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EXHIBITIONS



Home is..., The New School House Gallery, The Old School House, Peasholme Green, York, until March 21

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By Charles Hutchinson »

ON entering the New School House Gallery in York, visitors are greeted with a long line of blackboards bearing chalk-scrawled definitions of what home is.

One quotes poet Robert Frost: "When you go there, they have to let you in". Another observes that, "Home changed through your life from being your cocoon, to being a prison, to being a haven".

A third suggests home means "stuff like grandma had", which chimes with the corridor artwork, Sunday Tea At Nana's, by gallery co-director Paula Jackson and Kathie Tinker.

In the case of Paula and fellow director Robert Teed, Home is... an exhibition of contemporary ceramics, sculpture, paintings and textiles exploring the theme of home, personal and domestic space, memory and childhood.

The work includes 11 Jugs by 11 Makers; silver work by Sarah Stevenson, from Sheffield; paintings by York artist Emma Whiting; tableware by Linda Bloomfield, and Rachel Dormor; sculpture and paintings by Liadin Cooke; and textiles by Ebor Rug Makers' members Kay Pearson, Elizabeth Grubb, Gillian Barker and Julia Wilkins, plus Ellie Evans, Craig Fellows, York rug maker Jacqueline James and the esteemed Lewis and Louisa Creed.

"To be able to capture Mediterranean colours in old rags, as Louisa does in Two Greek Widows, is incredible," says Robert.



School House Gallery owner Robert Teed.



Fellows, a receptionist by day, "doodles away" creating printed textiles for fashion, while Evans, from Derbyshire, explores elements of her past by incorporating digital imagery in her high-concept fabric designs, using documents that once belonged to her grandparents to reflect on her Dutch/Polish roots.

Among the tableware designers, Kevin Millward, from Stoke, references Staffordshire ware in using a lead glaze to give his ceramics a deep sheen; Virginia Graham reclaims old designs in her work to deceive you into thinking her pieces have been glued back together, when in fact she has worked from scratch; and Annette Bugansky takes moulds from textiles, such as wool, and then slip-casts objects in porcelain, most notably for a pair of ceiling lamps.

Emma Whiting has painted a new £500 work, White House, expressly for the show. "The process of painting itself is for me a kind of odyssey, a struggle to find an image amid the marks which will suddenly reveal itself to be a destination, a homecoming," says Emma, a former English literature student at Oxford.

"I love to smudge, smear and scrape. My hope is that the process will result in an image which can tell its story and speak to someone else of home."

Liadin Cooke, from West Yorkshire, presents a series of watercolours based on spatial memories, along with a sculpture entitled Housemark that attempts to "map and define the solidity of home".

Hanne Rysgaard's witty porcelain offers a post-modern twist on granny's old cake stands with rose and dotty motifs mixed together. Meanwhile, Suzi Tibbetts, from London, echoes the spirit of Dadaism with her sound installations Kettle:Invaded and The Audiobook Series, using reclaimed items to make comments on noise, hidden lives and "the need for audio escapism within our society".