



## Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios

### ARTIST PROFILES - 2017

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#### North Norfolk

**Mary Blue Brady (painter)** Brochure ID 096

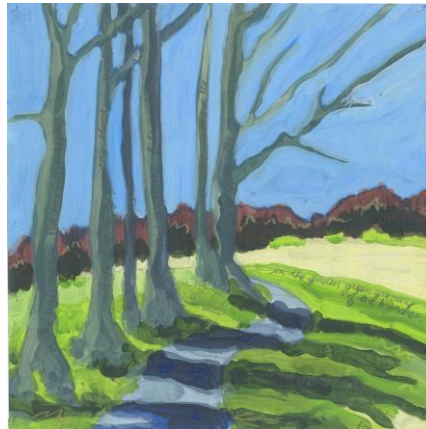
Mary, originally from America, has a Master of Fine Arts in Painting from the University of Pennsylvania and has taken up her love of painting the Norfolk countryside and coastal scenes since relocating from the USA in 2013.

Her recent landscapes echo the making of a life in her adopted country. She moves through the countryside and is drawn to the cultivated fields and tree-lined roads.

In her paintings she layers words, textures, and colours and weaving in bits of poetry, too.

As a lover of all things nature and outdoors, she has walked the forgotten footsteps of Roman soldiers and explored the ancient woodland where currents from the past find their way into the images.

Mary lives with her husband, children and step-children in Kettlestone in Norfolk. She has her artist studio in an old thrashing barn in the heart of the countryside.



**Henry J Stephen (Sculptor)** Brochure ID 130

"I have always found a particular solace in making.

"Being an artist never occurred to me, but I came to a cross roads in my life where I could take a chance and follow a dream. I have now been working professionally in sculpture for just over a year and half."

As a metal work sculptor, Henry says that his work resonates with the wild surrounding of Norfolk.

He said: "I love metal work! The raw energy and heat of its fluid transformation, there's something transcendental about changing the material into a piece."

Henry uses welding, plasma cutting and a good old hammer and heat to bend and shape his work.

His work space used to be outside under a small awning and then his parents offered him a space in one of their old stables. Henry said: "This space has allowed me to create more ambitious work and allows a lovely space to meet people and talk about all the beauties of Norfolk, and have a nice cup of tea."

He said: "I come from a background of debilitating mental health issues and drug and alcohol addiction and metal work has been a constant through my recovery and a way to help me alleviate the symptoms. I am lucky enough to have eight years' clean time, and bring a huge amount of gratitude to my practice."



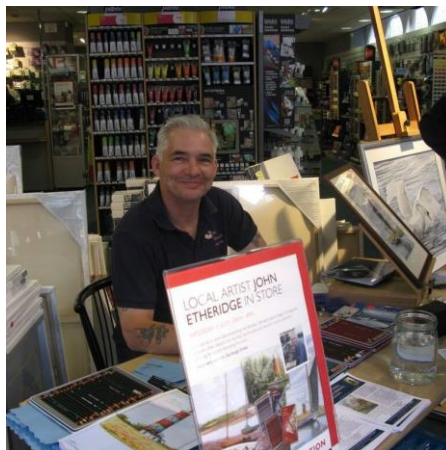
### **John Etheridge the cycling artist (painter and drawer) Brochure ID 090**

John's studio is located at his home in Stalham. John recently appeared live on Hochanda TV – a Sky channel dedicated to arts and crafts – where he represented art material company Faber Castell. He has also appeared on Mustard TV.

In 2016 he entered a challenge by the publication Colored Pencil Treasure in America. From more than 1,000 entries from all over the world, John was ranked in the top 200 pencil artists in the world.

"Taking part in Open studios is hard work but lots of fun. It helps promote me as an artist and gives people the chance to see where it all happens. I have done it 3 or 4 times now and found it to be very enjoyable.

"I have also started working on wooden plaques and furniture with real works of art and also have an extensive range of bespoke/personalised gifts from either my or your own artwork."



## **West Norfolk**

### **Les Williams (graphic artist) Brochure ID 247**

Les worked at Lloyd's of London for many years, during which his love of drawing the ever-changing city landscape began. Today he works not only on urban landscapes but also on the Norfolk countryside and coastline in his chosen medium of pen and wash.

He is currently Vice President of the Society of Graphic Fine Art, which was founded in 1919, and has a membership of 130 professional artists elected from all areas of the art world.

In 2017, the Society will be exhibiting nationwide including their members show in June at the Bankside Gallery, London and the Menier Gallery, London.

