

ARTS' News

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Business Arts / Conservatory Gallery

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Autumn 2002

www.businessarts.co.uk

Paintings, textiles, installations,
paper vessels, handbags

by



Jean Page
Mike Ashley
Pat Derrick
Stuart A Green
Jo Hincks
Jenni Meredith
Pam Winbolt
Helen Ripley

26th September until 26th October

You are cordially invited to the Private View:
Wednesday 25th September 7 - 9 p.m.

Open Thursdays to Saturdays
and Sunday 6th October 11 - 5 p.m.

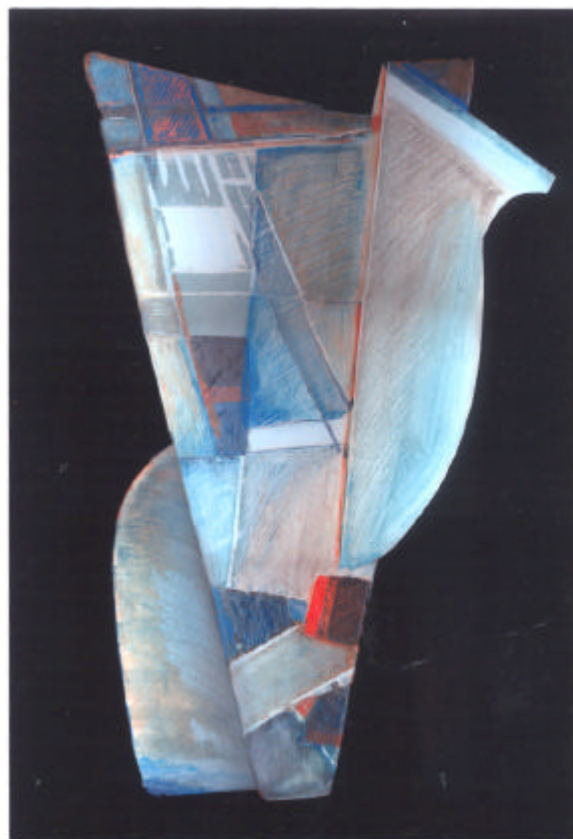
[HERE AND NOW ...](#)

PAM HUGHES 1918-2002: A Tribute by Richard Sell

I remember Pam as a most generous friend and a fine artist. We first met as members of the Cambridge Drawing Society in the '50s and I succeeded her as President some 30 years later. She was devoted to the Society and served it in various capacities, not least in running the Summer Sketching Group for many years. She was determined that no harm should come to the Society so I trod carefully when proposing any changes.

Pam's interests were wide and extended by her many travels with Norman in the course of his geological work. She drew continually and this enabled her to build up references for her etchings and wood engravings. She was equally at home in these media but needlessly felt less happy in watercolour. To me her most successful work was in wood engraving as she made it look so easy - and it is not! One of my favourites is *Endangered Species*, quite a small engraving, beautiful in itself for her sense of design and texture and her note of light and typically gentle humour. On the left in the background two Cambridge ladies gossip in the tropical house of the Botanic Gardens. On the right, deep in the foreground undergrowth, is a tiger faced with a moral dilemma. Small though his face is in the engraving you can see exactly what is passing through

his mind - whether to do the decent thing and forgo lunch ... or not. My own feeling is that the ladies did have their morning coffee in safety because Pam's humour was



Analytical, paper vessel by Jo Hincks

essentially kindly. If you try to engrave a puzzled tiger yourself, you will see just how good Pam's engraving is and know how lucky we are to have this legacy.

Latterly she struggled gamely to master working on vinyl as opposed to her beloved boxwood, and before her last illness she was able to produce new work for the Drawing Society. Increasing ill health made mobility very difficult but she never gave up. Last summer she invited us to a day at an RSPB event at Rutland Water. She was determined to see everything which meant she had to use an electric buggy - not easy for someone with no driving experience but she weaved her way (left-hand down a bit!) round all the stands so that nothing was missed. At the end of a long day she was still enjoying herself.

