



Immerse yourself in a virtual art exhibition

By Ruth Anders

You may remember the special cinema glasses that were essential for enjoying 3D films in the 1950s and more recently in the 2010s. Something similar has emerged now with the use of Google cardboard headsets that enable viewers to enjoy a virtual visit to a fascinating new exhibition.

A collaboration between OmVed Gardens, Thrown and Metafleure, *Gatherers* opened digitally last month in a huge contemporary glass house in Townsend Yard, Highgate, N6. Focusing on the materials around us, international potters and ceramicists from London to Tambourine Mountain in Australia have come together to celebrate their surroundings through the medium of clay.

Zooming in to art with cocktails

The virtual private view was hosted on Zoom, with 100 participants tuning in including many of the artists and, acting as our guide, organiser Claire Pearce invited each of them to talk about their work. Among the participants, we heard from Bisila Noha about the clay her parents had brought her from Equatorial Guinea, from Rhianon Gwyn from Wales who

incorporates slate and gorse ash into her work, and from Kat Evans whose smoke fired sculptures beg to be handled.

To add to the fun, virtual visitors had received advance notice of the ingredients needed to make delicious cocktails based on a tonic water mixer. Ahead of the exhibition tour, a cocktail making demonstration was led remotely by Vicky Chown and Kim Walker, authors of a book about the history of tonic water.

Still connected

Afterwards Claire told *The Archer*: "It was an exciting event for me. The moment everyone flooded into the grid at the start triggered the same anticipation as when we open our doors to a show for the first time and in this case people were able to do so from all over the world. It amazed me how connected it all still felt. It's unsurprising perhaps that we've already had



Online only: *The Gatherers* exhibition at OmVed Gardens in Highgate.

people contacting us to request more events like this in future."

When health rules allow, visitors should be able to enjoy this very tactile exhibition in person. For now, guests can

experience the displays through virtual reality, online workshops, film and photography. For more information visit www.gatherers.co and www.omvedgardens.com.

We took to the land to help the harvest

Following the Government announcement that furloughed workers may be urged to help pick fruit and vegetables this summer, Dennis Evans, the founder of N2 Poetry, recalls his own experience doing this in the 1940s.

Harvest time

"Fit boys of 13 years of age can help with the harvest." His Majesty's Government 1946.

"Men's work for boys' wages," said my father. Farm labourers were not yet demobilised from the Forces. We went with the school, slept under canvas. Good teachers cooked, and cared for us.

Potato lifting

Up and down the rows, Bent over, lifting potatoes. At the end of each row we straighten, rub aching backs. Then on to the next row, and the next – across the field. The sun is high.

School children, we work with gypsy mothers. The men still at war. "Men's work for boys' wages," my father says. We finish the field, have lunch. Feel pleased with our work, but complain about backs. Back to the field, sun and bending combine. Grip our backs with hot iron. A gypsy mother sees my pain, says, "This is how we work", shows me their technique. I crouch, put my forearm on my thigh, scabble with my free hand. I sail up the row.

Stooking

Stooking in the tumble-down field. The warm roughness of sisal used to be sheaves, on my hands. Working in pairs, a sheaf in each hand, we kick stubble and dust under a sweltering afternoon sun. We set the sheaves down, put the heads touching, form small wigwams to dry in the sun.

Rick making

Standing in a diamond, the old men teach as we weave in sheaves. The hayrick grows. We avoid making holes in the centre. Lifted skywards, We are supported on our tapestry.

More reading: www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2/peopleswar contains an archive of memories from that time.

Summer shows return to the great outdoors

By Daphne Chamberlain

Good news for fans of open air theatre, which is particularly enjoyable at the beautiful venue of Stephens House and Gardens in East End Road, N3.



Detective work: *Pantaloons Theatre Company* bring their hilarious version of *Sherlock Holmes* to Stephens House and Gardens

Two shows from *Pantaloons Theatre Company* are scheduled for this summer: "The most fiendish case yet" for *Sherlock Holmes* on Wednesday 29 July, and *Twelfth Night* on Wednesday 12 August, both at 7.30pm.

Both are billed as family-friendly fun, with live music and audience interaction. *Sherlock Holmes* has "more mystery than you can shake a magnifying glass at", while the *Twelfth Night* crew seem to be playing up the yellow stockings.

To comply with social distancing, the productions will be

on the conveniently large main lawn, and the audience are asked to bring along blankets for seat-

ing. The café is operating as a takeaway with socially distanced outdoor seating. As Stephens House and Gardens is licenced to sell alcohol, you are asked not to bring any of your own.

Stephens House and Gardens and *Pantaloons* are both hoping that circumstances will be kind to them, as Covid-19 has hit finances badly. The gardens and café reopened on 1 June, thanks to an online fundraising campaign to help finance staff and resources. So, fingers crossed for them all.

Tickets will be £16 each, £12 for children under 16, available online through www.tickettailor.com/events/stephenshouseandgardens/379009.

Keep in touch... but who said it first?

By Daphne Chamberlain

"Keep in touch". We've all said it. We hear it all the time. But who said it first? I looked up the origin the other day.

Apparently, the answer is an 18th century soldier. Military drills of that time required every soldier to be within touching distance of the men on either side. They had to be close enough to brush arms when marching. If they didn't, they were obviously "out of touch".

This made me think. Keeping in touch was much more than a Christmas card with an update message, or the occasional phone call or email, much more than becoming someone's 450th Facebook friend or Twitter follower.

You kept in touch with your comrades to support and defend them. You had a common purpose and fought for it together. No need to wonder whatever was happening to so-and-so. You would know very well. Perhaps we are falling into line again with this one.

Holy Trinity Parish Church 67 Church Lane, N2 0TH

Our church building is now open for private prayer on:
Wednesdays: 12.00 - 2.00 pm & Sundays 6.00 - 7.00 pm.
We continue to meet online for prayer and mutual support:
Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday, at 9.00 am
Bible Readings and Prayers: Sunday at 11.00 am
If you would like to join in prayer or send us prayer requests, please contact us via our website:

www.holytrinityeastfinchley.org.uk

For more information please contact us at:

Email: marius.mirt@htef.org.uk

Tel: 202 3565 4430