

LUTON CULTURE PRESS RELEASE

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Internationally Acclaimed Artist Eileen Hogan to Exhibit in Luton

'Eileen Hogan at Little Sparta' is an exhibition of exceptional paintings, drawings and prints inspired by Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden 'Little Sparta' in the Borders area of Scotland. The free exhibition takes place from 27 September – 30 November at the Stockwood Discovery Centre; home to *The Improvement Garden* a classical garden by Ian Hamilton Finlay in which his sculptures are an integral part of the landscape.

In 1997 during a visit to Scotland Eileen Hogan had a chance encounter with Little Sparta, the garden designed and created by world-renowned poet-artist Ian Hamilton Finlay. Affected by the breadth of poetry, philosophy, sculptures and landscape she embarked on a 12-year journey of translating it into paintings, drawings, prints and photos. The culmination of which can be seen in the exhibition.

Hogan has visited Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden at Stockwood Discovery Centre, and is excited to see her work displayed in close proximity to Finlay's for her Luton debut:

"It's a great thrill really. The garden here is wonderful and he didn't make very many gardens so (for Luton) to have one which is so substantial, is really remarkable. The sculptural and poetic elements are fused with landscape and the surrounding gardens."

"In important ways, my work and Ian's have very little in common. I am a great admirer of his work and my reaction to him and his environment was, and is, part of my emotional response to Little Sparta."

Eileen explains her method in relation to her beautiful beehive paintings:

"They're white shapes in a very intense green landscape. The light comes through the cherry trees in sometimes very dramatic shadows. The shadows fall on the beehives and they look quite mottled and piebald and flickering, and I rather love that. Whatever I'm painting, the way the light is falling on the subject is what's important, whether that's a person or a building or a garden. It's not so much the head or the figure or the tree... it's actually the light."

Complementing the exhibition are a series of art workshops exploring the work of artist Eileen Hogan, which examine themes within her exhibition at the Stockwood Discovery Centre on the 8, 15 & 22 November, 11am-1pm, £7.50

'Eileen Hogan at Little Sparta' exhibition takes place between 27 September – 30 November, at the Stockwood Discovery Centre. Entry is free.

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www.lutonculture.com

Notes to the Editor

1. Eileen Hogan is available for interviews; contact Luton Culture's media officer for more details.
2. Artist website: www.eileenhogan.co.uk
3. Eileen Hogan is a Professor in Fine Art and Theatre in the [CCW \(Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon art schools\) Graduate School](#), University of the Arts London. In 2013 she had a two-year touring exhibition consisting of paintings, drawings, prints and books inspired by [Ian Hamilton Finlay's garden Little Sparta](#). In 2013 it was shown at the [NewArtCentre, Roche Court, Wiltshire](#) and also at the Fleming Collection London. In 2014, a section of the show formed part of '[Of Green Leaf, Bird, and Flower: Artists' Books and the Natural World](#)' at the Yale Center for British Art. The touring exhibition was accompanied by the book: [BOUNTIFUL UL 238 SWEET PROMISE FH 172 GOLDEN GAIN FR 59: Paintings and Drawings by Eileen Hogan](#), published by the Fleming Wyfold Foundation. Hogan's next solo exhibition will be at Browse & Darby, London, in 2015. She is a patron of [Mindroom, a Scottish charity](#) for children with learning disabilities.
4. Internationally acclaimed artist and Turner Prize nominee Ian Hamilton Finlay was commissioned in the 1990s to devise a modern public garden for Stockwood. The result was the Improvement Garden, designed to be an improvement of the local council's plant nurseries that occupied the land before. Set as a sealed garden within the Discovery Centre's gardens, Finlay's Improvement Garden is comprised of six sculptures set apart from each other by carefully conceived vistas and views across the green space. The inspirations for the design of the garden range from Greek mythology and Roman architecture to the grand landscape gardens of the 1800s and the history of the Stockwood site itself.
5. Stockwood Discovery Centre is a treasure trove of exhibitions and beautiful gardens, best known for its famous Mossman collection of carriages - the largest collection of its kind on display in the UK. It has an extensive local collection, changing exhibitions, a children's playground and a popular Garden Café, and entrance to the Discovery Centre is free. It is also a paradise for garden enthusiasts and one of the few places in the country where the work of acclaimed artist Ian Hamilton Finlay can be seen on permanent display.

For further information about this press release please contact Print and Media Officer;

Tahmina Saleem on 01582 547548 or, alternatively, email

tahmina.saleem@lutonculture.com

Stockwood Discovery Centre is part of Luton Culture a registered charity.

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Luton Culture is an independent charity that opens up cultural opportunities in Luton for everyone. Our venues include Stockwood Discovery Centre, Wardown Park Museum, The Hat Factory, Luton Library Theatre, Luton Libraries and Luton's community centres.



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