

Friends of the Mercer Art Gallery NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2015

Website: Harrogate.gov.uk/museums

Registered Charity No: 1011431

The Harrogate Open 2015

The 'biggest and best' open exhibition in North Yorkshire opened its doors on the 4 July at the Mercer Art Gallery and it runs until 8 November 2015.

This year's judges - Yorkshire landscape painter Katharine Holmes, Director of the 108 Gallery, Harrogate Andrew Stewart and Jane Sellars, Curator of Art for Harrogate Borough Council - had a busy selection day viewing the 620 artworks submitted by artists from across the district from which they chose 130 works.

All successful works were eligible for a prize fund of £1,200 with this year's top prize of £500 awarded to artist **JACQUIE DENBY** for her work *The Resonant Rumour of Sun*. Jacquie, who is based in Grassington, uses landscape as a starting point for her work and hopes that her art

'might connect with someone -with luck this happens occasionally!'

The runner up prize of £250 was awarded to Harrogate artist

LANEY BIRKHEAD for her print entitled *'A mill cannot grind with the water that is past...'* which features Sunny Bank Mill at Farsley.

In addition 6 highly commended artists received awards of £75:

VICTORIA BROOKLAND for *There is a word which bears a sword*
ROBBIE BURNS for *The Temptress*

HAZEL CLARK for *Blown Away*
WENDY B JONES for *The Cushion Maker's Washing Line*

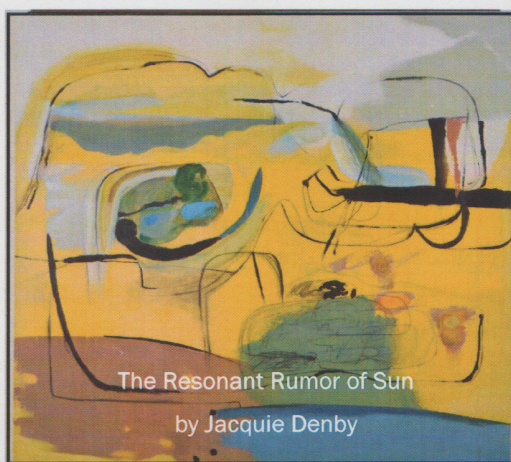
MAUREEN LITTLE for *The Listener*

JULIA POTTER for *Banaz Disregarded*

Visitors are given the opportunity to vote for their favourite work, the People's Prize, a special prize of £100.

This year's exhibition features a wide variety of art, ranging from large canvases to small drawings, with submissions ranging from art students at the start of their creative careers to established professional artists, all delighted to see their work displayed in Harrogate's beautiful Mercer Art Gallery in the biggest and best Open Art Exhibition in North Yorkshire.

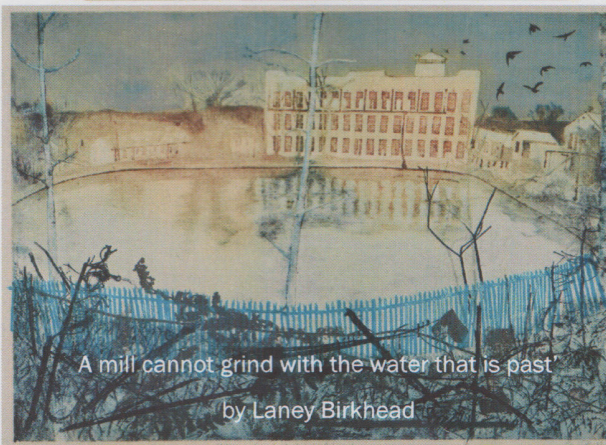
The first Open was in 2003 and they are held approximately every couple of years. The Harrogate Open gives everybody the opportunity to show their work in the Mercer Art Gallery, from art students to professional artists. This is a popular eagerly awaited exhibition. People are thrilled to be selected to show their work and they bring all their friends and family to the Mercer to see it.



Mr Barry Dodd CBE, the Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire announced the winners of the Harrogate Open 2015 exhibition and presented the prizes at the private view on the evening of Friday 3 July when the gallery was packed with artists and their friends from the Harrogate District. Mr Dodd commented on the high quality of the work on show -

Outstanding talent from such a small district' - and he spent time meeting the artists and congratulating them on their success.

The Friends of the Mercer Art Gallery provided the cash prizes. The Friends also support the gallery's work by organising fundraising activities, which helps to buy new works for the collection and to finance the blockbuster exhibitions for which the Mercer is well known.



The Harrogate Open has brought many new visitors to the gallery, and there have been record sales from the exhibition, where all work is available to buy at prices ranging from £50 to £5,000.

A series of artists' talks have been held throughout August with contributions from Maureen Little, Moira McTague, Ray Mutimer, Heather Foster, John Creighton, Ali Schofield, Julia Potter, Laney Birkhead, Josie Beszant and Catherine Sutcliffe-Fuller.

Jane Sellars