



Changing Spaces

Visual Arts Project by: Jonathan O'Dea

1. Contents

1. Introduction
2. Review by Valaire Grove
3. Images of artwork
4. CV
5. Press Coverage

Jonathan O'Dea
artist@jonathancodea.com
(+44) 07944454993

1. Introduction

In January 2012 Jonathan O'Dea received funding from Art Council England to develop a new visual arts project that explored the extensive development of the Olympic Park and its dynamic relationship to the Lee Valley Park. The project was supported by the Lee Valley Park Authority. The completed project formed part of the Create12 Festival in relation to the Cultural Olympiad. Another major part of the project was the development of a blog which logged the development of the project and invited people to view and comment on the artwork in its early stages. <http://www.changingspaces.blogspot.co.uk/>

Jonathan's aim was to produce art that was abstract, where people were curious about the materials and how the artwork was constructed. Linking this curiosity with the physical techniques and methods used to the regeneration of brown fields site (the Olympic Park) and the revitalising of the Lee Valley Park. This interest was partly fuelled by Jonathan's passed experience of working on construction sites over the years. From this experience, Jonathan developed a great interest in regeneration and how aspect of what goes unseen by the public when regeneration project are undertaken and its impact on our visual cultural and environment.

In order to inform the ideas behind the artwork The Olympic Delivery Authority provided Jonathan access to the Olympic Park. Additionally, the ODA and the Lee Valley Park Authority provided Jonathan with recycled building materials and found objects for inclusion in the final artworks. This access enabled Jonathan to capture the more abstract yet intrinsic physical changes - the minutia created by construction workers, park visitors, and natural phenomena - that people walk by every day but might never notice.

One of the main pieces produced was a site-specific sculpture constructed from a 4-metre high felled tree from the Lee Valley Park, supplied by the Lee Valley Park Authority. The other 11 artworks were be wall-mounted indoor sculptures constructed using recycled building material from the Olympic Park and found objects from the Lee Valley Park. The wall-mounted artwork was displayed by the Lee Valley Park Authority in the Waterworks Nature Reserves in East London, and the site specific sculpture is located outdoors at the Nature Reserve beside a public footpath that links the Lee Valley Park in Waltham Forest to the Olympic Park.



2. Review by Valerie Grove

Although I was closely involved in this project, my role in monitoring and documenting both the process and progress of Changing Spaces was defined by my collaboration with the artist, Jonathan O'Dea, and by my focus on editorial clarity in relation to the project's online presence. As a consequence, I didn't actually form an opinion of the work. However, now that the project brief has been fulfilled I can actually take a step back and approach the work, and the exhibition as a whole, from an analytical perspective rather than one of practicality.

This transition has been easier than anticipated for several reasons. Firstly, out of a total of 12 works I had only seen 3 in their finished state. The others I saw only in stages, either in the studio, or on-site in the case of the sculpture. It was only on completion of the hanging that I was able to see the totality of the project. So despite my familiarity with the sometimes literal nuts and bolts of the work and their contextual background, the exhibition itself was an unexpectedly original experience. The same applied to the sculpture. After documenting the early stages and the positioning of the piece, I had purposely avoided seeing it in its final state so this was also like seeing something fresh.

An understanding of the component parts of something does not necessarily entail an accurate perception of the complete and functioning whole. This applies particularly to the fact that the 11 wall-mounted works were united from the outset within a conceptual framework and therefore needed to cohere as a single visual entity, as well as stand as individual works in their own right.

In terms of individuality each piece largely succeeded. Grouped according to size and united in monochromatic and sometimes textural, material or structural motifs, the works were not only visually striking but created atmospheres that were not always comfortable. In the case of *Modification*, for example, an electric grinder with jagged holes gouged deeply into the handle had a rather disturbing undercurrent of violence not completely offset by the control imposed through its pristine, if texturally erratic, white surround.

This was also the case with the sharp wooden symmetry of angles exploding menacingly from the centre of *Transmutation 1*. However, the tension inherent in this work was balanced beautifully by its companion piece *Transmutation 2*, in which an 'implosion' created both a sublime visual spectacle and a range of imaginative possibilities.

This balance is evident throughout the show. Each work seems to be displayed with a particular companion. *Transfiguration* and *Industrial Landscape 1*, for example, contain familiar objects like breeze blocks, air vents and radiator parts, but where one suggests imprisonment, or an entrance into somewhere you probably don't want to go, the quiet beauty of the other relieves and reassures.

The three works that use the larger objects found in the Olympic and Lee Valley Parks are grouped together in a way that highlights both their industrial sensibility and their complete transformation. *Industrial Landscape 2* memorialises a solid iron pipe which was once part of a Victorian heating valve. *Changing Spaces 2* contains a perfectly straight line of London bricks split down the middle with an inlay of wood so polished it looks like metal. In *Changing Spaces 1*, however, a black pallet is convexly inlaid with a gravity defying circle of sharp, white wood chips. These seem incongruous as part of the piece itself but they constitute a motif that connects to the two other pieces in the show, *Deconstructed Landscape 1 and 2*.

The fragility and delicacy of these tiny splintered objects and their complex arrangements seem to be a huge material and compositional contrast to the solidity and weight of other works, but conceptually they are in tune. They are both shattered and composed simultaneously, which informs the sense of post-industrial dystopia that pervades this show. There is a constant negotiation between violence and control with the objects themselves looking like the remnants of a lost civilization that now command an awkward combination of nostalgia, reverence and fear.

The sculpture on the other hand is in the perfect location. Created from a whole tree trunk, *Intervention* stands outside in leafy surroundings a short walk from the main building. Although connections to the exhibition inside are evident in the materials and in the aesthetics of preservation and even fossilisation, there is a sense of this being a separate project. That said, the sculpture does have a similar post-apocalyptic feel but it seems more a triumphant survivor than a cadaverous artefact of loss.

