



## *Radlett Art Society*

Dear Member

This is my first communication since the AGM in March, hoping it finds you all well and looking forward to the Summer and warmer weather. A warm welcome is extended to w members to enjoy the lecture programme for this year which started well, attended in the Reform Synagogue and on Zoom with **“The Psychology behind the art of Marc Chagall”** given by **Jonathan Bergwerk** ; you are also invited to take part in other activities offered by the Society.

Our **Annual Art Exhibition** is at the Village Institute on the **9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> June**. On that weekend, the Radlett museum, adjacent, will have a display of art history in Radlett. This will include our scrapbook with items extending over approximately 60 years. Do come along. A preview evening of the exhibition on the 9<sup>th</sup> June is being held from 7.00pm - 8.30 pm with drinks and nibbles. Members and their guests are most welcome to join together with the option of buying a piece of art if wished.

No one has come forward to organise our annual 4 day -one 3 night tour. I have taken the opportunity to organise such a tour to **Cardiff**. It is **from September 18th -21st** ( I have hard copies available if anyone would like one) It is an opportunity to meet and spend time with other members of the Society, and of course appreciate the art and heritage of Cardiff- a lovely compact city-the Castle and our hotel are both in the centre The committee is most grateful to Angela Sobell for organising day trips to the **Ashmolean Museum** on October 8th and **Dulwich Gallery** to view the **“ Berthe Morisot”** exhibition on August 20th. We have a zoom lecture in October by Jane Wille on this exhibition.

The **Thursday workshop** continues to be popular following our successful afternoon in portraiture with live model Roger Fowler last March. It has been decided to hold a similar afternoon on Thursday June 22nd, 1.30 until 3.30 (come at 1.pm to set up ) with a female model. This will be a fun drawing /painting afternoon when you can let rip with your imagination. Cost just £5 as always This term in the Institute will cease at the end of June, but we will then go **“en plein air “** in the environs of Radlett until September when we return to the Institute for the autumn.

My best wishes to you all,

Gill Cooper Chairman.

# CONFIRMATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2023

We are still open to co-opt members who wish to volunteer

Hon President: Carmen Beal

Officers:

Chairman: Gillian Cooper

Treasurer: Stephen Starr

Secretary: Tim Beasant

Without Portfolio Cherrie Chester

Committee:

Lectures: Frances Beasant

Membership: Anna Cross

Social Media: Inga Armstrong.

Visits : Unfilled Position -

TBD Currently covered by other Committee members and volunteers.



**WORKSHOP PICTURE WITH MODEL**



# SUMMER EXHIBITION

**Radlett Art Society returns to the Village Institute for this year's SUMMER EXHIBITION**

**Historically, the institute was the home of the Summer Exhibition for years. More about that at the Museum which**

**is doing a special exhibition this year about art in Radlett and will be open over the Exhibition Weekend**

**Private View for all Exhibitors and their Guests and RAS**

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 7.00 - 8.30**

**OPEN TO ALL**

**SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 10.00 – 5.00 SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 11.00 – 4.00**

**Submissions are very welcome but must be received by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June**

Please send to Anna Cross [Annacross@me.com](mailto:Annacross@me.com) 07538 518704

## **Other opportunities to exhibit your paintings.**

As well as opportunities offered by Radlett Art Society - both in the Summer Exhibition and the Autumn Exhibition at the Radlett Centre as well as periodic displays in the Window of The Harpenden Building Society, here are some other ideas:- you can exhibit your paintings for free at the Real Cinema in Borehamwood ! No hanging fees and no commission to pay. Contact Dan Kirschner [07957715697](tel:07957715697).

The other place to exhibit your lovely works is at the Radlett Centre also free of charge. I have some of my paintings there at the moment. Do go and have a look. Don't forget that you can post photos of your paintings on the society's face book page! We would love to see them.

**Inga**

## FUTURE LECTURES

Thursday –June 25<sup>th</sup> 7.45 for 8.0 pm at the Radlett Reform Synagogue,  
118 Watling Street, Radlett WD7 7AA Zoom transmission also available.

### **THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN CRAXTON** Lecturer: **JO WALTON**

JO's talk explores the life and work of this highly individual and lesser known artist whose paintings and theatre design combined modernity with great British landscape tradition. Born in 1922 John Craxton discovered the visionary works of 19th century artists William Blake and Samuel Palmer while in his teens and their poetic imagining of Britain and her landscape fired his own creativity. As a young artist he shared studio space with Lucien Freud and was mentored by artists such as Graham Sutherland, before living and working in Greece and creating a personal, colourful and poetic artistic world.



