



Radlett Art Society

Dear Member,

At the time of writing, we are all still at the mercy of the pandemic and the restrictions considered necessary to control the spread of the virus. As you know, we have had to cancel all our lectures, visits and workshops and our annual exhibition will not now take place in June.

However, there are still some artistic activities available. Myrna has emailed information about TV programmes that might interest members and many large galleries have put their collections online to view at no charge for the duration of the emergency. Your Committee has not forgotten you!

We are looking at the possibility of an online lecture and perhaps an autumn exhibition, though on a relatively small scale. Gary has arranged for artists to display their work on the Society's website and some interesting pictures have already appeared. Please send him photographs of your work if you would like to exhibit.

Once the current restrictions are lifted, we will resume as many activities as possible though, inevitably, the continued need for social distancing will be taken into account. Your Committee will inform you of our plans as we learn more of the government's intentions.

Meanwhile, thanks to all our members for your continued support and let us all look forward to better times ahead.

Yours

Adam Lewis
Chairman



PAST LECTURES

Thursday 6th February : Frank Woodgate lectured on

THE ART OF AI WEIWEI: EVERYTHING IS ART, EVERYTHING IS POLITICS

Why are totalitarian governments so often obsessed with the potential power of their citizen artists? Ai Weiwei and his father, a Chinese poet, were each exiled and imprisoned by succeeding governments. These experiences have affected all of Ai Weiwei's life and work. Frank showed how Ai Weiwei was also heavily influenced by other artists, such as Warhol, Duchamp, Jasper Johns and the Dadaists, while he was a young man in New York. We saw images of various works depicting his propensity to protest, mostly about the activities of the Chinese government. Among these were: Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn (against the destruction of Chinese history); Sunflower Seeds (representing the downtrodden Chinese population); Surveillance Camera (protesting against his house arrest). Frank was very enthusiastic about Ai Weiwei's versatility and skill as an architect, painter, installation artist, political activist and blogger.

Muriel Beaver

Tuesday 10th March : Anita Greene lectured on

"THE STUNNERS" PRE RAPHAELITES, THEIR WOMEN AND THEIR ART

Anita gave us a fascinating talk about five women who could be said to have made the artistic reputations of the Pre-Raphaelite group of artists. They were Annie Miller (1835-1925); Effie Gray (1828-1897); Fanny Cornforth (1835-1909); Jane Morris (1839-1914) and Lizzie Siddall. They acted as models plus wives, lovers, muses and fellow artists to members of the Brotherhood. They are all recognizable in idealized form. We were shown Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience*, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Dante's Dream* – both featuring Annie Miller; Effie Gray in Millais' *The Order of Release*; Fanny Cornforth in Rossetti's *Bocca Baciata*; Jane Morris as *Proserpina* by Rossetti and in William Morris's *The Day Dream* and Lizzie Siddall in both Millais' *Ophelia* and Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix*. Anita gave us interesting biographies and amusing anecdotes about these women, often showing how they were used and abused by the male artists.

Muriel Beaver

VISITS

Due to the rapid spread of the **COVID19 VIRUS** and the consequent nationwide lockdown on the **20th March**, it was unfortunate that our first visit of 2020 to the **SAATCHI GALLERY & TUTANKHAMUN EXHIBITION** on the **22nd March** had to be cancelled. With the lockdown still currently in place, visits cannot go ahead until there is clear guidance from the government on updated safety procedures to observe with, not only coach travel but also group visits to museums, galleries and stately homes. Our visits to **Compton Verney** in April and **Leicester Cathedral and Art Gallery** in May have also cancelled and I am also sorry to say that I have had to cancel our trips to **Wilton House** in June (too close to be able to certain we can run it) and to **Althorp** and **Highclere**. Though both of those were a bit further out in July and August both of them required us to commit to the number of people going by early June which under the current situation we can't do.

On a slightly more positive note if things do improve and we think we can run viable trips safely and following government advice I may be able to replace the July and August trips with Compton Verney and Leicester Cathedral and Art Gallery as both of those do not need us to commit upfront but we would still need enough people to make the cost viable. If it looks like we might be able to run those trips I will ask our membership their views about potentially going on the trip. At the moment our holiday in September is still potentially able to be run but again that will depend on government advice and the availability of our venues and hotel closer to the time. Again I will keep people informed about the status.

Your committee is well aware of members' anxieties and will ensure that future trips, when they can be arranged, will have the health and safety of our members as a priority. Please bear with us in these difficult times, we have not forgotten you.

Gary Harding

Thursday Painters' Workshops.

We have all missed each other at our Thursday workshop sessions. I hope you have been keeping well and happily occupied, drawing, painting, making plans for your work, enjoying gardens, - perhaps watching and learning something from interesting artists on programmes. I look forward to meeting you all again WHEN the safe time comes and we can resume our sessions.

Carmen

WORKSHOP/STUDY DAY SUNDAY 8TH MARCH

Just before lockdown happened, we held a very successful day workshop for 14 of our Art Society members.

Jan Munro was our tutor for the day. She is a most enthusiastic, talented and inspirational artist with lots of ideas and tips. She works in all mediums and our workshop was entitled "*Still life in Acrylics*". Throughout the day she demonstrated and guided us to produce our own individual masterpieces, and finally at the end of the day, she offered an individual constructive critique of our finished work. An excellent day which I think we all thoroughly enjoyed - even those who had never painted with acrylics before!

We anticipate holding another workshop towards the end of the year but that will depend very much on how the current situation and social distancing evolves. Let's hope for all reasons that it will not be too long!

Gillian Cooper

LECTURES

Frances Beasant (Art Lecturers Organiser) in lockdown you would think I would have nothing to do now apart from cancel the lectures and the lecture venue.

Well initially that is what happened and then with all the creative contributions that came pouring in from those able to use new technology things gradually came alive again. Now most of us can now use Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp and even Teams to share our creativity. I have been taking part in the BBC4 Monday 11th May life drawing sessions on television and online (press the red button for full poses). The RA recorded life drawing sessions are still available to download (<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/online-life-drawing-class-lifedrawinglive>) and draw at home. Grayson Perry has a 60 min slot on television channel 4 called Grayson's art club that encourages all levels of ability to create from whatever is around. A good watch on a Monday, even if you don't participate.

I am also planning the possibility of a zoom live art lecture from one of the cancelled sessions that could then be available to download from the RAS website for a limited period of time. I have had creative outbursts in between teaching my London College of Fashion students that are dispersed all over the world since lockdown but are still attending lectures, workshops and tutorials to finish their fashion degrees. Two of the artworks I have done over the last 6 weeks are on the website under 'lockdown paintings' along with other members contributions. Why not join me and send your creative outbursts to Gary (gary.harding@gmail.com) who will put as many as he can onto our website. If you want inspiration and a theme consider how the coronavirus has changed your work. Shortage of materials, subjects more time, less time. Start painting, drawing, sewing, knitting, sculpting now.