

Around the kitchen table

bethlem
gallery

Around the kitchen table

23 September - 16 October 2015

Anthony Carry, Artist Taxi Driver, Beth Hopkins, Bethlem Wood Library, Cedrick Clerbout, Dan Duggan, David Beales, Debbie Myers, Deborah Pugh, Diana Chaccour, Dolly Sen, Errol Mitchel, Esther Maxwell–Orumbie, Imma Maddox, Jane, John Bull, John Healy, John Sayers, Ken Torrell Douglas, Kevin Stevens, Kim, Kim Noble, Laurence, Lindsay MacGregor, Lisa Biles, Lucy Millett, Lynda Bean, Luke Barracliffe, Matthew, Maureen Scott, Mike West, Pat Mears, Phil Baird, Ronald, Rosalie Schweiker, Sandie Whatton, Sarah Carpenter, Terence Wilde, Xavier White as well as patients and staff from the Anxiety Disorders Residential Unit, Bethlem Adolescent Unit and Gresham 2 Ward.

Curated by Sam Curtis

Following an open call-out on the theme *Around the kitchen table*, we are pleased to present an exhibition by gallery artists as well as patients and staff from the Bethlem Royal Hospital.

We use tables' everyday, they provide us with a grounding for all manner of tasks and activities; they support us and give our lives structure. Tables provide us with a meeting point to connect, share and debate. They act as social hubs where we like to congregate in solidarity and stop for a moment in the day. Tables are also sites for battle, where tensions rise and fall and where relationships begin and end.

The starting point for this exhibition grew out of a series of visits to hospital wards and from conversations with staff and patients. The kitchen table became visible as a common thread, a shared space for meeting, talking, doing and exploring together.

The kitchen is the heart of the home, the engine room and so it is the kitchen table specifically that provides us with an informal multifunctional space where all manner of activities take place. It's a place for meaningful conversations over a cup of tea. It's a temporary studio or workshop born out of necessity. It's a welcoming surface to dump all the things we pick up each day, ready to one day be sorted through, organised and stored away; a platform for making sense of the world. In this respect, we can think of the Bethlem Gallery as one of many 'kitchen tables' within the hospital that offer it's community a space to be, think, share, sort and do.

For this exhibition, the kitchen table is explored in a number of ways and as interpreted by contributors from the open call in the form of painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, poetry and writing. In the centre of the gallery, sits a long table from the Bethlem Wood Library, made for the exhibition from Oak sourced in the hospital grounds, a tree whose ecosystem supports 350 forms of life. This table will be a meeting place and space to be activated over the course of the exhibition with workshops, discussions, lunches and things to do, collectively or alone.

Events

Events are free and open to all.
For all events, please RSVP to info@bethlemgallery.com or visit our [Eventbrite page](#).

Wednesday 23rd September 4pm

Readings from *Luxury of the Dispossessed* by Dan Duggan

Hear artist and poet Dan Duggan read some extracts from *Luxury of the Dispossessed*, his book of derelicts, poems from purgatory and stories of incarceration on psychiatric wards under the provisions of The Mental Health act.

Thursday 24th September Friday 25th September 12-1pm

Open lunch at the table hosted by the Anxiety Disorders Residential Unit

Patients and staff from the Anxiety Disorders Residential Unit will be hosting the gallery table for two lunchtimes and inviting everyone and anyone to come and join them for lunch. Bring your own sandwiches, takeaway, crisps or salad and enjoy lunch in a new environment. On display on the table will be a set of plates made by the patients that respond to their individual OCD thoughts around food and eating.

Saturday 3rd October 11am

Enlightening walk for gatherers

Join artist Matthew for a walk around the hospital grounds to collect and gather acorns, conkers and other materials. We will then create food baskets back at the gallery as offerings to the hospital's varied wildlife inhabitants. See the natural world in a different way; through the eyes of animals! Please bring suitable clothing and footwear for walking in woodlands.

Saturday 3rd October 3pm

Bring it to the table with the Artist Taxi Driver

Bring it to the table with the Artist Taxi Driver and take part in a lively chat on politics, social and current affairs over a cuppa. Free tea and coffee for all participants.

