

OUT  
OF  
THE  
BLUE  
COAT

BLUECOAT

LIVERPOOL'S CENTRE FOR THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS

MAY-JUNE 2005



# OUT OF THE BLUE COAT

The gates to Bluecoat are now closed, however the organisation is working flat out to finalise its plans to expand and improve our facilities over the next two years.

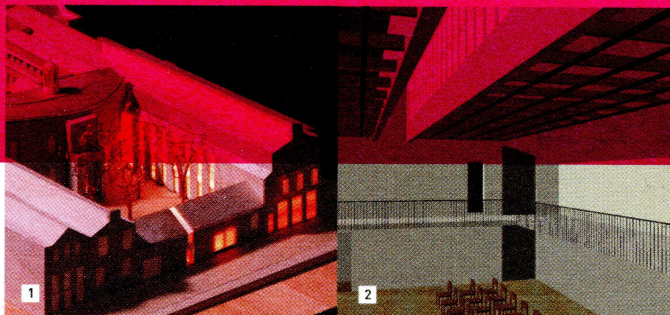
Whilst the building development will focus much of our energies, we continue our arts activities out of the Bluecoat, through the popular Connect programme of participation between artists and communities, and other off site events. These are detailed in this brochure, together with an update on the development.

It is important we keep in touch with our supporters, and we will be producing quarterly brochures with the latest news and events, as well as updating our website. If you have any questions or comments about our future plans, then please write to me at the postal or email addresses at the end of this brochure.

Bryan Biggs, Bluecoat Director

This brochure is available in alternative formats on request. Contact **Bec Jones** with your requirements and we will do our best to respond as quickly as possible. Email: [beccy@bluecoatartscentre.com](mailto:beccy@bluecoatartscentre.com)  
Fax: 0151 707 0048  
Phone: 0151 709 5297  
extension 14





## DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Since Bluecoat closed to the public at the end of January work has been taking place behind the scenes to prepare for the construction of our new arts wing and the restoration of the building's historic fabric and improvement of existing spaces.

Bluecoat's long history dates back almost 300 years when it began life as a school. The front courtyard facades have remained remarkably intact since the early 18th century, but there have been successive changes and additions to other parts, each age leaving its mark on the building. 20th century alterations have covered up earlier phases, however it is now possible for our conservation architects **Donald Insall Associates** to investigate how much of the building remains from earlier times.

To help explain Bluecoat's story, examples from various periods will be revealed and incorporated into the

refurbished interiors. From early photographs we know for example that the area now occupied by the ground floor gallery was once the school's dining hall and very different from today's small spaces. It is hoped that the historic character here can be largely reinstated and initial investigations reveal that much of the early 19th century timber beams, cast iron columns and lath and plaster ceilings still exist.

Other surveys have revealed walls and windows, once part of the exterior of the building and long since covered up. Second World War air raid shelters, buried in the garden, are also being revealed by hand digging, so as not to disturb the roots of the ash trees.

To find out more about the scheme, including the exciting new south-east wing, designed by lead architects **BIQ Architecten** from Rotterdam, who are working with project architects **Austin-Smith:Lord**, Warrington, please contact Bluecoat's Project Director Julie Ehlen.

1 & 2 Bluecoat development images by **BIQ Architecten**, Rotterdam





## CONNECT

Connect is Bluecoat's participation programme, which brings together artists and communities in creative collaboration. It continues while the building is closed for development. Here is news of some of our projects.

### WILD! LIVERPOOL EXPERIENCE SCOOPS DADAFEST AWARD

The **WILD!** group from **Halewood Resource Centre** proudly accepted the award for Best Community Arts Project, voted for by disabled people during Disability and Deaf Arts Festival, DaDaFest, last December. Their two-year project, **Liverpool Experience**, was organised by Bluecoat in conjunction with Liverpool Biennial. Working with artist **Andy Weston**, the group's artworks, including a mural and light-boxes, have toured Merseyside since September, including the Museum of Liverpool Life.

The group and their support workers are delighted with the award. One participant, Joanne said, 'I'm more interested in art now, I see art in everything... The best was winning the DaDa award and being presented with it at Bluecoat. It's been like a dream.'

