

our art

Issue 5 The magazine of the Nottingham Society of Artists

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Nottingham Society of Artists



Haidee-Jo Summers



Mim's Cats



After Camden Town
- the late works of
Harold Gilman



Studio
Improvements



Shooting your art



Matteo, our
friendly Intern

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Cover image:

Magic Catpet - Mim Brown

Welcome

to Issue 5 of OurArt magazine.

This is a very catty issue of our magazine. A loud meow to the closing down of the biggest attraction which draws the public past our gallery. Enjoy Mim's amazing imagination of a 'Norman' cat invasion of the Castle. The siege is upon us – the Castle is closed see pages 4 and 5!

There has been very interesting and varied exhibitions this summer, our charity schools exhibition, our **Jim Brown** retrospective, **Ala Bashir** with the biggest pictures I have ever

seen in the gallery. There were interviews by two TV stations and reviews by international art critics of his exhibition. (See back page) Then there were our Members exhibitions. Like me a large number of you like showing pictures. The shows are bursting with talent and visual delights. This summer in my opinion, brought the greatest variety of style, technique and competence we have shown yet.

Many of Jim Brown's pictures have been distributed in accordance with his family wishes. A good number have been sold to members and friends so far raising over £700 for the charity distributions.

Admittedly there has been a disappointing number of gallery closed weeks, but now we have Matt our first Intern on the case. He is bringing a new generation's outlook to our administration, will buck up our ideas and is empowered to find the solutions to all booking problems !!

Our social media presence has a growing following (nearly 1000 per week) and he is working hard at that to alert our and his own facebook following to come and visit our unique premises.

It is just as well we do not depend on the gallery for our financial stability although it usually makes a substantial contribution towards funding the range of our activities. It is our near 200 members who provide life support with annual fees. As to how we spend some of that money - see my article about improvements to the building.

Informing all Members is important, but not easy – not only engaging with volunteers for their time but also targeting information to the right people at the right time! . We all view contact and information in different ways. Our main ways are via the internet or by email. Unfortunately not everyone is media

savvy and I include myself in that. Yes I can do some things but others are a complete mystery. (Instagram, raspberry pies!). Phil Harrison has held power point talks on how to look at our web site and encourage us to put up pictures in the virtual gallery. I have listened and at last I have done it myself!



Going forward make sure the City wide 'Light Night' on the 8th of February is marked up on your calendar. We can never get enough help for this amazing evening and our supporting two week exhibition (6th - 17th Feb). Last year we had praise from the public and City Council Arts staff who visited our gallery.

If you have ideas or want to help, write your name and/or a message on the Studio office white board. *Alan Gardner*

Other Information:

The survey we held in 2015 called for changes in the membership structure of our Society. This resulted in the abandonment of judgement of artistic ability with members in grades such as Associates and Affiliates. Now we only retain a level competence in regard to the manner any work of art is offered for sale at a members exhibition. (The process of hanging and the presentation procedure for a sale). This permission takes the form of election to 'exhibiting member'. It is the one duty the Fellows have continued to carry out by a vote system. The Fellows were asked to decide on adopting a role of advising, mentoring or management if they are to continue to hold a relevant place in our Society. The Fellows held a meeting open to all members in mid October to discuss award or prize giving in the Society.

IS there a reason to continue a group titled 'Fellows' or should there just be volunteer groups of members who run an exhibition or other Society activities irrespective of being a Fellow? (or is that the situation already!). However members with knowledge and experience still have to make the decisions - is that why we should keep the Fellow role?

Want to hire this space for your own exhibition?



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For further details contact

bookings@nottinghamartists.org.uk



Alterations Top and Bottom

Like all buildings there is always something to upkeep and mend. Ours was built in 1934 designed by Percy Gill and cost £3,551.

Every year we spend about a third of our income on improvements and also pay the running costs of the rates, power and water.

Our year starts from April first for annual planning. So this year it is the studio that has seen a makeover.

At our AGM in June a vote was taken that the studio lighting for models needed improvement and that occupation of the room was obstructed with the large portable screen. The staging was on the wrong side.

At the same time a conclusion was drawn by the Board that electrically the room needed an update. The lighting wiring in the basement had failed due to damp and age and this prompted a review of the situation in the rest of the building.

In the studio we had the opposite - very hot in summer and although a few roof leaks had previously been addressed, now a dry and dusty structure. Why dusty? Because there were window board-wide ledges to fix the horizontal blind too which were hard to clean and became dust covered. More importantly the insulation wiring to and within lights was cracking. The lights had reached life end. A fire risk was developing which would not be helped with the dust and summer heat from the roof lantern exceeding 40C.

