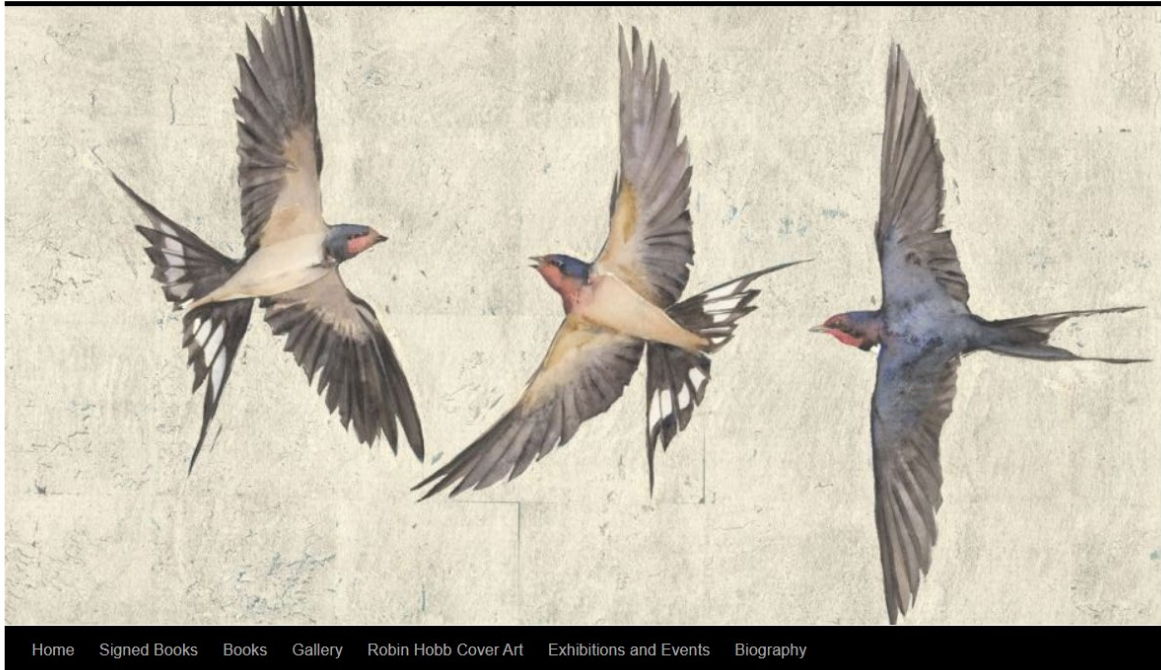


## Jackie Morris Artist

*The balance of life as an artist and writer living and working in Wales: or, how to ignore housework.*

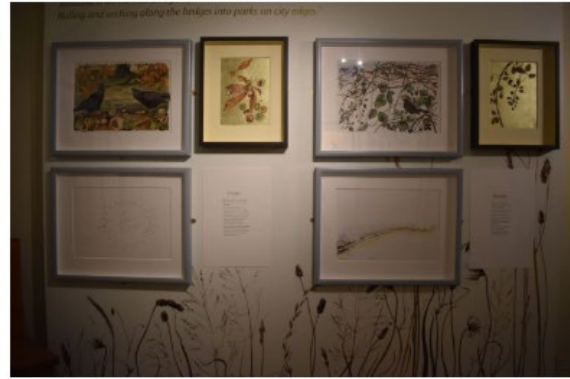


## A Week in the Woods

Posted on [January 27, 2019](#) by [Jackie](#)

The Lost Words exhibition has now moved and re-invented itself in the glorious setting of [Nyman's Gardens](#). Last weekend I travelled across England and Wales to sit in the gallery and paint and talk and sign books and goodness me but it was busy. I'd taken work with me to do in the lulls, and on Saturday I managed between signing to gild a raven, but Sunday.... wow. It was so busy.





The Gardens are beautiful, and Robin and I were hosted by the trust in their Woodman's Cottage, for the period of my working there. When I looked at it online I decided that what I really needed was a holiday, so we added 4 days on to our stay, and then, as ever, work piled on, so I took it with me, and worked in the cottage.



When I booked the extra days the lady taking the booking warned me. "It's down a narrow lane, with ditches on either side, a mile or so from the nearest neighbours and there's no street lighting. If you are of a nervous disposition," she said, "we suggest you choose another property."

What we found was the most perfect little house in the woods, the kind of place, where, if, say, there was going to be a lunar eclipse, it might be a great place to stay. How perfect, as I woke in the night before the eclipse began and the ground was so frosted it seemed to glow in the full moon light. And then, waking again at 5.10 am the world was dark, blood moon dulled by the shadow of the earth. Perfect.

And more perfect still was the remnant of [Rapture](#), an installation by Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva. Chloe, the ranger, took me to where she lies in the wood, covered in gold leaf, a curious creature, a magnet for the imagination.





How very perfect, wild, strange, coincidental.

