



Radlett Art Society

Dear Member,

Since my last newsletter, the Society's membership has increased. We extend a very warm welcome to all our new members and hope you enjoy our lecture programme for this year and take part in the other activities offered by the Society.

Our main event "**The Summer Exhibition**" has been held again in June at the Radlett Village Institute and was a most successful three days. Many visitors bought cards and paintings. Anna has included a fuller report in this newsletter.

Our lectures this year have been most interesting and varied. Frances is already organizing the 2025 programme. A live/zoom lecture is on 19th September, subject "**Ben Nicholson**" with the excellent lecturer **Jo Walton**. In October we return to zoom only with a painting demonstration given by **Mark Warner**.

The **Thursday workshop** is a thriving, friendly group of artists - all are welcome to come along to paint, stick or draw - or whichever way you want to express your art! It only costs £6.

It takes place in the **Village Institute** every Thursday between 1.30-3.30pm. Earlier this year we held a "**pebble painting**" afternoon which proved very popular with many of you - so many ways to decorate a little pebble - they were beautiful.

Currently we are meeting in venues around Radlett but will return to the Institute on 5th September. On September 12th we are lucky that **Elaine Delmar** (the well known Jazz singer) is in the area and has very kindly agreed to sit for a '**portraiture**' afternoon. Maybe she will be dressed in African costume. You will need to book for this event.

On Sunday November 10th water colourist **Jake Winkle** will spend a full day again in the Village Institute. He is a great teacher who gets such character and movement into his paintings - numbers will be restricted for this.

The Radlett Centre foyer and cafe gallery are booked from the 1st -31st October for our regular **Autumn Exhibition**. More details to follow but start thinking about what you would like to exhibit this year.

Two days ago from writing this, a group of members returned from a most successful five day visit to the Isle of Wight. Edward Cross has very kindly written a fuller report on the visit in this newsletter.

Finally a date for your diary:- **Wednesday December 4th 2024** is booked at Porters Park Golf Club for our annual **Christmas lunch**, 12.30 for 1.00. Further details will follow soon. Menu choices, meal cost etc

This can be the kick start to your Christmas festivities - it would be lovely to welcome lots of you to the beautiful surroundings of the Golf Club

My best wishes to you all

Gill Cooper Chairman



FUTURE LECTURES

Thursday 19th September – 7.30pm for 8pm is our last live and blended zoom art history lecture at Radlett Reform Synagogue 118 Watling Street WD7 7AA

BEN NICHOLSON LECTURER JO WALTON

Ben was one of Britain's most influential painters. He was best known for his beautiful still life and landscape paintings which combined abstract and representational elements in a disciplined harmony. The lecture explores the development of Nicholson's beautiful images set against a background of conflict, personal, international and artistic.



Thursday 24th October 7.30pm – 9.30pm on Zoom

(confirmed in Workshop News)

The artist's workshop demonstration will be by

MARK WARNER WORKSHOP DEMONSTRATION

Mark was brought up on the West Wales coast which has had a great influence on his approach to painting and his views of the landscape. He studied fine art in Newport and works in a studio on the Shropshire / Wales border where he does lots of demonstration teaching as well as painting his own and commissioned art



Thursday 21st November 7.30pm for 8.00pm on Zoom

GREAT RAILWAY STATIONS ARCHITECTURE AND ART

LECTURER IAN SWANKIE

On this our last zoom lecture of the year, with great joy we welcome the return of Ian Swankie. Many of you also enjoyed the "Spires of London" guided walk last June with him

This talk complements and extends the subject with Great Railway Stations Architecture and Art. As well as St. Pancras there are dozens more glorious stations in the UK and abroad with magnificent architecture and numerous artworks within the stations themselves for example Claude Monet's Gare St Lazare or William Powell Frith's Paddington.



Summer Exhibition Report

Our summer exhibition this year was a great success. Many thanks to all who made it possible, especially our artists without whom there would be no exhibition.

A very warm welcome to our new exhibitors, I hope you found it enjoyable. I can tell you there was something for everyone who came. People liked so many different styles of paintings. Even if you didn't hear the praise directly, I can assure you that your works were greatly appreciated.



