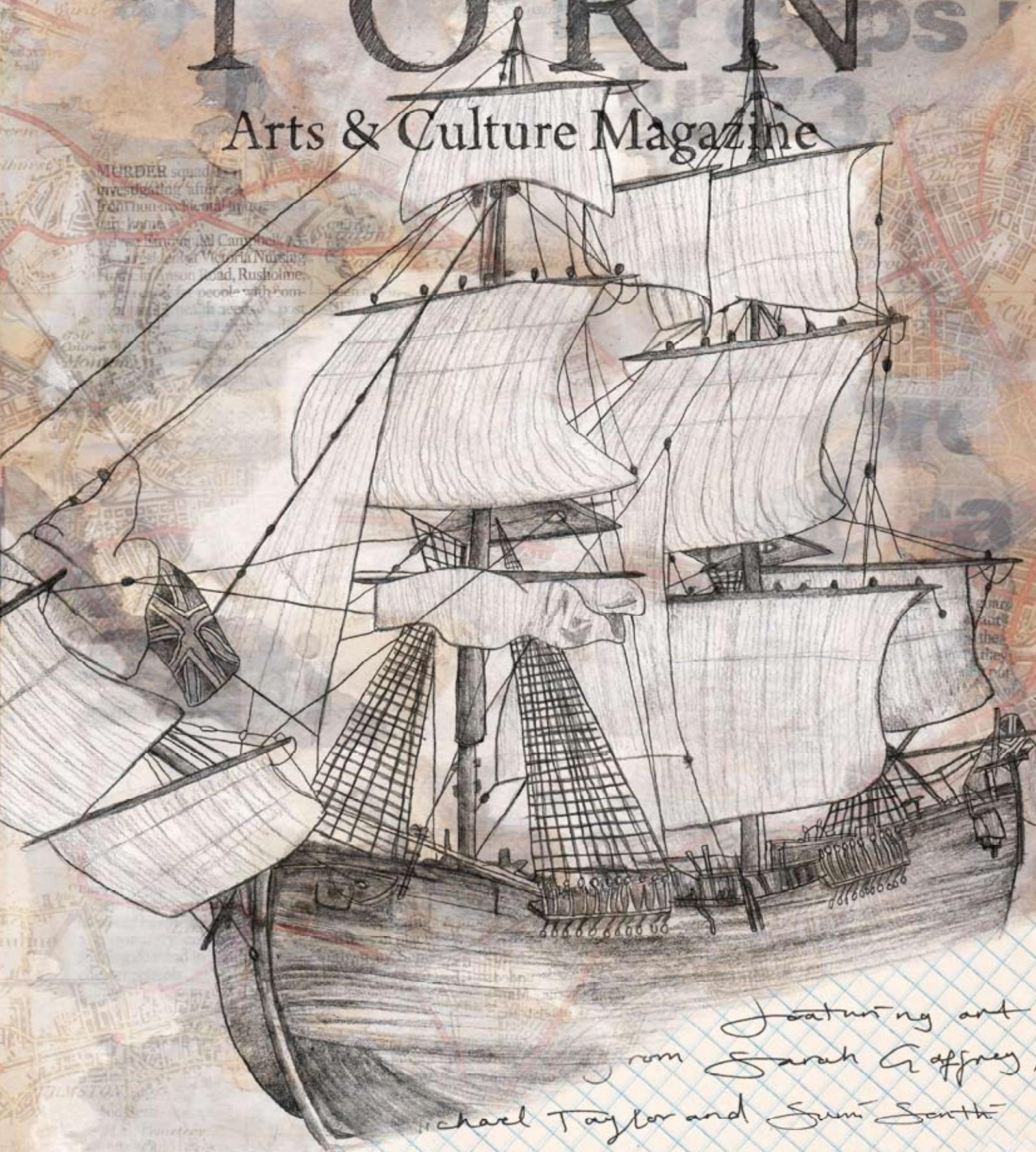


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Plus
featuring art
from Sarah Gaffney,
Michael Taylor and Sam South
Plus
guest reviews from Jack Perryman,
Naomi Racz and Cerys Hopcyn

