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## Good things happening soon

**Tuesdays February 19 and 26,**

*Tuesday Talks*, Whitworth Art Gallery. Free talks by post-war filmmaker John Smith (Tuesday 19) and walking artist Richard Long (currently on show at the Whitworth) in conversation with artist and lecturer Pavel Büchler (Tuesday 26). (weekly)

**Tuesday February 19,** *Beyond Pink*, Wahl Bar. Punk gig with support from Queer'd Science and Crywank.

**Wednesday February 20,** *Victoria Baths Swimming Club*, Levenshulme Baths, 7pm. Friends of Victoria Baths swim in another Edwardian pool, once again under threat of closure by the council. Pay by donation. (monthly)

**Thursday February 21,** *BCNMCR*, 2022NQ. Exhibition showcasing five Barcelona design studios. (exhibition continues until Friday March 7)

*Modernist Dreams and Utopias #4: 100 years of Blackpool Illuminations*, Manchester Art Gallery. The latest in Manchester Modernist Society's monthly film programme on the Changing Face of the Northwest, curated in collaboration with the North West Film Archive. Professor Steve Millington from Manchester Metropolitan University introduces three short films showing modernity, municipalism and light in Blackpool, followed by a Q & A session. (monthly)

*It Will Happen Again: has everything been done before*, Islington Mill. Open studio from resident artist Hannah Leighton-Boyce, part of the Rule of 3 series, plus open studio from Volkov Commanders and artists' film night.

*Reclaim the Night*, Oxford Road. Annual event lighting up the streets to reclaim women's right to walk the streets of the city without fear.

**Friday February 22,** *Inside Edge Outside Space*, Bureau. Bureau gallery reopens in a new space in Spinningfields with a show from Basel-based sculptor Clare Kenney. (exhibition continues until Friday

April 26)

*Underachievers Please Try Harder*, Roadhouse. Indie disco with guest DJs Pat Nevin and Colin Murray, plus live indie-pop bands Flowers and Martha. (twice monthly)

**Saturday February 23,** *Comfortable on a Tightrope and Giant Hell love in*, Kraak. Indie and pop bands including Golden Grrrls, Edible Arrangements, Former Bullies, Shopping, Sex Hands, Sun Electric Band, Grind Outs and World Peace.

**Sunday February 24,** *Ergo Phizmiz*, Islington Mill. Night of strange sounds, also featuring Lovecraft and Organ Freeman.

**Monday February 25,** *Themroc*, King's Arms, Salford. Manchester Film Co-operative presents the classic 1970s French film. (monthly)

**Tuesday February 26,** *Inequality: why the big issue?*, International Anthony Burgess Foundation. Manchester Salon discussion (monthly).

*The Gambit*, Taurus Bar. Chess-influenced play by up-and-coming North West writer Mark Reid.

**Wednesday February 27,** *Michel Bouvet talk and UR performance: Purple*, Islington Mill. Talk by French poster artist and graphic designer Michel Bouvet, followed by UR purple-themed performance.

*Bad Language*, Castle. Poetry night with special guest author Sarah Butler and open mic. (monthly)

**Thursday February 28,** *Urbis Research Forum: Cities of Refuge*, RIBA Hub. Presentations and discussions on topics affecting the city, this month on the theme of asylum. (monthly)

*The Ghost of Piramida*, Kraak. Screening of Andreas Koefoed's film, which features music by Danish band Efterklang, plus cake and Scandinavian tunes before and after the film.

**Friday March 1,** *Hayley Newman and Emily Speed*, Castlefield Gallery. New exhibition of sculpture, video, performance and writing. (exhibition continues until Sunday April 7)

*Crack Yr Skull*, Trof Fallowfield. Rock disco.

*An evening with Talking Heads*, Fuel. Bad Uncle presents a screening of classic concert film *Stop Making Sense*, plus live performances.

*The Morrissey Smiths Disco*, Star and Garter. As the name suggests, club night playing solely the music of the Smiths and Morrissey.

**Sunday March 3,** *Loiterers Resistance Movement* psychoeogeographic walk around Manchester. (see [www.nowhere-fest.blogspot.com](http://www.nowhere-fest.blogspot.com) for meeting place and time.) (monthly)

*Wonder Women: Radical Manchester*, various locations. Start of a series of exhibitions, walks and performances inspired by the impact of a shock moment in April 1913 when three ordinary Edwardian women surprised guards at Manchester Art Gallery, smashing glass and causing a commotion in the fight for universal suffrage. (continues until Thursday April 4, see [www.creativetourist.com/articles/festivals-and-events/manchester/wonder-women-2013-programme](http://www.creativetourist.com/articles/festivals-and-events/manchester/wonder-women-2013-programme) for more information)

**Saturday March 9,** *International Women's Day*, Working Class Movement Library, Salford. The Library celebrates International Women's Day with free talks by Livi Michael, author of a new novel inspired by the Pendle witch trials, and Ruth Eversley, who will explore the event's 'outsiders' theme by talking about her experiences as the child of a refugee family.

*Underachievers Please Try Harder*, Roadhouse. Indie disco with live bands Post War Glamour Girls and Songs for Walter. (twice monthly)

**Friday March 15,** *Party Hard!*, Star and Garter. Guilty pleasures disco with inflatable guitars.





**1** IT MIGHT seem odd to include a story entitled 'January Blues' in a publication emerging mid-February, but the latest edition should have been ready by January if life had not intervened, forcing a longer than usual gap in editions.

Since the last edition of the Shrieking Violet in August 2012, a lot has changed in my life. After a couple of years of vaguely thinking about returning to education in a research-based capacity, I finally took the plunge over the summer and applied for a PhD studentship at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston which seemed to chime really well with my interests, looking at a post-war programme called Pictures for Schools and tracing the networks of artists and educators involved in the scheme. I started mid-January and am currently trying to frantically get to know the field of cultural geography and reading around the themes of reconstruction, modernity and education.

I've also exchanged my base in a spacious four bedroom shared house on the banks of the Ashton Canal, on the edge of Manchester city centre, for a flat shared with a member of the opposite sex (a first for me), this time on the banks of the Bridgewater Canal, once again on the periphery of the city centre. The Ashton Canal is my favourite place in Manchester, a green corridor with surprises around every corner, a transitional space which is still awaiting redevelopment and rediscovery, and I really loved my (often directionless) excursions around Ancoats, east Manchester and Tameside on bike and by foot. In many ways, the area I've moved to feels similar to the one I've left behind, a mixture of new build flats and industrial buildings in various states of repair (some entirely derelict, others still engaged in production, others converted to studios), surrounded by diverse residential communities, and I'm looking forward to exploring the reaches of the Bridgewater Canal as well as getting to know the suburbs of Hulme, Old Trafford and Whalley Range better. I'm helped by the fact that it is far easier to cycle in this area than in the city centre, with an abundance of cycle lanes and long, straight road – roll on the warmer weather!



**Icicles along the Ashton Canal in Manchester**

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**2**



## Mental health at the movies: *Betty Blue* by Richard Howe

*"I had known Betty for a week. We screwed every night. The forecast was for storms."*

AS a nine year old, my friend James, who had a VHS and was the only one in his family to be able to work the recorder, would tape every late night film on the promise of nudity and violence.

