

June 2007

For immediate publication

Kurt Jackson- Annual Cornish Project

The Cornish Crows: An Bryny Kernow

Saturday 15th September – Saturday 6th October 2007

Private View: Friday 14th September

“When I sit here at my kitchen table I look out on to one of Clive- the-farmer’s fields that leads down to the coast. This field always seems to be full of rooks and jackdaws and maybe a few carrion crows. They stride around in their tatty black raincoats commenting on everything and sharing it with their partners and mates whilst pecking and pulling in the grass. All of a sudden they are off in a mass of black flapping flocks, cawing and chucking, to land further down the field or to return to their rookery in the sycamores by the vicarage. They are just some of the crow family that seem to fill my head – they are everywhere; ravens overhead, magpies on the washing line, jays screeching in the woods and now even choughs back on the cliff. They demand your attention – they entertain, they mimic, they chat, they marry for life; they’re intelligent, they’re comical, they’re beautiful- they dominate the landscape around .

In Cornwall the crows are in the stories of old, they are in the place names, they are the subject of recent conservation projects and they are even on the coat of arms. So a body of work that aims to capture and celebrate these amazing birds of the everyday commonplace and how they fit into this world that we share with them.”

Kurt Jackson 2007

This year’s Annual Cornish Project by Kurt Jackson has taken ‘Cornish Crows’, or ‘An Bryny Kernewek’ in the native Cornish language, as the theme of exploration. The collection of work, filling the three floors of the Lemon Street Gallery Georgian premises in Truro, Cornwall, is a highlight of the year and is eagerly awaited by followers of the artist’s work. The exhibition includes paintings on both canvas and paper – in oils, watercolour and mixed media. It will also contain examples of Jackson’s printmaking on the subject and a series of sculptural work in bronze and other mediums. Jackson’s project theme is particularly relevant in light of the comeback of Choughs to the region in recent years.



Artist: Kurt Jackson

Title: Choughs pass squeaking. Lion Rock, Kynance. November 2006

Size: 57 cm x 60 cm

Medium: Mixed media

Catalogues available upon request.

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“As I look out the window across the bay to the olive green acres of cliffland opposite, my mind goes back over the years to a quieter time, before the aircraft came, and before the motor cars jammed the country lanes in summer. A small cluster of black birds would be there on the clifftop, thrusting their long curved bills into the soft springy turf, indistinguishable at that distance from any other crow except their call. And it is this call that I carry in my memory still, as it drifted across the bay on the soft sunlit air: for the choughs, as choughs these were, were fond of such days as these, when they could take an excursion away from the gloomy caverns of the sea to feed on the wild south facing slopes such as the one I could see.”

T.O. Darke, 1971

Cornwall was once a stronghold for choughs, who are part of the crow family and bred in the county until 1952, long after they disappeared from the rest of England. As choughs declined, they became increasingly prized targets for egg collectors and trophy-hunters, which probably sealed the birds fate in Cornwall. Choughs are deeply rooted in Cornish culture they are depicted on the county's coat of arms alongside a miner and fisherman, businesses and organisations use the name, and many refer to them as Cornish choughs. They also feature regularly in Cornish legend, and rumour has it that King Arthur was transformed into a chough when he died, the red feet and beak representing his violent, bloody end.

Conservationists and locals have worked together for years to create better conditions for choughs in Cornwall. In 2001, three wild choughs settled in west Cornwall, raising hopes that they might stay to breed. To everyone's delight, two of the birds began nesting in 2002. By mid-April they had built a nest, tucked away out of sight in a sea cave, and the female laid a clutch of eggs that successfully hatched in May 2002 the first choughs to breed in Cornwall (and England) for 50 years.

Choughs are just one of the family 'Corvidae', which comprises a medium sized group of passerine (perching) birds that is made up of about 119 species in 26 genera. The most common, of which the majority can be found in Cornwall in at least one variety, include: Rooks, Ravens, Nutcrackers, Magpies, Jays, Jackdaws, Crows and thankfully again since 2002, Choughs. In his celebration of 'The Cornish Crow', Kurt Jackson pays tribute to the Corvidea family and the multitudes of birds from this group that help define this region's countryside.

"In Cornwall my subjects are mostly places I know well, that I visit over and over again - certain areas of coast, moorland and valleys. I tend to work on projects, usually over a year, which are based on a particular aspect of Cornish culture or a distinct tract of countryside. Capturing a fleeting impression doesn't interest me. In all my paintings the aim is to convey my feelings and sense of awareness in that particular environment."

