#### **BURNS HOUSE MUSEUM**

# The Welcome Table by Timorous Beasties



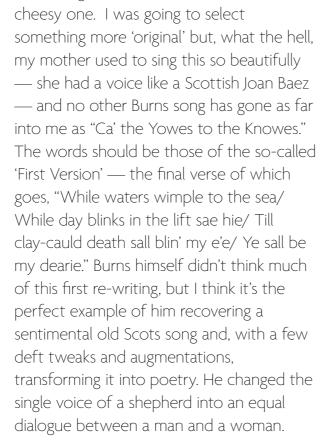
The influence of Robert Burns' work has spanned the centuries and crossed generations. In 2009 East Ayrshire marked the 250th anniversary of the poet's birth with two major exhibitions, *Creative Burns*, at the Dick Institute in Kilmarnock. An important aspect of *Creative Burns* was the commission of new work by four contemporary artists exploring the impact of Robert Burns' legacy on their own practice.

Timorous Beasties are a Glasgow based fabric and interior design company who produced *The Welcome Table*. The company name is taken from the first line of the Burns' poem *To a Mouse*. *The Welcome Table* references many aspects of Burns' life, work and legacy. To create a starting point for the table-ware imagery fourteen 'weel-kent' faces from Scotland's vibrant cultural sector were asked to share their favourite Burns poem and comment on its significance to them.

## Alex Linklater Freelance Writer

Ca' the Yowes to the Knowes

"This is maybe me confessing to the



The kailyard sentiment remains, but now charged with a real erotic exchange, sudden plunges of emotional depth (carried chokingly by the tune), and the one thing to be said about love that bears repeating, which is that it is pledged against death. If you can stomach the cultural cringe, it's also got one of the best group-singing choruses in the Burns oeuvre."

Paul Simmons Co-Founder of Timorous Beasties

Green Grow the Rashes, O



Andrew O'Hagan Author

#### Love and Liberty

"The poem I choose is 'Love and Liberty', sometimes

called 'The Jolly Beggars'. Song and drink and a quantity of food are good for starters, but liberty is the glorious feast. In company a man might find his voice, which is one of the meanings of democracy, as taught by Robert Burns. He is a poet who kept no school and dwelt in no academy, yet he tutored his fellows into life from his seat in a rowdy pub. Let's praise his consuming spirit."

# Liz Lochhead Poet Holy Willie's

Holy Willie's Prayer

"It is impossible to pick the Burns poem which means

most to me, as, like all great poets he speaks at different times to all our different moods and parts. But I decided to pick Holy Willie's Prayer, above even my favourite love song, Mary Morrison or the eternal favourite Tam O Shanter. Why? Because it is a dramatic monologue of absolute genius which so perfectly and so comically captures the voice of a real squirming individual. It's the LIFE in it, the way it actually goes far beyond Burns' undoubted anger and scorn for hypocrisy."





**Jacqueline Farrell** 

the beautiful description of the area where I lived, sweet flowerets.

whistling blackbirds and a murmuring stream. It made Cumnock and the surrounding areas sound that wee bit more romantic! I came to it again as an adult and I realised how full of love it was. His love for Mary is so strong and his final line 'Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream' paints a lovely tender image."

Stuart
Cosgrove
Channel 4
Journalist and
Broadcaster

#### Pretty Peg

"It's a poem about the power of memory. Everyone has a

moment in their life that is burned into their mind through their heart, it can be love for a place or a person or an experience that stays with them forever and even when their memory begins to fade can never be erased."

BURNS HOUSE MUSEUM
CASTLE STREET | MAUCHLINE | KA5 5BZ
T: 01290 550045



eastayrshireleisure.com

(no commentary given by contributor)

# **Kirsty Wark BBC Television Journalist**

#### Halloween

"I like this poem because it evokes memories of my childhood in Ayrshire when Halloween was such an exciting night and we would go guising from door to door."



A Man's A Man For A' That

"From when I heard it sang by my friend Kenny MacKay at one of our studio Burns Suppers it came across as such a beautiful call for equality and recognition of what is important in people. It's also a belter of a song."



# **Hardeep Singh** Kohli Writer, presenter and comedian

Such a Parcel of Rogues in a **Nation** 



But pith find power till my last hour I'll mak this declaration We're bought and sold for English gold Such a parcel o' rogues in a nation.

"Some people write Burns off as merely a romantic poet and a songsmith but work like Such a Parcel of Rogues in a Nation shows Burns to be passionately political when it comes to the constitutional future of the Scottish nation. Scotland and the Scots seem to historically blame the English for everything. Burns manages to rise above such petty politics to see the whole issue in context. He blames the Scots for selling their ain folk out; and the price was paid in English gold. This searing political insight was some two hundred years ahead of its time. Scotland's destiny rests in Scotland's hands."

James L **Hempstead Author of** 'Robert Burns Cronies. Colleagues and **Contemporaries:** A Comprehensive Book on Those Who Influenced the Life of Robert Burns the Bard of Scotland'

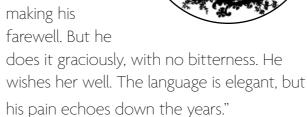
Ye Banks and Braes

(no commentary given by contributor)

# **Edwyn Collins** Musician

#### Ae Fond Kiss

"This is a broken hearted man. making his farewell. But he



# Roderick **Buchanan** Artist

#### Death and Doctor Hornbook

"I was always fascinated with the personification of 'Death' and the protagonist's willingness to draw a knife on this guy that was 'Lang Scotch ells twa' (whatever that meant). I was always getting chased at school and fantasized about sticking up for myself. Anyway, the last couplet sums up my whole view of the universe really, you can substitute 'Life' for 'Death' at the moment and go back to the original when I'm dead."



# John Hutcheson Taxi Driver and **Burns Enthusiast**

#### Tam O' Shanter

"My choice of Burns poetry would be Tam O'Shanter. It is

such a vivid, descriptive poem that the characters in it come to life. It takes you through the full gamut of emotions. It's funny, scary, satirical, gentle. It is Burns' masterpiece."

## **Grant Morrison Comic Writer**

#### To a Mouse

"This was the first poem that I memorised when I was a child; in fact it was my party piece. However I can't remember any of it now."



