

# Art

## THE SURFACE DETAILS

The late artist and designer John Hinchcliffe fused paint, ceramics and textiles with dazzling originality



**Diana Woolf**

### JOHN HINCHCLIFFE - THE DEFINITIVE WORKS OF A DECORATIVE ARTIST

★★★★★

John Hinchcliffe (1949-2010) was a multi-talented jack-of-all-trades. During his, sadly short, professional career he turned his hand to ceramics, textiles, print, collage and painting, with a little bit of teaching on the side. This highly informative exhibition gives a great sense of both his range of interests and his skills as a craftsman and artist (a selection of his prints are on show in a separate display upstairs).

Textiles were Hinchcliffe's first love; he studied weaving at the Royal College of Art in the early 1970s before doing a stint at the weaving department of the Konstfachsolan in Stockholm. Here he came across rag rugs and the exhibition opens with his take on the traditional Scandi textile - a wonderfully shaggy carpet in subtle autumnal shades cut through with bursts of canary yellow and zingy orange.

The piece sets the exhibition's agenda, introducing

Hinchcliffe's twin passions: texture and colour.

Examples of his printed fabrics are shown alongside more of these weavings, their bold, graphic designs including patterns of prancing gazelles and wild flowers. In spite of his success with textiles he soon moved on to experiment with ceramics. In 1982 he worked with the acclaimed ceramist Janice Tchalenko, producing a series of richly painted stoneware for the

V&A. Examples are displayed next to some of his original designs allowing viewers to see how the sketchy quality of the drawings is cleverly captured in the finished ceramics.

The designs also underline how Hinchcliffe's ceramics were all about form playing second fiddle to pattern and colour. Other ceramics on show include examples of the tableware he made in collaboration with his wife (and exhibition co-curator) Wendy Barber for companies such as Next as well as some of his popular Dorset Delft.

Hinchcliffe continued to produce ceramics and textiles and by the 2000s he had married the two together in a series of groundbreaking works that treated clay as a textile. Made by cutting brightly glazed clay into flat ribbons and then threading the strands through each other, these 'Constructions' are weavings in clay, full of writhing movement and vivid colour. The exhibition ends with these, neatly encapsulating Hinchcliffe's life-long experiments into surface pattern, texture and colour.

♦ Until 16 January 2016, at The Salisbury Museum, The King's House, 65 The Close, Salisbury: 01722-332151, [www.salisburymuseum.co.uk](http://www.salisburymuseum.co.uk)



**Stoneware bowls decorated at Dartington Pottery**

Colin Tierney's *Smith* becomes a modern-day Odysseus in his attempt to escape adversity and return home

## ...AND LAST CHANCE

### BRITISH CERAMICS

**BIENNIAL** Featuring the best in contemporary and traditional ceramic art and craft (right). Visitors can explore events, workshops, exhibitions and more. Until 8 November at venues including The Original Spode Factory Site, Stoke-on-Trent: 01782-236000, [www.britishceramicsbiennial.com](http://www.britishceramicsbiennial.com)



### WITLEY BEHIND THE

**SCENES** Explore the scenic grounds as well as learn some of Witley's uncovered secrets in this all-inclusive tour (centre). Lunch is included. On 6 November at Witley Court and Gardens, Great Witley, Worcestershire: 01299-896636, [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

### BRIDGWATER GUY FAWKES CARNIVAL

Enjoy one of the world's biggest carnival processions (the main procession starts at 7pm), illuminated with 22,000 light bulbs (below). Features more than 100 bright floats, music and dancing. On Saturday 7 November at Bridgwater, Somerset: 01749-835416, [www.bridgwatcarnival.org.uk](http://www.bridgwatcarnival.org.uk)

WHICH  
PLAY BEGINS...

*'Gif me trink  
dere, you!'*

Answer on  
page 81