



NEWSLETTER November 2014

[Editor: Brian Richardson]

Editor's Notes

The renewal form for membership in 2015 and the AGM calling notice accompany this newsletter. Tom Moss is standing down from the committee, having served as chairman in all but name for a number of years. His guiding hand and distinguished representation of the Society at public events will be very much missed. Some other committee members are also standing down after valuable service and some new blood is needed to assist the stalwarts who have indicated willingness to stand for re-election. Please consider putting yourself forward for nomination.

Christmas Party

Ho! Ho! Ho! – yes it is that time again; the high point of the Calendar, Friday 12th December at 7.30pm - the Art Society's Christmas Party.

It is a Bring and Share evening (a wonderful opportunity to exercise your culinary skills). A list will be available at the studio on Friday evenings for you to note what food you are bringing or, if you aren't a regular Friday attendee, just tell John Stacey what dish you will be bringing. This helps avoid too much duplication. Also let John know how many guests will be coming with you. Then come and join us on that Friday at our usual venue in the studio at France Hill Drive. (It is rumoured that John will be making his infamous trifle)

It is a perfect way to begin the Christmas Festivities, a pleasant evening with convivial company, good food, wine and one of my "wicked quizzes".

So write the date in your diary and get those grey cells exercising.

I look forward to seeing you on the 12th December

Kindest regards

Jenny Colquhoun



Annual Exhibition 2014

This took place at High Cross Church on 18 and 19 July with the private view on the evening of 17th when the Mayor of Surrey Heath, Bob Paton, officially opened the show. The judge was Marilyn Cudmore, retiring Curriculum manager of BTEC Art & Design and A level Art History, and teacher on the Fine Art Course at Farnborough 6th Form College. The winners of the various prizes were:

Sera Knight; committee prize for her mixed media painting entitled "Piccadilly", Liz Seward for her mixed media painting entitled "Poppies" on the theme of Remembering. Carole Head's poignant watercolour entitled "Forget-me-not" won the People's Choice/Best in Show prize.

(The following write-up is based on Sam Dauncey's web report)

Pastel Demonstration by Jane Disney, 17 October

Jane had brought some examples of her pastels of animals and portraits but this time she had a stock "cute tabby kitten" photo as her subject. She normally works from photos, even ones supplied by people who commission work from her.

She had done a quite detailed white-pencil sketch on a 14" x 14" square of black pastel paper. Black is a quite dramatic background for pastels and you need the texture of pastel paper for pastel to grip.



There can sometimes be enough texture on cartridge paper if you want a softer-focus painting but proper pastel paper, which has rougher and smoother sides, is preferred.

Carbothello pastel pencils are her favourite (but the only make she is really not too happy with for her type of painting is Derwent).

She hadn't come across dedicated pastel pencil sharpeners but uses large numbers of ordinary ones (which she liked to replace after only about 15 uses!).

Unlike many artists, who work over the whole canvas as they build a painting up, Jane almost finishes each part before going on to the next. Being right-handed, she works from top-left to bottom-right, normally with the board flat on the table.

So she began to fill in the kitten's right ear, gently making short strokes in the direction of the fur. Covering it with a flesh tone, she followed her normal light-to-dark sequence, gradually introducing shading with 3 or 4 different greys.

Because she doesn't grind the pastel heavily into the paper she can put on many layers and blend with the pencils themselves, not a finger.

For the very edge of the ear she used pure white, blending this into the rest of the ear with a pale pink and more of the greys.

The forehead was also started with flesh tone but gingery colours were added : short strokes of various mid-browns in the direction of the stripes.

Jane's strokes really are tiny: the pencil just touches the paper for a few millimetres, over and over again. Darker browns were used in the shadows and everything continually blended (with pencil not finger) "so the stripes don't look painted on".



When the forehead was finished, the second ear was done like the first. If you compared the photo with the painting you would see artistic licence made it more three-dimensional. Despite working from left to right, some traces of pastel appeared in the background but these were removed with putty rubber (or a plastic eraser could be used instead).

Next the right cheek: just like the forehead but with more of the darker browns for shadow: as many as 8 or 10 layers of lightly-applied and lightly-blended pinks and browns.

Next: the eyes. Very time-consuming. Size is exaggerated for glamour! Blue-grey surround. Gradually working down. Much darker at the top. Vital reflections with a white pencil. Fiddle. Fiddle.

Jane then "stuck on" a caricature fluffy white moustache but immediately started softening its edges and carefully drawing details of the nose (pale pink), mouth and chin.

At this point she ran out of time. The bottom right of the drawing was still blank and there was no sign of the final touches that would normally complete such a painting (highlights and fixative - sprayed lightly at 45° to the paper). She would expect to trim a picture like this down to about 8" x 10" before mounting and framing. (Jane finished the painting at home and supplied a copy, see below.)

We enjoyed a most interesting insight into working with pastel pencils. Thanks very much, Jane.



London Exhibitions

There are some great London Art Exhibitions on at the moment. I would highly recommend Anselm Kiefer at the Royal Academy which is only on until 14th December. I was sure I would hate it as I am not very keen on overtly modern art but this exhibition opened my eyes and my mind to the wonder of it. I went to the Royal Academy to see the Giovanni Battista Moroni Exhibition which is on until 25th January. It is a beautiful little exhibition in small rooms in the upper gallery of the RA and the portraits are a delight. What a contrast to the enormous canvases in the Anselm Kiefer Exhibition.

I am planning to go to the Late Turner Exhibition at the Tate which is on until 25th January. It is well timed to go with the film that is out now called Mr. Turner as the film concentrates on his later life and work. I am sure I will be one of the few art loving people who really did not enjoy the film much. I found it over long and rather slow but I have to admit that it captured the era brilliantly on film.

Carole Head

To Carole's recommendations I would add the exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery of the art pieces produced by Grayson Perry in conjunction with the very interesting Channel 4 series "Who Are You". This exhibition is on until 15 March 2015. (Ed.)

Forthcoming demonstration: On 28th November Sue Ford will give a demonstration of Portrait painting with pastels which should be interesting.

Workshop with Brian Sayers

It is proposed to have another of Brian Sayers popular workshops at Deron, Yateley, early in 2015 (Saturday 7th February is the likely date). Please let Jackie Corral (david.corrall@ntlworld.com) know if you are interested. Space is limited so it will be on a first come first served basis.

Any contributions for the newsletter, preferably on an art-related theme, should be submitted to:

Brian Richardson, 6 Spring Woods, Sandhurst, Berks, GU47 8PX,
or by email to: bricha3691@aol.com.

Your views on any exhibitions you visit would be especially welcome.