—

### WILD! THE JOURNEY PREMIERES AT BLUECOAT

Last November a crowd at the Bluecoat gates welcomed stars of short film, **The Journey**, who arrived by limousine and were escorted up a red carpet to a host of flashing cameras, into a champagne reception. The film was the result of a two-year project involving service users and support workers from **L8 Resource Centre** and **Fazakerley Croxteth Day Services**, working with artist **Leo Fitzmaurice**. The **Journey** has since been shown at FACT, the Museum of Liverpool Life and Bluecoat Gallery.





## THOUSANDS WATCH THIS SPACE



Last December and January Bluecoat, with support from Fivearts Cities, presented **Watch This Space**, an exhibition of work from three Connect projects: Holes, Making Space and WILD! The exhibition featured work by around 100 artists and participants - for many it was their first opportunity to exhibit in a gallery.

## BRINGING THE CITY FARM INTO THE CITY CENTRE

A whispered poem, eggs and beetroot, a hand painted map and five girls in white boiler suits dance requests on strewn hay. Their photographic images surround the audience who sit sipping tea on a hay bale or an old sofa. The mood changes, a fight breaks out. Momentarily ketchup flies, whipped cream splatters, mushy peas are airborne, spaghetti Bolognese creeps down a window pane, then they

- 1 Halewood Resource Centre's WILD! group with their DaDaFest award at Bluecoat, December 2004
- 2 The Journey filmmakers celebrate success. [photo Robert Cook]
- 3 Rice Lane City Farm (photo Annie Maclean)

emerge to dance again, complaining of the smell of food in which they wallowed...

This was the scene in the former Bluecoat bookshop space in January, when a group from **Rice Lane City Farm Youth Project** in Walton presented an installation and live art performance. The girls had been working since August with artists **Roger Hill** and **Sharon Smith**, making their first contact with live art and exploring its possibilities for creative expression. Drawing on Bluecoat's live art programme, Liverpool Live, and on their own experiences, the group's work brought the spirit of the farm into the city.

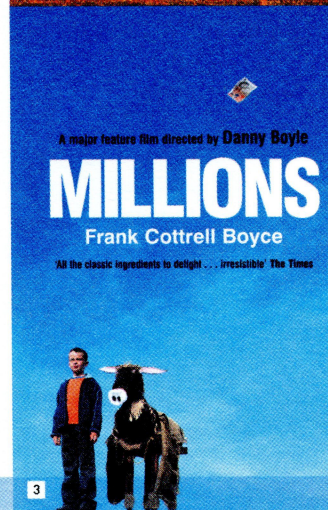
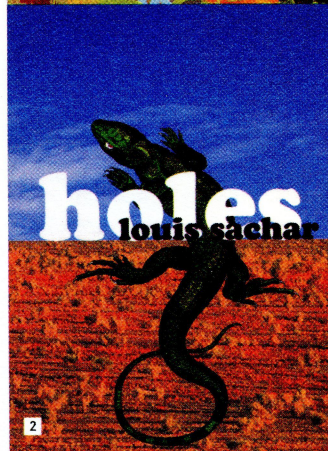
The installation has since been presented in St John's Shopping Centre (thanks to Marsha Freeman of Land Securities), at Walton Library and in the former barber-shop unit at Bluecoat. Tour organised by students from **Liverpool Centre for Arts Development**.



## LIVERPOOL READS... SUBTERRANEAN EXHIBITION

Bluecoat played a big part in last year's citywide book read **Liverpool Reads...** The selected book, **Holes** by Louis Sachar, topped the Liverpool library loans chart and was read by people of all ages right across the city. The book inspired creative writing and visual art, including a Connect project in which artist **Louise Wood** worked with service users at **Crown Street Mental Health Resource Centre** and pupils at **Lower Lee School**.

Work from this project, exhibited at Bluecoat last year, will be on show again in Liverpool's own set of mysterious holes, the Williamson Tunnels Heritage Centre, The Old Stableyard, Smithdown Lane from **28 April – 26 May**, open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays 10am – 6pm (last tour 5pm). Tunnels entry, including a guided tour: £3.50 adults, £3 concessions, £2 children.





- 1 Lightbox image by Alan Parker, participant in the award-winning WILD! project
- 2 Holes by Louis Sachar
- 3 Millions by Frank Cottrell Boyce, image courtesy of Macmillan

## THIS YEAR LIVERPOOL READS... MILLIONS BY FRANK COTTRELL BOYCE

**Millions** by Liverpool writer **Frank Cottrell Boyce** has been selected as the book for 2005/6. Based in Liverpool, it tells the story of two brothers getting used to life without their Mum who has recently died. One is obsessed with patron saints, the other with finance and real estate. When a bag stuffed with money seemingly drops out of the sky they find themselves suddenly rich – but the clock is ticking as the money is in sterling and the Euro is about to be introduced. *Millions* has recently been made into a feature film, due for general release soon, directed by Danny Boyle.

