THE WESTHOPE GROUP

Freeform 2026

Contemporary lace exhibition catalogue



Forge Mill Needle Museum Redditch

14 October to 22 November 2026

27 works exploring contemporary lace through free form, chance, observation and experimentation.

Dancing Free / Pamela Layzell

The works



01 Rhubarb Leaf Fan

Ann Collier

A weathered rhubarb leaf inspires a fan.

Bobbin lace
Mixed threads, wood
40 × 30 cm

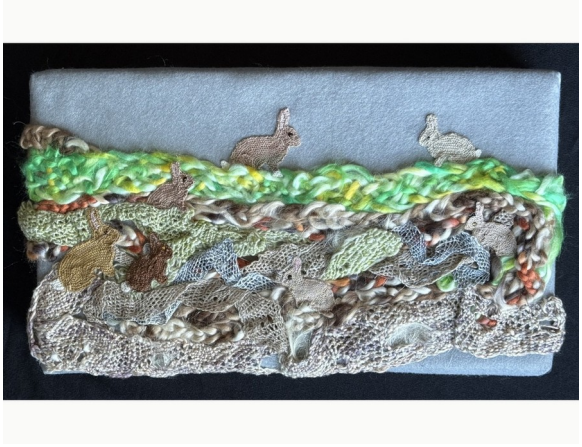


02 Rhubarb leaf variations

Ann Collier

Three further interpretations of a rhubarb leaf.

Bobbin lace
Mixed threads
33 × 29 cm



03 Rabbit Warren

Gil Dye

Seven rabbits inhabit an intricate lace warren.

Needlelace and bobbin lace
Natural and synthetic yarns, including Gil's own hair
24 × 42 × 6 cm



04 Whispers in the Wind

Janet Evans

Painted feather marks suggest windblown grasses.

Bobbin lace
Linen thread
24 × 11 × 11 cm

The works



05 Dancing Free

Pamela Layzell

A dancing figure emerges from its background.

Needlelace
Cotton thread, wire, wooden base
23 × 18 × 13 cm

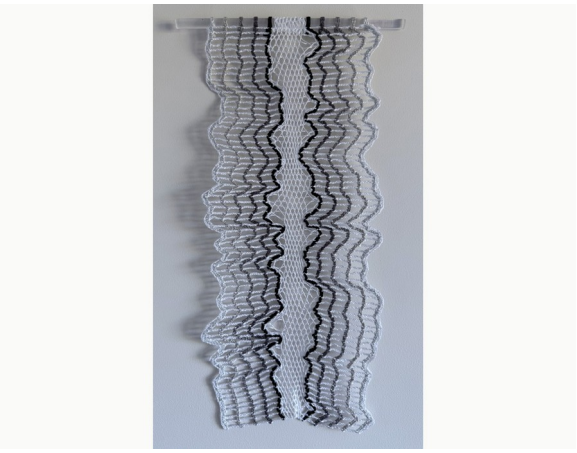


06 Organised Chaos

Pamela Layzell

Closed-eye drawing generates a circular lace design.

Needlelace
Cotton and linen thread, wire
66 × 14 cm



07 Random Waves

Pamela Layzell

Dice-generated curves become a repeating wave pattern.

Bobbin lace
Cotton thread
37 × 16 cm



08 Life Form

Robina Melville

Cell structures inspire freely chosen coloured stitches.

Needlelace
Linen and cotton thread, beads
30 × 30 cm

The works

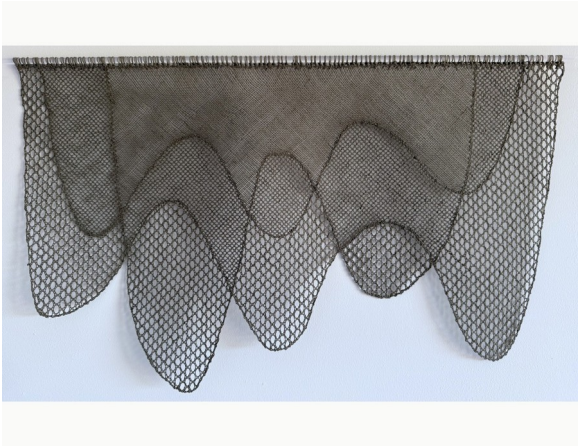


09 Gilded Pathway

Sharon Lidbury

Vegetable contours develop into dimensional metallic curves.

