

THE  
TOWN  
IS THE  
VENUE

# DEVERON EXPRESS



## /THE COMMUNITY CROCKERY

**SUMMER 2018**

**COMMUNITY CROCKERY  
· WALKING WITHOUT  
WALLS · ELA ORLEANS  
· REFUGEE FESTIVAL ·  
PEOPLES ACT · FUSHIA  
JAM · SUSTAINABILITY**

In 2004, we ran *Empty Shop/Modern Monument* with Eva Merz addressing the effects of two supermarkets moving into our small town. The works questioned the longevity of our shops in the faces of these giants and whether they were certain to become relics. If this were the case, what role could these newly empty spaces then play?

Fourteen years on, the closure of local sights is a common one. Places that were once an integral part of Huntly life such as the greengrocers and

the eponymous hotel are no longer able to continue. Within the past few months alone, the paint shop, the Tourist Information Centre, and Cruickshanks have all shut their doors.

Like many rural places, the effects of a drastic shift in consumer habits is reflected in our shrinking businesses. How must local communities work in parallel with the digitalisation of purchasing or as participants in our ever-growing world connected via globalisation? We aim toward a thriving town whilst tackling these problems, and the question on how to redefine our home has amassed relevance.

Instead of traditional retail providing us answers, perhaps we could turn to social art for new ideas on how to use these spaces. Rather than shops, they could become a way to explore the sharing of services and resources. This counters the constant commitment to buying products to keep our town flourishing. Instead, these rooms would be shared by the community, and bloom in the new economy of participation in projects.

*The Community Crockery* is an example of this economy. Artist Katie Rose Johnston crafted a set of 100 matching plates and cups shaped and designed by over 100 people from all aspects of local life. This crockery can be used by whoever needs it for gatherings and will be a lasting community asset for years to come.

*The Community Crockery* is one possibility of what could be. If we think of 100 such skills and other social practices, our society could become a more considered one. Imagine 100 people baking bread, and along with them 100 soup-making, whilst 100 are stitching tablecloths. Further on, there could be 100 people teaching English to Syrian New Scots, or 100 planting trees in the Square. Perhaps then, 100 people could pull together to occupy these spaces so we can use them for more creative and human methods of exchange.

**Deveron  
Projects**

# / Project Updates

## .....Walking Without Walls.....



### Slow Marathon

Originally co-conceived with artist Mihret Kebede in 2012, the 2018 *Slow Marathon* included digital exchange between artists Rachel Ashton and May Murad, exploring the political and personal challenges they faced in their year-long project, *Walking Without Walls*. Having spent a year planning both routes, permission was only granted a week prior to the event for 40 Palestinians to walk from one end of the Gaza Strip to the other. Simultaneously, 70 walkers in Scotland crossed the Aberdeenshire hills.

### Film launch at TATE Exchange

Produced by Alix Rothnie, the *Walking Without Walls* film (9min) features clips from WhatsApp and Skype communication between artists Rachel Ashton and May Murad, and drone footage from the Slow Marathons in Huntly and Gaza. It was launched on 25 May through a triple Friday Lunch connecting Huntly with audiences at the TATE in London and the artist and her family and friends in Gaza. See the film on our *townisthevenue* Youtube channel.

### Global Academy II Conference, Salzburg

Rachel and May have been selected to give a joint presentation, at the conference on transcultural exchange, 11-12 August. The conference is part of the *International Summer Academy of Fine Arts Salzburg* and provides an exciting opportunity for the two artists to finally meet in person after over a year of digital communication. The journey will not be easy for May, with both political and physical barriers to overcome, but we have our fingers crossed that they will get together at last!



