October 2021

NEWSLETTER

theartssociety.org/truro

Wednesday 13 October 7pm via Zoom

TRURC

Tidal Pathways (detail) © Amy Albright

THE ARTS

AS Truro AGM followed by Photography as Fine Art by Brian Stater

Should we accept that the very best photographs can be regarded as Fine Art? This question is at the heart of a lecture which argues that photography can equal, not to say exceed, more traditional disciplines in the key genres of portraiture, landscape and still life.

Photography, moreover, has carved its own area of excellence in depicting the human condition.



the human condition. All these ideas are discussed with reference to the work of some of the acknowledged masters of photography, including Henri Cartier-Bresson, Fay Godwin, Bill Brandt, Ansel Adams and Wolfgang Tillmans.

About the Lecturer

Brian Stater is a Senior Teaching Fellow at University College London, where he has lectured since 1997. His principal academic interest lies in the appreciation of architecture, while a strong personal enthusiasm is for photography. He therefore explores both business and pleasure by offering lectures on each of these subjects.



He has written on architecture for a wide range of publications and an exhibition of his own photographs has been held at UCL. He is a member of the Association of Historical and Fine Art Photography and he works with a pre-War Leica camera, as used by his great hero, Henri Cartier-Bresson, and many others.

Join as a Guest

If you, or you have a friend who would like to attend the next lecture as a guest, please book online via this link. This is a great way to try out our lectures, for a minimal fee. Guest fee is £5.00 for Zoom lectures only. Please book no later than 2 days before the lecture date. This will ensure you get the lecture Zoom link in good time. <u>Click here to join as a Guest</u>

Joy Reynolds

Just over two weeks ago your committee received some bad news when we learnt that our Chair, Joy Reynolds, had a stroke.

The good news is that after spending some time at Treliske Hospital, where she learnt that she will require a pacemaker, she has now returned to her own home, where she is recuperating.

I know that you will all wish her well and hope that she makes a speedy recovery.

Annual General Meeting

On the 13th of this month we have our Annual General Meeting. This, as last year, will be conducted over Zoom. The agenda for that meeting and the minutes of last year's meeting are being sent out at the same time as this newsletter.

The AGM will be followed by our October Lecture.

Hosting Lecturers — Can You Help?

How exciting we are going back to live meetings at last from November!

This made me realise hosts will be needed for the lecturers. Please contact me if you can help or wish to chat about what this entails.

It usually requires collecting the speaker from Truro Station about 5.15pm and bringing them along to the college. Following the meeting, offering a bed for the night and providing a light supper and usually a glass of wine or two! Finally return them to the station the following morning after breakfast.

I have always really enjoyed having lecturers to stay. They are good company and not demanding guests. You can claim a hospitality fee if you wish.

Karen (Programme Secretary)



Live Lecture – November 10th 2021 Health and Safety

We hope to have a good number at the first live lecture that we have had for some considerable time and we have been carefully considering all of the Health and Safety requirements that need to be in place. We want members to feel that everything has been done 'for the greater good' of everyone present at that meeting.

This lecture will be held in the Kenwyn Building, which is not unusual at this time of year, when the college have special events on for new students. Subsequently our lectures should revert to the Mylor building.

The college themselves have stringent cleaning protocols in place to keep their students safe and they have their own Health and Safety Policy. We are required too to have our own Health and Safety Policy when we are using the college premises to take account of our members needs.

With this in mind we have come up with the following:

* Windows and doors will be kept open in the Refectory to ensure adequate ventilation.

* In the theatre the air conditioning will be on. We have found out that 'This space is ventilated with air handling units, so air is drawn in from outside then conditioned (either heated or cooled), then blown into the space, then extracted to the outside via a different grill. The air exchange is about 8 to 10 per hour'. * On entry and during registration we would like face coverings to be worn. We would also like them to be worn throughout the lecture in the lecture theatre.

* We think that most people will be happy sitting next to others during the lecture as long as face coverings are worn, but for those who might still feel vulnerable we will ensure that the front two or three rows have seating with a space left between each seat.

* Our tea and coffee will be served in disposable, re-cyclable cups.

