

# NEWSLETTER

F R I E N D S *of*



MUSEUM & ART  
SWINDON

## THIS MONTH

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER  
2025

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Cover:  
**Alfred Wallis**  
*Amid Tall Waves*  
Museum & Art Swindon

# September/October 2025

**Hello!** Autumn greetings from your committee. Andrew Cross (the Chair) and I have been working on a new look for the newsletter. And that in part explains why it's late plopping into your inbox – thus I've taken an executive decision to combine September and October.

We're kicking this one off with news about donations made to Museum & Art Swindon and recent events– *Angela Atkinson, Editor*

## Friends News



Henry Orlik

### Friends Donate to Henry Orlik Acquisition

In September the Friends donated £3,000 to Museum & Art Swindon to support the acquisition of the Henry Orlik work *Eggs Unhatched on the Sun*. The work will be exhibited in a forthcoming exhibition at Museum & Art Swindon.

Orlik, now 78, caused excitement in the art world as a young man when he was exhibited alongside René Magritte, Salvador Dali and Max Ernst. After the caused star fell out with an art dealer, he became a recluse, painting alone in his south London flat. Orlik is now enjoying a renaissance with his works selling at exhibitions, put together by Grant Ford at Winsor Birch, in both the UK and New York.

Orlik is a surrealist, often showing monumental structures and flowing forms but as the viewer moves closer, the subtle shading becomes a sea of intricate, colourful marks, each one perfect. You can only wonder at the meticulous devotion to produce these works.

*Andrew Cross*  
Chair, FMAS



## Friends Support the Fossil Hunters: Unlocking Swindon's Jurassic Past

The Friends were very happy to support the exhibition private view on the 8<sup>th</sup> October and make a donation to MAS to enable the Fossil Hunters team to borrow artefacts from the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.



Photo: Claire Parsons

The exhibition is billed as a fascinating look at fossil hunters, as well as a showcase of Swindon's amazing Jurassic fossils.

Fossil Hunters will provide Discovery Visits for Primary Schools, professional CPD training for teachers, workshops and drop-ins for families and a dinosaur trail around the exhibition.

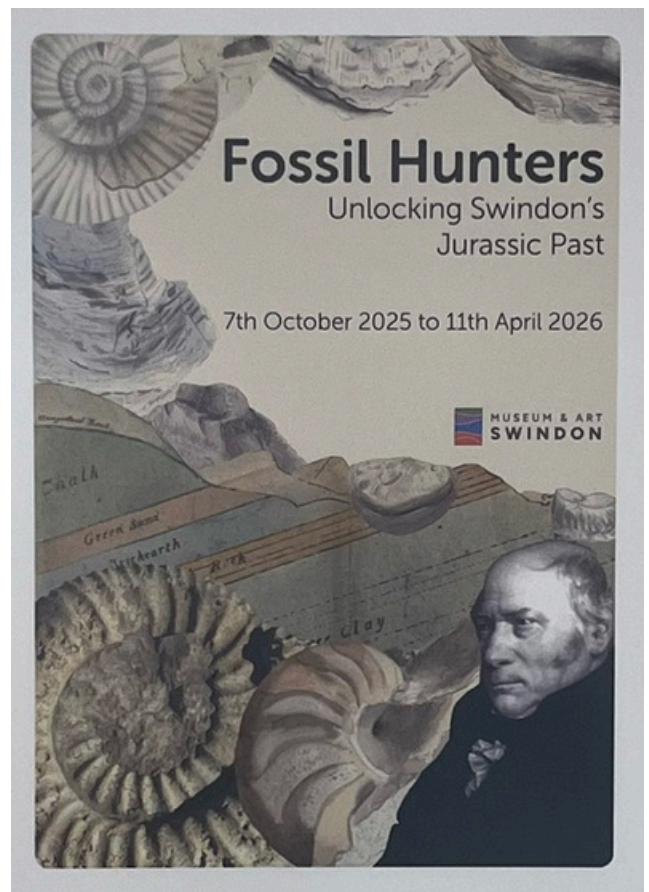
Find out more here:

[CLICK HERE](#)



Photo: Claire Parsons

Fossil Hunters runs until 11<sup>th</sup> April 2026. Plenty of time for you, your children and your grandchildren to visit!



