



Arts & Minds Newsletter

Spring 2023

www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

Message in a Bottle

A Skippko project supported by Arts & Minds
(page 14)

'Nature' is what we see -
The Hill - the Afternoon -
Squirrel - Eclipse - the Bumble bee -
Nay - Nature is Heaven -
Nature is what we hear -
The Bobolink - the Sea -
Thunder - the Cricket -
Nay - Nature is Harmony -
Nature is what we know -
Yet have no art to say -
So impotent our wisdom is
To her simplicity.

Emily Dickinson

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Spring 2023 edition of the Arts & Minds newsletter. As always, there has been loads going on since the last newsletter, with our monthly Connect & Create group, the online weekly Make Space group and a brilliant event at Leeds City Museum with a creative writing session run by Matthew Bellwood in response to the Living with Machines exhibition to name a few.

Please see the What's On section on page 32 for details about the next Arts & Minds event which will be at Hollybush Conservation Centre on Tuesday 4th April. The event will be a chance to get back to nature with a fun packed afternoon including a willow sculpture workshop and a tour of the centre with a chance to learn about tree identification and foraging for free food.

We are also launching the 2023 Creative Grants programme, with £1000 on offer to five LYPFT services to run a creative project. See page 18 for details about how to apply, and for examples of projects we funded last year.

As always I am looking for ways for us all to stay connected and for creative outlets that members can engage with. If you have an idea of how to do this, or you want to connect up, please email me at: toby@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. Please also keep checking the Arts & Minds eBulletin and website for more information.

LEARNING TO WEAVE WITH LANDMARK

The Landmark Trust is one of the leading building conservation charities in the UK. They rescue at-risk historic buildings and provide them with a new lease of life as holiday accommodation, meaning that people can explore the stories of these fascinating buildings and experience their very own piece of history, the income securing the future of each site forevermore.

One of the buildings which has been in the care of the Landmark Trust since the 1980s is the fascinating



Photo: **Calverley Old Hall**

medieval manor house, Calverley Old Hall. Calverley Old Hall is located to the west of Leeds, in the vibrant village of Calverley, and is currently undergoing complete restoration as part of a huge National Lottery Heritage Funded project running from 2022-2024. The restoration will transform the previously derelict hall into holiday accommodation for up to 10 people, alongside an additional self-contained flat for long term rental, and a community room for use by local people. At the heart of the project is Landmark's two-year public engagement programme.

During October and November 2022, working in collaboration with local weaver Agnis Smallwood, Landmark ran a number of workshops based on the traditional craft of weaving in order to design and create a series of six woven artworks which will be displayed in the community room on completion of the restoration works.

Firstly, a series of six design workshops took place over the course of three weeks at Calverley Old Hall itself, working with Agnis to explore the textures and colours visible in the building through the medium of weaving. Participants were invited to produce their own design inspired by Calverley, from the colours present in the warp and weft, through to the weave structure. Each group chose to focus on a different part of the building and its rich history, meaning that each of the designs was completely different to the next. Some groups chose to focus on sections of brick and stonework, peeling paintwork and dusty wallpapers or bright tiles, and some even had the opportunity to handle a range of the archaeological artefacts recovered from the building.



Photo: **One of the Design Groups at Calverley Old Hall**

The resulting six designs were then transferred onto Dobby looms at neighbouring Sunny Bank Mills in Farsley, where a series of 20 weaving sessions took place, running over two weeks in November. The results, as you can see, were incredible. Landmark would like to thank everyone involved with the project, and will be proud to display the artwork in the restored community space at Calverley Old Hall.

It was fantastic to see several members of Arts & Minds joining Landmark for the project, Landmark were thrilled

