

The Herald Magazine

26 August 2006



AWOL

THE SCOTTISH SOLDIERS LEAVING THE FRONT LINE

Inside Living: fashion, travel, chef, restaurants, wine, style, walks, gardening

LIZZIE FAREY

A renowned Singapore-born artist and basket-maker, Lizzie Farey has lived in Galloway since 1986, working mainly in willow and ash to create traditional and abstract sculptural pieces. She trained in fine art and stained glass at Canterbury and Cardiff before discovering her talent for basketmaking in the early 1990s. With no formal training courses available she learned the skill gradually, travelling throughout the UK and learning from various craftspeople before settling to live and work in Scotland. She has exhibited widely across the UK and the US, and her trademark willow balls in intricate random weave can measure up to a metre in diameter.

Farey has a fascination with living things and natural form, and says working with willow connects her to the rhythms of nature. Over the years she has become interested in less functional objects, taking influences from the Galloway landscape. She has a deeply distinctive style that illustrates her emotional attachment to her environment, and likes to work from the outside in, becoming involved in the piece as it takes shape. Growing and harvesting her own willow has deepened her relationship with the material.

"For me, willow has become a medium for an interaction with nature that is deeply personal," she says. "Using willow, birch, heather, bog myrtle and many other locally grown woods, my work ranges from traditional to organic sculptural forms. The willow has a life of its own and I try to let that life emerge. There's a process you have to go through which is chaos, absolute concentration and an enduring belief is necessary before order and stillness can return."

Farey hosts her first ever solo exhibition at Designs Gallery in Castle Douglas from today, before showing at the Home & Interiors Scotland exhibition.

Visit www.lizziefarey.co.uk.



Clockwise from left: Lizzie Farey's abstract willow sculpture *Horsetail Form*; an example of Simon Ward's "material collaboration", which can combine porcelain with metal, concrete and wood; Joanna Kinnersly-Taylor's dyed and printed textile *Shawl Currents*; bone china and glass vessels by Andrea Walsh

PHOTOGRAPHS: SHANNON TOFTS, SIMON WARD

possibilities of the material. She combines glass and bone china to create ethereal-looking ceramics, the china egg-shell thin to let the light flow through it. These beautiful pieces are so delicate you don't want to breathe for fear of breaking them.

One of just a few artists working with bone china, Walsh is attracted by the material's purity, whiteness and fragility – in fact, it's so delicate she estimates at least half of what she creates breaks before completion. This end result, breakages pending of course, is a stark contrast to the creation. "It's very messy," she explains from her Edinburgh studio. "I grind and polish and it can be extremely noisy. When people see the finished product they've got no idea about the work which has gone into it, the mess and the failures. It's a difficult material to use but that's what I love about it."

Walsh has been working non-stop to promote her work, all of which is about to pay off with a bumper autumn that's certain to see her status rise. First up is the Homes & Interiors Scotland exhibition, then she'll take part in Origin at London's Somerset House (the event replacing the Chelsea Craft Fair). Finally, in November, she'll have her own exhibition in Edinburgh's Open Eye Gallery, a daunting schedule that she's remarkably calm about. Perhaps it's just as well she's a lot more resilient than the material she's made her name using.

