

Special Exhibition: Rachael Howard - Contemporary Textiles

6 October 1999 - 20 February 2000

Rachael Howard designs and makes colourful and imaginative screen-printed, appliquéd and embroidered narrative wall hangings, framed works, and interior and fashion accessories. All are based on sketches of people, their postures, expressions and movements, and communicate Rachael's fascination with everyday life. Her work has been described as "witty, lively, intriguing, decorative, fresh and economically executed".

Howard's designs focus on the innocent and domestic pleasures of living, such as cooking, eating, gardening and swimming. As she explains, "everyday goings-on attract me. I find it fascinating to watch what people do, the rituals they follow, like opening their deck-chairs and having a flask of coffee".

Working from drawings in her sketch book, Howard cuts out vibrant scraps of fabrics, lays them in place, and then bonds them to the cotton or linen background - the original line drawing is screen printed over the top, and details and shading are added with machine embroidery. Discussing the inspiration for her work, Howard has said: "I like recording my life, and recording everyday life is what the old needlework pieces used to do; early quilts expressed important themes in a woman's life...I appreciate the low-tech simplicity and sense of order in historic work, particularly the format of many samplers".

Howard was one of the Royal College of Art's first six embroidery postgraduates in 1992, and has exhibited at the Geffrye Museum in the past. 'Rachael Howard - Contemporary Textiles' will be held in the Geffrye's design centre, a gallery which promotes the work of the most talented designer-makers in East London by showing their products to a wider audience and helping their businesses to grow. The exhibition has been organised by Ruthin Craft Centre in Wales.

- ends -

20 September 1999

Programme of Events/...

RACHAEL HOWARD EXHIBITION - PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

The Autumn programme of events will focus on examples of women artists and designers in the Geffrye's collections. Two special exhibitions will provide 'bookends' for the programme: Rachael Howard, a designer-maker living and working in Hackney today, and Mary Beale, a portrait painter working over 300 years ago.

ADULT WORKSHOP

People and Portraits

This special one-day workshop, led by Rachael Howard, will explore people and portraits. During the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to design and create a hand-made fabric picture using a variety of techniques including appliqué and stitching.

Saturday 13 November, 11.00am to 4.00pm

Tickets £20.00 in advance. Includes all materials, but not lunch.

TEENAGERS' WORKSHOP

More People and Portraits: Workshop for 13 to 15 year olds

A dynamic fabric workshop for teenagers, led by Rachael Howard. During the day there will be an opportunity to explore a range of techniques including appliqué, beading and hand-stitching to create textured pictures inspired by paintings and objects in the museum. Participants will take home a unique fabric portrait.

Saturday 20 November, 11.00am - 4.00pm

Tickets £5.00 in advance. Places are limited so book early.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

Every Picture tells a Story: Half-term Workshops for 6 to 15 year olds

This exciting week will focus on a celebration of 400 years of women in art and design, using a selection of contemporary Rachael Howard textiles and 17th century portraits as inspiration. A range of innovative activities will include painting miniature portraits, designing fabric banners and making pastels.

Tuesday 26 to Friday 29 October, 10.30am to 12.45pm and 2.00 to 4.00pm

Holiday activities are free for individuals and families. All children under eight must be accompanied by an adult. Places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis 30 minutes in advance of the workshop. Quizzes are available all day in the museum.

Notes to Editors/...

NOTE TO EDITORS

1. For further information or transparencies, please contact Nancy Loader, PR Officer, or Christine Lalumia, Deputy Director, on 0171 739 9893.
2. The Geffrye Museum presents the quintessential style of English urban middle class interiors from 1600 to the present day through a chronological sequence of period rooms. The museum is set in the former almshouses of the Ironmongers' Company, elegant 18th century buildings with a modern extension designed by Branson Coates Architecture. It is surrounded by tranquil gardens, including an award-winning walled herb garden and a new series of period garden rooms (open April - October).
3. The Geffrye Museum is an independent charitable trust, grant-aided by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Trust actively seeks to attract donations and corporate sponsorship to support the museum's services and development plans.

4. **Admission:** **FREE**

Opening Hours: **Open** Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 5pm
Sundays & Bank Holiday Mondays 12 - 5pm

Closed Mondays (unless Bank Holiday)

Christmas **Closed** Friday 24/12
Opening hours **Closed** Saturday 25/12
Closed Sunday 26/12
Open Monday 27/12: 12-5pm
Open Tuesday 28/12: 12-5pm
Open Wednesday 29/12: 10am-5pm
Open Thursday 30/12: 10am-5pm
Closed Friday 31/12
Closed Saturday 1/1/2000
Open Sunday 2/1 12-5pm
Open Monday 3/1 12-5pm

Travel: **Tube** Liverpool Street, then bus 149 or 242
Old Street (exit 2), then bus 243
Buses 149, 242, 243, 67