Location and the use of wire mesh and steel straps, means that it changes constantly according to the elements consolidating its vibrancy. In the sunlight it glints and glitters and the rain brings streaks of rust from the nails hammered like ceremonial armour into the top of the trunk. The inevitability of change clearly written into this work is also a celebration of natural cycles and renewal and is both positive and forward looking. Much of the work inside does not allow the viewer that luxury. It is perhaps within this tension that the project is complete.

3. Images of Artwork



Title: Transmutation 1

Media: Sliced Wooden Pallet, Paint on Board

Size: 80x80cm



Title: Transmutation 2
Media: Layered Wooden Pallets
Size: 79x79cm



Title: Modification

Media: Angle Grinder with Corrugated Board, Paint on Board

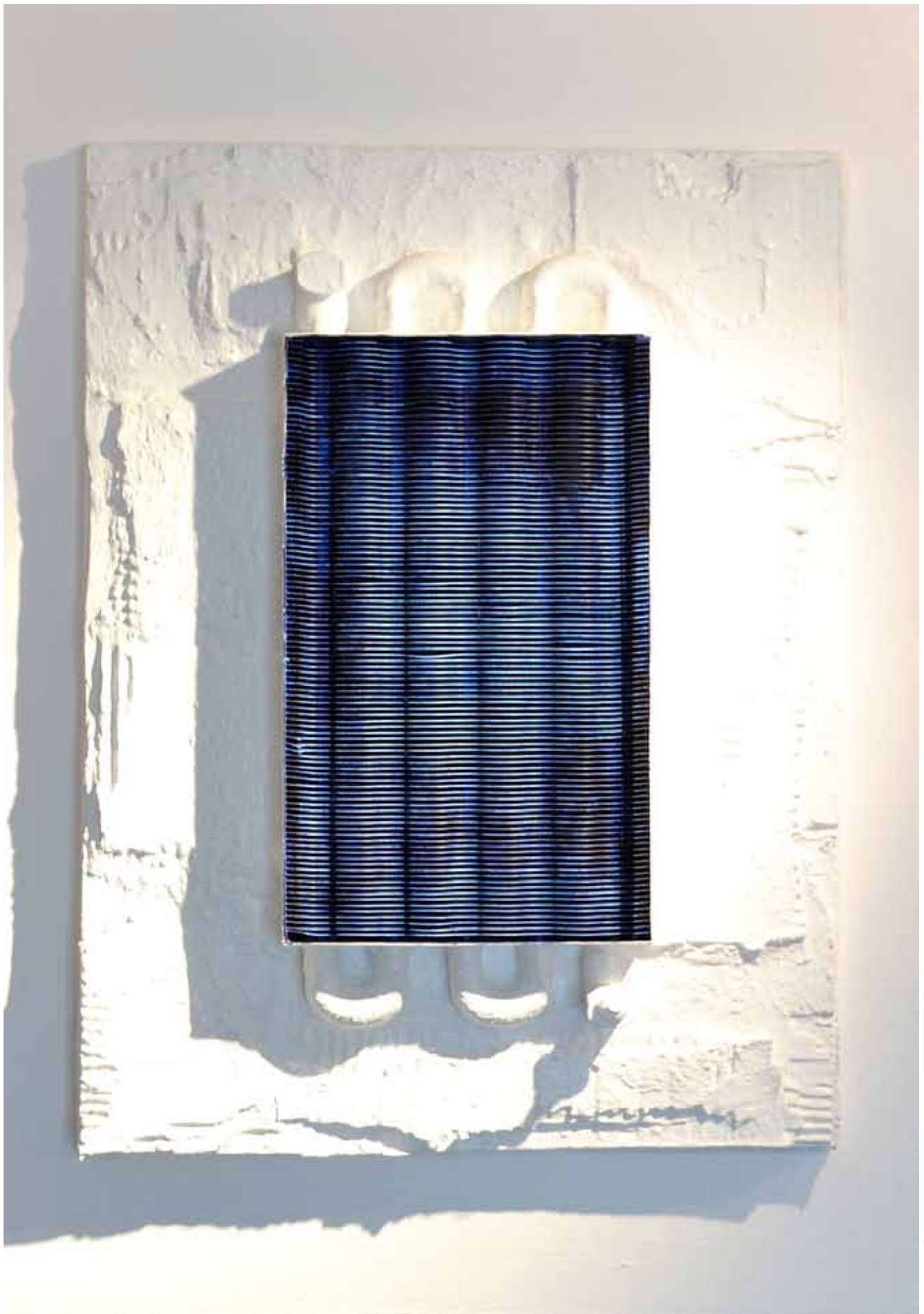
Size: 72x42cm



Title: Transfiguration

Media: Block with Air vent, Paint on Board

Size: 64x50cm



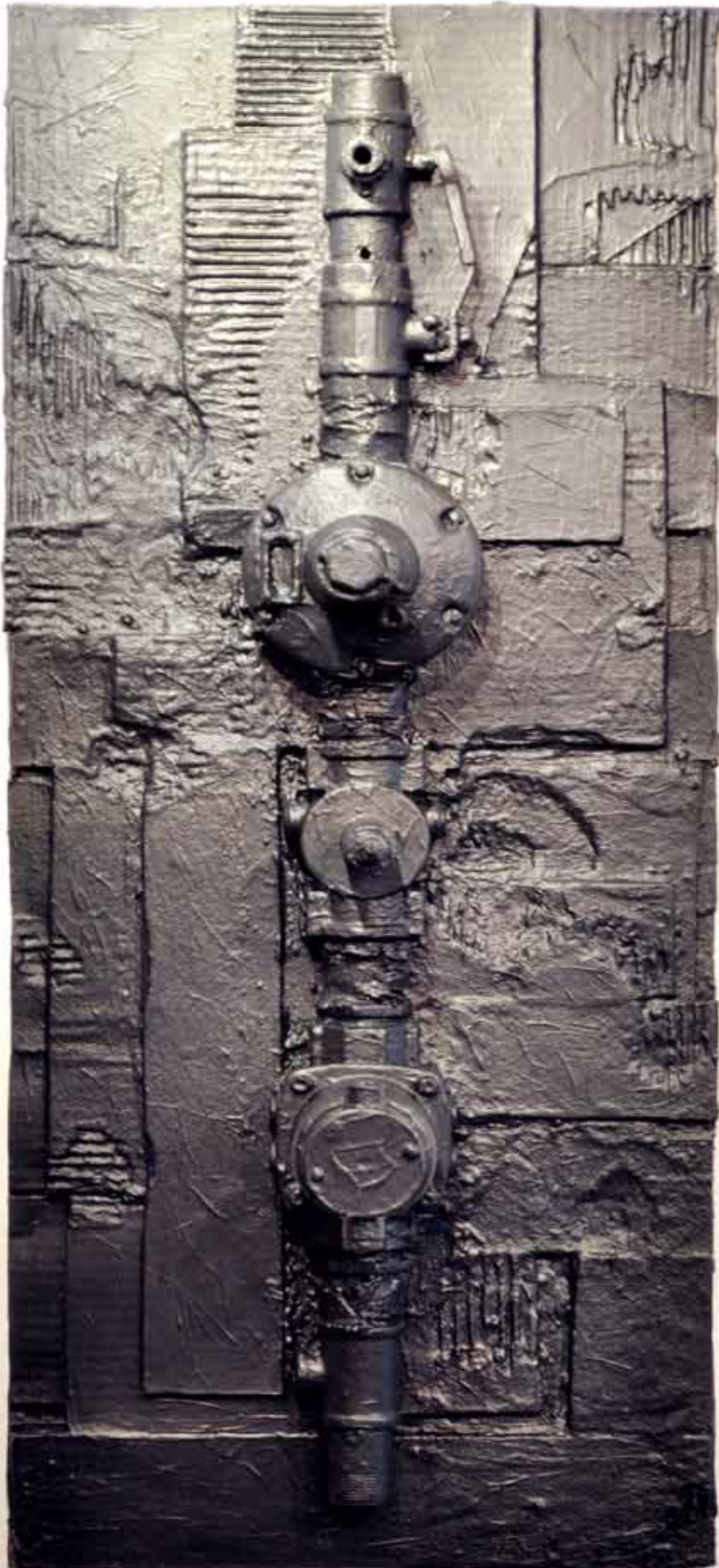
Title: Industrial Landscape 1

Media: Fridge Radiator on Board with Coragated Board

Size: 72x47cm



Title: Changing Spaces 1
Media: Wood Chippings, Paint on Pallet
Size: 122x69cm



Title: Industrial Landscape 2

Media: Industrial Boiler Valve, Corrugated Board, Paint on Board

Size: 122x69cm



Tile: Changing Spaces 2
Media: London Brick, Wood, Paint on Board
Size: 122x69cm



Title: Deconstructed Landscape 1
Media: Wood Chippings, Paint on Board
Size: 82x61cm



Title: Deconstructed Landscape 2
Media: Wood Chippings, Paint on Board
Size: 43x38cm



Title: Leaded Tree
Media: Wood and Lead on Board
Size: 70x35cm



Title: Intervention

Media: Tree with Wire Mesh, Nails, Screws and Metal support Straps

Size: 4 metres



Close up of Intervention