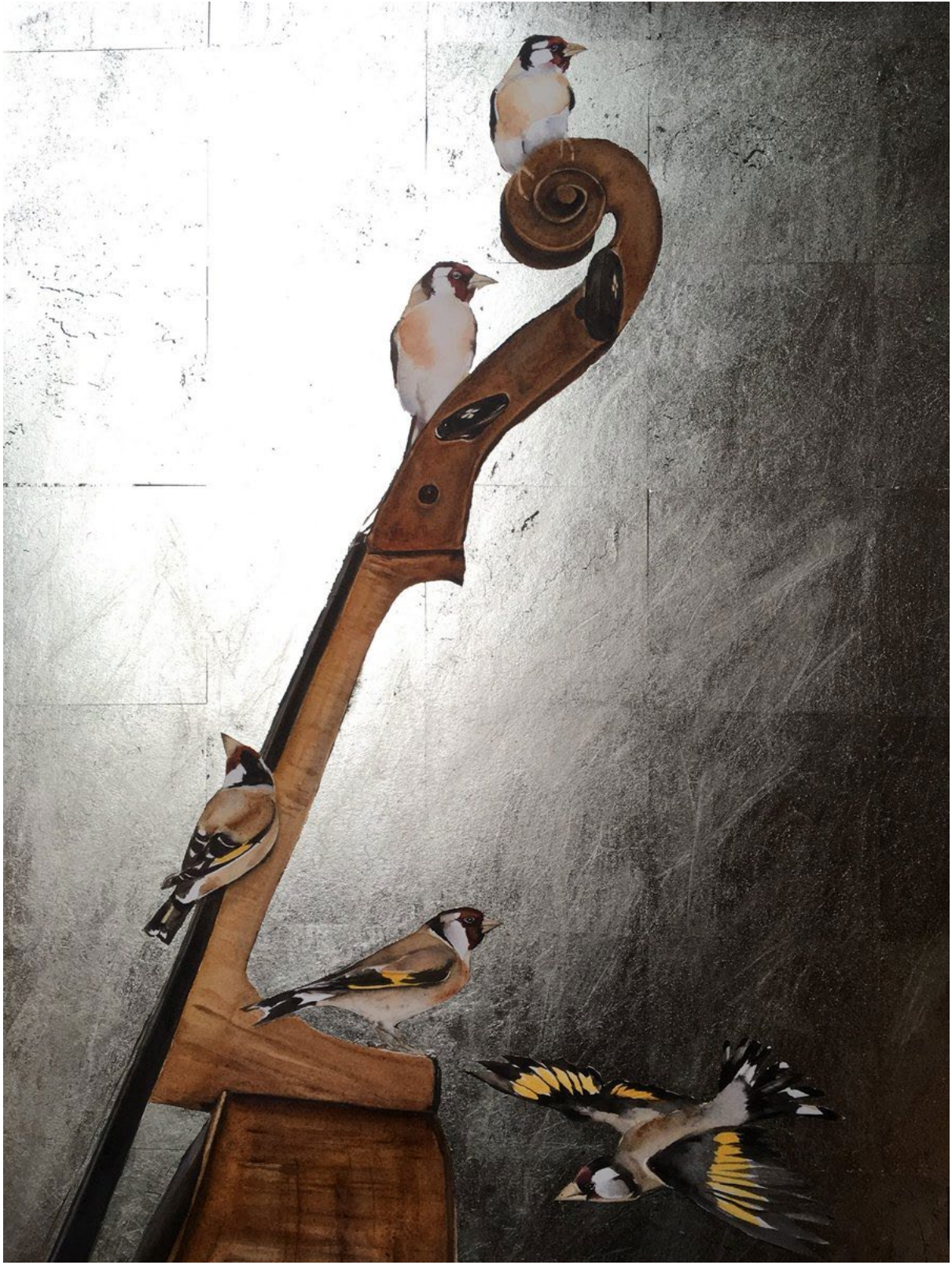
I worked away, Robin and I walked the woods. He had bought me a birdfeeder which will travel with us and while we were there I saw bluetits, great tits, woodpeckers ( greater spotted), a nuthatch or two, treecreepers, coaltits. Also a heron, and the flash of a fisher.

Somehow I made a chaos of the table, but managed also to gild a raven, paint a guitar and wren ( Karine Polwart), a cello and a charm ( Beth Porter) and make a mess of gilding a kora and an osprey, tangle up strings, and rather than throw away and start again, discover that somehow the melding of bird and instrument, and the mix of golds works.













And, I have the gold soul of a wren.....



and I left a small stone on solid water....



And the gardens are utterly beautiful and the house reminds me of Rebecca by Daphne Dumaourier. In the evening light, even the house seemed to be gilded.





Home now, and good to be back with hounds and cats and the sea and the call of the ravens. Listening to the rough cut recorded tracks of the Spellsongs and working on their images, back in the chaos of my studio.