Renovations started in the August break, taking down the ceiling blinds and removing the wood shelves from the steel beams.

Then the electricians started - we decided an industrial system would complement the existing exposed steelwork, open lantern and the steel window. Technically it had advantages for future additional cabling and movement of fittings if amendment to the layout occurred in the future. Cost wise it was simpler installing all cable on grid tray instead of in trunking and to be able to fix the light fittings to it.

The light fittings are all LED and neutral in daylight correction. Power consumption at the meter is much reduced. Now pretty well all the building is updated to low energy consumption.

With the staging on the town side the sun appears to have more effect on light and shade. Without the horizontal blinds the room is brighter. Experimental panels block the light in

a pattern of shading. They are removable. Their position can be changed. Let's try the effect. If more shading is needed there are further measures which could be tried. For instance, the old blinds have been kept. Some are in poor condition, there is some hope others can be rescued and put up in new or the original positions. New blinds could be fitted but obviously there would be a further cost.

Having replaced the basic lighting which enables us to be painting at night and on gloomy days (what other way is there with painting?), there is lighting for the subject - the model, the still life arrangement, whatever and wherever in the studio.

To give as much flexibility as possible two theatre lighting gantries have been installed to enable overhead lighting to be added or easily moved about. There are 'klik' sockets central on every steel beam to plug them in from switches on the side wall. The gantries for accent lighting were a bargain purchase from Maplin's closing down event. They even came with free disco lights so let me know when you want 'strictly' dancing too!

Ron Gratton a lighting engineer who has also been a member of our Society, has been very supportive, made us two new lights and restored or improved three others with LED lamps. Most of the lights are overhead - wires out of the way as a hazard. There are still floor lamps and portable heaters which does mean wires for a trip hazard. Side lighting is difficult without stand lights we may need to experiment with more directional lighting.

There is still more wizardry to try out. You will notice the light switching panel by the door has buttons marked 1 to 4. They are dimmer switches to sockets on the lighting track. Additional lights can be plugged in and have dimming potential. The lights are not all fitted yet. We will see the result of the rest of the system and decide what to try later.

Backgrounds to the staging. We have made a down stand valance above and at the back of the stage. This gives a theatre-like opportunity to add curtains on a track or hang from hooks a temporary backcloth. (It has to be temporary if not fire proof). For that reason the curtains at the window have been replaced with a venetian blind and I cannot explain why a wood blind is deemed fireproof! I wait to see if any back of stage curtains, lights or something else will be tried by others....

Heating - We last year completed a comprehensive upgrade of the studio system. I have not heard any one complain of it being cold when it is switched on (pressing a button near the door gives up to 2hrs heat). So please do not expect any changes to the heating system - if it's working well at last, don't break it!

Sometime next year we will need an open forum meeting to talk about bringing into use the basement areas. We have reached agreement with our neighbour and authorities on creating an entry escape door from the street at the rear of our building. It will be possible to use this creative space for a print workshop, a meeting space or even personal painting? Your ideas will be needed to make the best practical decisions.

Some of you may have seen the remastered first world war film 'They shall not grow old' in colour by New Zealand film director Peter Jackson. There was a one day screening marking the 100 years anniversary of the war. (PJ directed Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit)

One memorable scene was the toilet - five men sitting on a pole over an open trench.. the pole snapped.

Now I am not saying our toilets are that bad, but I do hear they need to be kept better, so that is perhaps the next goal to achieve. And so the maintenance goes on..and on.

Alan Gardner and John Pooler are the Board custodians for the building.

Downstand Valance - ready for curtains or background blinds to the stage.



Mim's Cats

Mim has been a member of the Society for twenty-four years and is known and appreciated by us all. We know that, over the years, she has worked untiringly behind the scenes, doing the jobs that were easily taken for granted.

Somehow she still found time to paint and what she is most well known for are her cat pictures. They are so popular at exhibitions that it is unusual for them to be hanging on the walls at the end. She has painted thousand of felines on hundreds of pictures; what you see here is but a tiny example of her skill.

Born and raised on a farm, she was well used to being with animals. She drew from an early age, but cats, then, had no particular appeal. Things changed though, when she became a member of the NSofA and entered a picture for the first time in an exhibition. She'd seen a cartoon of cats and wasn't very impressed, thinking she could make a better job of it herself. So was 'Catacombs' created. To Mim's surprise it was accepted (those were the days of selection!) and to her even greater surprise, it sold. So she carried on, honing her skills, always using her preferred tools of pen and wash, with the occasional addition of crayon.