* We would expect everyone attending the lecture to have had two Covid19 vaccination jabs.

* We would also like everyone attending the lecture to have done a Rapid Lateral Flow Test on the day of the lecture. This is quite a common requirement for choirs and other organisations now and for others carrying out voluntary activities. These tests are easy to self administer and the kits, which have seven tests in them, are available free from:

www.gov.uk

Free testing kits are also available from pharmacies

Closer to the November lecture date we will be sending out a yes/no survey to all members so that we know how many will be attending.



theartssociety.org/truro

Wednesday 10 November 7pm The Grand Tour by Brian Tom Duncan This will be a Live Lecture held in Kenwyn Theatre, Truro College

THE GRAND TOUR –The overriding theme of this lecture will be to recreate the perspective of a "Grand Tourist" of the eighteenth century. Who went? How did

they travel? Which route did they take? What did they see? Who looked after them? What did they buy? Did the experience have any lasting influence on those who went? These and many other questions will be answered! Beginning with the at times hazardous journey over the Alps and down into Italy we will recreate a typical "Grand Tour" beginning in Turin for a winter sojourn, continuing on to Venice for the Carnival and a few



Canalettos and then a brief stop in Florence to pay our respects to the local resident English grandee, Sir Horace Mann.

Rome was always the main attraction for these travellers and we will look again at all the city had to offer at that time: the classical ruins, St Peter's and other more recent architectural attractions, the temptations of the portrait studio and the sculpture dealers' atelier. Then there was the campagna, the countryside with its great villas and gardens. In the mid eighteenth century a new exciting diversion was added to the itinerary: Naples! The creation of a lively court under the now resident Spanish Bourbons, together with the extraordinary discoveries at Herculaneum and Pompeii made a visit to Naples essential. And what of the return? Well, we end with a look at some of the houses, landscapes and collections formed as a result of the Tour such as Holkham Hall and Kedleston. This will be a fitting end to an exciting journey. C. Hibbert, The Grand Tour, 1974. A. Wilton (ed.) Grand Tour – The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century.

Wednesday 8 December 7pm The History and Art of the Nativity Crib by Geri Parlby This will be a Live Lecture held in Mylor Theatre, Truro College

Nativity scenes or cribs as we know them today found their roots in the 1300s. They started as display pieces for Italian churches. Often made out of terracotta, these early Nativity sets were displayed year round. Since then they have evolved into a wonderfully diverse variety of artistic scenes. In this lecture we will be looking at the art form of the crib from the carved masterpieces of the medieval era to the extraordinary semi-pagan variations of South America. Christmas will never be the same again!



A Tour of Polgoon Vineyard

Situated on the very edge of Penzance and just off the A30 is Polgoon Vineyard. Here, celebrating on the day of the autumn equinox, fifteen members of Truro Arts Society paid a visit to and had a tour of the relatively new vinery.



Emma, daughter of the owners, John and Jim Coulson, explained to the group how her parents had purchased what was a derelict farm and outbuildings and through sheer hard work had converted the 23 acres, 2 cottages and 2 barns into what is now a flourishing business.

Their first harvest in 2006 saw them awarded a trophy by the UK Vitners Association for the 'Best Still Rose in the UK', but subsequently a number of lean years persuaded

them to diversify and perfect a sparkling cider product which they named 'Aval' (Cornish for apple). More recent additions have been Aval Raspberry and Peren (Cornish for pear), all produced by traditional methods. They also produce a Pinot Noir Red, a Seyval Grape White and a Polgoon Elderflower Fizz.

The tour concluded with a wine tasting of five of their products after which the group moved on to Trevaskis Farm and Restaurant, where, in the al fresco room, they enjoyed an excellent meal.











Zoom walk around Florence

Thursday 14th October 2021 11am

I am sure like me many of you have missed a little cultural trip to Italy over the last two years. So the next best thing a Zoom walk around Florence with Anna Piperato. I know everyone who came on Anna's walk earlier this year around Siena really enjoyed it. So do sign up and come along. Once again it is only £5 per person.