Bluecoat is again working with Crown Street and Lower Lee on a project relating to *Millions*. And you can get involved too in Liverpool Reads by reading the book yourself or to a friend, or encouraging others to read it.

Look out for further information about events and opportunities when the new book is launched officially in September. To join the Liverpool Reads... mailing list contact Bec Jones (details below)

## WAYFINDING PROJECT

In January we launched our Wayfinding project, when artist **Julia Keenan** met local disabled people interested in making Bluecoat a more accessible venue. The project continues in April when Julia and groups of adults with learning disabilities explore issues around the use of pictures and symbols in signage and marketing materials for the new Bluecoat.

To find out more about this project or to get involved, contact Participation Programme Manager Bec Jones on 0151 709 5297 ext 14 or email [beccy@bluecoatartscentre.com](mailto:beccy@bluecoatartscentre.com)





## OUT OF THE BLUECOAT EVENTS

e-space lab:  
**SPACE, LIFE AND URBAN FABRIC,  
 SHANGHAI AND LIVERPOOL**  
 SATURDAY 25 JUNE 10.00AM-4.00PM  
 AT THE RENEW ROOMS,  
 82 WOOD STREET, LIVERPOOL Free

**This event invites visitors to look through the prism of Shanghai's experience of rapid growth, in order to examine the transformations that Liverpool's own social and urban fabric is now undergoing.**

e-space lab artists **Philip Courtenay** and **Peter Hatton** explore how spaces can be made into places through the activities of everyday life. They are interested in creating, through an art process, new types of space in shared virtual spaces. It is a process that parallels the relationship between the city and the neighbourhood, the collective and the individual. Their current research focuses on Shanghai, one of Liverpool's world

city twins, looking at the social and urban fabric of the Hongkou area, currently in a fugitive state of transition as it heads towards total transformation. Modernity is the watchword here, so what happens to everyday life?

The architectural high-rise messages of modernity and change loom large over old areas of the city made up of labyrinthine lanes and high-density housing, but the interaction of people moving between new and old areas also creates new possibilities for spaces.

All are welcome to drop in at any time to meet the artists and find out more about this project they are developing with Bluecoat. For further information on this day-long programme of videos, presentations and discussions contact Cathy Butterworth 0151 709 5297 or email [cathy@bluecoatartscentre.com](mailto:cathy@bluecoatartscentre.com)

The event is Bluecoat's contribution to Architecture Week (17-26 June).

RENEW is the Northwest Centre for Regeneration Excellence, one of nine being established in the English Regions to promote good practice and better skills in regeneration.





## LIVERPOOL ARABIC ARTS FESTIVAL 9 - 25 JUNE



Bluecoat continues the partnership with Liverpool Yemeni Arabic Club and other organisations in this celebration of Arabic arts.

With Bluecoat closed this year, the Festival will of necessity be smaller and take place at other local venues including Philharmonic Hall, National Museums Liverpool, Open Eye Gallery, Sefton Park Palm House and the Arabic café Shisha. The festival will include a diverse programme of activities and workshops, with music, dance and talks featuring local and international artists from across the Arabic world.

This year's highlights include: Palestinian composer **Amal Murkus** and her group in concert with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra; a presentation talk on her life and work by Egyptian dance legend **Farida Fahmy**, co-founder and star dancer

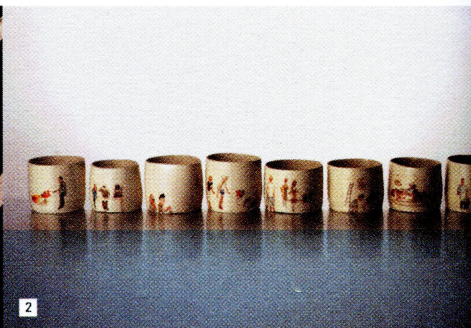
for 25 years of the Reda Troupe; Syrian music sensation **Abdullah Chhadeh**; and the ever popular Family Day on Sunday 12 June, hosted this year by Sefton Park Palm House, where there will be an opportunity to experience tradition, culture and food from all over the Arabic world in an atmosphere of the open-air bazaar. With true Arabic hospitality you are invited to bring your family and friends along for a remarkable day of live music, dance, stalls, food, workshops and fun activities suitable for all ages.

