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## COVER ARTIST JOE MAGEE

"JANUARY, I BELIEVE, HOSTS THE GLOOMIEST DAY OF THE YEAR - A KIND OF ÜBERHANGOVER. ONE SOLUTION IS TO OUTSOURCE YOUR GLOOM TO THE CLOUD AND THEN DELETE YOUR CLOUD ACCOUNT."

PERIPHERY.CO.UK  
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# EDITOR'S NOTE

## WELCOME TO ISSUE 68.

2020. Well what a year that was. Not going to talk about it too much though as we would just be repeating ourselves. What we are going to do however is to bring forth a guide to the ridiculous amount of highly recommended albums, EP's and books released and published by Stroud based artists, musicians and authors in that year which must not be named. On our count actually more than in the year before. Oh actually we can name that year - 2019.

Elsewhere we interview an artist who was a contestant on the Sky Portrait Artist of the Year television series, delve into a popular new podcast put together by a poet and musician, have a long overdue catch up with a community hero landlord, highlight the vital work of an arts based charity and cover the release of another highly recommended EP.

The February issue? Well we haven't planned that yet. As we write this Christmas is just around the corner. All though we have to plan our editorial features months in advance the year which must not be named has been a mammoth sized obstacle in that particular part of publishing. But what we do know is that after six years we are still to run out of content and Stroud always delivers something for an arts magazine to get their ink stained teeth stuck into.

Have a good year readers. See you in February.

Long live the printed word,  
Alex Hobbis and Adam Hinks

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LIVE THE  
PRINTED  
WORD.**

# NEWS

Arts and culture news from across the Stroud District

## ARTS

### DAN GUTHRIE

Dan Guthrie's exhibition UJ Remix, in collaboration with Creative Sustainability originally due to take place in March and featured in the August issue of Good On



Paper has now been given the go ahead. Guthrie's 2019 film albion, refreshed explored whether traditional British iconography can be used to represent a modern multicultural nation. A selection of images from the animation at the core of the film - a montage of digitally scanned Ankara fabrics, popular in Black and diaspora communities and printed in the colours of the Union Jack - will be exhibited as large format individual prints for closer examination on the platforms of Stroud and Stonehouse railway stations.

[danguthrie.net](http://danguthrie.net) / [cscic.org](http://cscic.org)

## WEVEN

A new not-for-profit Folk Crafts Cooperative has just been launched in Stroud. Originally conceived by Rhia Davenport - a crafts and folk enthusiast - together with



textile designer Mila Harris-Mussi and jeweller Josie Wickes, Weven aims to provide an open, accessible creative hub where makers, individuals and families can come together to learn and create; as well as showcase and celebrate the intricate and eclectic range of traditional country and folk crafts that are being made across the UK. Find out more in next month's issue...

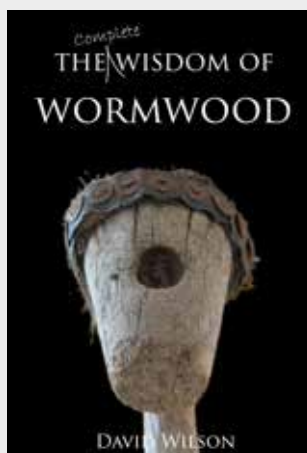
[weven.co.uk](http://weven.co.uk)

## BOOKS

### DAVID WILSON

The Wisdom of Wormwood by David Wilson has just been re-published as an expanded edition in paperback and ebook. Whether pondering the commercial potential of garden slugs; dreaming up ideas for novel websites; cataloguing pet hates; explaining the principles of natural gardening or alerting the world to the dangers of intelligent domestic appliances - no subject is too ambitious or obscure for this rustic English philosopher.

Though barely known beyond the boundaries of his native village, Wormwood is blessed with an intellect that acknowledges few limits and an imagination that ranges unchecked across the entire sphere of human experience...The book is available now from Stroud Bookshop and the Yellow Lighted Bookshop.



## YEW TREE PRESS

Despite the ongoing pandemic independent publisher Yew Tree Press are continuing to publish their popular ongoing series of pamphlets and books by Stroud

based poets and writers. In the last few months they have released five books which include poetry pamphlets from Diana Humphrey, JLM Morton, Mark Huband and Philip Rush, and a beautiful book of photographs by Andrew Fusek Peters. Usually each release is

accompanied by sold out launch events at the Museum in the Park, in the meantime all recent and previous titles are available to purchase online via the Yew Tree Press website.

[yewtreepress.co.uk](http://yewtreepress.co.uk)



## FESTIVALS

### STROUD ARTS FESTIVAL

Stroud Arts Festival have just announce the appointment of Dave Ayre as Guest Artistic Director for the charity's 75th anniversary year celebrations in 2021. Dave Ayre, a freelance double bass player, composer and music educationalist with over 20 years experience has been engaged to curate and lead an exciting season of events to highlight the scope and reach of the Stroud-based charity. Speaking of his appointment,

Dave Ayre writes: "I'm excited to work as Guest Artistic Director with Stroud Arts Festival and to help create an amazing season of arts and music events for the 75th anniversary next year. As a past recipient of Stroud Arts Festival funding I fully appreciate how important their support is for local artists and musicians. Together with the excellent team at Stroud Arts Festival I hope to follow on from Rick Vick's great work and present an inspiring, creative and inclusive season of events for the people of Stroud."

[stroudfestival.org](http://stroudfestival.org)



## MUSIC

### MR MARKO'S OUTER SPACE EMPORIUM

Following 'This is a Broadcast', written during the first lockdown in collaboration with poet Adam Horovitz, Mr Marko's Outer Space Emporium has just released a new

single 'Transmute' featuring Anne Garcin on vocals which also includes the instrumental track 'Future'. What is the music of the Outer Space Emporium like? "Think Barbarella meets 60s Star Trek in a club, somewhere off

the autobahn, playing an eclectic mix of the Chemical Brothers, 70s and 80s synth legends and variations on Ron Grainer's theme for Doctor Who," Mr Marko (otherwise known as Mark Thompson) suggests. "We're making sci-fi driven pop music with a sense of fun, and a side order of quantum physics you can dance to..."

[mrmarkosouterspaceemporium.bandcamp.com](http://mrmarkosouterspaceemporium.bandcamp.com)



## SPOKEN WORD/LITERATURE

### LAURA KINSELLA FELLOWSHIP

The National Centre for Writing in collaboration with Stroud based charity the Laura Kinsella Foundation have just launched the Laura Kinsella Fellowship as part of the Early Career Awards which will support one exceptionally talented early career writer of literary fiction. This exciting new Fellowship is an inclusive platform for writers at the beginning of their career. Set up to support writers experiencing limiting circumstances,



or whose voices are underrepresented in mainstream literary fiction, one writer will receive not only a cash prize but a bespoke programme of support delivered by the National Centre for Writing. The selected writer will receive a prize of £4,000 and a programme of bespoke professional development and promotional opportunities, which may include space and time to write, mentoring, residency or research trips, introductions to the industry, or engagement with the NCW's existing programmes. Submissions are open now (nationwide) and will close on the 15th January 2021.

[nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk](http://nationalcentreforwriting.org.uk)

### THE PHARE

The Phare; a Stroud based online magazine and writing resource have just launched their WriteWords competition inviting submissions of poetry, flash fiction



and short stories. Winners of each category will win £100, appear in the competition issue which comes out on the 5th Feb 2021, be invited to record their entry for the Podcast page, appear in a printed 2021 Anthology, receive an invitation to take part in The Phare's WriteLines online writing retreat for free and take part in on-going publicity. There are also runner up prizes. Submissions are open now and close on the 17th January.

[thephare.com/writewords](http://thephare.com/writewords)

## GOOD ON PAPER STROUD 2020 PLAYLIST

An 18 track spotify playlist featuring singles and songs from albums and ep's released by stroud dwelling bands and solo artists in 2020...

**SEARCH ON SPOTIFY FOR 'GOOD ON PAPER - STROUD 2020' OR SCAN THE QR CODE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE COLUMN...**

1. **Amelia Warner:** We Came Home
2. **Katy J Pearson:** Take Back The Radio
3. **Maja Lena:** Avalanche
4. **Emily Barker:** Machine
5. **Blancmange:** Mindset
6. **Mermaid Chunky:** Gemini Girls
7. **Simon McCorry:** Pieces of Mind
8. **Orbury Common:** Geoddessia (live)
9. **Phonsonic:** Sapience
10. **Near Future:** Sacrifice
11. **Diana Yukawa:** Isolation
12. **Sarah Nicolls:** The End Of The Valley Is In Full Sun
13. **Andrew Heath:** I Sleep Above the Forest
14. **Sam Sweeney:** The Old Wagon Way
15. **Hattie Briggs:** Don't Cry Until It's Over
16. **Faeland:** Easier
17. **Bones Like That:** Second Storey Window
18. **The Red Propellers:** Joey

SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA TO ACCESS THE PLAYLIST!





image by Michael Jones

# MANDEL

BY PAUL HARPER

**ONE OF THE STANDOUT EVENTS OF 2019, AN ALTOGETHER GOOD YEAR FOR LIVE MUSIC IN STROUD, WAS THE HIDDEN NOTES FESTIVAL – ORGANISED BY OUR OWN ALEX AND ADAM OF GOOD ON PAPER. A HIGHLIGHT IN AN OUTSTANDING PROGRAMME WAS A PERFORMANCE BY A STROUD BASED DUO, COMPOSER AND VIOLINIST EMILY HALL, AND MISHA LAW, WHO PLAYS VIOLIN AND VIOLA AND SINGS, WORKING TOGETHER UNDER THE NAME, MANDEL.**

They originally came together to improvise freely as a means of “offloading” and to offer mutual support for each other’s practices. These regular sessions have grown into a working partnership that both find stimulating and stretching. Improvisation remains as a vital element of their process, but now it is a starting point for a more developed compositional method. They record everything that they play and then review the recordings, picking out ideas and passages of music that become the basic material for more formal compositions and arrangements. It is a method that affords surprises, that encourages openness and generosity, and a degree of letting go. It can be an exercise in mindfulness, but it demands attentiveness and mutual confidence.