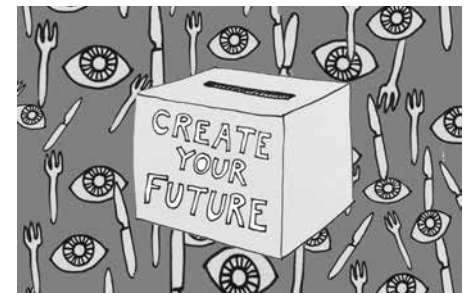
### Ela Orleans comes to Huntly

As the early summer birdsong reached its zenith in the woods and gardens of Huntly, renowned electronic composer, Ela started her three month residency with Deveron Projects. Within her project *Lunar Odyssey*, Ela is capturing the threatened human and ecological music of Huntly and its White Wood, and preserving them for our future society. Collaborating with folk musicians, foresters, young and older folks, their recordings and archival material will form the basis for her multi-layered audio-visual time capsule.



### Refugee Festival Scotland

*Who is? Project* – a series of photographic posters by recently graduated Iranian artist, Iman Tajik and Jonas Jessen Hansen – showed on billboards around Glasgow during Refugee Festival (15-24 June), and in our own Brander Building in Huntly. The exhibition was also the last stop in *Back O Bennachie* – a women's solstice sightseeing tour around Aberdeenshire with the Syrian New Scots of Inverurie and 'locals' alike. We travelled from stone circle to hilltop and coast, sharing Scots folksong, Syrian pop music, food and dance.



### People's Act

Within the Scottish Government's 2018 Year of Young People, we appointed Clyde Williamson as our first Young Intern. Throughout the summer, Clyde will be working with us to better engage Huntly's teenage population through *Peoples' Act: Meals & Movies*. Marking the centenary of a vital reform for democracy, the project seeks to address discussion around democratic citizenship today for young people, facilitated through the sharing of food and film.

**Community Crockery artist  
Katie Rose Johnston in conversation  
with Petra Pennington, June 2018**

***We've just seen the launch of the Community Crockery in June at one of the Stewarts Hall coffee mornings. What makes this different than just a large scale tea set?***

The Community Crockery has been designed with a particular concept in mind. We chose to look at the current changes within Huntly's town centre; the closure of shops which are Huntly institutions. We wanted the project to create an opportunity in which people could come together and strengthen the community. The crockery project and the resulting set create a space where discussion surrounding these changes to the town can take place in an informal atmosphere – over a cup of tea.

***Why was it important for the discursive concepts broached in the project to be given a material form?***

Using a cup is a very intimate part of our daily life. It's subliminally about nourishment. Every time you drink from it, the questions from the project are given the chance to gently come to mind. ...They're objects that are functional. There's an interesting boundary between functionality and the larger social concept of the project. Each piece straddles a difficult boundary between craft and art.



***The Community Crockery comprises a coherent set of 100 cups and 100 plates. Yet each individual component is unique, like a community. With all 200 items formed, glazed and fired by hand, by yourself, to what extent did others from the community shape the final pieces?***

All the plates in the crockery were fully made by community participants during workshops throughout Huntly. A lot of them were made at Hanover Sheltered Housing, we made some at the Brownies, and we made them at the weekly pop-in pottery workshop at Number 11 Gordon street.

The cups are slab built from rolled out clay. To allow them to be transportable for all kinds of community events, we didn't use handles,

which would be a fragile point. Instead, while the clay was in a leather-hard state, we took the cup and gently gripped it to leave a subtle impression. So when you're holding the cup, you can feel the person who made it, a bit like holding their hand!

As for the designs, I wanted to put a piece of everyone who had taken part in the project on the crockery. So it wasn't just in the physical form that that person had an influence. I used questionnaires to gather everyone's thoughts about the decoration. And in the end I thought I'd use these beautiful, poetic, personal insights by applying them directly to the pieces – in the original hand writing.

***How many participants were involved in the project from start to finish?***

It's hard to calculate accurately. It must be over 150 people who took part in the making as well as the text and drawn designs. It has hit a really wide demographic of the town.



***Was it important that you were working multi-generationally?***

Definitely. Because this is a set for the whole of Huntly, and I wanted every single age and demography to be represented within the crockery. Because the cups don't have handles, they equally suggest young people drinking cold drinks, and older people drinking hot drinks; in all shapes and sizes of hands!