Tree with wire mesh, nails, screws and metal support straps

4. CV

Education

1995-1996 St Martin's Art College (Diploma in Foundation Studies, Art and Design)

1996-1999 London Metropolitan University (BA Hons, Irish Studies with History)

Further coming exhibitions 2012-2013

2013 Invited by the European Commission to show my work in Dublin for national festival, 'The Gathering Ireland 2013', and to mark the Irish Presidency of the European Union

2013 Invited to show my work at RichMix in a solo exhibition

Selected Solo Exhibitions 2011-2004

2012 Waterworks Nature Reserve, Lee Valley Park

2011 12 Star Gallery, European Commission, London

2010 Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow, London

2009 The Project Space, Barbican Arts Group Trust, London

2008 The Gallery, Haringey Borough Council

2007 Irish Cultural Centre, London

2007 Linenhall Arts Centre, Castlebar, Ireland

2007 Clare Hall, Cambridge University, England

2007 Coatbridge Gallery, Glasgow

2006 City Hall, London

2005 Foursome Investments, London

2004 The Gallery, Haringey, London

Selected Group Exhibitions 2012-2004

2012 Hackney Museum, Artist Eye Exhibition

2011 Bricklane Gallery, London

2011 Smokehouse Gallery, London

2010 Vestry House Museum

2009 Artworks, Barbican Arts Group Trust, London

2009 Tsinghua Academy of Arts & Crafts, Beijing, China

2008 Blackhorse Lane Open Studios, London

2008 Air Gallery, London

2006 Barbara Stanley Gallery, London

2006 Artefact Gallery, London

2005 Oisín Gallery, Dublin

2004 Artefact Gallery, London

2004 Irish Cultural Centre, London

Commissions 2009-2004

2009 Overlay Commission, Cultural Industries Development Agency, London
2008 Keeping It Simple Training, London
2007 Westmead Business Centre, London
2004 Collage Arts, London