We will visit many of the main sites of Florence. Starting at San Lorenzo to learn about the Medici family. Then towards the Duomo and the Baptistry Campanile - and that famous dome. Heading down the Via dei Calzaiuoli (bonus points if you can pronounce It). We will marvel at the sculptures at the Orsanmichele before arriving in Piazza della Signoria (where a copy of Michelangelo's 'David' guards the entrance to the Town Hall). Passing underneath the Uffizi Gallery we'll finish with a beautiful view of the River Arno and Ponte Vecchio. Don't

miss out it will be a superb morning!

For those of you who don't know Anna she is a registered guide, passionate and contagious and a very knowledgable young woman. She grew up in the USA and studied Art History in New York and Manchester. Now living in Siena sharing her love for Italy.

Karen Kitson

To join Anna's walk, please click on the link below. Application Form Thank you to all those who have signed up to the Zoom Florence Walk with Anna Piperato. I know it will be a fun morning if our walk in Siena is anything to go by. There is still time to join - a great way to see Florence - with a cup of tea in your lounge, why not view with a friend.

Please contact me if you have any queries. Looking forward to seeing you in Italy! Karen Kitson (<u>karenjkitson@btinternet.com</u>)



If you have signed up to the zoom Florence Walk (£5) you will have access to the recording of the walk which will be sent out a few days later. Helpful if you couldn't be there live or missed a bit when the phone rang!



"LANDSCAPE DESIGN AND THE PICTURESQUE IN ART" BY TOM DUNCAN An Arts Society Truro Discovery Day Thursday 11th November 2021 at 10.30am Malpas Village Hall (transport arranged from Boscawen Park)

Eighteenth century England produced a remarkable number of classical Landscape Gardens that have survived such as Stowe, Rousham and Stourhead.

Throughout the century garden designers such as William Kent, Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton reshaped many aristocratic parks replacing formal Baroque schemes with varying approaches to the creation of a more relaxed and natural look. Behind much of this landscape design lies the influence of paintings, especially paintings in which an ideal world existed, inspired by the poetry of Virgil. Seventeenth century painters in Rome such as Poussin

and Claude created this world on canvas and Englishmen on the Grand Tour found them irresistibly attractive. So much so that not only did they buy these paintings to take home, they had real landscapes created in the English countryside which would allow them to have their own version of this Arcadian world literally on their doorsteps. As the century moved towards its close this classical vision came to be challenged by a wilder, more romantic notion of what landscape should be.

The "classical" picturesque gave way to the natural landscape as described in the writings of Richard Payne Knight and others. This was also the period when more natural landscapes came to be painted by Constable and the many new devotees of watercolour painting.



About the Lecturer

Tom Duncan was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he studied History of Art and Ancient History & Classical Archaeology. He then studied for his Masters in the United States, and moved to England in 1984 to complete his Ph. D. He has lectured widely to heritage and artistic organisations, nationally and internationally for many years. We do hope you will be able to join us on Thursday 11th November 2021 10.30am-3.30pm Cost £30 per person to include coffee and cake Optional Buffet Lunch £5.00 Please click this link for a booking form

Coming Ist of July FRY DURIDUS **80 DAYS** Join our virtual journey around the world this summer with a new lecture programme. Follow in the footsteps of Phileas Fogg and explore 24 destinations over 80 days - from wherever you are. Be guided by our Accredited Lecturers as you enjoy the Arts from around the globe. No steamer, railway or elephant required. GEORGINA REXON CINNY PALEMIS The art of Hinduisn Paris and the Belle Epoque TOBIAS CAPWEL The women who built The Golden Firs of The Knight American Art Institution in Art PETER MEDHURST The music of America The Great Omar The Art of Zen London then and now LYDIA BAUMAN **JOHN FRANCIS** BUTLER The birth of American Art The American Gothic Along the Suez Canal PATRICK CONNER Hong Kong Mans of America storic surdens of the iber Dubbie and beyond Aden and the Yemen Gothic Architecture revival Cloud Gate, Chicage THEARTSSOCIETY.ORG/80DAYS

Although 'Very Curious, Very Curious' started a few weeks ago, the lectures are all recorded, so you can dip-in at any time.