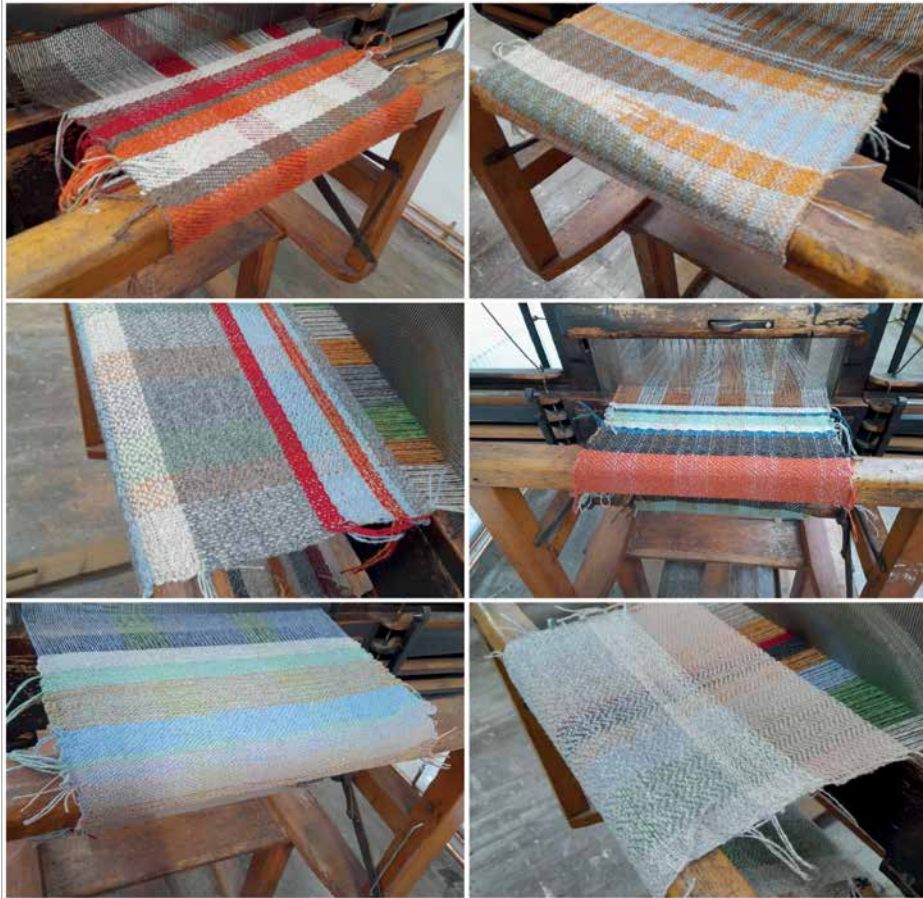


Photo: **The Woven Pieces**

to work with such a diverse groups of participants of the project and to meet so many new people. If you would like to get involved with future creative activities, please see the Landmark Trust website for further information:

www.landmarktrust.org.uk/support-us/projects-and-appeals/appeal-launched-calverley-old-hall/calverley-old-hall-activities-and-events

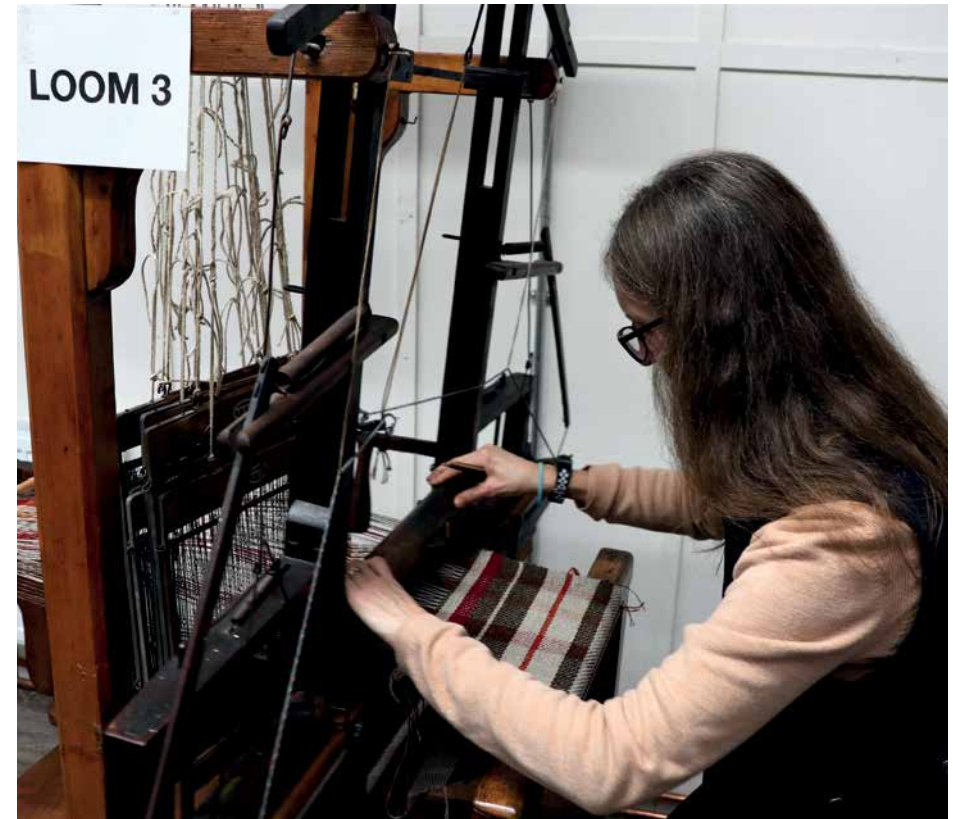


Photo: **Arts & Minds Member Weaving**

Alternatively email calverley@landmarktrust.org.uk and ask to be added to their e-news mailing list where you will be able to find out about upcoming opportunities.

