

## Press Release

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### **Marvellous medieval magic at the Museum**

Throughout half term, Reading Guild of Artists (RGA) is holding a marvellous medieval-themed week of activities, hosted by Reading Museum, from Saturday 10 February to Saturday 17 February.

During the week, not only will there be the opportunity to buy artworks by RGA artists – including paintings, cards and handmade books, some with a medieval theme, some more abstract, – but the chance to make a stained-glass ‘window’, make a coat of arms, and even artwork to continue the story of the Bayeux Tapestry!

One of the hands-on projects taking place is the production of six stained glass panels depicting medieval themes of architecture, embroidery, illumination, music, sculpture, and tiles.

Another activity taking place is ‘colouring in’ pages – there are many from which to choose, but it includes some ‘blood thirsty’ scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry which should appeal to children and more ‘refined’ images to appeal to adults, such as illuminated letters and stained glass.

Each day there will be ‘artists in residence’, who will be sketching and drawing the fun things happening in a number of places around the museum.

On Wednesday 14 February, visitors can make a Valentine’s day- inspired medieval greeting card, with artist, Helen Westrop. Helen will also be creating medieval tiles for colouring in to create a bigger work of art. She will also be instructing on basic embroidery and sewing for people to make and take away.

Helen Westrop, said: “I’ve designed and printed some fabric pieces with a medieval feel, hoping that children will embroider them, with instruction, needle and threads! I hope each child will make two; one to take away and the other to make a lasting display and legacy for Reading Museum by the end of the week.

Helen went on to say: “As a child in the mid-1950s, I sat with my Dad, with a scrap of paper and a carefully sharpened pencil, drawing the things around me – a tea cup or carpentry tools.

"More than 60 years on I want to encourage children to use their imaginations and enjoy the process of making art for art's sake. Art is not just about pigment and fine paper but about self-expression and helping you to feeling good when life throws curved balls in your direction."

Anthony Wilder, chairman, Reading Guild of Artists, said: "It is great having the artists in residence offering their own unique take on the week. You might be the star in one of their pictures if you can sit still for long enough!

"The results of their efforts will be on view in the main Madjeski Gallery throughout the week. The pictures will be copied and turned into a book for Reading Museum and given in memory of the great time that was had by all in the medieval-themed week. Come and see what they are doing and have a chat with them about their projects. Artists love to talk about their work.

"The week also coincides with Valentine's day and there will be much to inspire you to create something personal and unique for your Valentine. We have workshops for you to create a medieval-themed Valentine's card or gift, so do come along and get creative!"

Further information on the Reading Guild of Artists, can be found by visiting <http://www.rga-artists.org.uk/> or <https://www.facebook.com/ReadingGuildofArtists/>

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**Photo Opportunity**

Reporters and photographers are warmly invited to come along to any of the events during the week. Please call Therese Lawlor on 07503156128 to arrange or by emailing [publicity@rga-artists.org.uk](mailto:publicity@rga-artists.org.uk)

**Photos attached**

Attached is a photo of Helen Westhrop with an example of her art. Also attached are two further artworks by Helen.

**Notes to Editors:**

Reporters and photographers are welcome to come along to any of the events – please call Therese Lawlor, 07503156128 to find out more and to arrange.

The Reading Guild of Artists was founded in 1930. It has a membership of over 170 artists and plays an active role in the development of artists in Reading.