Anyone can sign up for the series, not just Arts Society members.

It is all free, but you must sign up.

Please follow this link for more details and sign in.

https://theartssociety.org/arts-news-features/verycurious-very-curious

I thoroughly recommend the Chicago lecture by Rosalind Whyte, who talks about the outdoor sculpture 'Cloud Gate' by Anish Kapoor

J.B.



We want to enrich lives through the arts, even if we cannot leave our homes. During the current situation many people will feel isolated and lonely. On this site we want to connect people through a shared love for the arts. Please click on the red panel above for further Talks and Lectures.

AMY ALBRIGHT Contemporary Fine Artist

You may have noticed that The Arts Society Truro has a new 'look', using a picture painted by Amy Albright, a young artist who has a studio at Krowji Creative Hub, Redruth.

She graduated from University College Falmouth in 2007 and currently lives and works in Cornwall.

In 2007 she won the Midas Award, culminating in a solo exhibition at Newlyn Art Gallery.



Amy has exhibited in group exhibitions in London, Nottingham, and the South West including: Cornwall Contemporary Gallery, Penzance, and Artonomy Fine Art, Truro. In 2009 she was selected to participate in a residency programme with Gallery Tresco, Isles of Scilly and in 2013 she became an elected member of the Newlyn Society of Artists.

Published here are sections from her website amyalbright.co.uk with some of the pictures from her forthcoming solo exhibition at Artwave West (see details right)



Still Searching 80x100cm oil on canvas

Amy Albright has developed a visual language that alludes to the interconnecting natural forms and patterns that surround us. Numerous sources are explored and referenced in the work: meteorological, astronomical, satellite and microscopic imagery, as well as her own investigative photographs. Her painting process is organic, imitating nature's ephemeral flux. The work evolves by allowing and capturing elements of chance, and balancing with an intuitive response to previous marks. In paintings of great richness

and sensitivity, she allows glimpses into a world that is not always visible to the naked eye. Minute fragments and traces that seem mysteriously familiar emerge out of deep luminous surfaces of colour. Through an intriguing relationship between macro

artwavewest

CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

Morcombelake, Dorset DT6 6DY Tel: 01297 489 746

artwavewest.com/exhibitions Amy's solo exhibition opens Wednesday 3rd Nov ends Friday 26th Nov



Surface Whisper 80x100cm oil on canvas

and microscopic, the viewer is often called upon to guestion their sense of scale. On the verge between figuration and abstraction, Albright's paintings communicate an intimate view of the intangible and ambiguous in nature, offering clues for the viewer to contemplate.

From Tim Smit KBE, 2019 (CEO and Founder of the Eden Project)

"Amy's work is hauntingly beautiful and full of life. Her powers of observation reflect someone who is a "natural philosopher", a noticer of nature's weft and of the power of the seasons. Her work harnesses two slightly contradictory feelings. Of sizzle and richness, the shadings blending the cool with the plush, the cold and lonely with the sunburnt and



Evershifting Vision 100x120cm oil on canvas

warm.

I have seen the Artist's work develop over the years and I'm absolutely riveted by her transformation into an observer of the moods of the natural world, unashamedly romantic but in the sense of someone who recognises that what is on canvas is important...in its own right, but also as an essential and intense life force to her. Amy Albright is an artist of distinctive power who will be recognised by a very wide audience as her work is already much sought after."

AN EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHES* by Jeni Fraser

The prosperous Dutch Golden Age was largely fostered by wealth reaped from overseas trading and colonial ventures. Exotic luxuries from all over the world poured into Dutch ports as the state and the Dutch East India Trading Company aggressively pursued their economic agendas overseas with the brutal legacy of colonialism which is still felt today.

As the prosperity of 17th century Dutch society increased, the general public became more engrossed with the amusements of everyday life, including education, commerce, and material goods. These changes had enormous repercussions on the art market, and it is no coincidence that *still life* arose as an independent genre in Europe parallel to the birth of early market capitalism and the world's first consumer society.