You can also find out more about the weaving project in Agnis' blog on the Landmark Trust website:

www.landmarktrust.org.uk/support-us/projects-and-appeals/appeal-launched-calverley-old-hall/weaving-at-calverley-old-hall

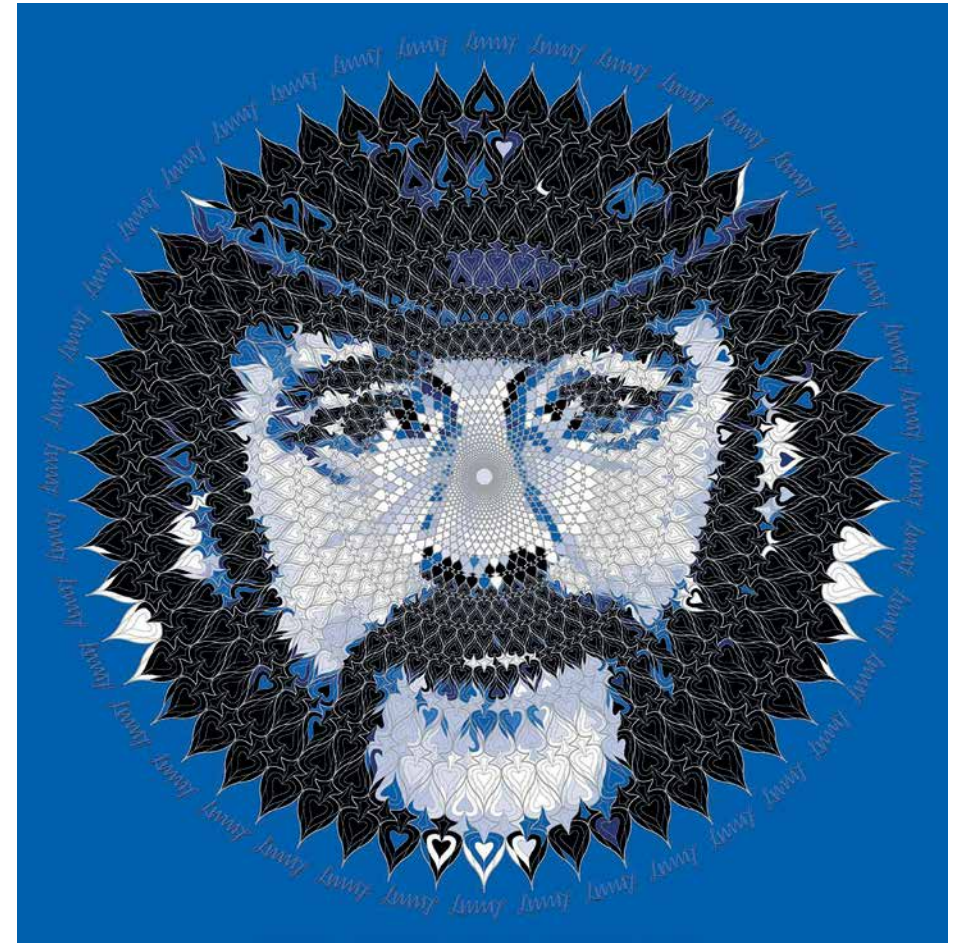
TESSELLATION ART

A REVIEW OF PAUL AITCH ART

One in a while you visit a 'Art & Crafts' fayre and an artist and their creations take your breath away. A recent Art House fayre at Leeds Kirkgate Market and an artist had this effect on me. At the stall of Paul Aitch Art some of his prints of famous people caught my attention. After taking a closer look, and having Paul show me his other creations, and I can honestly say I have never seen anything like them. He explained that the creations were in the "tessellation style", but that is only part of the amazing work he creates.

From patterned wallpaper to decorative mosaics, tessellations can be found all around us. The mathematical art of creating repeating patterns dates back to 4000 BCE when the Sumerians used clay tiles to decorate their homes and temples. Since then, virtually every other civilization throughout history adopted using tessellations in both art and architecture.

