

# News story: Art exhibition marks end of an era at Sellafield

The Art of Reprocessing, at the Beacon museum Whitehaven, tells the story of Sellafield's Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (Thorp).

Commissioned by the site's operator Sellafield Ltd, it features work from local, national, and international artists.

They include sculptures, relief printing, collages, textural canvases, paintings, and sketches.

Each piece has been individually commissioned to convey a moment in the life of the plant.

The below shows one of the pieces being made by Cumbrian artist, Charlotte Ellis.

## One of the pieces of art being made

The exhibition will be open until early January, with a smaller version continuing until March 2019.

Emma Law, head of corporate communications for Sellafield Ltd said:

"Thorp is not just a Sellafield story; it's part of the social history of west Cumbria.

"From the public inquiry in the 1970s, which decided it should go ahead, to the economic boom of the construction years and the 24 years of operations, it's been stitched into the fabric of local life.

"For us, it's an iconic building, but for many people it's mysterious: it's behind a fence, out of the sight.

"We wanted to make it accessible and meaningful to people who don't know much about it.

"So we commissioned artists to take the story and give us their interpretation; to see it with fresh eyes and express it a new way.

"It's a fabulous exhibition and I would encourage everyone who can to visit."

Thorp began operations in 1994.

It reprocessed more than 9,000 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel from nine countries around the world.

The final batch of fuel to be reprocessed began its journey through the plant on Friday, 9 November.

It will continue to serve the UK as a storage facility for spent fuel until the 2070s.

About half of its 450-strong workforce will remain in the plant to manage clean-out operations. The remainder have been found other jobs at Sellafield.

The artists

## **Katie Edwards**

Katie's screen printed illustrations reflect her enjoyment for the natural world, evoking thoughtfulness and humour. Each original silkscreen print is unique and hand-crafted.

## **Helaina Sharpley**

Helaina is a wirework artist and designer specialising in wall art. She is inspired by tea drinking and architecture from the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

## **Charlotte Ellis**

Charlotte explores the process of paint behaviour and movement through elements of artistic manipulation and intention. Her work is explored via a variety of pouring techniques and structural setups.

## **Paul Leith**

Paul was described by Sir Quentin Blake, a former tutor, as "an unusual talent which manages to convey an atmosphere of retro art along with a personal voice. I don't think I have ever seen anything quite like it and I still admire it now in its more recent manifestations."

## **Heidi Hodkinson**

With a degree in astrophysics, an ever increasing interest in neuroscience and the way we humans perceive the world, Heidi jumps down "rabbit holes of the mind, down to the quantum soup and out into the foaming multiverse."

## **Sarah Strachan**

Sarah is a self-taught abstract artist who works primarily with acrylics and mixed media on canvas.

## **Jill Davis**

Jill's family moved to West Cumbria after the last war, where her father was involved in the design and construction of the Sellafield site. Her typical subject matter is the local landscape. Sketching outside, she focuses on the graphic quality of each view.

## **Debby Akam**

Debby is a visual artist based in the Lake District working with painting, video and print making.

## **Simon Wilson**

Simon uses shoelaces and eyelets to create truly unique, eye catching geometric shapes & patterns.

## **Chiyun Yeh**

Chiyun Yeh is a Taiwan-born illustrator/designer, now living in Tokyo. Better known as 'YO', she creates illustrations focused mainly on the themes of fashion, lifestyle and storytelling, as well as comic art.

## **Marion Kuit**

Marion works mainly in print relief printing, which involves cutting the image from a block of lino, wood or plastic. The remaining surface is inked, paper is placed over it and pressure is applied either by hand roller or by using a press.

## **Issie Holmes**

Issie likes to be inspired by what surrounds her – the landscape, the people and her memories. She works with tight and accurate media like pen and pencil and also enjoys working with paper in all forms.

## **Thomas Hedger**

Thomas is a London-based visual artist who mixes strong lines and punchy colours to create images that aim to make something beautiful out of quite a brutal digital medium.

## **Veronica Currie**

Veronica is a public artist who specialises in site-specific work for the public realm, including hospitals, embassies, and airports.

## **Kate Eveson**

Kate works with textiles sewn onto fabric either by hand or machine which is stretched and then painted.

## **Aimee Green**

Aimee favours large abstract pieces using vibrant colours and detailed textures to create conceptual art, drawing inspiration from experiences in

her life and the landscape of the Lake District.

## **Sarah Taylor**

Sarah makes vibrant splashy paintings of wildlife that combine the fluid shapes of blown paint with intricate geometric detailing.

## **Hollie Morton-O'fee**

Hollie is an art and design student at Egremont's West Lakes Academy. She works in digital design, exploring techniques that allow her to transfer designs into textile pieces.

## **Olivia Pilling**

Olivia builds collages by deconstructing an image and rebuilding it.

## **Kathy Harris**

Kathy's work is about the art of storytelling through miniature. She uses miniature as a vehicle to communicate stories.