Our Prize Winners. We were very fortunate to have prizes donated which were awarded by our Exhibition Assessor to the following artists. A big thank you to our kind and generous sponsors and also to our Assessor for undertaking the task of selecting four paintings from so many very talented works of art.

1st Prize to Inga Armstrong - 'Sunset'

2nd Prize to Gundula Stevens - 'Winter's Night'

3rd Prize Juliette Anthony - 'Waiting'

Highly Commended - Gill Cooper - 'A Garden in Devon'

We sold 12 paintings, 5 turned wooden objects and a lot of cards. Many congratulations to all those who also sold. Finally many thanks to everyone who came to our exhibition. It was a very happy event where people met old friends and new. Many also visited the Museum which was open at the same time. It felt like a **Radlett Community Event** and a celebration of coming out of the dreaded COVID isolation

Workshop News

Thursday 12th September, 1.30 - 4.00 - Live model session.

We are delighted to announce Singer and Actress **ELAINE DELMAR** has very kindly agreed to sit for us. Places are limited and as we believe this will be a very popular event, you must notify Gill Cooper if you intend to participate. mrsgillcooper@icloud.com. We will email to confirm that you have booked your space. There is the usual studio fee of £6.00, but no extra. Tea & cake is provided at 3.30 to celebrate our model's birthday.

Elaine Delmar is also appearing at The Radlett Centre on 15th September

24th October 7.30-9.30pm Zoom Demonstration by delightful **MARK WARNER**

**10th November - All day Workshop 10.00am - 4.00pm
with Water Colourist**

JAKE WINKLE

Jake is a talented artist and teacher painting subjects ranging from landscapes, seascapes and portraits to very energetic animals. His style is bold, colourful and uncluttered. His enthusiasm for watercolour painting is infectious and inspiring.



RADLETT CENTRE EXHIBITION

The Foyer and Teatro Cafe Exhibition Spaces at the Radlett Centre are available to members of the Society to display their work from the

1st to 31st October

This Exhibition will be of FRAMED WORK and CANVASES in complete and proper finish ready to hang,

The deadline to exhibit is 16th September and is limited currently to two submissions per member with the possibility of an increase nearer the start date.

Please send details of your proposed work to me ANNA CROSS at anna.cross@me.com

Your name, the name/s of your paintings, the medium/media worked in and approximate measurements.

There is no submission fee for this exhibition.

COST of WORKSHOP £45.00

Radlett Centre Small Print

PAYMENT & COLLECTION OF WORK

Work must not be removed during the exhibition unless agreed by the Centre. All sales are payable to The Radlett Centre Trust and monies will be forwarded, with the agreed 25% deducted, to the Artist after the close of the exhibition. Pictures will not be reserved without full payment. Payment may be made by cash or card

SECURITY & DAMAGE

Although the building is always staffed when open, the Centre cannot be held liable for the loss, damage or theft of any work that is on the premises. If you require insurance for the exhibition it is your responsibility to take out a policy to cover your work.

EXHIBITION OPENING HOURS

The exhibition will normally be accessible to the public between the hours of 10am and 4pm Monday to Saturday. We reserve the right to close the building without notice if necessary and the Centre is not usually open to the public on Saturdays during the summer holiday period.

PAST LECTURES

Thursday 16th May **THE BIRD IN ART - Lecturer: Frank Woodgate**

We welcomed Frank Woodgate back to Radlett for his 14th visit with an interesting and wide ranging talk, A very good slide show and wonderful snippets of information and short stories to accompany the pictures. The lecture covered Birds as they appear in Art, in a variety of categories

Ancient depictions of Birds

1. Images circa 15000 BCE, in the Lascaux caves showed a man with a bird head and also a bird on a stick
2. An Aboriginal image of a very large, long extinct bird was thought to be about 40,000 years old
3. Images of fine depictions of Meidum Geese were originally found in a very early Egyptian pyramid.
4. Earlier Tomb Paintings around 2600 to 1567 - 1320 BCE displayed stylized almost two dimensional Egyptian men seen as if from the side but with one eye in full, as if from in front and surrounded by stylized pale faced much smaller family members BUT with beautiful depictions of realistic birds and fish.
5. ICE on a Pompei food counter was decorated with paintings - a Chicken - Upside Down Ducks and a Dog. They didn't eat the dog!