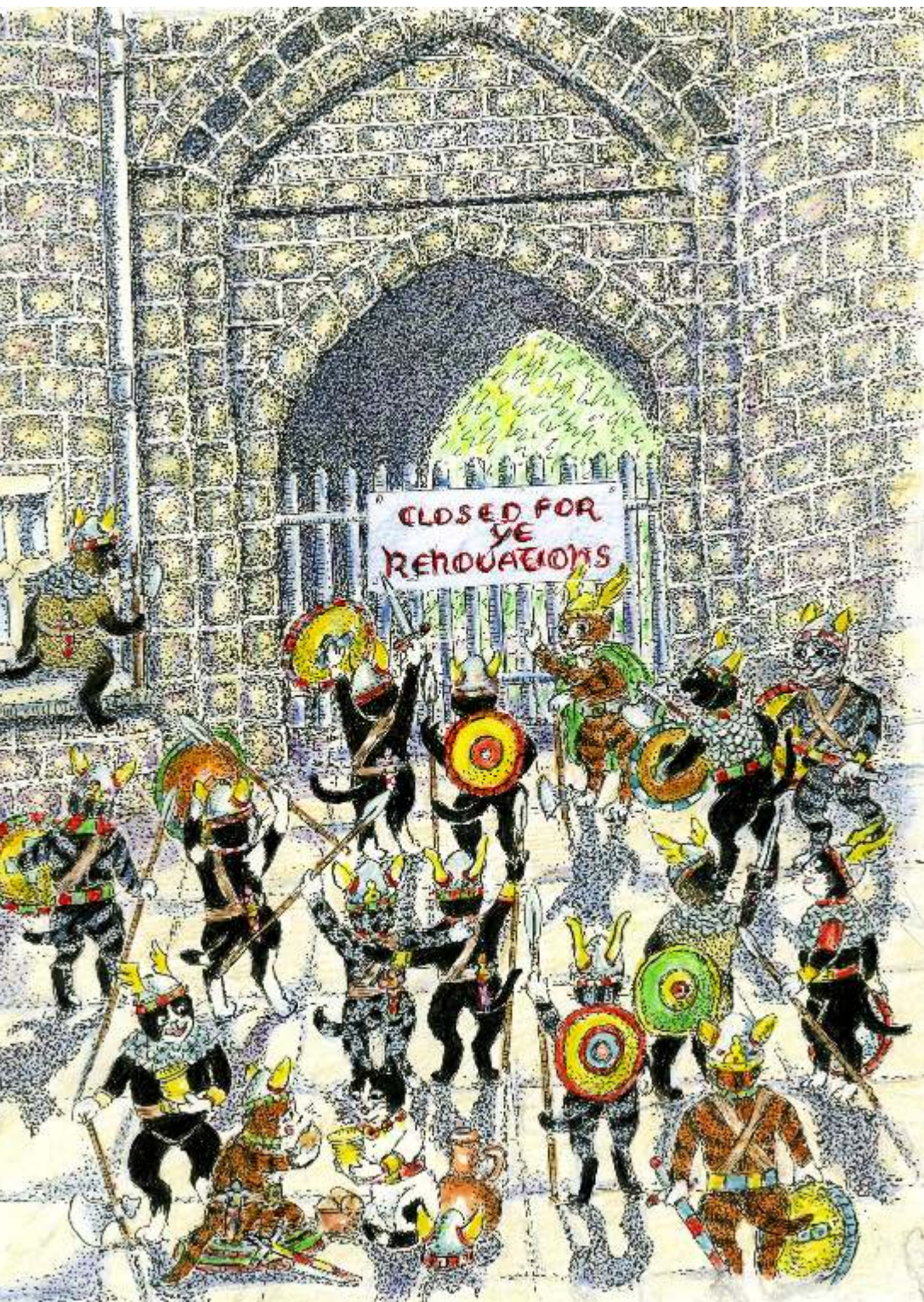
In 1955 she had taken a newspaper correspondence course in commercial art that she found extremely helpful. Other than that, she is self-taught and has developed a style that is instantly recognisable. There is a story in each of her pictures and at least one joke. They really repay close scrutiny.

Mim decided, on her retirement, that she was going to paint, paint and paint.