What is a tessellation? A tessellation is when a geometric shape (or tile) repeats itself over and over again, covering a 2D or 3D surface without any gaps or overlaps. There are different styles of tessellations depending on the shapes used. The word 'tessellation' comes from the Latin term 'tessera', meaning a small, tile-like stone. Tessera were used to make tessellata, meaning mosaics and tiling that decorate ancient Roman buildings.



The mathematical theory of tessellations also had an influence on the art world. Perhaps the most famous artist to use geometric grids in his work is MC Escher. Also referred to as the "father of modern tessellations", the Dutch artist created irregular, interlocking tiles, shaped like animals and other natural objects. Despite not having formal mathematical training, Escher had



an eye for precision and a natural understanding of geometry. With his woodcut prints, lithographs, mezzotints, and drawings, he simply wanted to achieve balance, harmony, and perfection. He was once quoted saying, *“Order is repetition of units. Chaos is multiplicity without rhythm.”*.

While Escher’s work is often associated with the Op art movement, other artists used mathematical tessellations in a more practical, decorative way. Paul’s tessellation takes a form which you admire twice, firstly the portrait of a famous person and then when you take a closer look you realise that the brilliant portrait is made up of an image or images which you can relate to the person featured, for example Leonard Cohen is made up from



hundreds of trilby hats, Lemmy from Motorhead is comprised of hundreds of ‘Ace of Spades’ images, while hound images create Kate Bush. These examples are just a few of an ever-increasing portfolio of famous people that Paul produces. Please take the opportunity to check out Paul’s amazing art work via his Facebook page [Paul Aitch Art](#) or on Instagram paulaitchart or visit his impressive online shop: www.paulaitcharty.wixsite.com/paul-aitch-art/shop – you will not be disappointed!

Article by **Paul Abraham** of www.theartfulrambler.com

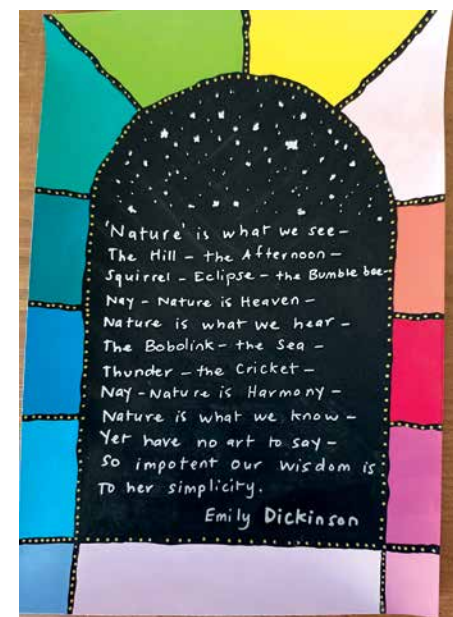
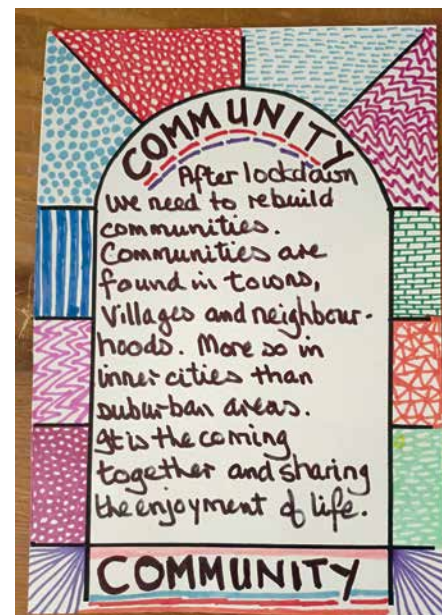
MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

The 'Message in a Bottle' project was designed by Skippko Arts Team, to take into account feedback from participants about taking part in something where they feel they are part of a shared experience, as well as creative activities to help alleviate the dark nights / winter blues. The project brought a little light into the dark nights and connected people together between December 22 and January 23.

"Enjoyable and gave me something to focus on over the Christmas hols. Felt good to connect with other people, even remotely."

Participants were sent a pack of materials with guidance notes and the opportunity to attend an 'Introduction to the project' Zoom session to get them started. 82 people got involved in total either at home or through a partner organisation such as Neighbourhood Networks.

Participants embellished and illuminated recycled bottles with colourful stained glass effects using tissue papers, outliner pens and self-adhesive motifs. People also wrote a message to go with their bottle, something they would like to share with other people. Skippko received poems, favourite recipes, encouraging thoughts, tips and recommendations for getting through the dark nights and words about something of importance to the individual.





Skippko held a 'Bring Your Bottle' event in February, bringing everyone together at Hollybush Conservation Centre. LED fairy lights were added inside the bottles and messages shared whilst drinking delicious home made soup.

