

Ebb'n'Flow

At Walford Mill Crafts from
15 September to 28 October 2018

Filling a gallery with contemporary lace might seem like a tall order, but for Jane Atkinson, it is the best thing she could ever have done.

"It has enticed me into projects I had felt to be beyond me, and allowed me to work out new techniques," Jane says. "For Oxygen, I took lace-like abstract patterns of bubbles floating on the water, experimented with new stitches and threads I found abroad or spun at home, and learned extempore how to keep this new visual language going through four panels. This has taught me to evaluate often and work slowly to get each piece right."

The fruits of these endeavours will be on display at Ebb'n'Flow in Wimborne, Dorset, at Walford Mill Crafts and the Priest's House Museum from 15 September to 28 October. Two venues were needed after the Mill was reconfigured to give a bigger shop but smaller gallery, but are only an eight minute walk apart.

This is in keeping with a show that considers change, specifically climate change, affecting the landscape near Atkinson's home in Christchurch. All the images have been culled from her daily walk



around Stanpit Marsh since 2000, although the site has provided inspiration ever since Atkinson began developing lace as an art form in the late 80s.

"The poignant thing is that, although I am captivated by ephemeral phenomena – like the patterns drifting on the salt pans there – everything else has turned out to be just as vulnerable. Extreme weather tore down trees in one night that I had used for inspiration for over 10 years; my work is their only legacy. One event alone, Storm Katie in 2016, underpins half a dozen pieces", relates Jane.

Although Atkinson had completed the gallery work last year, and was busy documenting it for the accompanying 64 page publication funded by Arts Council England, she has had to stay at her lace pillow. She had promised to send Oxygen 1 to a world survey of contemporary lace at the Hunterdon Art Gallery in New Jersey, USA, but the two shows turned out to open the same week.

"So, I had to make a new piece. I felt it needed to have the same challenging ethos as the work I originally offered, and a similarly abstract appearance since they liked this, but to be worth my effort, teach me something new. No pressure then!"

But, she feels this has lifted her practice into a whole new place. Like Oxygen, it was initiated without any clear plan, allowing new processes to evolve on the hoof; it will also be part of a seriously difficult series, based on a spectacular climate-related conformation on the marsh, although the second piece will have to wait until her own show is over.

"I can't wait to try it; except that I have to. I don't know how I'll do it – but I am no longer afraid of failure", she says, "that's been the blessing of this show: I have realised that I have

nothing to lose by trying. If the first try fails, I can start again."

Ebb'n'Flow is at Walford Mill Crafts, Wimborne, BH21 1NL and Priest's House Museum, Wimborne, BH21 1HR from 15 September to 28 October 2018.

There is also an international showcase of bobbin lace by artists who use other media, some of whom are teaching: Pierre Fouché, South Africa, 15 & 16 Sept, photorealism in design; Lauran Sundin, USA, 22 & 23 Sept, metal bobbin lace jewellery; Denise Watts, UK, 6 & 7 Oct, simple lace necklaces in real gold thread; Jane Atkinson, UK, 13 & 14 Oct, lace design from the landscape; Ann Allison, UK, 23 & 24 Oct, silver wire jewellery for total novices. [BC](#)