Pam was a member of the Society of Wood Engravers and contributed to their millennium print. I was thrilled when she gave us a copy which now has pride of place in our living room.

Her reputation in America as a wood engraver should not be forgotten. We greatly miss her.

Ed: A retrospective of Pam Hughes' woodcuts and wood engravings will be held here in the Conservatory Gallery in the Autumn of 2003.

NEWS FROM THE GALLERY

We are going to be a tiny bit boastful in this issue and mention that we are the proud winner of the **Cambridge Business Group Marketing Award 2002** presented at Clare College

Also we print below a selection of the heartening and quite unsolicited letters received after our last issue:

'...thanks for sending me this most enjoyable paper - a great range, always interesting. I love the Alphabet, and hope you'll start again at the beginning ... recipes, reviews etc. So I wanted to make sure you continue sending it to me when I move to Herefordshire (from London) and, from a well-known University Library:

'Thank you very much for this - we look forward to reading it.'

As this is the silly season, and whilst we are blowing our own trumpet, we may as well add that this Newsletter is sent to 5,000+ addresses, abroad as well as nationally, and many people have told us how they even re-photocopy our photocopy to send on to their friends or families, or keep the emailed versions on floppy disc. This is true devotion, and for that we must thank all our contributors for making it so interesting.

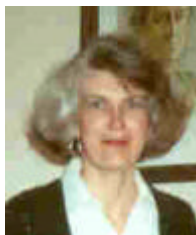
OUT AND ABOUT...

BUSINESS AS USUAL: the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition by Robin Stemp

It used to be said that you could write the review of the Summer Exhibition at the RA without going to the bother of seeing it. I have never done that but, to amuse myself, I wrote an outline of what I thought it might be like, this year, on the train going down to London. Hoping that my preconceptions would be wrong, I wrote the words 'dull', 'safe', 'repetitive' and 'controlled' with a large question mark.

Having seen most Summer Exhibitions since the early 1960s when, in hat and gloves, I would join the other cool dudes in the murmur of dissent without which no Summer Exhibition would be complete - too dull, too safe, too many landscapes, boardroom portraits, interiors with or without nudes seen *contre jour*, too many tasteful still lifes... We were disaffected with the whole establishment circus. And that, I think, is exactly what the RA Summer Exhibition is and should be all about - the establishment circus.

For those who like their show reassuringly the same, there is little there this year to rock the comfort boat. In essence, little has changed since last year and the year before, except that vital ingredient - humour. Art is always a mirror to society and in the '80s and early '90s there was usually a daft exhibit, grabbing the headlines. This year it is all quite subdued. The only item which has been much in the press is **Alan Jones'** *Woman* got up as a refrigerator. A sanitised harpy; Miss Whiplash available on the NHS.



Her companions, in identical cling film costumes, stare out at the world without engaging, like characters from a well



run brothel, *sans* soul, *sans* sex, in their clean efficiency. But, in their isolated posturing, are they not like so much of
Contained Serenity, oil on canvas

today's relationships? Art reflecting life. Elsewhere, the mood is low key and controlled, tasteful, empty. Dull? Yes, very, very dull.

In one of the galleries hung by **Ken Howard** of open submissions, he has stated that he would be happy to have breakfast under any one of the works - I am so glad I don't share his breakfast table. Well executed, nicely framed, easy on the eye - but there were hardly any there which told of life in the 21st century. Most could have been created at any time since WW2. Perhaps that is the point. Perhaps it is this continuation which is important. The fact that people eat, sleep, walk the dog, make love, look at the landscape, in exactly the same way as their parents and grandparents. Art reflecting life, indeed, in the cautious tread of trends already past.

And yet, in the streets outside, there is an air of cautious optimism, as the atmosphere of the Jubilee and the World Cup takes hold. Will this mood last and will it be reflected in next year's exhibition? I really, really hope so.

