

London Glassblowing and Graal Press: two new exhibitions at Gallery Ten



A few months ago, **Ainsley Francis** and **Jack Luke** were completing MAs at Edinburgh School of Art. Ainsley works primarily with engraved and kiln form glass, Jack is a photographer. At the ECA graduate show, **Gallery Ten** owner Paul Musgrove liked what he saw: yesterday Ainsley and Jack's work stood alongside some of the most illustrious names in the business in new shows at the gallery in Stafford Street. Jack's dad Gary, a Perthshire furniture maker, was also invited to exhibit, and the mix of emerging and established artists has produced outstanding results.



Internationally celebrated artist **Peter Layton** started **London Glassblowing** in 1976. It is both a working studio (one of the first hot glass studios in Europe) and a gallery. Peter Layton remains very much at its helm, with twelve other glass artists now working with him in what has become one of the world's leading glassmaking workshops. At Gallery Ten Layton shows some stunning pieces; the *Arrival of Spring* collection comprises perfume bottles and vases in swirling greens and delicate streaks of pink. In other pieces warm oranges, reds and turquoises infuse sensuous curves: *Lagoon* is topped with a tiny teardrop stopper.

Jochen Ott's *Changes* glows red inside; after blowing the artist cuts down through the glass to reveal black beneath the surface. The gorgeous elliptically-shaped *Tear Bottle* by **Cathryn Shilling** is another impressive piece. **Anthony Scala**

shows dazzling green and blue vases, bubbles cascading down inside the glass like sparkling wine.

✘ Ainsley Francis' *Focal Distance-Tradition* are perfect cast and kiln-formed pieces: whilst Jochen Ott's work reveals black layers inside, the interesting shapes of *Focal Distance* are black on the surface. Her *Focal Distance-Compassion* exhibits have a wooden form and glass 'lids' on which figures – perhaps foetuses – are drawn. Having come to the UK from Toronto to study Ainsley has now found a studio at **Edinburgh Contemporary Crafts** in Blair Street: she loves Edinburgh and has no intention of leaving anytime soon. ECC is, she says, an especially good place to work as it has such a great mix of artists, all of whom share equipment and experience.

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A very different and quite fascinating type of glass work is shown by **Layne Rowe**. *Reticello Woven Baskets* are reminiscent of sea urchins, with their swirly shapes and stripy surfaces. Some are white, some vibrant purples, blues and turquoises. They are made with layered glass cane which is cut into long strips, laid out in a rectangle, then twisted together. Once the glass is cold it is cut to expose other lines of each cane.

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Graal Press is the oldest independent collaborative screenprinting studio in Scotland; it's been working with artists for twenty years to produce limited edition original prints. At Gallery Ten Graal is showing work by **Barbara Rae, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Robert MacLaurin, Margaret Hunter, Victoria Crowe** and **Katie Downie**. The swathes of dark blues and blacks that make up the sky in Rae's *Desert Bloom* contrast

sharply with the pink land below, whilst her *Painted Desert 1* has a surreal, Dali-esque feel about it; strange green cacti stand isolated beneath an indigo sky.



Margaret Hunter's *Flow Day* is for me the outstanding painting in this exhibition. A woman sits, or perhaps rocks, her knees drawn up, her arms curving above her head. A circle drawn around her reflects the shape of her body. The energy does indeed flow, fired by a stunning red background. Another highlight is Victoria Crowe's leaf-bare tree (above), its tiny branchlets looking more like wires as it stands beside a white pavement; underneath the earth is as blue as the sky above; two birds peck at the cold ground.



Jack Luke's photographs of Bing heaps in West Lothian were a must-see at the 2014 ECA graduate show. Jack has now placed them in impressive dark wood frames, which he had made especially to complement the subject matter. The Bings are huge spoil heaps made up of the tailings of the shale-oil industry; now they have become a leisure area and a site of significant biodiversity, with parts taken over by birch woods. They are also a major motorcross venue. Jack aims to create lyrical images challenging our perceptions of post-industrial landscapes in Scotland.



And last – but certainly not least – we come to **Gary Luke**, Jack's dad. Gary, a joiner by trade, has been making furniture for over 25 years. The lovely **walnut console** he shows at Gallery Ten is almost Art Deco in style, with its clear curved lines and sleek drawers; it perfectly complements the glass exhibits but would be at home in any elegant Edinburgh flat or country house. Gary's business, **Templemill Woodworks**, also

makes beds, dining tables, bookcases and other pieces to commission, all from solid timbers. Timeless pieces.



These two great exhibitions are on at Gallery Ten until 4th October 2012, and the gallery is open 10.30am-5.30pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

