

Tracked down by Sarah Lowndes, a Trustee, this photograph was taken by Torsten Lauschmann for the cover of a new arts magazine in 1999. The magazine didn't get off the ground. Not wasted, the Trust is pleased, ten years on, to bring you this beautiful image of Gillian.



The Gillian Purvis Trust

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A SIGNIFICANT PLAYER IN ARTS EDUCATION IN THE CITY

On 27 January 2009, Keith Bruce wrote for The Herald: "It was fitting that the fifth annual Gillian Purvis Award to a final year textiles student at Glasgow School of Art was made on Monday evening in the school's Mackintosh Gallery, currently home to the fine awaken show of new textiles inspired by the GSA archives. In those five short years, the trust, established in memory of the young woman who died in a fire at her home at Glasgow's St George's Cross, has become a significant player in arts education in the city. The award to a final year student was first made to Scott Ramsay Kyle, now one of the school's best known graduates in the fashion world. The trust now supports a third year GSA student with a travel bursary and last year Fiona Rintoul became the first winner of an award to a student of creative writing. Yesterday artist Toby Paterson, Gillian's partner at the time of her death, announced that 22-year-old woven textiles student Charlotte Horsley is the winner of the 2009 award."

CHARLOTTE HORSLEY WINS THE FIFTH GILLIAN PURVIS AWARD

For the presentation of the fifth Gillian Purvis Award (for a 4th Year Student of Textiles at Glasgow School of Art), The Trust was privileged to have a private viewing of the exhibition “awaken”, described on page 1. Family, friends and donors to the Trust gathered in the Mackintosh Gallery where Toby declared Charlotte Horsley the winner. We congratulate Charlotte for graduating in June 2009 with First Class BA (Hons). Her first-class status was further endorsed with a scholarship from the Worshipful Company of Weavers and The Incorporation of Weavers Innovation Prize 2009.

Charlotte enjoys the physical process of weaving, the hands-on nature of making her own fabric. Drawing inspiration from natural landscapes and rock formations in Wales and the Isle of Skye, her aim was to produce a collection that captured the colours and sculptural forms in the finished fabrics.

In her application for the award, Charlotte wrote “My work will be aimed at the Interior market focusing on upholstery and interior throws.

After I graduate, I hope to get a job with a woven textiles company that specializes in Interiors. I also hope to have some time to travel, especially around Europe to gain inspiration for further work, be it for personal collections or to translate into work for a placement or permanent job after graduation.

I am also interested in looking into a Masters course in textiles, possibly at The Royal College of Art, but would like to spend some time actively working in the industry before I make that choice. I hope one day even to establish my own textiles company specialising in Interiors.”

Charlotte noted from Toby’s address at the art school Graduation ceremony in June, that work can be a long time developing after graduation. This she has encountered after approaches to around 40 companies. She is delighted to have secured a place in an Irish Linen company in Northern Ireland. Working as their only designer, Charlotte will be engaged with client briefs, looking to modernise and interpret their archive designs as well as making her own work.



Detail from Charlotte’s Degree Show in June 2009
Front cover: Charlotte with her Degree Show



Charlotte Horsley with Trust Chairman Toby Paterson (left) and Jimmy Stephen Cran, Head of Textiles at the “awaken” exhibition in the Mackintosh Museum of The Glasgow School of Art when Charlotte received The Gillian Purvis Award 2009

photos: Simon Paterson

REMEMBERING GILLIAN ALWAYS - MEMORIAL NEARS COMPLETION

In close and creative collaboration with Toby, John Creed has produced a beautiful and joyous piece in memory of Gillian. Commissioned by the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, where Gillian worked, the sculpture will soon be installed in the landscaped space there for family, friends and colleagues to visit and recall their own special memories of Gillian. Jim and Libby, Gillian’s parents, have been involved along the way and, most importantly, from the garden of their former family home in Dunblane, contributed the piece of sandstone which John has incorporated into the design. Soaring above the work is the poignant text Toby wished to include from “Wild Geese”, the poem by Mary Oliver that he selected early in 2004 in memory of Gillian.

Toby sincerely thanks the SECC for the personal opportunity afforded to him to give expression in a permanent memorial to Gillian, one that all can share and enjoy. He wishes also to acknowledge the sensitive understanding he has experienced over the period of its development. To John Creed, immense thanks for interpreting and combining the many meaningful strands to produce this fine work that will always remind us of Gillian and how she touched our own lives.

Next time, we hope to show you the work at its destination and perhaps, by then, you will have already been down by the Clyde to see it.