The Artist Taxi Driver is an artist, London taxi driver and prominent political and social protestor whose YouTube channel, under the name chunkymark, has attracted nearly 50,000 subscribers.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/chunkymark>

There will be more events to come over the course of the exhibition, please check our [website](#) for up-to-date details.
www.bethlemgallery.com

Works

The works here are presented in alphabetical order by the artists first name.

Anthony Carry

Fish (Around the kitchen table on Friday)

Fish is made from Purbeck marble, plinth is made from Portland limestone
£420.00

Beth Hopkins

Dad

Crank clay
NFS

Bethlem Wood Library

The Bethlem Kitchen Table

Turkey Oak
Price on application

“The table has been made from a Turkey Oak grown in the hospital grounds; it is recognisable as such by its angular leaves and the fact that the acorn cup is covered in mossy bristles. It was growing between the lodge at the hospital front entrance and the old museum and was planted at the turn of the century, before the Bethlem Hospital moved to the site, and has watched the hospital grow up around it.

The timber from this variety of Oak is very prone to cracking and splitting and is usually only used for fencing. This particular tree was felled because it was affected by Bracket Fungus, which had caused the core of the tree to decay and rot.

The Bethlem Wood Library is very grateful to Mark West and the Gardens Department at the Hospital for donating this tree to the library” – Bethlem Wood Library

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Cedrick Clerbout

Cendrier

Pen on paper
Price on application

Cedrick has spent time at tables looking into ashtrays to see what he can see. This work is one of a series of drawings that begin to animate and explore their contents.

David Beales

Kitchen Conversation

Digital print
Price on application

Debbie Myers

Lunchtime at the YMCA

Acrylic on canvas
£45.00

Deborah Pugh

Ice-lollies and wine

Acrylic on canvas
£35.00

In this gorgeously colourful work by Deborah, we get an aerial view of an intimate table scene set for two to indulge in neon ice-lollies and red wine. Deborah uses the tradition of the still life as a way to practice and develop ways of painting. For her, looking down on things, such as tabletops, allows her to give equal weight to each part in the work and gives it an abstract quality. Deborah paints mostly in her kitchen at the table, as it's a practical space that provides her with flat surfaces and a supply of water.

Diana Chaccour

Empty sets 1-4

Digital photograph
NFS

"Empty sets is an accidental series of photographs that were taken to measure the light in preparation for a food photography shot, as part of a recipe blog project that I maintained for a few years. The blog was an excuse and an opportunity for me to develop my photography practice and to tell stories around food and culture. I used it as a diary sometimes and also to protest about the political situation back home.

The images became unexpectedly significant and occasionally I placed more attention in these than the actual intended photographs. I thought the empty sets paralleled somehow my –sometimes overwhelming– feelings of solitude. Having emigrated a few years ago and coming at the same time from a family of migrants it is a common theme for me to experience not belonging and detachment. I am not sure if this is conveyed in the images but it's what they detonate in me, that feeling of departure.

For me there is a degree of melancholia in the anticipation of the content. Simultaneously I also feel the images do not look disrupted, they seem to be comfortable in their own waiting, in that space of loneliness and separation. Sometimes I think they can also be hungry, the images, desperate to be filled in or to be occupied, to be engaged, instead of remaining still, calmed, awaiting.

However, on occasions, after including the food and taking the final shots, I feel that the content could have ruined the settings, sabotaging somehow the beauty of that void, the peacefulness of the solitude. I feel sometimes the content could

be overwhelming as well, chaotic, disorganized and overfilling. I feel also that the settings could have escaped from the content, deliberately, finding a space of comfort in which to hide and retreat." – Diana Chaccour

Dolly Sen

Coffee Stain Stars

Digital print onto canvas
£100.00

"You can make stars out of anything – including coffee stains." – Dolly Sen

Errol Mitchel

Social Gathering

Black Indian ink, bleach, collage and latex gel
£350.00

"As usual, the party deteriorated" – Errol Mitchel

Esther Maxwell–Orumbie

Bottle with apples

Linocut print
£180.00

H.R. Parker

Working it out

Collage
£70.00

"This piece shows how the kitchen table can often be used as a workplace to try to make sense of what's happening in one's life. Sometimes the sheer amount of information available can be a barrier in itself and leave one feeling overwhelmed and confused as to the way forward." – H.R. Parker

Imma Maddox**Waves in a field of corn**

Egg tempura on gesso on wood board
£30.00

Like a lot of Imma's art, this piece was made on her kitchen table. Imma makes the most of her home by utilising it as a studio, a safe and comfortable space in which to create work and experiment.

