

Presidents' Newsletter Report

Hello again and welcome to our summer edition marking the end of our indoor season and we look forward to some great outdoor painting opportunities.

The AGM saw us reflecting on another successful season with a very welcome trend toward members working together and learning from each other. Although we do not profess to teach art, our workshop sessions and members presentations are good opportunities to pick up tips and maybe learn new techniques. This was certainly evident in Barbara Goodhalls' excellent workshop on experimental art, leaving our comfort zone to put aside our brushes and other traditional materials to take up sticks, palette knives and Indian ink working into impasto acrylic ground. I found this a great way to try something new which otherwise we would not have considered. This also highlights the wealth of talent we have within the Society which may be going undiscovered and whilst we should continue to bring in the best demonstrators and workshop leaders on the circuit we should also look a little closer to home. I would certainly invite any members to come forward with ideas or techniques that they would like to share with members and I am sure this can be considered for the syllabus, building on the continuing success of members work together. This was particularly true of the life drawing day where those not usually able to go could try this activity with support from regular attendees.

More and more is appearing on social media about people who regularly benefit from sharing creative pursuits. Societies like ours have been promoting the benefits for years.

At my workplace we recently held a themed week to support and raise awareness of colleagues who at some point in their lives suffered from mental health or anxiety issues. One of the top tips to alleviate symptoms is to do something creative, either painting, baking, getting back to nature by going for a walk, listening to music or just talking to someone and sharing your experiences. All a part of what we seek to offer and promote. There are some great new books about art therapy and its' many benefits and one in particular advises to join your local art group. I rest my case, we've been saying this for years.

I mentioned last time that art gives you a hobby for life and I am a great supporter of art as lifelong learning even if it is not for your living. A lot has been said recently about the pressure of SATS on school children. Amy has just completed hers and although core subjects will always be important in the job hunt we should also promote creative development too.

It seems we are good at training kids how to work. We should also teach them how to relax too and be well rounded individuals with a wide ranges of interests. This would also benefit those who are maybe not so academic but still have a lot to give. I am glad to see the voices are growing against the side lining of creative subjects in schools. If art is seen as a good stress reliever when we are working maybe we should try to stop the issue in the first place and encourage kids to paint more. It is sad there is no SAT for art.

It is good to know that Societies like ours have a role to play in helping people grow their interests. We love to welcome new people to new roles to widen their own scope within the society. I am very happy to welcome John Steadman and Rachel Sykes to Council and welcome the input of Laura Davies and Judy Hinchcliffe to Linda's growing band of exhibition helpers. In this area there are a few changes to come with an afternoon opening and more interaction with visitors with more group presence at the gallery with art workshops and talks, building on the success of last year's venture. We also have a new approach from Murray Forrest at Lawrence Batley Theatre who is planning a joint show at the theatre with Dewsbury Art Group. The dates are July 15th to September 3rd with each member asked to make an individual submission of up to three works where at least one will be chosen. The details are still sketchy at the moment but as soon as I hear more I will be contacting members.

With the hope of good weather we invite members to join the outdoor painting days so ably arranged by David Whiting. These are really good get-togethers in the summer. It can be daunting going out to paint alone these days. Our art society gives you the opportunity to work with fellow members enjoying the fresh air and maybe a picnic or lunch at a local pub. David is also well underway with plans for the new syllabus. He is separating the Christmas meal from the gallery visit. Next year's visit will feature the fifth anniversary of the Hepworth at Wakefield. This will also give the opportunity for new roles for interested members.

In summary the continuing theme is sharing experiences and growing together. It's no fun painting in pure isolation, we need to share our art and it continues to be proven that art makes people happy and brightens our environment. It is this growing feeling of togetherness that promises a great future for our Society.

Have a lovely creative summer.

Matthew Evans

A DEMONSTRATION

Paul Talbot-Greaves 'Landscape in Acrylic with Light and Dark Contrast' 9. 4. 2016

The meeting opened with two excellent member's presentations from John Macfarlan with his marine inspired works and Michael Heseltine with his highly textured semi-abstract and often mono-chrome landscape paintings. Both themes fitted well with the demonstration that was to come.