Ed: I loved wearing hats, gloves and matching accessories and keeping to strict colour codes - 'green and blue will never do' - as was the custom in those far off days of the '50s and '60s when life was simpler.

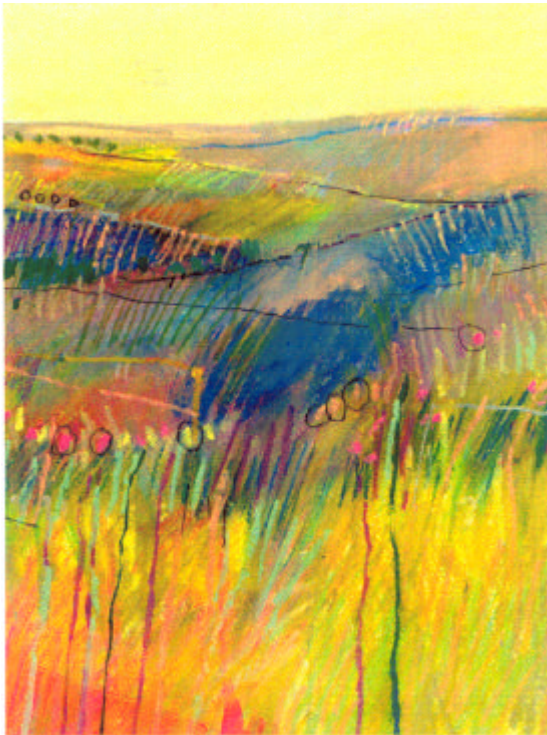
MUSINGS...

REFLECTIONS ON LANDSKIP: Thoughts by Anthony Day

It is hard to believe that **John Constable's** Suffolk had no prominent place in English art before his time. **Gainsborough** found it earlier, of course, but moved sadly on from his 'landskip' while Constable remained largely in his back yard, taking the shortest route to the nearest subject. As we all know, his possession of the landscape ensured its survival intact and we needed more like him in different parts of the country. But for his occupation, what would the Stour Valley be like today?



And how I wish those legions who swear by Constable, many to the exclusion of all others, would allow him to heighten their sympathy towards British landscape now.



Landscape, oil on canvas by Stuart A Green

Sadly they'll continue to conform to this machine age of tidiness and order, leaving nothing to survive by happy neglect. Englishness has been on the wane for the last fifty years, leaving people with little sense of indigenous growth. Gardening has become exhibited control, foreign shrubs chosen before anything English, and we landscape painters find many an alien stem invading our home fields. In my fen district the isolated cottages and farmhouses have grubbed out their elegant willow, their glorious hawthorns, their darling mirabelles that blossom in February and drop ripe plums in July and replaced them with the egregious leylandii - windbreaks, yes, but smelling like alpine blizzards with never a flower, a berry or change of leaf the year through. What has happened to the hearts of the Englishmen who live behind them? That man Leyland who arrived at this hybrid by chance should be commemorated in the rogues' gallery at *Madame Tussauds* for blotting the English scene more disastrously than the 'satanic' mills.

Abroad they laugh at the English obsession with mown grass at the expense of anything longer and prettier. The sounds of summer in our villages today grow no louder than the chorus of lawnmowers competing for smoothness, crushing all else that grows. Nor do those who love these machines confine themselves to their own properties. If there's a grass verge across the road they'll mow that too against the highway policy and any greensward beyond the back fence will get its hair cut too, a bit farther each time in the misguided cause of public spiritedness.