The bottles and messages were on display at Hollybush Conservation Centre for a couple of weeks during February and all the messages and photos of the bottles are available to view on Skippko's website: www.skippko.org.uk/message-in-a-bottle

"I have followed the link and it look like you had a great response to the challenge and they all look fabulous. Keep up the good work, can't wait to see what you have in store for all of us in the future."

"Extremely relaxing, took me back to my childhood – healing, strengthening, empowering, me time."

"Fun, meditative, good to have a project once the decorations came down to ease us into 2023."

"I like being involved in what is happening in my community especially when it involves art or photography."

"It has been enjoyable. Great materials supplied, all I needed was used plastic bottles. Good for people to come together – shared experiences make a real difference."

'Message in a Bottle' was funded by Leeds Inspired, Arts & Minds and Skippko Arts Team

CREATIVE GRANTS

Would you like to win £1000 for a creative project with an LYPFT (Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust) service? Arts & Minds are offering the opportunity for LYPFT services to win up to £1000 for a participatory project. Projects need to involve patients / service users in the planning and can be in any medium: photography, music, crafts, creative writing etc.

Arts & Minds are now accepting Expressions of Interest for the 2023/24 grants programme. If you are interested in applying for a Grant, please read the Grant Guidance on the website first to check if your service is eligible and what the money can be used for. The Grant Guidance is available to download on the Arts & Minds website: www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/creativegrants

Once you have checked the Guidance you can submit an Expression of Interest with your project idea. The Expression of Interest is a short form that helps us to



assess if your idea is suitable for a grant, as well as what help you might need (for example linking you up with appropriate artists to deliver your project).

The deadline for Expressions of Interest is the 30th April 2023. Completed forms should be emailed to: info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

The Grant Application Form can be downloaded from the Arts & Minds website from 30th April. Applicants will then have two months to refine their project idea and to submit their Grant Application.

BELOW ARE SOME OF THE PROJECTS THAT WERE AWARDED CREATIVE GRANTS IN 2022-23:

DEMENTIA INPATIENT SERVICE

Music and Reminiscence Sessions

Wards 1 and 2 at The Mount (Dementia Inpatient Service) were lucky enough to secure an Arts & Minds grant to run a creative project across the two wards. Artists Matthew Bellwood and Peter Spafford developed and ran the project with the support of the OT team across the two wards for a 6-week period. The group included a mix of music and reminiscence with varying themes each week, from old sea shanties to Christmas carols. Service users were invited to use the varying instruments provided too to add an extra element to the group. As part of the group, service users, the artists and staff wrote their very own chart-topping song 'Moo', developed over several sessions. Keep an eye out for it in the UK Top 40! See the moo-tastic lyrics on the next page...

MOO!

I WANT A CUP OF TEA,
I WANT IT NOW.
I WANT IT HOT AND SWEET,
WITH MILK FROM THE COW.
MOO. MOO. MOO. MOO.
MOO MOO FOR YOU!

I WANT SOMETHING STRONGER THAN TEA,
I WANT A SHORT.
WHISKY AND GINGER PLEASE,
THAT'S A LOVELY THOUGHT.
CHEERS. CHEERS. CHEERS. CHEERS.
CHEERS CHEERS, MY DEARS!

I'D LIKE SOME PRIME ROAST BEEF,
GRAVY ON THE SIDE.
YORKSHIRE PUDDING FOR A TREAT,
FILL MY HEART WITH PRIDE.
JINGLE, JINGLE, JINGLE, JINGLE.
JINGLE TILL YOU MINGLE.

I WANT A CUP OF TEA,
I WANT IT NOW.
I WANT IT HOT AND SWEET,
WITH MILK FROM THE COW.
MOO. MOO. MOO. MOO.
MOO MOO FOR YOU!

All in all, the project was very successful, with service users, staff and the artists thoroughly enjoying their time. To quote one of the service users:
"I enjoyed the music and the Lalalalala."

LIAISON PSYCHIATRY OUTPATIENTS SERVICE

Ceramics Workshops – An Invitation to be Creative

The ceramics workshops were designed specifically for people who experience Persistent Physical Symptoms that cannot be explained by conventional medicine. The project focused on individuals with symptoms which impact their day to day lives, engagement in occupation, social activities, and relationships. They often found themselves, or felt themselves, to be excluded from 'mainstream' mental health support by virtue of the fact their symptoms were bodily in nature. The project addressed this inequality by offering a group specifically with these individuals in





mind. People benefited from coming together around an activity which was not related to the physical symptom, providing some 'ordinary' in the 'extra-ordinary', and allowing people to use their bodies, which may be felt to act against their development, in the service of growth and creativity.