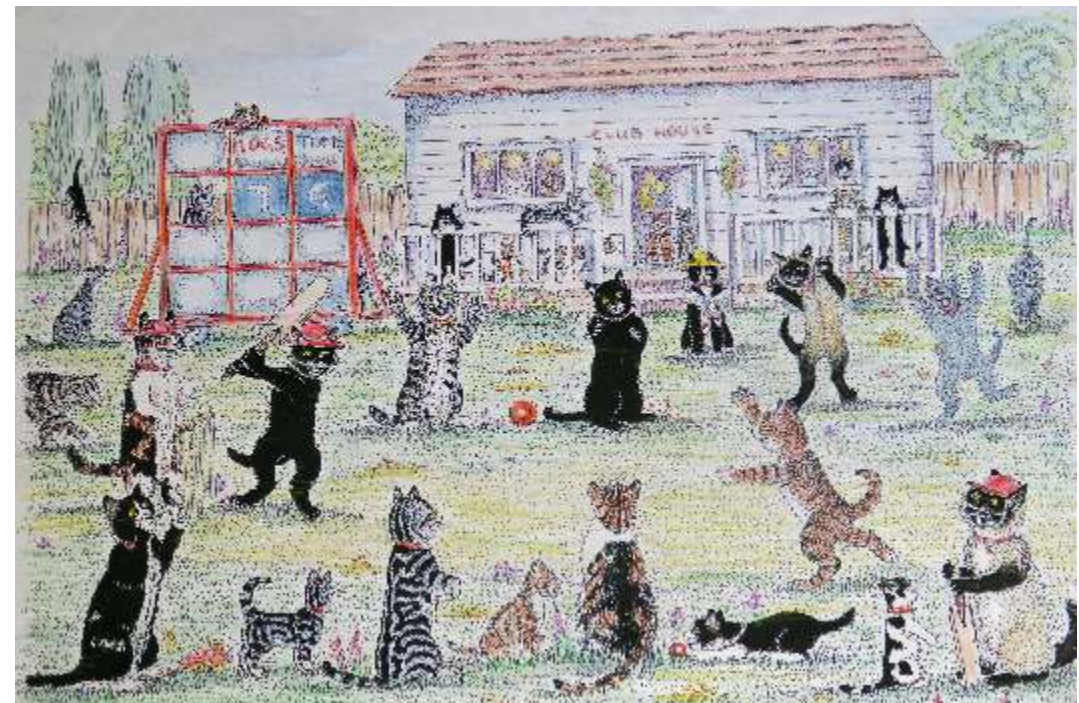
Her mother had suggested that she should become a hairdresser 'because that was artistic'. This she did for twenty-one years. She never enjoyed it and is happy that the cats took over. Since moving from a flat to her present house, there have always been cats living with her (currently there are four). Mim hasn't acquired them intentionally; they've sought her out, starting as lodgers and gradually assuming resident status. This ensures a constant supply of models.

Keep painting, Mim!

I was looking forward to a pillage....



It will never last....