Bobbin lace
Metallic thread and wire
43 × 20 cm



10 Shadows (of a former life)

Pamela Layzell

Hotel towel shadows inspire an ephemeral composition.

Bobbin lace
Linen thread
28 × 46 cm



11 Meander

Pat Brunsdon

Pencil shapes unfold through mirrored repetition.

Bobbin lace
Linen, cotton and miscellaneous synthetic threads
69 × 29 cm



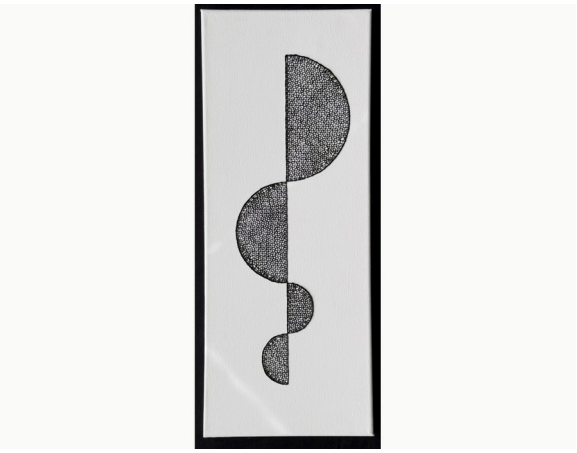
12 Random Memories

Gil Dye

A Möbius strip gathers earlier lace experiments.

Bobbin lace and needlelace
Mixed yarns
90 × 20 cm

The works



13 Balance

Robina Melville

Dice-directed collage shapes underpin this composition.

Bobbin lace
Cotton, linen and synthetic threads
51 × 20 cm



14 Untitled

Alison Tolson

A battlefield photograph prompts experimental lace techniques.

Bobbin lace
Linen thread, textured yarns
24 × 30 cm



15 Grasses

Alison Tolson

Textured grasses cross an enlarged Point Ground.

Bobbin lace
Linen thread, mix of textured yarns
48 × 21 cm



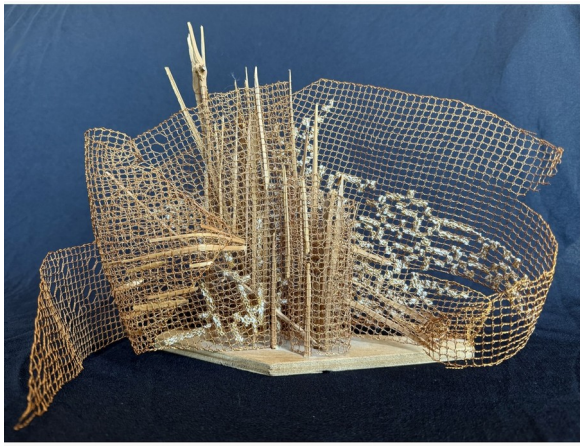
16 Tie for a Dandy

Anne Dyer

An unsuccessful panel becomes an imaginary tie.

Bobbin lace
Weaving cotton, chainette
70 × 32 cm

The works



17 Splinters

Anne Dyer

Woodcarving debris inspires this flowing wire composition.

Bobbin lace and filet
Fine copper wire, wood
27 × 33 × 12 cm



18 Moon Child

Anne Dyer

A secondhand belt becomes a beaded hanging.

Macrame and painting
Belt, thread, beads.
95 × 20 cm



19 Photo Frame

Anne Dyer

Folded paper geometry becomes a sculptural frame.

Bobbin lace
Fine copper wire, weaving cotton
11 × 9 × 6 cm



20 The Anatomy of Stitches

Anne Dyer

Enlarged thread crossings reveal lace stitch structure.

