

THROUGH OUR HANDS

the magazine

Interview:

linda seward talks
to marie bergstedt

Genevieve Attinger
Agnes Martin
Michala Gyetvai
Pauline Burbidge

and more...



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Pauline Burbidge's new work will be shown in her exhibition called *Quiltscapes & Quiltline*, which will be at The Bowes Museum, Co Durham, from 28th November 2015, until the 10th April 2016. It also tours onto The Ruthin Craft Centre, North Wales, from 23rd April until 12th July, 2016.

We hear directly from her about the new work.

Text by Pauline Burbidge

Below: Pauline Burbidge at work, 2015. Photo by Phil Dickson PSD Photography

Pauline Burbidge

I live in the Scottish Borders, with my husband, the sculptor Charles Poulsen. Our home and studios are surrounded by rural farmland, with main crops of malting barley and potatoes grown in the area. Hedgerows and banks of wild flowers and grasses outline the fields, in this region known as The Merse. To the north are the Lammermuir Hills, to the South the Cheviot Hills, in Northumberland. We often get a glimpse of these, on a short daily walk. We also have an amazing coastline close by, from 6 to 20 miles can take us to Eyemouth, St. Abbs Head, Berwick-upon-Tweed or Holy Island/Lindisfarne. The Scottish Borders also holds a network of wonderful rivers such as, the Tweed, the Blackadder and the Whiteadder, and is generally a very rich rural landscape.





Above: Byre Studio, 2014 with Helima Cassell's sculpture and drawings by Charlie Poulsen. Photo by Phil Dickson PSD Photography
Below: Art Room, 2013. Photo by Step Heiselden





Above: Pauline Burbidge painting, 2015. Photo by Phil Dickson PSD Photography

These surroundings influence and inspire my work, viewing and absorbing the bigger picture of large spacious landscapes and skies, or concentrating on detail of plant forms seen all around us, in the garden or roadside banks.

Over the past two years I have been developing and making works that I think of as textile landscapes – they link my love of the natural world together with my love of fabric and cloth. *Quiltscapes* & *Quillline* (the title of my exhibition) refers to the two

categories of my work, that I have been making over the last ten years. *Quiltscapes* being my fabric collages, stitched and made deliberately as wall hangings, and my *Quillline* works being made deliberately as usable and functional quilts. The images, texture and line all relate to the rural landscape and plant form around me, as described above.

As large textile studies, my work often falls between fine art & craft, however I simply think of it, under the separate but broad heading of textiles. I think of myself as a textile artist and a contemporary quiltmaker.

My *Quiltscapes* are a little like my 'paintings' - I use collage, stitch, basic print and any number of appropriate techniques to create these works. It depends on the image – this rules, and I select from my developed technical knowledge, grown from the past. I do not start with a rigid plan, but rather let it develop and change as I go along. This is very different to my early days of quilting when I felt that a plan was essential.

Examples of some recent *Quiltscapes* are *Honesty Skyline* and *Starscape*.

My *Quillline* pieces are like my 'drawings'. They are usually made from a whole piece of cloth. On recent works, such as, *Rye-Grass* or *Grain*, I have drawn onto the top cloth with a fabric crayon first, then drawn a whole network of quilting stitching – drawing again with my stitched line, by using my Handi Quilter machine (HQ18), which I find a wonderful tool to draw with. I choose to use it in a free-form way, rather than a computerized way. To spend an afternoon drawing on my machine, is all very



Above: *Transitions in Black, White and Grey*, Charlie Poulson, drawing on paper, 2014. Photo by Philip Stanley

satisfying!

I have been developing several basic printing and drawing techniques for my new work – such as cyanotype printing, monoprinting and using fabric crayons and resist pastes to draw with. These processes are new to me, but have been practised for many years.

Cyanotype is an early photographic method, invented by Sir John Herschel in 1842, and was used by the botanist, Anna Atkins to illustrate her book

on algae in 1843. The method uses chemicals to make the paper or fabric light sensitive, once it has been exposed to bright sunrays for a short while, it changes the colour of the fabric. The parts which have not been exposed to the sun become the image. Once it is rinsed in water thoroughly, then dried, this image becomes visible. I buy my fabric for this, ready processed from: www.BlueprintsOnFabric.com

I have also very much enjoyed using monoprinting for my recent work. It is a lovely basic and instant printing method, particularly fitting for use in



Above: Studio B, quilt by Pauline Burbidge, ceramics by Halima Cassell, 2014

contemporary quilt making, I think. Only basic equipment is needed; a piece of glass or plastic, fabric paint and tools to scrape the paint off to make your image. One or two prints only, at one time, can be made. It is wonderfully straight forward and instant, as a process, and I like the fact that you have to work fast, before the paint dries.

I have also been using fabric crayons to draw with on various new quilts. And very much enjoyed the boldness and freedom of the line drawing that I have produced.

I will be teaching a three day master class at both The Bowes Museum and the Ruthin Craft Centre – where I will concentrate on these basic printing methods. My exhibition can also be seen at the same time.

Drawing plays an important part in my work. I often make continuous line drawings as a starting point for my stitching lines. Some of these preliminary

drawing will be in the exhibition too. The making process is very important to me, and I wanted to illustrate this in the show.

A fully illustrated book/catalogue will be available with the exhibition, including photographs of the new work, and some making processes and an essay by June Hill.

I do hope that you can catch it at one of these venues. It will be a special exhibition, in two great, well respected places, with excellent gallery facilities!

As you can see, my work is very inspired by my surroundings in the Scottish Borders, so there is another venue to see some of my work, in the situation that it has been made. Why not come and visit our OPEN STUDIO sometime? We open our doors for four days at the beginning of August every year (over the first weekend of August) details are posted on my website.

Pauline Burbidge studied Fashion & Textiles at St.Martin's Art College in London, in the early 1970's.

She has exhibited in many corners of the world, including Japan, Australia and the USA.

Her work has been purchased by many Museums & Collectors in the UK and USA.

Her work has been published in many books, including her own titles, which include, Quilt Studio; Portfolio Collection Pauline Burbidge; Pauline Burbidge – Works between 1975 & 2012; OPEN STUDIO.

For more information about Pauline Burbidge:

paulineburbidge-quilts.com

and The Bowes Museum:
thebowesmuseum.org.uk

and The Ruthin Craft Centre:
ruthincraftcentre.org.uk

Below: Art Room, 2014, photo by Phil Dickson PSD Photography

