

OLD STORIES

A COMMUNITY
STORYTELLING
PROJECT

Project Art Works
Trinity Triangle Heritage Action Zone

A collection of memories, stories, images and ephemera from our local community about this unique part of Hastings known as the Trinity Triangle.

This area has a rich and unusual history and is changing as it becomes redeveloped, regenerated and reimagined.

Heart of Hastings Community Land Trust firmly believes in community-led regeneration and has been part of the Trinity Triangle community since 2016 when we moved into Rock House. The Trinity Triangle

Heritage Action Zone (TTHAZ) is the continuation of our commitment to this neighbourhood.

The TTHAZ is a four-year regeneration programme supported by Historic England to breathe new life into a historic part of Hastings town centre: the Trinity Triangle and America Ground.

It's a programme that is all about putting local people in the driving seat of looking after, restoring and celebrating the wonderful heritage of this unique, but neglected, part of Hastings' town centre. We will celebrate people's ideas, help them to shape the places they live and work, and promote stories about this special, historic neighbourhood.

The Trinity Triangle area of Hastings is an area rich in history and built heritage – it is home to the story of the America Ground rebels, Victorian and Edwardian buildings, the iconic Observer Building and the beautifully renovated library. The residents of the area are diverse and it is home to many small, independent businesses and a growing number of creative people live and work in the area

For us, heritage isn't just about old buildings, it's about everyone's stories – especially those who wouldn't usually make it into the guidebooks or formal histories. Just as celebrating heritage isn't just about preservation or restoration, it's about creating spaces and a neighbourhood that people can enjoy and want to visit again and again.

The Untold Stories project is an important part of this ambition.

James Leathers
Heritage Action Zone, Heart of Hastings Community Land Trust

What is now called the Trinity Triangle first came into my consciousness as a sixteen year old. From within the bright, light spaces of the Brassey Institute art school on the top two floors of what is now the Hastings Library, the 'triangle' was visible (the library occupied the building then as now but not quite so extensively). Those two years of learning drawing, printmaking of all kinds, painting, design and so on via an art foundation course were a significant experiential portal into art which is in fact a way of living.

Then, after some years and further study away and with two young children, I took a studio space shared with the painter Jonathan Cole on the top floor of 12 Claremont next door to the library. Another eerie, a light and airy space with a detailed view of the sandstone fascia of Trinity Church across the road. The light in the studio was stunning, and when working to a deadline I was on occasions there when the sun rose, streaming light through the east facing windows. Beautiful light.

Jon met my son Paul, who charmed and affected our conversations about art, materials and the importance of our senses and

sensory engagement in art making. Jon painted Hello/Halo (a beautiful painting that now hangs in our home) in response to Paul's use of the word 'hello' that he deploys in many different intonations and circumstances as a way to connect. In 1996 together,



Jon Cole *hello halo* 1997 (121.5 x 122cm) Oil on Canvas

Jon and I embarked on a short but ambitious series of artist residencies in local SEND schools working with over 160 children in self-directed art making through etching, casting and large floor-based paintings. These were extraordinary experiences and formed the approaches to Project Art Works, its philosophy and subsequent trajectory.

So, to now be so close to re-entering 12 Claremont in another phase of its life and that of Project Art Works is significant. The building is on a routeway to the sea, the area is being gradually restored through community-based commitment, friendship, shared skills and love.

We're building new partnerships and sharing common ideas that ensure a sense of responsibility and ownership of this central and special site within Hastings town centre.

This is a tiny fragment of the many Untold Stories that make up our relationship with the spaces we live in and inhabit. To see and be part of the change that is unfolding in this special area of the town is significant to Project Art Works and in 2021 we will open Untitled Gallery in the ground floor of 12 Claremont. A new chapter in the unfolding story.

Kate Adams
Project Art Works



WELCOME TO UNTOLD STORIES



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A LOOK THROUGH UNTITLED GALLERY WINDOW INSTALLATIONS

Heart of Hastings Community Land Trust plan to renovate 12 Claremont into an explicitly inclusive, creative and affordable neighbourhood hub for living, working and community action. In partnership with Heart of Hastings, Project Art Works will transform the ground floor of this building into Untitled Gallery.

While the building awaits renovation, myself, Sara Dare (Gallery and Production Coordinator) and Tom Lepora (Technician and Artist Facilitator) have spent many dusty days installing a series of exhibitions using the window alone.

