



HAPPENINGS
MAY 2006



To encourage and facilitate the furtherment and enjoyment of the Arts and Crafts
within the community

WELCOME

Hello all and a big welcome to the second news letter of the Newbiggin by the sea Arts forum HAPPENINGS. Another bumper month of activity to report on and all the up and coming events for your diaries. The biggest bit of news has to be our glittering new web site so go check it out at www.newbigginartsforum.org Included with the newsletter is a flyer for the next forum meeting we would be really grateful if you could possibly display this in your windows

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MAY MEETING

Pottery workshop

Alan Vinters introduced the forum to different forms of ceramics in the workshop he delivered to us. The first part of the workshop involved rolling out a slab of clay and producing a design on this by drawing on it pressing items into etc .The edges of this slab where then built up with coils of clay so that plaster could be poured into this to make a tile. The second part of the workshop involved making a pot on the kick wheel, several members of the forum had a chance to throw there own pots which Alan took away to have fired in a kiln.



Alan demonstrating



making a design



Alan doing a highland fling?



A finished pot

Speakers

Liz Underhill

Came to talk to us about Saint Bartholomew's Fayre day. She gave us an informative talk on the history of the Fayre and about what is lined up for the future this important community event. Anyone who wants to get involved in this should contact Eddie Galvin. We plan to have a stall which we will need volunteers to help with.

Brian Reid

Brian of the Aurora project came to tell us about what the project is and what it does some of the history of the project and its work which has been so successful that the models they use have been adopted by other organisations at its work has been global – Contact details Tel 01670 534756 or breid@northumberland.gov.uk

Jane Tarr

From the community fund explained to us how her organisation worked with businesses and artists to match fund projects. Contact details 0191 222 0945 or JT@communityfoundation.org.uk

Ted Burnett

Northumberland Enterprises representative told of the help that could be achieved through them when setting up in business. Contact details TBurnett@northumberland.gov.uk Telephone: 01670 534155

ACTIVITIES

Upcoming events

Arts fayre 28/5/06

Members of the group are invited to submit work for the Fayre a £5 deposit which is returnable is required to book exhibition space. Unfortunately we can not provide any insurance on the pieces submitted.

NEXT MEETING

Monday 5 June.

For the next forum meeting as you will see from the flyer a tie dye workshop will be taking place to take part in this you will need to bring a piece of white clothing to dye and a carrier bag to carry it home in as it will still be wet.

Also membership fees will be collected if you haven't already paid that's £2 for an individual or £5 for a family

CONTACTS

During the forum several individuals were introduced to whom you may approach to get done what you want done they are

Eddie Galvin, Keith Tait, Alan Vinter, Rebecca de'Wessington, Clair Cooper, Jason Thompson, Rebecca McCready and Gillian Perfect so if you see them in the street grab them and ask or contact through the usual channels

Trip Reviews

Battleship Potemkin
Pet Shop Boys and Northern
Sinfonia



From the above title, I can only claim to have heard of the Pet Shop Boys and the Northern Sinfonia. So, I was intrigued as to what everyone was shouting about when it came to light that this performance would be held outdoors in the Swan Hunter Ship Yard and was to be a high-light of this year's cultural calendar.

Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* is a silent movie portraying the revolt of Russian sailors in 1905 against their superiors and was premiered in Russia in 1925 with the original score from pieces by well known composers such as Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, but later on Edmund Meisel wrote a special score for the film. It was Eisenstein's intention to have the score re-written every ten years.

And so, in 2003 the Institute of Arts, approached the Pet Shop Boys, a new score was written in 2003 and performed live in London in September, 2004. It combined both pop and classical in the forms of orchestral and modern sounds, the vocal lyrics inspired from the sub-titles.

So intrigued and in great anticipation I stood in front of a large screen (mounted 100 feet off the ground), surrounded by thousands of people, on a fantastically clear night, beneath the stars in what can only be described as surreal surroundings. The great cranes of the shipyard strong and dominating, which was apt, as the film was about a great strength within the Russian community, united to fight for what was right.

I was surprised at how moved I was, the music taking you into the heart of the film, by effectively starting as background music, within a short space moving to the foreground.

