

> inhouse

The Artists Open Houses Newsletter



Winter 2009 - 2010



Christmas 2009

The Christmas Open Houses festival was wet but largely successful, with much local media coverage in the Argus, The Latest, Juice FM and BBC Sussex radio - including a session with award winning textile designer Fiona Howard at 7.30 in the morning. Thanks Fiona!!

And a big thank you too to Ruth Cobb who has worked so hard to make our PR strategy such a success throughout the last two years. We are looking forward to working with Lianne Jarrett Associates this year.

An article about the Open Houses in the Observer included a picture of Mibo /Madeleine Rogers' hugely popular cardboard cut-out Christmas Creatures at 33 Coventry Street (above left). Sadly though, the expected BBC TV news crew failed to materialise as they chose to report on flash floods at the last minute instead.

VisitBrighton reported record figures (over 1,000) for their online visitor competition, first prize of which is a print of Beach Huts in the Snow (above right), by Hove artist Tony Bowall (The Happy House in Third Avenue). Though sales may have seen a slight downturn, spirits have remained high and public response appears more enthusiastic than ever.

May 2010 Registration

With the Christmas Open Houses festival behind us, the Open Houses are already looking to the May festival. We're aiming for the biggest and best festival yet, with lots of new developments all round.

Registration for May is now open online and will remain open until 12th February - but upload your listing soon - early-bird rates run until 6th February (Early bird rate single space listings are £240 and double space listings £400).

see website for further details: www.aoh.org.uk/for-artists/registration
(or www.aoh.org.uk then 'for artists' and click 'registration')

Web developments

The AOH website was given a facelift and partially redeveloped for the Christmas festival. One new development was the introduction of Twitter - now with over 170 regular followers, including the Argus and Brighton Dome; we also now have Facebook, Flickr and blog facilities.

Huge thanks to Fred Pipes and Harriet Barrett who kept us all daily entertained and updated, via their Tweets, in the run up to and throughout the festival and with a weekly review on their blogs, as well as with a visual record though their regularly updated images on Flickr.

Fred will keep on Tweeting throughout the year, so please send him any news you have, at: pipes@brighton.co.uk so he can tell everyone. Harriet will be joining him blogging again in the run up to and throughout the May festival – watch out for it!

Massive thanks are due to Phil Ewen, who worked very long hours to make sure the site was up and running on time and to Norman Wright for his indefatigable support work.



Online shopping

There are other exciting web developments for Open House artists. We now have an online shopping page, where you can buy customised calendars - with images of an individual artist's work, or the combined work of an Open House, or work representing the houses on a trail. Cards, flyers and posters, giclee and photographic prints are also available, as are brown paper carrier bags. All are supplied at very competitive prices, with high quality printing by Spectrum Photographic, One Digital and The Brown Bag Co. Most orders will be despatched within a week and you can pay by phone, with the order being delivered to your address.

Become an AOH member

In another website development, artists exhibiting within the Artists Open Houses festival can, when registering their venue or at any time up to the point when registration closes, sign up for both hosts and their guest artists to become AOH Members. For just £10 per year, per artist, membership will give artists a presence in the AOH online search facility, where exhibiting artists can be easily found by name, medium or venue.

AOH Members will also be able to upload their contact details, email address, an image of their work and a link to their own website, which will appear at the bottom of their venue's brochure-online listings page. AOH Members will be eligible for a specially discounted offers at local arts suppliers and entry to the HOUSE Open competition, see p3.

Become a Guest Artist

If you would like to exhibit your work as a guest artist in an Open House venue, you can visit our 'exhibit your work' facility in the 'for artists' section of the AOH website:

www.aoh.org.uk/for-artists/exhibit-your-work

For just £20 a year you can upload an image, description of your work, contact details and a link to your website, so that Open Houses looking for guest artists can contact you.

While venues taking part in the Artists Open Houses must lie within the 01273 telephone code area, there are no such restrictions on guest artists - within reason!

HOUSE Open

AOH Members will be eligible to enter and be selected for HOUSE Open - the open submissions exhibition (last year's Selectors' Choice). The exhibition will again be held at the beautiful Regency Town House in Brunswick Square (see right). On registering as an AOH Member, artists will automatically receive a HOUSE Open application form for the exhibition.