The aim of the workshops was to learn new creative skills in a supportive environment. The project was developed by the Liaison Psychiatry Outpatients Service with help from Arts & Minds. Below is some feedback from the participants:

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the ceramics workshop, so much so that I have continued to attend weekly. I have learnt a new skill and met new people. This workshop has given me the time and space to do something for myself and has helped build my confidence and boost my mood."

"Previously I have had not been able to go out on my own as I am highly anxious and worried about falling. Meeting new people has given me the opportunity to build my confidence, have something to look forward to and develop my creative side, I have enjoyed experimenting with clay and have produced gifts for my family."

"Alison is so friendly and welcoming; I look forward to each week."

"Lovely group, I am creative and have developed new skills, the environment is relaxed, Alison is knowledgeable and puts me at ease, I look forward to each session."

"Open, friendly, and encouraging, it's amazing how much you can produce in one session, it great to meet new people, learn a new skill and look forward to seeing what you have produced and how it has turned out. Alison is always on hand to guide you, very knowledgeable and an excellent teacher."

OLDER PEOPLE'S INPATIENT SERVICES

Visual Arts Sessions

The project was centred around the seasons, looking to connect service users to the idea of the ever-changing seasons and the consistency of nature through tough times, especially giving a dedication to Covid times.



The artist, Millie Wilkinson, brought the outdoors into the creative space using immersive experiences through sound and visual media in the sessions. In the background of each session were the sounds of each season and also a visual walk-through nature played on a wide screen. It really helped people to connect to the art project as a whole and allowed graded participation. Some people just enjoyed listening to the sounds or watching the walk. Others engaged more fully in the different art media including ink, paint, printing, clay or collage.

It was really amazing to see some participants explore their creativity in new ways. Many had not engaged in creative projects before so it was something new to keep exploring. Some participants wanted to know more about creative groups in the community post discharge from hospital and continue art as a meaningful occupation.

Another aspect of the project was reminiscing – tying in memorable days growing up in the seasons such as school 'Snow Days' in winter, beach days in summer and bonfire nights in autumn. Millie was really engaging and very fluid in her approach. She was willing to try new things to explore texture and colours to build up the final piece of work.

The work service users produced is really beautiful and the Older People's Inpatient Service want to place it in the visitor's room in the hospital where carers can also enjoy the final artwork and see the hard work of participants and some of the really meaningful activities provided in collaboration with Arts & Minds and LYPFT.

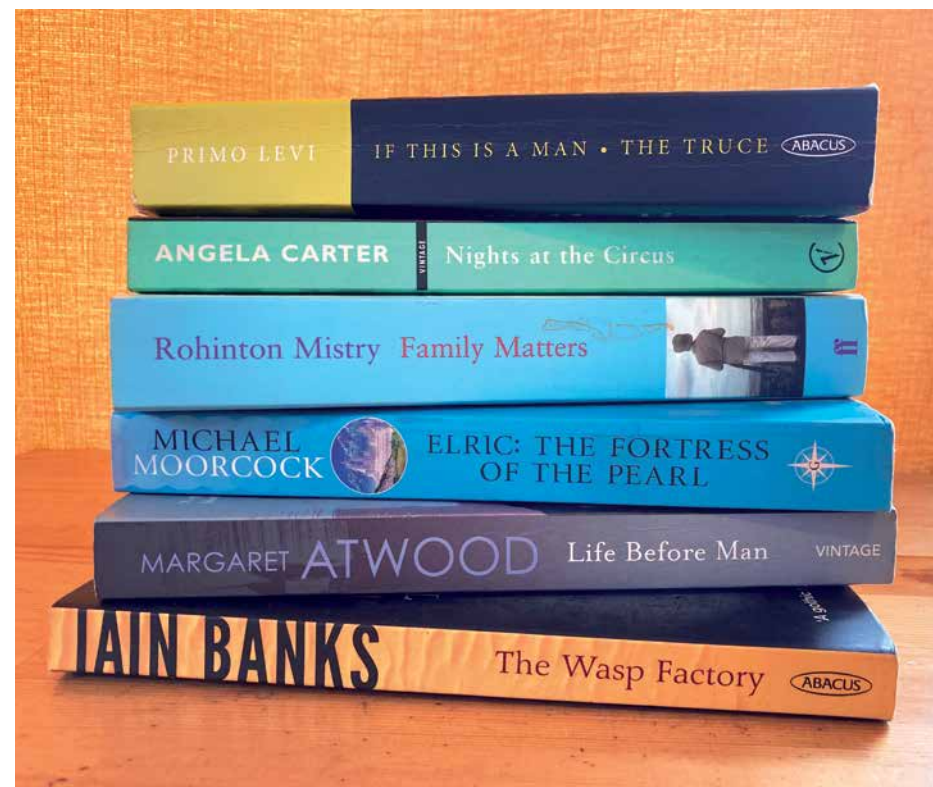
For more information about Creative Grants visit:
www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/creativegrants