1952 Malevesi Crete Landscape

Thursday –July 20<sup>th</sup> 7.45 for 8 pm at the Radlett Reform Synagogue,  
118 Watling Street, Radlett WD7 7AA Zoom transmission also available.

### **A GLOBAL LENS: PEOPLE AND PLACES IN CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Lecturer: BARRY VENNING** Barry has researched new material on photography and we are lucky to see some of the best iconic photography from around the world. He will cover many photographers' names familiar and less familiar.: He looks at documentary and portrait photography from around the globe over the last sixty years, including some internationally celebrated photographers such as Martin Parr (UK) and Sebastiano Salgado (Brazil) also stunning work by lesser known practitioners such as the journalism of Elena Chernyshova (Russian but based in Paris) **Luke Duggleby:Wrapping the Surviving Tree, 2013. CIWEM Environmental Photographer of the Year competition, 2014. Digital print. Private collection**



Thursday –September 7<sup>th</sup> 7.45 for 8.0pm at the Radlett Reform Synagogue

118 Watling Street, Radlett WD7 7AA Zoom transmission also available.

### **'OP ART THE OPTICAL REVOLUTION'** Lecturer : **FRANCES ROSS**

Frances makes a return with this lecture which is perfectly timed around the British artist **Bridget Riley's 90th Birthday** and the celebrations of her work in both public and private collections. Bridget is a prolific op art artist who became famous in the 1960s initially working only in mono black and white before expanding her oeuvre with optical patterns in colour on a large scale. She is the most famous of all the Op Art artists.



We shall also consider the work of Victor Vasery (known as the father of the style), Josef Albers and his student Richard Anuskiewicz among others inspired by this optical phenomena.

We shall look at some of the fantastic op art textiles used for interiors and fashion in the 1970's including Ossie Clark and Mary Quant's use of the illusion textiles.

## FUTURE VISITS

### **Walking Tour - Day Trip Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

A two-hour walking tour of London's architecture and exciting regeneration in Kings Cross with an excellent guide well known to RAS members Ian Swankie

We have 16 confirmed for this trip and another 6 places still currently available. please contact Frances Ross on [frances.ross2@btinternet.com](mailto:frances.ross2@btinternet.com) if you want to join this walking tour – payment is now due £17.00 – details will be sent out shortly.



### **Dulwich art gallery visit Sunday 20th August 2023**

Berthe Morisot was part of the impressionist movement and as a female initially struggled to make her mark on the Movement. Thirty of her masterpieces from international collections have been assembled for this first major exhibition since 1950.

Tickets have been reserved for our Society and a coach booked to leave Radlett (outside Costa Coffee) on Sunday 20th August 9.15 pm. Costing has been carefully calculated to offer a tremendous day out for £35 for members and £42 for non members. Audio guides can be downloaded for free to mobiles (bring earphones).

Participants to make their own arrangements for lunch, the timing of which will depend on entry as these will be staggered in small groups.

An excellent talk can be heard on BBC Sounds "In our Time" by Melvyn Bragg BBC4 dated 13 October 2022.

Contact Angela Sobell to reserve seats at [Angela.RadlettArtSociety@gmail.com](mailto:Angela.RadlettArtSociety@gmail.com)

Telephone number [07768 040970](tel:07768040970)

# PAST LECTURES

Val Woodgate - Cezanne - The Exhibition. Report. Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

I found this a most engaging and interesting lecture. Val succeeded in making sense of Cezanne's paintings and answering many of the questions that I had while visiting the exhibition myself.

Paul Cezanne 1839 - 1906, is known as the Father of Modern Art. His influence can be seen from Cubism to Abstract Art. He was born in Aix-En-Provence. His father, a banker had high hopes of his son becoming a lawyer. However, after four years of law, Cezanne rebelled and went to Paris to study art. He gained a place at the prestigious Académie Suisse. At this time he was influenced by his old school friend, Emile Zola and several of his early paintings demonstrate this influence.

Val took us through the Exhibition, room by room, explaining lucidly, with the use of wonderful slides, the progress of Cezanne as a painter. While studying at the Académie Suisse, Cezanne met Pissarro who had a great influence on him.

In Room 2 of the exhibition is a small, early painting of a sugar bowl. It was very dark and the paint is impasto, as if applied with a palette knife, very unlike familiar Cezanne. Pissarro taught him to paint with thinner paints and a much lighter palette. Once Cezanne adopted this method, the landscapes are painted with very little detail and no people. Buildings have roof tops and doors or windows, nothing else. Trees have no leaves and grass, no blades.

Cezanne also used a very limited number of colours but a great many shades. It is said that he used sixteen varieties of blue. Colours are never solid when examined, but made up of many shades. He also used a very characteristic method of mark-making. Vertical parallel lines in trees and vegetation, horizontal parallel lines in buildings which Val called his constructive brush stroke. This method of mark-making also allowed for his variety of shades within a confined area.