In the early decades of the century, colourful ontbiities ("breakfast pieces")-which typically show the ingredients of a simple meal-were in vogue. Clara Peeters, one of the few female artists of the time, is credited with helping to introduce this type of still life into the Dutch painting

Clara Peeters, *Still Life with Cheeses, Artichoke, and Cherries*, ca. 1625, <u>LACMA</u>

tradition. Her *Still Life with Cheeses, Artichoke, and Cherries* (ca. 1625) shows a richly painted, though humble, spread of mostly local products.

Yet beyond the obvious artistry, the painting has a nationalistic flavour. The butter and huge cheese wheels that dominate the composition evince cultural pride in Dutch agriculture (milk, called the "noble liquid," has become such an integral marker of Dutch heritage that Johannes Vermeer's <u>Milkmaid</u>, 1657–58, seems almost a cliché). The work is intensely realistic—every scrape of the serrated knife is reflected in the butter, for instance. The flowering artichoke and beautiful red cherries reflected on a silver plate punctuate the largely brown-hued composition. At the same time, this still life's humility reflects prevailing Calvinist sentiments. An eaten cherry at the



WILLEM CLAESZ HEDA, BANQUET PIECE WITH MINCE PIE, 1635, NGA, WASHINGTON D.C.

introduced *banketjes* ("banquet pieces") into the still-life repertoire. These sumptuous paintings reflect and celebrate this increasing prosperity and the country's international exploration (and dominance).

Heda's *Banquet Piece with Mince Pie* gathers a far more extravagant spread than Peeter's quaint breakfast scene. The warm and muted palette here exemplifies the so-called "monochrome" style Dutch artists preferred for still lifes and landscapes between the 1620s and late 1640s. Gold, silver, and pewter accents "pop" against the neutral background and white over-cloth. The scale of this painting shows these foods and objects near life-size, and viewers are further drawn into the scene by the plates and lemon peel balancing precariously off the table ledge.

Among the offerings here are olives and a lemon imported from across the Mediterranean, oysters with vinegar and precious seasonings like salt and peppercorn. The star of this banquet, however, is the mince pie. Seasoned with

edge of the table, only the stem and pit remaining, is a gentle reminder of the impermanence of life. But paintings, of course, were valued for their permanence. Here, the food never spoils.

A decade or two later, commercial goods from all over the world began to be imported with more frequency. Such products became necessary property for aspirational Dutchmen. A group of Haarlem-based painters, led by Pieter Claesz and Willem Claesz Heda, expensive imported currants and spices from India and the Near East, mince pie was a delicacy served only on festive occasions. Clearly, the wealthy host of this dinner party treated his guests to the most expensive imports – and perhaps the party got out of hand? It is certainly over. Look how the tablecloth is askew, a glass is broken (lying in the dish on the far right), and the candle extinguished.

While art historian Norman Bryson in his 1990s book *Looking at the Overlooked* calls such a scene of tipped-over goblets, rumpled tablecloths, and broken glasses a "still life of disorder" that represents the ongoing battle between vice and pleasure, virtue and abstention. But symbols are often slippery: A broken glass, for instance, might merely stand for wealth rather than a moralising sermon. It was an odd custom for drinking

drinking establishment patrons to throw glasses over their heads and pay extra for broken glassware (anyone who could not afford to do this drank beer with the unwashed masses).

Still lifes helpfully reminded viewers of the prosperity of their republic. At the height of the Golden Age, painters such as Willem Kalf produced fancy pronk ("display") paintings depicting items like Chinese porcelain,



WILLEM KALF, *STILL LIFE WITH A CHINESE BOWL, A NAUTILUS CUP AND FRUIT,* 1662, <u>HYSSEN-BORNEMISZA MUSEU NATIONAL</u>

Venetian glassware, and silver-gilt cups and trays. In *Still Life with a Chinese bowl, a Nautilus Cup and Fruit*, the glistening effects of light, texture, and colour foreground Kalf's aspiration, like other painters of the era, to "outcraft" the craftsmen of the precious objects he depicts—such as the Persian carpet on the table, silver tray, and Chinese porcelain sugar bowl.

