

# De / Construct

a sculptural installation

by @GossipArtCollective



Stirling Smith Museum gardens

1st July to 22nd August 2021



# GOSSIP IT

## *De / Construct*

Over the past year, we have all seen our lives being deconstructed. Routines that were once firmly in place have been scattered as we negotiate lockdown. Virtual events replaced the sound, presence, and touch of real human contact. Gestures that we took for granted have disappeared from our daily interactions. However, many have found comfort in spending more time outdoors, becoming aware of the space around our homes.

Placing these works in a biodiversity garden, offers a fantastic opportunity to explore our relationship with the outside world. It's a place to think about what has been taken apart and how we put things back together again.

Through interventions with pre-existing objects, environments, or materials, seven artists have created artworks turning their surrounding 'negative space' into positive visual expression. De / Construct is an exhibition birthed out of this unusual time: it is a response to change and explores what holds us together through our relationship with nature. While lockdown has produced many fragmented thoughts, this peaceful garden allows them to reconnect once again.

Artists: Tracy Dougall, Ken Elliott, Alice Martin, Valerie Martin, Lesley McDermott, Audrey McMenemy, and Ann Shaw.

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

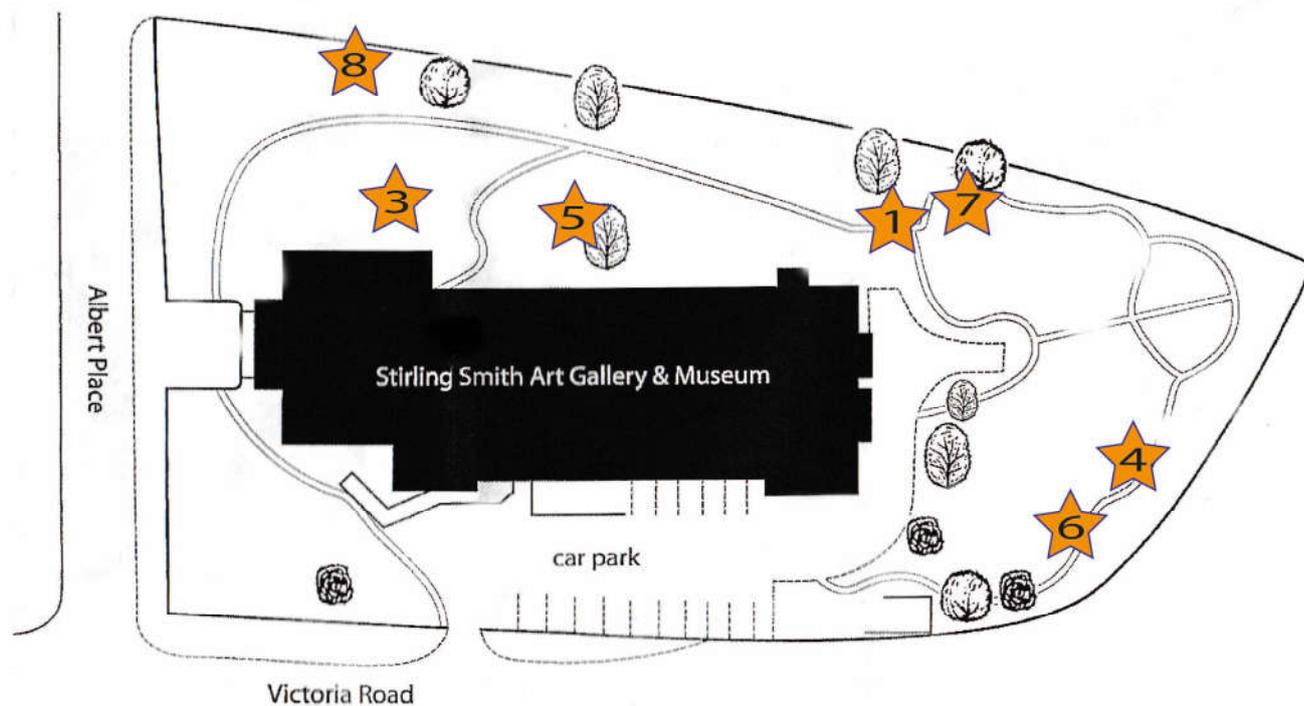
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Stirling Smith Museum

Twitter: @SmithMuseum

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## A map of the sculptural installations



1 - *The Torn Fabric of Our Lives* by Tracy Dougall

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3 - *Tree* by Ken Elliott

4 - *Pend—e—nt* by Alice Martin

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## Artist's information.

