



Officers and Committee - 2020

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Hire of Hooks : Bob Sleeman

DVDs : Ken Head

Website: Raymond Ore

<http://www.croydonartsociety.org.uk>

Welcome

Whilst we remain in limited circumstances due to the Covid-19 restrictions there is still a lot taking place within CAS. So may I extend a very warm welcome to this our Summer 2020 Newsletter with an invitation to read on to catch up with our latest events and our future plans as hopefully we emerge from this unpleasant episode.

Editorial

As we have moved into high summer and it's usual associations with holidays, leisure and hopefully enjoyment, we do so having recently gone through a period which seems to have fundamentally changed our general way of life, and, I venture, perhaps not in a good way. For many a load of welcome extra spare 'indoors' time has suddenly become available whilst for others a nightmare of disruption and uncertainty has played out. In any case it all feels like we are in uncharted territory with the odd warning of 'Here Be Dragons'

Within CAS, changes, temporary or not, have also been forced upon us. In many ways this has represented a welcome invitation to do things in fresh new ways, and there has been some excitement in moving into new opportunities and innovative methods of working. But there is one glaring deficiency eating away at the heart of things, being the necessity to socially isolate ourselves, both generally within our communities and even within our families. Association is so fundamental to everything we do in CAS that its enforced absence has struck at the very heart of our endeavours.

Meanwhile, your Committee and associates have risen to the challenge and have been working tirelessly on the nuts and bolts (or should I say the wires and circuits) of converting our activities into digital and virtual forms. Despite this process being unbelievably complex and convoluted there has, I'm pleased to say, been a good deal of success and we can even now look forward to holding our Annual Exhibition later in the year for the first time on an On-Line platform. This will not only widen the reach of the exhibition itself but will also be a great opportunity to promote our Society and our artwork to a much wider public.

So, am I being overly optimistic in thinking that at the end of all this a stronger and more improved CAS may result?

Phil Sadler

NEWS OF MEMBERS

EXHIBITIONS

The current circumstances have of course put opportunities for real world exhibitions very much 'on hold' for the present. But 56 members took part in the CAS on-line 'Into the Light' exhibition. The exhibition 'took place' earlier in the lockdown process and provided an oasis of very uplifting and interesting hope and creativity at a time when we were experiencing a grim and relentless diet of daily coronavirus updates.

The exhibition is excellent and stands many a viewing especially because each entry contains an accompanying reflection by the artist. The exhibition page is still available for viewing if you go to:

<https://intothelight.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/gallery.htm>

Denbies 2020 Exhibition

As you will no doubt be aware we sadly had to cancel our planned fixture at the Denbies Wine estate for our annual Denbies exhibition this year. The decision finally to cancel was not an easy one to reach as it involved trying to predict the future, always a difficult task, and then making a risk assessment based upon that prediction; clearly this is more art than science. However, the final decision to cancel was reached with the health and safety of members fully in mind as well as the very real risk that there could have been only limited attendance at the gallery. The wine estate was very helpful and have rolled our booking forward to next year. So, let us hope that we will be back again enjoying this main exhibiting opportunity in the glorious Surrey Hills next year.



EXHIBITIONS (Cont.)

Raymond Ore: Congratulation to Ray who has had an article published in the July edition of SAA's quarterly Paint magazine entitled 'Park Life'. In his article Ray demonstrates a painting in mixed media of a group of inquisitive seagulls in his local park. It includes full details of all the steps and decisions taken to produce the work as well as details on some of his methods.



As a bonus Ray has also published a time-lapse video showing his actual painting process which can be viewed on his YouTube channel at:

<https://youtu.be/WV3ADi2g0zl>

London Galleries:

Many CAS members regularly take part in exhibitions held in the London Galleries by the various Societies and Associations that show there. This year programmes, of course, have been somewhat disrupted and many members will have had works accepted for an exhibition only to find that the exhibition has been switched to an on-line platform or has been postponed. But the good news is that the Mall Galleries, to name but one venue, will be opening again from 1st September 2020.

Getting Back to Normal?

Evening Activities

Our bi-weekly evening meetings in the Minor Hall, Christ Church Methodists have been held in abeyance now since early spring. The Church has recently been in touch with us to update us with its plans to re-open. As it transpires so far, although meetings may certainly become a possibility, it is not clear whether it would be viable or desirable for us, given the need to observe distancing rules and perhaps to don face coverings. Another question is whether *all* members would feel comfortable back attending meetings within enclosed rooms, perhaps with masks on. But the situation is constantly under review.

