

HABITAT artists' books

Hen Fenyw Fach (A Little Old Lady)

This poem is based on a memory of a local traditional sweet shop and the merchandise sold there. It also refers to an old folk poem about an old lady who kept a sweet shop.

Broadside; pen and ink plus hand-coloured lino print, digitally printed on Hahnemuhle paper

ARTIST:

Ruth Jên Evans
Ceredigion, Wales
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WRITER:

Mihangel Morgan
Aberdare, Wales



Artist's Statement

Having been brought up in a close rural community, Ruth was immersed from her childhood in a strong tradition of story telling, both factual and imaginary. As an artist she sees the images she creates as a continuation of this but through a visual medium rather than spoken one.

Artist's Biography

Ruth Jên Evans is a full-time artist based in Ceredigion, Mid-Wales. She has an unquenchable enthusiasm for all forms of printmaking and mark making and has been an active member of the Aberystwyth Printmakers since it was established in 2004. Although printmaking is an essential part of her practice, recent work has ranged from large-scale installations to delicate ceramic pieces and from spontaneous multi layered silk screens to animation and film. Her work has been exhibited widely, both in the UK and abroad and is represented in several international collections.

Writer's Statement

This poem is based on a memory of a local traditional sweet shop and the merchandise sold there. It also refers to an old folk poem about an old lady who kept a sweet shop.

Writer's Biography

Born in Aberdare South Wales, I was a lecturer in the department of Welsh at the University of Aberystwyth for 23 years. I returned to live in Aberdare six years ago.

Content of text included in artwork (English translation)

A Little Old Lady

The bell behind the door continues to ring as we go into the shop.

Here, in front of us is the counter, and behind are the shelves, rows of jars full of temptation.

And here comes Mrs Lewis, slowly, from her parlour.

She comes to stand there in her habitat of sweetness, her hair as white as her little paper bags.

She's an old lady but she sells a larger range than black sweets,* Though she is not as generous as the old lady of Kidwelly, Threepence a quarter is her usual price, and we must choose from these dainties; Scented pear drops, aniseed balls, striped humbugs, circular chocolate drops, big ones and white ones, black liquorice and Spanish, fudge and toffee, sour yellow lemon drops, little white chocolate mice, tiny pink sugar mice, pineapple cubes, multi-coloured jelly babies, white chocolate teddy bears, small parma violets, minute cherry lips, massive round gobstoppers, warm salted nuts, sherbet and sweet marshmallows.

When we have paid our sixpence we leave with a bag each, the corners tied into ears with a neat flip by Mrs Lewis.

*The poem refers to a well known traditional Welsh verse