

Stirling 900: A Snapshot



Group Exhibition by **GOSSIP** II



SCAN ME

TOLBOOTH Jail Wynd, Stirling, FK8 1DE

31st May–27th July (Tue–Sat, 10am–5pm)
Meet the artists 1st June and 6th July 12–2pm

900
STIRLING
CELEBRATING 900 YEARS

Press Release

Stirling 900: A Snapshot

Group Exhibition by GOSSIP Collective

Stirling 900: A Snapshot celebrates the 900th anniversary of the Royal Burgh of Stirling through the art of continuing GOSSIP members. The pieces mark the history, heritage and culture of Stirling from the past to more recently. Stirling's unique location is explored by looking at how its historic events, sites and people have shaped it. These reflections include what lies in the present and the impacts on the future as well. The city's central location has added to its importance in a wider sense, but it is also a vital hub for the county of Stirlingshire, covering centuries of lives and happenings, all of which are conveyed via memories, forgotten gems and narratives formed across time.

Truths, facts, the built environment, landscape, nature, craft, political comment, feminism and folktales are all brought to light. There will be a variety of mediums on display from the artists, including painting, drawing, sketchbooks, words, screen print, found objects, collage, digital graphics, textiles, sculpture and audio.

Featured artists: **David Barbara, Ken Elliott, El Kerr, Lesley McDermott, Audrey McMenemy, Dawn Robison and Libby Yule.**

Curated by **Alice Martin.**

Meet the artists 1st June and 6th July 12-2pm.

<https://gossipcollective.weebly.com/>

Facebook: [GossipArtCollective](#)

Instagram: [gossipartcollective](#)

YouTube: [gossipcollective](#)

Email: gossipstirling@gmail.com



David Barbara

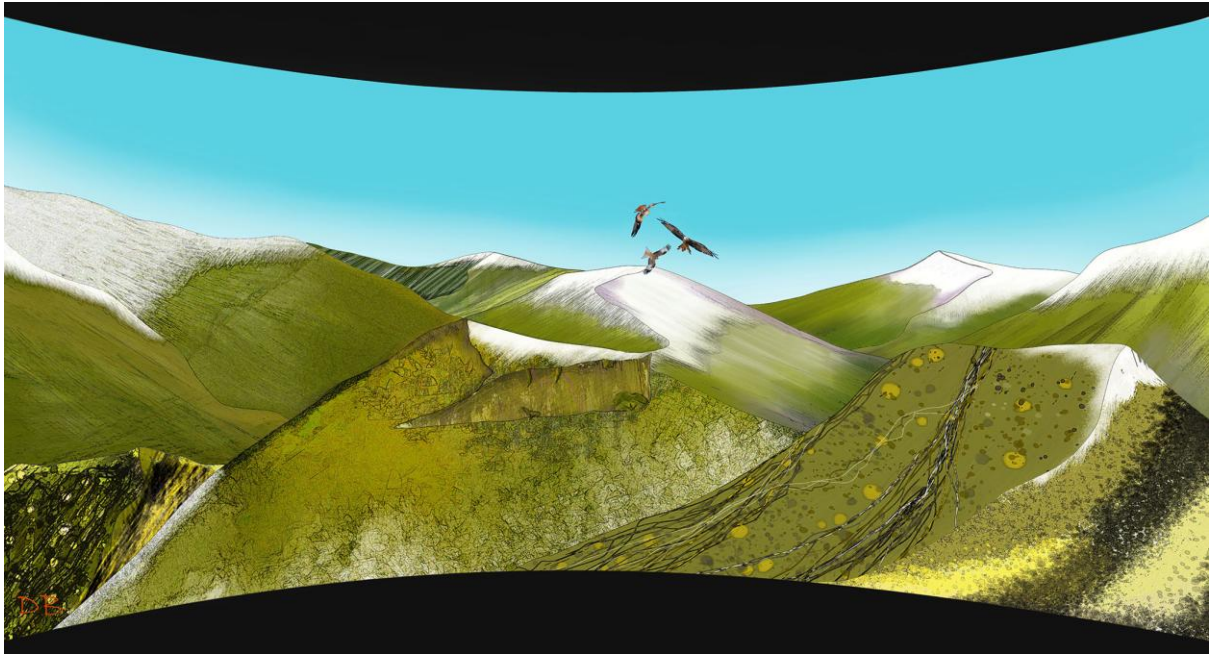
- *The Red Kites Playground*, Digital graphics, 35 x 16 inch

Artist Statement: If you've got time why not visit the Sheriffmuir Battlefield: the key event of the 1715 Jacobite Rising. Leave the centre of Dunblane by following the High Street, up to the roundabout on the B8033 and follow the sign for Sheriffmuir along Glen Road. At the top of Glen Road turn left just before the 'dead end' signs and follow the road up the hill. Stop at the MacRae Monument. You are now in the heart of the battlefield where in 1715, 7000 Jacobites fought 3500 government troops to regain the Scottish Crown for the ancient Stewart line, a real Game of Thrones! The result was a draw but ended the rising and it was to be 30 years before Bonnie Prince Charlie tried to reclaim his ancient birthright in 1745.

