



LORE

and the living archive.

Lore And The Living Archive: exhibition of original artworks and artefacts from the Doc Rowe Archive and Collection

Touchstones Rochdale, 5 May – 30 June 2018

Lore And The Living Archive is the culmination of two years of research and development for three emerging artists who have been commissioned to respond to artefacts in the Doc Rowe Archive and Collection – and Doc himself as collector.

Photographer, **Bryony Bainbridge**; printmaker and poet, **Natalie Reid**, and multimedia artist, **Anna FC Smith**, contemplate what place traditions have in contemporary society and how they influence the communities in which they originate. The artists also consider the role of the archivist and how his presence at some events has become as anticipated and revered as the tradition itself.

Opening at Touchstones Rochdale in May 2018 before touring the UK, the original artworks will be displayed alongside a curated selection of artefacts, film and photography from the Archive that illustrate customs from across the British Isles and complement the themes explored through the new artworks.

Doc Rowe has been documenting the customs of the British Isles for much of his life, including an annual pilgrimage to Padstow's May Day since 1963. His passion – or habit – has seen him amass an enviable archive and collection which is currently housed in Whitby. This living archive, growing year on year, charts the rise, decline and revival of many of our calendar customs.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a **Wakes Day celebration** at the Gallery on **Saturday 26 May 2018**, with more information to follow.

Project manager, Stephanie West, says: "Doc Rowe's archive is of national importance and significance. The sheer volume of audio and video material documenting British folk culture is unmatched by any other collection in the country, and for the first time, we have the opportunity to understand its continuing relevance by opening it up to artist interpretation.

"The exhibition will allow us to explore the role of the folklorist and collector in the present day, and how intangible traditional customs can be 'preserved' for future reflection and artistic contemplation."

Lore And The Living Archive will run alongside a new commission from Magnus Quaife. A food riot in 18th century Manchester meets the iconic, near-revolution of Paris 1968 in Manchester-based artist, Magnus Quaife's newly-commissioned, multi-dimensional voyage into civil disobedience, language and unsung folk heroes. Quaife draws first on the legend of oft-forgotten Milnrow school master John Collier, known by the pseudonym, Tim Bobbin.

For images, interviews with Doc Rowe and the artists, and more information, please contact Sophie Parkes-Nield via sophie@sophieparkes.co.uk or 07854 160624.

<http://docrowearchiveandcollection.blogspot.co.uk/>

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<https://www.facebook.com/docrowearchive/>

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Notes to editors



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1. **Touchstones Rochdale** offers a wide variety of exhibitions in the Heritage Gallery and the Art Gallery's four gallery spaces including those from the local community, selections from the borough's impressive art collection and work by contemporary artists. Opening times: Tuesday - Saturday 10am-5pm; Art Cafe 10am-4pm. Free admission. <https://link4life.org/arts-heritage/exhibitions>

2. The three artists involved in the project are:

Bryony Bainbridge

Fascinated by people, Bryony Bainbridge's photography has an earthy documentary feel enhanced through analog and medium format film. Graduating in Fine Art from Newcastle University in 2011, Bryony's portraiture featured in the Inspirational Women of the North East project which exhibited at the Hatton Gallery and has since toured across the UK. <https://www.facebook.com/BryonyBainbridgeArt>

Natalie Reid

Natalie Reid is a visual artist, illustrator and printmaker, whose practice is influenced by and seeks to explore the human relationship with traditional customs and cultural history. Her illustration skills, often incorporating the written word, and her fascination for folksong has led her to illustrate artwork for musicians, including multi-award winning band, The Unthanks. <http://www.natalieraereid.co.uk>

Anna FC Smith

Multimedia artist, Anna FC Smith, locates herself between artist, historian and anthropologist, with longstanding interest in folk culture and communal traditions. Her current residency examines the role of tobacco in the lives of cigarette factory workers, while previous solo shows explore clog fighting (2013-16), and Harry Hill's TV Burp in comparison to carnival (2012 13). <http://annafcsmith.tumblr.com>

3. Traditional song and custom has been the focus of **Doc Rowe's** life. A seasoned teacher, speaker, broadcaster and writer on traditional song and custom, Doc is in demand for his knowledge. He is a committee member of the Folklore Society and the Oral History Society, and a member the Traditional Song Forum, and has been awarded an honorary doctorate and the English Folk Dance and Song Society's Gold Badge for his services to traditional song and dance. <http://www.docrowe.org.uk/>

4. **The Doc Rowe Archive and Collection** comprises of audio and video material documenting British folk culture, the most extensive collection found in the country. The Collection contains: audio and video recordings, with related documentation and transcripts; photographs and transparencies, both archival and contemporary; written and printed material, such as field-notes, correspondence, posters, newspaper cuttings, artefacts; and exhibition and display material. Focused on the continuation of a living culture, rather than interpretation of the past, the collection is vital to our understanding and celebration of our living traditions.

5. Seasonal events

<http://www.docrowe.org.uk/collect/seasonal.html> Artefacts: <http://www.docrowe.org.uk/collect/colls.html>

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