***The Community Crockery project spans ideals of craft within the context of socially engaged art practice. Is this a comfortable mix or do you find as an artist or maker that there is a tension between the spheres of art and craft?***

Definitely a huge tension. In my observation this comes from the fact that craft is made for the home, and takes the form of functional, domestic objects. It is often made by women. I think the gallery has been much more historically a male environment. The art is untouchable, ethereal, not something of this world. Art objects are commissioned by the elite, out of normal people's price range. It's cordoned off; we can't even touch it.

I play with this tension in my practice as a sculptor, making abstract domestic environments in the gallery space, and I have seen an increase of young artists using craft based and domestic materials. I hope this means that there is a shift happening, so craft isn't looked down upon.

I think that because the Community Crockery reached out through craft, the project was informal, accessible. It's less intimidating than art can be. Perhaps that's a controversial statement but I feel it's true. The project became both; no one worried about if it was art or craft; people just got involved.

***How do you feel the Community Crockery and other projects like it can help regenerate Huntly's town centre?***

In the face of so many places in the town square closing down, I don't think one project alone can address such a huge scale issue. But it did raise the question of how else we can measure the success of our town centre, beyond the trade of goods. And little stories are its success. This project brought a lot of people together face to face, especially in the pop-in pottery; people who would have walked past each other in the street without a reason to make conversation. And there are legacies. Such as passionate potters in sheltered housing, who discovered new skills and are keen for their next session to mould their thoughts out of clay.



***With bookings steadily coming in for the Community Crockery, ranging from a get-together at a local housing association, to a full wedding, do you have a message for the people borrowing it?***

Have fun using it, don't be afraid of breaking it; that is just the reality of ceramics. Get together, make memories, have lots of conversations over coffee, have a big party and just get it used!

***Thank you, Katie! We enjoy using it every week for our Friday Lunches!***

**Find details on borrowing the Community Crockery on the back page.**

# / Events Calendar

## /July

**Friday 6**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Barry Peter Ould, Percy Grainger



**Saturday 7**, 9am - 1pm, Huntly Square  
Huntly Farmers Market  
Seasonal Café - iced herbal teas

**Wednesday 11**, 12 - 2pm, meet at Brander Garden  
Midweek Minor Path bashing - opening up overgrown walker's paths

 **Thursday 12**, NEW MOON

**Friday 13**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Sophie Lindsay, artist's talk

.....  
• Every two weeks  
• **Wednesday 17**, 8am - 9am, 8 Castle St.  
• The Town is the Garden  
• Field Notes on Surviving the Future:  
• Reading Group  
.....

**Friday 20**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Alasdair Campbell, Curating contemporary music

**Saturday 21**, 10am - 2pm, venue tba  
The Town is the Garden  
Communities from Below: A workshop on community and soil

 **Friday 27**, FULL MOON

**Friday 27**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Dudendance, Alien Species

**Monday 30**, 6-8pm, Brander Kitchen  
Food Chain cooking workshop  
David Foubister, Oatcakes, raspberry jam and kefirised 'clotted' cream  
Booking essential / £5



## /August

**Friday 3**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Matt Donaldson, The Bike Shack

**Saturday 4**, 9am - 1pm, Huntly Square  
Huntly Farmers Market  
Seasonal Café - make your own jam

**Monday 6**, 3 - 5pm, RSA, Edinburgh  
Arts, Borders and Migration event:  
Scotland + Europe  
Edinburgh Art Festival 2018  
Booking essential / Free

**Friday 10**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Stuart McAdam, artist's talk - "Fid" (illustrated)



Don't  
**JUST EAT**  
cook!