He would force – yes, force – me to work through them, watching all these films, which turned out to be a history lesson in '70s and '80s arthouse cinema on Channel 4. We saw everything. Literally.

This included breathtaking *Betty Blue* (Beatrice Dalle) and author Zorg (Jean-Hughes Anglade). Crazy in love, tragic romances always drew me and my friend back for repeat views. We'd watch *Betty Blue* up till just after the piano scene – the happier period.

The piano scene I still think is the most (one of the most) beautiful, poignant, memorable and subtle expression of two people's love for each other, with a few pressed piano notes, smiles and facial glances.

True love, passion, anti-heroes, literary gold, ultimate risks and sacrifices. Dreams, runaways, drinking, partying and sex. The film's colour palette, the cinematographer's compositions, sumptuously beautiful and metaphorical, and that hot saxophone on the soundtrack.

My friend no doubt definitely recorded *Betty Blue* based on its name, but that was part of the director (Jean-Jacques Beineix)'s plan – making a film that was attractive to teenagers (well, nearly we were) and movie fans around the world. The film was nominated for Best Foreign Film at the Oscars and a winner at Montreal.

Dubbed Cinéma du look, new young directors from advertising and music videos introduced surface, colour, love romance, heroes, fun and joy as a reaction the abstract, procrastination and earnest impenetrability of Jean Luc Goddard and the other 1960s new wave heroes, directors who had arguably got old and stale.

The mental health issues are frank in that they are covered up or overlooked or fobbed off as youth, exuberance passion and zeal; if they weren't so beautiful and young would, they get away with it. This is realistic and one of the few naturalistic elements of the film, although the film is very dramatic. Everyday acts of crazed madness and insane violence turn up regularly/are commonplace, and this is highlighted even more in the excellent three hours-long director's cut, for example the man with a hooked hand attacking a static mattress, everyday madness.

Timeless. Classic. Watch it.

Check out my films too – <https://vimeo.com/18599252>

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhye0hzz72Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhye0hzz72Q)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj6H\\_eCz\\_4s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj6H_eCz_4s)







## 3 Frank Dobson: True and pure sculpture by Joe Austin

MENTION the name Frank Dobson today, and the likely image that will come to mind is that of a rotund and bearded, old school, leftwing politician who never quite gained the political reputation he so obviously craved.

Back in the early part of the last century however, that same name belonged to an artist who, along with Jacob Epstein, and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska was considered amongst the finest of sculptors. Some even argued that he was the first truly Modern British sculptor (Epstein was American, Gaudier-Brzeska, French). Sadly his time in the spotlight was relatively short, with his reputation declining as quickly as tastes changed, with the result that his name today is often little more than a footnote to many standard art histories.

My interest in Dobson was piqued when I recently discovered that he was responsible for an intriguing sculpture in my local park. *Woman and Fish* (1951) is at once a beautiful and yet strangely odd piece. A disproportionately limbed and naked woman (more of which later) stares off into the distance holding a large fish in one hand, and even though the work is placed out of reach in the centre of a barren, fenced-off area, it has a presence and an allure that I would defy anyone to ignore.

Frank Owen Dobson was born in 1886, six years after Epstein and five years before Gaudier-Brzeska. After showing early promise as an artist, and undertaking an art education in London, he enlisted in the Artists Rifles, joining the illustrious company of the Nash brothers and Charles Jagger in the service of his country.

In the years before the advent of World War I, Dobson (who at that time was primarily a painter) had been developing a style along vaguely impressionistic lines, with just a subtle hint here and there that the modernisms of the early twentieth century were beginning to seep into his consciousness.

Like many artists who had experienced the horrors of the War first hand, however, the lure of the purely machine aesthetic was proving treacherous and misguided and as such it was a softer, more humane modernism that Dobson adopted upon his return. He also took the crucial decision to concentrate on sculpture as his main artistic outlet, becoming an advocate of direct carving, whereby the use of maquettes and models was eschewed in favour of working directly from memory, an echo of the primitive arts to which much of this period of modernism owes such a debt.

It seems to me that Dobson's post war sculptural work can be divided into two quite distinct phases, the result, I might suggest, not just of a considered process of refining ideas but also of the far more prosaic effects of an accident; in 1933 Dobson's left arm was seriously fractured, and stone carving became almost an impossibility for him.

Prior to the accident, Dobson's clean lines and rounded, semi-abstract forms saw his work chosen by Wyndham Lewis as the only sculptor in his Group X show in London in 1920. He also represented the UK establishment at several of the annual Biennales in Venice.

Considered by a number of contemporary critics as the saviour of British Sculpture (Roger Fry described his work as the True and Pure Sculpture of my title) Dobson was undoubtedly seen as cutting edge. Works like the almost flawless *Man Child* (1921) and *Cornucopia* (1927), with their intertwining limbs and stylised faces, display



an effortless understanding of form carved with undeniable skill and panache.

Another stand out work from this period adorns Goodhart-Rendell's very fine St Olaf's House/Hays Wharf building on the south of the River Thames. A series of large, gilded terracotta relief panels, entitled *Capital, Labour and Commerce* (1931/32), form a key element of the riverside elevation, with their corpulent figures and scenes of dock-side life in gold and black contrasting beautifully with the angular Portland limestone.

1933 was a watershed year for Dobson then, and it was only after a long period of convalescence that he slowly began to work again, responding in the best way he could to his injuries, by choosing to model his ideas in clay rather than carving them from solid stone.

Despite this fundamental shift in approach, the key elements of his style were still evident: a deceptively simple approach to form, a penchant for naked women, a taste for the romantic and a serenity to his figures that was borne out of Dobson's belief that violence was not a suitable subject matter for sculpture.

The surface of his post-1933 work, however, took on a very different appearance. The smoothly angular geometries and graceful planes of a work like *Reclining Nude* (1924) were replaced by darker, more intense and organic textures, such as on *The Fount* (1948) and his most recognisable sculpture, *London Pride* (1951), from the Festival of Britain. Both of these works display the inherent process of building up the subject through a gradual accretion of layers, a finish clearly different to that created by the act of removal that carving represented.

As to the reason that Dobson is now largely forgotten, I think that can be placed at the feet of two people: Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth. Although they were unwilling and unwitting culprits (Dobson was in fact good friends with both artists), their radical reinterpretation of what modern art might achieve, developed throughout the 1930s and 40s, influenced critics and clients alike. Dobson's reluctance to move away from the simple truth and beauty that he found in his beloved female nudes resulted in his work looking dated and old fashioned. After the Festival of Britain, commissions gradually dried up, to such an extent that by the time of his death in 1963 at the age of 77, he was living in relative obscurity, forgotten and misunderstood.

I'll finish with a couple of stories that illustrate not only how Dobson's obsession with sculpting naked young women was not universally appreciated, but also how much his influence and standing declined, as sculpture became more about what it looked like rather than who created it.

The first story comes from 1950, when a huge, 15 tonne relief that Dobson proposed for a major new public building in British Guiana became the victim of a public outcry at the unsuitability of the work. A mould was never made from the full size clay model in Dobson's studio and the work was subsequently lost. I can find no images of the piece, but unsurprisingly, descriptions of naked young women litter what written records still remain.