Each exhibition install has brought its own challenges including broken windows and blown sockets! But with each install we've felt closer to a time when we can open the gallery and welcome our first visitors. We've spent hours discussing what has been and imagining what might be as we work away within this old building. Installing with Tom, I've

heard stories of Claremont's past identities - when he used rave in the basement and sleep in the roof, installing with Sara we imagine the exhibitions and events we hope to hold, a new home for Project Art Works and the community we look forward to being a part of.

Sally Bourner
Project Art Works

[1] Before works began
[2] Aug 2019, *Untitled* by Sam Smith
[3] Sept 2019, *Art People Care (in Makaton)* by Kate Adams

[4] Oct 2019, *In Focus* by the members of Tuesday Accelerate group
[5] Dec 2019, *Untitled* by Christopher Tite

[6] Jan 2020, *Birds and Nests* by Michelle Roberts
[7] Feb 2020, *The De La Warr Pavilion* by Charlie Thomas

[8] June 2020, *Into the Wilderness*
[9] Nov 2020, *Untitled* by George Smith



A TOUR OF 12 CLAREMONT LUCY WALKER AND TOM LEPORA



Lucy Walker is an artist maker at Project Art Works, she is a talented costume designer among many things. Her work spans across a wide range of media and genres. Lucy takes inspiration from shows that she loves, she has an incredible knowledge of Red Dwarf and has created a universe of characters, costumes, short stories and animations in response. Here we meet two of her newer characters, Lister Cat and Starlight.

Tom Lepora is an artist who works at Project Art Works and often in collaboration with Lucy Walker. Tom has a long-standing history with 12 Claremont. In October 2020, Tom, Star Light and Lister Cat gave Isolation Station a tour of the building soon to be Project Art Works Gallery: Untitled. To watch the film visit: isolationstationhastings.co.uk



NEW ROSE SARAH LOCKE

First time I saw you, you were hanging against that doorway covered in paint. Beautiful brown skin like you were always in the sun, muscles artfully sculpted to your slender frame but a softness, a child-like touch, smooth hairless arms. Leaning gracefully, a shock of dark hair and earring, I told myself romantically you were some local boy, some fisherman's son. And me, some city girl from far away, chasing the openness of the sea. Something in the way you stood made me pause and watch you standing there and wait until you saw me. I must've been smiling because you caught my gaze and said, 'hello,' and offered me a cigarette.

That summer was as slow, and hot, and heart sinking as I'll ever remember, although I know I was only here for a week and I know I only knew you that day and that night.

I wrote New Rose in 2008 as part of an audio tour that could be experienced around Hastings and St Leonards during Shot by the Sea Film Festival. I was a studio holder at 12 Claremont at the time and the piece was a bit of a love song to the building and to its previous (imaginary) inhabitants.

Created for Audio Tour- 'This is Real-Dream On!'- Shot by the Sea Film Festival 2008

We sat on the pavement, our backs against the stone wall of the church facing this strange old building- it hasn't changed much in style, four floors of big arched windows reaching a pitched roof, like a very tall home-YMCA still etched on the glass. But it was more run down then, peeling frames and old wooden shutters covering the top floor. You were painting a sign for the Photographer's Studio, all gone now of course. You said you helped out printing photos upstairs and that you had the keys and sometimes slept over. As we smoked and talked you told me about why you loved it here and that you'd like to take my picture.

On the top floor, above the dark rooms, a large space in the rafters looking over the street was where the prints were kept. I remember you had a black woollen blanket with a cushion on top and a transistor radio. On a shelf in the window one small print of a woman with jet black hair cropped close to her scalp smiling, no make-up, with beautiful pearly teeth. She was sitting side on with her legs pulled into her chest, chin on her knees, a pair of drainpipes clinging to her boyish legs. And here was me too big for drainpipes. She looked just like you I thought, a female version of you. I knew she was yours but I didn't say anything. You took my picture, just of my face- you said you liked faces- almost in silhouette against a section of the window or that's how you described it anyway. I never did get to see it.

You had to work that afternoon but to you told me The Damned were playing at the Pier later on and you knew someone who could get us in if I wanted to go.

It's hard to describe the best night of my life apart from knowing I was drunk and the smoky raw atmosphere and the freedom it gave me. I don't think you needed that freedom quite as much as I did. You had it already.

Returning to your building, up the darkened street still listening to the sea, I sang out, "I gotta new rose, I got it good. Guess I knew that I always would. I can't stop to mess around. I gotta brand new rose in town". You just smiled.

We slept on the floor that night, on top of the blanket, gazing up through a hatch in the ceiling at the stars. It was nothing really, just brushing lips to say goodnight but I never could sleep after that.