Awards 2010-2003

2012 Arts Council England
2010 Arts Council England
2009 Apex Arts Grant Award
2003 Prince's Trust Grant Award

Press/Media/ Publications

2012 BBC London Radio
2012 Waltham Forest Guardian, London
2012 Irish Post
2012 Irish World
2012 The Yellow Advertiser, London
2011 The Irish Post, London
2011 Waltham Forest Guardian, London
2010 Create 2010
2010 The Guardian Guide
2010 Waltham Forest Guardian
2010 London Borough of Waltham Forest Cultural Strategy
2009 Waltham Forest Guardian
2008 Haringey People, London
2007 The Guardian Guide
2007 Cara (Aer Lingus magazine)
2007 Connaught Telegraph, Ireland
2006 Contexts: Arts and Practice in Ireland

freetime

MAY 17, 2012

YOUR LOCAL ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND LIFESTYLE GUIDE

guardian-series.co.uk

Art made out of scrap from Olympic site

Jonathan O'Dea talks to George Nott about how he has created artwork from old piping

EXHIBITION

ISPOKE to the fixer. They put me in touch. They said they could supply me with the stuff," says artist Jonathan O'Dea. "There was this clandestine meeting in the car park at Hackney Marshes, where the football pitches are. This guy came with a pick-up loaded up with stuff, and we did the hand-over."

On the shadowy fringes of the Olympic site last year, after much pulling of strings, Jonathan got his hands on a most valuable bounty. Not drugs or diamonds, but materials essential for his latest project, namely wooden pallets, bricks, blocks and sand.

Together with materials sourced from Lee Valley Regional Park, the rural corridor that runs through Waltham Forest to the Olympic site, the Irish artist has created a number of wall-mounted sculptures, *Changing Spaces*, that will go on display at WaterWorks Nature Reserve.

"The idea is to try and bring these two environments together in a physical way," says Jonathan, "looking at the



Jonathan O'Dea working. Below: in the Lee Valley

interconnection. I wanted to look at how these spaces are changing, the natural and industrial history of the areas and also play around with the idea of regeneration – of turning something old into something new."

The project had been bubbling in Jonathan's head since it was announced London would host the 2012 Games. Given rare access to the site with a select group of artists, Jonathan was inspired by the mammoth construction project.

"I was fascinated by the physical scale of the development of the Olympic Park and its structural complexities," says Jonathan, who has worked in construction in the past.

"I've seen from the groundworks up. It's quite an achievement – from an artistic point of view, it's actually unbelievable. There's a lot of physical labour gone into it, a lot of creative thinking as well."

The ten works present the salvaged materials in an unusual way, leaving the viewer questioning how each piece was created.

"I wanted to get across a sense of wonderment about how the artworks were produced," says Jonathan. "I deconstructed the materials I had and put them back together in a different way. Some of the materials are obvious, but you're not quite sure where they came from or what they were used for."

One features an old valve pipe from an industrial heating system found in an abandoned warehouse near the Lee Valley Park, another uses piping from an old radiator from an industrial fridge. For one piece, a wooden pallet is reconstructed to be completely unrecognisable.

"There's no way you can really prepare for these sort of things, it's not like you can do preparatory drawings. They just come together. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. I want people to ask – how did he do that?"

The artwork will be displayed at WaterWorks Nature Reserve Centre, Lammas Road, for three weeks from June 16, and will tour other Olympic boroughs later in the year. A larger outdoor sculpture will be located semi-permanently in the nature reserve.

● To follow the works in progress visit Jonathan's project blog at www.changingspaces.blogspot.co.uk

Tarby has a few funny tales to tell



Jimmy Tarbuck comes to Harlow

YOU know you've really made it in showbiz when you're known by just one name. Madonna, Prince, Elvis, Parky are household names, but none can tell a tale quite like Tarby – aka Jimmy Tarbuck OBE.

Have you heard the one about Tarby being in the same class at school as John Lennon? Or the time he swung his golf clubs with Bing Crosby? If not then you're in for a treat as one of the country's most evergreen performers and master of light entertainment swaps the London Palladium for the Harlow Playhouse for one night only to take audiences on a nostalgic trip down memory lane.

There's plenty more anecdotes and a barrel load of funny stories from Tarby's incredible career to be heard. He may have hosted all kinds of television shows, but Tarby is best in front of a live audience. This is sure to be a night that won't be fast forgotten.

● Jimmy Tarbuck is at The Harlow Playhouse on May 24 at 8pm. Details: 01279 431945

Keep up with what's going on in the area at guardian-series.co.uk



Controversy over free Party On The Pitch this weekend

NEVER mind the Queen's Jubilee, pop royalty will reign in Leyton this weekend as chart stars descend for the biggest party the borough has ever seen.

The aptly named *Party On The Pitch*, which takes place at Leyton Orient Stadium, will see four top acts take to the stage in a one-off spectacular.

You'll barely be able to move for hitmakers – the line-up features *X Factor* winner Alexandra Burke, platinum album selling trio Scouting For Girls, pin-up pop princesses The Saturdays (pictured) and self-styled 'Carib-pop' act Cover Drive.

The gig on May 19 is part of *The Big 6*,

a series of large scale events taking place in the borough during the Olympic year. More stars, including Rizzle Kicks, N Dubz's Fazer and Ms Dynamite will be stopping by in coming months.

The council aims to pay for these events through sponsorship and one-off income generated by the Olympics. The authority says that the cost of *The Big 6* could top more than £1.5million, meaning the majority of revenue it expects to make from the Olympics will be spent on the series of free events, which include fireworks displays and concerts.

The events have been criticised by anti-

cuts campaigners over its cost. The council says it is justified as millions of pounds in extra grants have been poured into the borough as a result of the Games.

