

## **The 'Hive Geometrix Exhibition' at Upfront, Art Gallery 17<sup>th</sup> May - 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022**

### **The 'Hive Geometrix' exhibition will feature paintings by Stephen Livingstone about the life of 'Honey Bees through the Seasons'.**

Stephen Livingstone is a visual artist who is based in Durham. His work deals with human impact upon landscapes and habitats and often involves collaboration with museums and archives, academic institutions and individuals with specialist knowledge and skills. He has developed major projects for the British Library, the National Trust, Durham University and the Museum of Art and Design in New York.

Stephen has prepared for the exhibition over a number of years by observing Penrith beekeepers at work, participating in hive inspections and honey extractions and studying how bee colonies change throughout the seasons. The vivid images he has created illustrate the impact of seasonal patterns on the ways in which honeybees work together to reproduce, collect and manage their stores of pollen and nectar and cluster over the winter months. He has also been instrumental in selecting photographs taken by association members which will also be on display and will complement the paintings.

#### **This is what Stephen says about his paintings:**

*'Beehives are places of mystery and magic. Even beekeepers, who over many centuries have developed an intimate, symbiotic relationship with honeybees, can never properly understand nor fully visualise the complex inner-workings of their hives.'*

*The paintings are an interpretation of the inside of a working beehive, representing the activities of the queens, workers and drones throughout a bee year. They portray, in symbolic form, their political and social activities and often desperate efforts to survive, aided and abetted by the interventions of their human guardians. The paintings are cutaways, architectural diagrams of the interior structures of a beehive, each panel representing a particular part of the hive, the colours selected and layered in order to evoke the light and scent sensing experiences of the bees.*

*The paintings are mixed media and oil paint on canvas board.'*

The art exhibition has been planned in collaboration with Penrith & District Beekeepers Association. It will also feature:

- a large mobile installation '*Dancing Bees*' which has been created by Key Stage 2 children of Temple Sowerby School with the support of another, local, visual artist, Ali McCaw.
- Information panels produced by Penrith Beekeepers Association:

*The World of the Honey Bee : frequently asked questions about honey bees and the role of beekeepers.*

During the exhibition the Penrith Beekeepers Association will be running events and activities about bees, developing bee friendly gardens and cooking with honey.

Grants to support the 'Hive Geometric Exhibition' and the other events have been provided by Arts Council England, Penrith Town Council, Persimmon Homes, the Martin Wills Wildlife Maintenance

### **Information about the events that Penrith Beekeepers Association is hosting during the Hive Geometrix Exhibition:**

#### **Bee Hotel Workshops 22<sup>nd</sup> May + 18<sup>th</sup> June 2.00.p.m.**

Female Solitary Bees lay their eggs in hollow stems or tubes within the soil. Bee Hotels are designed to replicate these conditions and often made from wooden blocks that have been drilled with deep holes or strips of wood that have been joined together with tubular spaces in between. The Bee Hotel Workshops will provide each family group the opportunity to make a wooden bee hotel that they will be able to take home to hang in their gardens. These are small wooden structures made up from pre-cut wooden strips. Everything needed to assemble them will be provided. Workshops are FREE but each place needs to be pre-booked. Only one bee hotel will be available to assemble for each family attending. The sessions will begin with a short introductory talk by Margaret Riches, a Penrith Beekeeper. Information about where to hang the bee hotel and the bees that are likely to use it will be supplied. Please advise us of the number of people in your groups when you reserve your place so that we know how many seats will be required.

#### **'Celebrating World Bee Day: Cooking with Honey' with John Crouch at 6.30.p.m. on 20<sup>th</sup> May. £20 per person**

The event will begin in the main puppet theatre auditorium with an Introductory talk about how honey is produced by Margaret Riches, a Penrith beekeeper. This will be followed by a presentation by John Crouch, Cumbria's celebrity chef, about the nutritional value of honey and how it can be used as an ingredient to enhance the texture and flavour of all types of food. While John then returns to the cafe to prepare and serve the tasty light bites that will be available to sample later on, Stephen Livingstone the artist whose paintings of 'Honey Bees through the year' are on display in the gallery will make a presentation about his work. After this, the group will be offered a welcome drink as they move through to the cafe where a selection of tasty bites will have been placed at each table. During the rest of the evening there will be an opportunity to purchase additional drinks at the bar, participate in a 'blind honey tasting' competition and view the Hive Geometrix Exhibition.

#### **Gardeners ' Question Time on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2.30.p.m. £5 per person**

An opportunity for you to pose questions about gardening issues to our panel of experts. These will include horticulturalists from the National Trust and the Horticultural Department at Newton Rigg College, now based at Lowther Castle and an independent Garden Designer. The session will be Chaired by Eric Robson, the well known former presenter of Gardeners' Question Time on Radio 4. When you purchase your ticket, you will be invited to send Eric Robson your question /s. You will be contacted nearer the time to confirm whether you will be invited to pose your question to the panel. Lunch is available at Upfront Gallery from 12.00. Time should also be available for a 'cuppa cake'' afterwards as Upfront Gallery does not closes until 4.30. It is recommended that places are reserved for lunch or tea. Please contact Upfront Gallery directly to make these arrangements.

Tel: 017684 84538 E mail: [info@up-front.com](mailto:info@up-front.com)

**To reserve places and purchase tickets for the events: E mail: [mr4cnr@gmail.com](mailto:mr4cnr@gmail.com)/ Tel: 01768 894404**

**To view the Hive Geometrix Exhibition: Upfront Gallery is open Tuesdays - Sundays 10.00.-4.30.**