Any meadows left now are soaked in nitrogen to stifle all but grass, then over-grazed. Farmers annually slash down hedges to within a yard of the ground, mostly in autumn when the fields are clear, thus destroying winter food for the birds and their habitat for spring. Most farmers are atrocious countrymen. The National Trust in my village has long since joined the manicuring madness, having the

power tools to play with. Bulldozers, hedge-slashers, chainsaws, trimmers and lawnmowers are fun to use and drain little of human energy. In Constable's day it took an age to reduce a fallen tree to firewood. Show our property managers now a tree and they'll reshape it in no time, conforming to uniformity like the rest, for nature doesn't quite know what it's about. This isn't conservation but intense gardening, showing what you've done to earn your money. The tree planting is often misguided. Lining fen routes are mountain ash and alders that were never there before in their history. I planted oaks for the future, but only by the roads and paths in line, forced into uniformity by farmers who wouldn't accept them for the outer landscape. We just can't put back what was lost. Are they, I wonder, having not been there for so long, equally constricted by the standards of uniformity in force today in the village of East Bergholt, surrounded though they are by the cherished landscape of the miller's son?

Raise your voice against this and you become an impractical crank - or a loopy artist! Before you ask, I still have a wild place in which to hide and I've painted it to death to stay there, but I fear for its future, expecting any day a new scheme to clear it out - to 'improve' it, as they say.

Ed: Sorry Anthony, but perhaps it was ever thus, as the following article explores.

THE ORIGINS OF THE ENGLISH LANDSCAPE GARDEN by Philippa K Croft

Although formal gardens in the French manner were still being created in England until the middle of the eighteenth century, a change in attitude towards man's relationship with nature began to evolve around the 1730s and gave rise to an era that was to witness England's greatest contribution to the art of garden design.

The poetry of **Alexander Pope** and the example of his own imaginative gardens at Twickenham had reflected **Addison's** views regarding the rejection of formality, but it was a slow transition from the enclosed linear style to the open undulating landscapes that were to come. **Charles Bridgeman** produced designs that placed formal gardens around the house but used the device of the dry ditch or *Ha-Ha* to allow uninterrupted views across the countryside. The asymmetrical garden he created at Stowe is one such example.

The Georgian gentleman was educated in the classics and undertook the 'Grand Tour', seeing for himself the temples and ruins of ancient Italy. Soon the English park began to echo the countryside around Rome with its Palladian architecture and symbolic relics. Inspired by the 'ideal' landscape recorded by painters such as **Claude Lorrain** and **Gaspard Poussin**, **William Kent** built the gardens around Chiswick House. This was for the foremost patron of the arts, **Lord Burlington**, to whom Pope had dedicated his Epistle on gardens in 1731, with the plea "*Consult the Genius of the Place in all*".

Kent's most imaginative landscape was probably his design for the informal garden at Rousham, with vales and glades containing classical references at every turn. He also continued **Bridgeman's** work at Stowe, enhancing it with his own original 'picturesque' vision and smoothing away any remaining traces of formality. The Elysian Fields and the Shrine of British Worthies are part of his work.

One of the most complete and best preserved examples of landscape art of the period is Stourhead. Created over

more than thirty years by **Henry Hoare**, it was designed as a



series of 'prospects' with classical figures and temples, to be discovered by the visitor as he meandered through the wooded slopes around the artificial lake.

Babylon - Keep Out, acrylic & tissue by Stuart A. Green

Whilst the landed aristocracy were opening the boundaries of their gardens to encompass views of the countryside, the more provincial Englishman was bringing the countryside into his garden. Winding paths, serpentine rivers and rustic buildings combined the new style of gardening with farming, giving rise to the ornamented farm, or *Ferme Ornée*. A well-documented example (no longer existing) was The Leasowes, near Halesowen, designed by its poet owner, **William Shenstone**. It contained fine trees, a ruined chapel, and structures which recalled a medieval English rather than Italian ancient past.