"The Olympics is a once-in-a-lifetime event and we want to help our residents celebrate in style," says Cllr Chris Robbins, leader of Waltham Forest Council. "The Big 6 will help make the Olympic year unforgettable for our residents, bring the community closer together and provide our residents with the kind of memories that last a lifetime."

Details: www.walthamforestbig6.co.uk

George Nott



University needs skills, funds and materials to display Irish archives



BY FIONA AUDLEY

LIVERPOOL'S Institute of Irish Studies will open a public library allowing access to their 40-year archives of *The Irish Post* for the first time.

Historical British and Irish documents will also be on display if the centre based at the University of Liverpool can raise enough funds to support the venture.

Institute director Professor Marianne Elliot, pictured, said: "When *Irish Post* co-founder Brendan Mac Linn died his family gave us a full set of his Irish Post archives. We were delighted to get the beautifully bound collection and had always intended on opening it up to our students and to the public so they too can enjoy them and use them."

She added: "These archives are an important source of information as the paper has documented the history of the Irish community in Britain for more than 40 years."

"It is vital that they are preserved but also made available to the community or those with an interest in its history. Also to those students or academics who are undertaking research on the subject of the community."

"We believe this library is so important for all these reasons and it will grow as we will store other important documents relevant to the Irish community as we acquire them."

Sinead Mac Linn donated the full set of archives to the Institute when her father passed away in January 2009.

A second set was donated to the Irish studies department at the London Metropolitan University — these archives are not open to the public.

As plans for the Liverpool Institute's new library get underway, the team there are hopeful that the Irish community across Britain will back their venture by donating skills, materials or funds to support the project.

"We have a space in the institute which would be an ideal room to hold this library," Professor Elliot said. "Of course we need to renovate and refurbish it so it's fit for that purpose. We must also acquire the furniture and fixtures needed to support an archive of this size."

The Belfast-born historian added: "Ultimately we will need support and funds to see the library dream become a reality. With such a vast community out there and so many working in firms or industries which could help with a project of this sort, we would be very keen to hear from anyone who can offer some assistance, help or advice."

For further information or to contact the Institute of Irish Studies to offer support for the library project contact Dorothy Lynch on 0151 794 3887 or email dorothy@iisc.ac.uk

Green light for O'Dea's Olympic art project

IRISH artist Jonathan O'Dea, pictured, has succeeded in a lengthy battle to acquire British Government funding for an Olympics inspired art project.

The Mayo-born man's grant application to Arts Council England was accepted this week. He is now itching to get started on a series of artworks made from recycled building materials found on the Olympics site.

Over the coming months Mr O'Dea, who has lived in England since he was 12, will produce 10 3D pieces reflecting the changing environment around the development of the Olympic Park.

"If I didn't get support from the Arts Council it would have made the project unrealistic to deliver because of its scale and ambition," he said. "But their support is great, and a real endorsement for my ideas and my cultural contribution to London and the Cultural Olympiad."

He added: "As this is the second time I have received funding from the Arts Council, I would really like to thank them for backing

this exciting project."

The Waltham Forest-based artist's project will form part of Lee Valley Regional Park's cultural programme leading up to the launch of the Olympic Games and its cultural legacy.

An exhibition of his finished work will be shown in June at the WaterWorks Nature Reserve.

WaterWorks Centre Manager Angie Oliva said: "We are proud to be working with Jonathan and hosting his exhibition. The art project is an innovative way to encourage the local community to be more involved with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

The exhibition will be part of the Create Festival programme for 2012. O'Dea's wall mounted artwork will be displayed in the WaterWorks Nature Reserve indoor exhibition space for two weeks, while the largest sculpture will be permanently located outside in the Nature Reserve.



Birmingham call for volunteer counsellors

THE newly-rebranded Irish in Birmingham organisation is calling on the community to volunteer their time to help families dealing with bereavement.

After experiencing an increase in those seeking such services at their Digbeth hub the group have purchased a comprehensive training kit to prepare volunteers willing to assist the service.

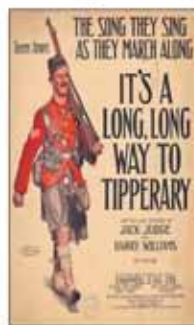
An IIB spokesperson said: "A volunteer who offers help and support to people at a deeply vulnerable time in

their lives requires commitment and resilience. We are seeking to recruit a number of volunteers to help us to support people experiencing loss by bereavement."

Those who want to get involved should be able to offer at least three hours a week and be available for supervision on a regular basis. They should contact Paula on 0121 604 6111.

Training will commence on the March 7 and IIB hope to launch their new bereavement service in April.

Stalybridge ready to celebrate Tipperary links



CENTENARY celebrations of the song *It's a Long Long Way to Tipperary* will be held at the end of January — in the English town where it originated.

Many people wrongly believe the song is an Irish song, when in fact it was composed in Stalybridge Greater Manchester — no less than 315 miles from Tipperary — 109 years ago as part of a pub bet.

English songwriter Jack Judge wrote the timeless tune in the New Market Inn on January 30, 1912, after accepting a five-shilling bet that he couldn't produce a song to perform the following day.

Just two years later at the outbreak of World War I the song was adopted as a marching tune by the British army, in particular the 7th Battalion of the Connaught Rangers,

which numbered many with Co. Tipperary roots among its ranks.

And in World War II, the song, which tells the story of an Irishman who is forced to move to London to find work and leave his sweetheart behind in Tipperary, once again became a hit amongst British soldiers.