Emily and Misha have their own distinctive practices and bring different perspectives to the collaboration. As a composer, Emily has had many prestigious writing commissions and her work has been performed by, amongst others, the London Sinfonietta, LSO, the Brodsky Quartet, and Opera

North. The breadth of her range is evidenced by her music being frequently broadcast on BBC Radios 2, 3, 4 and 6 Music. She often works through collaboration with other musicians and writers. Misha has a deep interest in free improvisation, and this is the starting point for her music making. Following her degree in music, and a career as a touring musician, Misha trained as a Music Therapist and has an active practice in that field. Despite divergences, they both felt that their experiences had run in parallel. Their musical educations, at York and Dartington respectively, had encouraged an experimental approach and they both describe themselves as having done “wacky stuff in our 20’s.” When they began working together they felt that they had arrived simultaneously on the same page.

Apart from the periods of lockdown, they have continued to meet and work throughout the last year – albeit in a socially distanced way. The opportunity to lose themselves in their music must have been a solace, but they have also been busy producing their first EP.



image by James Styler

The EP features two tracks, Nha Trang and a short suite of three contrasting movements. The suite was inspired by the Cotswold hills and the shifting weather over the common that can be seen from Emily's studio window. The first movement is an expansive, romantic evocation of the open tops and green valleys of the Cotswolds; the second has a rhythmic energy that describes the passage of clouds and the rain as it sweeps across the landscape. The final movement is a melancholic meditation on the fragility of nature that carries a sense of yearning and of loss. Nha Trang, was developed from an improvisation that took as it's starting point a large-scale photograph by Andreas Gursky. The photograph shows workers in a factory in Thailand making wicker furniture for IKEA. Typical of Gursky's work, it is rigorously composed and highly detailed, and it emphasises systematised, dehumanizing and environmentally destructive aspects of the modern world. Taken from an elevated position, the crowded and chaotic factory floor is resolved into a kind of order by a series of regularly spaced overhead cables that divide the image horizontally. The music

picks up this organisation with a repeated refrain, and an underlying rhythm, but where the photograph has a kind of objective distance, standing above and bearing silent witness to the scene, Emily and Misha make a more distinctly humane and compassionate response. The music is beautiful and sad.

These pieces have a satisfying compositional completeness to them, but they cleverly retain some sense of their improvised origins. As well as a certain grace and vitality, there is a directness and something conversational in their structure, and there are occasional moments of playfulness that are surely a reflection of Emily and Misha's friendship and their working methods.

These qualities are particularly evident in live performance. Before sitting down to write this piece I was watching a YouTube video of Emily and Misha performing at the Union Chapel in North London. The film captures Emily and Misha's obvious relish in playing together and it made me think about what a hard year 2020 has been for artists, especially those who thrive through collective

endeavour. I am also reminded of what a joy it is to be in the presence of musicians, to be caught up in the act of making music. As we start a new year, with the promise of an end to the pandemic in sight, I am looking forward to two things above all else – to sitting around a table with family and friends, and to taking part in the shared experience of listening to live music. Here's to Hidden Notes 2021!

The recording has been a largely local enterprise, with Emily and Misha being joined on the recording by Doug Mackie on double bass and by the voices of Emma Tilley, Sophie Sterckx and Suki Hutcheson. It was recorded in the Holy Trinity Church by Daniel Inzani (Spindle Ensemble/Tezeta), mixed by David Sheppard and features cover artwork by Dave Bain.

.....  
The EP is set for release on the 8th January 2021 via the renowned Icelandic based label Bedroom Community (**bedroomcommunity.net**) Mandel are currently working towards a full length album and will also be recording a performance for the Record Shop Sessions, a new series presented by



Hidden Notes and Sound Records featuring 20 minute sets by contemporary classical/avant garde artists out of the popular independent record store on Stroud high street. Filmed and edited by Tom Jacob with sound by Daniel Inzani the films are premiered on the Hidden Notes YouTube channel (**hiddennotes.co.uk/recordshopsessions**)

For news, updates and further info follow Mandel on facebook and instagram **@MandelDuo**

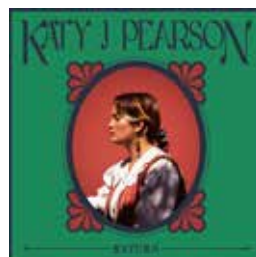
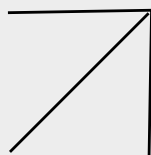
—  
PAUL HARPER IS A LECTURER AND WRITER ON VISUAL ART AND CRAFT

# 2020 MUSIC RELEASES

## OUR ANNUAL ROUNDUP OF ALBUMS AND EP'S RELEASED IN THE LAST YEAR BY STROUD DWELLING MUSICIANS, BANDS & SOLO ARTISTS.

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### **KATY J PEARSON RETURN**

Return symbolises the re-entry of Pearson into music-making after a previous, collaborative project with her brother fell foul of the pressures of a major label record deal and over the course of two-and-a-half years, between her parents' House in Gloucestershire, her Bristol bedroom, and nearby community arts space the island, Pearson honed her craft as a solo artist, learning to rely on her creative instincts, and bringing forth an album just as shaped by the South-West's of England as the rich musical history of America's southern states.

> RELEASED 13/11/20

> [katyjpearson.bandcamp.com](http://katyjpearson.bandcamp.com)



### **THE ONES PENGUIN TOWN**

Thee One's third album, recorded over four sessions at Jim Barr's J&J Studio in Bristol then mixed back in Stroud by Jam Sponge Music. It features guest slots from Jack Page and Marianne Parrish and welcomes fellow Low Chimes alumni Lachlan McLellan as a permanent 'One'.

> RELEASED 01/12/20

> [theones.bandcamp.com](http://theones.bandcamp.com)

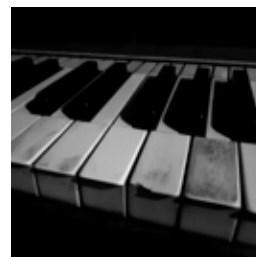


### **FIDEL CUTSTRO TALKING IN DRUMS**

Infectious debut 14 track mixtape from local hip-hop DJ and producer Fidel Cutstro available released as a digital download and limited edition high grade cassette tape. Obvious influences are DJ Shadow and J Dilla but also clearly tells the story of Cutstro himself and his own musical journey.

> RELEASED 16/04/20

> [fidelcutstro.bandcamp.com](http://fidelcutstro.bandcamp.com)

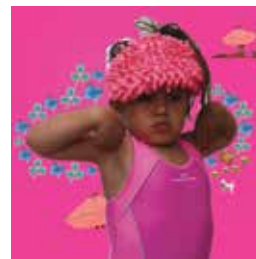


### **SARAH NICOLLS EVERYTHING IN BLACK AND WHITE PT.1 AND PT.2**

Innovative pianist, composer and inventor of the Inside-Out Piano, a sculptural feast of an instrument which stands 2.5m tall, designed to enable 'inside piano' playing. During lockdown she recorded and released two albums of improvised piano pieces: "These albums have been born out of lockdown. I felt the need to be soothed by playing. I'd already decided to make a keys-only album. Things have come together in a simple musical language: this is the kind of music that flows out of me right now."

> RELEASED 24/05/20 and 02/07/20

> [sarahnicolls.bandcamp.com](http://sarahnicolls.bandcamp.com)

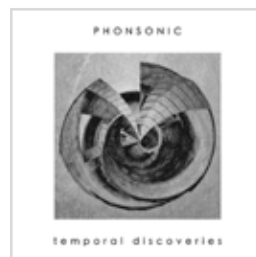


### **MERMAID CHUNKY VEST**

Debut release by experimental music performance duo Mermaid Chunky. Recorded and produced by Capitol K (Flamingods/Snapped Ankles/The Comet Is Coming/Alabaster dePlume/Deerhunter) at the Total Refreshment Centre in London and released via independent record label Faith and Industry.

> RELEASED 06/11/20

> [mermaidchunky.bandcamp.com](http://mermaidchunky.bandcamp.com)



### **PHONSONIC TEMPORAL DISCOVERIES**

On Temporal Discoveries Phonsonic (aka Alexander Carminada) explores how time affects his sense of space, place and being through electronic instruments, acoustic instruments, electroacoustic and field recordings...

> RELEASED 08/01/20

> [phonsonic.bandcamp.com](http://phonsonic.bandcamp.com)





## **ORBURY COMMON** **SUPPERTIME SEANCE**

A four track live EP by the innovative local electronica duo. These four songs were summoned from the spirit world of Orbury Common by means of musical seance, performed live around the old round table. The ghostly, traditional Orbsong was channeled, translated and extracted via various electro acoustic instruments, then beamed out as comprehensible sound....

> **RELEASED** 06/11/20

> [orburycommon.bandcamp.com](http://orburycommon.bandcamp.com)



## **ANDREW HEATH** **THE ALCHEMIST'S MUSE**

The Alchemist's Muse further explores Heath's obsession with minimalism, texture, tone and the detritus that litters our sound field such as radio static or mechanical noises. Clusters of piano notes and guitar drones against warm layers of electronics and treated field recordings, often manipulated with various forms of both tape machines and software to create the finished pieces. Bill Howgego adds a sublime bass clarinet to 'The Alchemist's Muse' and the Romanian born poet, Maria Stadhnik re-voices her work on a completely new version of 'The Garden Reveals Itself'.