'Gothick' buildings became fashionable as the enthusiasm for the English landscape garden increased, as did the inclusion of ruined towers, follies, grottoes and hermitages, often complete with resident hermit! These were all suggestive of the more wild and gloomy aspects of the natural landscape. The poetic stimulus of such features and views, valued for their qualities of melancholy and mystery, were linked to philosophical ideas of the 'Sublime' and beautiful, presaging the Romantic movement which gained momentum in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

But probably the person who had the most important influence on the design of English gardens from the 1750s was **Lancelot Brown**. Working with William Kent at Stowe during the 1740s, from 1751 Brown established himself as a landscape architect. Over the next thirty years 'Capability' worked for many of the landed gentry, planting clumps of trees and creating lakes to follow the natural contours of the land, and replacing all traces of formal gardens and straight tree-lined avenues with large sweeps of lawn reaching up to the windows of his clients' houses.

Brown exploited the natural potential of a site, avoiding any allusions to ancient history, but in so doing he managed

to obliterate much of the garden's history too. He redesigned nearly 200 gardens, and in the course of a generation changed the face of the English landscape.

**FRAME SALE IN THE GALLERY SATURDAY 14th
SEPTEMBER 11 - 5 p.m. From £1.00 ea.**
**SPOKEN LANDSCAPES - an
alphabetical anthology of landscape
poetry selected, introduced and
illustrated by Mark Handley,
interwoven with our own art anthology**



'U' is for ...

**SIR THOMAS URQUHART OF
CROMARTY
(1611-60)**

The eccentric Scottish translator of **Rabelais** gave his works quite extraordinary titles (at least to those of us no longer very conversant with Ancient Greek), such as *Trissotetras (A Most Exquisite Table for Resolving all Manner of Triangles)*, *Pantochronocanon* (proving his direct descent from Adam and Eve), *Ekskubalauron* and *Logopandecteision*. As a Royalist he spent much of his adult life on the run from Puritans, (and also his creditors), and at the Battle of Worcester lost a considerable quantity of writing with his luggage. The legend is that he died in Paris of a fit of excited laughter on hearing of **King Charles's** Restoration. I suppose this could be interpreted in two ways, as a sign of joy, or of incredulity. I have been unable to find anything resembling a landscape among his execrable verses but consider the following pointless epigram rather funny, and can almost see what he is getting at:

THE PARALLEL OF NATURE AND FORTUNE

A fly, which is a despicable creature,
Obtaines, beside her wings, six
feet from Nature;
Yet four feet only she is pleas'd to
grant
To the huge body of an elephant;
So Fortune doth withdraw her gifts
from some,
Whose real worth surpasseth theirs
on whom
She hath bestowed them, as forcibly
As elephants in strength exceed a fly.



...for MAURICE UTRILLO (1883-1955)

Maurice Utrillo's mother was **Suzanne Valadon**, a beautiful but wild 18-year old artist/model who was encouraged by **Renoir**, **Degas** and **Toulouse-Lautrec**. Although it was suspected that **Puvis de Chavannes** was Maurice's natural father, **Miguel Utrillo** (1863-1934), a painter and joint publisher of the periodical *Forma* with **Ramon Casas**, adopted Maurice. Maurice became a drunkard and drug addict, and spent many years in clinics and, occasionally, police cells. His mother began to teach him to paint as a diversion, and then continued to teach himself. He first exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in 1909, and by the 1920s was highly successful. He was

highly prolific, painting mostly monochrome street scenes in Montmartre, Although they were often taken from picture-postcards, they are nevertheless also sensitive and convey emotional emptiness and solitude.. His best works were produced until 1916, now known as his 'white period'. His later works were more colourful but less touching. In 1934 the Tate Gallery wrongly announced that he had died of drink in that year, leading to a libel suit which was settled out of court. In later years he became deeply religious.

Most museums of modern art have an example and, because of the deceptive simplicity of his paintings, he is among the most forged of modern artists.