### *The Torn Fabric of Our Lives by Tracy Dougall*

**Media:** Canvas, various fabric strips hardened, painted then varnished.

**Description:** This piece is based on a painting I did during a sketchbook swap collaboration during lockdown. I was reflecting upon life and how dramatically it has changed over the last few years. How so many lives have been torn apart in many different ways by this disease, as loved ones have been missed, others have lost loved ones, lost time & experiences and our ability to physically socially connect has become broken down. I was interested in making this piece into a fabric sculpture to represent our earth and how it has been torn apart by this global pandemic and the thoughts are now, how can we repair it?

**Dimensions:** 62 x 52 cm

**Artist Statement:** For 20 years, I was a stay at home mum looking after my four daughters. Two have specific ongoing health problems and I used creativity as distraction from difficult symptoms. I also home educated for 9 years due to these difficulties and used creativity as a mean to educate too. When my daughters became, older I went back into education to study art. This to gain knowledge and experience of art techniques, learn art practices and to professionalize my own art practice. This for my own enjoyment and fulfillment but also for the well-being of others as I hope once I finish my studies to work in a community or health setting to encourage others to be creative for the promotion of positive well-being.

The context for my art practice is focused on connections and I portray this through portraiture, landscape and abstract work. The connections relate to loved ones and places that hold a dear place in my heart as they provoke memories of good times spent together. To see more of my work, use the links below to my blog and social media accounts.

#### **Media links:**

Facebook : Tracy Dougall Art <https://www.facebook.com/teddart74>

Instagram: tedart74 [https://www.instagram.com/tracy\\_dougall\\_art/](https://www.instagram.com/tracy_dougall_art/)

Artist blog: <https://tedd744.wixsite.com/tracydougallart>

*The Torn Fabric of Our Lives*



## **Tree by Ken Elliott**

**Media:** Aluminium strip sculpture.

**Description:** The sculpture is an exploration of a series of curved lines and how they can form another representation of the natural world: starting as ink on paper, progressing and transforming into a three-dimensional shape, using only metal strips.

A key theme is the twisting, extending, spiral shape of the helix, growing up, expanding, and reaching skyward, tipped with leaves breathing in energy from the sun and renewing the air.

Made from aluminium with stainless steel fastenings, the highly polished metal surface is shaped to reflect the sky and, as the sun emerges, show an array of dazzling highlights.

**Dimensions:** 250 cm wide by 300 cm high

**Artist Statement:** Since 2018, after a career in engineering spanning the Cornish china clay mines and Scottish petrochemical industry, I have focussed my creative energy into my artwork.

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

My work is currently focussed on exploring ways to express some of the elegant forms in the natural world using only a minimal set of curved three-dimensional shapes, hand-formed in aluminium strips using simple tools.

### **Media links**

Website [www.northfieldartsandcrafts.co.uk](http://www.northfieldartsandcrafts.co.uk)

YouTube channel *Ken's Engineered Art*  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPgXpHegc7TxyhBxL9DP59Q>

Tree



## ***Pend—e—nt* by Alice Martin**

**Media:** 3D Prints

**Description:** Recently I have been exploring artefacts that are in the form of something else and converting them from one or more 2D public domain images, into 3D models. The item I have chosen to focus on for *De / Construct* is a pre-existing [bird pendant from The Metropolitan Museum of Art](#). The newly created sculptures have been produced using a desktop 3D printer, funded by a Scene Stirling Micro Grant. The access to industrial printers in person has become limited due to the pandemic, therefore beginning to experiment with my own is a useful alternative.

The original bead is just a couple of cms in size, but I have increased this to 14.5cms each. The final pieces will be suspended in the air. The bird symbolism, the process of making and displaying outdoors all fit in well with the ideas behind this exhibition.