- Kurt Jackson

Kurt Jackson

Kurt Jackson's work embraces an extensive range of materials and techniques including mixed media, large canvases, and relief work. His paintings are fluent, dynamic and exciting, resulting from a working method that is both challenging and intense. He is undoubtedly most famous for his plein air paintings of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. However his painting continues to take him abroad and further afield.

Kurt Jackson is one of the leading British Artists. Born in 1961, in Blandford, Dorset; the son of two painters, he was encouraged from an early age to both paint and draw. He grew up exploring the hedgerows and streams of his surroundings, often sketching the animals he observed. His father's painting was a constant presence. An abstract



Artist: Kurt Jackson
Title: Jackdaws, rooks and crows.
Perrenporth, low tide. January
2005.
Size: 22 cm x 22 cm

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studio painter, he would paint plein air watercolour landscapes for recreation during family holidays – regularly taken on the Cornish coast. Before reaching university age, Jackson had travelled extensively throughout the world including the Amazon Rainforest, and visited the Arctic Circle just after his degree. His parents were active in the peace movement and he was taken on many political demonstrations. By his late teens he had developed his own affiliations to libertarian politics and environmental issues. At university Jackson initially opted to pursue his interest in natural history, and he graduated from St. Peters College, Oxford with an honours degree in zoology. However he spent most of his time attending classes at Ruskin College or painting in the countryside surrounding Oxford. In 1984 he and his wife Caroline settled in Boscastle and in 1989 they then moved to West Cornwall where they still live with their three children.

Kurt Jackson has worked with a number of charities, raising money and awareness about their work, they include: Survival International, Green Peace, Oxfam, VSO, Water Aid, Cornwall Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust. The forthcoming exhibition will again donate the proceeds of one Kurt Jackson painting to a designated charity.



Artist: Kurt Jackson (Cr3.)
Title: *Ronnie, the No Go By bird man.*
January 2000
Size: 22cm x 34.5cm
Medium: Oil on panel

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KURT JACKSON

Solo exhibitions

- 1984 Robinson College, Cambridge
1986-95 North Cornwall Museum Camelford
1988 & 90 New Street Gallery, Plymouth
1988-91 Dower House Gallery, Lostwithiel
1989 Maltings Arts Centre, St Albans, Herts
1990 & 92 *Visions & Journeys*, St Just
1991 Chapel Gallery, Saltram House, Plymouth
New Victoria Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme
Hertford Gallery, Hertford
1992 New Contemporary Gallery, Penzance
1992 & 94 Avalon Art, Marazion
1992 & 95 Amalgam Art Ltd, London
1993 Porthmeor Gallery, St Ives
Cadogan Contemporary, London
1993 & 94 White Lane Gallery, Plymouth
1994 Rainy Day Gallery, Penzance
1995-97 Beside the Wave Gallery, Falmouth
Ashbourne Gallery, Derbyshire
South Crofty, Camborne School of Mines
Penzance Geological Museum
Plymouth City Art Gallery
Doncaster Museum
1996 Handle House, Devizes
Beatrice Royal, Hampshire
1997 Lynne Strover Gallery, Cambridge
Darlington Art Centre
Rheda-Wiedensbrück, Germany
1998 *Painting the Path of the Sun*, St Just
David Messum Gallery, London
Concarneau, Brittany
1998-99 *Carnsew*, Falmouth Art Gallery
Worcester City Art Gallery
Lancashire Mining Museum
Cornwall Geological Museum
Phoenix Arts Centre, Exeter
1998-2000 Origin Gallery, Dublin
1998, 99 & 2001 John Davies, Stow-on-the-Wold
1999 *Crossing the Peninsular, the Path of Totality*, St Just
2000 David Messum Gallery, London
Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro
A3071, the Road to St Just, St Just
Castlegate Gallery, Cockermouth, Cumbria
University of Exeter
2001 Walker Gallery, Harrogate
Tinner's Way, St Just
2001-02 *Delabole Slate Quarry*, Indian King Arts Centre, North Cornwall
Penzance Geology Museum
Falmouth Art Gallery
2002 David Messum Gallery, London
Lemon Street Gallery @ RGI Kelly Gallery, Glasgow
Lemon Street Gallery @ Dundas Street Gallery, Edinburgh
Lemon Street Gallery, Truro
Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro
Delabole Slate Quarry, Slate Valley Museum, New York, USA
Helen Day Art Centre, Vermont USA
Long Field, St Just