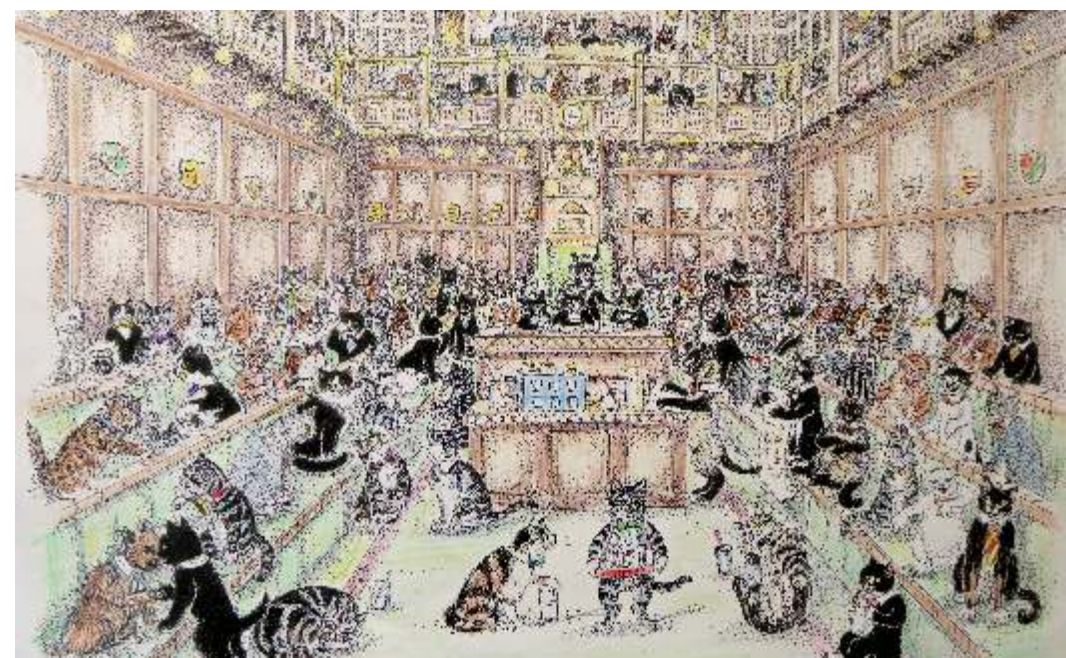


Crickcat

We have always been excellent hunters



Catsminster





Tomcat pole



Catservatoire



Moon Dance



Kitchen scene



*I dread
Saturday
nights...*

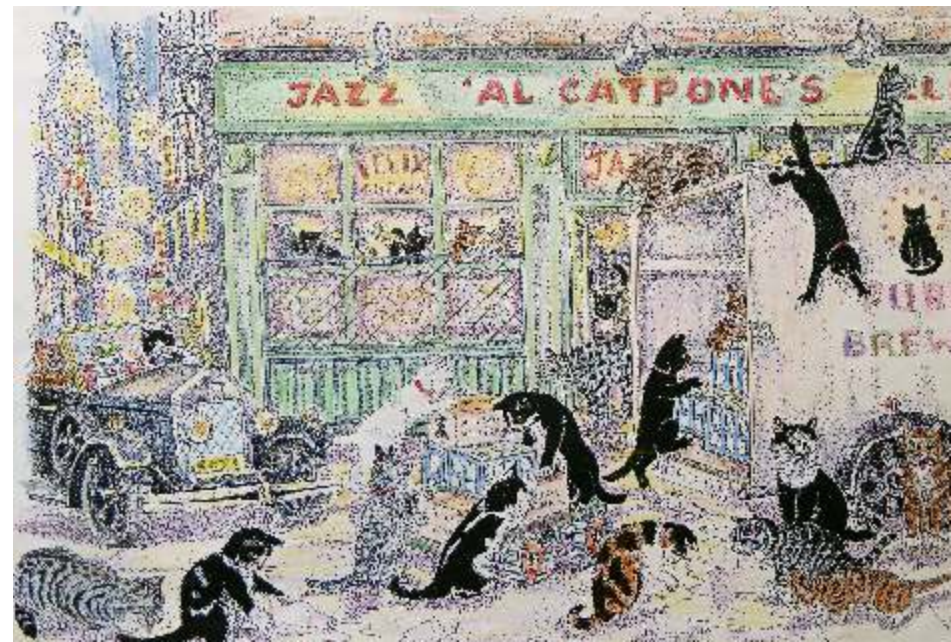


Cool cats

Jazz at Catpone's Club



The Catsaders



Haidee-Jo Summers

We are very proud and privileged to have had Haidee-Jo as a member of the NSofA since 1991. During that time she has achieved success, status and admiration as an artist in this country and abroad.

Many of you will be familiar with her work by seeing it in exhibitions or in artistic publications. She has featured in the Encyclopaedia of Watercolour Techniques, Artists and Illustrators magazine, and The Artist. In the latter, as well as featuring in innumerable issues, she was also on two front covers.

She has appeared on TV, painting the river pageant at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. She has written a book and made a video*.

The art prizes and awards she has won make an awesome list.

She won her first as an adult in 1997 with the Young Artist Award from the Royal Institute of Oil Painters (ROI). Between 1997 and 2017 twenty more were added - an impressive list by any standards!

She has had solo exhibitions in London, France, Nottingham, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire. Her work has been shown in many juried exhibitions: she has been exhibiting for at least twelve years at the ROI; five at the New English Art Club (NEAC); five years at the Royal Society of Marine Artists (RSMA) and six at The Artist.

In 2015 she was elected an Associate member of the ROI and a full Member in 2016.

The RSMA elected her as an Associate member in 2017.

Can you tell us where it all began; do you remember drawing when you were small?

Yes I was always drawing as a child and receiving drawing materials for birthdays and Christmas. I also loved typography and used to spend hours copying different typefaces. I won my first competition for a drawing when I was around 9 years old, entering the competition on a box of teabags and winning with a drawing of washing on the line!

What happened when you left school?

After school I did a year's foundation course at York, where I was steered towards illustration because I could draw. That was fine by me at the time because the fine art department seemed to involve chicken wire and plaster of paris rather than pens and paper!