A VISIT TO LEEDS LIT FEST 2023

It's a Saturday afternoon in late February, and I'm sitting in the gorgeous Howard Assembly Room, waiting for the next instalment of the uncanny writing workshops that are running here as part of Leeds Lit Fest. There are a handful of writers milling and talking to one another; others, like me, are scribbling in our notebooks. Even though it's a dreary, chilly day outside, the space itself – high ceilings, wooden floors, simple stained glass windows – lends us an energy and a warmth as we gather.

Leeds Lit Fest is in its fifth annual iteration. Founded in 2019, it has run every year since then (online in 2021) at the tail end of February and the beginning of March, just when the light is growing longer but the days seem endlessly cold. Run as a collaboration by eight arts and literary organisations in Leeds, it has won Best Literary Festival in the national Saboteur Awards twice, and offers affordable and engaging literary events at locations around Leeds. Some of these are creative workshops; others are panel discussions or readings; and some are performances, including collective performances such as the all-night readathon on Chapel FM.

I have adored literary festivals since I was a child. Back then, my dad used to work behind the scenes at the Edinburgh Fringe, leaving me long days at the Edinburgh Book Festival in Charlotte Square, where I wandered the



book tents, stood in line for hours to get books signed by Jacqueline Wilson, lay on the grass with a notepad and a stack of new books, and got over-excited by a glimpse of Terry Pratchett in his trademark black hat, limping between the authors' tents. But literary festivals can be expensive to get to, and I haven't been back to Edinburgh since the early 2000s. When I moved to Leeds mid-pandemic, I was excited to learn that the city had its own literary festival.

Leeds Lit Fest makes use of the vibrant culture of open mics and spoken word poetry that thrives in Leeds at

venues such Leftbank Leeds, The Chemic Tavern, The Leeds Library, Hyde Park Book Club, and Open Source Arts. It adds to this mix a nine-day feast of literary activities for adults and children.

My personal favourites are the workshops, where it's possible to sit in quiet in the midst of other writers and try out new techniques, and where, if you're lucky, the air begins to shimmer with connections and idea. I go to three: 'The Uncanny in Short Fiction' (taught by Lucie McKnight Hardy), 'Weirding Your Fiction' (taught by Dan Coxon), and 'Leeds Lit Crit' (taught by Penny Newell and Rachel Cracknell). In the first, Hardy brings our attention close to how the uncanny emerges out of seemingly distortions of the familiar. In the second, Coxon walks us through his experience as an editor wading through the slush pile, and argues that a glimmer of bent reality – something really weird, either conceptually or even at the level of the sentence – can make a piece stand out. In the third, Newell and Cracknell have us leave the short pieces of writing we brought with us scattered across tables and walk around them in silence, leaving annotations and anonymous sticky notes.

By the time you read this, Leeds Lit Fest will be over for the year, but it seems certain to reappear in February 2024. There's a website (www.leedslitfest.co.uk), a Twitter feed (@LeedsLit), and a Facebook page (/LeedsLitFest) if you want to keep up with their goings-on. And, in the meantime, Leeds Poetry Festival is just around the corner (10th-16th July 2023, www.leedspoetryfestival.com).

Article by **Jessica Wright**

HOLLYBUSH – THE WELLBEING AND CRAFTING OASIS!



Hollybush, on the Bramley, Kirkstall boundary is an environmental volunteering centre that has now been running for over 40 years. The building itself dates back to at least 1700 when the site was a farm before The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) decided to make the then empty building and overgrown land as its West Yorkshire branch in 1979 and has been running training and education programmes, facilitating, volunteering and improving green spaces ever since. Their amazing and dedicated volunteers help to manage green spaces across Leeds and beyond. It is also home to The Hollybush Project which runs nature-based activities for adults with learning difficulties and the Hollybush Community Cafe which is open to the public.

With Hollybush being a Safe Space and with their desire for everyone to have a rewarding and positive experience while volunteering with them, they ask new volunteers to sign a Code of Conduct developed to make sure all activities run safely, and everyone feels welcome. The centre's aim is to bring people and places together to create happy, healthy and connected communities for everyone, while TCV is an inclusive organisation which works with groups from all backgrounds and is committed to the safeguarding of the groups with which they work.

