

On Deborah Beeson

Deborah Beeson is a kind of self-confessed house wife in a traditional sense. A bit like the sort of types of our mother's generation that one would have thought almost have died out. She loves making things, embroiders, makes jam, waiters, cocoons around her family and her rural community. Attracted by WRI rituals she involves herself in cabbage growing competitions, hat displays and rose pedal collections.

But what distinguishes her from the craftiness of our mothers is that she borrows these house-wife-ish techniques to make her art and then vice versa, she takes her artistic techniques to involve them in her home-making. She uses the remnant needles of the Christmas tree and rewrites with them into the carpet using her son's gluttonous Santa letter (the tree itself was of course decorated with iced brussels sprouts). As 'Artist for All Seasons' in our town she embarked on a whole series of such interventions; like decorating the gents' loo with roses on Valentine's Day, mass-pancake-race in February, easter bonnet display in March and stringing shiny red apples around our Duke's column on Halloween.

Her string of seasonal interventions culminated in the research of the life of our potato over one full season. She collected the potatoes from a local farmer, planted them lovingly in 220 pretty pots, nurtured and raised them like her own family. Then she displayed them in various forms around the town's center garden as the summer months evolved. The final form took a Chartre like labyrinth, that was meant to be walked as a pilgrimage for repentance before reaching the goal. At the centre is a mysterious shed, where all the thoughts, spirits and sorrows brew in demijohns, delicately engraved with her own poetry. A symbolised transformation from the natural to the industrial world, from kinship to family to community, from plant to tea party.

We thank Deborah for adding to the celebratory calendar of our town through making us think of the importance of trad(e)itions over the past two years.

Claudia Zeiske, Deveron Arts