 **Saturday 11**, NEW MOON

**Saturday 11 - Sunday 12**, International  
Summer Academy of Fine Arts, Salzburg  
Global Academy II Conference  
Artists Rachel Ashton and May Murad  
present on Walking Without Walls

**Friday 17**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Dr Duncan Cockburn, Culture Aberdeen strategy

**Saturday 18**, 10am - 5pm, Brander Garden  
The Town is the Garden  
From Old Ways to New Hands: A basket weaving workshop  
Booking essential / £35 / bursaries available

**Friday 24**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Charlie Roy, artist's talk

**Friday 24**, 11am - 1pm/2pm, RSA, Edinburgh  
Arts, Borders and Migration event:  
Migration + Borders  
Edinburgh Art Festival 2018  
Booking essential / £2 discussion/£7 incl. lunch

 **Sunday 26**, FULL MOON

**Monday 27**, 6-8pm, Brander Kitchen  
Food Chain cooking workshop  
Caroline Gatt, Maltese Fenkata (rabbit feast) and kuskus bil-Ful (broad bean stew)  
Booking essential / £5



**Friday 31**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Coldwells Farm, Organic farming



## /September

**Saturday 1**, 9am - 4pm, Huntly Square  
Huntly Hairst Farmers Market  
The Town is the Garden will be leading a programme of discussions, pop-up stalls, and activities throughout the day.  
[www.huntlyhairst.co.uk](http://www.huntlyhairst.co.uk)

**Sunday 2**, 10am, meet at Brander Garden  
Food walk as part of Huntly Hairst programme

**Friday 7**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Clyde Williamson, Young Intern, update on People's Act: Meals & Movies project

 **Sunday 9**, NEW MOON

**Friday 14**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
David Foubister, Gardening knowledge share through self-developed community databases

**Saturday 15**, time and venue tba  
The Town is the Garden  
Workshop - details to follow



**Thursday 22**, 10am - 12pm, the White Wood  
White Wood forestry maintenance session

**Friday 21**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Lauren Dixon, artist's talk - The politics of Europe

 **Monday 24**, FULL MOON

**Monday 24**, 6-8pm, Brander Kitchen  
Food Chain cooking workshop  
Zeynep Yildiz, Turkish Sarma with Kisir  
Booking essential / £5

**Friday 28**, 1pm, Brander Kitchen  
Friday Lunch  
Beatrice Charnley, Tatties for social engagement



## Sweet Fuchsia Berry\* Jam

Makes 1 x 300ml jar

200g fuchsia flowers, washed

200g ripe berries

3 medium apples, peeled, cored and chopped

3 tablespoons water

200g preserving sugar

juice of 1 lemon

Wash the flowers and berries and remove the stalks. Steam apple in heavy-bottomed pan, with lid on, for 10mins until soft. Add sugar and lemon juice, stir over low heat until dissolved. Add flowers and berries, bring to the boil. Boil for 10-15 mins, until setting point. Allow to sit for 5 mins and bottle into warm jars.

*\*Not all fuchsia berries are sweet, although all are edible.*

It is time for summer pruning of plum, damson and apple trees. Cut only green growth, not into brown wood to encourage fruit bearing spurs to develop. Summer raspberries will need to be cut back once all fruit is over, leaving just a few new green canes for next year's fruit. When blackcurrants are over at least a third of old fruit stems should be cut down to ground level. Some of your oldest strawberry plants could be discarded and new plants created from runners.

It is not too late to think about planting seeds. Mangetout, Kohlrabi, Beetroot and Swiss Chard can all be planted until the end of July. Leafy salads such as Wild Rocket, Chicory and Pak Choi can also be planted late, as can Spinach and Cauliflower and late sowings of curly parsley. Overwintering veg should also be considered toward September to get a head start on next year. Broad beans such as 'Aquadulce' and Autumn onions such as 'White Snowball'.



**Town  
is the  
Garden**

## On Food Sustainability

When wondering about, planning for and working towards food sustainability it's tempting to think in terms of food miles – those neat calculations highlighting the distance that food has had to travel and the fuel spent so that food can reach our plates. And yet, while it is essential to be aware of food miles, how much energy is used, and how much waste is generated by current industrial food production and distribution systems, the issue of food sustainability in our daily lives is anything but neat.