**Artist Statement:** A fascination in the visual and conceptual possibilities stemming from the interdisciplinary fields of art, archaeology and museology drives my artistic practice.

I challenge the ideas of experience and engagement through the roles of artefacts and curation. This includes, at times, the value structures of everyday items. Artist by nature have the desire to reimagine a space in a contemporary context. This creates a fresh perspective as creatives are not limited to historical means and do not have to abide by certain methodologies.

With this, I intend to question conventional ideas of representation with the hope to make the viewer less passive. Focusing on what a museum space could be and how an exhibit might be encountered. I am also interested in the tactile and how it can add to a person's overall understanding. I aim to subvert the notion of the traditional museum and replace it with one which is less overwhelming and somewhat ambiguous.

My work spans 3D printing, scanning, installation, digital prints and printmaking. I remix open cultural content with culture, materiality and revisualisation being central as well.

### **Media links:**

Website [www.cargocollective.com/alicecmartin](http://www.cargocollective.com/alicecmartin)

Twitter and Instagram: @alicecmartin

*Pend—e—nt*



## ***Constricted by Valerie Martin***

**Media:** Recycled wood & metal.

**Description:** A natural form sculpture created through the repurposing and recycling of both natural and manmade waste materials.

**Dimensions:** 200cm high x 120cm wide.

**Artist Statement:** I like to give a new story to found or discarded materials. With this sculpture I try to give an impression of how our life continues to grow and mutate with the constriction the pandemic has imposed. Hopefully returning to a more colourful, engaging and sustainable future with every day that passes.

**Media links**    [www.valeriemartin.co.uk](http://www.valeriemartin.co.uk)

*Constricted*



## ***Quotidian* by Lesley McDermott**

**Media:** Mixed media.

**Description:** Installation of sculptural compositions of found objects collected from 'inside the home', consisting of a variety of personal items and materials that have representational significance or hold some sentimental value.

**Dimensions:** 300cm high.



## ***Socially Distant Artefacts by Audrey McMenemy***

**Media:** Mixed Media, found and recycled Pieces

**Description:** They belong together like a family of artworks but have been made to be apart. They remain connected but divided by space. The pieces will be made from other art works and odd materials in my studio that I have deconstructed and reconstructed using recycled pieces and bits of natural twig and leaf found in Stirling.

**Dimensions:** 5-7 small items in glass jar containers

**Artist Statement:** Audrey McMenemy: Mixed Media, Textile Artist and Teacher.

I graduated from Glasgow School of Art (Embroidered and Woven Textiles) in 1981.

As most of my career has been in teaching I respond best to interactive textile/craft booth inspired projects. I work best in workshops and collaborative projects.

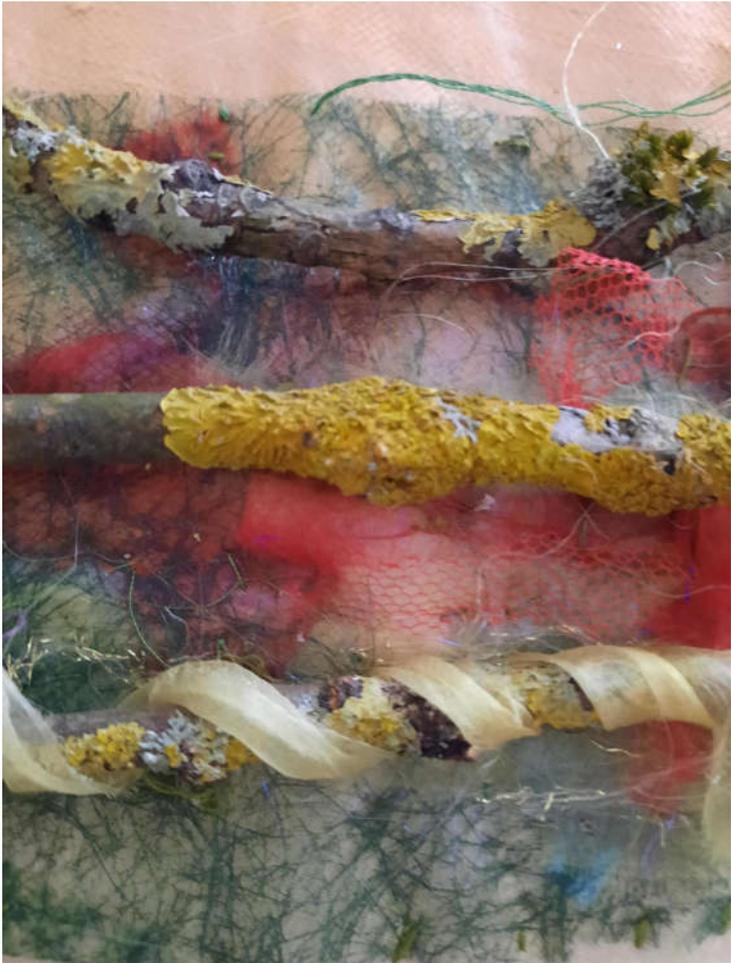
Recently I created mixed media panels in an outdoor exhibition in the Pathfoot Galleries, Stirling, and a sketchbook in "Over the Rainbow" at the Tolbooth In Stirling. An installation exploring the qualities of materials and the blurred lines between fashion and fine art based on the inspirational theme of Transparency was my response to the historic and ethereal beauty of Bannockburn House.