> **RELEASED** 11/09/20

> [andrewheath.bandcamp.com](http://andrewheath.bandcamp.com)



## **ARON ATTWOOD** **DOUBLE NEGATIVE**

As if self writing, recording and releasing a 10 track album during the first lockdown wasn't impressive enough Aron Attwood followed Outside just two months later with Double Negative, another 10 track sun drenched and uplifting album further solidifying his strength as a solo artist.

> **RELEASED** 12/07/20

> [aronattwood.bandcamp.com](http://aronattwood.bandcamp.com)



## **THE RED PROPELLERS** **DOUBLE ELVIS**

The follow up to 2019's No Film In The Camera, Double Elvis - released via Stroud based label Rollercoaster Records - features nine songs which comprises the second part of the planned trilogy Under the Shadow. Peace Comes To Shove, the final instalment is written, rehearsed and will be out soon.

> **RELEASED** 020/06/20

> [theredpropellers1.bandcamp.com](http://theredpropellers1.bandcamp.com)



## **ANDREW HEATH** **A TRACE OF PHOSPHOR**

Written and recorded at Andrew's home in Stroud in late 2019 A Trace Of Phosphor features a beautiful soprano saxophone contribution from Lydia Kenny on 'Will the Angels Still Hear Me?' and 'I Sleep Above the Forest'.

> **RELEASED** 01/05/20

> [andrewheath.bandcamp.com](http://andrewheath.bandcamp.com)



## **AMELIA WARNER** **HAVEN EP**

Following 2018's Visitors and her critically acclaimed soundtrack to the film Mary Shelly directed by Haifaa al-Mansour, pianist and composer Amelia Warner released a four track EP. Released via Decca Records (part of the Universal Music Group) Haven is a hauntingly beautiful collection of songs recorded at her home in the Stroud Valleys and also features Mike Lovatt and Dan Newell on trumpet, Richard Watkins on horn, Andy Wood on trombone, Owen Slade on tuba and Mitch Taylor on guitar.

> **RELEASED** 19/06/20

> [ameliawarnermusic.com](http://ameliawarnermusic.com)



## **EMILY BARKER** **A DARK MURMURATION** **OF WORDS**

On her new album, A Dark Murmuration of Words, Emily Barker examines our unconscious choices and unspoken prejudices, and essays the search for meaning in an increasingly loud, social media-driven world. The American writer Emily Dickinson once said that "If you take care of the small things, the big things take care of themselves" - like the starlings in a murmuration, where the movement of each individual bird is related to just seven of its closest neighbours, none of them aware of the mesmerising, fluctuating shapes being created by the flock.

> **RELEASED** 04/09/20

> [emilybarker.bandcamp.com](http://emilybarker.bandcamp.com)



## **ARON ATTWOOD** **OUTSIDE**

A collection of inspiring songs written and recorded during lockdown by multi-instrumentalist Aron Attwood (The Achievers/Albino Tarantino).

> **RELEASED** 16/05/20

> [aronattwood.bandcamp.com](http://aronattwood.bandcamp.com)



## **PHONSONIC** **INSIGHT**

Insight is a collection of tracks that have been created with a more reflective and introspective approach. Working on the sounds for this collection was a process of discovery. The use of field recordings, a 1980's micro cassette recorder and modular synthesis also fulfilled an urge to experiment and explore.

> **RELEASED** 12/06/20

> [phonsonic.bandcamp.com](http://phonsonic.bandcamp.com)



## **SAM SWEENEY** **UNEARTH REPEAT**

Uneath Repeat celebrates a new direction, not only for Sam but for English music. His new band are injecting into the English tradition something that has never been heard before. The music has the groove and swagger of traditional English music with the huge sound, flare, energy and festival spirit of bands coming out of the Celtic and Scandinavian music scenes. Leaving string sections, brass, concertina and harmonium behind, the new band brings together Sam's unique fiddle playing, the acoustic and electric guitars of Jack Rutter (Seth Lakeman, Moore Moss Rutter) and Louis Campbell (National Youth Folk Ensemble), the double bass of Ben Nicholls (Seth Lakeman, Nadine Shah) and the keyboards of Dave Mackay (Art Garfunkel).

> **RELEASED** 27/03/20

> [samsweeney.bandcamp.com](http://samsweeney.bandcamp.com)



## **BLANCMANGE** **MINDSET**

Mindset is the third album to be written and co-produced by Neil Arthur with Bengie (Wrangler/John Foxx And The Maths) at his Memetune studios in Cornwall, following the critically acclaimed Unfurnished Rooms in 2017 and Wanderlust a year later. Since Stephen Luscombe was forced by illness to stop touring or recording after 2011's Blanc Burn, the band's evolution has continued at a rapid pace through a new album almost every year with Arthur at the helm. These days you can hear Blancmange's influence in everything from La Roux to LCD Sound System to Hot Chip and they've have also been reaching new audiences within the dance music scene via collaborations with Kincaid, John Grant, Disco Halal and this year's remixes from Honey Dijon and Roman Flügel on London Records.

> **RELEASED** 05/06/20

> [blancmangemusic.bandcamp.com](http://blancmangemusic.bandcamp.com)



# THE CROWN & SCEPTRE

BY ROB CLUCAS-TOMLINSON  
IMAGES BY CARMEL KING

It's a suitably cold and grey December morning on Horns Road; still, silent, without the hint of birdsong or human chatter. The fog has finally lifted from the heart of the town, but the mist still clings to the hills across the valley, as if mirroring the pandemic which still clings to our everyday lives, joyless and squat, fogging up our plans. At the end of Horns Road, though, is a beacon, an old and cherished public house, The Crown & Sceptre, which has stood here since Victorian times and offers so much more than occasional respite. Many publicans have taken their turn over the years, but now is the time of Rodda Thomas, a more community-spirited, left-leaning good 'un you would do well to find. In normal times his doors would be wide open to let the world in. But these are not normal times, and it's evident from the moment I walk in.

Inside the pub now the chairs are stacked, like the end of day, and the bar is closed and the main door is locked. The lights are off and no music is playing, and as we sit around a table and I fumble with my notes, the quiet pub sighs, as if waiting for the world to begin again. If there was a clock in here, you would hear it, it would be ticking, rhythmically sending you into a melancholy slumber. But this pub once had energy, and I've been privileged to see it, feel it, and to be a part of its warm, rowdy cheer - when tapping feet and the hum of electric guitars made the old floor shake and the heart sing. For now, though, it's been tempered by the virus occupation.

Rodda sits opposite me at the empty table. Genial, pragmatic, but evidently fatigued by this continuing blight on his livelihood, he pulls himself forward and begins to reflect. "By next June, I'd have run this pub for twelve years," he says, with a mixture of pride and disbelief. "I can't say I ever wanted to run a pub, it was never my plan. I fell into it really, but here I am."

Yes, here he is, a hero of the five valleys, telling me tales of his publican's past. And if he fell into it, then he fell in deep! Working his way back, he was five years at the Golden Fleece on Nelson Street and two years at the Woolpack in Slad. Before then it was London, and the Hawley Arms in Camden Town. "It later became Amy Winehouse's local," he says, "and during my time in charge, TimeOut Magazine named it as having the best jukebox in London!"

Buster Bloodvessel drank there too, and the legendary, irreverent Bad Manners frontman formed a long-term friendship with Rodda that led to him performing at the Crown & Sceptre to an appreciative crowd on Fringe weekend a few years back. Ah, the ghosts of pub-times past! For this is a pub well known for its live events, its open-mic evenings and Friday night music, where the eclectic musicians of Stroud and beyond came to play songs while the punters swayed and the beer spilled. There is no music now, however, and we wait for its return.

"When did you first become aware of the impending gloom?" I ask him. "It was January," he says, "when the rumours started. I'd been planning a trip to India, but I just knew - I feared the worst. By March, we already had the shop set up. Lockdown happened on a Friday, and on the Saturday we opened our community store. We've never been properly shut, not for one day during the crisis." Which is something he's proud about, and rightly so. Because this is a pub where community matters, and even in lockdown, it's still doing its bit to provide and support.

As the persistent cold air continues to creep around the outside corners of the pub, whispering ills and doing its worst, nestled within the building's sturdy walls is a curious little shop of hearty edibles where artisan breads, pasties and pies, juices, tins of beans and bottles of beer are all on show, ready to feed the hungry brethren of Bisley Road and Spider Lane, Daisybank, Churchfield Cottages, Bowbridge Lane, and all their tributaries beside. Rodda and his small team - which basically consists of his hard-working son, Ruan, and the equally grafting Katie, (the bar staff are currently on furlough, but will return as soon as things change, and they, too, did their seismic bit for the struggle when the pub reopened temporarily after the first lockdown), have turned their ale house into a convenience store of such delights, the main attraction of which are their gastronomic evening meals or 'home cooked take outs' as Rodda humbly puts it.

"Monday is veggie curry day and Ruby Tuesday is meat," he says, calculating in his head the linear list. "Wednesday is usually beef bourguignon and Thursday is spanakopita filo spinach and feta from Greece." There's a pause while he glances over the menu in his mind. "It's Friday fish pie and Saturday cornish pasties, fresh from the oven, of course. Sunday is meat or veggie roast, with homemade dessert, and that's going down a treat, we sold 40 last Sunday alone!"