At the end of the performance, the shipyard emptied, as if a shift had just finished and I went home enlightened, richer and yearning to experience more.

So this week I am off to see the Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers. Can't wait!

Rebecca de'Wessington

Battleship Potemkin

The vast spaces of Swan Hunter Shipyard provided a dramatic background for the screening of the Battleship Potemkin at Wallsend on Bank Holiday Monday. Although the weather was more arctic than springtime, the vast crowds who attended did not let a little chill get in the way of a superb evening's entertainment.

As the natural light became dim as evening approached, coloured lights flashed up the walls of the huge hangars. The renowned local actor, Tim Healy, started proceedings by setting the historical context for the Russian film. The crowds stood spellbound when the huge outdoor screen came to life telling the real story of the 1905 mutiny of the sailors of the Potemkin against the repressive officers of the Russian Imperial Navy. The stark black and white images, with flickering subtitles, were oddly reminiscent of the silent movie era.

The music score written and performed on the night by the Pet Shop Boys and the Northern Sinfonia, was stunning, mixing a blend of electronic keyboards and symphony music. The crowds loved it and enthusiastically demanded an encore.

My guests for the evening were medical students visiting the north-east from Tanzania-their first journey outside Africa. The Arts Group provided the tickets and made it possible for them to have a once in a lifetime experience.

They have already told me that the evening is now part of their 'life history' and they are looking forward to recounting the tale of an unforgettable evening to their friends and family when they return home. Thank you – or as the students would say in Swahili- asante sana.

Brenda Longstaff
Northumbria Healthcare

Jenny Lewis & the Watson Twins – 17.04.06 Gateshead Sage



An evening of alternative country / bluegrass tunes provided a mixture of highly professional performance with musical theatre which left the expectant crowd thrilled. The small but perfectly formed Jenny Lewis provided a highly polished performance including tracks from her highly acclaimed album "Rabbit Fur Coat".

Joined on stage by her band & the Watson twins who provided harmonies which were used like a musical instrument to accompany the rest of the ensemble. The music soared and moved seamlessly between searching melancholy to upbeat songs of forbidden love. This was a top class performance; highlights included "Born secular" & "Rise up with fists". There may be better gigs in the area this year, but if you get the chance to see Jenny Lewis, my advice is catch them while you can, you won't be disappointed.

Eddie Galvin

Mugenkyo Taiko Drummers



On Thursday evening, I went to Whitley Bay Playhouse along with some of the Newbiggin Arts Forum, to a concert of traditional Japanese drumming. I'd never been to this sort of event before, and all I knew about it was that some people would be hitting big drums for a couple of hours. Beyond that it was a totally new experience.

As a drummer and percussionist myself, I was interested in the concert from a musical point of view. Bashing drums - even little ones - is very therapeutic, and if it sounds good then all the better. I knew the players would be good at what they did musically, but what I wasn't expecting, and what impressed me as much as the sounds, was the movement - the choreography.



The concert was a mixture of rhythms, dance and martial arts - with perfectly co-ordinated playing and movement that was as much a visual spectacle as an aural one. Six performers, one male and five female, played two halves that mixed ancient and modern pieces. I have to say that I couldn't have told you which were the modern and which were the ancient - they all sounded very impressive, and the variety of sounds was amazing. It wasn't all drumming- other Japanese and World Music instruments were used to great effect too, from the beautiful woody tones of the shinobue bamboo flute, to didgeridoo, bells and cymbals. Some of the pieces were melodic, the percussion being used to add atmosphere - sounding very otherworldly, and at times ghostly. And some of the music was extremely energetic, using mostly drums, with synchronized rhythms and shouts from the players.



The drums themselves ranged in size from flat hand-held ones, measuring a few inches across, up through ones about the size of beer kegs, and then on to huge drums the size of water butts and bigger. The largest drum - dominating the rear of the stage on a heavy wooden stand - must have

been eight feet long and about five feet wide. The depth and volume of sound produced by the drums was impressive - and the group used no amplification, except for the didgeridoo.