...and for UNDERPAINTING

Underpainting is the preliminary lay-in in any colour, but usually in *Grisaille* (neutral greys), either for its own sake or as a model for an engraver or the first stage in building up an oil painting, in which the drawing, composition and tone values are worked out before colour is added, particularly if many glazes are envisaged. *Glazing* is the process of applying a transparent layer of oil paint over a solid one in order to change the first colour, for instance a transparent glaze of crimson over a solid blue to produce a purple. *Scumbling* is the process of applying an opaque layer of oil paint over another opaque layer of a different colour or tone. but not entirely obscuring the lower layer, thus producing an uneven, broken effect. These were considered normal practices up to the 19th century. *Alla Prima* (Italian) or *Au premier coup* (French) are the terms describing the later technique generally used since the 19th century of completing the picture surface in full opaque colour of such denseness that previous drawings or underpainting, if these exist, are no longer visible. Glazes are now rare as they are considered to be inconsistent with inspiration. Paradoxically, the recent principal practitioners of glazing are probably artists such as **Jackson Pollock** who practiced the *Tachistes* method of painting, i.e. blotting, staining, or action-painting. Some early coloured glazes have been inadvertently removed in cleaning processes (see Varnishing below) and some have dissolved of their own accord, particularly those used by **Reynolds**.

'V' is for ...

HENRY VAUGHAN (1622-95)

This mystical Welsh poet's contemplation of a native waterfall, in which he sees an image of eternal life, contains that curious impression we sometimes have, in gazing at a fall, that we are seeing a static hanging curtain of water and not a continuous flow:

THE WATERFALL

With what deep murmurs
through times silent stealth
Doth thy transparent, cool and watry wealth
Here flowing fall,



And chide, and call,
As if his liquid, loose Retinue staid
Lingring, and were of this steep place afraid,
The common pass
Where, clear as glass,
All must descend
Not to an end:
But quickned by this deep and rocky grave,
Rise to a longer course more bright and brave.

... and LOUISE ELISABETH VIGÉE-LEBRUN (1755-1842)

One of the most successful of all women painters, Louise Elisabeth was the daughter of a pastellist named **Vigée** and married to the dealer **Lebrun**. She was trained by her father and influenced by **Greuze**. In 1779 her career blossomed when she was summoned to Versailles to paint **Marie Antoinette** who subsequently became her friend. She was known to be charming and kept a famous Salon. In 1783 she was elected to the Academy. At the outbreak of the Revolution in 1789 she left France to travel in Italy, Vienna, Prague, Dresden and Berlin. She returned to Paris in 1802 but found she could not live under Napoleonic rule and left again, this time for England and Switzerland before returning in 1845. In all countries she had great success as a portraitist, excelling in portraits of women and children. Her *Memoirs* were first published in 1835-7 and two English translations still exist. Her portraits are in the Wallace Collection and National Gallery London, and in New York and Toledo Ohio.

...and for VARNISHING DAY

The custom of painters ostensibly varnishing their paintings after they were hung by academies, but before they were seen by the public, was open to abuse as many painters actually re-touched their paintings, particularly **Turner** who was notorious for submitting his pictures only part-finished and then completing them on the Academy walls. Out of this tradition arose the now accepted practice of inviting one's best patrons to view an exhibition before the general public, hence the Private View. Varnishes have been used since the Middle Ages and are of many types. Ideally they should be colourless, transparent, have no effect on the base colours, and be easily removable in the case of deterioration. Regrettably this has not always been the case and most have altered the original colours of the paint beneath. In the early days of the National Gallery in London varnish was used to protect pictures without glass from the noxious effects of the atmosphere. This varnish, called megilp, was a mixture of mastic in turpentine with boiled linseed oil. It originally added a warm golden glow to the Old Masters and was considered to be an enhancement, but it soon darkened, became almost opaque and in some cases even blistered and cracked. The practice was condemned by the National Gallery Select Committee in 1853 but by then all the pictures which had been treated with it, such as **van Eyck's Arnolfini and his Wife**, were permanently sealed in their dark-brown coating. The difficulty was that the solvent used to remove the varnish also dissolved the mastic in the original paint. It was not until the 1940s that a successful removal technique was discovered, although its use is still controversial.