Carry along the road and turn left at the Sheriffmuir Inn, in 1944 this was a top-secret military research and training ground, and you could not have entered without an official pass. Following the conquest of much of Europe by the Nazis, Hitler built a massive series of concrete defences, often with slave labour, along Europe's Atlantic Coast. Ahead of the Allied invasion of occupied Europe, the British built a series of top-secret replicas to research how to breach the so-called Atlantic Wall. The biggest and best preserved of these is at Sheriffmuir and lies over the site of a series of World War I practice trenches. Look for the large concrete blocks to your right as you continue the road. This was one of the key training grounds for D-Day, the end of the Nazis started here which was an event of genuine world significance. Wear boots and watch your eyes for bits of sharp metal if you do explore the ruins, they were bombed for decades.

Description of Work(s): The artwork was made using computer graphics. It took me seven weeks to complete this, including photographing the hills to try and get the nearest colours possible. I also gave the shape a 3D effect which I think works well for a panorama artwork.

Email: david_photography@talktalk.net



Ken Elliott

- *Lines in time*, Pen and ink on paper, 3m wide by 1.5m high.

Artist Statement: After a career in engineering, spanning the Cornish china clay mines and Scottish petrochemical industry he now focuses his creative energy on his artwork.

Ken's practice has developed from the production of pen and ink hand-coloured drawings to computer-controlled wood carving, and on to metal sculpture.

The work shown here in the Tollbooth takes Ken back to the beginning of his most recent artistic journey, to pen and ink drawings. These are intended to provoke thought in the viewer, about one of the most pressing issues of our time.

Ken's work is currently focused on exploring ways to express both the elegant forms in the natural world, local history, and more abstract concepts, using only a minimal set of curved three-dimensional shapes, hand-formed in aluminium strips using simple tools.

Description of Work(s): Four hand-coloured pen and ink drawings arranged on a background of words, along lines of time.

Two hundred years ago in 1823, the legacy of the triangular trade was front and centre. This artwork starts with a graphic reminder of this. Inspired by the historical resonance of an artefact in the Stirling Smith.

Two hundred years on, the events of this trade evoke strong feelings and a sense of societal guilt. And now too in 2024, we grapple with the consequences of our society's 50-year intensive use of fossil fuels and dependence on continuous expansion.

Can we make the changes necessary to our way of life and avoid being thought of, in 200 years time, in the same way we think of the society 200 years ago that prospered from the triangular trade. And if we do, or we don't, what will things look like.

Email: nfld@mail.com

Website: <https://www.northfieldartsandcrafts.co.uk/index.html>

Social media: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/@kensengineeredart>



El Kerr

- *900 Fragments*, Mixed media on panel, W: 120cm H: 90cm.
- *900 Fragments Artist Book*, Collage and mixed media, W: 21cm, H 29.5cm.

Artist Statement: Eloise is a Scottish artist specialising in drawing, painting and mixed media. She is predominantly interested in working intuitively with colour and mark-making while exploring the tactile quality of materials. Images, symbols and motifs are embedded in layers, through which details emerge and fade. Inky strokes take on a life of their own as they seep into layers and reveal traces of emotions and memories, evoking the sense of a modern-day cave painting.

Description of Work(s): I have documented key moments from the history of Stirling through mark-making, drawing, collage and mixed media. *900 Fragments* is layered with intuitive drawings and marks that reference imagery and events relating to the history of Stirling. Reminiscent of an urban wall, drawings and expressive marks are overlapped, fragmented and abstracted between layers of paint, giving a sense of embedded memories emerging and fading with the passing of time. A grid of exactly 900 rectangles is revealed in areas of the painting. *900 Fragments* is exhibited alongside my artist book, which documents my process of collating materials and developing my work in response to the theme of Stirling 900.