This year, alongside curators from Brighton Museum, Pallant House Gallery, Permanent Gallery and Regency Town House, a student will be working with the professionals to help with selection and curation, as part of our commitment to nurturing young artists.

For photographers there will be a special, additional, section to the exhibition, sponsored by Spectrum Photographic - all selected photographic artists will have the opportunity to have their work printed and framed by Spectrum.

The exhibition theme is Regeneration - reflecting the restoration in progress at The Regency Town House. The theme also links with a focus on 'generative' art by Brian Eno, this year's Guest Artistic Director of Brighton Festival. Brighton Festival, Visit Brighton and Spectrum Photographic will all be offering a prize to winning artists.

AOH is currently in discussion with the Festival over closer links between the two festivals. This includes working with Brian Eno, having greater coverage within the Festival brochure and in shared marketing and e-marketing. This is a very exciting development for the Open Houses and reflects the new status that our festival has achieved within the city, with the Festival, B & H City Council and other major bodies now offering their support.

HOUSE linkups

This year several of the curators working on HOUSE projects would like to work much more closely with the Open Houses. Feedback from Open Houses last year made clear that many houses are keen for this to happen too and for the two aspects of the festival to become more integrated. One idea proposed for May is for some Open Houses to have a HOUSE artist creating an intervention within their house. This could take the form of very minimal interventions, such as a sound piece, or a much larger one - for instance Tim Brown from Cinecity is looking for a house with a garden shed, in which to set up a very small cinema!

This will have great reciprocal advantages; Open Houses with HOUSE artists exhibiting with them will receive coverage in both sections of the brochure as well as in the AOH media campaign.

If you would like to find out more, or to offer your Open House to take part in this scheme please contact: info@aoh.org.uk

Marketing strategy

We always try to limit the cost of listings for Open Houses. One way of achieving this is to limit the brochure print run. We might all love to have an endless supply of brochures, but at a unit cost of almost 50p, we have to target our distribution carefully. AOH currently receives no public funding – costs are met by brochure listing fees, advertising and sponsorship.

This year we will again be printing a fold out leaflet, which is far cheaper to print, can be distributed to places which won't take brochures and, can be published earlier in the year (so that AOH has a presence around the time of the Festival and Fringe launches). Our policy is to deliberately not launch the AOH brochure earlier than we do, since we are not driven by the necessity of making ticket sales. One result of an earlier publication date, would be people taking a brochure, losing it, then taking another as the festival starts – an expensive waste. This year the leaflet will show a map of the town and surrounding areas, pinpointing where all Open Houses venues are located. Also shown will be the main brochure pick-up points, such as the city's libraries, museums and the Dome box office, so that visitors will know exactly where they can collect a brochure on arrival in the city. The AOH website address will be clearly shown, so that visitors can refer to it to download trail listings and maps, or to locate venues where they can pick up a brochure.

We are again working with a professional distribution company, to deliver leaflets to targeted points in London and the South East, as well as distributing brochures to hotspots within the city. This way we can keep costs down for artists, while making brochures and leaflets readily available for visitors.

Online gallery

During the year we are planning to introduce an on online gallery open to all Artist Open House artists. For a small charge, artists will be able to upload a portfolio of their work, a description and a link to their own website.

Clients will be able to contact artists directly to buy work. There will also be online sales of giclees and photographic prints of artists work, handled by AOH via Spectrum.

One of the many benefits of the gallery is that it provides a focus for Brighton and Hove (and environs) artists' work and can be easily found by galleries, agents and other interested buyers, especially due to the AOH website being enviably 'Google heavy'.

Sponsorship

This year, for the 1st time, we are offering one business per trail the chance to be a headline sponsor for that trail. This will mean that their business will be marked on the trail map itself and their Company name, logo and contact details will be shown prominently on the trail map page, plus they will have a link on our website. This could be of interest to cafes, restaurants, and shops, who want to be noticed and visited during the festival. A mock up is available with prices. Trails will take a share of the money raised from headline sponsorship. If anyone is interested in being a headline sponsor, or in selling headline sponsorship within their trail, they should contact sponsorship@aoh.org.uk

For any queries you may have, or suggestions you would like to make, please contact us at: info@aoh.org.uk If you would like to subscribe to our quarterly newsletter online you can subscribe at: www.aoh.org.uk/artists-open-houses/aoh-newsletters