The other anecdote is by the critic Brian Sewell, who tells the shocking tale of Mrs Dobson's wholesale clearance by smashing and burning the contents of her husband's studio after his death. Other than a few things saved by lucky old Mr Sewell, everything else was lost, destroyed because of its perceived eroticism. An ignominious end to what I can only imagine would have been some wonderful works of art.

Thankfully tastes change, knowledge increases and the works that remain are once again being talked about and reassessed in their rightful historical context. I for one hope that his reputation can be rebuilt so that once again it's sculpture that comes to mind whenever the name of Frank Dobson crops up in conversation.







5

## A Permanent Fixture? The Paolozzi Mosaics at Tottenham Court Road

by Jack Welsh

IF YOU have visited Tottenham Court Road Tube station recently then you could have not failed to notice that the station is a construction site. Built over a century ago as two separate stations, it became increasingly apparent that the station was woefully under-equipped to cope with the 150,000 passengers that currently use it every day. The redevelopment work is part of the Tube upgrade plan – an ongoing modernisation programme to revitalise the infrastructure of the world's oldest underground transport network. Once the £1bn work on Tottenham Court Road is completed, the station is

set to become one of the key transport interchanges in Central London. Significantly, this interchange will incorporate one of the new Crossrail stations, currently marked by a huge crevasse that punctuates the built environment of Tottenham Court Road itself.

These two significant developments will increase the capacity of public transport in the capital, seeking to pre-empt the issue that by 2031, the population of London is forecast to swell to 8.21 million people<sup>1</sup>. If the population of Greater London is included in this figure, 12 million, then London is regarded as a megacity, a metropolitan area with a population exceeding 10 million inhabitants. At present, the five most populated megacities are located in the East, expanding at such an incredible rate that it is resulting in a shift in the momentum of global economic power. It is predicted that by 2050, the global economic landscape will reflect the exponential population growth of these 'emerging' countries. While established countries such as the UK are currently considered as economically 'stable', expanding economies such as that of China, forecast to be the world's biggest economy by 2050, are rapidly developing new infrastructure. This 'copy and paste' growth is demonstrated by the fact that the five most recent underground transport networks to have opened have all been in China.

In order to maintain London's position as a global economic powerhouse, the Great London Authority has recognised the need to solidify its competitive advantage. In the period of 2010-2011, Mayor of London Boris Johnson oversaw the publishing of three concurrent policy documents: the London Plan, the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy. These policy documents are explicitly clear in their desire to ensure London maintains its position as one of the key urban cities in the world. Core policies such as improving existing transport infrastructure, namely the modernisation of the Tube and the construction of Crossrail, were identified as being crucial to improving achieving this goal. Crossrail will compress the travel time between Heathrow airport, the main financial areas of the City and the South East region, increasing London's economic efficiency from a local to international scale. These neo-liberal strategies are what geographical theorist David Harvey considers as 'spatial fixes', ongoing solutions to capitalist crises through geographical expansion<sup>2</sup>.

However in London, as in every highly populated urban environment, transport space is finite.



6



Infrastructure is being redeveloped to maximise current resources with Tottenham Court Road poised to be one of the early examples of the 'Super Hub' model in practice. The concept of a 'Super Hub' – 'transport nodes delivering seamless, fast, comfortable interchange with networks of other public transport but offering a variety of services to the customer' – was proposed in Green and Hall's 2009 report to Lord Adonis on achieving better railway stations in the future<sup>3</sup>. Crucially Transport for London's authority allows them to implement changes to the urban environment outside stations, such as moving street furniture and adding new road markings. Resultantly stations will evolve from 'inward looking' places to becoming firmly integrated with the urban fabric of the city<sup>4</sup>. Additionally the creation of new retail space in these developments attracts private capital that in turn allows for the completion of the project. However, the high cost of rents will only serve to attract the same corporations who already dominate retail space in the city, such as the usual branches of Costa and M&S. Consequently, these developments will become spatially fragmented and corporately homogenised<sup>5</sup>.

It is clear that the need for a distinct cultural and visual identity is as strong as ever in these new developments. The role of Art on the Underground, the contemporary flag bearer for the rich cultural history on the network, will be crucial in this process. This is exemplified by the commissioning of renowned conceptual artist Daniel Buren to create a new permanent artwork for Tottenham Court Road Tube station. Buren was awarded the commission for his proposal responding to the ticket barriers and Oxford Street entrance, areas recognised by Transport for London's spatial management principles as 'decision spaces'<sup>6</sup>. Here, all focus must be on passenger decisions in the space. Acknowledging the imposed rules of this space and the fleeting nature of passengers' movement, Buren has responded by proposing to fix large diamond and circle symbols, created in his trademark striped vinyl, to glass walls in the station. A cabinet displaying the physical forms of these shapes will also be displayed in the ticket hall.

While the Buren commission will play a significant role in creating a new visual identity for the station, the cultural legacy of Tottenham Court Road was forged many years earlier. The 1,000 square metres of colourful mosaics that wind along the station corridors, travel down the



1 Greater London Authority. (2010). *The Mayor's Transport Strategy*, p.15.

2 Harvey, D. (2001). Globalization and the Spatial Fix. *Geographische Revue*, 23-30.

3 Green, C., & Hall, P. (2009). *Better Rail Stations. An Independent Review Presented to Lord Adonis, Secretary of State for Transport*, London: Department for Transport, p.74.

4 Gullino, S. (2011) The fluidity of social sustainability in spaces of movement: the case of the art stations in Naples, Italy. *Int. J. Sustainable Society*, 3 (4) p.422.

5 I) Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. (Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Oxford: Blackwell.

5 ii) new economics foundation. (2005). *Clone Town Britain*.

6 Transport for London (2012). Functions of Spaces. Retrieved 14 June, 2012 from <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/microsites/interchange/70.aspx>



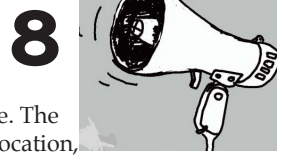
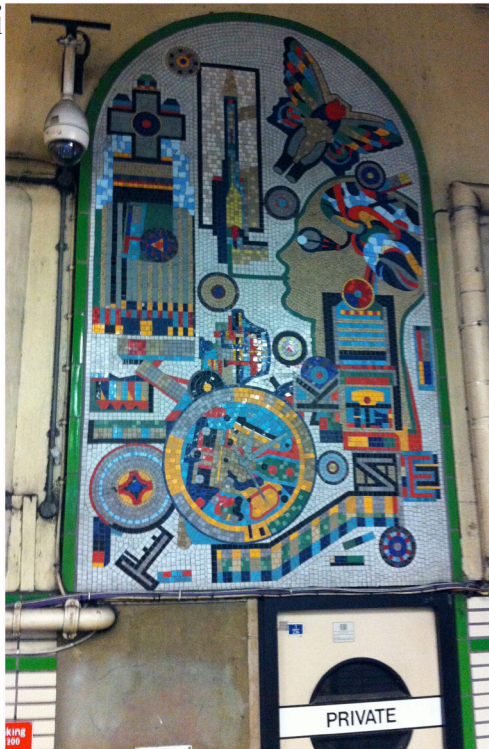


7 escalators and spill onto the platform walls are the work of the late Eduardo Paolozzi. Completed in 1986, the mosaics were commissioned as part of the Underground's Changing Stations refurbishment programme during the eighties. The programme introduced a new working methodology to station refurbishment, one that saw artists collaborating with architects to create artwork for stations. Often these relationships resulted in creative tension between the artists' modernist aesthetic and the architects' overwhelming desire for functionality. This led the programme to be criticised for 'patching up' stations with art, which passengers found visually confusing, and far removed from a genuine holistic modernisation achieved through art and design<sup>7</sup>.