Jane**Useful!**

Ceramics, wood
£55.00

Odd one out!

Ceramics, wood
£45.00

Fragile

Ceramics, wood
£55.00

"I don't often know how I am going to start, or where I'm going, but using clay feels right. It's just been for me, and my pieces feel like parts of me. They always take ages and then seem to suddenly get to a point, when I realise that I don't really want to do anymore. With these three it's been good to take it further and think about presenting each piece for someone else to see."

- Jane

John Bull**In the lounge**

Pen and watercolour on paper
£105.00

John's drawings and paintings are snapshots of moments in time that he captures like a photograph. *In the lounge* is one of a series of works that capture life on the hospital ward and explores how people share communal spaces.

John Healy**Serving Platter**

Clay and wire
£77.77

Serving Platter was made in 2007 when John was an inpatient at the hospital. At this time John was making without any specific plan and his works developed as they went. He finds satisfaction in the way the piece is interesting in its own right today, when at the time of its creation, he was in a darker headspace.

"Generously apply carrot sticks, olives and onions."

- John Healy

John Sayers**The table**

Rizla, pencil and spit
Price on application

Ken Torrell Douglas**Why walk on eggshells when you can eat ice cream?**

Egg cartons, plywood, wire, and barbed wire
£3000.00

"It glows in the dark and has electric lights which never run out. It has double-edged meanings, which you are welcome to ask me about. It's over 6 foot tall but can fit through a normal door." - Ken Torrell Douglas

Kevin Stevens**Dolly, Lill, Mr. D. Evans, Ron and Wynn**

Pen on card

NFS

These are a selection of works from a series Kevin made whilst working for a Beer Barrel Tap production company in the late 70's. Kevin's urge to make these portraits of his fellow workmates taking their break times eventually landed him in trouble with the boss and he was sacked for veering from his job role.

Kim**Cat and kettle**

Acrylic on paper

£150.00

Kim Noble**Meltdown**

Enamel on canvas

£650.00

Lindsay MacGregor**Granular**

Baby bottle, printed tape and instant coffee

NFS

"This piece is a distillation of how I felt at the deepest part of my postnatal depression (PND). I wrote a note and stuck it on my wall to remind myself to go and see my son Leo in the morning as I'd lost my ability to connect with my feelings for him. All I wanted to do was go and sit on my own with a coffee at the table in the Mother and Baby Unit, which is why the bottle is filled with coffee granules.

The title refers to the coffee granules but also the origin of the word, the latin granum (grain or seed) representing how you are stripped bare and ground down and are rebuilding from nothing but

the bare bones in PND. The dried granules also relate to how sad I felt as my breast milk had dried up and I could not breastfeed when PND hit me."

– Lindsay MacGregor

Lisa Biles**Wannabe, but can't be**

Watercolour

£35.00

Lucy Millett

Stuck around the kitchen table

Acrylic paint and collage

NFS

Lynda Bean**Fruit table**

£80.00

A lack of studio space can often mean that artists need to come together to share temporary creative spaces as and when they can, around work and family commitments. Lynda painted *Fruit table* at a friend's house after breakfast and washing up they set up a still life scene on the table and set to painting it. For Lynda, still life painting is about the process of painting; an exercise to develop her work and the subject matter is secondary.

Luke Barracliffe**Salad**

Paint on paper

£110.00

Matthew**Kitchen table**

Pencil on paper

£145.00

Maureen Scott**Kitchen sink**

Oil on canvas

Price on application

Maureen painted *Kitchen sink* in 1970 in the very bedsit the painting depicts with the young girl being Maureen's daughter. Maureen looks back at these years as tough years when all of life and work happened in the one room.

Mike West**Exotic fruits**

Oil on board

£115.00

Artists share their work in many ways outside of galleries or institutions. Mike has run occasional informal painting and drawing workshops for local children from his housing cooperative. *Exotic fruits* is from a workshop where he'd gathered a range of exciting and colourful fruits as source material. The value in artists informally sharing and offering learning opportunities to others is often undocumented and difficult to quantify.

