

Skull cakes, seaside sculpture and a Renaissance dream team – the week in art

The Notre Dame embarks on a gargoyle-rescue mission, Gormley arrives in Kent and a master provocateur comes to Tate Modern –



Holiday Home by Richard Woods, part of Folkestone Triennial 2017. Photograph: Thierry Bal

Jonathan Jones

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Exhibition of the week

Folkestone Triennial

The contemporary art scene hits the seaside in this admired festival of experimental interventions whose eclectic mix this year ranges from sculptor of found objects Bill Woodrow to Turner prize-nominated Lubaina Himid, among an array that also takes in Emily Peasgood, Amalia Pica, Sinta Tantra and more. Read our review here.

. Folkestone venues from 2 September to 5 November.

Also this week

Nature Morte

Contemporary twists (from twisted contemporaries) on the still life tradition should make this a highly diverting exhibition. Mat Collishaw, Cindy Wright, Nancy Fouts and Gabriel Orozco are among the emblematisers of mortality playing with fruit and bones. Read our report here.

. Guildhall gallery, London, 7 September to 2 April.

Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael around 1500

Am I dreaming? Does that really say the dream team of the three greatest artists of the Renaissance are exhibiting together at the National Gallery? And for free? To call this a display of genius is a simple factual statement.

. National Gallery, London, from 2 September to January.

Bruce Nauman

A scintillating selection of the master provocateur's works from the outstanding Artist Rooms collection. This follow-up to the same team's magical Louise Bourgeois display proves that Artist Rooms truly is the pearl of Tate Modern's free displays.

. Tate Modern, London, until July 2018

Antony Gormley

The renowned sculptor is taking over the Kent seashore - as well as participating in the Folkestone Triennial (above) he has a statue in the salty brine off Margate.

. Turner Contemporary, Margate, until 5 November.

Masterpiece of the week



Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) by Thomas Phillips, 1813. Photograph: Apic/Hulton Archive

George Gordon Byron, 6th Baron Byron (1813) by Thomas Phillips.

The masterpiece here is Byron himself, a living work of art who outraged and fascinated his contemporaries and inspired everything from vampire stories to decadent paintings before the ultimate surprise of his heroic death fighting for Greek independence in 1824. Phillips portrayed him soon after he “woke up famous” (his words) when the first two cantos of *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* were published in 1812. He is wearing the traditional costume of brigands he met in northern Greece, as related in this poem. Byron is the prototype of every icon of modern self-invention from Oscar Wilde to David Bowie - and father of Ada Lovelace, a very early pioneer of the digital age.

National Portrait Gallery, London.

Image of the week



Goat's head illusion cake by Katherine Dey.

Shaking off Bake Off’s twee pinnies-in-paradise image, bakers such as Katherine Dey (above) are using hyperreal cake sculptures of severed limbs, hearts and heads (in lemon drizzle), bowls of ramen and half-eaten trifles with cigarette butts.

What we learned this week

Architect Richard Rogers would think twice about tackling a Pompidou today

Art Detectives are solving mysteries for British galleries

Miranda July has landed a charity shop in Selfridges

One Italian photographer has been getting to grips with memes

Poet Lydia Towsey found life modelling radically changed her body image

Wildlife photography is for the birds

Hyperrealist illusion cakes are works of art

Pink Floyd may beat Bowie as the V&A's most visited music show

Actor Dan Ziskie photographs the drama of the street

Notre Dame wants €100m to save its gargoyles

Palestinian refugees harness the power of photography

Spanish holiday homes get an architectural makeover

Larry Rivers was a master of provocation

The Royal Academy will explore Dalí's explicit urges

Get involved

On 24 September, art scholar Edgar Tjihuis will lead a full-day course on how to write about art and make money from it at Kings Place, London. Book now to secure your place.

Our A-Z of Art series continues - share your art with the theme W for women.

And check out the entries we selected for the theme V for value.

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