Good, honest food from a good, honest pub, what's not to like? Because there is so much to like about this pagan place, it's a little gem at the far end of town, a hobbit-hole of soul where listeners come and story-tellers are welcome. But with any quirky haven not part of the mainstream, its fragility is clear and its position precarious, not least now in these uncertain times, when the country is in lockdown and the storm is still raging. What does a post-Covid future hold for the pub? I ask this question in my head at first, because I have feared asking it aloud. But, with courage or tactlessness, I cannot work out which, I voice it nonetheless.

And here Rodda becomes emotional. It's been a long pandemic, and we're all a little exhausted by it, a little humbled, a little defeated. But for someone whose purpose, whose entire way of life, is to create a snug beneath his roof, a steadfast retreat for people to gather, huddle, gabble and drink in magnificent human



belonging, the virus has been particularly cruel. "I'd love to reopen in spring," he chokes. "but I'm not sure we will. I want my locals back at the bar. But will it ever be the same?"

He isn't certain, and he fears for the pub's future. Everything local seems to be hanging in the balance right now. It's the same in all towns, of course, but Stroud's a bit special. I'm not talking about the gentrified coffee shops, the hip farmer's market or the historic canal being carved up and beautified for civic pride, but rather the independent businesses that bind its many communities. Because it's them that make this old town tick, it's them that keep its fabric tight, as their community's ancestors once dyed fabric red upon the hills. But fabric can easily fray, if it isn't looked after.

"We have an annual pickle off," Rodda says, reeling off the eclectic list of events he has proudly hosted, "where people bring their pickles to taste and we hand out certificates to the winners. There's also the chilli cook off and a barbecue competition." "Don't forget the dog show," Katie adds from afar. She's been listening in and she's keen to ensure that nothing gets forgotten.

"We had seventy-four dogs at last year's show," Rodda nods. "And there's the firework display on Bonfire Night and the knit and natter women who met up here weekly until the virus struck."

The women came to knit and natter. Will they again? Will we continue to remember and support our local shops and pubs when normal life returns next year? Without them, our communities may well begin to unravel, as quickly as the pandemic will disappear from our concerns, allowing the faceless conglomerates to move in instead, and pick away at our collective identity, and leave us purely individual, and alone.

Personally, I think Rodda will make it through, and the pub, for sure, will continue to serve the local community, post virus. Because when the music returns and going out is once again the new staying in, all of his dedication to the people in his patch will have earned him their loyalty and they'll drink to his health. And anyway, who among us can say no to a pickle off on a Sunday evening?

For news and further updates follow the Crown & Sceptre on facebook @HatandStick and visit the pubs website at [crownandsceptrestroud.com](http://crownandsceptrestroud.com)

ROB CLUCAS-TOMLINSON IS A WRITER AND QUIZ WRITER WHO ALSO GOES UNDER THE NAME MR. BOBBINGTON. HE HAS A FREE QUIZ SITE - BOBBINGTON'S BAFFLER! - BAFFLER.CO.UK - AND HE HAS BEEN HOSTING REGULAR ZOOM QUIZZES THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC.



# THE THUNDER MUTTERS

BY JUDITH GUNN  
IMAGES BY EMILIE SANDY

How did that lockdown project go then?... Me neither... Adam Horovitz and Becky Dellow, on the other hand, they started a podcast.

The Thunder Mutters podcast combines the talents of Becky as a musician and Adam as a poet. The podcast has as its focus the poetry of John Clare who was first published in 1820. His book, *The Shepherd's Calendar*, provides the themes and focus of the podcast (somehow the idea of counting the days of 2020, two hundred years later is very fitting).

"We did come up with the idea before the pandemic" says Becky. "I wanted a product that I could showcase my music through, almost like an artist would be able to show pictures. I couldn't work out, other

than by live performance, or the great expense of recording an album, how I could do that." The idea remained an idea for a while, but the pandemic put it higher up the agenda. "We just didn't explore it because we didn't need to, we kept ourselves busy with literary festivals, with gigs at the museum, independent one off shows."

The pub circuit, village halls and gigs were a source of performance and participation for both Adam and Becky. "I first met Becky when I was working in The Golden Fleece pub" that was back in the 1990s. Adam grew up in a family of poets "in a thumb offshoot of the Slad Valley." His father Michael Horovitz is a founding father of performance poetry alongside poets like Adrian Mitchell, Christopher Logue and the Liverpool poets. Adam's mother, Frances, was a poet and broadcaster, often reading poetry on BBC Radio 3. "I started out as a

performance poet like my father". Adam explains. "I particularly love reading aloud, which is why I work with Becky. A combination of music and poetry is something that excites me." It is not surprising then, that a podcast that combined poetry and performance seemed like an ideal vehicle in a pandemic.

"It started in April - Becky came to me in January or February and said 'shall we do this?'" Adam continues. "Then suddenly, with the restrictions, we said okay but we will have to learn how to do this on the hoof. It's meant it's been quite tricky because we are recording remotely and it made the editing process somewhat more difficult because of the interference of Dalek noises and so on."

Internet vagaries aside, the podcast was ready to go, but why did they choose to focus on John Clare? John Clare was a Romantic poet, and 2020 was the bicentenary of



the publication of his first book of poems which chronicled the rustic year in poetry. The book was an immediate success. Clare became famous, a part of the trendy clique of Romantic poets that included John Keats and Percy Shelley. But Clare didn't find fame easy. The hustle and bustle of notoriety and the frenetic pace of London (it was a better year than 2020) was not to his taste. Clare preferred the rural pace of the fields of Northamptonshire, the source of his inspiration and the succour for his life. By 1827 sales were down and he returned to that gentler pace.

"When Becky suggested Clare" says Adam "I was excited because the last book I had put out was a collection based on six pasture farms that I had stayed on, and wrote about *The Soil Never Sleeps* so I just jumped at the chance and was happy to embed myself and absorb myself more into the writing of Clare."

Becky's training is in music. Her instrument is the fiddle and her PhD in English folk tune manuscripts, particularly those compiled by people like John Clare, who was not only a poet but a musician. "I was looking at tune books from the nineteenth century," says Becky. "Fiddlers' tune books, the kind for amateur musicians, basically because my great-great grandfather had transcribed one. He was a fiddler as well." While Adam's family is borne of poetry, Becky's family is a musical one, her grandfather played alongside Laurie Lee on Sunday afternoons.

The Thunder Mutters, the title of the podcast, is a John Clare poem from *The Shepherd's Calendar* read by Adam. The tunes were collected by Clare and taken from his manuscripts and played by Becky, along with

other tunes of her choice. "I love a good tune, it doesn't matter whether it's English, Scottish, Irish or Welsh, but I seem to home in on Irish tunes. They seem to do something to my soul, they make my heart beat faster, it's almost like therapy".

The original idea was to have a podcast once a fortnight, one episode dedicated to Clare, while other poets including Keats and Shelley are featured elsewhere (Episodes 2 and 4). The podcast has invited contributions from modern poets, contributions which have included the likes of Philip Gross, Ian Duhig and Ella Duffy, while Stroud-based poet Elvis McGonnagall offers his own interpretation of *The Thunder Mutters*.

Becky and Adam are open to responses and submissions from all who want to contribute. "We were very keen that it wasn't just a one way podcast" says Becky. "That it wasn't just us broadcasting to people. We wanted there to be a flow to and fro and so that's where the idea of the submissions came from." Episodes 6 and 8 are full of responses from poets and musicians who have made contributions and more are welcome, not just from the famous and established and not just poetry. We love tunes. People have written their own tunes in response to Clare's poetry, or there are tunes from his tune books that people are playing". December's (Episode 13) edition featured a PhD student using work from her MA to set two of Clare's poems to music.

The podcast just about pays for itself through donations via [ko-fi.com/thethundermutters](https://ko-fi.com/thethundermutters) and its audience is international. There are listeners across the world, including the curator of the John Clare cottage in Helpston, who has linked to the

podcast.


Lockdown aside, both Adam and Becky have additional projects, looking to a better year in 2021. "My next book comes out sometime next year: *Love and Other Fairy Tales* with Indigo Dreams Press and before that I've got a poem on the album *We Come from the Sun* which is composed by Cerys Matthews and the Hidden Orchestra, which is due to be released in January."

Meanwhile Becky has taken advantage of one-to-one masterclasses from traditional Irish fiddle player, Martin Hayes, and Stroud based English folk fiddler, Sam Sweeney, to hone her skills in order to record an album with Lukas Drinkwater, due out next year.

"*The Shepherd's Calendar* will finish in March" says Adam "and we need to think about what we will do next. There's plenty to do and plenty that would be interesting and relevant to all this..."

The Thunder Mutters podcast is available on all streaming platforms including Audible, Spotify and Apple Podcasts. All previous episodes are also available via [the-thunder-mutters.captivate.fm](https://thethundermutters.captivate.fm) For news, updates and further information follow the podcast on facebook [@thethundermutters](https://www.facebook.com/thethundermutters) and twitter [@ThunderMutters](https://twitter.com/ThunderMutters)

JUDITH GUNN IS A FRUSTRATED SCREENWRITER AND THE AUTHOR OF *DOSTOYEVSKY: A LIFE OF CONTRADICTION*. SHE HAS TWO STORIES IN THE LATEST EDITION OF *STROUD SHORT STORIES* AND IS THE CREATOR OF ONLINE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT AND BOOKS. SHE DOES THIS WHILE TUTORING STUDENTS ONLINE AND WRITING THE GREAT NOVEL. [JUDITHGUNN.COM](https://www.judithgunn.com)



# THE THUNDER MUTTERS

## JOHN CLARE

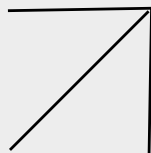
The thunder mutters louder & more loud  
 With quicker motion hay folks ply the rake  
 Ready to burst slow sails the pitch black cloud  
 & all the gang a bigger haycock make  
 To sit beneath—the woodland winds awake  
 The drops so large wet all thro' in an hour  
 A tiney flood runs down the leaning rake  
 In the sweet hay yet dry the hay folks cower  
 & some beneath the waggon shun the shower.