Email: el@elke-studio.com

Website: www.elke-studio.com

Social Media: @elke.studio

Lesley McDermott

- *'Pulchritudinous'*, Video projection, Time approx. 5 mins.
- *Seen*, Mixed media installation (Screenprint, painted and stitched canvas panel with found objects), 150cm x 100cm.
- *Encompass*, Mixed media installation (Screenprint, painted and stitched canvas panel with found objects), 150cm x 100cm.
- *Unknowns*, Mixed media installation (Screenprint, painted and stitched canvas panel with found objects), 150cm x 100cm.
- *Past is present*, Mixed media installation (Screenprint, painted and stitched canvas panel with found objects), 150cm x 100cm.
- *Thinking aloud*, Mixed media installation (Screenprint, painted and stitched canvas panel with found objects), 150cm x 100cm.

Artist Statement: McDermott often explores transitions, movement, engagement with place, or relationships between participants experience and the subjects being considered. She endeavours to find ways of expressing creatively towards well-being, using a variety of materials and methods.

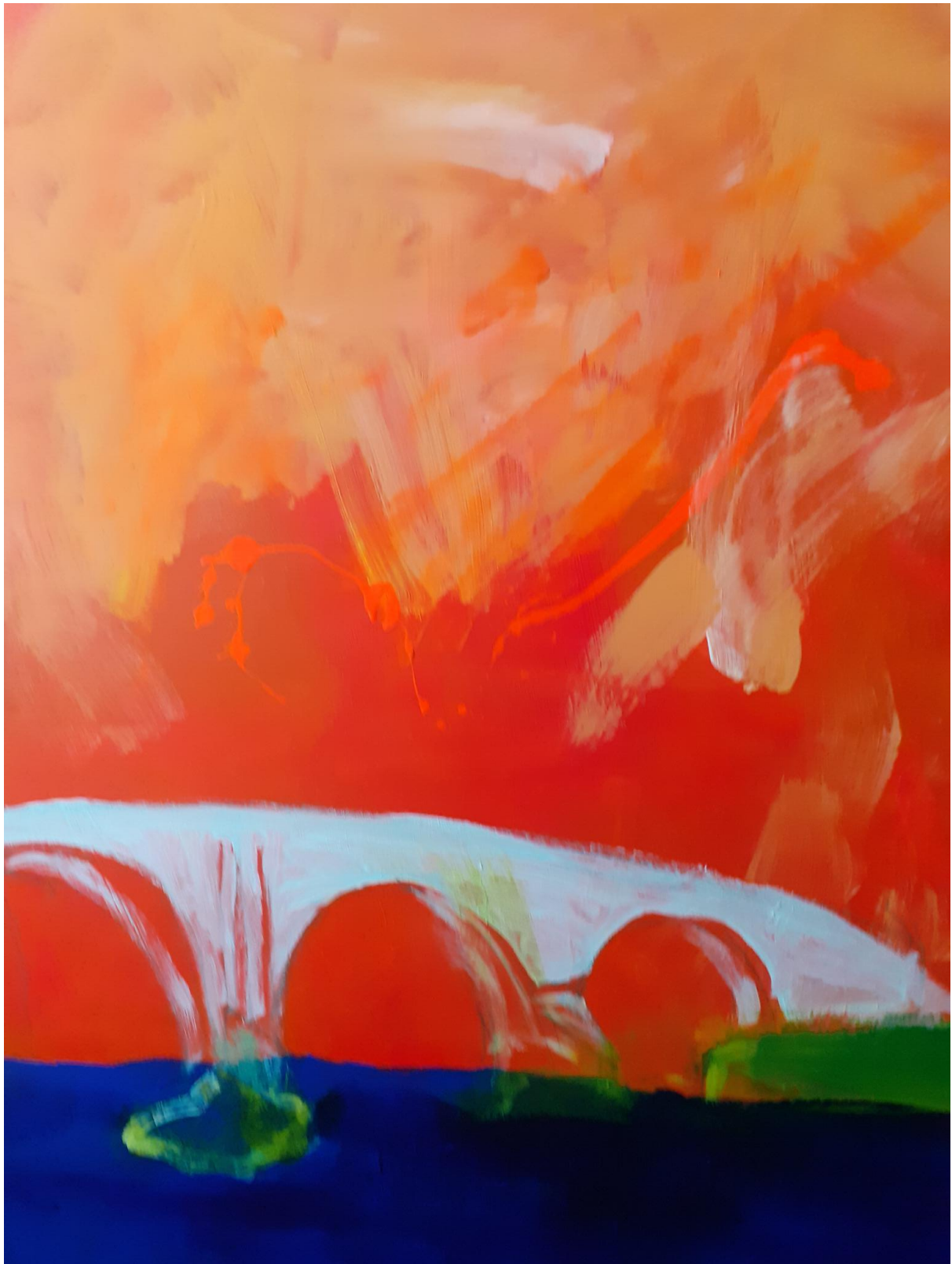
Description of Work(s): Series of mixed media panels with video projection.