So I went on to a degree in illustration at De Montfort University in Leicester. It was Leicester Polytechnic still when I started in 1991. As it happens it was a great course for me and it's where I really started to paint. We had lots of drawing projects and did a whole day's life drawing every week, which usually involved painting from the model and short poses. I attended portrait and life drawing groups at the NSofA during evenings and weekends. I also won a painting competition on Channel 4's The Big Breakfast with a small self-portrait. That was the start of my using oil paints, as my prize was a studio easel (which I still have) and a wooden case of oil paints.

By the time I graduated in 1994 I knew that I didn't want to be an illustrator after all. I wanted to paint the things I chose to paint, and then try to find an audience for that work. I had my first exhibition in the NSofA upstairs gallery. I think my average price then was around £20!

I was invited back to De Montfort to teach life drawing one day a week, so that's when I got started with teaching. I also worked at Dobbs picture framers in Nottingham, and then I started teaching several weekly painting and drawing classes at Keyworth village hall.

For the last 20 years we have lived in Lincolnshire and raised our children, Milly and Oscar here. We only left for a year when we lived on a little island in France for the whole of 2011.

Before going to France in 2011 I was holding weekly art classes in Fulbeck and Dry Doddington, and opening my studio with the Lincolnshire Open Studios scheme, Art on the Map.

The year in France was a wonderful break and a chance to rethink the way I worked. I particularly took to plein-air painting during the year, and also discovered the online world of art blogs and Facebook as I felt a little isolated from other artists. When we moved back to the UK I determined to make the most of competitions and opportunities, and decided to teach day workshops rather than weekly classes so that my diary would be more flexible and give me more time for my own painting. I also vowed that I would never miss the ROI annual submission deadline ever again, as my longest held ambition was to become a member. That ambition was started at Friar Lane also in the mid 1990's, thanks to meeting



Above - Burgau

Parasols at Don Sebastia



Leslie Goodwin who was a member of the ROI at that time and encouraged me to enter.

When we had only been back in the UK a couple of months in 2012 I entered the SAA Artist of the Year competition. The SAA have around 45,000 members so you can imagine how stunned I was to win the first prize, and the title 'Artist of the Year'. That helped I'm sure when it came to the BBC picking artists to paint the Queen's Diamond Jubilee river pageant. In spite of the weather it was an incredible thing to be a part of and such a talking point. Thanks to social media I had artists congratulating me from all over the world!

From then on it was like a snowball effect, more and more opportunities came my way and suddenly so many people were getting to know me. I always say that I became an overnight success after working hard for 20 years!

So, where are you at with your painting now? What are your preferred ways of working; what are your favourite subjects and media?

I mainly paint in oils en plein-air although I do develop some work in the studio. Nothing beats the thrill and challenge of being in front of the subject for me. I find that having an immediate and living connection with my subject throughout the painting process feeds my imagination and I often find myself working in a heightened state of adrenaline and against the clock. I love the challenges that painting en plein-air can throw at me and get myself into increasingly difficult situations, never having a 'fail proof' method, never knowing what the outcome will be, never feeling 'safe' but very much alive and often very uncomfortable. My favourite subjects are intimate scenes rather than grand vistas; harbours, fishing villages, allotments and gardens, backyards, washing

lines and interiors, sheds and chickens. Painting in snow is a real favourite but we just don't get enough of it!

We moved house last year to a gorgeous place in the Lincolnshire countryside with a huge but very basic 1970's joiners workshop in the garden. We're currently in the process of renovating and extending it and it's going to be the most amazing space to work in, I'm extremely fortunate.

I'm all about the oils. I've used just about everything else in the past but all of my gallery work is oils. I do draw in pen a lot and occasionally use watercolours in my sketchbooks.

I don't generally take commissions, although I will occasionally do something special for an existing collector.

....more



**Coming ashore at
Lympstone**

Do you do much teaching?

It's very important to me that I spend my time mostly painting, with a little teaching on the side. My own painting is always my utmost priority. These days I do some two and three day workshops every year, and the odd painting holiday abroad. All my upcoming workshops are listed on my website here

<https://www.haideejo.com/workshops>

Are there any artists (living or dead!) whom you particularly like/admire or may have influenced you in any way?

I have so many favourite artists, but most particularly Joaquin Sorolla and John Singer Sargent. Ken Howard has been my constant inspiration since I was a student and I've been lucky to get to know him in recent years and have visited his studios in London, Cornwall and Venice.

Other favourite British artists include Bernard Dunstan (sadly died recently), David Curtis, Trevor Chamberlain, John Yardley, Lucy Willis and Peter Brown.

I hardly dare ask, but do you have time for any hobbies? If so, what are they?