# 2020 BOOKS

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### MANIFESTO BY DALE VINCE



How one maverick entrepreneur took on UK energy... and won. In this book, he shares his single-minded and uniquely purpose-orientated approach to business, with lessons learned from experience that will speak

to any fledgling entrepreneur. This is the story of a man whose unwavering mission to help save the environment has driven him all the way to the top, and a powerful manifesto for anyone who wants to change the world.

> RELEASED 26/11/20

> PUBLISHER Ebury Press

### BENEATH A STARLESS SKY BY TESSA HARRIS



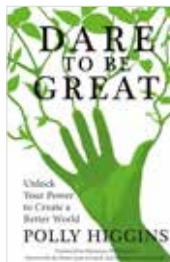
Munich 1930: Smoke filled the air. Lilli Sternberg's quickening heart sounded an alarm as she rounded the street corner. Lifting her gaze to the rooftops, a roaring blaze of thick flames engulfed the side of the building and

joined the stars to fill the black sky. Her father's shop was no more. Lilli Sternberg longs to be a ballet dancer. But outside the sanctuary of the theatre, her beloved city is in chaos and Munich is no longer a place for dreams. An absolutely gripping and emotional historical fiction novel about love, courage and betrayal for fans of My Name is Eva and The Woman of War.

> RELEASED 09/12/20

> PUBLISHER HQ Digital

### DARE TO BE GREAT BY POLLY HIGGINS



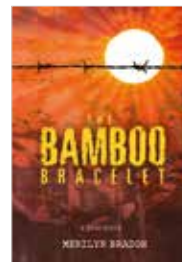
This is a book unlike any other. It does not tell you what you must do, it does not set out a guide for the 10 definitive steps to becoming great by next Thursday. Dare To Be Great is both a playful, inspirational

conversation and a heartfelt, lived call, daring each one of us and our society as a whole to become truly great. Celebrated Earth lawyer Polly Higgins was a luminary in the environmental justice movement as she worked to Stop Ecocide across the globe. She was a beacon for how to live the brave, bold lives that, at our best, we imagine for ourselves. This book shares insights from her own remarkable journey, inspiring us to recognise and step into a greatness within - that is not about grandiosity but something far more exciting: aligning with our unique purpose in service of a better world.

> RELEASED 17/04/20

> PUBLISHER Flint

### THE BAMBOO BRACELET BY MERILYN BRASON



It is 8th December 1941. Fresh from England and six months pregnant, Ronny Rynd has left her husband to holiday in the suffocating heat of Manila in the mountain setting of Baguio.

Following the surprise bombing of Pearl Harbour, she finds herself caught up in the Japanese attack on the Philippine Islands. Alone and vulnerable, this ordinary woman caught in the wrong place at the wrong time must learn how to survive. Years of incarceration in prisoner of war camps loom as Ronny struggles to bring up her baby, living in constant fear in hostile and primitive conditions. Against this background unlikely friendships blossom to sustain her. Desperate to be a family, the ever-feisty Ronny must confront the dangerous Japanese authorities for permission to be united with her husband, imprisoned in the overcrowded city camp in Manila. But conditions there present different horrors and further heartbreak. A tribute to the remarkable men and women who created their own functioning society within their camps, this book displays their inventiveness, determination and unexpected humour. It is a story of family life lived in spite of the brutal regime of years in prisoner of war camps...

> RELEASED 17/03/20

> PUBLISHER Matador

### COMPLETE AND UTTER CULT! BY ELVIS MCGONAGALL



Stand-up poet, comedian and walking shortbread tin Elvis McGonagall returns with Complete and Utter Cult!. This new collection of satirical verse captures Elvis' ongoing futile exasperation

at the dismal trajectory of our post-truth world as it trundles along the primrose path to Beelzebub's bottomless pit. Fake news and COVID-19. Organic novichok and Piers Morgan. Yes, the good ship lollipop is sailing down the shitter. Climb aboard with Elvis as he bellows into the void of our diseased, burning planet and we all drift towards a giant melting iceberg. Complete and Utter Cult! tackles everything from the pernicious effects of the patriarchy to disappearing rainforests via Brexit milkshakes and a pandemic. Yes, all the feel-good hits are here, fully annotated with the innermost thoughts from the canyons of Elvis' mind as he banged away on his typewriter at The Graceland Caravan Park. And there's a love poem.

> RELEASED 22/10/20

> PUBLISHER Burning Eye Books

## **THE MOVE** BY FELICITY EVERETT



New house. Fresh start. Same husband. Can you paint over the cracks in a marriage? Karen has packed up her life and is making The Move. She's on her way to the idyllic country cottage which her husband has

painstakingly renovated for her. They're escaping the London bustle and the daily grind. And they're escaping their past. A fresh start in a beautiful, peaceful village. It will be different here, right? But something is awry. The landscape, breathtaking by day, is eerie by night. The longed-for peace and solitude is stifling. And the house, so artfully put together by her husband, has a strange vibe. Now that Karen is cut off from her old friends and family, she can't help wondering if her husband has plans of his own, and that history might be repeating itself. From the author of the bestselling *The People at Number 9* comes a dark and redemptive tale of a rural dream gone wrong...

> RELEASED 26/10/20

> PUBLISHER HQ

## **THE LITTLE LIBRARY CHRISTMAS** BY KATE YOUNG



A festive cookbook from award-winning food writer Kate Young. The perfect Christmas gift for cooks and bibliophiles alike. The Little Library Christmas is a collection of 50 festive recipes from

Kate Young, the Little Library cook, including 20 favourites and 30 brand new creations. From edible gifts and cocktail party catering, to the big day itself and ideas for your leftovers, this book will guide you through the Christmas period with meals, treats, tipples and - of course - plenty of reading recommendations. With beautiful photographs throughout and in a gorgeous, giftable format, this is the perfect book to put under your tree at Christmas.

> RELEASED 01/10/20

> PUBLISHER Anima

## **STROUD** BY RUPERT RUSSELL



Stroud is a compact cultural soup of stories waiting to be told. Rupert's photographs take you under the skin of the people in this unique town, at times part of the picture-perfect Cotswolds it occupies and at times set very apart.

> RELEASED 02/11/20

> PUBLISHER The History Press

## **MISS BENSON'S BEETLE** BY RACHEL JOYCE



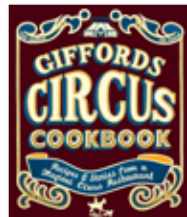
It is 1950. In a devastating moment of clarity, Margery Benson abandons her dead-end job and advertises for an assistant to accompany her on an expedition. She is going to travel to the other side

of the world to search for a beetle that may or may not exist. Enid Pretty, in her unlikely pink travel suit, is not the companion Margery had in mind. And yet together they will be drawn into an adventure that will exceed every expectation. They will risk everything, break all the rules, and at the top of a red mountain, discover their best selves. This is a story that is less about what can be found than the belief it might be found; it is an intoxicating adventure story but it is also about what it means to be a woman and a tender exploration of a friendship that defies all boundaries.

> RELEASED 23/07/20

> PUBLISHER Doubleday

## **GIFFORDS CIRCUS COOKBOOK** BY NELL GIFFORD AND OLS HALAS



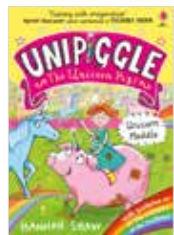
Giffords Circus has been touring the south of England every summer since 2000. It is a traditional village circus with a uniquely British flavour, blended with

extraordinary acts from all over the world. Their restaurant Circus Sauce is headed by chef Ols Halas and seats circus goers in a beautifully decorated tent on site. This extraordinary book is a celebration of the food that brings the circus and its audience together, alongside the story of the circus itself and its vibrant community. Full of colour, personalities, stories and images of the circus and its slow journey through the English summer countryside, the book's 100 recipes are nothing but delicious, joyful and hearty.

> RELEASED 26/03/20

> PUBLISHER Quadrille Publishing

## **UNIPIGGLE THE UNICORN PIG** BY HANNAH SHAW



Welcome to Twinkleland Kingdom, where everything is 100% perfect. Except Princess Pea... Today's the day the princess has to choose her own perfect unicorn at the Royal Unicorn Parade. All is well

until the muddy Unipiggle appears and creates a very big muddle. It looks like Princess Pea has met her perfect match...

> RELEASED 06/02/20

> PUBLISHER Usborne Publishing

## **THE HUFFALOTS** BY EVE COY



When Mom wakes up her Huffalots, nothing is right--they don't like their clothes, their breakfast is yucky, and they just don't

like each other. When one of them trips, the other offers a hug, and they magically transform into Huffalittles, then Lovealittles, and finally - with a big cuddle - they become Lovealots. But it's been a long day and Mom is now grumpy and tired. Good thing the Lovealots know exactly what to do...A gorgeous picture book that explores how moods change through the day and what we can do to help others feel better.

> RELEASED 01/09/20

> PUBLISHER Andersen Press

## **MEESHA MAKES FRIENDS** BY TOM PERCIVAL



A warm and affectionate look at the joys and difficulties of making and keeping friends, relating to others, and finding your place in the world. Wonderfully empowering and emotionally

resonant, Tom Percival's Big Bright Feelings series is the perfect springboard for conversations about mental and emotional health, positive self-image, building self-confidence and managing feelings. Every child's bookshelf should contain his books.

