Public Art Walk  Southampton Old Town

Starting at God’s House Tower head along Back of the Walls, the footpath should lead up to Briton Street with the Old Town Walls along your right hand side. Just before Briton Street, on the left, is a ceramic Mural (1) on the side of Friary House by John Hodgsson. Made in 1987 the work depicts the history of a Friary that once stood close by.

Follow the route of the old town walls as denoted in the change in road surface by crossing Briton Street, continue a few yards and down an alley way on the left, exotically named Oriental Terrace, (click here to see how it looked in 1935) where are a set of black kettle like sculptures (2). Retrace your steps and continue along Back of the Walls. You will soon see one of ‘a space’ arts’ major public art commissions from recent years. The 30 meter long steel cut out (3) is inspired by the town walls which lend their name to the street. Also of interest is a small fig tree which must have self seeded behind the fruit merchants, P&R Produce. Across the road on Queensway is another ‘a space’ public art commission from 2014 by artist Chris Jenkins (4), a set of three steel cut out gates that map parts of the Old Town.

Make your way to the nearby Holyrood Estate. A brick relief planter (5) by former Arches Studios resident Andrew MacCallum stands near to a steel sculpture on a pole by Bill and Peach Shaw (6), this is one of a set of five similar steel sculptures in the Estate. Also among these there’s also a number of tiled murals (7) by artist Anna Vickers in the entrances to the blocks of flats. At the far end of the Estate is the location of a new development at East Street where ‘a space’ is currently working on a huge mural by another former Arches resident, Ian Kirkpatrick.

Cross Queensway and head to Back of the Walls, at Jane Austen House there’s another artwork by Anna Vickers, this time a metal cut-out fence (8). Further up the road from here is another commission by ‘a space’ arts, this time a subtle brick relief scultpure (9) by current Arches resident Chris Cudlip.

Wander over to Castle Way where K6 Gallery (10), which uses a pair of phone boxes as an exhibition space, is currently showing work by RIPE artist Bryn Lloyd. Finally on nearby Hamtun Street is a mural by Henry and Joyce Collins (11), the mural was originally located by Sainsbury’s in Lordshill (1978) and was relocated to it’s present site in 2010.

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