AWARDS MADE BY THE GILLIAN PURVIS TRUST

THE GILLIAN PURVIS AWARD

To a fourth year Design student in the Department of Textiles, The Glasgow School of Art

- 2005 Scott Ramsay Kyle
- 2006 Catherine Aitken
- 2007 Lynsey Park
- 2008 Hillary Fry
- 2009 Charlotte Horsley

THE GILLIAN PURVIS AWARD FOR TRAVEL FOR PRIMARY RESEARCH

To a third year Design student in the Department of Textiles, The Glasgow School of Art

- 2006 Holly Rothwell
- 2007 Jennifer Groundwater
- 2008 Ian Porter
- 2009 Emma Shannon

THE GILLIAN PURVIS AWARD FOR NEW WRITING

To a student of creative writing at The University of Glasgow, The University of Strathclyde or The Glasgow School of Art

- 2008 Fiona Rintoul, University of Glasgow
- 2009 Kirsty Logan, University of Glasgow



John Creed at a recent demonstration in Maryhill, Glasgow

photo: Simon Paterson



Tributes at the foot of “Gillian’s Tree” in Kelvingrove Park in January 2009

photo: Lesley Paterson



Toby and John Creed during a recent visit to John’s blacksmith’s studio

photo: Rhona Warwick

BEST WISHES TO IAN PORTER

In June 2008, the Trust was pleased to receive a postcard from Ian Porter, then a student of Printed Textiles heading for 4th year at The Glasgow School of Art. Ian won that year’s Trust Award for Travel for Primary Research that led to his visit to Berlin. It was a fruitful research trip that excited Ian in preparation for his final year. It was really sad, therefore that, on his return to Glasgow, Ian was diagnosed with a serious and complicated illness that halted his creative progress. Subsequent bulletins have recorded that he is responding well to treatment and it was great to hear that he was aiming to continue his course at the art school this session. All at the Trust send Ian the very best of wishes for a good recovery and a return to his distinctive fabric design and production.

MEET THE BROONS



photo: Lennox Cole

In the far reaches of Wester Ross, Daphne and Maggie Broon and The Wean have been laying away on behalf of the Trust. Friends and neighbours enjoy the golden-yolked fresh eggs from these happy hens in exchange for donations to the Trust. Thanks to their financial advisers, Ron & Lennie Cole.

& THANKS TO ALL OTHER HELPERS

The Trust thrives thanks only to the generosity of many past, new and continuing donors. Those who have contributed in the past year include: Louise Brady, Mrs Margaret Brown, Gary Browne, Gillian Buchanan, Campbell Dallas LLP, Ron & Lennie Cole & The Broons, Bob Dallas, Sorchas Dallas, Leigh Ferguson, Iain Harrison, Anna Johnston, Joan Johnston, The Hugh Fraser Foundation, Christine McGeoch, Keith Moore, The Stanley Morrison Trust, Tom O’Sullivan & Joanne Tatham, Sam Paterson, Andy & Ruth Rae, Jim Smith, Cindy Sughrue, Lisa Sutherland, Mr & Mrs A M Thomson, Toby Webster at The Modern Institute, Freda Wylie.

The Trust is delighted that The Stanley Morrison Trust has continued to provide support for this annual Newsletter, ensuring that we can report to you in full without diminishing the funds gathered in from donors. Out of the blue, Freda Wylie generously donated the considerable proceeds from the sale of some of her very fine knitted and crocheted work. Our gratitude goes to staff at The Glasgow School of Art, especially those in the Textile Department.

www.gillianpurvistrust.org Thanks to Colin Hardie for upgrading the website. It’s now down to the Administrator to keep it up to date! Award winners please let us have relevant links you would like us to add.

STOP PRESS:

For those interested and who may not know, on 31 October 2009 Kit Warwick Paterson was born to Toby and Rhona. All well and happy.

JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME & 4000 PHOTOS FOR EMMA SHANNON

Another weaver the Trustees selected for an award this year was third-year textile student at Glasgow School of Art, Emma Shannon, who collected the Travel Award for Primary Research.

The award allowed Emma to journey around the UK to visit examples of brutalist or constructivist council estate architecture, often described as ugly, depressing carbuncles. Many such buildings are threatened with demolition, even those listed, and Emma recognised the importance of documenting them creatively. On her agenda were Park Hill estate in Sheffield, Robin Hood Gardens, Finsbury and Heygate estates in London, and estates in Coventry, Birmingham, Walsall, Bristol and Nottingham. Journeys and transport being important to her theme, Emma also aimed to visit Preston Bus Station before its planned demolition. She recognised that such research would result in a significant body of work, not only leading to fabric design, but also documenting an important piece of British social history, and inspiring people to appreciate these structures before they are demolished.