"I love taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios, which I have done for maybe 10 years, it gives me a chance to meet people from all over the world and to chat about my work and the techniques I use.

"Last year I had visitors from the US, Germany and Spain. It always amazes me how many people come, I probably have a couple of hundred visitors each weekend I am open.

I am so fortunate to be part of the Castle Acre Trail, where each year we have 5/6 artists for people to visit and also to see our beautiful conservation village with pub, tearooms, a ruined Norman Castle and Priory. What more could you want!"



### **Abbey Stirling (Painter & furniture upcycler) Brochure ID 245**

"Art has crept up on me with age. I'm a writer by trade, but being a mother ignited a creative passion in me that writing alone can't fulfil."

When Abbey had her first son she started upcycling furniture for his nursery, and the painting, waxing and distressing of the paint rekindled her love for expressionism.

The furniture became works of art, and with the addition of decoupage Abbey began getting commissions.

Abbey said: "It gave me the confidence to start painting canvases again, and that's definitely what I enjoy the most. I've always painted landscapes or objects, but I'm discovering a love for figures and faces. Now I can't stop analysing people – everyone's made up of shapes and shades."

Abbey moved to Norfolk two years ago and, within weeks, converted a barn to use as a studio. Abbey said: "Surrounded by monastic ruins and rural farmland, it's a hidden gem. I feel so privileged and at peace when I'm there. It's my happy place."

This is Abbey's first time taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios. She said: "I see it as a great way to meet local artists and increase my profile as an artist and small business. I couldn't be happier here in Norfolk, leading a healthier more creative and fulfilling life."



## **South Norfolk**

**Andrea Girling (drawer) Brochure ID 233**

Andrea is taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios for the first time. She works from her studio at her home in Old Costessey.

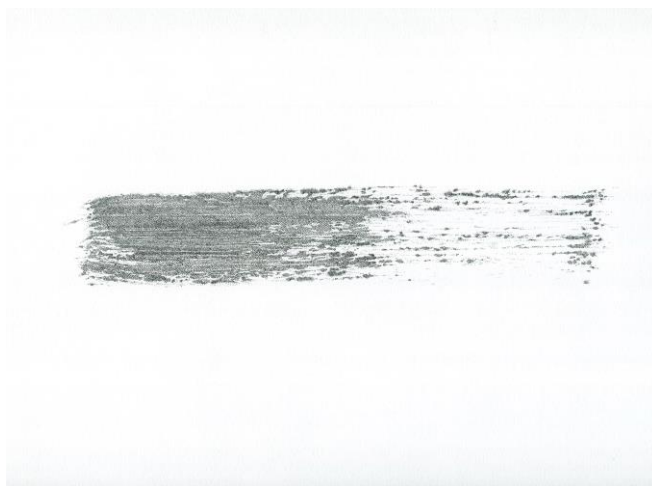
“I've always had an interest in art, but like so many I ended up working in an office for 13 years. It was only when I was made redundant in 2007 that I had the opportunity to follow my passion in art and return to education - although very daunting at the time it was also very exciting.”

After studying an art diploma and a foundation degree in Bedfordshire Andrea completed a BA in 2012 at Norwich University of the Arts, which was when she decided to specialise in drawing.

“I was encouraged to enter the prestigious Jerwood Drawing Prize during my degree, but I didn't enter until after I finished the following year in 2013. To my complete surprise I received an email saying that I had been shortlisted from over 3,000 submissions.

“It was at the private view that I discovered my work had been sold, but I didn't know who had bought my work until about 10 months later. It was then I discovered an art collector had purchased my drawing. Subsequently he bought two more drawings from me. Now all three pieces are in the Prints and Drawings collection at the British Museum.

“I have enjoyed visiting artists during the Norfolk open studios event since I moved to the county in 2011. This year I am looking forward to participating for the first time. Since completing a Masters degree in Fine Art last year I have been working on some new drawings and handmade books using various bindings.”



## **Yusuf Keten (Painter) Brochure ID 221**

Yusuf was inspired to create by watching his eldest sister in Turkey working with ceramics, copper and other materials. Today, Yusuf creates abstract paintings, creating layers with the use of brushes, pallet knives and his fingers.

Yusuf said: "I create my work in a large, light conservatory which is virtually in my garden. This means that the seasons, and the sounds and smells that go with them, help relax my mind, letting my imagination work to its best ability. English is not my first language and I feel that I can express myself through my paintings and love the idea that other people take on my work and put their own interpretation on to it, and enjoy having conversations around this."