> RELEASED 09/07/20

> PUBLISHER Bloomsbury

## **THE CODES OF LOVE** BY HANNAH PERSAUD



Ryan and Emily appear to have it all, successful jobs, a beautiful house and the secret to a happy marriage. A secret that involves certain 'rules'. Beneath the surface trouble is brewing in the shape of Ada. Whimsical,

free spirited and beholden to no-one, she represents the freedom Emily's been striving for and the escape that Ryan didn't know he wanted. As they are separately (and secretly) drawn to her, things start to unravel. The rules are still the rules, to be taken seriously, not to be broken....

> RELEASED 05/03/20

> PUBLISHER Muswell Press

## **THE HEATWAVE** BY KATE RIORDAN



Elodie was beautiful. Elodie was smart. Elodie was troubled. Elodie is dead. In Provence, under a sweltering sun, Sylvie returns to the crumbling family home of La Reverie with her youngest daughter Emma.

Yet every corner of the house is haunted by the memories of Elodie, her first child - memories she has tried to forget, but whose long-ago death the villagers certainly haven't. As temperatures rise, and forest fires rage through the French countryside, memories of Elodie spread further through Sylvie's mind... Because there's something Sylvie's been hiding about what happened to Elodie all those summers ago. And it could change everything.

> RELEASED 03/09/20

> PUBLISHER Penguin

## **THE MISSING PIECES OF NANCY MOON** BY SARAH STEELE



To unravel that long-lost summer, she had to follow the thread...Florence Connelly is broken hearted. Her marriage has collapsed under the weight of the loss she shares with her husband, and

her beloved grandmother has just died. Even the joy she found in dressmaking is gone. But things change when Flo opens a box of vintage 1960s dress patterns found inside her grandmother's wardrobe. Inside each pattern packet is a fabric swatch, a postcard from Europe and a photograph of a mysterious young woman, Nancy Moon, wearing the hand-made dress. Flo discovers that Nancy was a distant relation who took the boat train to Paris in 1962 and never returned. With no one to stay home for, Flo decides to follow Nancy's thread. She unravels an untold story of love and loss in her family's past. And begins to stitch the pieces of her own life back together.

> RELEASED 06/08/20

> PUBLISHER Headline Review

# HELEN FOX

BY LORNA JENKINS

**SEEING A PORTRAIT BEING CREATED FROM A BLANK PIECE OF PAPER IS A MIND-BLOWING EXPERIENCE. WHICH IS WHY SKY ARTS PORTRAIT ARTIST OF THE YEAR IS ONE OF MY FAVOURITE PROGRAMMES; THE ARTISTS' ABILITY TO CAPTURE THE CELEBRITY SITTERS IN AN ARRAY OF DIFFERENT STYLES IN JUST FOUR SHORT HOURS NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME.**



If seeing it is exhilarating, imagine taking part. It was a scenario local artist Helen Fox played over in her head a few times after she got the call. "My phone rang when I was in the shower. A London number. I called back straight away and didn't catch the company name. They told me the woman who called was on the phone and would call me back. 'Sorry who am I calling again?', 'Sky Vaults Productions, we film Sky Portrait Artist of The Year'." Although obviously delighted, Helen wasn't an avid watcher of the programme beforehand: "I don't actually have a TV, I know, bit odd. But I was obviously aware of the programme so binge watched it round a friend's house when I heard I'd been selected."

Helen entered her self portrait in February, along with a second work she finished within hours of the entry deadline. "There was also the option to enter a third artwork. So I added my pen and ink drawing of a what I coined my 'strategic banana'. Even if you doubt your ability, always try to be memorable," she explains.

Sky called the next day. "I had been selected for the competition heats. Over the next 24 hours I went through stages of being thrilled, delusional (imaginary conversations with Stephen Mangan [presenter of the show] for starters), momentarily in denial and then in sheer morbid fear."

If you've never seen the programme, it's set up is essentially a few artists selected from thousands of entries around the UK, both amateur and professional, who then gather in a room (often Battersea Arts Centre) to paint/

draw/ lino print a celebrity sitter, in four hours. The pieces then get whittled down by esteemed judges: independent curator Kathleen Soriano (formerly of the Royal Academy and having worked with the likes of Anselm Kiefer); brilliant artist Tai-Shan Scheirenborg; and art expert Kate Bryan (who previously led the art fair Art15). "They've made art a spectator sport, as nerve-racking as that sounds it's actually brilliant," Helen explains.

Helen practiced a lot, creating more than 40 portraits before she travelled to London for filming. But there was a problem, Helen's usual style is incredibly detailed realism. Her initial self-portrait took 30 hours. "With different techniques and a heck of a lot of practice, I whittled it down to three and a half hours. I might appear a bit gimmicky with drawing on black paper with white charcoal but it's just a time saving method."

Another tricky part of the programme is that the artists never know who their celebrity sitter is until they stride into the studio. "Sir Trevor Macdonald was the sitter in my group," Helen says. "He was extraordinary, and a relief to me in many ways. Firstly, I knew who he was (portraiture is tricky if you have no idea who you're drawing), secondly, he most definitely wasn't a beautiful woman, for some reason, possibly Freudian, I struggle with the aesthetic female form."

As well as being judged, only having four hours and changing her entire technique for the competition, Helen also had to handle being filmed throughout the whole experience.





“My brain did have the most unhelpful habit of turning into minestrone the moment a camera was pointed at me and I was expected to form complete sentences. Luckily the Sky editing team weaved some magic and I appeared coherent and almost normal,” she jokes. “All in all it was an exhilarating experience, one I’m not likely to forget in a hurry, and has done wonders for improving my art and has even inspired me to start painting. So, in a nutshell, if you need a portrait fast, don’t panic!”

Sound advice from the artist, who creates portraits as well as abstract and still life works in a variety of mediums. Originally from Gloucester, Helen has been in Stroud for more than three years. “The way I describe Stroud to others is it’s a mixture of Camden and Brighton in the middle of the Cotswolds. Such a brilliant place, for a small town we seem to be teeming with creatives; poets, musicians, actors, authors, artists, you name it we’ve got them!”

I ask her how has the artistic community pulled together during lockdown? “It takes more than a pandemic to stop Stroud! So many initiatives were going on to keep us busy. I had a major distraction anyway with preparing for this competition but I joined up with a group called the Anti Detachment Society as they were doing a fundraiser, Portraits for PPE. I think there was a strong need for people to feel useful in some shape or form.”

“Quite simply art kept me sane!”

Series 7 of Sky Arts Portrait Artist of the Year is out now and you can catch Helen in Episode 2. For further examples of Helen’s work visit [helenfoxart.com](https://www.helenfoxart.com) and follow her on instagram [@helenfoxart](https://www.instagram.com/helenfoxart)

—  
LORNA JENKINS IS AN EDITOR AND FREELANCE JOURNALIST FROM STROUD. SHE ALSO PAINTS AND SELLS HER WORK DURING STROUD OPEN STUDIOS AND IN MADE IN STROUD. INSTAGRAM: [@LORNAPAINTSANDWRITES](https://www.instagram.com/LORNAPAINTSANDWRITES)

# ARTLIFT

## PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AND LONG-TERM HEALTH CONDITIONS CAN NOW SELF-REFER FOR FREE ART COURSES WITH ARTLIFT.



Lockdown has been extremely tough for all of us, but particularly those who struggle with depression and anxiety, long-term health conditions like chronic pain or ME, or who are shielding due to cancer treatment. Although the vaccine offers light at the end of the tunnel, this has been a long, cold, lonely winter for many.

Artlift is a local creative health charity offering a chance to get creative with people who care. This talented team of trained and experienced artists has now been providing arts on prescription for over 10 years.

Back in 2004, Dr Simon Opher, a GP in Dursley, noticed that a lot of his patients were coming to see him with health problems that were social or emotional as opposed to medical. So, he engaged an 'artist in residence' at the surgery and began referring patients to take part in creative activities. He noticed that surgery visits reduced and there were significant improvements in their mental health.

The Arts Council and Gloucestershire County Council then funded a partnership called Arts for Health, and Artlift placed artists in fifteen GP, hospital, and mental health settings. The project was evaluated by a team of researchers from the University of the West of England. This evaluation laid the foundations for future evidence-gathering.

In 2013, Artlift became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and continued to offer alternatives or additions to drug therapy for patients with a range of health issues. The University of Gloucestershire carried out a qualitative evaluation which built on their 2011 and 2012 evaluations. Within two years, the expertise of the team was recognised with funding by NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to provide Arts on Prescription in nine community and primary care settings across Gloucestershire for people living with mental health conditions.

The foundations are laid and now anyone registered with a doctor in Gloucestershire can be prescribed a FREE 10-week art course to support their health and wellbeing. Throughout this time, Artlift has worked tirelessly with the University of Gloucestershire to gather the evidence for the health benefits of this programme. Recently, COVID has created a barrier to access so the charity has opened the booking process and is now offering self-referral and delivering all their sessions

safely online, or through the post and/or telephone for those unable to access the internet.

Participants are guided by a trained artist as they explore creative writing, photography, printmaking, graffiti, drawing, and painting with others in the same boat. No skill or talent in art is needed – this is just a chance to take inspiration from the world around them, share experiences, make new friends, focus on something positive and process thoughts. In the words of a previous participant, 'I have been really enjoying it, a lot more than I thought I would. I zone out for two hours and come downstairs calmer and smiling after the Zoom sessions.'