Born in Coventry and raised amongst concrete, high-rises and motorways before moving to a council estate in Leith, Edinburgh, Emma realised she had aspirations beyond the biomedical science degree upon which she had embarked. On coming to Glasgow, she discovered the direction for her work and the architecture of council estates and motorways have been a recurrent theme. Emma aims to produce beautiful, hopeful, woven fabrics from this inspiration.

The Trust received initial feedback from Emma on return from her trip over the summer: “I can’t thank you enough for the opportunity I had to complete this journey. 4000 photos taken and despite all the research I conducted before I left, I found loads more places to document. It really was my journey of a lifetime. This trip has given me all the inspiration for my collection and also given me an insight into who I am and why I like this architecture that everyone despises so much.”

Emma is now embarked on her fourth year in the Textile Department and we look forward to seeing the fruits of her research at the Glasgow School of Art Degree Show in June 2010.

SAFE FUNDS

Over the years, the Trustees have debated options to safeguard your donations to ensure the best possible benefit goes directly to the students who receive the awards. Such is their highly cautious approach, we are pleased to report that the income received by the Trust has not been diminished by the current economic downturn and the capital fund remains secure.

As the Trust approaches its seventh year, it is well-placed to continue making the annual awards already established. The Trustees constantly review the opportunities to make new awards to meet the Trust purposes.

From the outset of the Trust, Alex Johnston at Campbell Dallas has provided invaluable guidance and undertaken the annual audit of the Trust’s accounts. Thank you.

DIFFERENT DIRECTION FOR THE TRUST’S NEW WRITING AWARD

In its second year, The Gillian Purvis Award for New Writing was presented in June 2009 to Kirsty Logan. Along with a co-editor, Kirsty is establishing Fractured West, an alternative literary magazine, whose focus is on flash fiction and short poetry with edge and bite. They are reaching out to new writers with fresh ways of looking at the world. Although grounded in Scotland, the magazine welcomes submissions from writers all over the world. It will provide a showcase for young and emerging writers who may find it difficult to break into



Chairman Toby Paterson and author Anne Donovan meet Kirsty Logan as she receives the £1500 Gillian Purvis Award for New Writing 2009

© Dominique Carton/ WriterPicture

The Award from the Trust has already facilitated the website for Fractured West.

A message from Fractured West to writing readers

Dear writers, Fractured West is now open for submissions! We’re looking for flash fiction, prose, poetry, microfiction, sudden fiction, vignettes, and short short stories. We don’t care about definitions: if it’s short, we want it.

- SEND your best work in the body of an email to submissions@fracturedwest.com
- MAX 1,000 words, but the shorter the better
- ONE story at a time
- BIOS are not vital but will be read with interest
- DEADLINES are unimportant; we accept/reject on a rolling basis
- PAYMENT will be one copy of the print magazine

We look forward to reading your work, Kirsty & Helen, Editors, Fractured West, <http://www.fracturedwest.com>

the commercial mainstream.

Fractured West will be published online and in print form, giving it the accessibility of a website with the quality of a printed publication. Podcasts and live reading events will be produced around Scotland.

After great help from Liz Lochhead in setting up this award in 2008, the Trustees were further privileged with support this year from author Anne Donovan who, during a busy schedule, gave of her time very readily to help the Trust. All involved, including Gillian’s family, are enormously appreciative of such generous contributions in realising the aims of the Trust.

FIONA RINTOUL WINS AGAIN

After she was awarded the first Gillian Purvis Award for New Writing in 2008, Fiona Rintoul went on to win the Sceptre Prize for emerging writers with her novel in progress Leipzig, which the judges described as “confident” and “compelling”. This award was announced at the Aye Write literary festival in Glasgow in March this year.

... AND REPORTS ON HER TRIP TO BERLIN

On return from her research trip to Berlin, supported by the award from The Gillian Purvis Trust, Fiona sent the following evocative report.

Back in the GDR

“Any questions?” asks our tour guide, Thomas. There is a stunned silence. We’re standing in one of the interrogation rooms at Hohenschönhausen, the former Stasi prison in Berlin. Like all the Hohenschönhausen guides, Thomas is a former inmate. He’s just finished telling us his story – and what a story.

I visited Hohenschönhausen, now a museum, as part of a research trip funded by the Gillian Purvis Trust Award for New Writing. My novel-in-progress is set in the former East Germany, and the Award allowed me to travel back to Berlin and Leipzig to complete my research.

I was particularly interested in the Stasi and how they operated. One of my main characters works for the Stasi as a so-called ‘unofficial collaborator’



Leipzig town centre in 1986. The banner reads ‘For the realisation of the resolutions made at the 11th Party Conference.