The main demonstration was well attended and as usual Paul came well equipped with the high tech visual display which has become one of his trademarks and has been adopted by several art societies locally. Paul works on a side table with his painting surface at a slight angle but uses a video camera and large screen to give the audience the best possible view as the work develops. As he works in semi-darkness with a spotlight on the work surface it does give added drama to his 'performance' in a similar way to a music concert and gives a whole new meaning to the term 'mixing desk', this time for paint rather than for sound.

Paul is a professional landscape painter based in Halifax and has been teaching and demonstrating watercolour and acrylic for eighteen years, he is also a regular choice as a selector for local societies. Paul is a Companion of the International Guild of Artists, an Associate of the British Watercolour Society and a Professional Associate and Advisory Panelist of the SAA. He writes regular articles for The Artist magazine and has produced four practical art books. As he worked Paul showed his wealth of knowledge for his medium, even down to it's chemical make up and how this effects it's use. The advice was to use acrylic medium rather than water to thin the paint as this increase adhesion and keeps the colours fresh and vibrant. He uses large, chunky brushes for a bold effect and each demonstration piece is only done once. The subject was a landscape scene built up over several layers working from transparent to opaque. This subject was a good way for Paul to demonstrate his love and understanding of texture, colour, shape and pattern and the strength achieved from abstract qualities even in a realist approach. At the end of the meeting members were able to ask questions and view the finished work on the table. There was also a range of art materials to purchase for those who had been inspired to have a go themselves.



Matthew Evans

WORKSHOP REVIEW

'Members' Own Work' with Barbara Goodall, 23.4.16

It was great to see so many members at our second 'Members' Own' meeting one.

A delightful time was had by the members who came along to 'have a go' at the method introduced by Barbara, the only definite rule being 'no brushes'. Barbara showed us how she starts by drawing lines, using a thin wooden skewer, maybe suggesting a shape such as a tree, with Indian ink, on to a board. She then adds some white acrylic paint with a palette knife, putting texture and movement to start to build up original, often unexpected images. She showed us how easy it is to remove unwanted results and go over the painting until a satisfactory picture is achieved. Everyone became totally absorbed in the activity, and most people agreed with Barbara that the freedom of expression, without the constraints of detail and accuracy was truly liberating! Many members created images of trees, but there were other ideas such as portraits, a cockerel, stormy seas and reflections. The afternoon was interesting, enjoyable and relaxing, and prompted many members to say we should repeat the practice of asking members to share their ideas and talent with each other. It ended with a look at each other's efforts, and a warm and heart-felt vote of thanks to Barbara.

Shirley Waddington



MISCELLANEOUS

The Saturday Syllabus for 2016/17

You will receive your copy of the Syllabus with this mailing.

I would like to point out some features of the new programme, in which I have retained or increased some successful elements while making slight reductions in others. Firstly there are more meetings – 17 rather than 15. The meeting in the Gallery during the Exhibition, which was rather a stopgap last year, went so well it is in there again. Members' workshops have proved popular, so I have increased these from three to five, including both portraits and life drawing. Tutor-led workshops remain at two, but both allow you to contribute your own references and objects, rather than the stage by stage 'copy my picture' model.

I have reduced demonstrations from six to five, of which two will be followed by members' workshops on the same theme. I have had a recommendation to put in a session of painting small sections of a large picture to assemble at the end, so this is a 'semi-led' members' workshop.

I have been feeling that the practice of linking the Christmas lunch with a gallery visit has limitations, including travelling distances and time constraints, so I am proposing that the two are separated – a Christmas lunch on our last Saturday date in December but at a local venue, enabling more members to attend, and also a gallery visit at a different time to visit a particular exhibition. The successful and refreshing Hamer student presentations are also planned again, followed by a talk on an art career.

I have been pleased by your good and enthusiastic attendance over the past year (average attendance around 20, 56 members attended at least one meeting) and I am confident of your continued support.

David Whiting

The Portrait Group

Monday Evenings 6.45 - 9pm at Paddock.

If you would like to come, just turn up call

James Fitzpatrick (07415 101235)

or John MacFarlan, (01484 425244)

for more details.

The Life Drawing Group

Thursday afternoons 1.30 - 4.15pm at Gledholt.

If you would like more details, or to confirm a place, Contact:

Jill Moynan - tel: 01484 863759

The start date for the new season will be

September 22nd 2016.

NEWSLETTER

This is your magazine! If you have anything to say about any artistic topic please let me know. Perhaps you have been to an interesting gallery or learnt about a new artist or painting technique.