'Pulchritudinous' is a contemplation, a journey that considers the place, meaning and movement, reflecting a fleeting sense of what Stirling is, its physical presence, beauty and grace.

Email: lesleymcdermott@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.lesleymcdermott.weebly.com

Social media: <https://www.facebook.com/lesley.mcdermott/>



Audrey McMenemy

- *Trouble on All Sides*, Mixed media and textile with glass bead, Framed 32cm x 42 cm.
- *Four Ounces of Crimson Silk*, beaded textile piece captured in a painted box, 10cm x 6cm x 6cm.
- *The Bonds of Virtue are Higher than Blood*, Large chiffon hanging with embroidered words and stitches.
- *Captivity*, Embroidered mini panels set like a grid-the view from a window, Mixed media and beads, Each piece 20 x 20cm.

Artist Statement: I studied constructed textiles at Glasgow School of Art at the height of the Punk era, so I do enjoy a distressed surface and a torn edge.

Exploration of materials, constructed textiles and found objects are central to my thoughts. I respond to the properties of materials and enjoy interpreting ideas using symbolic motifs and colours. Mixing urban and natural elements in organic pieces is a signature.

I enjoy the journey of a sketchbook and collaborating with other artists. Using preloved and sustainable materials has become more important to me and directs many choices.

Description of Work(s): *"All the Days she wrought with her Needle"*, Three working sketchbooks with information on the importance of needlework to the Queen of Scots.

The works are organic mixed media pieces inspired by social comment, words about and by Mary Queen of Scots.

The textiles pieces/embroideries interpret, status, rivalry conspiracy, Catholicism, power and Queendom.

Black was worn to suggest mourning and the loss of her French crown, but it was also a colour of status.

Red- was worn under her black garments and revealed when she was executed- this is a colour connected to Catholicism and to martyrdom.

White is symbolic in its purity and innocence- also a colour associated with mourning in her French kingdom.

Email: audreymcmenemy@hotmail.co.uk



Dawn Robison

- *Lost Knowledge*, Mixed media and sculpture, 40 x 50cm.
- *Forgotten Beauty*, Sculpture and mixed media, 30 x 50cm.
- *The Forgotten Child*, Sculpture and mixed media.
- *The Father and the Holy Ghost*, Mixed media and sculpture.
- *The Call of my Ancestors Remains Unspoken*, Photography, 8.3x11.7inch & 5.8x8.3inch.

Artist Statement: As an artist, I recreate people's stories and memories in the form of mixed media miniatures. In creating these, I use recycled items as well as natural materials. Illustration comes to life. Memories can be reborn and held close to the heart.

Description of Work(s): In creating these artworks, I have taken areas and specialities that feature around the livelihoods and history of Stirling and have transformed them into memories into which they would be forgotten over time.

Lost Knowledge: Knowledge has been a tool that has been collected for many years leading to centuries. What would happen if that knowledge returned to the etheric of the universe? Would it turn to dust? Would it just rot?

Forgotten Beauty: In a world of current beauty and false love, what happens when a garden of Eden disappears?

The Forgotten Child: After many years pass in a family home, what happens to the things we leave behind? Our teddies? Our pictures? Our once cherished ornaments and bric a brac?

The Father and the Holy Ghost: When the white light passes on mainstream religion and the golden close is lost upon discovering true reflections? Does everything then turn to red?

The Call of my Ancestors Remains Unspoken: In looking through Stirling's past memories through the archives and how Stirling was founded by our Wiccan and Pagan ancestors, which led to humanity's question of morals and the destruction of innocence; the witch trials.

Email: missdmclaren_78@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.dawnmclaren.weebly.com



Libby Yule

- **River**, framed, photographic collage poster of original watercolour, ink and mixed media paintings, 36 x 24 inches.
- **Castle**, framed, photographic collage poster of original watercolour, ink and mixed media paintings, 36 x 24 inches.

Artist Statement: Libby is a painter, printmaker and batik artist who trained in textile design at Scottish College of Textiles. Work ranges from abstract acrylic paintings to views of Stirling Castle, Trossachs landscapes and watercolours.

Description of Work(s): From a series of paintings of the river and the castle I am creating two photographic collages. These are illustrations of the influence of built and geographic environments on our development and creativity. These elements, (the river and the castle) are present in my life and artistic environment on an almost daily basis.

Email: libbyyule88@gmail.com

Social media: Facebook [Libby Yule artist](#)



The **audio** file playing in the gallery is a collection of sounds of some artists at work such as paper and ink, cutting and watercolour painting to create a subtle ambience on a loop.

Media

<https://stirlingevents.org/tolbooth-event/stirling-900-a-snapshot-exhibition/>

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