In a recent Committee meeting the matter was discussed and it was thought desirable perhaps to set a tentative date at which meetings might re-convene. The plans will of course be subject to how the flu season turns out, and particularly whether there might be an upturn in the corona virus prevalence at the same time. But it was decided to aim at a provisional date of 11th January 2021 when hopefully we will meet for a portrait life class. So we keep our fingers crossed.

In the meantime, we have started holding our Monday evening activity meetings using the Zoom application. If for any reason you have been unable to access these online events, they can be thoroughly recommended and without doubt have so far been very successful. If you do have a phone, tablet or computer (preferably but not necessarily with webcam) that has access to the internet, it is very easy to join the merry throng. If you contact any member of the Committee they will be able to point you in the right direction.

Exhibitions

In so many areas of life, coping with the coronavirus pandemic has involved finding solutions to a multitude of new, previously un-heard-of challenges, most of which have at the back of them a certain life or death urgency. It is the compelling nature of these challenges that has tended to paralyse the nation into a grim fight for safety. Faced with these realities the very idea of an open art exhibition has been categorically taken off of the table for the present, of course not only by choice of our Committee, but also by the emergency laws passed forbidding such activities during lockdown.

But things have eased somewhat, and now we have the situation where limited association is permissible with the proviso of social distancing measures being in place and with the wearing of face masks. The upshot of all this is that it is still very difficult to contemplate putting on a public exhibition. Whilst exhibitions generally may not be impossible to arrange, (many galleries are opening in a limited fashion,) it is still not a good, safe prospect for CAS at this point in time, for a number of very valid reasons.

So, our 131st Annual exhibition this year is to be held in on-line form. Preparations are nearly complete to enable the exhibition to proceed, although finalising them has been somewhat of a long and painstaking process. But within the committee and membership there have emerged many hidden talents which have proved invaluable for the making, arranging and managing all the necessary factors to make the exhibition a possibility.

Summer/Autumn Evening Zoom Events

October 5th : 8.30pm: Critique/Appreciation Evening

Roger Lewis will be leading our proceedings tonight. This will be our second appreciation evening held online. The procedure has been to send photographs of your work to Ray Ore who will present each picture to us and to Roger for his analysis and comments.



October 19th : 7.30 pm: Talk – William & Ben Nicholson

Jessica Saraga will be delivering a talk tonight on painter William and his artist son Ben Nicholson. The work of these two two artists of the early and mid-20th century preceded and led into the British Modernist Movement.



November 16th 7.30 pm : Demonstration - Paul Alcock

Paul paints extensively in the UK and Europe and is also an experienced tutor. He works in many media and was semi-finalist in the Sky Artist of the Year event in 2018.



December 6th : 7.30 pm: Christmas Social

It will be a first, but this year our Christmas social evening is also to be held in an online form. Join everyone at the zoom meeting to take part in the usual fun involving games of skill and knowledge. We can't promise mince pies though.



What's on Your Easel

Bob Sleeman writes: Avril has been re-visiting lino printing as this can be done at home without the heavy press needed for her normal etching plates. She has been using the reduction method where you print initially say ten copies and then overlay the next reduction using registration guides. The lino and some new Rowney System 3 acrylic paint and System 3 extender have been purchased from "Great Art" but most of the "ink" is similar acrylic paint used many years ago to make very large posters (approx. 6ft x 12 ft). I'm no expert on inks and paper but maybe this helps: <https://www.boardingallrows.com/blog/best-linocut-inks-for-block-printing>

Avril is now talking of buying better quality ink for future work if her etching class at the Kentwood Centre in Penge does not start again in September.

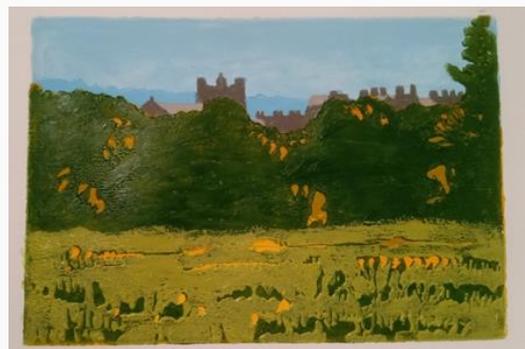
The image started off as below on 28th May 2020 printed on Daler-Rowney heavyweight cartridge paper.



