



Artist Marc Craig with his finished mural on the former New Local Cafe building. Photo: Mike Hughes

All eyes on pop-up gallery

By Alison Roberts & Mike Hughes

The former New Local Café building at 42 High Road, has undergone a transformation into a pop-up art gallery.

London-based street artist Marc Craig, whose work has been seen everywhere from Tate Britain to the Leake Street Tunnel, was asked by owner Alida to paint a mural on the front of the empty cafe, but when he saw the space inside he realised there was potential for much more.

Marc has collaborated with a group of fellow artists to produce an exhibition of abstract art, entitled *The Externals*, which will run throughout November. The gallery is open daily from 10am to 4pm and features work by Marc Craig, Zach Walsh, James Green, Damn Sung, Rod Atkinson, William Kwaku Amo, Krudspen and David Iain Brown.

Leave your mark

Visitors to the gallery will be encouraged to get creative and add to a community doodle, which will be displayed publicly when finished.



The Externals: Some of the works on display in the pop-up gallery at 42 High Road.

What happens when a book makes it to the big screen

By Diana Cormack

An East Finchley artist has been signed up to host a podcast as part of a series that examines how books are translated to the big screen.

Craig Johnson, of Sedgemere Avenue, N2, is hosting *The Kings of Horror* series on the Literary Licence Podcast (LLP), which carries the description "We compare the book to the screen and everything in between".

The podcast is now in its fifth year, with a worldwide following of more than three million dedicated listeners and subscribers to its monthly newsletters.

LLP was the brain child of Dr Keith Chawgo, of North Finchley, an editor, producer and director, who had the original idea of reading a book, then watching a film and having a discussion about the two.

Basically it was a show about books to screen, but gradually changes were made to the format and, as the project developed, approaches were made by international radio stations. Now 26 of them air the broadcasts, including in Japan, the Philippines and Brazil.

Craig's horror season

Covering all manner of genre, various monthly and weekly themes are planned and hosted, with specific co-hosts being chosen from all over the world. This is where Craig, a



Podcaster: Craig Johnson

long time devotee of the horror scene, came in.

His horror season started in September with *The Dead Zone* by Stephen King, followed by Clive Barker's *Cabal* in October. Craig told *The Archer*: "In November I'm comparing *Ghost Story* by Peter Straub versus the movie, and the musical *Little Shop of Horrors* vs *Green Thoughts* by Peter Collier."

Craig is a key worker in mental health care, with his work as an artist and photographer playing a large part in his life. Accompanied by musician Dayvid Granthe, he can be heard on Fridays at 6pm. Visit www.llpodcast.com for more information.

An epic at St James

By Marian Bunzl

The roof of St James Church, Muswell Hill, still needs repair work in the north aisle and the chapel and so a second Raise the Roof fundraising concert took place on Saturday 2 October.

It was a performance of *Die Wintereise* (Winter's Journey), a collection of songs by Franz Schubert, set to poems by Wilhelm Muller, on the theme of lost or unrequited love; in effect a dramatic monologue that is rarely performed in its entirety.



Curtain call: Baritone James Cleverton, left, and pianist Nigel Foster. Photo Yvette Bonner

Muswell Hill resident and internationally acclaimed baritone James Cleverton was accompanied by renowned pianist Nigel Foster, director of the London Song Festival, to perform this epic work.

The lyrics tell the story of a lonely traveller in the snow on a journey to mourn a lost love. One could understand all through James expressive baritone, now dark with anger or despair, now gentle and tender with sorrow and regret.

Nigel's piano accompaniment required great virtuosity to accomplish changes of rhythms and cascades of arpeggios. He never allowed it to overwhelm his singer but sympathetically supported and enhanced his baritone's every nuance.

St James is also very blessed in its audience. In spite of an appalling evening of high winds and pouring rain, the church was full to bursting, the applause was thunderous and the roof was raised.

Pets bring love into our lives

By Caroline Broome

The Finchley & District branch of the RSPCA organised a pet blessing service at Holy Trinity Church in Church Lane, N2, on Friday 8 October. St Francis Tide: Blessing of the Pets provided a welcome opportunity to give thanks for our beloved pets, for their loyalty and unconditional love.

Considering the combination of dogs and cats that attended the service with their owners, the congregation was very well behaved! We took two of our six cats, who were very happy to sit in their wire baskets near the radiators, observing from a safe haven, whilst the dogs sat obediently at their owners' feet, looking up at them adoringly for the most part.

Fr Marius Mirt conducted the service with a selection of hymns and prayers, celebrating animals as man's companions, acknowledging our responsibility to all animals, and asking for forgiveness for those who have abused and exploited animals.

The reading, from the Book of Genesis, told of the creation of animals to accompany man: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." Hymn 662 sang about the integral part animals play in our lives. One member of the congregation,



Pet blessing: Two dogs make friends during the service at Holy Trinity Church. Photo Mike Coles.

who brought her dog, spoke her personal prayer out loud, and I said a few words about a very special cat in my life, WinkyWoo, now sadly departed, whose unwavering love and companionship buoyed me up immeasurably through a tough time in my life.

By the time Fr Marius said the

Blessing of the animals, one or two dogs were getting a bit frisky, but still the cats sat stonily aloof. I found the whole service deeply touching, not only for its humble acknowledgement of the vitally integral part the animal kingdom plays in our world, but also for offering the recognition our pets deserve for enriching our lives.