I have an active interest in the qualities and characteristics of materials. I combine old pieces with new ideas, I re-use art work, constructing and deconstructing is part of the process. I collect and repurpose vintage pieces with modern techniques.

I have a love of threads and fabrics, wet and dry techniques. Changing surfaces and responding to the joy of textile and stitch continues to be central to my working methods. I use sketchbooks to research and inform and I let the work grow and change as I find out how material respond to the technique.

I believe that introducing learners of all ages is a creative and rewarding way to be involved in art in the community. I hope to combine my love of teaching with my exploration of recycling to inspire learners of all ages to enjoy the process of creating art work. We see the value of craft and art work to our sense of purpose, direction and wellbeing as we negotiate the confines imposed by restrictions in this Covid Era.

*Socially Distant Artefacts*



## ***Thank you to the NHS by Ann Shaw***

**Media:** blue and white ribbons (varying in length) cut to size. Approx. 100 ribbons.

**Description:** Blue is the colour of healing. In many cultures tying rags or ribbons on trees is an ancient tradition, a way of giving thanks often for healing and also for wishes, and hopes.

We have been through a pandemic and I have had personal experience of being in The Forth Valley Royal Hospital at the start of it (January 2020), and experienced first hand not only the excellent care I received but also the strain the NHS system is under.

Hopefully this simple installation serves as a token of my gratitude, and I am sure I speak for many others too, who have benefited from our free health service, which during the Covid crisis has been placed under unprecedented demands on their services.

**Dimensions:** Ribbons vary in length from 30-80cm in length.

**Artist Statement:** As a former journalist who went to Glasgow School of Art as a mature student . I now combine writing with making art.

My work is about communication through storytelling and images.

It is a spontaneous response to the world we live in and I try to say something new about it often using humour as a tool.

While I believe digital technologies have the power to enable everyone to be creative in ways undreamt of even ten years ago it challenges the way we both create art and share our work. The pandemic has hastened this process making us all re-assess our lives and the art we make. This is a dilemma I face on a daily basis.

**Social media:** Website: [www.annshaw.co.uk](http://www.annshaw.co.uk),

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/shawannshaw>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/annshaw2017](http://www.facebook.com/annshaw2017)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/annshaw2017/](http://www.instagram.com/annshaw2017/)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/annshaw](http://www.youtube.com/user/annshaw)

Blipfoto: [www.Blipfoto.com/libra](http://www.Blipfoto.com/libra)

*Thank you to the NHS*



**GOSSIP** would like to thank the participating artists for their contributions. Thanks also to the Stirling Smith Museum for the opportunity to show the work and the Museum staff and, volunteers, and supporters for their assistance organisation, installing, and hosting the exhibition.

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

Facebook and Instagram: @GossipArtCollective

### **Stirling Smith Museum and gallery**

Twitter: @SmithMuseum

Facebook: @TheStirlingSmith

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