

# **Easy Read For Delaine Le Bas: Un-Fair-Ground Exhibition**

**Written and designed by  
Sally Hirst**

the **Whitworth**

**Venture  
Arts** ~ ~

## Introduction



Hello, my name is Sally Hirst and I wrote this easy read guide for the Un-Fair-Ground exhibition, and I'm doing the neurodivergent friendly tour.



I am autistic with learning disabilities.



I like all visual arts but I mainly work with clay, weaving and poetry.



I am the artist in residence here at the Whitworth Art Gallery which means I come here to learn more about art, do tours and workshops.

## Venture Arts

I go to a supported art studio for learning disabled and/or autistic artists called Venture Arts where I make most of my artwork.



In this easy read and tour I have done my best to use the right language but I'm still learning so I am sorry if I say anything that causes upset.



Delaine Le Bas is part of the British Gypsy, Romani, Roma and Traveller community (Romany) but Delaine doesn't want to be known just as a Romany artist because there is more to who she is than being Romany.



Delaine Le Bas was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2024.



Delaine Le Bas is also interested in witchcraft and folklore.



As well as her own work Delaine Le Bas also chose pieces from the Whitworth Collection.



I hope you enjoy my easy read and tour of the Delaine Le Bas: Un-Fair-Ground exhibition.



## Un-Fair-Ground by Delaine Le Bas

Un-Fair-Ground was made for Glastonbury Festival 2024.



In Glastonbury it was just one big piece but at the Whitworth we split it into two pieces so it could fit in the space better.



When making this piece Delaine didn't have a plan, just a rough idea.



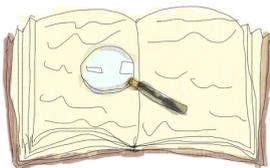
There is a character she made up that she sometimes dresses up as called Zigeuner Sauce who was a clown that would say what she thought.



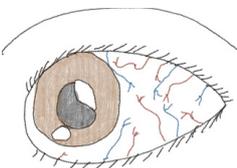
Zigeuner sauce is a German sauce which had to change its name because Zigeuner meant 'Gypsy' which some people thought was a bad word.



There is also Medusa in this piece who was from Greek mythology, with snakes for hair, and she could turn people into stone.



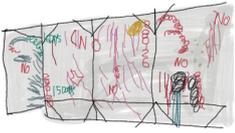
Many people saw Medusa as a monster, but Delaine Le Bas was interested in what happens to monsters before they become monsters.



Delaine Le Bas also felt Medusa was an outsider as she couldn't come too close to anyone in case they turned to stone.



Delaine Le Bas related to Medusa because Delaine sees herself as an outsider in her own Romany community who are already seen as outsiders.



## Performance Space by Delaine Le Bas

The first thing you see in this exhibition is this fabric wall.



It has the word 'no' written on it, which feels a bit unwelcoming.



It could mean when Romany people go somewhere the locals say 'no' as in they are not welcome.



Or it could mean that if Delaine could be born again she would say 'No' more to the things that limited her.



Or it could be from her interest in language and how words can have the same meaning like the word 'no' can mean 'no you cant stay here' or it could mean 'know' as in 'yes I know the answer to this question'.

What do you think this piece could be about?



She also wrote numbers counting down the days until her exhibition opening.

## Different Shapes and Sizes by Leslie Thompson.

### Venture Arts

Both Sarah and Leslie are artists from Venture Arts



Leslie drew strong women that he made up.

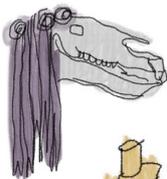


The strong women are all exercising in the gym.



He started to sign his work as an autistic artist showing he's proud to be autistic.

### All is Confused by a Horse's Head by Sarah Lee



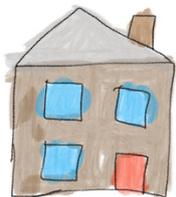
This piece is about Mari Lywd which is a Welsh festival where a horse's head on a stick comes out of a tomb.



People gather round the horse's head and feed it beer.



It's to celebrate the winter solstice which is the shortest day of the year.



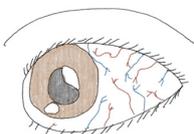
Sarah's grandparents lived in Wales so she liked to visit and take part in this festival even after her grandparents passed away.



Sarah takes her time with her embroidery so she drew sketches first to slowly stitch into.



Delaine Le Bas inspired Sarah to not trim her embroidery threads so you can see loose threads on Sarah's work.



Both Sarah's and Leslie's work are near the front of the exhibition for everyone to see. Delaine likes to share her space with other artists as she knows how hard it is to get your artwork in a gallery space.

## The Floor



In this room there is a brick path and grass painted on the floor.



We are allowed to go on the green grass but it still feels naughty like we don't belong on the grass.



