

ArtSway

Contemporary Visual Art in the New Forest



Hannah Maybank

19 April – 15 June 2008

Teachers' Pack

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SWAY PARISH COUNCIL



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Hannah Maybank

Hannah Maybank's paintings and ink drawings embody an ethereal, contemplative beauty inherent in the natural world. Her work perfectly compliments the rural location of ArtSway, with the New Forest acting as an inspiration for her recent residency and forthcoming exhibition.

The works created have an otherworldly quality to them, employing for example recurring motifs of trees, clouds and mountains. The repetition of these motifs across the surfaces of the paintings not only echoes aspects of life, growth and decay, but also the cycle of the process in which the paintings were made.

The paintings begin as a series of overlapping drawings using precise outlines on layers of tracing paper. Using these intricate drawings as templates, Maybank then builds up her images on canvas using latex between layers of acrylic paint. During the final stages much of the latex is removed. Layers of paint are then peeled back, torn and cut into, producing a tactile surface suggesting forms such as a leaf or a tree. These forms become almost three-dimensional objects as the paint is peeled away from the canvas and underlying layers and markings are revealed.

Although she constructs her canvases with an intense attention to detail, it is in the final stages of latex removal that an element of chance determines the outcome of each painting. Colours, however, are carefully chosen to compliment the detailed intricacy of the paintings – creating a final work that features a complex lexicon of textured forms and patterns that appear to float on a shimmering, flat ground. The finished paintings can be appreciated on numerous levels. Starting from a distance the viewer is initially attracted by the almost detached, sparse intricacy of the pieces, but on closer inspection details are unveiled that cause one to think more deeply about the process involved and about our relationship to time and the natural world.

Her ink drawings, however, are quite candid and incredibly bold – echoing the almost reckless 'tearing' of the latex from underneath the surface of her canvases – and have a calligraphic quality to them that borrows from Chinese scroll paintings. These drawings, of trees the artist photographed in the New Forest, take on the appearance of large cameos – with large black shapes floating on a white background. The drawings and paintings cannot but perfectly compliment each other: the drawings are the paintings in flux, the paintings are the drawings taken to their natural conclusion.

About Hannah Maybank

Hannah Maybank was born in Stafford in 1974 and graduated from the Royal College of Art Painting course in 1999. She was artist in residence at ArtSway in late 2007. Recent exhibitions include: Top Twenty, 39, London, 2007; Hannah Maybank, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, 2005; Hannah Maybank, Queen Street Studios, Belfast, 2004. Hannah Maybank is represented by Gimpel Fils, London.



Hannah Maybank, *Disclosure*, Acrylic & Latex on Canvas, 2008

The following themes and ideas are explained more fully in the **Exhibition Information section of this booklet** – which is based on a gallery handout that accompanies Hannah Maybank's exhibition at ArtSway, a document that is intended to provide visitors insight into his work and ideas.

Below are suggestions and ideas that are designed to stimulate working with your students in general art & design classes, as well as across other subjects. All of the ideas below are loosely linked to suggestions for areas of work that can be found on the National Curriculum website.

1) Hannah Maybank's work refers to two specific themes: 'time and space' and 'growth and decay'. Ask your students to think of their experiences of the natural world – such as the New forest. **How can they reconcile these experiences with Maybank's themes and ideas? Could they produce a painting each, or together, that conveys the seasonal cycles of the Forest – and could this also include notions of the passage of time?**

2) Trees are a recurring motif in Maybank's drawings and paintings, as are clouds and mountains. **Is there a particular grouping of trees that can be of interest to your students – such as in their own garden at home, or perhaps in an area such as the New Forest? Can they think of other natural forms – those not used by Maybank – that they could use as their own visual 'language'?**

3) If you look closely at one of Hannah Maybank's paintings you can see elements of the line drawing that she transfers, one-to-one scale, from large sheets of tracing paper to the surface of her canvases. **These original large drawings exist as layers – can any of your students think of a famous painting, and how many layers that painting might have? What role could layers play in their own work? Could they take three of their own existing drawings, transfer them to tracing paper and then produce a new composition, a new work?**

4) **Fibonacci Numbers and the Golden Section:** Mathematical ideas are often present in works of art either explicitly on the part of the artist or implicitly through reflections on the human condition or on the physical world. Conversely, and often in tandem with its utilitarian value, mathematics can be appreciated from an aesthetic viewpoint. Moreover, the actual 'doing' of mathematics is often considered to be an emotional experience akin to the production of an artistic artefact. In this illustrated talk we consider the mathematical quantity known as the golden section and discuss its beauty from a mathematical point of view and some of its occurrences in art and nature. We shall also demonstrate how the simple sequence of numbers 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13,..., known as the Fibonacci numbers, in which each successive

term is the sum of the two previous terms, is intimately related to the golden section.