Bobbin lace
Cords made of assorted threads
135 × 45 cm

The works

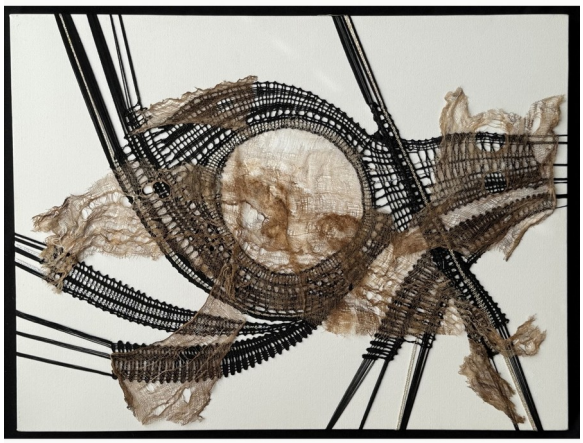


21 Pebble

Janet Evans

A lace photograph becomes a chiffon scarf.

Bobbin lace
Paris chiffon 40gsm (100% polyester)
133 × 31 cm



22 Shrouded Form

Ann Wheeler

Caterpillar webs inspire drawings developed into lace.

Bobbin lace and manipulated scrim
Mixed threads including perle, string and metallic
46 × 61 cm



23 Rannoch Moor

Alison Tolson

A moorland sketch becomes expressive thread drawing.

Bobbin lace
Mainly linen thread
50 × 40 cm



24 Froth

Ann Allison

Improvised overlapping circles form a lace spiral.

Bobbin lace
Various linen, cotton, silk and synthetic yarn, wire
Lace pillow is 61 diameter cm

The works



25 Sunny Hunny

Janet Evans

A beach stone inspires a freestanding form.

Bobbin lace
Linen thread
13 × 20 × 20 cm



26 Scrunching

Ann Wheeler

Flattened crumpled paper supplies lines for lace.

Bobbin lace and needlelace
Mixed threads including perle, wool and paper
113 × 36 cm



27 Triform

Ann Wheeler

Three-colour printed papers generate this assembled form.

Bobbin lace and needlelace
Cotton perle thread
59 × 12 cm

The designers

Eleven exhibiting members of The Westhope Group

Ann Allison

A bobbin lace maker, designer and tutor since 1980. Her practice has developed from traditional lace into bold structures, including self-supporting copper wire work.

Pat Brunsdon

Making lace since 1965, Pat explores colour, texture and freestanding forms while retaining recognisable lace techniques. She joined the Westhope Group in 2017.

Ann Collier

A lacemaker since 1976, Ann specialises in experimental fans. An international teacher and author of seven books, she has chaired the Lace Guild and led OIDFA.

Gil Dye

A founder member, teacher and author based in Newcastle. Gil combines contemporary experimentation with research into early bobbin lace, particularly sixteenth and seventeenth century examples.

Anne Dyer

A founder member who hosted the group at her Shropshire craft college. Anne began lace in 1962 and enjoys challenging techniques through playful experimentation.

Janet Evans

Janet began lacemaking in 1990 and teaches in Essex. Czech design study, mixed media and three dimensional forms inform her practice and collaborative design workshops.

Pamela Layzell

Based in East Sussex, Pamela works in bobbin lace and needlelace. Her mathematical background informs experiments with scale, repetition, unusual grids and three dimensional structures.

Sharon Lidbury

A Surrey lacemaker and teacher who began in 1981. Sharon combines English and Milanese lace experience with Czech design methods and co-organises lace design courses.

Robina Melville

An Edinburgh-area lacemaker with a particular love of needlelace. Colour, texture and concern for the natural world shape her work. She joined the group in 2012.

Alison Tolson

A Scotland-based designer who learned bobbin lace at school. Nature, drawing, painting and Czech lace study inform her experiments with enlarged traditional techniques and varied threads.

Ann Wheeler

A Winchester textile artist, tutor and founder member. Ann encourages experimental lacemaking and develops large scale contemporary work through observation, research and sketchbook studies.

Sources and image credits

Images and exhibition information from The Westhope Group. Descriptions and biographies summarised from the exhibition and member pages. Dimensions are height × width × depth unless stated otherwise.

www.westhopegroup.org.uk/freeform-2026

www.westhopegroup.org.uk/members

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