Then more lino is cut away and layers of colour were printed over the ten initial prints on the next day – always waiting for the medium to dry. The colour sequence was basically light to dark.



More lino is cut away on the 30th and 31st and new layers of colour added:

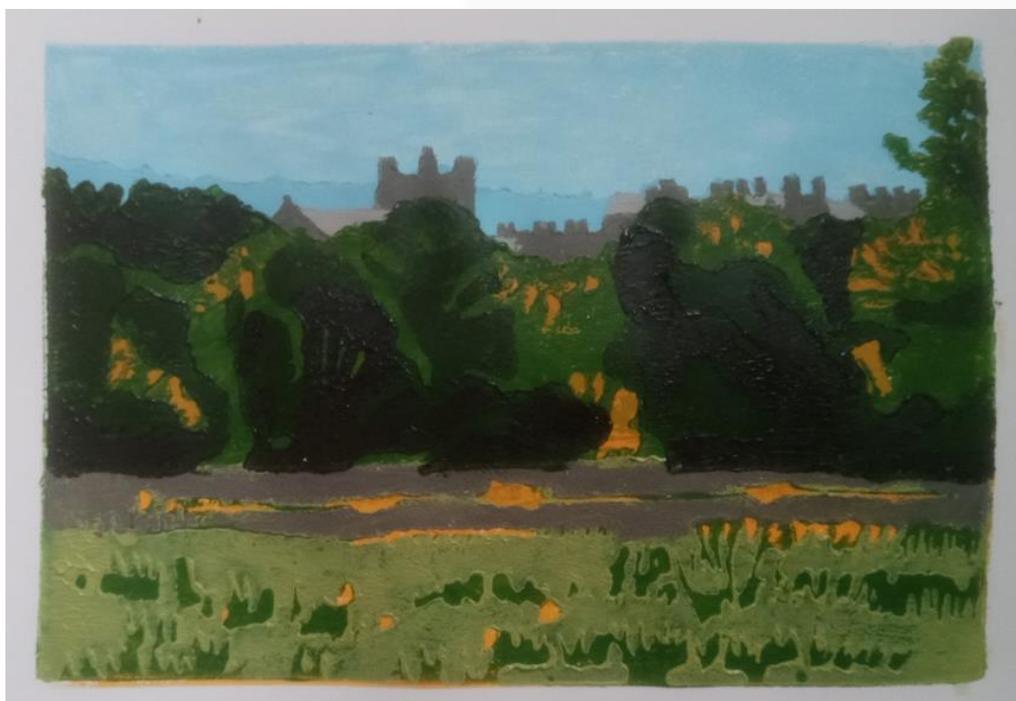


Over the next few days the work progresses and the ink on the paper gets thicker and takes longer to dry.

What's on Your Easel (Cont.)



By the 5th June there is very little lino left and many layers of ink make the final version. Luckily all ten prints worked quite well and the exercise was obviously enjoyable.



On Monday 1st June we had taken another walk along the Ouse near Lewes, taking the photo below, but from a different point, later in the day in a different light so the purple area of grass seed heads was less visible but the variety of green hues is quite remarkable.



Banana Sandwiches

By Elizabeth Mosby

Lately I have taken to having a banana sandwich for lunch, occasionally. If the banana is ripe but not squashy it goes well cut up between two slices of Utterly Butterly spread bread, and a soupcon of granulated sugar.

Today it took me back to after the war – say 1948 – when rationing was still in place.

There were two primary schools in our village – the Church of England and the Methodist. Neither school had more than 90 pupils and three classes. Of course, the children from each had an unwritten rivalry with the other. The older boys sometimes came to blows after school.

Each building had high windows as they had started as charity schools in the Victorian age. My school (the Church of England) had high ceilings and gas lights suspended from the wooden beams. They were lit with a taper after pulling the chain of the light, with a pole, to release the gas.

Both schools were situated on the edge of the common, which spanned a road, making a clear boundary between us. We played on the common as an extension of the tarmac playground round the school. My mother was the infant's teacher, and my brother and I were her pupils for a time.

We lived in a late art deco house (all white with iron framed windows), across the main London to Brighton road from the school.

By chance, our next-door neighbour was the head teacher of the Methodist school (which was near the pond on the common). A rather tight-lipped single lady, living an orderly life. Her name was "Miss Parrot". Inevitably she was called "Polly Parrot", but never to her face.

I am not sure if it was a VE day remembrance celebration, but our class was invited over to the Methodist school for a tea party. It was an adventure to set foot in this foreign territory.