Er-no!

Do you have any special plans or aspirations for the future?

I just want to go on developing and improving my work, that's always been my driving force.

And there's such a long way to go with that! I always want to express more about my personality and feelings with more economy, and am ever aware of my shortcomings and areas where I need to grow. My sketchbooks are full of drawings of figures and faces and my gallery work is mainly marine and landscape so I see a future path in bringing the two increasingly together and painting from groups of people in the open air is what I long to do more of.

Many thanks to Haidee-Jo for pausing in her extremely busy life to make this interview possible. It's lovely to think that, in all the exciting things that have happened to her - particularly in the recent past - she still retains her links with the NSofA. The connection is a source of pride and pleasure to us.

***She is certainly an inspiration as far as the work ethic is concerned! Not many of us can emulate her, but it's certainly possible to take pleasure in watching her working. You don't need to be an oil painter to enjoy her video 'Vibrant Oils' or her book of the same title. They really are delightful!**



EXHIBITION PREVIEW

After Camden Town - the late works of Harold Gilman.

Anyone visiting this Autumn and Winter exhibition at the Djanogly Gallery will inevitably make an acquaintance with the formidable figure of a woman who is possibly the most familiar housekeeper in British art history. This, of course, is Mrs Mounter who was Harold Gilman's landlady at 47, Maple Street, London W1 during the years of the Great war.

Gilman made a number of drawings and paintings of Mrs Mounter at this time and in what is probably the most celebrated of these depictions (Tate) we see the lady at close quarters in confined space as the artist invites us to join her at the breakfast table and to share a welcome cup of tea from her traditional dark glazed pot. This is a sympathetic portrayal of a woman with whom Gilman was on close terms and who, despite differences of age, background and social class was able to participate in both the domestic and creative life of the artist.

Gilman places the viewer (and himself) seated at the breakfast table directly opposite this apparently austere but strong, resolute and characterful woman. The picture gains additional poignancy from the year of its completion, 1917, a time of national crisis and personal sadness for a great many people. In another, slightly earlier picture "Interior with Mrs Mounter" 1916 – 17 (Ashmolean Museum Oxford) we see Gilman's housekeeper standing in the middle ground by an open door separating two interior spaces, keeping watch over her domestic domain as sunlight penetrates through a partially open window casting shadows across the floor of the apartment. Gilman's presence is alluded to by means of his hat, coat and artist's satchel hanging behind the door. The tranquility and order of this inner sanctum provides a sense of refuge from the outside world at a time when news of the casualties on The Somme was being received.

The two paintings referred to above were late works of Gilman's tragically brief career. He was to become one of the many millions who perished in the influenza outbreak which followed the cessation of hostilities. In both paintings the dignified figure of Mrs Mounter is presented in the familiar setting of Gilman's Maple Street lodgings situated off Tottenham Court Road just a short distance away from Fitzroy Street in a neighbourhood which is now seen to have played a highly significant role in 20th C British Art and in the advent of modernism. In these streets and the surrounding area were located the studios, residences and meeting places in which the various movements and frequently short lived groups of artists came together, formed and flourished, albeit often only briefly. In doing so they inspired a new, innovative and some times challenging spirit in British art, a spirit which was to inform the more progressive tendencies in the crucial years surrounding the Great War, in the inter war period and even into the years beyond as far as mid century.

Harold Gilman, a native of Somerset, was brought up in the relatively comfortable and secure circumstances of the late Victorian and Edwardian middle class. He attended the Hastings School of Art and, significantly, was a student at The Slade from 1897 – 1901. In the years between 1902 and 1913 he travelled to



WA1968.20
Harold Gilman,
**Interior with
Mrs Mounter**
Image by kind
permission
© Ashmolean Museum,
University of Oxford

Although it would be inaccurate to describe Harold Gilman as a neglected or underestimated figure

Spain, to America and to Scandinavia. He also, crucially for his artistic development, spent some time in Paris during 1911. However the origins of Gilman's mature career can be traced back to 1905 when Sickert returned to London from France and his Fitzroy Street studio became a meeting place for a new generation of painters inspired by Sickert's Degas derived enthusiasm for the every day and the common place. This interest in the reality of daily life led Gilman along with several of his contemporary associates including Spencer Gore and Charles Ginner amongst others to form The Camden Town Group in 1911. This was also partly a reaction against academic tradition and against what they saw as the restraint and convention of much of the painting of this period.

