

Saturday Portfolio The Drawing Room 2011



EDWARD ALLINGTON

I have found the guilt is mine!

Edward Allington 2011



MATT MULLICAN



SALVATORE ARANCIO



DEXTER DALWOOD

Good works: leading British artists sell sketches for charity

ONE of the best-kept secrets on the art world calendar is the biannual fundraiser at the Drawing Room, a gallery in a Victorian warehouse on a side street in London's Bethnal Green.

The Drawing Room was set up in 2000 by Mary Doyle, Kate Macfarlane and Katharine Stout, who between them have knocked up more than 50 years' experience as

public-sector curators. Its model was the legendary Drawing Centre in New York, a tiny downtown gallery which opened in a SoHo in 1976 as a homage to the fine art of taking pen to paper.

"We noticed that drawing was becoming a much more visible medium in contemporary work but there was no dedicated space," says Stout, a curator of contempo-

rary British art at Tate Britain. "This is now the only gallery of its kind in the whole of Europe. Its success is due to genuine interest from artists and audience."

The Drawing Room girls' art-world pedigree means that for their biannual auction they pretty much have the pick of contributors. Three months ago, they sent A4 cartridge paper to a carefully



SEB PATANE

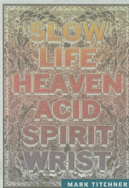


GRAYSON PERRY



MARK WALLINGER

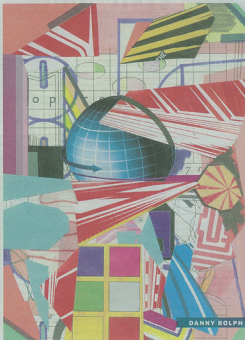
markwallinger.com



MARK TITCHNER



CHARLES AVERY



DANNY ROLPH

selected group of artists and invited each to make one unique work. Unlike many charity auctions, these are not the scraps from the studio floor.

"They take it very seriously and treat it as a work of art," says Stout. "Some artists have said to us that doing these drawings for the auction has started them on a whole new body of work."

This year, there are more than 200 contributors, including George Shaw, one of this year's Turner Prize nominees, as well as big names such as Grayson Perry who contributed an eerie little work in biro, Michael Landy, who did a portrait as himself as a rubbish bin, Mark Titchner who drew New Age slogans, and Seb and Roberta Smith who opted to write

a diatribe against arts cuts. As a new initiative this year, the Drawing Room has asked celebrities and collectors to nominate their favourite drawings.

"Joe Snow really liked Mark Wallinger, Milo Skinner went for Grayson Perry and Glaswegian artist Kate Davis, while Nick Hornby opted for Dexter Dalwood and Leo Fitzmaurice, who did a

drawing of a yellow duster," says Stout.

The 2007 auction involved a brisk bidding war over a Paula Rego drawing, so she may be one to watch for this year. "It's always a very buzzy event," says Stout. "There's always a huge amount of anticipation in the room with people trying to keep up with the bidding as it reaches a

crescendo." And if that sounds a little too dramatic, you can bypass the gallery completely and place your bids in advance of the 18 May online auction from the comfort of your own sofa.

LENA CORNER

The auction is on 18 May. To view all images and to bid go to www.drawingroom.org.uk