I waited until morning, frozen, not wanting to move and wake you with the creaking floorboards but at the same time, aching for you to turn over and lay your arm across me. Just some small contact.

I stand here now and I look at that building and I see your face reflected in each pane, peering from the top floor now the shutters have been peeled away and the windows replaced. You look newer now, a fresher face. I can tell you're somewhere else, somewhere beyond here. The windows on your floor like five fingers reach skywards, each arching frame an eyelid, blinking a kiss goodbye.

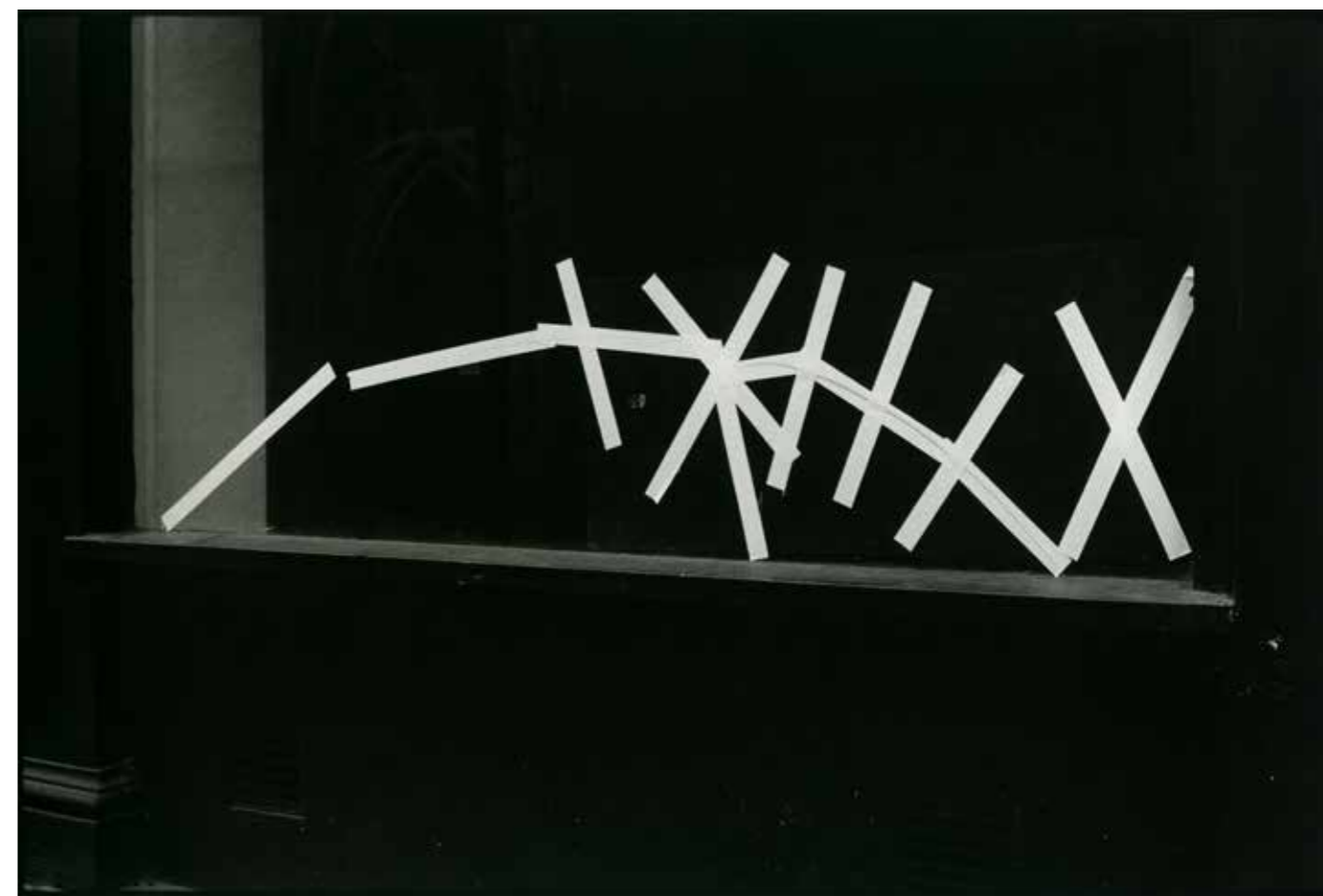
Sarah Locke
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**PHOTOGRAPHS
TAKEN IN AND
AROUND TRINITY
TRIANGLE
ALEXANDER
BRATTELL**



Alexander Brattell
<https://brattell.com/>





Hastings Library has always been a focal point for events from local authors, book launches, children's events, arts and culture. We have held events for Hastings Storytelling Festival, the Literary Festival, Bloomsday and Hastings Cultural Festival.