Birds as Victims

A 1st Century mosaic of a cat with a very realistic gleam in its eye shown stealing a bird. This picture was later referenced by Picasso in 1939 in a painting and a drawing at a time in the artist's life where he probably identified with the poor bird. It was just after the Spanish Civil War when he was still married to his first wife and his relationship with his current mistress was drawing to a close. He was in a new relationship with the much younger Dora Marr. Picasso revisited the subject in 1953 in his works, "Cat & Cock" and "Dead Cock and Jar". Picasso had said '*women don't leave a man like me*' and his then partner Françoise Gilot replied '*just watch me*' and left him, taking their two children with her. (She was an artist in her own right and also painted a picture called - "Spring Birds" - maybe depicting herself as the strong white bird abandoning the rather smaller and weaker looking black bird in the picture).

We saw paintings by Cranach, a beautiful bird's wing painted by Dürer, a very unusual watercolour of a bird by Turner and a picture of a Dead Bird (1943) by Lucien Freud.

We were then introduced to the first of several birds by the sculptor Dame Elizabeth Frink – "Dead Hen". Apparently, this was cast from a model made of a mixture of clay and dental plaster. When the plaster was set, the sculptor hacked away at the model creating a very rough surface before casting it in bronze.

Thornton Dial was a pioneering artist from Alabama. His work "The Birds That Didn't Learn to Fly" features blackbirds hanging from a clothesline, made from gloves, dyed and burnt looking like birds. The creatures are a parody of Jim Crow, the racist designation for Black people that was applied to institutionalized segregation in the US.

Hogarth depicted a goldfinch being tormented by a cat with a wicked light in its eyes in "The Graham Children". One of the children was already dead when this was painted. The father died soon after leaving his apothecary business to his oldest son a callow youth. Another unfortunate bird was the one painted by Joseph Wright of Derby, 1768, in "The Experiment on a Bird in an Air Pump".

Birds as Predators

A founder of Der Blaue Reiter group (The Blue Rider) with Kandinsky was Frank Marc whose abstract painting "Forms of Combat 1941". certainly showed birdlike shapes and one is definitely attacking the other Winslow Homer was an American Artist. His painting "The Fox Hunt" 1833 was interesting as the fox is the victim of the crows. In order to paint this picture, Winslow Homer had the fox and crows killed and frozen. He then laid the fox out in the snow with the crows hanging from a washing line above it John James Audubon Artist and Ornithologist – 'Swallow Tail Hawk' is one of his careful and accurate pictures of 435 species of American birds published in Birds Of America which became an important work of natural history and scientific observation.

Bald Eagles are an American Symbol as seen on postage stamps.

The Nazi Eagle was a reference to the Roman Imperial Eagle.

More threatening sculptures of birds by Elizabeth Frink. Of the three she created in 1952 while still at Art school, all were sold. One is at the Tate. By 1962 they were far more stylized, a beak and legs and increasingly threatening

Spiritual Birds

Brancusi - a sculptor who broke all the rules. He started working with Rodin in 1912 but moved away. In the 1920s he created "Bird in Space", a very elegant abstracted bird. When it was imported into the US the authorities did not recognize it as art and wanted to tax it as a metal structure. Fortunately they were persuaded that it was art.

Ai Weiwei – 'Yours Truly 2015 Installation on Alcatraz about Human Rights and Prisoners of Conscience'. The images were made of large Lego bricks.

He had postcards of birds available for visitors to complete and send to the prisoners of conscience across the world. Around 10% of the 900,000 visitors completed these cards.

Groups of Birds

In the eighteenth century, after the many fashionable portrait paintings, followed by many paintings of horses and dogs came a fashion for paintings of exotic birds which were being imported at the time by artist Jakob Bogdani. Before that, Snyders in the 1630s painted birds in the background for Rubens.

A large group of birds is called a Parliament of Birds and in the centre of such a group would often be an owl. In the extreme and disturbing painting, "The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Hieronymus Bosch (1515) the birds are painted larger than the humans.

Birds in Christian Art

Birds were used as decoration in early illuminated Prayer books and Psalters.