My recent visit was a real eye-opener as many motorists will speed pass the centre without realising what an important place it is for people of all backgrounds and experience. While I was there, the site had a woodworking group making planters which the centre sells, another group were sat around a roaring fire while working on other wood related projects. Plants were being re-potted in another area of the centre as a workshop on willow weaving took place in one of the centres teaching spaces. The hive of activity didn't stop me from taking time out to watch the squirrels and a variety of birds and allow me to have some mindfulness moments in the wonderful wooded areas.

With a range of nature-based courses from gardening and conservation, to basket making and woodwork, there is something inspiring for everyone. Weekend or seasonal / family courses can be booked and paid for through their Eventbrite page and their free or low-cost Adult Community Learning courses can be booked at the Leeds Learning Hub – type LS5 into the search!



My visit really showed me at first-hand what a fabulous and incredibly important oasis Hollybush is. The centre allows people to connect with people of shared interests and begin new friendships while being in the fresh air and being active, which improves their mental health and wellbeing as an added bonus.

Please check out Hollybush and all the activities they offer, you will not be disappointed and you may end up with making your own handmade willow basket!

Website: www.tcv.org.uk/hollybush

Article by **Paul Abraham** of www.theartfulrambler.com

WHAT'S ON...

CONNECT & CREATE

Connect & Create is a monthly group where Arts & Minds members can connect, share skills, and take part in creative workshops led by other members. Each month's offer will be led by a different member and is free to attend. The workshops are on the **first Monday of every month** from **1pm to 3pm** with the exception of bank holidays, in which case they are on the following Monday.

The Connect & Create group meets at Leeds Discovery Centre, Carlisle Road, Leeds LS10 1LB. There is free parking if you are coming by car and the centre is a short walk from town if you are coming by public transport.

For more information, or to sign up for the workshops, email info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. Sessions are by RSVP only and there is a limit on numbers so please get in touch if you want to come along so we can book you a place.



MAKE SPACE

We would love you to join us at the weekly Make Space Zoom session, where the focus is on connecting with other members, and taking time for yourself to continue with your creative project, poetry or artwork. Bring along a cuppa, and tune in for your time out session between **1.00pm and 2.00pm every Tuesday**.

Arts & Minds started the Make Space during lockdown as a way to stay connected with members while we were not able to meet up in person. Due to the success of the group, and the continued demand for online sessions, we are continuing to run the Make Space group online as other Arts & Minds groups and sessions have returned to meeting face-to-face.

For more information, or to sign up for the sessions, email info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. You will be sent a Zoom link to join in with the sessions.



Willow Sculpture

An **Arts & Minds** event at **Hollybush**



Join Arts & Minds at the fabulous **Hollybush** for an afternoon of getting back to nature. This exclusive event for Arts & Minds members includes a willow sculpture workshop as well as a tour of Hollybush finding out about the conservation work that they do. The workshop is suitable for both complete beginners and experienced willow sculptors alike. Light refreshments will be served both before and in-between the workshop and tour.

Please note that parts of this event will take place outside so be prepared for the elements and wear appropriate clothing.

Tuesday 4th April 2023 • 12.30pm to 4.30pm

Venue: **Hollybush Conservation Centre**
Broad Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds LS5 3BP

An **Arts & Minds** event at **Hollybush**



Places for the **Hollybush** event are limited and are by RSVP only. To book a place on the workshop please email Jane at: info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

You will be sent a confirmation email with all the details for the day. This event is for Arts & Minds members only. If you are not an Arts & Minds member you can join for free at: www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us

www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk

www.tcv.org.uk/hollybush

This event is a partnership project between **Arts & Minds** and **Hollybush**

arts and minds
network

About Arts & Minds

Arts & Minds is a network of people in Leeds who are interested in creativity and mental health. We include carers, health workers, artists, performers, students, people who have used mental health services and OTs. We want to get people talking about how the arts can help mental wellbeing.

If you want to know more please contact us using the details below. You are welcome at any of our events or workshops, if you are a member or not. You can join Arts & Minds for free at: **www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us**

email: **info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk**

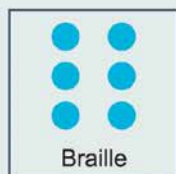
web: **www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk**

facebook: **facebook.com/artsminds**

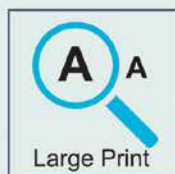
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