

Mosaic Pigs in Bath!

See page 14



Bladud - Annette Martin

FEATURES

Mosaic Pigs in Bath!

Kate Rattray was very pleased to have the opportunity of being involved in an exciting project in Bath this year.

You may have heard of the cow parade in different countries and the storks in Germany. These projects inspired the organisers of King Bladud's Pigs in Bath. 100 fibreglass life-sized pigs were made by sculptor and robotics specialist, Alan Dun, and local businesses were encouraged to sponsor artists to decorate them. After being displayed around Bath for the summer, the pigs will be auctioned off and the charity Sustrans will receive some of the money raised.

The project idea is based on the legend of King Bladud, king of the Britons, who in 863BC, was said to have contracted leprosy after a trip to Athens and couldn't return to his kingdom. He decided to become a swineherd and one day whilst driving his pigs through Bath, the pigs rolled in the hot mud around the springs. When they got out the King noticed they had been cured of the disease, so he too jumped into the mud and was cured, and was therefore able to return as King.

I joined the project quite late, and with my details added to the artists' page on the King Bladud's website, I waited for someone to contact me. Soon after I joined I received an e-mail from Mark Williams, manager at Rotork. Rotork is the world's leading designer and manufacturer of industrial valve actuators, valve control systems, valve gearboxes and accessories. He said he wanted something in a sort of "fake bronze". He had contacted several other artists too. I phoned him and talked over some ideas, and sent him three designs for the pig. Although I was the first to contact him from his list of possible artists, he wanted to hear from all before choosing which one he would use.

Two weeks went by and I hadn't heard anything, so I decided to ask two Wells companies I had received funding from in the past. Unfortunately things had changed in management and sponsorship procedures and I was beginning to think I may as well go and bury my head in the sand. Downhearted, I went home and checked my e-mail and lo and behold there was a message from Mark Williams. It said: "We like design 2 best, can I



Top: Pig-eon - Candace Bahouth
Middle: Pigissimo - Margaret Peckham /
Claudia Phipps
Bottom: Walterloo - Natasha Rampley



get the pig shipped over to you asap?!"

So that was it, I was in super pig mosaic mode! I picked up the pig and laid him in the back of my people carrier (now pig carrier!) to drive him to my workshop, and negotiated expenses with Rotork, so I could buy materials. In my workshop, I had the remainder of some beautiful copper tiles that I have used in a couple of patios. I ordered several sheets of jasba gold ceramic mosaic. I have used these in the past for a public art project, and was pleased with the colour and the durability in the frost. They are considerably cheaper than gold leaf glass. I also used mirror, terracotta matt ceramic, some extremely hard bronze ceramic mosaic, blue ceramic roundels, glass nuggets and gold mirror.

My design represents the muddy healing waters running down the pig's back. It took me three weeks to complete the pig; every inch was mosaiced. We had to give him a name and Rotork chose Ropork! After getting over this awful, but funny, play on words (I am trying to be kind here!) I suggested his title should be Prince.

Prince Ropork now stands in The Circus, which is an upmarket residential area at the top of the main shopping area.

Most of the pigs have been painted, and some have some interesting materials fixed on. Seven of us have used mosaic or tiles to decorate our pig:

Helen Nock's *Pig in Clover* stands by the Assembly Hall.

Natasha Rampley's *Walterloo* stands by Bath Abbey.

Annette Martin's *Bladud* stands by Annette's shop - Bath Aqua Glass - see page 9.

Candace Bahouth's *Pig-eon* is above the Inspired Maker along The Paragon.

Claudia Phipps's and Margaret Peckham's *Piggisimo* stands along Walcot Street.

Bronwyn William-Ellis's *Vidar the Forest Warrior* also stands along Walcot Street.

All the pigs will be auctioned at The Assembly Hall on 31 October at 7.30pm with a starting price of £1,250.

If you are interested in finding out more about the project visit: www.kingbladudspigs.org/ or www.rattraymosaics.co.uk

Top: *Pig in Clover* - Helen Nock

Middle: *Prince Ropork* - Kate Rattray

Bottom: *Vidar the Forest Warrior* - Bronwyn William-Ellis