Hannah Maybank cites the influence of both Fragonard and Watteau in her work, and that she is interested in areas of her work where the viewer is 'being taken through' particular sections of her canvases. **Discuss the works of Fragonard and Watteau with your students – and apply the basic principles of 'the Golden Section' (or 'Golden Mean', 'Golden Area'). Can they identify any 'Golden Sections' in their own and others work?**

5) Unusual materials: Maybank uses traditional materials such as canvas and acrylic paint to make her work – but also uses unusual materials such as latex. **With reference to suggestion 1) on this list – are there any unusual materials that your students can gather and use to enhance their paintings? Consider that Maybank tears the latex she applies to her canvases – and with it the layers of paint – to create a new texture in her work. However, this texture refers to ideas of 'growth and decay' as also mentioned in suggestion 1). How can your students use the materials they have gathered to suggest another idea?**

6) Chance plays a crucial role in Maybank's work, particularly when she is cutting and peeling the latex and surface layers of paint. **How important is the element of chance in an artists work? Does Maybank's final peeling and cutting back of the paint and latex 'lock the painting in', as Francis Bacon claimed in his work (he would often throw dollops of which paint across his canvases)? Discuss with your students the role of chance and accidents in making their work.**



Hannah Maybank, *Arcane Seek (Rose Ghost)*, Acrylic and Latex on Canvas, 2008



Hannah Maybank, *Carniferous - I*, Shellac Ink on Paper, 2007



Hannah Maybank, *Mirrored Oaks*, Acrylic and Latex on Canvas, 2008



Hannah Maybank, *The Invitation*, Acrylic and Latex on Linen, 2008

Page 8: **FREE Guided Tours and Workshops at ArtSway**

ArtSway is keen to welcome school groups visiting the gallery. Please see the **Information for Schools Visiting ArtSway** section of this booklet for more information. **Please note:** we would only be able to accommodate between 20 and 25 children in the galleries per visit.

Free Guided Tours

One of the best ways to experience an artist's work, as opposed to looking at images in books and on the Internet, is to actually visit a gallery to see their work in the flesh. ArtSway has hosted many school group visits in the past, offering Guided Tours around the gallery by the Curator, Exhibitions and Education and Marketing Officer.

The tours sometimes involve PowerPoint presentations, but usually consist of ArtSway's staff taking the students from work to work, explaining the origins and content of the works on display. A tour will usually end with a question and answer session.

On some occasions it may be possible to have the artists present for a school visit.

Free Workshops

ArtSway employs a wide range of artists to lead workshops. However, they are all professional artists who will charge a fee to lead a workshop. If a school is interested in scheduling an artist to lead a workshop, please contact the gallery. Contact details are in the **Information for Schools Visiting ArtSway** section of this booklet. In some instances we will provide an artist free of charge.

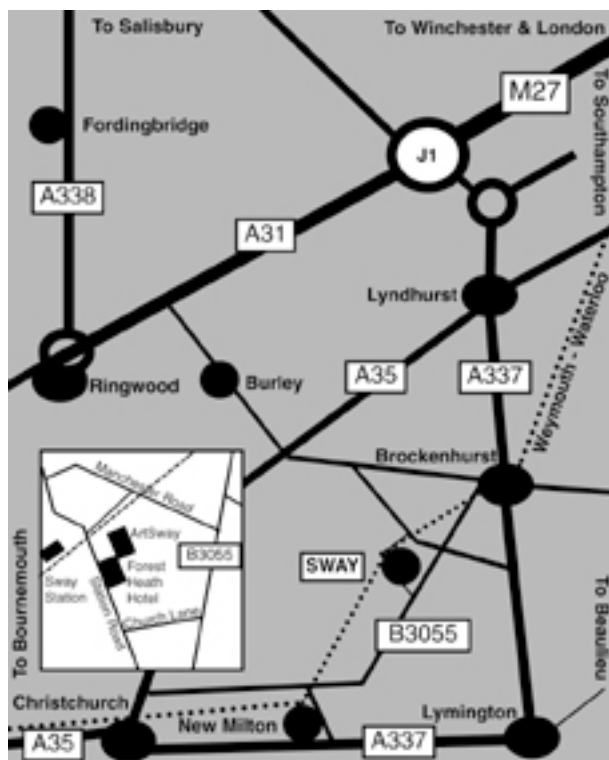
There are a series of **FREE** one-hour workshops available. These workshops take place after the tour of the exhibition, and involve simple drawing and paintings techniques and are based on the themes outlined in the **Themes for Lessons and Workshops** section of this booklet.

A Timetable of a Typical School Visit to ArtSway

- 10.00am – 10.10am: **Introduction and welcome to ArtSway.**
- 10.10am – 10.30am: **Tour of the exhibition.**
- 10.30am – 11.30am: **Workshop activities.**
- 11.30am – 11.45am: **Discussion and round up of activities.**
- 12.00pm: **End of workshops and school visit.**

The following is information for school groups visiting ArtSway for **Guided Tours and Workshops**.

Getting to ArtSway:



By Rail: Sway Station is on the London Waterloo to Weymouth Line.

By Car: Follow signs to Sway from Brockenhurst, Burley or Lymington, then follow signs for Village Centre & Train Station. ArtSway is just behind the Forest Heath Hotel on Station Road.

Access: All parts of the gallery are accessible via level access.

Parking: ArtSway has its own car park that is reached along the access drive between the surgery and chemist on Station Road in the centre of Sway.

Etiquette and Good Behaviour in the Galleries

Works of art are very fragile and cannot be touched. The paintings of Hannah Maybank are very delicate and we ask that children visiting the gallery take care both of their own safety and of the artworks on display. Teachers and their assistants are responsible for their groups. At the beginning of the tour the relevant ArtSway staff member will give a brief explanation to the visiting children of what they can and cannot do in the gallery.

Contact Details for ArtSway

If you would like to discuss a visit to ArtSway, or what we could offer in terms of educational resources, please contact:

Peter Bonnell, Curator Exhibitions and Education on Telephone: 01590 682260 (extension 14), or Email: peter@artsway.org.uk

Address: ArtSway, Station Road, Sway, Hampshire, SO41 6BA
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Opening Times: Tuesday to Sunday, 11am – 5pm. **Admission is FREE.**