However, unlike the town of its origin, Tipperary town has capitalised on its association, even erecting a statue of the English songwriter in the town centre. They have also cashed in on the link by organising the Tipperary Song Of Peace Contest every year, which lures entrants from all over the world. The long-running Tipperary Peace Convention gives an annual award to global peace-makers — previous recipients include

Nelson Mandela and Bill Clinton. However, residents of Stalybridge hope to finally get the recognition they deserve when they celebrate the wartime hit's centenary on January 30.

Joyce Raven, who runs the town's Historical Society, said: "It's a big thing because everyone knows it's a song that has gone through two world wars. It's very much knitted in with Stalybridge."

The song, which has been performed by everyone from Julie Andrews to Judy Garland, is famous the world over. When The Rolling Stones performed in Dublin in 2003, even guitarist Keith Richards got a huge ovation when he spontaneously belted out the song as a tribute to his thousands of Irish fans.

CROWN MORAN HOTEL LONDON

Dine for 2 Valentine's Weekend 12th & 13th February 2 starters (2 mains) 2 puddings 1 bottle of wine All for £40	Romantic Valentine's Day Dinner 14th February 3 Course Meal (1 Unit Entertainment) Call for Valentine's Menu £25pp
Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Package From £149 Per Couple Bed & Breakfast From £99 Per Couple *Offer subject to availability, terms & conditions apply	
Call 0208 452 4175 Email: crownreservations@moranhotels.com www.crownmoranhotel.co.uk	

ENTERTAINMENT

freetime

A mosaic of peoples and places

Bob Gilbert has published his walking book *The Green London Way* again, writes George Nott

BOOK

ORIGINALLY published in 1991, *The Green London Way* was an eponymous guide to the first long-distance footpath encircling London, and one of the first entirely urban long-distance walking routes in the country.

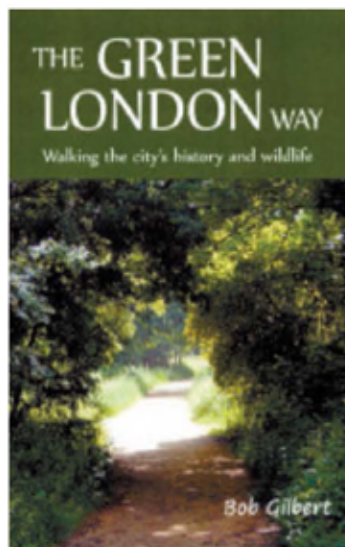
A lot has changed since then: the suburbs have spread further still, the Olympic site has transformed Stratford completely – and so have our attitudes to urban walking.

“What was once considered as a rather cranky idea has now been enthusiastically embraced,” says Bob Gilbert, author of a new revised edition of his popular book, *The Green London Way: Walking the City's History and Wildlife*. “It marks a change in attitude, an acceptance of a different sort of landscape, and a realisation of the richness that an urban exploration has to offer.”

The footpath is a circular route of nearly 110 miles, which Bob has divided into 18 walks including one that takes in Finsbury Park, Walthamstow Marshes and the River Lea, and another that winds from Clapton to Victoria Park before continuing to Stratford and the Olympic Park.

The book, which appeals to both the armchair and active walker, provides a wealth of information and route maps, describing the social and natural history of the areas it covers.

“In the last 20 years,” says Bob, a long-standing campaigner for the protection of urban open spaces and public access, who lives with his family in east London, “we have seen the decline of a number of



species and there have been changes in the plant world too.

“Perhaps the most significant area of change has been the continuing pressure of development, at a pace that seems to belie the existence of any natural or international recession. Change in a city is not just inevitable but healthy – and it has brought some improvements to *The Green London Way*. But what is disturbing is the pace and scale of the change. The result has been a new anonymity, a loss of neighbourhood and local identity.”

Each walk route is accompanied by a detailed local history and information

about the wildlife, common and rare, to look out for at each spot. It's clear from the guide that despite major man-made developments, London's wildlife remains rich and diverse.

“The impact of the human species is obvious and the growth of the city has brought with it development and destruction – and an enormous loss of life forms and their habitats,” says Bob, who in his varied career has been a stand-up comedian and director of sustainability at a London local authority.

“But there is another side to the picture. The story of London's wildlife is an illustration of the tremendous recuperative power of nature. It is demonstrated in almost every street; by the lichen which grows on the pavement, the moss which grows on top of a wall and the wild plants that spring up at the bottom of a lamp-post.”

Bob's writing makes you want to get out in the open and experience the landscape for yourself.

Of Walthamstow Marshes he says: “It has a strange and brooding beauty, a beauty which is unconventional, with its flat, brown and wind-blown reed-lands set in a landscape of pylons, railways, tower-blocks and industry.”

A living commentary of London, the book will inspire you to explore for yourself our fascinating city.

“London survives,” adds Bob, “as a wonderful mosaic of peoples and places and cultures, of history and natural history, and an almost inexhaustible store of stories.”

● *The Green London Way: Walking the city's history and wildlife* is available now on Amazon and bookshops. Details: www.lwbooks.co.uk

SOUND ADVICE

Your guide to the very best local music

with DANIEL BINNS

Best gigs this week

AMERICAN band Jamie Williams and the Roots Collective headline the Redbridge Green Fair Live Music Club this Friday night.

They play a warm mix of blues and country.

Also on the bill are solo singer-songwriters Nigel Mear and Michael Silver.

Entry is £4, or £2 for under 18s.

It takes place at Ilford Sports Club, at Cricklefield Stadium in Ilford High Road, and begins at 8pm.

Scottish folk expert Mick West plays Walthamstow Folk Club with skilled guitarist Frank McLaughlin on Sunday. It's at Ye Olde Rose and Crown in Hoe Street and doors open at 7.30pm.

Admission is £6, or £5 for concessions.

The Battered Saucepan Blues Band play the same venue at a free gig the day after, Monday. The lively tunes get going from 8.30pm in the main bar.