ART CLASSES IN THE GALLERY

3rd October - 12th December (half term 24th October)
Thursday mornings 11 - 1 p.m.
£8 per session

Tutor **Jan Davies** will start with an introduction on the history of pastel painting with examples of artists' work, followed by practical guidance on choosing the best pastels, papers and equipment. There will also be full information on techniques such as overlaying colour, feathering, blending, hatching and cross-hatching, and pointillism. There will be a new project with a theme to draw each week, and drawing in the garden whenever possible. For the first session materials will be provided, but if you have your own pastels and would like to bring them, please do. You will need something to protect your clothes as pastels can be messy!

For more information telephone 01223 211311

ART ON A PLATE ...

by **Katharine Macpherson DA**

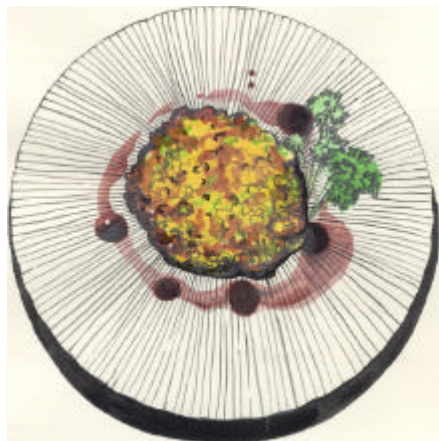
Life may be too short to peel a mushroom, as **Shirley**

Conran once famously said - but I hope you agree with me that it isn't too short to stuff one!

Large flat Portobello mushrooms are perfect for this as they have a

good flavour, keep their shape well and one makes an ideal starter-sized portion. A single one also makes a tasty main course accompaniment - while two or three are filling enough to make a meal in themselves.

Add a salad and some crusty bread and I think you'll find you won't have *mushroom* for more!



STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Serves 4 as a starter

4 large flat Portobello mushrooms, wiped clean

15g butter

1 shallot or small onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, if wished

1 rasher streaky bacon, chopped

20g fresh breadcrumbs

2 teaspoons fresh parsley, chopped

1 tablespoon lemon juice

50g Cheddar cheese, grated

few drops balsamic vinegar

few drops extra virgin olive oil

watercress to garnish

* Remove the stalks from the mushrooms and chop the stalks finely.

* Gently fry the chopped shallot, bacon and mushroom



stalks in the butter for about five minutes. A chopped or

Project Eden, textile by Helen Ripley

crushed clove of garlic is an optional extra that could be included here if you wish.

* Remove from the heat and mix in the breadcrumbs, parsley, lemon juice, cheese, balsamic vinegar - and just enough olive oil to bind the mixture together without it becoming sloppy.

* Put the mushrooms, top down, on a non-stick baking tray and spread a quarter of the stuffing over each one.

* Bake for 20 minutes at 170°C.

* And serve with lots of peppery watercress.

Paul Bowes of Bacchanalia and Jug & Firkin (01223 576292) recommends Barbareso Giuseppe Cortese Vigna in Rabaja as a worthy red companion. A mid 1980s vintage, drinking well now. A full bodied, indeed full bloodied, rich red wine, mellow with a lingering taste of berries. A veritable 'taste of Italy'.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

5-8 Sept: **Conservatory Gallery** at *Homes and Interiors* at Ingatestone Hall, Essex (telephone us for tickets)

Sat 14th Sept Frame sale day

31 Oct-23 Nov: **Helena Green, Jane Strother**, paintings; **Mark Judson** ceramics

28 Nov-21 Dec: **Cambridge Drawing Society**

27 Mar-26 Apr 2003: **Northern Aspects - Geoff**

**Marsters, Laurence Broderick, Mac
Gregory, Ruth Parker**, paintings and
sculpture

Summer 2003: Paintings from Africa by **Beverley Gibbs**
and **Esther Joseph**

Autumn 2003: **Jill Walden**, batiks and etchings