HASTINGS LIBRARY GILLIAN NEWMAN

Many local authors, poets, illustrators and performers have held events at the library including Brian Moses and Ed Boxall. In 2019, local storyteller John Kirk helped us celebrate National Libraries Week with a local primary school, and we hosted an Astronomy Road Show to celebrate the Summer Reading Challenge. The library continues to be an inspiration for local artists.

In previous years we have hosted a course with the local Workers Educational Association, making available our resources to run a course on the Brassey family, and held Making it REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) sessions with playgroups and nurseries, using stories, rhymes, drawing and mark making.

The Library service also supports local groups through outreach work and through bringing groups into the library. Each year we work with groups and schools to help choose the East Sussex Children's Book award.

We also hold weekly rhyme times, story times and code clubs for children and we have regular class visits from local school and community groups, beavers, cubs and brownies.

Gillian Newman

THE LIBRARY PROJECT BERNARD MCGUIGAN



A couple of years ago when the library building was being refurbished, I happened to cycle past when some of the original stone facade was being thrown into a skip. Being a stone sculptor, I immediately set about rescuing some of it. I decided after much thought to recharge some of those pieces of discarded stone into beautiful abstract sculptures. A piece of history re-imagined into a small work of art.

Bernard McGuigan
bernard-mcguigan.format.com



PROJECT ART WORKS
EXPLORE
GOTHAM ALLEY



An installation of an ongoing series of island like forms, derived from found objects

Plaster and pigment
2019 – 2020
Photos: Alex Brattell

Responding to the times we are living through, *a fuller acquaintance with the archipelago* invites the viewer to navigate a co-created Lilliputian world. As observation gives way to imagination, it is possible to mentally inhabit the fossilized and fragile cast sculptures as a series of islands, surrounded by sea.

A FULLER ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE ARCHIPELAGO SINÉID CODD



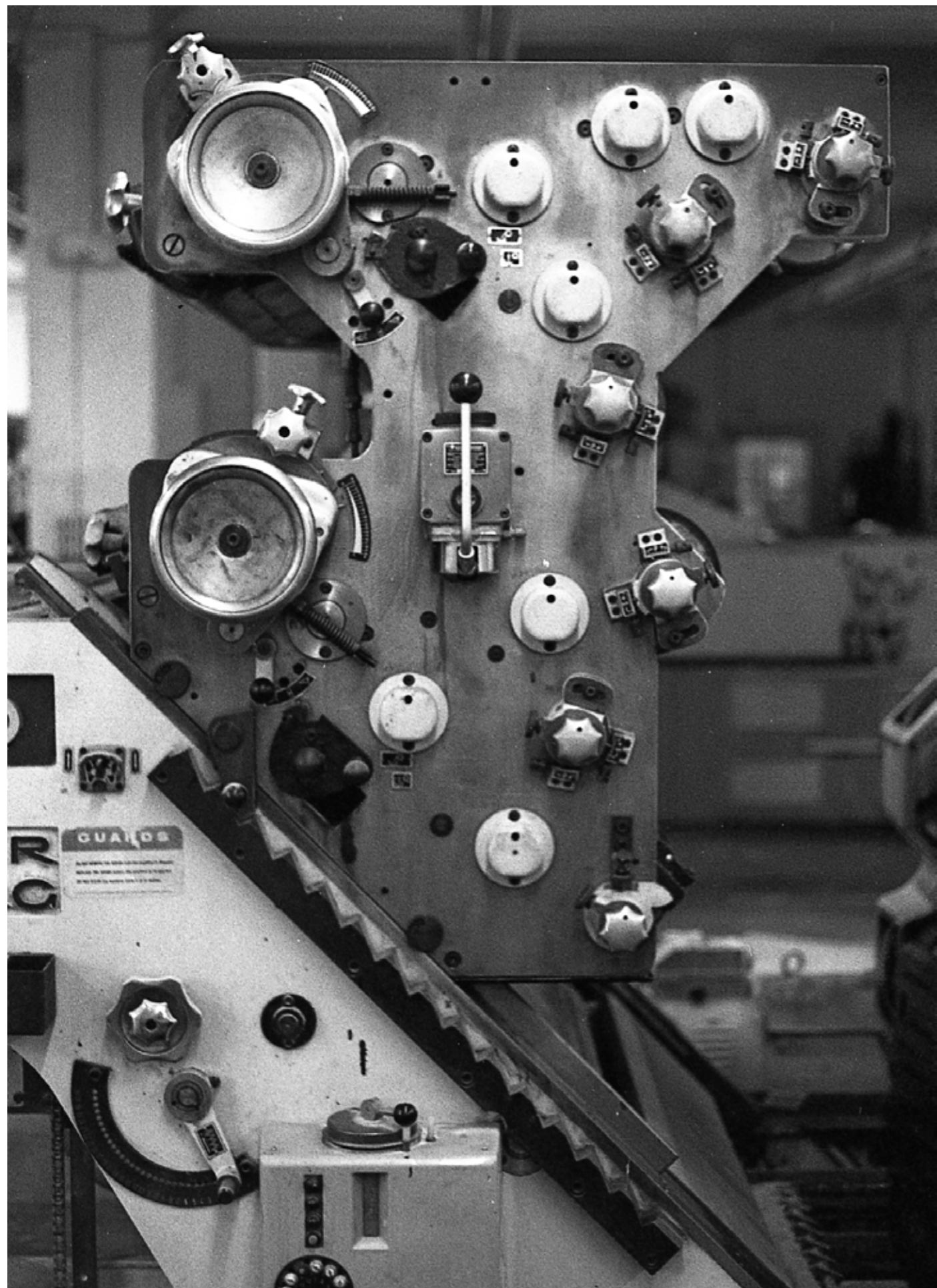
All islands are separated from each other, but some stand alone, while others are in pairs or groups. The now evident architecture and topology of the mostly bleached islands may suggest abandonment associated with a dystopian world.

