

BTG 20th Anniversary Show at Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh

Ruth Bell

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I've just returned from a visit to the BTG 20th Anniversary tapestry show at the Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh. The tapestry "balcony" is a great venue, showcasing the works in a bright and spacious setting, with the added bonus of being able to study the tapestries close up or to view them from a distance.

Jane Riley's striking seaweed tapestries "Dhoon Bay Wrack" and "South Bay Wrack" are dynamic and eye-catching, the scale and detail reminiscent of Georgia O'Keefe's flower paintings. Jane's work has come a long way in a short time both in size and vibrancy.



Ruth next to her tapestry "The Making of a Storm"

Several outstanding tapestries need to be seen to be fully appreciated. Margaret Jones' haunting and subtly blended imagery in her piece "700" takes the medium of tapestry into a realm of deep and exciting possibility.

In Jane Freer Wyld's tapestry "Ice", you can almost hear the shards cracking! I found her use of a myriad of tiny beads woven into the fabric imaginative and highly effective.

Two other personal favourites which stood out for me were Yoshiko Nakano's "Catching Stars" and Christine Sawyer's "The Good, The Bad and the Downright Dangerous". Nakano's skilful rendering of bright spots of light reflected against an inky blue backdrop gave this tapestry depth and beauty. The colours and theme reminded me of my own exhibit, "The Making of a Storm". We both used reflecting images, deep blues, water and sky in a similar effort to capture a place where finite and infinite meet.



Christine has a great sense of composition and colour. The bright and vibrant shapes create a dynamic backdrop for the patterns and proliferation of bacterial creatures, real and imagined, swarming through her tapestry.



Christine Sawyer's "The Good, The Bad and the Downright Dangerous"

Sifting through the catalogue, I have to mention Elizabeth Radcliffe's amazing "Tiger Eyes". The detail and precision (so difficult to master in this medium) are superbly executed.

Yoshiko Nakano's "Catching Stars"

This is a great show with something for everyone. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the tireless organizers and curators for bringing this marvellous exhibition to fruition. There are so many great tapestries to see, and it is impossible to do justice to them all. The above are just a few highlights of a fascinating and eclectic exhibition. Thank you BTG!