The paper chains were up and games were played. We had jelly for tea, cake (made with powdered egg), and banana sandwiches, which were a delight, as there were no bananas in the shops.

Years after someone explained to me that they must have been made of mashed up swede and banana flavouring.

Funny what takes you back years. It was such a vivid memory. I am still sitting on that wooden seat, taking a bite.



CAS 131st Annual Exhibition

As mentioned above the 131st CAS Annual Exhibition this year is to be held in on-line form. In common with many other Art Societies this is breaking new ground for us. Whilst we do have time honoured, tried and tested methods in place for displaying and selling art in the context of real-world exhibitions, when it comes to putting on virtual exhibitions, we are very much still learning.

The differences between real and virtual at first appear to be trivial, one being viewed on a computer screen whilst the other viewed at the physical location. But this is only the tip of the iceberg. Of course, there is the argument that paintings being viewed on a backlit computer screen have the potential to look quite different to ones viewed in the flesh, but this is probably mostly surmountable by ensuring accurate photographic or scanning fidelity. But you realise we are in a totally different business when you start considering the specifics of distance selling, the bits and bytes of virtual galleries, the vagaries of the worldwide web and the logistics of what they insist on calling 'shipping' which is packing and posting to most of us.

I'm pleased to say we have amongst us many specialists, and I'm very pleased to report that we now have a system. It is untried of course but every twist and turn has been gone into, and it looks like all the 'known unknowns' (as somebody once called them) have now been addressed.

I won't go into the process here as I think very soon we all will receive detailed instructions for taking part in the exhibition. These will cover everything from how initially to photograph and submit our works, through to guidelines on pricing, dealing with prospective purchasers (which may be worldwide), copyright matters, distance selling rules, postage and packing, and hopefully how to receive payment if we do sell. On the one hand the whole business is very exciting, but there is this element of unfamiliarity but please don't let that put you off.

The normal three-week duration of the annual exhibition is to be expanded to a generous 8 weeks, which will extend through the festive season. It is proposed to be running from 16th November 2020 until the 16th January 2021. So, may I encourage you to get those brushes, pastels and pencils warmed up so that we will have as much of the virtual space available (and it is quite extensive) filled up with your excellent artworks



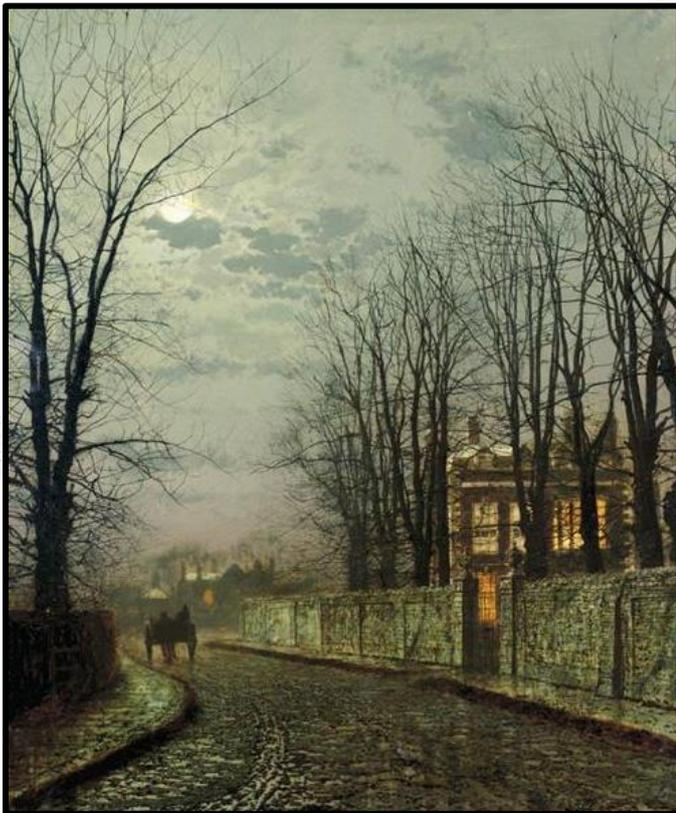
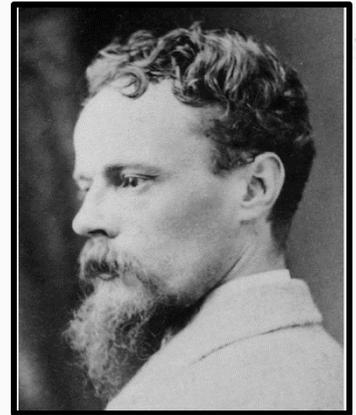
Phil Sadler