'Neatness' is itself a culturally and historically contingent virtue that has its roots in industrialisation in Europe and the USA in the early 1800s; these two phenomena share a history. Albeit theirs is a long history with some tendrils that reach back into distant pasts where for instance the separation between town and forest, village and meadow, garden and uncultivated land has ancient resonances throughout Europe and well beyond it too. This separation stands in for places where on the one hand human labour defines an environment (town, village, garden) and on the other hand other species, are seen as the shaping force of an environment (forest, meadow, uncultivated land).

But what the neat thinking of modernity did not, and many argue still does not, take into account were the forces that do not fit with the logic of resource extraction and environmental dominion. These are the global forces that today threaten our sources of food and nutrition: Climate change, depletion of fish and other animal populations, the bee crisis, soil erosion...

What if we shift our focus slightly? What if rather than aiming for neatness and control of our environments through human labour alone we made new partnerships with other beings that share and affect our world that cooperate, sometimes untidily, in growing our food? When the Town is the Garden, we also ask who else lives together with humans in the town and the garden? How do these other creatures keep life going in ways we had not yet appreciated? How should we reconsider gardening when some plants, such as moss, long considered a 'weed', is now known to prevent soil erosion as much as if not more than trees? What if instead of lawns our front gardens were populated with self-seeding and or perennial edible plants that need much less effort to maintain than thirsty grass? How could we consider food, food production and the ways we prepare and share meals with this shift of focus?

# Notices

## People

### Welcome

Ela Orleans, **Artist**

Petra Pennington,

**Art & Community Worker**

Caroline Gatt, **TITG Project Assistant**

Robyn Wolsey, **Project Assistant**

Alix Craig, **Intern**

Lauren Dixon, **Intern**

Clyde Williamson, **Young Intern**

### Goodbye

Rachel Ashton, **Artist**

May Murad, **Artist**

Katie Johnston, **Artist**

Rachael Disbury, **Project Manager**

Elisabetta Rattalino,

**Art & Community Worker**

# #HUNTLY HAIRST

## The Food Festival

First weekend  
in September

- STALLS -

- STREET FOOD -

- EVENTS -

Find the full programme at  
[www.huntlyhairst.co.uk](http://www.huntlyhairst.co.uk)

**TOWN IS THE GARDEN HAS  
MOVED TO 8 CASTLE ST**



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and volunteering opportunities**  
on our website

## FOOD CHAIN EXPLAINED

**WORKSHOPS CONNECTING  
FOLK + FOOD**

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BRANDER KITCHEN, LEARNING  
TRADITIONAL FAMILY RECIPES  
FROM NEAR AND FAR**

**LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH,  
FROM 6PM, £5 INCLUDING MEAL  
SEE EVENTS FOR DETAILS.**

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BORROW IT  
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CROCKERY**

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FULL SET TO SERVE 100**

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BY

MONDAY - SATURDAY | 9.30 AM - 4.00 PM

20/22 DUKE STREET, HUNTLY

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## Our Guests

Dr Blake Morris / Janet Starkey / Sami Ajrami, Gaza Journalist / Gill Russell / Elena Romero-Passerin / Anne Miller / Sylvia Plath's Mushrooms / Rachel Ashton and May Murad / Mick Napier, Scottish Palestinian Solidarity / Claire Craig, Travelling Gallery / Andrew Watson / Emily Druiff, Peckham Platform / Katrina Flad / David Cholet and the LGBTQ+ Club, The Gordon Schools / Eleanor Brown, Forager / Cally Smith, Huntly Swift Group / Milica Milosevic-Robson and Gary Cameron, Creative Scotland / Iman Tajik and Jonas Jessen Hansen / Joanna Helfer / James Reid / Alexandra Falter / Sheena Milton, Garioch Women for Change / Syrian New Scots, Inverurie / Neil Theodoreson, Forester / Rehema Chachage /

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[www.walking-institute.com](http://www.walking-institute.com)

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Deveron Projects is based in the rural market town of Huntly, Scotland. We connect artists, communities and places through creative research and engagement. The *town is the venue* describes the framework in which we work and contribute to the social wellbeing of our town. We have engaged with local people, and their clubs, choirs, shops, schools, churches, bars and discos since 1995.