Maybe it could be about how Romany people sometimes feel they don't belong in certain places even though they are allowed.



It also reminds me a little of the yellow brick road from The Wizard of Oz because there is one yellow brick on this white path.



Or could be about Delaine's interest in witchcraft.

## l'Archipel En Feu by Delaine Le Bas



This piece is about how we connect to all living things.



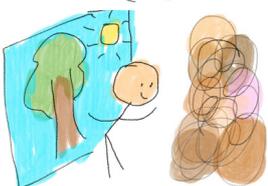
Delaine Le Bas thinks of trees being made of her body parts.



It's named after a book by Jules Verne who was born in Nantes which is where this piece was made.



The fabric is hand painted and hand stitched too.



This piece was used as a background for performances.

## Witch House

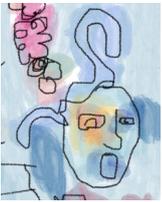
### Meet Your Neighbours (wallpaper) by Delaine Le Bas



Meet Your Neighbours has a quote written on from a newspaper about taking away human rights from Romany people.



The couple is an outline drawing of Delaine and her late husband.



Medusa is inside her stomach to show it was a stomach churning response to what was going on at the time for Romany people, so she was sick with worry.



There is also a seagull and a Rubbish Doll in this piece. This shows Delaine's feelings on how Romany people are treated like rubbish, and when people think of Romany people they often think of rubbish.



The wallpaper has been ripped to show the collection pieces hidden behind.

### Floating Mermaids by Pearl Alcock



Delaine has met Pearl Alcock and other artists in the Witch House room, or she has a special memory with some of the pieces here.



Pearl Alcock got into making art when she couldn't afford a birthday card for a friend so she had to make one herself.



Some people think that Pearl was bisexual meaning she loved both men and women and this piece could be about being alone with a girlfriend without worrying what other people thought.



What do you think this piece could be about?

## Untitled by Judith Scott



Judith Scott had Down's syndrome and was Deaf, but no one knew she was Deaf.



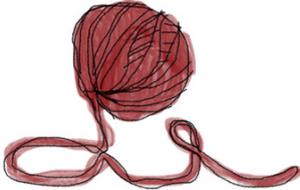
This meant the special school she was about to go to thought she was unable to learn because she couldn't hear, so they didn't want her.



She was then sent to a home for disabled people away from her family instead of going to school.



Once grown up, Judith's twin sister looked after her and sent her to a supported art studio for disabled artists, but she showed no interest in art for a while.



She eventually found a love for yarn wrapping sculptures.

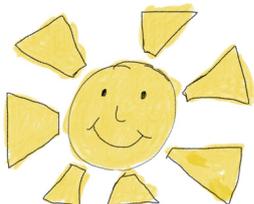
## Nana by Niki de Saint Phalle



Niki's Nana figures have rounded bellies, large hips and smiling faces which celebrates the female body.

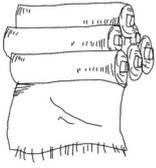


Many artists who used women in their work often showed them as weak but Nana shows women with filled joy, strength and freedom.



The bright cheerful colours is meant to make us feel happy.

## Untitled by Madge Gill

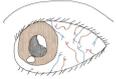


This room is made of Calico fabric.



It's a very calming space with not much colour.

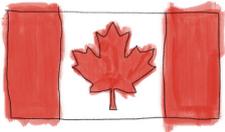
It makes it easier to focus on each artwork.



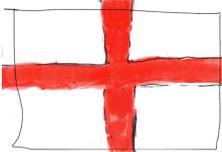
When Madge Gill was 9 years old she was sent to an orphanage even though her mum was still alive.



5 years later at age 14 years old, Madge Gill went to Canada to work as a babysitter and servant.



At 18 years old, Madge Gill went back to England.



Madge Gill believed she had a spirit guide called Myrninerest to help with her creativity.



A spirit guide is believed to be someone who you can't see but is there to help you, such as an angel.



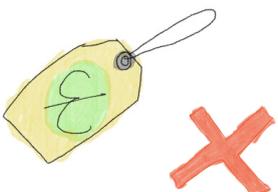
Her spirit guide inspired her to draw, write, knit, crochet, weave and play the piano.



Madge Gill often signed her work using her spirit guide's signature.



Madge Gill exhibited her work in art galleries but she did not sell her artwork because they belonged to her spirit guide.



**The artworks mentioned in this easy read:**



**Un-fair-Ground  
by Delaine Le Bas**



**Performance Space  
by Delaine Le Bas**



**Different shapes and Sizes  
by Leslie Thompson**



**Floating Mermaids  
by Pearl Alcock**



**All is confused by a  
horses head  
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**Untitled  
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**Nana by Niki de  
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**Untitled by Madge Gill**



**The Floor**