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## Wine Tasting Evening at Magnum Wine, Old Town

Some of the Friends and their guests attended a wine tasting evening at Magnum Wine with wines expertly presented by Brian Saunders from Magnum Wines. The raffle prize was donated by Magnum Wine and The evening raised £300 for the Friends.



<https://www.magnumwineshop.co.uk>

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## Free December!

The Friends AGM will be held in January 2026, the date will be advised.

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# A Visit to The Base

## Exhibition Review: Lines of Influence at The Base, Greenham

*Claire Parsons*

Lines of Influence: Twentieth Century British Printmaking is a superb celebration of the craft and creativity that defined British printmaking across the last century.

The exhibition brings together striking linocuts, etchings, and lithographs by artists such as C.R.W. Nevinson, Eric Ravilious, Dame Elisabeth Frink, Sybil Andrews, and Edward Bawden —



revealing how printmakers shaped the look and feel of modern Britain.

Beautifully curated, the show highlights both the artistic and everyday uses of print — from fine art to posters and book design — while exploring how these works reflect social change and visual innovation. Bold, colourful, and accessible, it's a joy for both art enthusiasts and newcomers alike.



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Alongside the exhibition, The Base offers talks, workshops, and relaxed sessions that make the experience even richer. Lines of Influence is a thoughtful and inspiring look at the power of print — well worth a visit.

The exhibition runs until Sunday 16th November. To find out more, [CLICK HERE](#) 

# Experiencing Swindon Open Studios

*Andrew Cross*

I have a feeling of reverence to be given the opportunity to peer into the inner workings of an artists studio. Not all of the artists show their studio. With some it is a gallery (front room/kitchen etc.) of finished works but when artists open their studio, it's an added bonus for me.

With nearly one hundred artists, from in and around Swindon, my visit programme had to be efficient particularly as I only had one weekend. The wonderfully produced event booklet and map was immensely useful and made it easy to plan and get around. I did however bite off more than I could chew and didn't get to see all of my selection even though I got home at 8pm on the Saturday. I could have spent hours talking to the artists and I suppose I probably did.

I only know a few of the artists, so for me I was guided by the promotional picture against each artist in the booklet. So that needs to be a good one. After that it was geography.

To say I enjoyed my two days of open studio would be an understatement. I loved it. Artists were happy to talk about their work and journey. Above all, I saw some incredible art. Open Studios Swindon is a 'must have' and a way to access the incredible talent in Swindon. The ability of the artists, the quality of the work and the diversity of style and technique was all on display. Artsite in Theatre Square was a microcosm of the diversity of styles with great work on display.

Any disappointment? Yes. Not getting to see all of my choices and I wish I could have bought everything I liked. I had my heart set on visiting Ken White and was saddened when he wasn't well enough to participate.

After two days I was fortunate to end at the studio of Tim Baynes, a prolific member of the Guild of Wiltshire Artists. With much discussion and common interests, it was a perfect end.

Thank you Tim and to all the artists in the Swindon Open Studio.



Photo: David Chalk DCPHOTOS.

<https://timbaynesart.co.uk/>

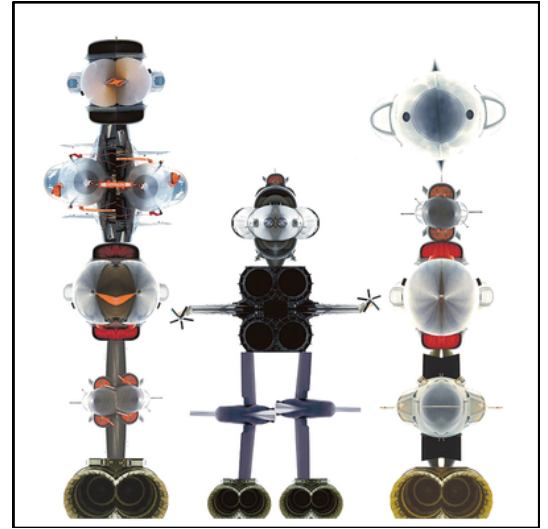
# Featured Artist – David Bent Hon CRAaeS

