

Andrew Crummy receives the MBE in New Year Honours List

Andrew Thomas Crummy from Craigmillar has received an MBE in the 2022 New Year Honours List.

The honour means a great deal to the designer and artist who has received it for “services to Art and to Cultural Heritage in Scotland”, but he concedes that his story really did begin with his mother, [Dr Helen Crummy](#) MBE, who received her honour some 50 years ago in 1972. He recalls going to Buckingham Palace with his parents and brother Philip, who is now an archaeologist in Colchester, but does not remember all the secrecy back then. There is a statue to commemorate Helen Crummy and her work as an activist outside the Craigmillar Library.

Mr Crummy said it has been hard to keep the news to himself, after receiving an email from the Cabinet Office about a month ago. Asked which of the many parts of his life have perhaps resulted in the honour, he believes it to be the Great Tapestry of Scotland. He also does not know who put him forward for the honour, and concedes that adds to the air of mystery around the honour itself.



Andrew Crummy in his studio PHOTO Jon Gill

The artist painted the Gothenburg ceiling mural I the James Fewell Bar at The Gothenburg pub in Prestonpans. He painted representations of the original Baron as well as the 14th Baron and his wife, as well as others and it followed the style used in the 16th century for Prestongrange House, then owned by the 1st Baron whose descendants became Marquis of Lothian. He said: "I used to run the murals programme from 2004 to 2012. The Baron of Prestongrange commissioned me to paint the ceiling in the Gothenburg Pub. I painted that ceiling based on the 16th century Prestongrange ceiling. I did another version of it – an updated version. I painted it in place.

"The pub was set up under the Gothenburg principles which mean that 96% of the profit goes back into the community for regeneration. These pubs are dotted around the central belt of Scotland in the mining communities."

This kind of idea would of course have attracted Andrew Crummy who also with his mother set up the Craigmillar Communiversity, hosted several conferences, had a major exhibition in Edinburgh City Art Gallery, and helped create an

art workshop in Craigmillar. They also started [World Community Arts Day](#) still running with great success. Crummy explained that the [Craigmillar Now](#) organisation which reopened what was The Craigmillar Festival Arts Centre may eventually lead to the Craigmillar Communiversity.

He claims that the honour he is now receiving is due to his mother and many other people. He said: "I think through all these projects that I've been involved with, and of course my mother is part of that story. But I've met an awful lot of other people who have just been fantastic. There have been a lot of stitchers, obviously, but a lot of other people as well. And it's been an amazing journey because I have met a lot of incredibly intelligent, creative and sharing people who want to share things and do things together. I think in that one way I have been blessed. And there's a lot of them."

"In the tapestries are thousands of women – and it is mainly women. But I am part of a much bigger network of people, and you know I am really conscious of that."



The great tapestry of Scotland in its permanent home in Galashiels. PHOTO Phil Wilkinson.

Andrew Crummy has worked on many large-scale public projects but nothing matches the ambition and size of The Great Tapestry of Scotland. An estimated 55,000 sewing hours were spent on 49,000 metres of yarn to complete an artefact which has been dubbed Scotland's Bayeux Tapestry.

He was the artist and designer for the project, which tells Scotland's story from pre-history to modern times. Measuring almost 142 metres, it is the longest tapestry in the world.

In the past few years Crummy also created the [Cancer Tapestry](#). Diagnosed with cancer in 2017, he reacted to the illness and treatment in the only way that was appropriate. He channelled his anger and energy into a new tapestry. You can read the story of the film which may be made about the tapestry [here](#). Filmmaker Jon Gill plans a documentary series which he told The Edinburgh Reporter he will enter into film festivals to raise awareness of Andrew and his work.

Crummy's other designs and productions include The Seawall, Sams Burns Gate, The Witches Memorable, Battle of Prestonpans Mural and Cockenzie Power Station Mural.

He was also the designer for The Battle of Prestonpans tapestry, and latterly The Scottish Diaspora Tapestry which involved over 260 stitches, 10 million stitches, 3,000 metres of thread and was produced in Scotland, England, Ireland, USA, Australia and France.



Drawings for the Cancer Tapestry PHOTO Jon Gill



This is a montage of photos of the statue of Helen Crummy MBE in Craigmillar PHOTOS © Martin P McAdam