Pat Mears**Last Supper**

From the veggie series, collage and watercolour

£135.00

"Mankind has killed and eaten many strange creatures throughout history, but there have always been some who were vegetarian" – Pat Mears

Phil Baird

Set of 3 napkins:

Cat Theatre**Network Ants****Squirrel Map**

Watercolour pens and sharpie pens on calico

£50.00 each

Phil's work often involves a form of subconscious or automatic drawing where marks made evolve and grow into larger forms and patterns. In these pieces, art becomes functional and Phil's drawings ordain napkins.

Ronald**The Turkey, the British meal**

Pencil and crayon on paper

Price on application

Sandie Whatton**The kitchen table**

Poem

Free, please take one.

"A recollection of friends" – Sandie Whatton

Sarah Carpenter**Sweet**

C-type photograph

£160.00 framed

"Being 'around the table' proves to be the hardest place to be for someone with disordered eating. Not only do meal-times present challenges and personal battles, 'around the table' becomes a place of forced lies and deceit. During recovery, 'around the table' means difficult discussions and absolute honesty; a bittersweet environment for sharing struggles and facilitating important conversations with unknown outcomes.

My piece 'Sweet' is part of a series; 'Emerging', a reflection of my journey during recovery from an eating disorder. Sweets were my biggest binge food following restriction. A reward mechanism and means of comfort in place of the self-soothing and compassion I felt I did not deserve. Sweets took up such a big part of my life replacing so many other important things. They gave my body fast access to the sugar it needed to stay functioning; my arch enemy yet they kept me alive. If I hadn't had the comfort and release that I found in sweets, I may not have found the strength physically and mentally to face everyday. Just as I formed a love hate relationship with my eating disorder, so to did I with sweets, a small hit of pleasure followed by immense embarrassment and pain which fuelled the repetitive cycle. For me, this image is a reminder of the chaos they brought to my life, of the hold that they had over me - weighing me down, of the disgust they made me feel and, evokes feelings of repulsion and sickness. On the other hand it is a reminder of the strength you can muster to overcome your fears." – Sarah Carpenter

Terence Wilde**The Unstable table**

Pen and pencil on paper

NFS

Xavier White**Bon Appetit**

Crockery from Deptford market

Price on application

To see some of the artworks submitted that we couldn't fit into the exhibition please check out the Bethlem Gallery blog:

www.bethlemgallery.com/blog/

Thanks

A big thank you to all the artists, patients, staff and volunteers who took the time to submit work to our open call out. We were overwhelmed with the response and the range of interesting takes on the theme.

Another big thanks to the following Occupational Therapists for showing us what they do, in thinking through the exhibition ideas together and for supporting their patients in participating in this exhibition:

Becci Haigh and Lisa Johnston at the Anxiety Disorders Residential Unit

Jenny Shaieb at the Mother and Baby Unit

Susan Paterson and Tina Regent at Gresham 2 Ward

Sarah Holland at the Bethlem Adolescent Unit

David Lopez from the OT Walled Garden

Josip Lizatovic from River House

A big thanks to the Gardening Department for all their help with felling the Oak tree and with carting incredibly heavy slabs of wood around the grounds.

A space to carry out tasks together or alone

A place for generosity – cooking for others etc.

A place for sharing

A space for serious and meaningful conversations

Intimacy

An informal social space

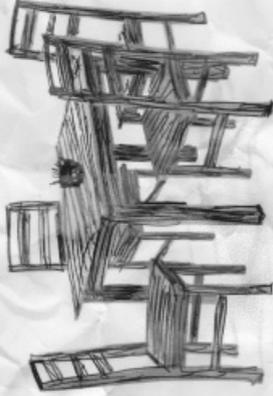
A space for accumulating clutter and sorting things

Battleground

A place for democratic relationships (King Arthur's Roundtable, The Last Supper)

Sometimes a place where social interaction is forced

Family



Kitchen-table entrepreneurs. A place where artists and creative workers temporarily work, the domestic office or workshop.

Politicians have used the kitchen table as a metaphor for ordinary families. "Bringing policies to the kitchen table"

Being close to others

The kitchen table can stand as a reference to doing something yourself, a hand-made or DIY approach.

Food and eating

Around the Kitchen Table

“During recovery, ‘around the table’ means difficult discussions and absolute honesty; a bittersweet environment for sharing struggles and facilitating important conversations with unknown outcomes.”

- Sarah Carpenter