

NEWSLETTER Summer 2020

Hampshire Open Studios is nearly here as I write. It is going to be very different this year unfortunately. I think my **'STRANDLINE'** exhibition might be one of the very few at which we are still running Open House hours, in the afternoons, 12 noon until 5pm. I will also have a By Appointment system in the mornings, 10am – 12 Noon.

It has been an odd year for everyone. The Covid crisis has affected life and people's lives so deeply.

In mid March, just as the government announced that people with symptoms needed to self-isolate I got the symptoms! Felt poorly for exactly 7 days and on the 8th day woke up feeling completely better with all my old energy back. I had to carry on with self-isolation for another 7 days and by the time I went back outside the world had completely changed. Lockdown. It was like Sunday afternoons in the 1970's or those films in which the protagonists have somehow escaped the Apocalypse and find themselves wandering down deserted streets.

From the point of view of this painter I bounced around with lots of different ideas for pictures never settling on one thing and then, out of the blue, came these paintings of swimmers floating and diving in deep, clear water.



ART in HILL HEAD 2020
STRANDLINE
Open every day August 22 – 31
At 8 Osborne View Road, Hill Head, PO14 3JN

Elaine Sue Caroline Chris

10am – 12 noon APPOINTMENTS ONLY
To make an appointment please phone Chris Lewis 07709 600242
(Between the hours of 10am – 4pm any day from now until 31 August)

12 noon – 5pm OPEN HOUSE Self-distancing and hygiene measures in place and visitors over 11 years old to wear masks

Other art studios in Hill Head open. Check times online:
Morpheus Ceramics/John Cook · 9 Osborne View Road
Max Salisbury/Clare Saha Blackburn, 3 Ellerslie Close
Jenny/Devan Thorpe, 1a Hill Head Road
Check all opening times online ·

FOR ALL 2020 OPEN STUDIOS LISTINGS + EXTRA INFORMATION go to
www.hampshireopenstudios.org.uk
NO BROCHURES THIS YEAR

Also Tania Wilkie 52 Portsmouth Rd, Lee-on-Solent PO13 9AG
Tel: 07803 966703 Email: taniawilkie1@gmail.com



I didn't think about it much in the beginning. About 20 years ago I did a series of paintings of light penetrating clear water, inspired by a holiday in Kefallonia, where the sea is just about the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. It was turquoise, transparent and the patterns the light made in shallow water entranced me. From those paintings came another 2 or 3 of children jumping into the swimming pool. I took the ref. photos for those with a clunky, throwaway, underwater camera (pre-digital). Recently I found one of those paintings and a print of another one and that was what got me started on this set. As I worked on one and the next and the next I came to realise that they represented my longing for freedom. In deep water you can float, dive down, turn somersaults and lose all inhibition of movement. It is the nearest thing to flying that our dull and heavy earthbound bodies can manage.

During this Covid 19 pandemic and at the height of 'Lockdown' we all felt so restricted, the opposite of these images. We missed contact with our daily lives, seeing friends and family. I have missed 6 months (and counting) of my one and a half year old Granddaughter's life. At this time, during this glorious summer weather, I should have been taking her to the park, running on the beach, building sandcastles and going in the sea, pointing out birds and butterflies, plants and clouds and eating ice cream with her. It is a small sadness compared to what other people have had to endure but it still hurts.



As the pictures kept coming, the implied mystery and danger of deep water started to become apparent too. Although the water in these images is crystal clear and the colour a kindly blue-green I also had to portray depth and darkness beyond my swimmers and the 'pretty' fish. What lies beyond them in darker, deeper water? What hides? What is out there? When one is in the sea, treading water, head above the surface you can't know what lies beneath.

So, for me, these paintings are a metaphor describing our lives during the 2020 pandemic. I wish you all well. Stay safe.

