



## **Stroud International Textile Festival 30 April – 22 May 2011 : Press 01.02.11**

Now in its sixth year, the International Textile Festival has established itself as the UK's principal festival that celebrates textiles, from traditional through to contemporary textile art, linked to related applied arts. Presented by Stroud International Textiles who are based in the glorious Stroud Valleys in the Cotswolds, this festival highlights the truly global language of textiles.

The 2011 International Textile Festival promises an exciting and stimulating programme of exhibitions, talks, workshops, events, performance and opportunities for debate and discussion. This small market town is host to the UK's only textile festival that broadens out to welcome performance art, theatre, and the applied arts with textiles at its heart.

The festival has a reputation for excellence and innovation while celebrating contemporary and traditional work from leading international artists and emerging artists, ensuring that it remains fresh and vibrant.

*‘The festival promises to showcase new work alongside well known international names. Always stimulating, innovative and diverse, the festival will bring world class speakers and artists to the Cotswolds. It is radical, inspiring and we hope fun’* Director Lizzi Walton

Each year the festival attracts thousands of visitors, who come from all over the UK and Europe to enjoy the high standard of work and programming. Now in its sixth year, the festival will present new exciting work from Dutch embroidery artist, **Tilleke Schwarz**, who is known for her humorous and provoking slant on society. Tilleke is exhibiting in the main exhibition, ‘Wordplay’, showing at the Museum in the Park alongside **Jessica Turrell**, **Clyde Olliver**, **Lauren Steeper** and rising young artist, **Debbie Smyth**. Each has their own slant on sampling and messaging.

The festival will highlight inspiring paths in woven textiles, with artists exploring cutting edge ways to step ‘Out of the Loom’ in a one day seminar that explores through debate and dialogue.

**Sue Hiley Harris** brings new woven sculptures using paper yarn dyed with indigo; **Jan Garside** weaves quiet lengths of cloth; contemporary willow from **Lizzie Farey**; and **Sophie Horton** who knits site specific work.

Japanese artist, **Elodie Watanabe** and French artist, **Corinne Gradis**, were inspired by a book on world traditions of basketry, which illustrated wonderful examples of African baskets. What followed is embroidered and appliquéd collages shown for the first time in the UK in ‘Relics’.

**Sophie Horton** works in the environment and will create a site specific temporary textile intervention in the landscape/townscape of Stroud. The starting point will be Stroud's industrial history. Utilising traditional knitting processes and materials e.g. wool and lurex she will make a dramatic art work that will transform the town's environment - whilst on show and in the memory, once the festival is over.

The festival is particularly pleased to be exhibiting for the first time at the New Brewery Arts centre in nearby Cirencester where a 'Festival Feast' will be shown. Included in the selected exhibitors will be 'Picnics' a collaboration between **Alice Kettle** and ceramicist **CJ O'Neill**.

Artists opening their studios include **Matthew Harris, Tim Parry Williams, Nick Ozanne, Dorothy Reglar, Studio Seven Textile** artists – visitors can wander round and see the intimate spaces where makers create their work. From garden sheds to large studios - meet and buy direct from the individual artists. These are just a few of the many artists who will be opening their studio doors.

Speakers in the festival include **Lesley Millar, Professor Simon Olding, Mary La Trobe Bateman, Ptolemy Mann, Laura Thomas, Jessica Turrell, Tilleke Schwarz and Jenny Band**.

Workshops with Tilleke Schwarz, Jessica Turrell, Sue Rangeley, Stitches in Time, The Big Weave.

The main venue remains the Museum in the Park with other venues clustered around the town.

World Textiles are represented with the now famous World Textile weekend sale and world travellers will be giving talks. This weekend draws crowds from all over the UK to enjoy the ethnic treasures sourced from all over the globe.

Showcasing new talent there will be work from second year BA degree students of Somerset College showing in venues including shop windows, around the town. Fashion students have designed and created jackets using locally woven cloth from Stroud's remaining cloth mill, Milliken Mill, who produce the famous billiard and tennis ball cloth.

A one day seminar- **Off the Loom** – will explore new innovations in woven textiles. Invited speakers are all forging new ground within the fashion, science, furnishings and art spheres taking weave into dynamic new arenas. From e-textiles to art for architectural spaces, each speaker is a pioneer in their discipline and is taking their expertise into unexpected arenas. The seminar will give plenty of opportunity for discussion, debate and exploration. This event has been sponsored by Renishaw plc.

Rounding up the festival on Saturday 21 May will be a **Vintage Shindig** so wear your best frocks and dance the night away to cool sounds.

All this takes place in the glorious Cotswolds where you are surrounded by hills and valleys, some great restaurants serving locally sourced produce; Stroud has relaxed cafes that will welcome you.

There are excellent Bed and Breakfasts and the Imperial Hotel in the centre of the town is offering a Festival Reduction on all rooms for festival visitors.

**End**

**Notes to Editors**

Festival office: Five Valleys Foyer, Gloucester Street Stroud GL5 1QG +44 (0)1453 751056  
Email: [info@stroudsit.org](mailto:info@stroudsit.org)

Free Festival Guide available

Dates: 30 April – 22 May 2011

Entrance to exhibitions free but talks and workshops are charged

The International Textile Festival is the only UK festival to focus on textiles and related multi discipline arts and crafts

For images and further details contact Director, Lizzi Walton on + 44(0)1453 751056 / 07767763607

Go to [www.stroudinternationaltextiles.org.uk](http://www.stroudinternationaltextiles.org.uk)

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=138780706140460>

Details and help on accommodation go to <http://www.cotswolds.com/> +44 (0)1453 760960

Or visit the Stroud International Textiles website where there are local Bed & Breakfasts and hotels offering discount prices, who will welcome you.



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