www.walfordmillcrafts.co.uk
www.contemporarylace.com

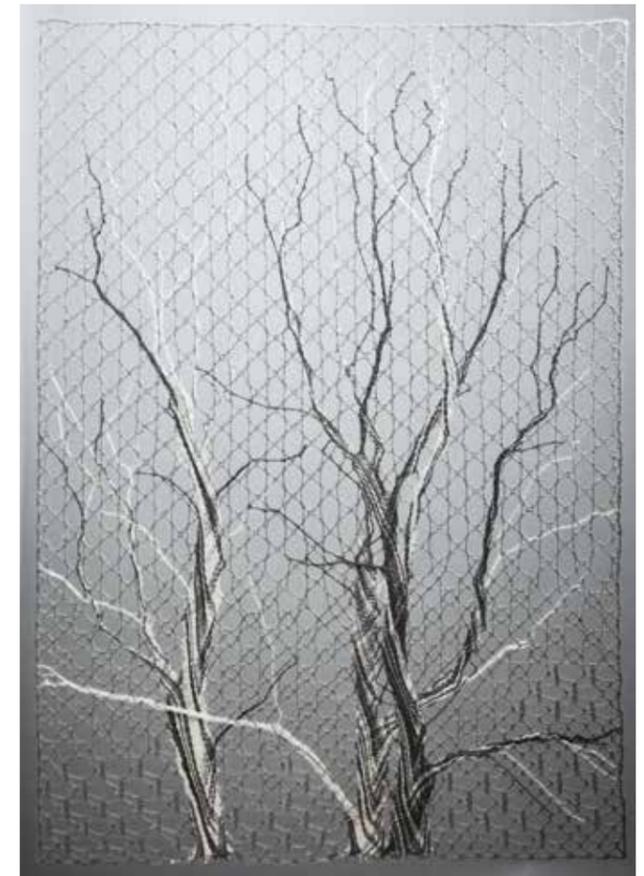
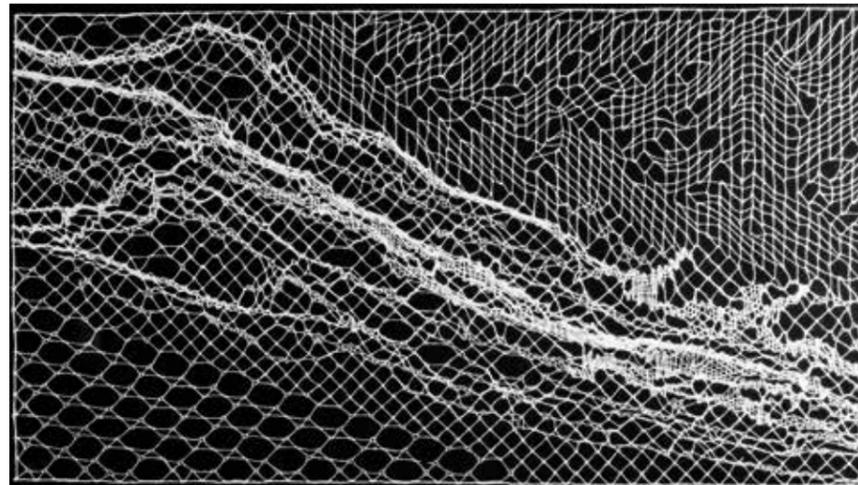
Clockwise from left:
Timber Scarf, blended linen, 183 x 20cm, (the pattern was developed from the bark of the uprooted tree... before eager ponies stripped it);

Cupid With His Piercing Dart, (deeply wounds my tender heart, inscription on an old lace bobbin), 2016, hemp with linen tow, 121 x 76cm (made in memory of the whorls of heart-shaped poplar leaves which were just filling buds on another uprooted tree);

Arbor Mortis, 2017, linen tow, 69 x 48cm (This was a ghost tree recorded the day before, then uprooted by the storm. It had been 'ring-barked' by ponies, which killed it);

Oxygen 1, Czech and handspun linen, 1, 31 x 56cm.

Photography
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EBB'N'FLOW
Lace, Place and Climate
A meditation in contemporary lace on Stanpit Marsh, Christchurch, a vulnerable landscape under pressure from climate change
by **Jane Atkinson**

With international showcase featuring Ann Allison (UK); Hanne Behrens (Denmark); Anne Dyer (UK); Pierre Fouché (South Africa); Sue McLaggan (UK); Sylvia Piddington (Australia); Lauran Sundin (USA); Denise Watts (UK)

Walford Mill Crafts, Wimborne BH21 1NL and Priest's House Museum, Wimborne BH21 1HR
15 September – 28 October, 2018
Two-day workshops
(special rates and bursary for young lacemakers)

www.walfordmillcrafts.co.uk Tel. 01202 841400