We saw two paintings of St Francis with Birds, the first a 13th Century painting by Giotto,

The second by Stanley Spencer (1935). The Daily Mail said of the latter “Mr Spencer’s St Francis is a caricature which passes the bounds of good taste” and the Royal Academy refused to hang it - so Stanley Spencer resigned from The Academy!

Another repeated image is the **Pelican**, In her ‘**Piety**’, she pecks at her own chest to feed her young.

Finally Frank covered paintings of specific birds.

Doves of Peace - by Picasso and a Banksy wall painting on the West Bank.

Eagles, sometimes representing Jupiter in mythological paintings including several kidnapping Ganymede and the Peacock representing Juno.

The 1962 **Frink Eagle Lectern** in Coventry Cathedral (the eagle representing St John The Evangelist)

Swans - as painted by Stanley Spencer in Swan Upping at Cookham 1915-19 - showing a change in the Artist’s style as a result of fighting in the first war. And Dali’s Swans Reflecting Elephants - where the reflections in the water of the swans and the surrounding trees look like elephants!

3 paintings of **Leda and The Swan** - where Leda was impregnated by a Swan - painted in very different ways by Veronese, Matisse and Eric Gill.

Lastly Frank showed us a small fresco of a Swift on a cobalt blue background, beautifully painted on a piece of reclaimed Thames brick. (Sarah Hocombe 2017). This treasure was given to Frank and Val as an anniversary gift - the symbolism being that the Swift mates for life. In conclusion - “**Where there are birds, there is hope**”. **Mehmet Murat Ilde**

Anna Cross

Thursday 20th June

ANGELICA KAUFFMAN (1741 -1807)

Lecturer: Clare Ford-Wille

At the time of Clare’s lecture Angelica Kauffman had an exhibition in London and Clare used this exhibition to structure her talk. Examples of Angelica’s work were mainly but not exclusively from the exhibition.

Angelica was born in Chur in Switzerland. Her father considered them Austrian and they travelled widely in Europe. At the time she was working there many prominent female artists and Angelica had to introduce herself. This she did by a series of self-portraits.

At the age of twelve her portrait showed her with sheet music She was interested in and had ability in music and art. In a portrait painted in her teens she is wearing the traditional costume of the Bregenz Forest in Austria. Throughout her career she was aware of the significance of costume including head covering, another example being the “all’antica” dress in a 1787 self portrait painted while she and her father were in Italy. For a year she worked with her father on frescoes in the Church of the Holy Trinity in Schwarzenberg. Her painting for the High Altar, “Coronation of Mary by the Holy Trinity”, was given to the Church in 1802. She was able to adapt her style to setting and also to that desired by a commission. Angelica moved to England and in 1766. She became an established portrait painter, examples of which were “Portrait of Johann Joachim Winckelmann”1764 - “Martha Cocks in Turkish Dress with Embroidery Frame” 1772 (again

the importance of dress). She continued with self portraits and was herself the subject of paintings by Nathaniel Dance 1764.

As well as portraits she painted works with historical and mythological themes "Shakespeare's Tomb" 1772 and "Rinaldo and Armida in the Magic Garden" c.1772.

Angelica was one of two women founder members of Royal Academy - the women featured on paintings of the Academicians either in the background or as portraits on the wall as seen in Johann Joseph Zoffany's "The Academicians of the Royal Academy" 1771-2. Angelica was now sufficiently renowned to be favoured by royalty including a Queen, "Her Majesty Queen Charlotte Raising the Genius of the Fine Arts" (1772).

Although she was in the background of paintings of the Academicians, Joshua Reynolds entrusted her with the ceiling paintings in the front hall of the Royal Academy. These paintings illustrated the four elements of Art - Invention, Composition, Design and Colour. Each featured a woman (against convention). She returned to Rome (after an unsuccessful marriage) in 1781 and continued with her work. Her "Self-Portrait at the Crossroads between the Arts of Music and Painting" 1794 illustrates again the conflict in her life, to choose music or painting. (The latter appears to be winning.) She was still painting using historical and mythological themes and with royalty still favouring her.

Angelica died in 1807 and is buried with her second husband in the Church of Sant' Andrea delle Fratte in Rome. Interest in her work lived after her for some years. Designs "after Angelica Kauffman" were found on vases and even a chimneypiece panels. However, female painters like Angelica faded into obscurity until quite recently.