While this criticism was merited, Paolozzi's creative vision and ambition has ensured that the public has held the work in high regard. So much so that when news appeared that sections of the mosaics were being removed during the redevelopment process, there was a campaign launched online to 'Preserve Paolozzi!' arguing that the coloured mosaics are the most stunning artwork on the Underground<sup>8</sup>. In response, Transport for London promised that the mosaics would be carefully maintained and restored where possible, with any removed segments being displayed elsewhere in the station. This means that once the hard hats are removed and the Tube refurbishment is complete at Tottenham Court Road in 2016, the station will play host two site-specific artworks by internationally renowned artists. While these works represent artists from different eras they also represent different approaches to commissioning art in underground transport networks.

Consistent with his 'in situ' practice, Buren's proposal has the potential to frame the new architectural features of the station as well as entering into an engaging dialogue about the institutional conditions imposed in such a controlling space. By employing striped vinyl, Buren will allow light to flood into the space, working with the architectural properties of the station to produce a functional yet imposing work. While we won't be able to see the work for another few years, there is every chance that, in time, these large-scale symbols will come to be as strongly associated with the identity of the station as Paolozzi's mosaics have. Of course the ability to create a strong visual identity for the network has been arguably the success story of the Underground since the beginning of the twentieth century. From Frank Pick's visionary hiring of artists to create advertising posters to the challenging Art on the Underground programme, the Underground has employed art and design to create a globally recognised brand and has generated real cultural value. Each line and station on the network has carved out an identity through a wide range of aesthetic and practical devices, including architecture, furniture design, colour, artwork and even daily poems at individual stations scribbled on official whiteboards by staff.

By working with world-renowned artists such as Buren, Art on the Underground is directly contributing to London's competitive advantage against other cities and networks, strengthen-



8 ing the image and reputation of the capital on a global level. It does this through allowing artists such as Buren to create new work in a similar support structure to that of a contemporary gallery, but one that responds to the Underground as both a literal and 'functional' site. The term 'functional' site can be defined by its departure from a physical location, epitomised by new genre public art and socially engaged, site responsive practices. This complex environment ensures that realising art is a collaborative and challenging task for curators, artists and the many partners involved. While some may consider the Art on the Underground to be extension of corporate branding, and in essence it is, it forms a key part of public art strand of London's Cultural Strategy, that of using high quality public art to enhance the public realm and contribute to the vitality of living in London<sup>9</sup>. In this respect, the programme aids London's claim to be the world's most culturally significant city.

As the Underground is committed to working with Art on the Underground to incorporate new artworks in new major redevelopment of stations, the fate of existing artworks will become increasingly pertinent. Reflective of a flawed arts policy over thirty years ago, the Paolozzi mosaics now represent the inevitability of change within these transport environments. If the artistic integrity of the mosaics has arguably been compromised by redevelopment work, or is looking tired and neglected, should they be removed completely and replaced by a new commission? Or should new commissions by artists such as Buren contribute to the development of the overall cultural identity of the site, rather than replace existing ones? Naturally the answer is not straightforward and needs to be arrived at on a work-by-work basis. The popularity and cultural significance of the mosaics, as well as cost of removal, will ensure that they remain in place for many years. However it is clear that Paolozzi's mosaics raise questions regarding the purpose and durability of permanent artworks in all underground transport networks.

*Elements of this article were based on research for my 2012 Masters thesis at The University of Manchester: 'Does the Art on the Underground programme contribute to the economic development of London?'*



7 Dormer, P (1993) 'Towards Better Design', RA Magazine, no. 38, Spring 1993, p.40.

8 The Arts Desk (2011). Preserve Paolozzi! Retrieved December 23, 2012 from <http://www.theartsdesk.com/visual-arts/preserve-paolozzi>

9 Greater London Authority. (2010). *The Mayor's Cultural Strategy*, p.155.





# 9 Inside the Mystery Castle

by JT Wilson

*Blood splattered on the stones in the desert. An emaciated man crouched on his hands and knees, coughing into the void. The reverberations from the rocks caused weird echoes, stripping the humanity from the sound, turning it into a canine hacking.*

*Shaking, the man looked to the sky to see that the vultures were circling again. They had been coming more often lately; they had known that the man's time was up long before he was prepared to admit it. His legacy would be a lifetime's work unfinished, a tragedy in three storeys.*

*It was time to contact Mary Lou.*

BOYCE Luther Gulley's legacy is the pinnacle of good or bad parenting, depending on how romantic you are: a grandiloquent gesture of parental love, at once an atonement and an explanation for years of absenteeism. Either way, it's an incredible story and a bizarre piece of history, worthy of your time. But an explanation of the artefact he produced isn't enough: the story behind it is as compelling as the unfinished end result.

In 1928, Gulley was a husband and father to a five-year-old daughter, Mary Lou, and lived in Seattle. His world crumbled around him, however, when he learned that he had tuberculosis. At the time, treatment of tuberculosis was rudimentary at best: the BCG vaccine was still unpopular in the USA and streptomycin, the cure, was still twenty years away. Prospects for Gulley's survival didn't look good; doctors advised him that the changeable and mild climate of Seattle was not good for his condition and that the contagious nature of TB put his wife and his infant daughter at risk.

One afternoon, Gulley popped out of his office under the pretext of a dental appointment. He never returned, and next appears in the Arizonian desert in 1930. It appears that he walked the 1,431 miles between Washington and Arizona. It also appears that one thought occupied his mind during the journey: a promise that he had made to his daughter before his disappearance. "One day," he had told her, "I'll build you a fairytale castle." When he reached Arizona, he resolved to do exactly that.

The rest of Boyce Luther Gulley's life was spent building his daughter a castle out of whatever happened to be lying around in the eighty acres of land that he purchased. His choice of location, at least when he got to Arizona, was not accidental: the land included an old gold mine and was adjacent to a landfill used by the residents of Phoenix, allowing him access to plenty of resources. He did, however, neglect to find a location with electricity or running water. It's not entirely clear how he survived in the desert; save for a stint as a temporary shoe salesman, biographers are oddly incurious about his day-to-day living. What did he eat? Where did he sleep?

