



# ART APPRECIATION NETWORK

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Dear Friends,

I feel confident in addressing you as friends as I have had so many letters, e-mails and telephone calls following my introductory letter. Thank you all for your good wishes and support. Mentioning thanks prompts me to pass on a message from Audrey who asks me to acknowledge with her gratitude all the kind wishes she has received. I would like to add my congratulations to her - I joined the Network from its very early days and had much pleasure and accumulated extra knowledge from her output. Enjoy your retirement, Audrey!

I should also thank the staff in the National office for constant support to a newcomer; between us we will try and keep you all informed on what's happening in the Art world. Lin Jonas has helped us acquire a copy of the Museums & Galleries Year Book so if there is anything you would like to know about collections in just about any gallery in the country - give me a call. Another important corner of support comes from Elizabeth Gibson in the Resource Centre. Elizabeth would like you to know that there is a new version of the Art list available from her at the Centre. It occurs to me to explain that I keep the database of members and prepare the Newsletter for the National office to print and despatch. Please let me know if any mailing address needs correction or up-dating.

To move on to more light-hearted matters, I would like to pass on a note I received from the Hitchin members telling me that discussing favourite pieces of art ended with one member trying hard to extol the virtues of Rothco. That I can understand! Since I mentioned the look-alike Sistine Chapel ceiling, I have had requests for its precise location and a Brighton member sent a newspaper cutting about the honour awarded to the artist, Gary Bevans. One other comment I must share with you - I attended a Region seminar with a friend, Pam, who is in my Art History group. One matter seemed to bring gloom from all quarters until Pam got up and said "Are we not forgetting that learning is fun?" That brightened things up.

Another letter from a member asked for more reviews on exhibitions - you will see that this News contains quite a lot of information on displays - please keep your comments coming: I will print them. I was also intrigued to learn how members look at Art and its history. The general consensus seems to focus on how much one can learn from history of almost anything - architecture to zoology. I named my syllabus - "Art History - Looking at Paintings" and was thrilled when one new member commented that she now felt she could look at a painting and really see it.

It seems that some groups plan their study more freely, studying schools, themes, 'isms, individual artists and using videos, Power-point presentations and gallery visits. I started with my groups looking at painters - with a trademark - in Europe and then branched out into developments and comparisons, with special meetings for high days and holidays. We even took part in a groups' presentation for U3A in Ludlow devising a storyline from picture titles on two occasions.

<b>Future issues (if the Fates allow)</b>			
Winter - January:	Spring - April:	Summer - July:	Autumn - October

## **Exhibitions to come**

**Picturing Britain - Paul Sandby** Castle Museum/Art Gallery, Nottingham until 18.10.09,  
NG, Edinburgh 7.11.09-7.02.10, RA London, 13.03.10-13.06.10

**Wild Thing: Epstein, Gaudier-Brzeska & Gill** RA London. 24.10.09-24.01.10

**Durer to Spencer** Barber Institute until 25.10.09

**Anish Kapoor** Royal Academy, London until 11.12.09

**Georgian Portraits** Compton Verney until 13.12.09 *see right*

**Van Gogh - The Artist and His Letters** RA London, 23.01.10-18.04.10

**Henry VIII - 500th Anniversary** Windsor Castle until 18.04.10



## **Exhibitions farther afield**

**Venice Biennale** Giardini/Arsenale until 22.11.09  
**At the Russian Court** Hermitage, Amsterdam until 31.01.10

### **The Unusual**

Alison Burt and Hazel Vellacott are the artists in residence in Newhailes House in Musselburgh, home to an extraordinary collection.

