



1. Newly refurbished painting studios at Stroud Valleys Artspace

# site07 stroud valleys visual arts festival

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## Press Release April 2007

### Site07 festival 1st - 30th June 2007 featuring the opening of Stroud Valleys Artspace a newly refurbished building designed by Tony Fretton Architects

*"The area has a long history of excellence in the arts and crafts, and continues to be recognised today through the substantial public and philanthropic funding to Stroud Valleys Artspace. This festival is rightly the focus of this high level of activity."*

Professor Anita Taylor RWA, Director, Jerwood Drawing Prize, Vice Principal, Wimbledon School of Art

The site 07 is poised to bring over 250 local, national and international artists to Stroud in Gloucestershire to participate in this dynamic contemporary arts festival. Now in its eleventh year, Site 07 builds on the success of previous years festivals with packed programme of exhibitions, site based works, screenings, open studios, talks, workshops and walking tours.

The organisation behind Site 07, Stroud Valleys Artspace (SVA) was founded in 1997 with the aim of promoting and supporting the artists working in the area. Starting from humble beginnings, when volunteers helped to convert a disused town warehouse into artists studios, SVA has just moved back into its building in John Street, Stroud after completing the 2nd phase of the £1.5 million building refurbishment project. Stroud Valleys Artspace will feature as a key site for the Site07 festival.

This unique contemporary arts resource will provide good quality space, facilities and support to a wide number of artists and the community. The building has been designed by Tony Fretton Architects, whose back catalogue includes the Camden Art Centre, London; the Lisson Gallery, London; a house for Anish Kapoor the British Embassy in Warsaw.

*"SVA is now moving into one of the most significant stages of its development, taking ten years of arts activities into a new phase. We are really pleased to be working with prestigious Tony Fretton Architects, a London based practice which has a reputation for designing art spaces of exceptional quality"* said Jo Leahy of SVA



2. Organiser Jo Leahy mops up at John Street  
3. Neil Walker and Jo Leahy, organisers at SVA prior to it's opening.

*'The re-opening of Stroud Valley Artspace represents a magnificent transformation of this important facility in the heart of the town. It is a real tribute to the many dedicated individuals who have laboured long and hard over many years to bring this remarkable project to fruition. Stroud already enjoys an enviable reputation for the quality and range of artists living and working locally. This new centre brings added impetus to the growth of this reputation. Stroud Valley Artspace will support artists and develop audiences, and contributing strongly to the vibrant atmosphere that makes Stroud such a creative place.'*

Arts Council England, South West Executive Director Nick Capaldi

SVA will be reopening its new building to the public in June with an exhibition of John Street studio artists work. Artists participating in the exhibition will be receiving critical mentoring from Lisa Le Feuvre, an independent curator and writer. She is an Associate Lecturer at Goldsmiths College and the South Bank University and is also the Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Maritime Museum, London.

After the success of last years exhibition, at the Museum in the Park, this year's exhibition will be selected show of work by artists taking part in the Site07 festival. Darbyshire Framers, a leading framer and art fabricator in the contemporary art world, will be awarding a prize of £1000 worth of framing services to an exhibiting artist who will also offered a ten day exhibition in the newly refurbished project space at SVA, John Street. The selectors will be Mark Darbyshire, Jean Boyd and Gavin McClafferty.

The festival will see the return of the popular open studios events. Last year over eighty artists welcomed visitors to their homes and studios throughout Stroud's picturesque five valleys. This year's festival will offer art-lovers the same opportunity to see high quality art within the diverse settings in which it was created as well as the opportunity to purchase work directly from the artists. "The open studios are important," states participating artist Nick Grellier, "people come in and rifle through plans chests and drawings and see where the art comes from."

William Morris perhaps began the trail of artists to Stroud. He has since been followed by sculptor Lyn Chadwick who set up his studio in Edge during the 1940s. The establishment of renowned sculpture foundry Pangolin Editions in the nearby village of Chalford, put the area firmly on the artistic map. And when Damien Hirst established a studio in the valleys, Stroud's reputation for nurturing and inspiring artists and art was firmly established.

"This is a town with a real buzz to it," says painter Carolyn White, who has lived and worked in the area for 12 years. "Visitors passing through notice the lively farmers market, the street cafes that also host art exhibitions and the wealth of cultural events. The strong artists community here is an integral part of the vibrant town life. I think that's why Site is such an exciting festival. It brings together a diversity of provocative and traditional art in a rural setting, with a progressive Cotswold town at its hub. The Site festival is the annual highlight to the year-round arts scene in Stroud."



4. In/Out sculpture by Colin Glen at Museum in the Park



5. Cafe lifestyle in Stroud on market day



6. Walkers on the Cotswold Way at Frocester Hill enjoy stunning views across the river Severn to Wales.

There will be talks, walks, poetry, performance, and of course exhibitions. With the final details now being put to the 2007 programme, set to be launched in April, it's a case of watch this space.