Constructing the Mystery Castle, as he named it, was a haphazard affair. He used mortar made out of cement, calcium and goats' milk. He lugged stone and sand from a mile away. During the course of his duties as a salesman, he made trips to Mexico in which he collected Aztec curios to decorate the castle. He didn't want to interfere with the natural landscape, so he built a staircase to circumnavigate a boulder. When he needed windows, he used the tyres and windscreens from his car. The eighteen rooms that he completed include a chapel and a bar, yet not all of the rooms have a roof. There are thirteen fireplaces and a ledge protruding from a window. Economising on space, he created an early version of the foldaway table and the foldaway bed.

In 1945, on his deathbed, he notified Mary Lou Gulley, the daughter he had abandoned without explanation, that, as promised, he had built her a castle. Astounded, Mary Lou travelled to the desert to find a ramshackle, 'Howl's Moving Castle' construction made out of mining rails and bits of telephone pole which had a dungeon but no roof. Gulley hadn't finished there, though: he'd incorporated all sorts of secret compartments into his creation. A loose stone re-

vealed nickels and dimes totalling \$74. Another wonky compartment contained gold nuggets. Then there was a trapdoor which Mary Lou had been instructed not to open until 1948; her father had stipulated that if she stayed there for three years, she would be allowed to open it. As Boyce had spent over a decade building the thing, the least Mary Lou could do was honour the request: she moved in immediately.

On New Year's Day 1948, she invited Life magazine up to witness the opening of the trapdoor. In typical Mystery Castle eccentricity, the padlock, from an old Mexico City jail, had no key: it had to be chiselled off. The trapdoor hid a box containing two letters, a photograph of her father circa 1942, a Valentine, some gold ore and two \$500 bills (\$12,000 in today's money). The letters explained to Mary Lou how he built the castle for her and his hopes that *she would enjoy it*. The Valentine was from Mary Lou to her father, sent when she was seven. Never responded to; always remembered.

*Mary Lou Gulley lived in the Mystery Castle for the rest of her life.*

Sources:

Wikipedia

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# 10



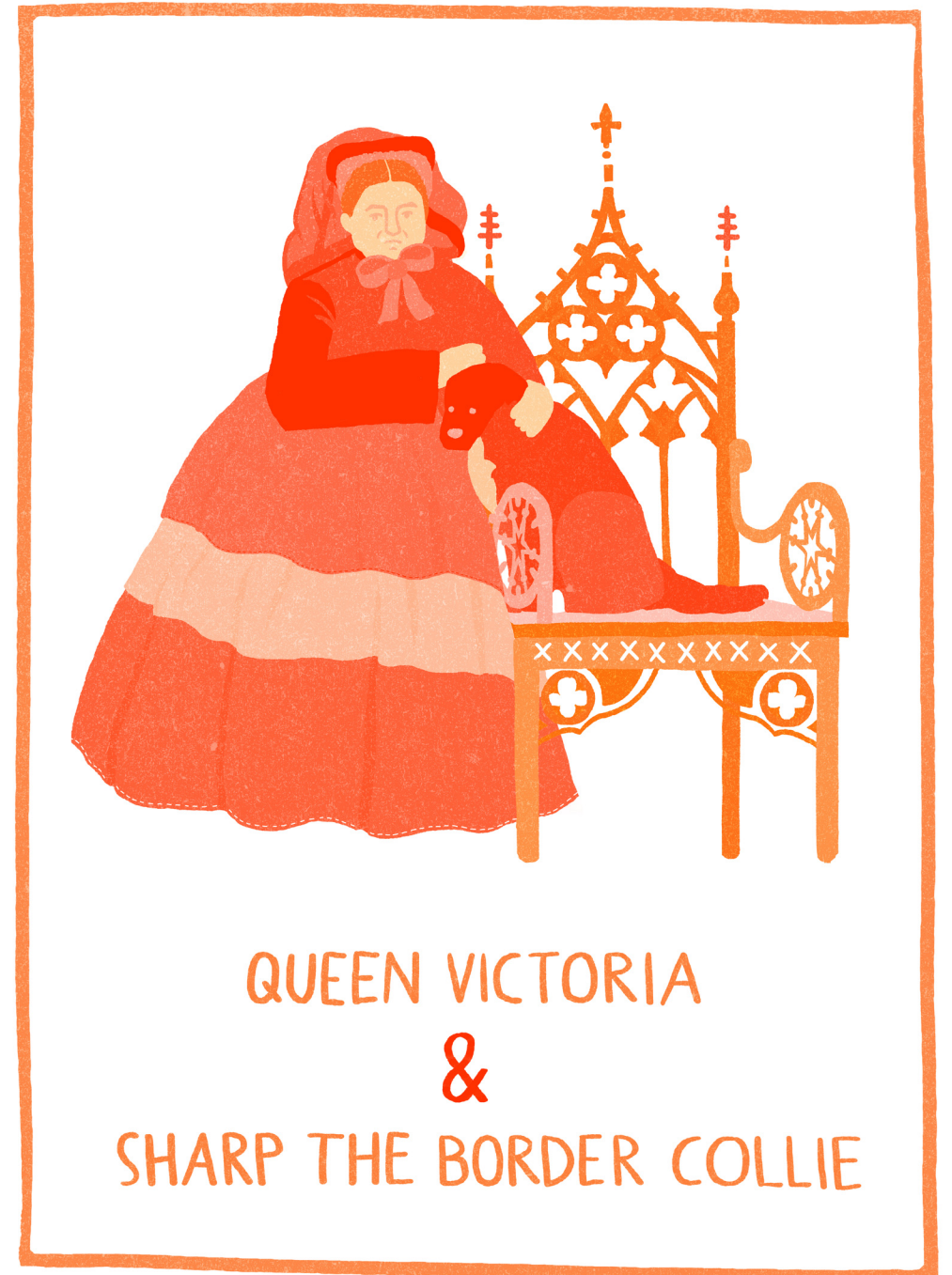




11



12







# 13 Interview with Michael Azzerad (‘Our Band Could Be Your Life’)

by Sam Lewis

*‘OUR Band Could Be Your Life’ was all about artists placing themselves outside the mainstream, driven by an ‘us vs. them’ mentality. After Nevermind broke in 1991, did this distinction become irrelevant? And how do you think the internet has affected this distinction?*

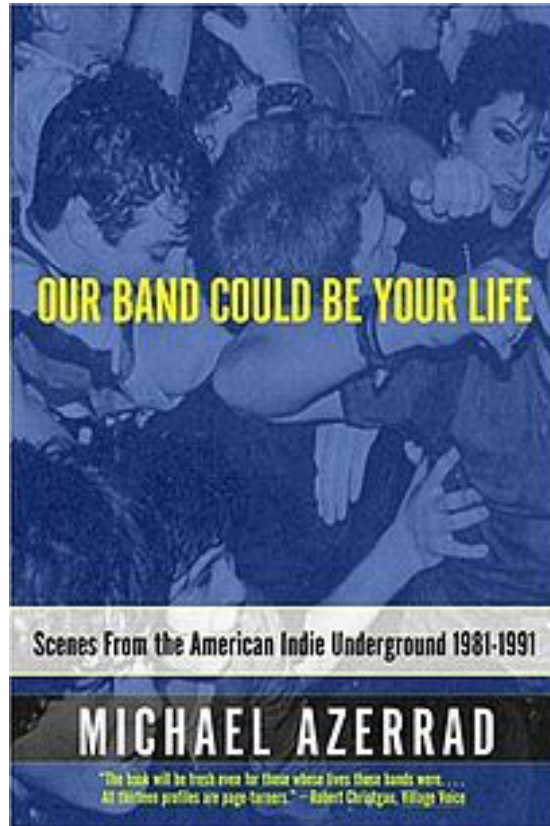
Well, I doubt they consciously placed themselves outside the mainstream. They just made the music they wanted to make and realised that the mainstream did not want it, so they either found or built another, smaller community to support it. They were just making the music they wanted to make, and it happened not to fit in with mainstream music culture. The idea that it was a conscious decision was an afterthought by fanzine writers (first and foremost *Maximumrocknroll*) and other non-musicians.