## **Acquisitions**

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. **Titian - Triumph of Love** this can be seen at the newly renovated museum opening in November 2009

Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. **Philip W Steer - A View of Barnard Castle**

Cartwright Hall, Bradford. **Paula Rego - The Guardians**

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. **Whistler - The Beggars** *see right*

Fry Art Gallery, Saffron Walden. **Ravilious - Demonstrating a Machine Gun**

John Creasey Museum, Salisbury. **Frank Auerbach - Ruth.**

National Museum, Cardiff. **Burne-Jones - Perseus & the Graiae**

Tate, London **Rubens - Sketch for the Banqueting House Ceiling**



## **My Picture of the Moment**



## **Brain-teaser No 1**

A Breton Girl - Henri Guinier

Who Said?

"I understand what I paint"

"I paint what I understand"

## Exhibitions visited With my thanks to John Busbridge

### **Fatal Attraction** at Compton Verney, (March - May 2009)

Inspired by the publicity surrounding Titian's *Diana & Actaeon*, the entrance had a most impressive reproduction of the Titian on 2 gauze curtains. Other displays of the same title included a small Jan Bruegel the Elder, two Rococo versions from De Troy and Natoire and a rather disappointing Veronese. Also on show were two well known Eddy's, *Candaules & Gyges* and *Musidora*, Degas' bronze *Le Tub*, a Giambologna *Nymph & Satyr* and the gallery's own Cranach, *Venus & Cupid*. A variety of prints of Rembrandt, Durer, Picasso, Nolde, Beckmann and Schiele were on show. Additional third rate pieces rather brought the display down to the commonplace.

### **Baroque** at the V & A (April-July, 2009)

The paintings and prints were all well presented, supported by short excellent videos, for me, one of the most memorable pieces was Tiepolo's *Immaculate Conception* from Aranjuez - (there is a small oil sketch in the Courtauld) - the exhibition had a spectacular finish: a recreation of a Portuguese Church sanctuary with its furnishings, vestments and sacred vessels, a huge altarpiece from Mexico and a polyptych with a 3-dimensional *Virgin of Sorrows*. Beautifully presented, worth a couple of hours of anyone's time, although despite the magnificent show, one could sense the social revolution on the horizon.

### **Futurism** at Tate Modern, (June - August, 2009)

Centred on the Italians, this had an unexpected coverage - Boccioni, Carra, Balla and Severini were well represented with some minor painters. The interest in portraying energy and speed in urban life in the early C20th was shared by the Orphists - such as the Delaunays - and the Italians influenced the early Cubists. Braque, Picasso and Leger represented the Cubists, Malevich, Larionov, with Popova, Goncharova Exter and Rozanova showed the Russian example and English Vorticists, Wyndham Lewis, Nevinson and Bomberg rounded off the display. Well positioned for visual effect, there were plenty of spaces between pictures - a comfortable not-too-large show.

### **Alexander Calder** at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, (March-July, 2009)

Calder spent 7 years in Paris developing "drawing in space" before his career blossomed in America. His sculptures using recycled materials were imaginatively displayed under clever lighting. The show was a delight, enjoyed seemingly by many of the primary school children in the city!

### **Kandinsky** also at the Centre Pompidou, (April - August, 2009)

This enormous exhibition of some 150 paintings, watercolours & drawings covered his long career and extraordinary development depicting colour-saturated scenes of Russian peasant life, the Munich years of the Blaue Reiter, Berlion and the Bauhaus and the formal canvasses in his final decade in France. Quite awe-inspiring!

Matisse's painting "Le Bateau" was displayed to an estimated 116,000 visitors in the New York Museum of Modern Art, some time ago. The artist's son then noticed the painting was hung upside down.....

#### **Compton Verney held a survey on visitors favourites**

Art movement - *Impressionism* Style of art, in order - *Painting, Sculpture, Drawing*  
Favourite artists, in order - *Turner, Monet, Van Gogh, Cezanne.*

The EAC Over 60s Art Awards are holding their 13th annual competition for amateur artists. The closing date for entries is 26 October and there will be a display of the finalists' work at the Bankside Gallery in London in the first week of December.