And there are special bi-lingual radio broadcasts, part of Angela Heslop's Artwaves programme on **BBC Radio Merseyside**, with news and views from local Arabic community members, updates on the festival and interviews with artists, music and much more.

For further information contact Festival Manager Ngozi Ikoku at Bluecoat on 0151 709 5297, or ask for a free Festival brochure.

1 e-space lab: Shanghai cityscape  
2 & 3 Images from last year's  
Liverpool Arabic Arts Festival





While we are closed, organisations associated with Bluecoat, including some of our partners and tenants, are continuing to promote their work. Here are some exhibitions and events we hope you will be interested in supporting:

### **BLUECOAT DISPLAY CENTRE**

is still open at Bluecoat with access from College Lane. Phone 0151 709 4014 [www.bluecoatdisplaycentre.com](http://www.bluecoatdisplaycentre.com)

#### **Opening Times:**

Monday - Saturday 10.00am - 5.30pm

### **BCN JEWELLERY FACTORY**

#### **TILL 21 MAY**

Exhibition of contemporary jewellery from Barcelona curated by **Monica Gaspar**.

### **EMERGE**

#### **28 MAY - 25 JUNE**

Selection of North West based artists including **Helen Felcey, Nawal Gebreel, Gillian Hughes, Peter Lloyd, Tabitha Kyoko Moses, Molly Rathbone** and **Kazuhito Takadoi**, who explore nature and the organic through a variety of materials.

### **IN THE WINDOW SERIES**

May - **Penny Fowler**, bone china and porcelain ceramics

June - **Helen Beard**, hand thrown and painted ceramics

July - **Bob Crooks**, hand blown glass

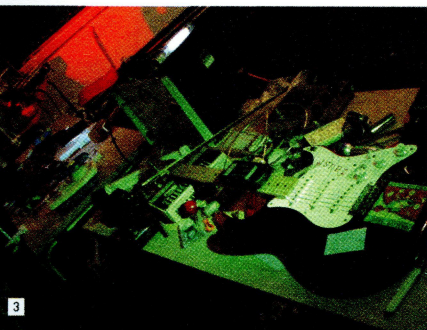
### **ART CLASSES**

Bluecoat's popular adult art classes in printmaking and life drawing continue at Liverpool School of Art and Design, Liverpool John Moores University, with whom we are working in partnership to develop the courses. Contact us for details.

### **BLUECOAT TENANTS**

All our tenants except the Bluecoat Display Centre have moved out of the building. Contact us if you need details of how to contact any of them.





## FRAKTURE

Frakture concerts continue off site at St Bride's Church, Catherine Street, Liverpool L8 7NG:

### FRAKTURE BIG BAND

FRIDAY 29 APRIL 8.00PM £3/£2

### WALLY SHOUP, JOHN JASNOCH, ROB DANTON

SATURDAY 28 MAY 8.00PM £3/£2

### FRAKTURE BIG BAND

FRIDAY 24 JUNE 8.00PM £3/£2

Frakture also run monthly workshops in free improvisation in music. For further information telephone 0151 280 9628, email [office@frakture.org](mailto:office@frakture.org), website [www.frakture.org](http://www.frakture.org). Contact them too for details of this Spring's **Listening Room Soundwalks**, taking you to undiscovered places.

- 1 Helen Felcey - Emerge Exhibition
- 2 Helen Beard - In the Window
- 3 Frakture

## BLUECOAT

### INFORMATION

Bluecoat Arts Centre, School Lane  
Liverpool L1 3BX

The building, apart from Bluecoat Display Centre, is closed to the public whilst building work takes place, however you can contact us as follows:

Telephone: **0151 709 5297**

Fax: **0151 707 0048**

Email: [admin@bluecoatartscentre.com](mailto:admin@bluecoatartscentre.com)

Website: [www.bluecoatartscentre.com](http://www.bluecoatartscentre.com)

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Heritage Lottery Fund  
Northwest Development Agency

The Granada Foundation  
PH Holt Charitable Trust  
and donors who wish to remain anonymous



To find out more about how you can help support the development, contact Charlotte Myhrum on 0151 709 5297 ext 16.



**BLUECOAT**

[www.bluecoatartscentre.com](http://www.bluecoatartscentre.com) 0151 709 5297