This bounty draws in different corners of the globe, a proud nod to the everexpanding Dutch empire. By unpacking specific objects here, seemingly disparate cultures come together, connected by the Netherlands's globalising ambitions. The Ming sugar bowl, for instance, simultaneously suggests two different cross-cultural exchanges, one more sinister than the other. The sugar obliquely references one of the most barbaric elements of the global Dutch empire: the horrific, widely documented treatment of slaves on South American plantations. Meanwhile, the typical blue-and-white pattern on the bowl would later be adopted by Delft potters, leading to the famous "Delft Blue" of Dutch earthenware—which, therefore, has Chinese origins. <u>Timothy Brook</u> contends that such Chinese porcelains were so highly valued that the dish in Vermeer's <u>Girl Reading a Letter at an Open Window</u>, painted around 1657, would have drawn the contemporary viewer's eye from the young woman.

The embarrassment of riches in these paintings brings up an obvious question: Who consumes what, and at whose expense? Far from examining some distant phenomenon, 17th-century Dutch still lifes offer an uncanny perspective on our own times, in which globalism and consumer culture seem to be reaching a peak, once again in tandem with one another. What are the true social costs of today's most sought-after items, and why do people love to show them off? Nikes, iPhones, and designer clothes are imported from many of the same international sites the Dutch traded with hundreds of years ago (and employ similarly dubious labour practices). Instagrammers photograph, tag, and share pictures of their meals on smart phones – not so far removed from the ploys of 17th century Dutch merchants keen to document their wealth and objects via an an *ontbijtjes, banketjes* or *pronk* painting. As the poet Mark Doty once described, the still life: "It is an art that points to the human by leaving the human out; nowhere visible, we're everywhere."

Further Reading:

John Michael Montias <u>Vermeer and His Milieu: A Web of Social History</u>. Christopher Lloyd <u>Enchanting the Eye: Dutch Paintings of the Golden Age</u>, Julie Berger Hochstrasser <u>Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age</u>.

*The title of this article is borrowed from Simon Schama's book of the same name (Amazon.co.uk here – other retailers are available)

THE ART OF WAR: Artists of World War I 3 lectures with Catherine Wallace Art historian, author and lecturer Mon - Weds Nov 1st , 2nd ,3rd 2021 10.30 – 11.45pm on Zoom or You Tube with Q and A at end Cost £10 per lecture to book email catherinewallace2@icloud.com





Lecture 1: November 1st From Blasting to Bombardiering: The Modernists at War 1914 – 1919

Lecture 2: November 2nd Keep the Home Fires Burning: Women Artists 1914 – 1918 and depictions of Women's roles in WW1

Lecture 3: November 3rd War Horses: The role of horses and how they were depicted during WW1

THE ART OF WAR: Artists of Word War II

3 lectures with Catherine Wallace Art Historian, author and lecturer Mon - Weds Nov 8th, 9th, 10th 2021 10.30 - 11.45pm on Zoom or You Tube with Q and A at end Cost £10 per lecture to book email catherinewallace2@icloud.com



Lecture 1: November 8th Rebels with a Cause: The Modernists at War-1939 – 1945 in the Air, on Land and at Sea Lecture 2: November 9th Heroines in War: Women Artists and the depiction of Women's role in the Second World War Lecture 3: November 10th On Foreign Soil: War Artists Abroad - Battles (observed and imagined), Retreats and Prisoners

Click here for the Cornish Art History Newsletter August 2021



What's On

royal cornwall museum Open Tues to Sat. 1000 - 1600 Admission £5 Annual Pass

Citizens of Love and Rage by Gavan Goulder

Until 7 November

Portrait photography those involved in protests over the lack of action taken by leaders and government to address the climate emergency.

Fragile Planet

Until 24 December A major exhibition of watercolours that illustrate the precariousness of wilderness and endangered environments around the world. We are grateful for support from the Foster Foundation.



Climate Conversations

Until 24 December

A display of community responses to our collection, with a focus on climate change and the impact humans are having on the planet.

Glimpsing Truro's Past

Until 24 December

The development of our great little city illustrated through objects, stories and memories by the people that live and work here.