Categories include: Landscape, Seascape, Still Life, Portrait, Drawing, all in any medium  
For full details & entry form, visit [www.eacartawards.org.uk](http://www.eacartawards.org.uk) OR e-mail: [marg.millington@eac.org.uk](mailto:marg.millington@eac.org.uk)



Picasso bought the C14th chateau on the slopes of Mont St Victoire, (beloved by Cezanne) and was buried in its grounds. His daughter, Catherine, has opened the chateau to the public.

**What is the value of Art?** A question raised at a recent seminar elicited these comments:  
Pictures didn't often make sense but good story-telling could unlock them, if there was any sense  
**And:** There's not enough joie de vivre about experiencing art - there's still too much reverence!  
Your comments will be welcome!

## **My thanks to Mary & Douglas Russell for the following report**

On 2 July members of the Chichester Art Groups visited Pallant House Gallery. Many members had not seen the new extension, added in 2006 since our first visit but this Gallery of Modern Art in the South is a unique combination of a Queen Anne townhouse and a contemporary building holding one of the best collections of C20th British art in the world.

Refreshments were available on arrival and then, divided into small groups each with a guide, we enjoyed a tour and talk on the 'Highlights of the Collection.' In 1955 Bishop George Bell offered the position of Dean of Chichester Cathedral to Walter Hussey. Before coming to Chichester, the Bishop, an advocate of modern church art, had commissioned Henry Moore's Madonna and Child for his Northampton church as a beginning and continued to add to his collection. On his retirement in 1977, he gave his art collection to Chichester District Council on condition that Pallant House was restored to house it. The new gallery opened in 1982 presenting Modern British art in an historic setting. Other collectors - Charles Kearley, Doreen Lucas, Geoffrey Freeman and Colin St. John Wilson also bequeathed their collections.

During our visit we were able to see works by artists including Peter Blake, Edward Burra, Jacob Epstein, Lucien Freud, Eric Gill, Duncan Grant, Barbara Hepworth, Augustus John, John Nash, Paul Nash, John Piper, Walter Sickert, Mathew Smith, Stanley Spencer, Graham Sutherland and Pablo Picasso. The new buildings certainly were needed to show off these works of art!

A temporary exhibition of works by the Scottish Colourists was an added attraction. These works from the Fleming Collection were being shown in England for the first time - Peploe, Cadell, Hunter and Fergusson were key players in introducing modern art into Britain - the work combined a knowledge of contemporary French art with the painting traditions of Scotland. Time in Paris and the south of France integrated well with portraits, still lifes and Scottish landscapes. To add to our day, the garden at Pallant House offered a beautiful shady refreshment area - most welcome on a hot day. There was even a sculpture exhibition arranged in the Cathedral. The tour and the talk had proved most interesting, it had been a good learning experience in a remarkable setting: a most enjoyable day out.

*Editor's note: I hope others in the area will be able to take the chance to see what sounds to be a fascinating and extensive display of the work of some of our most illustrious painters.*

Reading the above report set me thinking on the development of art through the ages. I had attended the last morning of Audrey's seminar and was most impressed by her presentation with its depth on modern pictures - it was good to meet other U3A members and I was grateful for the opportunity of joining in Audrey's scholarly session. Their meticulous attention to detail, covering a wealth of movements and styles, the C20th artists certainly give us food for thought, as illustrated by Audrey.

On my way home, I mulled over the developments from Byzantine mosaics going on to serene religious art eventually leading into Mannerism when the artist wanted to show more human facets. European artists moved into portraits, history, landscapes and still life, themselves becoming trained artists from their early beginnings as artisan apprentices. However, the big change became inevitable when photography was invented and the artists moved into different spheres where they showed their thoughts, ideas, fears and hopes in ways which are sometimes very difficult to understand or appreciate. I think of the desolation shown by war artists or the turmoil in Van Gogh's work and turn quickly to scenes with more relaxed viewing; I do, however, like his *Blute-Fin Windmill in Montmartre* with its iridescent light. But then, those are my own thoughts - perhaps you will put pen to paper and let me have your comments?

I look forward to our next exchange of ideas -

**Olwen**