– in German an Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter or IM. I wanted to make sure I’d got the details right.

Much of my novel plays out in Leipzig, and so I went there first. I talked to ex-Stasi men and women (men mainly) and their victims, as well as to those – probably the majority of East Germans – who managed to live ein ganz normales Leben, an entirely ordinary life, in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR).

One such woman was Ina. “If you didn’t get mixed up in politics and you had good friends, you could live quite happily,” she told me.

She also spoke of a trip to a cousin’s wedding in Austria in the late 1980s. She was given permission to travel on the basis that her husband and children stayed at home as ‘insurance’ that she would return.

Several people told me similar stories of officially sanctioned trips to the west. Perhaps the Wall wasn’t as impermeable as we like to think. At the same time, I learnt about the curious phenomenon whereby troublesome dissidents were made to leave the GDR against their will.

Strange place, the GDR: some people weren’t allowed to leave and some some weren’t allowed to stay. What, did the citizens of such a country think when they saw the supposedly ‘Golden West’?

“I was slightly disgusted by all the excess,” Ina told me, before summing up what for her is the main difference between the GDR and the new Germany: “Before you couldn’t be rude about the government, but you could be rude to your boss. Now you can say what you like about the government, but you can’t be rude to your boss.”

And what about the Stasi men? How do they see things now? Some are repentant but most are not. One, let’s call him Jürgen, was vigorous in his defence of the shoot-to-kill policy employed at the Wall. Since reunification, border guards and politicians have faced trial because of deaths at the Wall. Jürgen saw this as ‘victor’s justice’.

“Republikflucht [leaving the GDR without permission] was illegal,” he said. “That was quite clear and the law was there for all to see. If you committed Republikflucht, or helped someone else to do it, you were breaking the law and had to take the consequences. That’s how I saw it then and that’s how I see it today.”

At the other end of the spectrum was Monika Haeger, a former IM I saw interviewed on German TV. She penetrated the famous oppositionist circles based in the run-down and bohemian Prenzlauer Berg area of East Berlin.

She wept openly when she spoke of the people she betrayed, some of whom went to prison because of information she supplied.

“That’s what I’d call it now,” she said. “Betrayal. Spying. At the time, I saw it as justified action against my enemies.”

Monika’s personal history is tragic. An orphan brought up in an East Berlin children’s home, the Stasi became a surrogate family for her. “The Stasi told me they would always be there for me and they always were,” she said.

It’s hard not to see her more as a victim than a perpetrator.

Thomas’ parents were later arrested for unspecified ‘activities against the State’. Some time after that, Thomas too was arrested and taken to Hohenschönhausen. The exact nature of his crimes was never clear, but they included ‘unauthorised contact with western agents’ – phone calls to his brother in Hanover.

Thomas was 19 years old. He remained in Hohenschönhausen for four years. He was released in 1984 and allowed to return to Hanover. His mother was released in 1989 shortly before the Wall came down. His father died in prison.

The group silence that greeted Thomas’ story was interesting to me. Although Thomas was a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany, the West German authorities did nothing to try and secure his release from Hohenschönhausen.

It wasn’t their place to interfere. Thomas’ story uncovered the dark side of Realpolitik.



‘Faschism - Never again’

Our group, mainly West Germans, didn’t know what to say to that. They had come to Hohenschönhausen to hear about the terrible East German dictatorship, not about the failings of their own government. But as a foreigner, I was interested in both sides. I asked Thomas about his return to West Germany. He told me that adjusting to life in Hanover was almost as difficult as his time in the Stasi prison.

“When I came out of Hohenschönhausen, I had been so dismantled as a person that I couldn’t even go into a shop and ask for a bread roll,” he said. “The idea that I was entitled to anything had been beaten out of me. I had to rebuild myself from scratch. Then I became a student in Hanover. I was living with left-wing West German students. They supported the GDR and criticised the capitalist west. They couldn’t understand what I’d been through. I tried to explain it to them, but they didn’t want to listen. In the end, I gave up trying.”

I was irritated by the affluent-looking West Germans in my tour group who wanted only to gasp in horror at East German atrocities and couldn’t engage with Thomas’ story when it went beyond that. I came to understand why even today many East Germans find ‘Wessis’ arrogant and annoying.

I hope I have managed to express some of these subtleties in my novel. In many ways, I find contemporary East Germany to be a kinder, gentler and more engaging place than West Germany. At the same time, there can, of course, never be any justification for the Stasi and their prison at Hohenschönhausen.

I’d like to thank the Gillian Purvis Trust very warmly for giving me the means to conduct this necessary research for my book.

Fiona’s book “Leipzig” is nearly finished. Look out for it!