Angela Atkinson

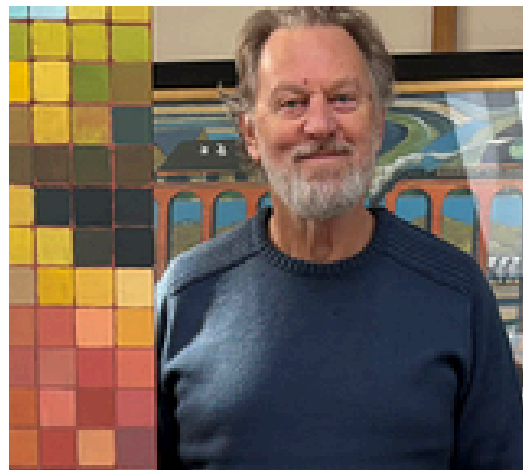
After visiting Swindon Open Studios and being struck by the quantity and quality of artistic talent that abounds in Swindon, Andrew Cross thought a featured artist section would be interesting.

We decided to start with David Bent in part as a selection of his vast body of work relates to our October talk – and more of that below.

Living and working in Swindon, David is renowned for his aviation art, including his Aerobots, but he has far more bristles to his brush than that.



David Bent  
*Mr & Mrs Aerobot and Babybot*



David Bent in his studio

David's body of work is diverse, a well-travelled man, much of his work reflects his travel experiences. And his love of nature is clear too, in many of his art works, including the landscape geometry series of paintings, one of which: Beach House West of Looe is held within the Swindon Museum and Art Collection.

Social issues make their way onto David's canvas too, in the form of response work. I'm thinking here of his painting of the Grenfell tower disaster and 9/11. But I'm also thinking of his Movement 2000 collection. This set of eight powerful, harrowing and haunting paintings that David produced as we headed towards the new century. Depicting the movement of souls displaced through no fault of their own, the works are tragically as relevant to the world now as they were then.

Visit David's website here: <https://davidbentstudio.com/quotes> Also – your newsletter compiler has written about David, and other Swindon artists, on her blog. Have a root here:

<https://swindonian.me/category/artscultureheritage/david-bent/>

# Upcoming Events

Angela Atkinson

## Friends Talk - 30th October, Euclid Street

We have Gail Brown coming to talk to us about the art of flight. More about that here:



<https://friendsofmas.org/events/gail-brown-the-art-of-flight/>

Then, the **16th October brings a Swindon Heritage Preservation Trust event**. It's a talk by railway village resident and lifelong railway man, Jack Hayward entitled Swindon Works at War. Information on that here: <https://mechanics-trust.org.uk/all-events/swindon-works-at-war-by-jack-hayward/>

And those of you with children/grandchildren might like to know they've got a spooky spider hunt in the **Railway Cottage Museum on the 29th October**. I've got mine staying with me that week as it's half-term so I've booked that. Info on that one here: <https://mechanics-trust.org.uk/all-events/halloween-spider-hunt/>

Oh - yours truly is having a **book launch** - so here's a cheeky mention of that - it would be lovely to see some of you there.

<https://swindonian.me/2025/10/09/book-launch-25th-october/>

Returning to the arts, our friends at the **Kennet & Swindon Arts Society** have, on the **20th October, a lecture entitled: Turner & Constable: Great British Rivals**. More info here:

<https://theartssocietykennet.org.uk/Lectures/FutureLectures.aspx>

## Social media

If you're a social butterfly you'll find us on Facebook here:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057526986578>

And Instagram here: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsmuseumartswindon/>

Do give us a Like and a follow!



## Coming to Museum & Art Swindon



- Exhibitions

### Surreal Impulses

📅 21 Oct 2025 - 14 Mar 2026



- Exhibitions

### The Lost Surrealist: Henry Orlik's Quantum Revolution

📅 24 Oct 2025 - 14 Mar 2026



- Special Events

### Curator Talk: Leslie Cole, Official War Artist with Katie Ackrill

📅 01 Nov 2025 - 01 Nov 2025

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And Instagram here:

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Do give us a Like and a follow!

## and finally.....

The old shop banners in Swindon's Parade have now been replaced with artwork from Museum & Art Swindon, adding colour to the town. The banners use slices from Desmond Morris' The flower seller. More please!