E-mail andwalsh@hotmail.com

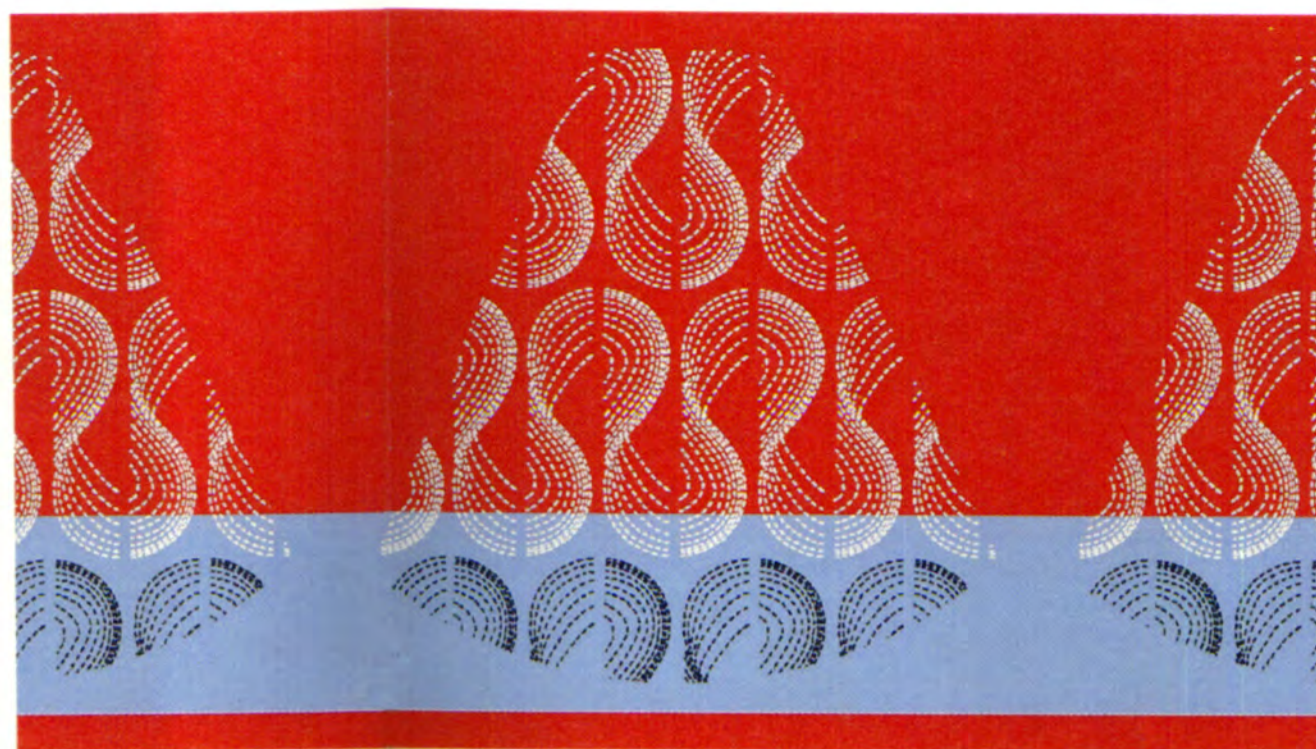
SIMON WARD

As a child, Simon Ward preferred to spend his Saturday afternoons at auctions, cultivating his interest in pottery and ceramics. But his initial fascination with Royal Doulton has been replaced by a more unconventional style: he combines porcelain with metal, concrete and wood, creating a distinctive method he calls "material collaboration".

"Most of my work falls in the grey area between applied arts and sculptural," says Ward, who is unimpressed that such a distinction applies in Europe. "My creations do have a purpose but they're not meant to be used everyday. It's visual rather than functional." This approach is largely inspired and informed by his travels in Japan, where there is no firm distinction between applied and fine art. "Their indigenous crafts fascinate me," he says. "Entire families work together, so the grandfather is a potter and so is his son and his son. It's what they call Japan's Nation Treasures."

After winning a prize at the Korean World Ceramics Biennale last year, he hopes to return to learn some of their ancient ceramic practices. Inspiration also comes from closer to home – Ward teaches 3D Design at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen, a course primarily concerned with jewellery, ceramics and glass, a crossover of materials that is his signature. "I like teaching what I've learnt but I also learn a lot from my students," he says. ■

E-mail simon.p.ward@talk21.com.



INTERIORS

by Cate Devine



Kelly Hoppen carpets in six new designs and four new colours from **Wool Classics**, from September (Monogram, £98/metre). White bone tableware, pictured, by foul-mouthed celebrity chef **Gordon Ramsay**, courtesy of Royal Doulton at House of Fraser. Gently distressed painted birchwood bedroom furniture from Willis and Gambier's brand new Winchester range.

ON THE UP

WIN HOMES & INTERIORS SCOTLAND TICKETS

The Homes & Interiors Scotland Exhibition 06 is at the SECC, Glasgow, on Saturday September 9 and Sunday September 10. Tickets are £7 in advance and £9 on the door. Call 0870 040 4000 or buy them online at www.secctickets.com/homesandinteriors.

We have 40 pairs of tickets to the exhibition to give away, valid for either day. To enter, e-mail your answer to the question below (with "Homes & Interiors Scotland" as the subject title) along with your name, address and a daytime telephone number to marketing@theherald.co.uk.

Q: Where does the Homes & Interiors Scotland Exhibition 06 take place?

TERMS AND CONDITIONS The winner will receive a pair of tickets to the Homes & Interiors Scotland Exhibition 06 for either September 9 or September 10. Prize supplied by Homes &

Interiors Scotland 2006. The prize is non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. All entries must be received by August 29. Winners will be drawn at noon on August 30. Usual Herald competition rules apply. The prize will be awarded to first correct 40 entries drawn from assembled e-mails.