HOSPITALFIELD

For the opening of Hospitalfield's new Garden Café as part of the launch of Phase One of the Future Plan in summer 2021, Hospitalfield commissioned artist Mick Peter to create the tables bespoke for the Café.

Now forming a part of our collection, there are twenty tables, each with an individual design embedded into them based on the collections here at Hospitalfield. To make the tables, Mick worked with Furniture designers Three Four Five furniture to make the tables to be situated within the new glass house Café designed by Caruso St John.

We asked Mick to explain some of the decisions and inspiration that led to the tables:

Hospitalfield: What is the inspiration behind the images on the tables and how did you choose them?

Mick Peter: The tables grew out of a discussion of the process for the sculpture commission I've been working on at Hospitalfield - essentially using a material that is associated with architectural applications. When I'd shown how images could be inlaid into the material Hospitalfield's Director Lucy Byatt was keen on a commission for the new café. I knew the building and the collection quite well so it was clear there would be lots of potential for visual references which come directly from Hospitalfield.

I've often looked towards graphic design and illustration for inspiration and for a long time I've admired Derek Birdsall's work for Penguin. He did a series of covers (24 in all) for Somerset Maugham that used photos taken by Harri Peccionotti in 1971. Their idea was to make all the covers from one collection of objects so that when put side by side the images would align. For the tables I wanted to do something similar with objects from the collection where these points of alignment were a bit more subtle. Nonetheless in laying the tables out, people would find moments of visual correspondence that would be amusing and interesting while they were eating their lunch or drinking tea.

H: How did you draw the images into the table?

MP: I used reference photos as well as images and scans of my own. I wanted to include objects from the collection as well as objects that reference the garden. There's also an image of one of my own sketchbooks and drawing tools for a lightly rhetorical gesture. I scanned my drawings and made files that could be extruded and used on a CNC machine to engrave the images into the surface. The line work was then filled and polished back.

H: What are the tables made from?

MP: They're made from a composite material called Hi-Macs. They're mounted on a powder coated stainless steel frame. Everything is custom made.