If you think the members would be interested in what you have to say. Say it here.

Contact Jill Moynan Newsletter editor

huddartsoc@googlemail.com

Tel: 01484 863759

A DEMONSTRATION

A Watercolour Portrait Painting by Susan Neale, 7.5.16

The afternoon got off to a very good start with presentations from two members with widely differing levels of experience; Susan Wilson, who has only been painting for a few years showed us her amazing animal paintings, and Eddie Fenn, who has worked in the field of art for all of his life impressed us with his stunning abstract and semi-abstract work.

Susan Neale then introduced herself to the 24 members attending, and told us some of her background, making us feel tired just listening to her typical week, including full-time teaching, doing workshops and submitting work to exhibitions – she was proud to say she has one picture accepted in the Mall Galleries in the New English Art Club – one of 86 selected from 1300 entries!

Susan loves to use watercolour as it captures light so well, and prefers reference photos with strong tonal contrasts. She stressed the importance of using the best reference you can, and to take the photo yourself if possible, remembering to get down to the level of children or animals to avoid distortion.

The portrait was drawn on Saunders Waterford paper, 300gms, and Susan had masked where she wanted to keep the light skin tone. She uses raw sienna with lots of water, sticking to Windsor and Newton Artists' Quality paint. She has recently discovered Brown Madder as a good colour for deeper skin tone, and starts with the ear to test the contrast, rather than a more prominent feature. Susan likes to mix the use of lost (soft) and found (hard) edges to add interest, and uses a mixture of indigo and burnt umber for dark areas. Members were keen to see how she tackled painting the glass jar with water (and stickleback), but she made it look easy by painting it with clean water first, then weaker versions of the colours behind. For highlights, Susan used white gouache, and she tightened up shading with coloured pencils, drawn on as hatching to strengthen the contrast.

Portraits usually take Susan several days to complete, so she did not have time to finish the demonstration, but we saw enough to feel inspired to have a go at a very difficult task, and hope we can achieve something approaching the excellence of Susan's work.

Shirley Waddington



120th ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Where does the time go? I can't believe that the Exhibition season is fast approaching, as I write this there are only 71 days until our show opens on 10th September.

It's an exhibition I wasn't certain I would be involved with, as last year I had found the work load throughout the Summer just a wee bit too much! However I am still here in the role of Exhibition Secretary because following my plea for support, I now have a fantastic team to work with. The really encouraging thing is that three of these volunteers are new members who have only joined since the last show and are now regularly attending syllabus sessions.

All the information you need with regard to entering your work in the Exhibition is included in this mailout, therefore I am only going to draw your attention to a few innovations for this year.

Selection will take place on Saturday 3rd September, immediately after the hand in session closes.

This means there will be no chance to sneak in with your work on the Monday morning, as there has been in the past for members who could not make the Saturday. If you are away, please make arrangements for a representative to bring in your paintings and please also make sure your work is presented correctly according to the Conditions of Entry.

The Opening Preview Event is to be held on Saturday 10th September at 1.30pm.

The preview cannot be held in its usual Friday evening slot due to cut backs within the Library service, sadly there is no money for out of hours staffing, lighting, heating etc. For this reason we will now open our exhibition officially, with the Mayor of Kirklees present at 1.30pm on Saturday afternoon.

There is a new award this year, The Calder Graphics Prize for the best work by a new Exhibitor. This does not just apply to new members, but to any member who hasn't exhibited before for whatever reason. We have 73 members and last year only 44 submitted work for selection. I hope this will encourage more members to put their work forward, so that our show can be truly representative of our society as a whole.

Demonstration Day - Saturday 8th October.

The format for demonstrating our skills is also changing, this year there will be a dedicated Demonstration Day. Hopefully this will be a concentrated version of the Tuesday and Friday sessions last year, where just one person filled each slot. It's an opportunity to hold an Open Day to promote the Society; we can work alongside each other in the Education Room and showcase the variety of creative practices that occur within the membership. You can opt to join us for the full day or just for a session, hours to suit you! It's something I am really looking forward to, an opportunity just to get on with my work and to share my enthusiasm with prospective new members. If you would like to take part please indicate this on your entry form and you will be sent further details.

HAPPY PAINTING!!

Linda Downs, Exhibition Secretary