Trumpeter Jay Phelps leads an ensemble at the East Side Jazz Club in Leytonstone on Tuesday.

The group includes Jean Toussaint on the saxophone, pianist Reuben James, bassist Ben Haselton and Clive Fenner on drums.

Admission to the club, at the Lord Rookwood pub in Cann Hall Road, is £6. It starts at 8.30pm.

Acoustic songwriter Al Neville takes to the stage at Loughton Folk Club for a gig in aid of charity Cancer Research tonight.

Tickets are £3 on the doors, which open at 8pm.

It's at the Loughton Club building in Station Road.

Canadian “murder ballads” singer Ben Rogers has a show at the Birkbeck Tavern in Langthorne Road, Leytonstone this Sunday.

Support comes from the Green Rock River Band and Matt Lax.

The gig, which is free, starts at 6pm.

● Got a gig? Email dbinns@london.newsquest.co.uk

Balloon magic

DANNY Schlesinger is an international balloon maestro. He's not your usual squeaky-poodle-dog balloon maker.

His show, *Danny and his Amazing Balloons*, features some truly incredible inflatable stunts including the Human Balloon and tricks with Poppy the Balloon Hound.

● Dugdale Centre, Enfield Town on June 17 at 3pm. Details: 020 8907 6680



Follow @LondonFreetime on Twitter

WHAT'S ON

Shows ■ Plays ■ Gigs ■ Classes ■ Exhibitions ■ Events ■ Sport ■ Activities ■ Jumble Sales

Find out what's on in the area at www.guardian-series.co.uk/freetime

Making a sculpture that's rotten to the core



Jonathan O'Dea's rotting tree work. Insert: working on the tree

THE plan was straightforward. Artist Jonathan O'Dea had already sourced and selected the felled tree from which he would create his sculpture. All that was left to do was carve into its trunk before installing it in Lee Valley Regional Park.

But he hit a snag. “I had a major problem,” he says, “I went to the site to begin working on the sculpture only to discover that the tree was completely rotten.”

“This was a real blow, and let me tell you, depression started to set in rapidly!”

The site-specific sculpture was to form the centre-piece of Jonathan's *Changing Spaces* project – a series of ten three-dimensional abstract artworks that reflect on the changing environment of the Olympic Park and its connection to the Lee Valley Park.

The situation called for an emergency plan – “a mantra that should never be too far from the mind is Always Have a Plan B,” says Jonathan.

The artist has now encased the rotting tree within a tight wire mesh, and stabilised it with steel straps. It is

hoped that, with time, planted honeysuckle and other flora will grow around the tree, and the rotting trunk become a habitat for insects.

“It will eventually rot completely,” says Jonathan, “the plan is for it to rot in the cage, and not just fall over. It's going to change over time.”

“It's a strange form of sculpture, because it's not taking away, you're not carving, you're adding stuff to it. It's a reverse to the concept.”

The piece is now upright in Lee Valley Regional Park, with the final touches now being added. During its installation, passers-by were supportive of Jonathan's ‘Plan B’.

“The sheer fact the tree had started to rot forced me even further to come up with something new and different,” he says. “But I never thought that what I came up with would capture so many people's imagination: and when you're able to achieve this you know you have done your job as an artist.”

● The sculpture is part of a larger project, *Changing Spaces*, on display at WaterWorks Nature Reserve Centre, Lammas Road, from June 16 to July 8. Details: www.visitleevalley.org.uk

George Nott



Artist unveils Cultural Olympiad visual arts project

BY SHELLEY MARSDEN

WALTHAM FOREST artist Jonathan O'Dea is to deliver a very exciting visual arts project, entitled Changing Faces, in partnership with Lee Valley Regional Park Authority for the Cultural Olympiad in 2012.

Over the coming months, artist Jonathan will produce a series of 10 three-dimensional abstract artworks that reflect on the changing environment around the development of the Olympic Park and its connection to Lee Valley Regional Park.

The artwork will be produced from recycled building materials from the Olympic Park and found objects from Lee Valley Regional Park.

One of the main pieces will be a site-specific sculpture constructed from a 3-metre high felled tree from the Park, supplied by the Authority. The exhibition of the final artwork will be part of Lee Valley Regional Park's cultural programme leading up to the launch of the Olympic Games and its Cultural Legacy.

Jonathan's aim is to produce art that is abstract, where people are curious about the materials and how the artwork is constructed.

He said, "I want to link this curiosity with the physical techniques and methods used to the regeneration of brown fields site (the Olympic Park) and the revitalising of Lee Valley Regional Park. This interest is partly fuelled by working on construction sites over the years, and to see the visual impact of turning something old into something new."

WaterWorks Centre Manager for Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Angie Oliva said: "We are proud to be working with Jonathan and hosting his exhibition. The art project is an innovative way to encourage the local community to be more involved with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

From the beginning, audiences will have an opportunity to engage with the project in its development stages through on-line blog.



Jonathan O'Dea at work in his studio

giving. The blog will go live in January 2012 and people will see a variety of images and up-dates on the progress of the project. The blog will be updated once a week, allowing people to post comments about the work and provide feedback and opinion.

With the extensive development within the Olympic Park and its dynamic relationship to Lee Valley Regional Park, not only will the visual landscape of these environments see dramatic changes, but our cultural interaction with these environments will also alter. Often these changes will be physically obvious, but other more covert changes may also affect our physiological connections within these environments.

The exhibition of the finished work will be shown in June 2012 (dates to be announced) at the WaterWorks Nature Reserve, Lammas Road, E10 7NU. The exhibition will be part of the Create Festival programme for 2012.