Only one of the groups was of Japanese descent Miyuki Williams, whose parents are Japanese and Welsh. The rest of the players were from the UK, and the group are responsible for spearheading the growing movement to develop taiko drumming as a European art form from their training facility - or Dojo - in Lanark, Scotland. Founding member Neil Mackie, the only male player in the concert, has a background as a rock drummer, but has spent many years training with a taiko master drummer - as have many of the other players.



The group run workshops and educational outreach events around the country, and have been seen on TV many times, at The Brit Awards, Cup Finals and Last Night of The Proms - they've even appeared in a Bollywood film, so very international. The audience on Thursday evening, who must have numbered more than 400, were certainly given a real treat - and it was an experience we won't forget soon.



The last piece, which featured all six drummers pounding a very fast and complex rhythm for almost 15 minutes, was literally breathtaking. The three female drummers at the front of the stage sat on the floor with their legs astride beautiful ornately decorated barrel shaped drums, and pounded on them in perfectly co-ordinated patterns, leaning back at an angle that demonstrated as much as anything else their level of fitness and discipline. I couldn't have done it for more than a few seconds, put it that way, so a little intimidating in an entertaining sort of way. Breathtaking. – Jason Thompson

For more information visit www.taikodojo.com.

Future trips

Gillian Perfect has volunteered to be our trips co-ordinator. At the monthly meetings Gillian will be available to take bookings for our upcoming trips. If we are going to an event in Newcastle by minibus the cost of travel is £3.50 per person. We will be looking to take a deposit on the night, so for future meetings, make sure you have some change available. Please note that if you are unable to make the trip the deposit is non-refundable.

Publicity

Please find attached details of the first Newbiggin Arts Forum Fayre & the flyer for our meeting in June. I would ask that you publicise these meetings as widely as you can & in particular that you try & come to the Arts Fayre & bring someone with you. Entry is free, there are refreshments available and the work available will be by local artists. For those of you who can, can you put a copy of these flyers in your window at home. I believe it's a great way to promote the forum to our neighbours & to show just how many of us support the arts in Newbiggin. If you would like to exhibit your work at the fayre please contact me as soon as possible.

Ambassadors

As we grow, it is important that we all act as ambassadors for the arts in Newbiggin. This will be a very busy month for us and as a group it's important to us to be as inclusive as possible. I would ask you to talk to your friends, neighbours, colleagues & family and tell them about the forum, tell them about what we do the workshops, trips & invite them along to the arts fayre. The more people we can get involved the better it will be for the whole village.

Photography group

I have approached Newbiggin Bowl's club, and they have very kindly agreed to allow us access to their open day bowls competition on Saturday 27th May. This is an event involving 28 pair's teams and will give us an excellent opportunity to take a wide range of interesting photographs. The Day runs from 9.00am until about six pm, but you can come & go as you please. Refreshments are available on the day so it should be very pleasant.

I suggest we meet at about 8.50am to have a briefing on the do's & don'ts for the day of prime importance is to keep off the playing surface. If you are interested in taking part in this can you contact me as soon as possible.

Painters Group

There will be a meeting held in Newbiggin soon for everyone who wants to be involved with the painters group. I have contact details for most people, but if you would like to sign up for this group please contact Eddie Galvin.

Volunteers Needed

Anyone wanting to volunteer to help with arts fayre should contact Eddie Galvin. The Fayre is on Sunday 28th May we will be opening up to artists from 10.30am & the public from 11.00am until 4.00pm. Volunteers will need to be there at 10.20am.

Events Co-Ordinator

From time to time we are involved with ad hoc events, and it would be really helpful to have 1 or 2 co-ordinators. This role would be to breakdown & identify the resources we need for each event (such as the arts fayre or tri-town festival), and then co-ordinate all those involved so everyone knows where to be & at what time. This role would suit someone with access to email & good attention to detail. If this sounds like you, contact Eddie Galvin e.galvin@btconnect.com

Is there anybody in the group who has market research experience?

Do we have any German speakers? Contact Eddie Galvin

Monthly meetings

We still need 2 or 3 people to help with the room set up on the night. If you know you can get to the meeting by 6.00pm, why not volunteer & help with the set up / tidy up.

Please contact Eddie Galvin 01670 858 834 e.galvin@btconnect.com