Susie Walker, a local Stroud artist, who leads some of the courses, explains: 'People often come to Artlift with low confidence because of life-changing health issues. As artists, we are not therapists - we just create a supportive space where we show them that we all have creativity to tap into, whatever our experiences. We see how simple creative tasks build confidence and skills as we share ideas. After gently holding people, it is so exciting to hear that they are drawing, painting, or making every day. Some are even selling work, heading to art college, or running classes. I am really inspired by the change that creativity can bring to our lives.' Funded by MacMillan Cancer Support, Susie's next course, Flourish, is for people going through cancer treatment or living with cancer and runs every Monday afternoon, 1-3pm, 22 February 2021 to 3 May 2021.

Cath Wilkins, Executive Director of Artlift, wants more people to understand the transformative power of creativity: 'At Artlift, we have hard evidence that art can change lives. Arts on Prescription enables people to make connections with others, and to shift their perspective, supporting their wider wellbeing and mental health. We know there are people out there who could benefit and are delighted to bring down barriers to access to our services through self-referral.'

So, if you are registered with a doctor in Gloucestershire and face mental health challenges, or long-term health conditions like chronic pain, ME, or cancer and in need of a lift at this difficult time, you will be able to find a course that inspires you via [artlift.org](http://artlift.org) or contact 03000 200102 or [referrals@artlift.org](mailto:referrals@artlift.org) to book in.

**MAY 2021**  
21<sup>ST</sup> - 23<sup>RD</sup>



# STROUD FESTIVAL OF FOOD & DRINK

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# ART LISTINGS

## GALLERY PANGOLIN

SAT 9TH JAN - 27TH FEB

### New Year Mix

Gallery Pangolin are ringing in the New Year with a mix of bronze and silver sculpture, sculptors' jewellery, limited edition prints and unique drawings by regular gallery artists and some less familiar names.

[gallery-pangolin.com](http://gallery-pangolin.com)

## IMAGINE THERAPEUTIC ARTS

WEDS 13TH JAN - WEDS 24TH MAR

### Art of Ageing Group

If joining from home, you will need a computer, tablet or smartphone, with a camera+mic. Art materials can be delivered if needed. In the sessions, there will be facilitated process-oriented artistic activities, biographical conversations and some creative writing. Join us and share what it is like to be growing old in the current times. Working creatively with nature and with stories, both personal and archetypal, exploring memories, wishes and open questions, within a multicultural environment. The intention is to maintain our spirit young, to value old age, to see a long life as a gift to share, by developing our imagination. Please note that in the current situation we can accept limited numbers of members (max 6-8) in the studio. Visit our dedicated page for further guidelines on the precautions we are currently taking to help slow the spread of coronavirus. Online group: 9:30am-12pm/In Studio group: 10am-12:30pm Payment on a sliding scale: £30-£20 / session, or £270-£180 / in advance for 10 sessions

WEDS 13TH JAN - WEDS 24TH MAR

### Children Art Club for 9-13 Year Olds

A studio space for children to explore a variety of themes, facilitated by Anne Tandree, therapeutic arts practitioner. Different art media will be used to encourage self-expression in a supportive and inspiring environment. 4-5:30pm £135/£110(concs) for ten sessions. The first session can be taken as a taster (£15).

THURS 14TH JAN - THURS 25TH MAR

### An Imaginative Journey: Myths, Symbols and Stories

Rediscover and connect to our creative past by taking an alternative Journey, with Robin R James. We will be seeking inspiration from tales and legends as depicted throughout ancient history and the craft of mosaic. Explore these fascinating stories from around the world. Suitable for both beginners and those with some experience. 7-9pm £230/£210(concs) for ten sessions

[imagine-therapeutic-arts.co.uk](http://imagine-therapeutic-arts.co.uk)

## LANSDOWN HALL

WEDS 13TH - MON 18TH

### We Three

To misquote Plato. The wonderful work of these three artists will give wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and joy to the universe. Don't miss this unique Exhibition. Weds 11am-7pm/Thurs - Mon 11am - 4pm

[lansdownhall.org](http://lansdownhall.org)

## THE MUSEUM IN THE PARK

TUES 25TH AUG - TBC

### Theo Deproost: Lost In Time

An exhibition of photography exploring the secrets of the Museum's stores. Theo Deproost is a still-life and landscape photographer based in London. He grew up in Stroud and has fond memories of visiting the Museum when it was still in Lansdown. Since 2017, he has been exploring the museum's stored collection and taking photographs, with the aim of sharing some of its weird and wonderful (and usually hidden) artefacts with the wider public. Book your visit online or call 01453 763394.

[museuminthepark.org.uk](http://museuminthepark.org.uk)

## STROUD AND STONEHOUSE TRAIN STATION

DEC - TBA

### Dan Guthrie: UJ Remix

Dan Guthrie's exhibition UJ Remix, a collaboration with Creative Sustainability originally due to take place in March and featured in the August issue of Good On Paper has now been given the go ahead. Guthrie's 2019 film album, refreshed explored whether traditional British iconography can be used to represent a modern multicultural nation. A selection of images from the animation at the core of the film - a montage of digitally scanned Ankara fabrics, popular in Black and diaspora communities and printed in the colours of the Union Jack - will be exhibited as large format individual prints for closer examination on the platforms of Stroud and Stonehouse railway stations. This work forms a series of exhibitions by local people at Stroud and Stonehouse railway stations. If you have an idea for an exhibition contact Hannah McDonnell: [hannah@cscic.org](mailto:hannah@cscic.org)

[cscic.org](http://cscic.org)

## THE SUB ROOMS

MON 9TH NOV - SAT 16TH JAN

### Everything Is Light

Everything is Light is a fantastic family attraction featuring a maze of illuminated tunnels and hidden rooms bathed in colour - all from the unbridled imagination of Jack Wimperis. Ticket slots will give visitors entry to the event for an hour, visitors are asked to arrive no more than 10 minutes before their time slots to avoid queues. A limited number of additional slots

will be released with special intimate performances, from world-class performers. See website for times, tickets and further info...

[thesubrooms.co.uk](http://thesubrooms.co.uk)

## NEW BREWERY ARTS CIRENCESTER

SAT 16TH

### Printing With Leaves with Clare Walsh

Using real leaves, the heat press, and thermofax screens, create beautiful unique fabric designs with a combination of printing methods. A day of textile exploration and creativity. You will produce samples that can be used as art work or incorporated into sewing projects. No experience necessary. 10am-4pm £90

SAT 23RD

### Introduction to Lino Printing with Beth Jenkins

For absolute beginners, or those who haven't cut any lino for a very long time, this is a perfect way to start. Using easy to cut lino, you will learn how to design, and cut your own original block, and how to print it on paper, in a single colour.

We will look at a variety of techniques from other artists so that you can see a number of ways to make an image. You will receive guidance and encouragement at every stage of the process and you should end the day with a good knowledge of how to make further linocuts in a single colour. 10am-4pm £90

SAT 30TH

### Monoprinting with Christine Felche

Monoprinting is a painterly way of using printmaking to extend and transform your drawings. As a method it means that no two prints will be the same; it is a spontaneous method combining printmaking, drawing and painting. You will learn techniques that you can then use at home to experiment with mark making and textured materials. You will be working with an A4 plate to create black and white, and colour one off art works. There will be an opportunity to use the etching press to extend your mono printing. 10am-4pm £90

[newbreweryarts.org.uk](http://newbreweryarts.org.uk)

## FILM

## ELECTRIC PICTUREHOUSE WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE

SAT 2ND - TBC

### Wonder Woman 1984

Diana Prince lives quietly among mortals in the vibrant, sleek 1980s -- an era of excess driven by the pursuit of having it all. Though she's come into her full powers, she maintains a low profile by curating ancient artifacts, and only performing heroic acts incognito. But soon, Diana will have to muster all of her strength, wisdom and courage as she squares off against Maxwell Lord and the Cheetah, a villainess who possesses

superhuman strength and agility. [wottoncinema.com](http://wottoncinema.com)

## SPOKEN WORD/ LITERATURE

## PREMA ARTS CENTRE ULEY

MON 25TH JAN - MON 29TH MAR

### Writer's Group

A chance to come together with a supportive group of writers. Meet monthly to share your work, get advice, meet other writers. Creative writing tutor Sarah Erskine will lead the group, offer feedback and help confidence and support you in your writing. The perfect place to find a community of writers to explore ideas and techniques with. 7-9pm £27/£26concs

[prema.org.uk](http://prema.org.uk)

## NEW BREWERY ARTS CIRENCESTER

SAT 16TH

### Modern Calligraphy with Emma Barnes

During the session, key modern calligraphy basics will be covered; how to use the essential tools, mark making drills to practice applying pressure to your new pen, and alphabet practices before moving on to whole words. Emma from Emerald Paper Design will be giving demonstrations each step of the way, as well as being on hand for individual guidance. 10am-12pm £55

SAT 23RD

### Decorated Letters with Emma Leyfield

Decorated Letters are a chance to slow down and step into the world of snail mail with an artistic twist. In our modern lives of text messages and emails, receiving a hand-written letter already feels quite special. Add the surprise of being given something beautifully painted and you have a unique gift that is infinitely more personal than an online message. In this workshop we will cover the basics of painting botanicals in watercolours and transferring this skill to decorating letters. In the afternoon you will have the chance to try out origami letter folds or make a set of watercolour cards; skills that are perfect to kick start your own letter-writing hobby. 10am-4pm £90

[newbreweryarts.org.uk](http://newbreweryarts.org.uk)

## ONLINE

## DEEPBED RADIO

A project led by artists and supported by artists that has self set the task of profiling DJs and audio projects with roots or threads to artist led hubs in the Stroud and Gloucester area. Deepbed is an online station but it's also a meeting place for an emerging artists community with a common interest in each other's creativity. Follow Deepbed on facebook and instagram for weekly programme

# VACANCY

## Research Assistant

- Part time, temporary job as Research Assistant and Librarian suited to school leaver, student, retiree, single parent
- Necessary skills: Good English, IT and an interest in history
- Flexi time: 8 to 12 hours or less per week, £10 per hour in congenial central Stroud office/studio for four to six months

*For further information and to apply contact:*  
stroud@orient-rug.com  
Tel. 01453 751 400

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# HAVE A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR



# WONDER WOMAN 1984

FROM SATURDAY 2 JANUARY

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01453 844401 [www.wottoncinema.com](http://www.wottoncinema.com)

**ELECTRIC**  
PICTURE HOUSE

schedules and the website to listen back to previous shows.