A snapshot of the possible gallery environment. Designed by Ray Ore

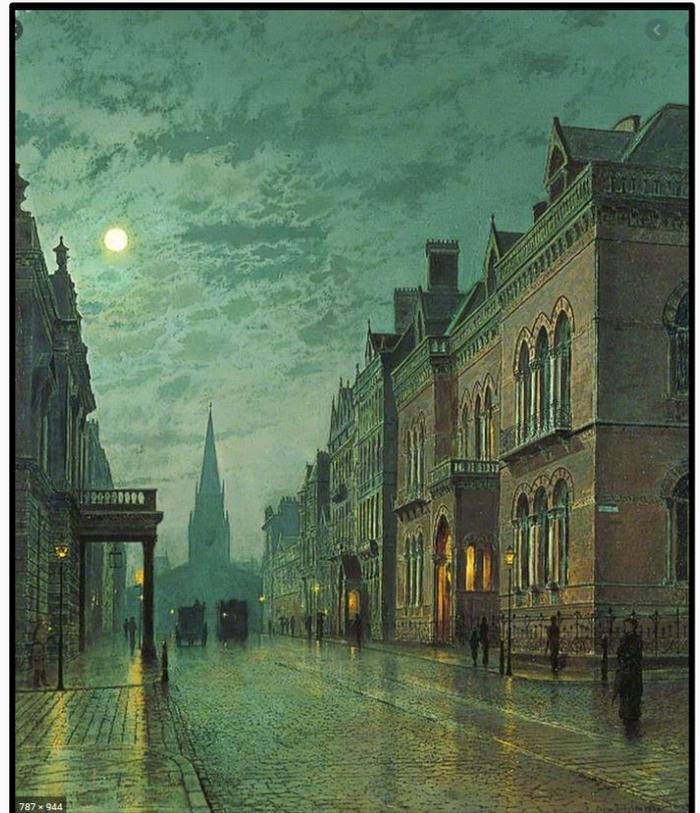
John Atkinson Grimshaw

One of the foremost painters of townscapes and nocturnes of the Victorian era was undoubtedly John Atkinson Grimshaw (6 Sept 1836 – 13 Oct 1893). JAG as he signed himself was a contemporary of Whistler who commented that he (Whistler) thought his own moonlight paintings were good until he saw Grimshaw's.

Roger Lewis particularly appreciates Grimshaw's work and he suggests the following as some of his own favourites amongst the extensive body of his output.



A Wintry Moon



Park Row Leeds



This may be a view from roughly the same spot on Park Road Leeds, but as it appears today (courtesy: Google). I think it is recognisable only from the finials on the rooftops of the buildings to the left. It is surprising how it has changed including the appearance of the misty church.

It illustrates very well that the charm of Grimshaw's rendition lies very much in his artistic vision as depicted in the atmosphere and mood that he has captured and applied to the raw materials of the scene.

It may be worth mentioning that the building on the left is today a 'Bier Keller' and it looks in Grimshaw's day to have been a licenced premise also.

On a Lighter Note

Maybe an idea for our next real-world exhibition. This was an installation by Anish Kapoor entitled *Descent into Limbo*, which appeared at the Fundação de Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto, Portugal back in 2018.

The 'hole' was cunningly made to look like a sticker on the floor's surface but was in fact a very real 8ft deep hole in the floor. Of course, there were ample warning signs and a permanent attendant posted with the strictest instructions to keep everyone safe, so what could possibly go wrong?

Well, inevitably one visitor, tried to test out the illusion of the very real hole disguised to look like a fake hole, and went tumbling into the black void. After a short hospital visit the man was discharged thankfully none the worse for wear for his short spell in Limbo.



WEBSITE AND BOOK OF ARTISTS

There are still a great many members, new and old, who do not have an entry on the Society's website or in the Book of Artists which is on display at every exhibition. We have now completed giving our website a brand new look and feel, so now is a great time to get your name and a few of your pictures added.

At present this is FREE to all members so why not take advantage while it still is.

For details refer to our webmaster Raymond Ore ray@raymondore.co.uk

Get in touch

Contribute to future editions of the newsletter by sending your News/Exhibitions reports and any items of interest.

Please let the Editor, Phil Sadler have your contributions

Deadline: 15th December 2020

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