

Press Release

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‘Hilary Jean Gibson: Illustrations of the Leach Pottery St Ives’

Exhibition: 27 August - 12 September 2018

Book Launch: 1 September 2018

A unique exhibition featuring illustrations of the Leach Pottery by professional illustrator, Hilary Jean Gibson, launched on 1 September in the Borlase Smart Room of Porthmeor Studios, St Ives. The exhibition comprises over 20 original prints and also features a new book of Hilary’s wider illustrations of the Leach Pottery.

This is the first showing of Hilary’s highly observed illustrations that she has been working on from 2012-18. Over this period of time, Hilary frequently visited the Leach Pottery recording its varied and changing nature using mediums like pen, pen and wash, pencil, and gouache.

Illustrations of the Leach Pottery St Ives, published by Hilary Jean Gibson, has 138 pages featuring full-page illustrations, details, and extracts from sketch books alongside a delightful narrative of her experiences over the years at the Leach Pottery. The book is available for sale at the Leach Pottery.

The exhibition runs in the Borlase Smart Room, Porthmeor Studios, St Ives.

Selected original illustrations, and accompanying book, for sale.

Hilary Jean Gibson said: “This exhibition is the total of 6 years’ drawing and painting at the Leach Pottery. Julia Twomlow, who was Director at the time, thought it was a wonderful idea and that my presence at the Pottery would also prove an interesting experience for visitors.

“I first visited the Leach Pottery taking a group of students from St Ives School of Painting – we spent time in the Museum and also saw a pottery demonstration. I could see a story unfolding, I could see and sense traces of the past. My friend, Liz, said: ‘there’s something for you here’.

“There are places, like the kiln room, that grab your attention but it’s often the finer details, like the coat hook and the Bakelite switches, that drew me in – things that people have been using over years that were fascinating. Sometimes, you have to look into a corner to see the intimate detail of buildings and the more time you spend in one, the more the history starts to speak to you.

“I’ve had a lovely time at the Leach Pottery, everyone has been so welcoming and it’s been a pleasure to also record the next generation of potters. I wanted to capture the past and present of this vibrant site for the future.”

Libby Buckley, Leach Pottery Director, said: “Hilary has been coming here for 6 years, which shows an incredible dedication to her work and, I feel, a real affection for the Leach Pottery. We’ve only seen glimpses of what Hilary’s been doing, so it’s incredibly impressive to see all her work come together. It’s truly fascinating and insightful to see the site, and its many facets, recorded and explored from Hilary’s perspective – she has managed to capture the soul and the magic of the place.”

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Notes for Editors

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Leach Pottery

Founded in 1920, the Leach Pottery is considered to one the birthplaces of British Studio Pottery. Bernard Leach, one of the great figures of 20th century art, played a crucial pioneering role in creating an identity for artist potters across the world. The Leach Pottery was restored and reopened, in 2008, as a Museum, to celebrate the life, work, influences and legacy of Bernard Leach. The exhibition, gallery and shop spaces regularly showcase work by leading regional, national and international studio potters. The Studio provides training for the next generation of potters who learn by making Leach Standard Ware tableware.

The Leach Pottery is managed by the Bernard Leach (St Ives) Trust Ltd, a registered charity founded in 2005 reg. no 1111263. The primary objectives of the trust are to further the development of studio pottery, provide training in the art, craft and making of pottery and to advance the public education of the life and work of Bernard Leach and his circle.

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