[deepbedradio.org](http://deepbedradio.org)

#### DIALECT

Dialect writer development is trialling a membership scheme this winter. For £10 a month, join an online creative writing workshop to spark new work and get feedback and become part of a writing community through an online forum. Contact [dialectwriters@gmail.com](mailto:dialectwriters@gmail.com)

[dialect.org.uk](http://dialect.org.uk)

#### GROUNDWORKS

Ground Works and #Landlinks walks. Ground Works has been working with a host of national and international artists, writers and poets whose inspiration and concern is for our landscape and environment. Through engagement with various art media, practises and approaches, the participating artists were encouraged to take solo synchronised #Landlink walks and share their experiences and inspired work. Follow the online news, images, films and artist conversations. Presented by Select Arts- Lizzi Walton and Kel Portman - Walking the Land.

[groundworks.org.uk](http://groundworks.org.uk)

#### HAWKWOOD COLLEGE

##### MON 11TH - MON 25TH

##### The Writer's Clinic: Introductory Course with Tessa Harris

Writing creatively can be a lonely process. Self-motivation, alongside skill and talent are vital to inject life into your prose. Under the guidance of award-winning novelist Tessa Harris, you'll learn how to identify and examine your writing weak spots head-on. Over the course of three introductory sessions, you'll be encouraged to undertake exercises to help you build on your experience and interact with other writers, then, over the course of the next eleven months, you gain support from regular clinic consultations to help deal with any problems you encounter on your writing journey. £75 3 part online course via zoom

##### TUES 12TH - TUES 26TH

##### Winter Poetry: Nurturing Your Creative Spark with Drew Dellinger

In this three-part online course, we'll celebrate poetry and cultivate our creativity, using writing exercises and prompts to open our imagination and follow our poetic impulse. We will share, read, and write poetry—studying the tools and techniques of master poets—and communing with the sages, priestesses, rebels, philosophers, prophets, mystics, and misfits that constitute poetry's long lineage, as we step into that lineage ourselves. £75

##### THURS 14TH

##### Conversations That Matter with Caroline Lucas

The Rebirth of People and Planet in a Time of Global Emergency. Join us for this one-hour online Conversation That Matters as Catherine brings her personal insight into the process of awakening

through crisis to shed light on our current global situation. Catherine will weave her inner and outer journey into an exploration of what it means to lead from the emerging future in these times. Our global state of emergency is already triggering shifts in the collective awakening of consciousness. Over the coming decade we have the opportunity to help further catalyse that. What does this mean for each of us individually? How can we lead from the emerging future in our own lives, in our organisations, our businesses and our communities? 5-6pm £donation

##### THURS 28TH JAN - THURS 30TH SEPT

##### A Year's Nature Writing Workshop with Mary Reynolds Thompson

Welcome to the Wild Scribe: Nature Writing Workshop! Here, you'll explore your love of nature through writing. You'll learn new journal and poetry techniques, discover how to unlock the power of nature's metaphors, dialog with trees, and much more. From £300

[hawkwoodcollege.co.uk](http://hawkwoodcollege.co.uk)

#### PREMA ARTS CENTRE ULEY

##### THURS 21ST

##### Modern Calligraphy

Emma Barnes from Emerald Paper Design is hosting a beginners guide to modern calligraphy via Zoom. During the session, key modern calligraphy basics will be covered; how to use the essential tools, mark making drills, and alphabet practices before moving on to whole words. Price includes a starter kit full of the goodies you need to start your modern calligraphy journey which will be posted out to you prior to this evenings workshop (booking close on Monday 11th Jan to allow time for postage so book your space soon!) 7-9pm £32/£29concs

##### SAT 30TH

##### Zine Making

Zinester Sophie Sherwood shares the art of creating this classic low-fi, DIY form of publication in this evening of Zoom making. Zines (like mini magazines) can be about anything and everything from political activism to recording the everyday or as a means of making mirth. In this evenings masterclass you'll make your own zine using words, image and collage. 6:30-8:30pm £10/£9concs

[prema.org.uk](http://prema.org.uk)

#### RAW UMBER STUDIOS

Raw Umber Studios are running regular, free online portrait and figure drawing sessions. They're a chance to draw or paint from high resolution photographs at the same time every week. The videos mimic a traditional / portrait drawing session. Tutor Lizet Dingemans joins in, does a demonstration, and gives hints and tips. At the end of the session Raw Umber give you a link where you can download the photographs from so you can continue working on your drawings.

[rawumberstudios.com](http://rawumberstudios.com)

#### STROUD DISTRICT GREEN PARTY CLOUD CAFE

##### WEDS 13TH

##### Valley Protectors

Valley Protectors: with local planning and regulatory authorities failing to control pollution, community groups around the country are responding to the challenge of monitoring and protecting their local environments. Contributors: Nicola Cutcher, member of Friends of the Upper Wye and producer of forthcoming live documentary Rivercide to be presented by George Monbiot and directed by Franny Armstrong. Paul Powlesland: Founder of Lawyers for Nature and Friends of the River Roding. Ashley Smith: Windrush Against Sewage Pollution. Ilkley Clean River: group who have been running a citizens science project on the River Wharfe and applied to become the first designated bathing river in the UK. 7:30pm

[stroud.greenparty.org.uk](http://stroud.greenparty.org.uk)

#### STROUD IMAGINES

Stroud Imagines is looking to inspire the use of our collective imagination to tackle local issues and challenges, bringing together people from all parts of our communities to support each other more effectively. Their inspiration is the work of Rob Hopkins in his book 'From What Is To What If' and seeks to explore the powerful 'what if...?' questions he poses at a local, Stroud, level. SI started a series of regular Open Mic nights, inviting 8

local people to come and share their creative imagining for Stroud and surrounds. Visit the facebook page for this month's Open Mic, news and further info.

[facebook.com/StroudImagines](https://facebook.com/StroudImagines)

#### STROUD LOVE RADIO

Stroud Love Radio is a local live and interactive 'pirate radio meets chatroom'. A DJ collective playing MOBO and World music SLR features 14 of Stroud's favourite DJs performing every weekend, Friday evening to Sunday. Selection ranges from the Northern Soul of veteran DJ Andy Edwards through to the Acidiscotek of Crooked Stylus. To listen, follow Stroud Lockdown Radio Facebook page, clicking on the links posted at showtimes.

[facebook.com/stroudlockdownradio](https://facebook.com/stroudlockdownradio)

#### THE THUNDER MUTTERS

Poetry and traditional folk fiddle music from the British Isles presented by poet Adam Horovitz and fiddle player Becky Dellow. Featuring poets such as John Clare, Thomas Hardy, Blake and other Romantic poets with fiddle tunes from 18th and 19th...The Thunder Mutters is a podcast in love with music, and with the music of words. Presented fortnightly by poet Adam Horovitz and fiddle player Becky Dellow, it takes its name from the poem by John Clare.

[the-thunder-mutters.captivate.fm](https://the-thunder-mutters.captivate.fm)

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# Coming up at The Subs in 2021...



MUSIC

## Macy Gray

Tues 8th June | Tickets from £22

A gifted songwriter and dazzlingly singular singer, Macy has been overturning fan expectation and industry formula since kicking off her music career with her debut 2000 album 'On How Life Is'. That musical calling card spawned the classic single 'I Try' and both the record and single were massive global hits. They kicked off a career that includes multiple Grammys and MTV awards, over 25 million units sold, and a thriving acting career. She is known for her distinctive raspy voice and a singing style heavily influenced by Billie Holiday.



MUSIC

## Mavis Staples

Mon 14th June | Tickets from £40

Mavis Staples is a Blues and a Rock and Roll Hall of Famer; a civil rights icon; a Grammy Award-winner; a chart-topping soul/gospel/R&B pioneer; a National Arts Awards Lifetime Achievement recipient; and a Kennedy Center honoree. She marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., performed at John F. Kennedy's inauguration, and sang in Barack Obama's White House. She has collaborated with everyone from Prince and Bob Dylan to Arcade Fire and Hozier.

The Sub Rooms is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation  
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All information is correct at the time of printing.

For more information about how to find us, access, and ticketing  
and booking information, please visit [TheSubRooms.co.uk](http://TheSubRooms.co.uk)

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# Loganberry

TAKE-AWAY & COFFEE SHOP



Pleased to be located at the independent heart of Stroud High Street, Loganberry Cafe & Takeaway opened in Autumn 2020. We offer freshly ground Carrero Italian Coffee, prepared by barista trained staff. Non-dairy options are available to accompany hot drinks if that is your preference.

All our cakes, baked items and soups are home-made. Vegan and gluten-free options are also available. Please ask at the counter if you'd like more information. We are friendly and welcome your suggestions!

We have looked carefully at sustainability and, in particular, plastic waste. Our drinks' cups are compostable. Cardboard food boxes are recyclable, as is our cutlery.



**Find us:**  
26 High Street  
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GL5 1AJ

**Opening Hours:**  
Mon-Sat 09:00 - 16:00 / Closed Sundays

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*We are Covid secure and operate from behind a Perspex screen.  
Please see any additional guidance at the door.*