Modelling an idea of the individual within the collective, through viewers' curiosity and engagement, the installation elicits questions and ideas around community and relationship as well as culture and environment. It has a particular resonance in respect of the isolation Covid19 has inflicted upon us all.

In September 2020, the Observer Building and Heart of Hastings welcomed and supported the development of the project. I tested the impact of the installation in a large raw space within the building and the archipelago was documented by Alex Brattell. I am currently developing the next phase of the project to include a diversity of responses to the work.

Sinéid Codd
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THE OBSERVER BUILDING STEVE PEAK

Until 1981 Westminster Press, the owners of the Hastings Observer, also ran a general printing and publishing trade in the big Observer building at 53 Cambridge Road. But then in June that year they decided to abandon that work and instead focus on being just a newspaper publisher.

About 140 staff were made redundant, and in September 1981 all the printing machinery in No 53 was auctioned. I knew many people who had worked there and knew how important the business had been. So on a viewing day just before the auction I went inside No 53 and took many photos, some of which are here.

In 2007 I wrote and published a book "The Hastings Papers: A History of the Hastings and St Leonards Newspapers", and I am currently putting together a history of the America Ground, where the Observer had its print works from 1870.

Steve Peak
www.hastingschronicle.net

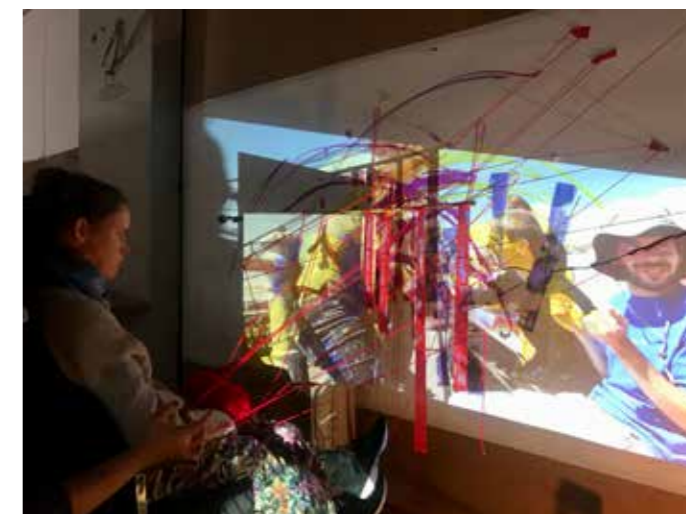


OBSERVER MURAL
GEORGIA SAWERS



PROJECT ART WORKS RESIDENCY AT THE OBSERVER BUILDING

To mark the launch of new creative programme *Art. Freedom.Care*, Project Art Works explored the unoccupied space in the historic Observer Building in Hastings for a two-week residency. Artists and makers experimented with new ways of working to inform the creative programme going forward.



UNTOLD STORIES

Project Art Works
projectartworks.org
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Untitled Gallery
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Heart of Hastings
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