

Visual Arts in Rural Communities

# Newsletter

Summer 2009

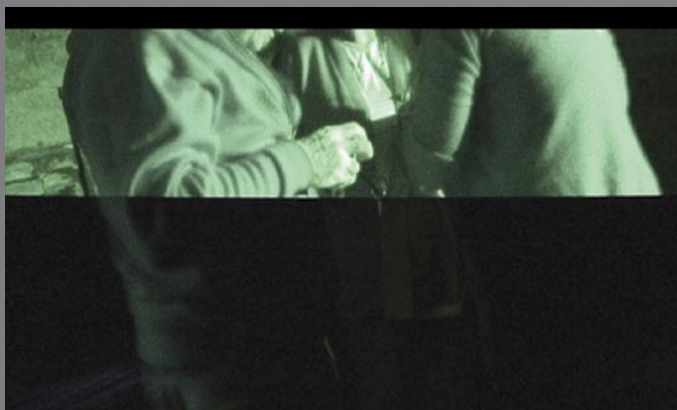


Nicky Coutts & Liz Murray, *Do you like us being here?*, 2009

## Paranormal event at Kielder Castle provides inspiration for film

Nicky Coutts, working with artist Liz Murray, has made a film from footage shot at a paranormal event they attended at Kielder Castle in May. It will feature in the exhibition '*Is Mary Here Again?*' at Waygood Boutique, High Bridge, Newcastle this summer. The photograph on the front cover of this leaflet has been made into a screen print, currently exhibited as part of the Northern Print Biennale. The print will be for sale; proceeds to Waygood's ambitious new artists' studios and gallery. Nicky and Liz will also build a 'Spirit Hut' in the gallery which will be recreated up at Highgreen in September. See back page or visit Waygood's website for further details and dates.

[www.waygood.org/freshEyes/freshEyes.html](http://www.waygood.org/freshEyes/freshEyes.html)



Nicky Coutts & Liz Murray, *Is there anybody here?*, 2009

## Crossroads

Nicky Coutts' proposed filming at the crossroads between Greenhaugh and Highgreen will be going ahead this summer. She has identified crossroads scenes from eight feature films that she would like to recreate with roles played by local people. She is still seeking someone to play Tom Hanks' part in '*Castaway*' (if anyone is interested!). There is also a vacancy for someone

to be 'Oedipus Rex; the King' in a scene from the film of the same name and other parts. When shooting is completed Nicky will edit and intercut scenes to create the film. Get in touch with Nicky on 01434 240562 or by email [n.coutts@btinternet.com](mailto:n.coutts@btinternet.com) if you would like to be part of the filming process either in front of or behind the camera!

## Cabinet installed on moor

Nicky's cabinet of curiosities, '*No One Belongs Here More Than You*' will be installed on the moor opposite the main entrance to Highgreen in early August. There are now nearly a hundred 'gold' votive objects made by visitors to the studio so the displays will change monthly until October so that all the clay figures can be exhibited in the cabinet.

## Group visits

In March a group of young people with autism from Thomas Bewick School visited Highgreen. They went for a walk led by Maureen McCracken and then made clay objects in a workshop with Nicky. This was the first event in an on-going relationship between VARC and the school. VARC is funding a project in which artist, Karen Rann, is visiting the school between now and Spring 2010 to work with students to create a large piece of artwork for display at the school and in an exhibition.



Students from Thomas Bewick School enjoy a walk near Highgreen

Children from Dr Thomlinson C of E Middle School, Rothbury came to Highgreen for a full day of creative activity with Nicky recently. They made clay models of imaginary mythical creatures and created more through a 'misfits' charcoal drawing activity.

## Projects progress

VARC's Fund for Local Projects has been enabling the following projects:

Members of Byrness St Francis Church and residents of Byrness village are making a textile collage depicting St Francis and native animals, birds and flowers. The finished hanging will be displayed as an altar frontal in the church during St Francis tide and in Byrness Village Hall at other times. The project is being led by artist Sue Moorhouse who lives in Byrness.



Byrness residents' first workshop

North Tyne and Redesdale Agricultural Society has commissioned Helen Brown, shepherdess and photographer, to document Bellingham Show. You will be able to view her photographs online after the event at [www.bellinghamshow.com](http://www.bellinghamshow.com).

Corsenside Recreation Access Group has commissioned wooden sculptures of wildlife from forester Simon Banks. The sculptures are being placed along tracks and in the clearing in Fowlaws Forest to make the area more attractive and encourage local people to use it.

# VARC Tenth Anniversary Event, June 2010

Next year VARC will be celebrating its tenth year with a publication and a special event that will bring together residents, past artists, students and visitors. More details will be provided as plans develop.

## Past Artists' Update...

Imi Maufe's collection of books made whilst at Highgreen is on display at the Hatton Gallery as part of the Northern Print Biennale. Imi was also commissioned by Northern Print to create a map of Newcastle and Gateshead which shows where in the city you can find print in buildings.

Find 'Passport to Print' online at [www.northernprint.org.uk/biennale](http://www.northernprint.org.uk/biennale).

## Diary of Forthcoming Events

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2 pm - 4 pm, Exhibition Preview

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> August,

Exhibition open to public

Waygood Boutique, 31 High Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne

'Is Mary Here Again?'

Nicky Coutts and Liz Murray

All welcome!

### Early August

Cabinet of Curiosities 'No One Belongs Here More Than You' will be installed on the moor opposite Highgreen.

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2 pm – 4 pm

Opening party of exhibition by Nicky Coutts at Highgreen.

Refreshments... All welcome.

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October – Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November

Nicky Coutts' exhibition at Queens Hall, Hexham.

Visual Arts in Rural Communities was set up to promote the understanding and enjoyment of visual arts in rural communities through contact with an artist, through creative workshops and through mounting exhibitions in the area. At the same time VARC intends that the residency and other projects it initiates provide artists the opportunity to develop his or her practice and create new artwork in response to a remote rural location.

VARC wants to develop its email mailing list. If you would like to receive newsletters, invitations and information about events by email rather than by post please can you inform VARC. See contact details below.

If you have any ideas or would like to discuss anything in this newsletter please contact:

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# [www.varc.org.uk](http://www.varc.org.uk)

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