Was it because they were just unfashionable?

Maureen Grossman

Thursday 11th July ART AFTER WINDRUSH – Post Colonial Artists in Britain Since 1948 Lecturer – Barry Venning

Barry took us on a journey through the contributions, struggles and development of African, Caribbean and Asian artists in Britain since the SS Empire Windrush arrived from the West Indies in 1948.

The lecture opened with pictures of the front of Tate Britain decorated in bright colours and lights depicting South Asian culture, religion and history. This work by Chila Kumari Singh Burman was commissioned by the Tate in 2020 as a response to lockdown. When the art inside could not be viewed they decided to display art work outside so everyone could still see it. This creation demonstrates how far African, Caribbean and Asian art has come to be part of the mainstream.

Hew Locke is another artist who has had a huge exhibition in Tate Britain in recent years. Called "The Procession" it comprises 160 life size figures representing many facets of Guyana culture and history, displaying characters from religion, slavery, carnival and everyday life.

Barbara Walker is another contemporary artist who creates interesting, ambitious and challenging art. This was demonstrated by one of her works which depicted a scene of 1st

WW soldiers. Taken from a photograph, Barbara has just outlined the figure of the black soldier with no further details representing how the contribution of Black and Asian soldiers has been excluded from much of military history.

Going back to the 50's, 60's and 70's Barry had examples of various artists who had paved the way early on for the place of African and Asian art in British culture. Anwar Jalal Shemza of Pakistani origin had formed the Lahore Art Circle in the 1950's. Keith Piper studying at Nottingham Trent College organized exhibitions of African, Asian and Caribbean art students as they found it impossible to get main stream galleries to show their work.

Barry also demonstrated how art has reflected the anger felt by many. A work by Chris Ofili "No woman no cry" – the title taken from the Bob Marley song, represents Doreen Lawrence. A painting of a woman's crying face contains a picture of Stephen Lawrence in each tear drop.

Yinka Shonibare a seriously disabled artist originally from Nigeria has created the biggest work entitled "The British Library" (featuring 6,328 books). Every second or third book contains the name of someone from one country who has made a contribution to another. More imaginative work can be seen in that created by the The Singh Twins who came to national attention when they appeared on Grayson Perry's Art Club during lockdown. Their artistry combines politics, culture and humour.

The lecture ended with "A Glimpse of the Future" as demonstrated by Steve McQueen, Possibly best known as the Director of "12 years a slave" whose work "Year 3" was made up of pictures of every year 3 in London schools showing how multicultural London now is, where children of all colour and religions now study alongside each other.

Cherrie Chester

29TH July – 2ND August Four Day Holiday Tour ISLE OF WIGHT

Including an en-route visit to Salisbury with a guided tour round its lovely Cathedral, a large group of the Art Society spent a very enjoyable 'working week' touring the Isle of Wight. We saw most of the 'normal' tourist attractions; Osborne House with its historic contents and associations, and delightful estate, and a sedate trip on the charming IOW Steam Railway. One less well-known locations included at our request was Farringford House, home of Alfred, Lord Tennyson now meticulously restored to its High Victorian condition. Another close by, near Freshwater, was Dimbola Lodge, home of Julia Margaret Cameron celebrated Victorian photographer, now forming a gallery for her evocative, pioneering work.

For me the trip had two highlights. First was the Roman Villa at Brading, the oldest settlement on the Island. The layout of the villa and many artefacts found there were displayed and explained, with several simply stunning and beautiful floor mosaics. The whole was excellently housed in a lovely, spacious and airy modern building. (A sad contrast to the mosaic and hypocaust at St. Albans.)

In (personal) top position was the Ventnor Botanic Gardens, as interesting and attractive as any garden I have seen.

Situated in a sheltered geological dip between lower and higher cliffs, the south-facing site allows propagation of several species which cannot be grown elsewhere in the British Isles (even the Scilly Isles) all beautifully and imaginatively landscaped in areas evoking the appearance of countries or continents world-wide. A tour with explanations by the Head Gardner lifted this visit well out of the ordinary.

Excellent planning and guidance by our Chair, Gill, plus five days of hot and sunny weather made this an Art Society trip to remember.

Edward Cross

Photo taken by Gary Harding at Ventnor Botanic Gardens