*If ‘80s hardcore and post-punk was ‘modernist’ (as Simon Reynolds puts it) and the ‘record collector rock’ of the ‘90s and early ‘00s like Pavement and Palace is ‘post-modernist’, how, if at all, would you categorise contemporary bands? Are they still trapped in post-modern self-referentiality? And if not, what’s changed?*

What’s changed in contemporary pop music is the instant availability of music from every era and every genre and every nation. It’s now possible for bands and audiences alike to absorb a very vast and diverse amount of music. I think a minority of them actually do, but those people tend to be culturally influential — the marketing term is ‘tastemaker’. So it’s fashionable to be a musical polyglot. Even though the general public stays with their same stuff, they’re being gently pulled into diversity by tastemaker artists — Kanye West sampling King Crimson, for instance.

*Almost all the groups in ‘Our Band Could Be Your Life’ were fighting against the corporate culture of the day, creating what you call ‘angstmusik’ in the process. Today America is in the midst of an economic crisis, and embroiled in controversial wars. Is today’s music equally a response to that environment? Do ‘alt/indie’ bands even feel the need to take sides explicitly?*

I wouldn’t say the *Our Band Could Be Your Life* bands were consciously fighting against the corporate culture of the day, except perhaps Beat Happening’s Calvin Johnson, who made a slogan out of jousting with the ‘corporate ogre’. And I don’t think those bands’ music was angst-ridden because of any culture war they were consciously waging. It was just how they felt, and they converted that feeling into music.



But no, underground bands don’t seem to feel the need to take sides explicitly; I think they’re savvy enough to have seen what a hypocritical embarrassment the baby boomers made of that approach. Rather, today’s underground bands take sides implicitly.

# 14



*You’re totally right that the bands of the 1980s were forced by necessity to exist outside the system. But then at the same time groups like Minor Threat and Minutemen also had a deeply political approach to their music and lives. Which seems absent from many ‘indie/alt’ bands today. But I agree that today the rebellion is implicit.*

I agree, there seem to be less politicised bands today, although musicians very publicly support social or political causes. The idea that big corporations are anathema seems to have largely evaporated though. No-one is very keen to follow where their money is coming from or going to. I find that very sad.

*In your blog post, ‘It’s The Beginning of a New Age’ you wrote that “underground music is just vastly different now”, in relation to the positivity and lack of cynicism of contemporary bands. When I listen to groups like Ducktails, Animal Collective or Lil B, I can hear a similar optimism. Where do you think this springs from? Is it a new generation growing up in a post-Cold War culture? Is it a reaction in some sense to the economic crisis in America?*

It is the nature of underground music to form an implicit critique of mainstream culture. Right now, mainstream culture is, by and large, stupid and angry. The most rebellious thing you can be right now is smart and optimistic.

*You told The Village Voice that, “I think if you think music sucks right now, in the deepest sense you are old. I think this is one of the greatest periods of music in my lifetime”. Can you please elaborate on this statement? What about the current period makes it so great? Are we entering a new ‘era’ of rock/pop music, and if so, what defines it from the past? Do contemporary bands inspire you in the same way as those you wrote about in ‘Our Band Could be Your Life’?*

There’s this phenomenon I see in people, starting around when they hit 35, when they just shut down and stop listening to — or, more to the point, hearing, in the deepest sense — new music. They start complaining that the music they listened to when they were younger was better than “this crap today”. And that’s when they’ve shut down their minds to a whole lot of things; they have gotten old.

Pace my esteemed colleague Simon Reynolds, I’m hearing a lot of music that just explodes with invention; it does what the most exciting music does, which is to advance our notion of what music is. It’s challenging and it makes you, as one ‘80s hardcore compilation put it, “flex your head”. And there’s just so much of this music happening at once that it’s almost overwhelming. I haven’t seen that since the post-punk era; it was long overdue.

Yes, we are entering a new era of rock/pop music. And that’s because of major social upheaval and technological advancements. Those things power changes in history as well as changes in music — and that’s no coincidence because, as social theorist Jacques Attali pointed out, music predicts history.

The contemporary bands I’m excited about inspire me in a different way from the bands in *Our Band Could Be Your Life*. The latter were pioneers of a community; the former are harbingers of a new historical era.

*What defines, for you, this new era of ‘rock/pop’?*

The idea that making loud, angry, distorted music is no longer rebellious. That’s a hard one to get rid of because it was true for so long and many older people have trouble letting go of it. Making music that flatters the intelligence is much more rebellious and truly progressive, because so much in our culture right now insults the intelligence. Per Monsieur Attali, if that new kind of music catches on, it bodes well for the future.





**15** Does music presage social change because the kind of people who make new music — generally, young middle/lower middle class people — are the most susceptible/sensitive to the early harbingers of social and economic change?

There's a very abstract answer to that question provided by Attali. But people from all walks of life play and write music, so I wouldn't look for a class component. It's more in the inherent nature of music and artistry.

*For Simon Reynolds, the iPod heralds the death of the 'social music experience', while the internet has destroyed the idea of progress and 'futurism' in pop and rock by allowing artists to obsessively focus on the past through videos on YouTube and MP3 blogs. In the epilogue to 'Our Band Could Be Your Life' you wrote that 'The internet allows DIY to range far beyond anyone's wildest dreams'. A decade on, how do you feel these words have panned out? Has the internet fostered the expansion of DIY in music? Or do you think modern technology has had the pernicious effect Reynolds perceives?*

I really have to reject the premise of the question, which poses a false dichotomy between perceived lack of musical progress and the state of DIY. It is quite possible for musicians to make derivative music all by themselves.

I also wonder if Simon was actually predicting the death of the social music experience. Live musical performance, which is where it all began, is alive and well. And Simon, of all people, knows very well that people still get together and dance, which is the ultimate social music experience.

Yes, thanks to the internet and digital technology, DIY has of course ranged beyond anyone's wildest dreams. The ideal of DIY was to empower musicians so they wouldn't have to be dependent on professional recording studios and record labels (indie or major) to produce and distribute their music. In 1981, the start of *Our Band Could Be Your Life*, no-one dreamed that it would be possible to make an excellent recording in one's living room using a microphone or two and something called a 'laptop', or that they could send that music all over the planet instantly as soon as it was completed. In 1981, that would have been — and still is — completely mindblowing.

*You're right that DIY doesn't = innovation. But I suppose a healthier DIY, independent scene does, on the whole, allow for a broader range of voices to be heard than in the corporate mainstream.*

Right, but again, a broad range of voices could all be derivative.