This is the first time Yusuf has taken part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios. He said: "I am looking forward to meeting people and sharing and talking about my work with them."



## **Norwich**

### **Bill Botten (painter and 3D artist) Brochure ID 158**

Bill is taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios for the third time and work from his studio at his home in Norwich.

"I started work as a studio boy at a London advertising agency and progressed to art director of Sphere Books before leaving to go freelance in my early 30s. I have designed/illustrated the jackets of some 240 hardback and 40 paperback books including James Bond titles, The Spy Who Loved Me, Moonraker, For Special Services and Icebreaker. The Spy Who Loved Me was done as a 2ft x 3ft oil painting, and the original work was sold at a specialist Sothebys sale in the late 1980s.

"I have been an artist for over 60 years, and am lucky enough to have painted full time for the last 40. This is the third year I have been part of the Open Studios, and I'm looking forward to meeting all our visitors. My whole house will be open every day with over 50 paintings and three-dimensional figures on display.



## **Broadland & Great Yarmouth**

**Colin Palmer (Painter)** Brochure ID 060

Colin is participating in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios for the first time

“I was always interested in art at an early age, our neighbour in Gorleston, being the highly collectable oil painter Geoffrey Chatten who, on my return from school, regularly inspired me with his tales about the endless discoveries in, and joy, of art.

“I passed my O level in art at school and my teacher encouraged me to go to Art College but in the 60's art students were often regarded (unfairly, of course) as drop outs and I can vividly recall my Mother saying "don't bother with Art College dear there's no money in that ".

“So, I became a Solicitor instead and eventually was able to set up my own business which my wife and I ran for over 30 years but that never left much spare time for Art which hobby I now regret not making space for.”

After retiring in 2014, Colin has painted more than 50 pictures including portraits, landscapes and pets.

“It seems my work has improved with practice even though I don't paint every day. I tried watercolour and pastels with some success but find the medium of oil so wonderfully versatile and expressive and well worth the mess one can be left in and with!

“This is my very first year participating and it has been a great experience meeting fellow artists. There are some very beautiful pieces of Art being quietly produced in this area by truly modest people with natural talent.”



**Nicki Darrell (Ceramicist)** Brochure ID 042

Nicki's work tends towards the sculptural. She plays with texture, creating hand built works on a large scale, pushing the clay to its limits. Taking inspiration from natural forms she also works on smaller, decorative pieces.

Initially setting up a studio in a shed at the bottom of a garden Nicki now works in a purpose-built studio at home.

Nicki Said: “My interest in clay was kindled as a child by assisting a potter demonstrating throwing to tourists one day a week after school. Later I was taught basic throwing techniques which stood me in good stead when I returned to ceramics after an absence of thirty years.”

This is the second year Nicki has opened her studio to the public. She said: “It's good to feel part of an art community. The experience of welcoming visitors to my home studio last year was so positive; a chance to get feedback on my work and an opportunity to renew some old friendships and make some new ones.”



### **Della Ames (Painter ) Brochure ID 057**

“I am delighted to be taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios this year. Retirement from my job as a High School Librarian in September of last year has enabled me to focus on my passion for painting and I have been able to devote much more time to watercolours and experimenting with other media.”

Della has always dabbled with watercolour but when she moved to East Anglia from Somerset over twenty years ago, she attended an evening course on Drawing and Painting to learn the basics of watercolour painting.

Della’s college tutor encouraged her to apply to appear on the Channel 4 programme Watercolour Challenge, and was subsequently selected to appear on the show.

“I now have a studio in my garden where I spend many a happy hour. It is located in the front garden and is easily accessible. I am very much looking forward to welcoming visitors.”



### **Breckland**

#### **Ian Banstead (Woodturner) Brochure ID 007**

Ian is a visually impaired woodturner and is taking part in Norfolk & Norwich Open Studios for the first time, his studio is located in his garage at home in Attleborough.

Ian attended a one year course in woodturning at RNIB Manor House Torquay in Devon in 2003 and subsequently worked with woodturner Dick Waller.

“Dick made me two blocks to go against my grinder and he designed and made a bar with holes in it so I can put pins in the holes which is my guide as I cannot see a pencil line and I do my measuring with a talking tape measure.

“I only have two chisels which have been made specially for me and they are for putting tennons in the bottom of round timber to put into an expanding chuck for making boxes, vases etc.”

Ian uses English hardwoods such as ash, apple, cherry, laburnum, oak, walnut and foreign hardwoods acacia, bubinga, mahogany and zebranno.

