



## IN THE LOOP!

This newsletter brings you the latest Playhouse news, developments and offerings. A bi-weekly update to help keep you In The Loop until we can welcome you back into the building.

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### INDUSTRY UPDATE

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Thank you for all of your comments of support and congratulations regarding our fantastic funding success! We thought it may be helpful to clarify to you some of the key points such as, where the money has come from, why the Playhouse has been successful and what is the funding for?

The funding is from a grants programme which is part of the Government's £1.57 billion package to protect the UK's culture and heritage sectors from the economic impacts of Covid-19. This fund was open to cultural organisations who could prove that before Covid-19 they were financially sustainable, but who now found themselves at imminent risk of failure through the impact of this pandemic. It is intended to provide a lifeline for the organisations and venues who help communities engage with art and culture across England.

Our supporters are aware that the Playhouse had a robust business model in place, but this relied heavily on income generated from our ticket sales and secondary income from the bar and café. Any profit from the main house programme was re-invested into arts development initiatives and subsidised ticket schemes such as 'Pay What You Decide'.

This funding then provides the financial support over the next 6 month period to ensure that by 31 March 2021 we are in a position to reopen either fully or partially (dependant on Government advice), or to operate on a sustainable, cost-efficient basis until we are able to reopen at a later date. It will help us to recover financially from the massive loss of income we have suffered through closure, assist with paying our rent, our bills, our staffing costs, and help us to plan new ways of working.

For example, it may help us to navigate new ways in which to continue as the creative and social hub for our community. We have a new ambition to develop staff skills and technology to explore a Playhouse digital offer through the creation of digital content to share and engage with audiences online reaching beyond the Playhouse stage and into the community. We shall also be working in close partnership with Queens Hall Arts, Hexham and The Maltings, Berwick on an exciting project celebrating Christmas in Northumberland.

This vital new funding is gratefully received and most reassuring to our community, partners and valued supporters. We hope this information allows you to advise anyone and everyone on the reasons for our success and our plans over the next six months.



HM Government

# We're an arts venue and we are #HereForCulture

Thanks to the Government's Culture Recovery Fund we can continue to be #HereForCulture.

HERE FOR CULTURE

## Re-opening plans for the Playhouse

The Playhouse reopening will happen in stages and start firstly with the ground floor only. We are currently working with our hospitality partners McKennas towards making the foyer area, café and white room safe to patrons who wish to use the café.

The Playhouse Box Office will not be open in the foyer but it shall remain open online and for telephone enquiries and bookings.

We cannot offer an exact date at this time therefore please expect a special update at the end of next week with more news.

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## LET'S GET DIGITAL

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To get your feedback we are carrying out a new digital audience survey, with The Audience Agency, to learn more about who our digital audiences are and how digital audiences are engaging with arts and culture online.

The survey should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete and your help will enable us to evaluate the impact of digital work and help us understand how people's consumption of online arts and culture have been changed by COVID-19.

Soon you will receive an email inviting you to take part. Whether you love digital content or have never engaged with it we want to hear from you.

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## **THE GALLERY: AUTUMN EXHIBITION**