I do agree that DIY technology enables all kinds of people who might otherwise not have made art. Maybe they were too shy to collaborate with someone else to get their stuff made or recorded. Maybe they were intimidated by the technology. Maybe they couldn't afford the technology. There are surely many other things I'm forgetting. It's empowering.

*The New York band Woods told me that one of the effects of the internet on musicians was to break down the barriers that constricted their predecessors, in that bands today no longer had any tribal inhibitions or physical limitations with regards to where they got their influences from. Would you say you agree with this? How do you think the internet has effected contemporary bands and audiences?*

I'm not sure what's meant by 'tribal inhibitions', but it's true, musicians have access to an exponentially wider and deeper array of music than before, and they're recombining and interpreting those musics in ways that earlier artists could not have contemplated. Likewise, more adventurous music listeners, whom, it must be pointed out comprise a tiny minority of the market, are also absorbing many more different kinds of music, which in turns opens their ears to musical innovation of all kinds. And let's not forget the tremendous influence that digital technology has made on musical form and composition, and I'm not just talking about T-Pain.

*By 'tribal inhibitions' I mean not wanting to listen or sound like a certain band because your friends, or your 'scene' might not approve. Like, I guess, not liking Black Flag and Yes at the same time. Or disco and rock.*

I think it's still quite possible to be a social outcast for liking certain kinds of music. I mean, what if you hang out with Juggalos and you're all sitting around drinking PBRs one night and you suddenly announce that you're really into Taylor Swift. Don't you think your buddies would look askance at you from then on?

This goes back to the minority of musical polyglots that I mentioned above. Some communities are like that, but I think most are not. But in polyglot communities, one's status can rise if one consistently finds good music from anywhere, any time; if you're a connoisseur. But it's important to point out that even though those communities have branched out somewhat — you can be into both freak folk and black metal — again, if you're into Taylor Swift you might get some raised eyebrows. There are limits.

*In the epilogue you argued that, "the revolution had been largely successful, but as it turned out the struggle was more fun than the victory". Today, two decades on from Nevermind, does it still seem a pyrrhic victory? What does it mean for indie/rock bands to operate today in a world where punk/alt-rock 'won'? Where does the space for being subversive lie today for bands, labels and music fans?*

Well, I just meant that the struggle was more fun, and, let's face it, that's true of just about any endeavour. There's a camaraderie and idealism in struggle that is very exciting, whereas achieving your goal only brings about a temporary sense of equilibrium — before it sets the stage for new dissatisfaction.

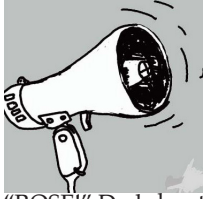
However, I will say that all the work done by the '80s indie underground is really coming to fruition now — today, musicians can now make a decent living playing exactly the music they want, because it's much cheaper to produce the music, it's easier to tour, and it's easier to find an audience, among many other advantages.

The space for being subversive lies in not being beholden to mainstream culture in any way, which gives artists the freedom to critique that culture with relative impunity.

**16**







# 17 January blues

by Rebecca Willmott



"ROSE!" Dad shouts up to me. I am in my bedroom and I have just started to read.

"Shall we make some gingerbread men biscuits?"

I was confused.

"It's February the seventh Dad, and it's not Christmas anymore!"

"Let's have one extra day! Come downstairs and help me Rose, they'll all end up with one leg and half a head without your expert skills!"

"Expert!" I laugh to myself. I wasn't an expert in anything. I did like making biscuits though and once dad had an idea, there was no stopping him. When I get downstairs the kitchen is clean. The mound of dishes has disappeared, the newspapers have been moved to one neat pile and Dad has cleaned a work station for us on the dining room table.

"We have to sprinkle on some flour before we do cut out the biscuits don't we? I remember that bit," Dad says, rubbing his hands together.

"Yes dad, but first we need to make the dough!"

Dad smiles. "Ah yes of course, excellent memory, you get that from your mother, not me, not me at all!"

"OK, we need a big bowl to do the mixing."

"A big bowl, a big bowl," Dad repeats this while rooting through the cupboards like a disorientated monkey.

"Aha! One nice big bowl," He says as he proudly placing it on the table.

The bowl is heavy and very old and there is a chip on the rim.

"Right what else do we need?" Dad asks very importantly with his hands on his hips. His apron is stripy and he smiles as he hands me the awful apron with "Kiss the Cook" printed upon it. Mr Umpton next door gave it to us for Christmas last year.

"Thanks, dad."

"No problem sweetie, now let's get cracking!" he says, pointing at a box of free range eggs. His shoulders start to shake and his cheeks turn red as he chuckles. He always laughs at his own jokes.

I try to hold back my laughter, but I can't.

"That's my girl, a smile"

We crack two eggs into a smaller glass bowl. I whisk it with a fork, as Dad pulls out a bag of plain flour.

"How much do we need?" Dad asks me.

"About two hundred grams."

We pour the flour in the bowl with the whisked eggs and one hundred grams of sugar.

We mix it together with a wooden spoon. I like how the flour turns a beige colour so quickly.

"So we need to roll it out now don't we?" Dad asks as he brings out the rolling pin from the cutlery drawer.

"Yes, dad but, we haven't even put the ginger in! They won't be gingerbread biscuits without ginger!"

"Gosh, I am a silly!"

I sprinkle a teaspoon of ginger into the mix. It smells like Christmas.

"Now it's time for rolling!" I say proudly.

Dad drops half the dough on the pre-floured work station.

"I feel like a pro, Jamie Oliver eat your heart out!"

"Perhaps you could audition for the *Great British Bake Off*, Dad!"

"No, I'd be too good for them!" He smiles at me, as I drop the other half of dough on the table.

# 18



"Oh no the dough is sticking to the rolling pin!"

"More flour, more flour, that's what you need."

I sprinkle a good layer of flour on the rolling pin.

"That's much better."

"Now which cutters shall we use?" Dad jingles the cutters in the stripy box,

"Well we have dinosaurs ... not very festive ... and here we have a star!"

"A star would be good!"

Dad continues wriggling his fingers through the box. "Ouch! Caught my finger on a sharp edge, throw this one away! "

"Oh no, not the Christmas tree cutter!"

"OK, so we have the star and oh and a gingerbread man!"

"I'm having the gingerbread man. You have the star because you are the light of my life!" Dad chimes.

"Shut up dad!" I say this because he is so soft sometimes.

The dough feels rubbery and moist. I twist my star cutter softly and lay it carefully on the baking tray with a line of parchment paper.

We cut out twenty biscuits. Dad pops them in the oven.

"So what time do we need them in there for Rose?"

Mum always twisted the dial so it looked like quarter to two, which is 200 degrees on our oven.

"For how long, Rosie Posie?"

"Twenty to twenty five minutes," I say with confidence.

"OK, I'll set this egg timer so we don't forget! Cup of hot chocolate?"

"Ummm yes please." I love hot chocolate.

In twenty two minutes the biscuits are ready.

"Safety first!" Dad says as he slips on a floral pair of oven gloves, they are very old and are a bit black on the mitts.