- 2003 David Messum Gallery, London
Guardian News Room, London
St Michael's Way, Lemon Street Gallery, Truro
- 2004 David Messum Gallery
Porth, Newlyn Art Gallery
Porth, Worcester City Art Gallery
The Paps of Jura, , Lemon Street Gallery @ Dundas Street Gallery, Edinburgh
The Paps of Jura, , Lemon Street Gallery @ RGI Kelly Gallery Glasgow
Glasgow Art Fair
Lemon Street Gallery
London Art Fair, Messums, London
Two Woods, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath
Porth, King's Lynn Arts Centre, Norfolk
Artist in Residence, Glastonbury Festival
The Cornish Estuary, Lemon Street Gallery
- 2004-5 Paddington Station installation
- 2005 David Messum Gallery, London
Porth, Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter
The Painted Etchings, Newlyn Art Gallery, Newlyn
The Painted Etchings, Lemon Street Gallery @ Dundas Street Gallery, Edinburgh
Glastonbury Festival, David Messum Gallery, London
Three Woods, St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery, Lymington
Porth, Canterbury
Three Woods, Royal Cornwall Museum and Art Gallery, Truro
The Cornish Hedge, Lemon Street Gallery, Truro
David Messum Gallery, London
Porth, Catmose Art Gallery, Rutland
Thames- Source to Sea, South Hill Park, Bracknell, Berks.
Neil's Place, Lemon Street Gallery @ Dundas Street Gallery Edinburgh
Ponds, Pools and Puddles, Lemon Street Gallery, Truro, Cornwall
- 2006 David Messum Gallery, London
- 2007 *The Young Liffey: An Life Oige*, Solomon Gallery, Dublin
River Avon Part I, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath
The Painted Prints, Lemon Street Gallery @ Dundas Street Gallery, Edinburgh
The Cornish Crow: An Vran Kernewek, Lemon Street Gallery, Truro

Selected events & mixed exhibitions

- 1982 Three-man exhibition with brother & father,
Maltings Gallery, Weathampstead, Herts
- 1983 & 84 Travelled through Africa painting
- 1984 Marriage to Caroline
Moved to Boscastle
- 1985 Two Man Show, Dunheved Gallery, Launceston
- 1986 Birth of son, Seth
- 1988 Birth of daughter, Zinzi
- 1989 Moved to St Just-in-Penwith
- 1989-90 Gallery 92, Barnes, London
- 1990 Birth of daughter, Chloe
- 1994 Rheda, Wiedensbrück, Germany
Rye Art Gallery, Rye
- 1994-97 Penwith Society of Artists
City Gallery, Leicester
White Lane Gallery, Plymouth
Beatrice Royal Gallery, Hampshire
Rainy Day Gallery, Penzance
Landscapes of West Penwith, Newlyn Society of Artists & Hastings Museum
Now & Then, David Messum, London
40 Years of Art in St Just, St Just
Celtic Festival, Plymouth Arts Centre
Endangered Spaces, Christies; Richmond Hill Gallery

1994-2005 Newlyn Society of Artists
 1997 & 99 Cill Riallaig, Ireland, residence
 1998 *A Place in My Heart*, Carlton TV
 Elected Academician, Royal West of England Academy
The Next Generation, Jeremy Annear and Kurt Jackson, David Messum Gallery
 Penlee House Gallery & Museum, Penzance
 Publication of *Paintings of Cornwall and the Scillies* ISBN 0 953 137 015
 1999-2005 Glastonbury Festival, Artist in Residence
 2000 Walker Gallery, Harrogate
 2000-03 Belgrave Gallery, St Ives
 2000-05 Royal West of England Academy
 2000-05 Lemon Street Gallery, Truro
 2002 Publication of *The Cape* ISBN 1 850 22 172 3
 2003-05 Falmouth Art Gallery
 2004 *Elemental Insight*, Meteorological Office, Exeter
 Publication of *Sketchbooks 2003-2004*
 ISBN 1 850 22 190 1
 Elected Chair of Newlyn Society of Artists
 2005 Artist in Residence on Greenpeace ship 'Esperanza'
Live 8 @ Eden Project, Artist in Residence
Kurt Jackson, A Picture of Cornwall, BBC1 South West
Kurt Jackson, A Picture of the South West, BBC3
 Falmouth Art Gallery
 Royal West of England
 Newlyn Society of Artists
 2006 Publication of *Kurt Jackson – The Thames Project* ISBN 9 550 17572 3
 Art Miami, USA with Lemon Street Gallery
 London Art Fair with Lemon Street Gallery,
 Exhibition @ Kew Gardens [mixed, charity] 9/5/06 – 18/6/06
 Eden Live 8 charity auction of paintings from the day, London 28/6/06

www.kurtjackson.co.uk