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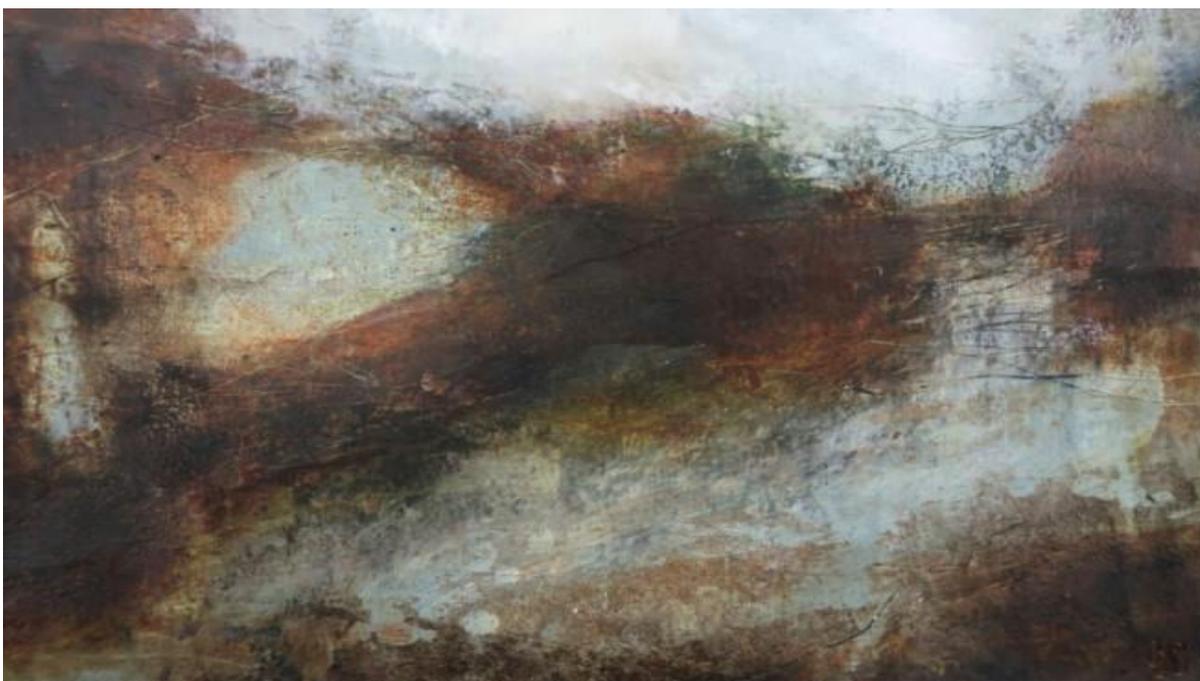
The Gallery is currently open ONLINE. Our Autumn Exhibition features fine artist, Gillian Lee Smith, and ceramicist, Hilary Durie. Running until 9th November, you can view and purchase work from the exhibition by heading to our website.

### **Gillian Lee Smith**

Exploring the lost and found, the past and how it has shaped us, connection and heritage - there are the themes in the work of local artist Gillian Lee Smith.

"Inspiration comes from stories I read as a child, family history and books and documentaries, in particular those relating to maritime history. A great deal of time is spent immersed in and creating sketches of the harbour villages, castles and landscapes of Northumberland and Scotland with sketchbooks and a flask of coffee. These sketches and stories then form the basis for expressive studio work in oils and cold wax".

Gillian exhibits locally and nationally and is currently working on an ambitious art project which will continue into 2021 and beyond titles 'The Lost and Left Behind'.



## Hilary Durie

After a career in teaching following a degree at Goldsmiths' College London Hilary is now focusing on developing a range of ceramics and painting based on her personal response to the landscape.

"My Strata ceramics collection is a mixture of thrown and handbuilt forms. For the handbuilt forms I have used a very textured black clay brought back from Scandinavia. My work has been a response to the layers and striations in rock formations. Whether it's pebbles or exposed rocks I am always drawn to their shapes and structures. There is something very circular about responding to rock formations with clay, returning the material through the firing process to its original state. During construction the clay is carved, imprinted and textured and then further developed in the glazing process".

Presented are pieces from Hilary's Strata collection featuring lamp bases and pots.



Click [here](#) to visit the Gallery.

Follow The Playhouse Gallery on social media for unique insights, important announcements and upcoming events.

Facebook: [@theplayhousegallery](#)

Instagram: [@the\\_playhouse\\_gallery](#)

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## THIS WEEKS WATCHLIST

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After the popularity of our earlier watchlists from our film programmer Jonny (pictured left), here is another selection of great films currently streaming online on Netflix, Amazon Prime, All4 and BBC iPlayer for you to explore over the next two weeks.



This weeks watchlist features Crazy Rich Asians. This superb, glossy rom-com is a real watershed moment for representation in Hollywood, with an exclusively Asian, Asian American and diaspora Asian cast. Adapted from Kevin Kwan's bestseller, this is fairytale stuff, with normal girl Rachel falling for her prince charming Nick, and landing smack bang into the world of the elite. Heading off to Nick's best friend's wedding in Singapore, Rachel finds out that he is considered one of the country's most eligible bachelors. Suddenly thrust into the spotlight, she must now navigate jealous socialites, his odd relatives and disapproving mother...

[Click here to view this weeks Watchlist.](#)

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## THANK YOU

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Our thanks to everyone for their continued messages of support and actions such as re-joining of Playhouse membership schemes, Front Row, Friends, donating online, or buying a seat or step. Your continued support for the Playhouse during this crisis is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for reading In The Loop.

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