We were reminded that in France the 19th Century was very troubled, with revolutions in 1830 and 1848. The Franco Prussian war in 1870 was followed by the Paris uprising. In this period Cezanne took his mistress (she became his wife in 1880) and son, Paul to L'Estaque, back in Provence, in order to avoid conscription. Even his family did not know where he was.

Paintings from L'Estaque are the subject of a whole room. Here, his painting techniques were well-established. We also see how Cezanne paid homage to the classical painters Poussin and Claude, using their rules of composition and using foreground trees to create a frame within the frame of the painting. In L'Estaque he painted En Plein Air.

The Still Life room gathered together a collection of paintings normally scattered across the world, many in private collections. Here we could see how Cezanne painted series of paintings at the same time, using the same objects but seen in different ways. He clearly ignored perspective and gravity in these works.

Tables do not have straight edges, plates and fruit float somewhere above the base of the composition and vases and bowls that one might look straight at have elliptical tops so the viewer can see into containers. In one picture the wall, floor and table appear continuous. They do not make sense and are disturbing and discordant. Cezanne played with Reality and was not constrained by it. In this respect in particular, Cezanne has been a great influence on Modern Art.

The next room of the exhibition was dedicated to his paintings of Mont San Ventoux with about eighty pictures of his beloved view of the mountain and surrounding landscape.

One picture showed a collection of ill-defined buildings, one of which Val pointed out as the home of Dr Gachet. Van Gogh was buried in one of the surrounding fields. Cezanne often outlined his subject with a dark indigo seen in these pictures of the mountain.

Again we see Cezanne play with classical composition in this room.

The Bathers - there were many pictures of bathers in the next two rooms. Strangely distorted figures with no narrative to the pictures. He painted nude or semi nude men as well as women and these became increasingly androgynous creatures. Cezanne was embarrassed by people so he painted from pictures by other artists and photographs - these sometimes taken from a strange angle so the resulting painting looked really odd. Some of these paintings were owned by Monet and Matisse. Indeed many artists collected Cezanne's paintings. Monet owned fourteen!

The final room of the exhibition showed paintings from the last years of Cezanne's life. By this time he had moved home and there were some delightful paintings and drawings of his gardener. He had also developed Diabetes which was not effectively treatable at the beginning of the 20th Century. There is a collection of drawings, watercolour paintings and oil paintings in this room. Indeed some watercolours next to another version of the same picture in oils. And more pictures of his new view on Mont San Ventoux. His later pictures looked increasingly more abstract.

Cezanne stands out amongst other painters because of his distinctive brush strokes, and his use of colour, in particular the lack of any solid block of a single colour.

## The Psychology Behind the Art of Marc Chagall- 20<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Lecturer: Jonathan Bergwerk

Jonathan Bergwerk is a familiar speaker to many in Radlett, but this was his first lecture to the Art Society. He gave a most interesting and erudite talk on the life and work of Marc Chagall (1887 - 1995).

Chagall worked in a wide variety of media - paint and stained glass among the better-known. His style can be readily brought to mind; quirky designs with strong and vivid colours depicting scenes and ideas in a way that can be described as romantic, whimsical, sentimental and fantastic.

Jonathan Bergwerk's approach to his subject did not focus on technique, nor on influence absorbed or projected. Nor on the artist's florid use of Symbolism, plainly a worthy topic on its own. Rather, he told the story of Chagall's long life and showed how his personal psychology and experience were reflected in much of his work.

One of 8 children, mostly girls, he lost his only brother and his hardworking father quite early in life. The influence of his mother, who brought about his entry into the study of art, was plainly very strong.

It appeared that he was not successful in making relationships save with the three strong women who were successively his partners, all of whom figured in his paintings, often depicting himself as the weaker and more dependent of a romantic couple.

The context of his paintings, much more than mere background, was frequently provided by the shtetel, i.e. the small Chasidic Orthodox-Jewish village of his upbringing in present Belarus, with fiddlers (some on the roof) an archetypical Wandering Jew with a sack, and strange horizontal figures, sometimes apparently floating in the air.

He had his first solo exhibition in 1914 and achieved wide recognition not least by the well-known dealer and patron Ambroise Vollard. He painted 1,000 known artworks as well as other formats, and was widely in demand and commercially successful. Despite his success he appears to have remained deeply insecure throughout his life and displayed behaviours apparently irresponsible, neurotic and childish such as walking out on the home upon the birth of each of his own children.

The wide range of interesting questions and informed comments from the large audience both in the hall and on Zoom were a testament to this stimulating talk.