

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR... DAVID GARRATT

Sheffield-based artist David Garratt sent personal letters to 1,000 famous British faces. Their replies are displayed in his solo show, *Oh, Isn't Celebrity A Terrible Thing, Thank God*.

What is the idea behind your exhibition?

I started by writing a letter to Shane Richie, and went on a big tirade about how my art education was failing me. He was the first name that came up on Google, and about a year later I got a signed photograph back with a generic signature. The idea was I'd try a bit of reverse psychology on the celebrities and send my own signed photo in the hope that they'd elaborate on their letters.

Were the results as you hoped? Yes, it's been quite effective. I've had a lot of replies thanking me for my autograph, and personalised letters from Rolf Harris and Brian Blessed. Terry Wogan sent me one of his old jumpers and Antony Worrall Thompson sent me a cookbook.



Did any stars refuse to play along?

Some celebrities get the joke more than others. I got a lot of responses back from comedians and I've had a 90 per cent success rate from BBC news readers.

The second part to your exhibition is *The Gospel According To Jeremy Kyle*. What's that?

I've collected sayings from Jeremy Kyle shows – things like "You don't have the word victim written on your forehead, you have the word survivor". I've got postcards that people can take and create their own public gospel according to Jeremy Kyle, and I've created watercolours based on his sayings.

Does your art always comment on fame?

I've always been drawn to the entertainment angle of art. I think celebrity culture will always be my preoccupation.

Amanda Trickett
Today until Jan 25, *Persistence Works*,
21 Brown Street, Sheffield,
Mon to Wed and Fri 10am to 5pm,
Thu 10.45am to 5pm, free.
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