The smell of baked ginger fills the kitchen and I can taste them already.

"Good batch we have got here!" Dad says with delight.

"Oh yes, they are nicely browned now." I am so pleased they worked out.

Dad tipped them on a wire cooling rack, next to the sink.

"When can we eat?" He says with excitement.

"In five minutes, we have to let them cool. Are we going to ice them?"

"Icing sugar? Oh no I don't think we have any! Oh I am sorry Rose." Dad looked heartbroken.

"Don't worry Dad, they are lovely as they are, I like the gingerbread men without faces, now they can't talk back to us when we eat them!"

"Exactly!" Dad cheers up instantly,

After four minutes I bite the nose of the hedgehog off and dad eats a whole star in one go.

"These are delicious! Top job Rose!"

"Couldn't do it without you, Dad!"

After wolfing down his second star, Dad says with a grin, "Now don't be soft and have another biscuit,"





# 19 Pork/apple/barley stew

by Richard Bilsborough

A COUPLE of years ago I was given a stock pot. Initially, the only use I could think of something so big was as a bucket. I lived on my own, with my dole barely stretching, so it seemed, to buy anywhere near enough to fill such a huge container. Winter came, with the inevitable ceiling-leaks. My stock pot's first use was to catch the water dripping into the kitchen, as I pirouetted around it, tiny pans – thimbles with match-stick handles – in my pot-towel-wrapped hands.

This changed – as many things do – through poverty and providence.

A kilo of mince. Mince on reduced offer. Mince which needed to be eaten that day. No other pan could handle it. Bravely, I yanked the stock pot out, slamming down a plastic measuring jug with a resounding clunk to catch the still-leaking ceiling. After a quick bleaching down and scrubbing, the stock pot was on the hob. It was a chilli, one which I'd cooked a thousand times before. But never at this volume. So began my relationship with my now-treasured bucket pan.

Anyway, this is a recipe I made up when I was given a load of pork with an equally short use-by date. Any pork cut that can stand up to a bit of boiling can do; I tend to use shoulder, although I have even done this recipe with roughly-chopped pork steaks and it turned out well enough. The trick is to not to use too sweet an apple, using nutmeg to balance the flavour. Use the sage and Worcestershire sauce to add depth, with the barley absorbing and thickening the broth. Use your discretion, play around and it should be good!

TO SERVE 4-5, YOU WILL NEED:

Pork – I used 4 slices of shoulder meat, marinated overnight in salt, pepper, cider vinegar, sage and nutmeg, then cut up into 1-inch-square chunks.

8 x sausages – any decent pork sausages will do. Lincolnshire work well, as do ones with black pudding in. I used 4x Pork/Apple, 4x Pork/Black Pepper

1 x large carrot, sliced

Onions – 2 small (or one large), roughly diced.

Mushrooms – a handful, quartered

2 leeks – washed, chopped.

Garlic – a couple of cloves, to taste, roughly-chopped.

Apples – a sour apple works better, nothing too sweet – I used one-and-a-half Russet apples.

Cider (Optional, if I have some in a dry cider can really help the flavours along.)

Pearl Barley – 250-300g.

Chicken stock – Check the back of the pearl barley, I think I used about a litre.

FOR PORK MARINADE

Cider Vinegar (75-100ml)

Salt & Pepper (to taste)

Worcestershire sauce (A dash)



Dried Sage (Stands up better to the long marinade time)

¼ ground Nutmeg

20



## INSTRUCTIONS

Marinate the pork in the cider vinegar, sage, salt and pepper, and a little Worcestershire sauce, overnight. Don't go overboard on the salt; there'll be salt in the stock, too. Play it cautiously here: if it isn't salty enough you can always add in later.

Put the pork into your stock pot with a bit of oil, brown on a low heat for ten minutes. Stir occasionally to stop it from sticking, but let it sit as much as possible. When the pork is starting to look cooked on the outside, add your sausages (I chopped mine in half) and leave to cook, stirring occasionally for about 15 minutes, until things are starting to look cooked.

Add your onions and mushrooms to soak up any fat; if there isn't much, add a little more oil. Leave for a couple of minutes, then add the rest of the vegetables and apples. Grind in a quarter of a nutmeg seed, stir to coat everything in the oil/nutmeg and stir occasionally for another 10-15 minutes, until everything is cooked.

Add the chicken stock, pearl barley, cider (if you're using it), stir, and let cook for 60-90 minutes, until the barley is ready. Add more sage/a touch of Worcestershire sauce if the flavour needs some enhancement, nutmeg if too sweet.

Serve up with some crusty buttered bread, feel warm!







# 21 Sebadas (also called Seadas, according to Sardinian language variants)

by **Valentina Orrù**

SEBADAS are a traditional Sardinian dish that can be used as a second course or as a dessert. They originally come from the areas of Sardinia traditionally characterised by an economy based on sheep farming. Those areas, Barbagia, Ogliastra, Logudoru and Gallura, are well known for the production of authentic Sardinian pecorino cheese.

## Ingredients:

500g durum wheat flour  
1 spoonful of water  
Salt to taste  
3 spoons of pork fat  
3 eggs  
1kg of Sardinian pecorino cheese  
2 orange zest, grated  
1 lemon (juice)  
olive oil for frying  
honey/sugar



To prepare the dough, put the flour into a bowl with the eggs, add the salt, melted in the spoon of water, and mix with a wooden spoon. Add the pork fat gradually and mix well until you get a smooth dough. Then let the dough rest covered with a cloth for about 40 minutes.

Grate the cheese and mix with the orange zest and the lemon juice until you get a dense cream.

Roll out the dough to 2.5/3 mm thick and cut out circles of 10 cm in diameter (you can use a mug or a glass). Place 2/3 spoons of cream on each circle and close with another circle pressing the edges together.

Fry the circles in olive oil for about 10 minutes and drain in kitchen paper. Serve hot covered with honey\* or sugar.

\*If possible, it is highly recommended to use Sardinian honey.

# Recipe in Sardinian:

# 22



500 gr de farra da trigu tostau  
1 cugliera de acqua  
1 spizzu de sabi  
3 cuglierasa de struttu  
3 ousu  
1 Kg de pecorinni friscu  
2 cosciusu trattausu  
su succi de u limoi  
ollu de obia  
mebi/zuccuru

Impastai sa farra cun sa simbua cun i s'ousu, acciungi su sabi scallau in dua cugliera d'acqua abellu abellu, acciungi su struttu. Traballai bei s'impastu e lazziai pausai po 1 ora crobettu cun su pannu.

Trattai su casu cun su crosciu de s'arangi e acciungi su limoi a s'impastu fiasa a formai ua crema densa.

Sterri sa pasta po fai su pillu sottilli e ritagliaia forma da discusu de 10 cm. Poi acciungi ai discusu ua pariga de cuglierasa de impastu e sarrai cun is attrusu discusu pigendi mei bordusu.

Fai callantai s'ollu de obia e fri i sebadasa finzasa a diventai doradasa a tottu i duas pattisi.

Srebi i sebadasa callentisi cun du pagheddu de mebi o zuccuru.

Gustaddasa cun prasciei!