Site07 will run from 1st-30th June 2007. The Open Studios dates are 9th-10th and 16th-17th June 2007. To make sure you get a brochure with further info please send a large SAE (42p stamp) to Stroud Valleys Artspace, 4 John Street, Stroud, GL5 2HA.

You can also contact the organisers on 01453 751440 or [site@sva.org.uk](mailto:site@sva.org.uk)

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## Further details of Site 07 programme

### site07 festival exhibition and the Darbyshire Prize, Museum in the Park, Stroud

**27th May - 30th June**

After the success of last year's exhibition at the Museum in the Park, this year's exhibition will be a selected show of work by artists taking part in the site07 festival. Darbyshire Framers will be awarding a prize of £1000 worth of framing services to an exhibiting artist who will also be offered a ten day exhibition in the newly refurbished project space at SVA, John Street, Stroud. The selectors will be Mark Darbyshire, Jean Boyd and Gavin McClafferty. Darbyshire Framers is a leading framer and art fabricator in the contemporary art world and has attracted a range of high-profile clients; artists like Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and Derek Jarman to commercial and public galleries such as Gagosian, White Cube, Serpentine Gallery and the Royal Academy.

### site07 featured artists projects and events, various locations

**1st - 30th June**

site07 is supporting a small selection of individual and group artists shows and events. In the past these projects have included site specific works, artists talks, sound events, film screenings, visual and sound workshops and music and poetry events.

### John Street Exhibition and Events

**1st - 30th June**

SVA is pleased to be able to reopen its newly refurbished building to the public in June with an exhibition of John Street studio artists work supported by Lisa Le Feuvre.

### Artists Open Studios

**Saturday June 9th & Sunday 10th 11am - 6pm**

**Saturday 16th & Sunday 17th 11am - 6pm**

To take part in Open Studios 2007 artists are asked to open their studios during the two weekends of Saturday 9th - Sunday 10th June and Saturday 16th - Sunday 17th June from 11am - 6pm and by appointment during the week.

### Open Studios Exhibition, Subscription Rooms, Stroud

**1st -30th June**

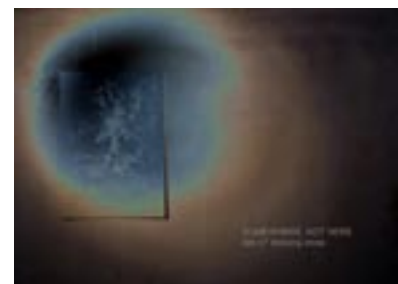
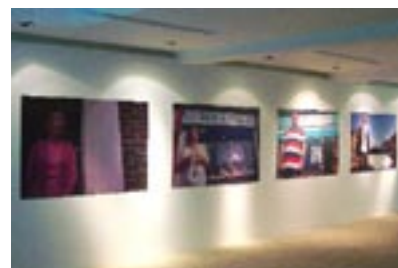
This exhibition will be a selected show of open studio artists work. It also works as a festival information point and is designed to help visitors plan their open studio visits. The exhibition will be part of a full programme of festival events in the Sub Rooms.

### Somewhere, Not Here.

**Drawing show, Ruskin Mill, Nailsworth**

**1st -21st June**

In most if not all forms of drawing the artist finds a period of deep concentration. At this point the pen becomes an extension of the artist, and the paper a screen on which the skill and vision of the artist are projected. This moment of transition is what is implied by 'somewhere not here'. Stroud and its surrounds has long been blessed with many talented artists. This annual show provides an opportunity to see into the mechanics of drawing as well as to buy original works.



## Note to press:

### Picture captions for page 4

7. *Site 06 festival exhibition. Musuem in the Park. June 06. Photograph by Nigel Noyes*

This exhibition was selected by Anita Taylor, director of the Jerwood Drawing prize and Vice principal, Wimbeldon School of Art.

8. *Circumscribe. Louisa Fairclough and Sean Borodale. Some Vacant Accommodation. SVA. Jan 2007.*

*Photograph by Colin Glen*

Some Vacant Accommodation was a two and a half day collaborative event held at the newly refurbished, but still mostly unoccupied SVA buildings in Stroud on the 26/27/28 of January 2007. The event encompassed a range of site-specific works, performances, critical responses, interventions, ideas, and dialogues by invited artists and curators from across the UK.

9. *Kate Lovedays studio. June 2006. Photograph by Nigel Noyes*

Kate Loveday is exhibiting and opening her studio as part of Site 07 open studios artist.

10. *Simon Poulter. Some Vacant Accommodation. SVA. Jan 2007. Photograph by Colin Glen*

Simon Poulter exhibited these pieces of vandalised works from his Knowle West Media Centre Commission in SVA's new project space as part of Soem Vacant Accomadation.

11. *Gavin Mc Clafferty. Somewhere Not Here. Drawing show. Ruskin Mill. June 2007.*

*Photograph by Gavin McClafferty*

Gavin Mc Clafferty will be exhibiting as part of a selected drawing show of artists working in commercial art industries based in Stroud including Science, Pangolin and Darbyshire Framers.

## Funders

Stroud Valley Artspace has raised over £1.2 million for the re-development of its building.