Northern Arts Uncovered, Leeds by Naomi Racz



{Photo of the organizers, Helen Brady and Victoria Rossiter, by Burhan Saeed}

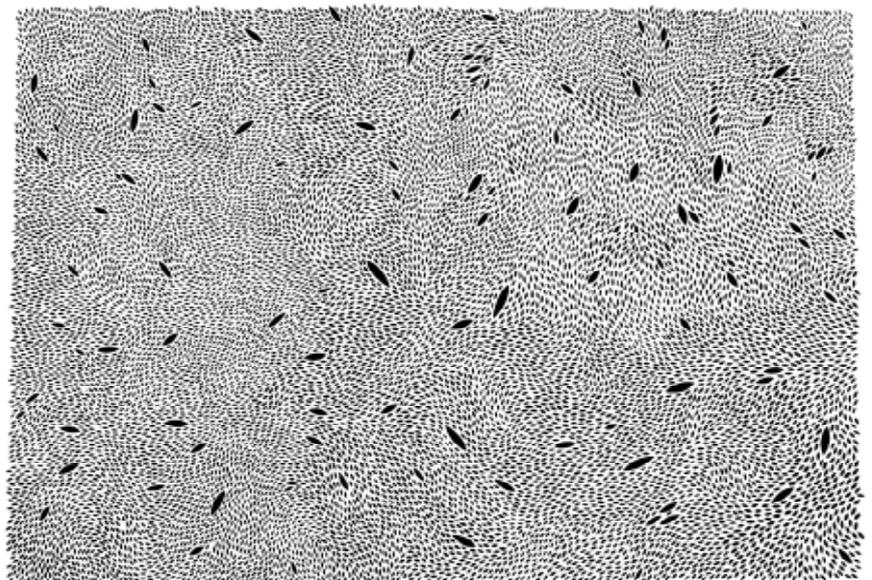
Anyone from the north knows it's full of talent and filled with opportunities for artists to study or be inspired. In particular, Leeds has a wide range of art and design courses, including those offered by the renowned Leeds College of Art. However, there aren't many galleries in the city and this pool of local talent have had

few chances to exhibit their work in the past. The Northern Arts Uncovered exhibition, which was held at Leeds Gallery on Saturday 21st April, was set up to try and remedy that situation. I went along to see what the exhibition had to offer and to show my support for this great initiative.

Leeds Gallery opened in September 2011 with the aim of providing a platform for local artists; by hosting the Northern Art Exhibition it certainly did that. The majority of the artists on show were either from or based in Leeds, or else based within the north-east. Victoria Rossiter, who organised the event, felt that it was a great success, "The exhibition went really well, guests came up to us all day to say how much they loved it. I thought all the artwork was fantastic, everything worked well together and I'm really proud of everyone involved."

There were 24 artists exhibiting and a wide range of styles and mediums on offer, including photography, illustrations, and fine art. However, a few artists in particular stood out for me.

Pippa Dyrlaga's detailed paper cuttings are reminiscent of Rob Ryan, who she says has inspired her work. However, although both artists specialise in paper cuttings, Pippa's work is definitely not an imitation of Ryan's.



{Papercut by Pippa Dyrlaga}

Interestingly, Pippa claims these images were inspired by a dream, “My work started because I had a vivid dream about a post-apocalyptic world in which everyone was getting eaten by millions of bears. I couldn’t stop thinking about it, so I started to draw them, and then things developed from there.”

Pippa’s pieces stood out to me not simply because of their stunning visual impact, but also because of the obvious level of work that goes into each piece. “I carefully hand draw them out first to make sure that everything fits together as it should, and then I cut them out using a scalpel. It is quite physically straining doing the bigger ones. Depending on how intensively I do them, I have once or twice ended up with blisters on my fingers and had to walk around with claw hand for a couple of hours. The process is so important. To me it’s removed from the finished piece, almost more significant in a way.”

Pippa hopes to expand her range of abstract pieces and has also begun printing onto bags. Wherever her work takes her in the future she’s certainly one to watch.

Another artist whose work caught my attention at the exhibition was Chris Westerdale. Chris’s impressionist style paintings of every day objects struck me as being quietly different from the much more modern styles of work that dominated the exhibition. Chris agrees that his work is very traditional. “I don’t try to over-complicate things. I don’t have the background or education to be clever enough to do that. I see what’s in front of me and I try to bring it to life on the canvas.” Chris is 48, but only came to art three years ago when he started training with Stewart Taylor, whose work inspired Chris. Chris is also influenced by Van Gogh, Degas, and Morisot, whose styles he has attempted to imitate in the past. He hopes to continue developing his work and we can expect to see more of it as Chris believes his new found passion for art is where his future lies.

See more of Pippa Dyrllaga’s work on her facebook page [facebook.com/bearfollowscat](https://www.facebook.com/bearfollowscat). Chris Westerdale is available to be contacted at wildwood.cw@googlemail.com. You can see samples from all the artists who exhibited at Northern Arts Uncovered on the website northernartsuncovered.co.uk



{Painting by Chris Westerdale}