The wall-mounted artwork will be on display in the WaterWorks Nature Reserve indoor exhibition space for two weeks, and the larger sculpture will be permanently located outdoors in the Nature Reserve.

Jonathan O'Dea was born in the West of Ireland but moved to London with his family in 1988, aged 12. He attended St Martin's Art College between 1995 and 1996 and since 2003 has presented several solo exhibitions.

• Visit the artist's website: www.jonathandea.com

Musician's gruelling cycle for local charity

BY DAVID HENNESSY

LIAM Connell, a Littlehampton resident known for his charity work, has just undertaken a mammoth challenge to help a local school for children with special needs.

When Liam learned that Palatine School in Durrington, which caters for children with moderate to severe learning difficulties, required a new school bus, he decided he would do something about it with a charity bike ride.

It was no ordinary bike ride either, as Liam took it upon himself to cycle almost 1,000 miles from John O'Groats in the far north of Scotland to Land's End in Cornwall.

Liam has raised in excess of £80,000 for good causes over the years, through both sponsored cycles and charity concerts with his folk band Bixby.

The 68 year old was joined for the entirety of his incredible journey by Rory Cavanagh, Barrie LeGrove and Sharon Fletcher while many others, including former world champion boxer Alan Minter, joined him for a time along the route.

The team raised more than £16,000, which surpassed their target of £15,000 for the new bus. Liam and everybody involved were delighted to see the school receive their new vehicle recently.

Liam's grandson Niall attends Palatine school and it was a calendar that Niall brought home that told Liam of the school's need: "They were asking for donations towards a minibus," Liam recalls. "I decided there and then to do something this year in order to raise enough money to buy the bus in one hit."



Liam (with glasses, centre) and his fellow fundraisers at Land's End

Headteacher Nick Dry was delighted with the efforts as the pre-existing buses all over twenty years old and had seen far better days: "We receive no funding in our budget for our minibuses, so raising money through fundraising is the only way we can sustain this."

Liam took up cycling when a fall some years ago left him with back and ankle injuries. "The accident prevented me from taking part in my favourite forms of exercise - running and swimming. So while convalescing I tried my hand at riding a bike instead."

In 1999 Liam completed a cycle from Cherbourg to St Malo in France to raise funds for St Barnabas Hospice, and has

continued to cycle in the name of charity ever since. Liam was recently presented with a special cup by Littlehampton Companions Club in recognition of his charity work.

Companions' Chairman Tony Squires said in his speech: "The Companions are really impressed with Liam's efforts to raise money for those less fortunate than themselves. His efforts have spanned many years and it was about time that all his hard work was recognised."

"I feel really honoured to receive this cup and the recognition that the Companions Club has given me," Liam said. "I must also thank my hard working team for helping me achieve so much."

Tributes to journalist Mary Raftery

BY DAN GRIFFIN

THE chairman of an organisation that helps Irish people in Britain who suffered abuse as children has paid tribute to journalist and broadcaster Mary Raftery who died last week.

Michael Waters, of Survivors of Child Abuse UK (SOCA), said that Ms Raftery was instrumental in exposing the truth about the abuse suffered by children at the hands of members of the Catholic clergy in Ireland.

"Her investigative skills and her reports and her television programmes were actually very important in bringing all this to the fore," he said.

Ms Raftery's documentary series on institutional abuse, *States of Fear*, prompted then Taoiseach Bertie Ahern to apologise to victims on behalf of the State when it was broadcast on RTE in 1999.

The documentary also led to the setting up of the Ryan Commission, which reported in May 2009 on the subject of abuse within Catholic industrial schools. It was also responsible for the setting up of the Residential Institution Redress

Board which, to date, has compensated about 14,000 people who have received an average €63,000 each.

A subsequent programme, *Cardinal Secrets*, investigated the cover-up of clerical child sex abuse in Dublin's Catholic archdiocese and resulted in the setting up of the Murphy commission which reported in November 2009.

She also came to the UK a number of times to address meetings and the like. "SOCA had numerous dealings with Ms Raftery," Mr Waters said. "She was always a very good person, very willing to listen, to know what happened and was deeply concerned to what happened to the people, the children, in industrial schools, and also all the children that were abused by clerics."

"Her aspirations were set very high and she achieved everything that she wanted to achieve. She didn't achieve for herself, Mary, she wanted to achieve for those that were abused, that's what she would always say."

"It was a passion for her and she would always say she wanted this to come out because of what happened to the men and women and children, and it needed to

come out," Mr Waters said.

As well as making documentaries, the last of which *Behind the Walls*, about Ireland's psychiatric hospitals, was broadcast last September, she also contributed extensive analysis pieces for *The Irish Times*.

Writing in that paper last week, Fintan O'Toole said: "At a time when the value and the values of professional journalism are being called into question, her work stands as one of the greatest examples anywhere of the capacity of a committed, skilled, and eloquent reporter to change things for the better."

Elsewhere, President Michael D Higgins has written to Ms Raftery's family to express his condolences, while Táine and Minister for Foreign Affairs Eamon Gilmore said Ireland owed her "a debt of gratitude," adding that she "uncovered the truth, even when it was a truth that a lot of people did not want to hear."

The Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin said that because of her work the Catholic Church was now a better place for children.

"Bringing the truth out is always a positive thing even though it may be a painful truth," Dr Martin said.

SPECIAL OFFER
IRISH WORLD APP ONLY
69P

WHAT A BARGAIN! Getting your copy of the Irish World app has never been so affordable!

For the month of January your Irish World app will cost only 69p per edition - so for only 69p you can download your Irish World edition wherever and whenever you like, to browse through at your leisure!

YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS IT!

To read our digital edition, please log-on to iTunes or www.pocketmags.com and search for The Irish World newspaper. It's as easy as that.