The project has been supported by:

- Arts Council England, South West through a National Lottery grant of £665,000
- SWRDA Community Investment Scheme grant of £100,000
- SWRDA Rural Renaissance Initiative £210,000
- Stroud District Council £70,000
- Gloucestershire Environmental Scheme £50,000
- Summerfield Trust £50,000
- Stroud Town Council £26,000
- English Heritage £10,000
- Austin and Pilkington Trust £3000
- ADAPT £3000

## **Stroud Valleys Artspace**

Stroud Valleys Artspace (SVA) is a multidimensional 'space' provider which includes studio, resource, project, exhibition, web and publishing spaces. SVA initiates, commissions and promotes an accessible and innovative programme of projects in collaboration with regional, national and international artists.

The history of SVA can be rightly seen as a success story in the making. SVA was therefore initiated by a small group of dedicated artists who had the vision to see the potential in the physically and culturally empty spaces in the heart of a struggling market town. With energy and determination they created a vital and innovative organisation from scratch - an organisation that has grown and developed to the point where it is now recognised as one of the most active and exciting arts organisations in the South West.

SVA is now moving into one of the most significant stages of its development. SVA has purchased and has just completed the 2nd Phase of renovating a 7000 sq ft warehouse building in Stroud town centre that it previously occupied, taking ten years of arts activities into a new phase. This £1.5 million is led by Tony Fretton architects (Lisson Gallery, Camden Arts Centre, Artsway) it is set to become a new focus for the arts in Stroud, the county and the region. The renovation of this building will enable SVA to provide good quality workspace, resource facilities, exhibition space and a support network to a wide number of artists and the community. The building will provide a vital arts infrastructure and an interactive cultural focal point from which a high quality arts programme will be promoted for the district, county and region.

SVA is run by artists for artists which acts as a hub for local professional artist networks in particular Stroud Valleys Visual Artists and Stroud Musicians Collective. SVA has 95 members and over 250 artists take part in the Site Festival, an annual visual arts celebration which takes place for the month of June and which attracts up to 25,000 visitors to the Stroud District.

## **Tony Fretton Architects**

Since it was founded in 1982, the practice has established a reputation for work of exceptional quality at an international level. Tony Fretton Architects skills in research, architecture and planning provide cultural and economic benefits that are directly experienced in the buildings we make and the world around them. This is demonstrated in the long-term success of the Centre for Visual Arts in Sway, Hampshire and the Quay Arts Centre in the Isle of Wight, where the process of making the building has brought to the foreground the raison d'être of its users and raised the profile of the venue. Stroud Valleys Artspace, Gloucestershire, which is currently on site, is another example of a project that will work in this way.

As well as designing galleries such as the Lisson Gallery, the Camden Arts Centre and a new art museum in Southern Denmark, Cultural Centre Fuglsang, Tony Fretton Architects have worked with artists as part of the design team, designed exhibitions for Tate Modern and the Hayward Gallery in London, executed houses for artists, and created spaces for artists collectives.

Tony Fretton Architects are skilled in working in sensitive urban and rural situations and locations of historical significance, making architecture that properly relates to its context, and is functionally and aesthetically appropriate to the present time. The critically acclaimed award winning Red House, a new-build house in a conservation area in Chelsea, typifies our approach to bespoke housing and has led to our appointment as architects of a new London residence for Anish Kapoor.

Tony Fretton Architect's work is frequently exhibited and published at a national and international level. It is this recognition that has led to the commission for the new British Embassy and Residence buildings, Warsaw, awarded in 2003, and subsequent contracts for large-scale housing developments in the Netherlands and Denmark.

## **Darbyshire Framers**

Darbyshire Framers is a leading framer and art fabricator in the contemporary art world and has attracted a range of high-profile clients; artists which range from Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and Derek Jarman to commercial and public galleries such as Gagosian, White Cube, Serpentine Gallery and the Royal Academy.

[www.darbyshire.uk.com](http://www.darbyshire.uk.com)

## **Lisa Le Feuvre**

Lisa Le Feuvre is an independent curator and writer. She Associate Lecturer on the MA Creative Curating at Goldsmiths College and on the BA Arts Management at South Bank University, and is Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Maritime Museum, London. Her recent exhibitions include *Avalanche 1970-1976* (Chelsea Space, London, 2005) and *Gordon Matta-Clark: The Space Between* (CCA Glasgow and Architectural Association London, 2003). In 2004 Lisa was guest curator at The Photographers' Gallery producing *Mediterranean: Between Reality and Utopia*, *Pierre Bourdieu: In Algeria* and *Hashem El Madani*. Her forthcoming curatorial projects include *Dennis Oppenheim: Recall* (MOT, London, February 2006) and *Dan Holdsworth: Seeing the Invisible* (National Maritime Museum, London, April 2006).

Full copy and other photographs are available for usage on:

- Stroud Valleys Artspace's newly refurbished building at John Street
- Tony Fretton Architects
- Artists case studies
- Darbyshire Framers
- The Stroud valley area
- A number of the participating artists below who are also available for interview.