The Camden Town Group artists were influenced initially by Sickert's impressionist technique and realist vision but increasingly they also began to be inspired by more recent ideas from the continent. Gilman along with Ginner spent time in Paris and by the time The Camden Town Group formed in 1911 the first of Roger Fry's highly influential exhibitions of Post Impressionism had been seen in London. These various experiences and influences resulted in the development of Gilman's mature style and in the emergence of a distinctive Camden Town vision and manner of painting.

In terms of subject matter this represented a consistent emphasis on the everyday reality of the urban scene immediately encountered outside the studio. In terms of technique the fundamental principles of Slade School draughtsmanship remained but were now combined with the high key palette, relatively saturated colour and impasto brushwork derived from French Post Impressionism. Formal structure and the analysis of plane reveals the influence of Cezanne, complimentary harmonies of colour are indebted to Gauguin and the vigorous intense application of paint owes something to Van Gogh. These technical and stylistic qualities can be readily identified in the Mrs Mounter pictures of 1916 -17 and in other works of Gilman's late period. Here we can perceive the clarity of structure, the decisive handling of space and the emphasis on plane with the final image realised through a radiant palette embracing umber, sienna, ochre, emerald, viridian, violet, vermilion and cobalt. One hundred years after their completion these paintings continue to command our attention through their construction, surface qualities, vibrant colour and life affirming qualities.

he has not received the acclaim (or notoriety) attached to some of his erstwhile contemporaries such as Augustus John or Wyndham Lewis. Gilman's work is quite well represented in The Tate and can be seen in various public collections throughout the country but as far as I know he has not been the subject of a one man show since The Arts Council Survey of 1981 -82 which I remember visiting at The Stoke on Trent Museum and Art Gallery.

The present exhibition will be a welcome opportunity to once again take a close look at an artist who played a decisive part in the development of British art during a particularly dynamic and productive period, a time when Gilman and his associates were instrumental in introducing the British public to the various progressive and sometimes revolutionary movements in art arriving from across the channel yet at the same time maintaining the continuity of the British figurative tradition.

In conclusion perhaps it is appropriate to quote the words of Charles Ginner, Gilman's contemporary and fellow founder of the Camden Town Group.

"All great painters by direct intercourse with nature have extracted from her facts which others have not observed and interpreted them by methods which are personal and expressive of themselves – this is the great tradition of Realism."

DWM.

After Camden Town

- The Late Works of Harold Gilman

opens on November 17th and continues until February 10th at the Djanogly Gallery, Lakeside Arts, University of Nottingham.

Work experience for Sophie

As a student at Carlton-Le-Willows Sixth form studying Art, Textiles and Psychology, I was asked to set up a week-long work experience for week commencing 25th June 2018 in an area of work I was keen to learn more about.

Having contacted the Nottingham Society of Artists, I met with Alan Gardner who kindly agreed to allow me to shadow his work with the Society with the additional bonus of helping out with the management of the 2018 Wollaton Festival. This experience turned out to be one of the most eye-opening weeks of my life.

At the start of the week, I had very mixed feelings; I was anxious about meeting and working with new people and being in an unfamiliar situation, but at the same time, I was also extremely keen to learn about the Society itself and gain further understanding of the art world by talking to like-minded people who all share the same interests to what I hope to aspire to in the future.

I wanted to understand, appreciate and experience the hard work which goes into organising and maintaining a successful Society and be aware of the day to day issues that running a public Society may entail. With further support and intervention of Alan, I was also able to work with Nottingham City Council, to experience the role of Festival Management by helping out with organised sessions and admin duties within the office. It was here that I met an Exchange-Student from Sweden named Sarah. She was studying Business & Communication at Nottingham University and had been helping the Nottingham City Council organise the Wollaton Arts Festival since last September. By engaging with Sarah, she provided me with a greater understanding not only of the different skills required for the type

of jobs I'm interested in, but she also gave me invaluable insight generally as to what 'university life' involves so that it may help me decide whether or not this is the right path for me to choose.

Whilst at the Nottingham Society of Artists, I was surprised as to the range of members, although mainly more mature in age, there was a good mix of male, female and ethnic origins. I felt as though I'd gained invaluable knowledge and transferable skills throughout the week, which will hopefully help me in the future including practical tips given to me from Edmund Wilson, during my gallery sitting with himself and Pat Bayliss, to help improve on the accuracy of my drawing skills by emphasising the need to know the anatomy and muscles of the human body in detail. On attending a Board Meeting of the Society, it also became clear to me not only what the structure of a typical business board meeting may take, but it also gave me insight as to the hard work that goes on behind the scenes of such a society in order to please all of its members whilst at the same time being actively aware and protecting members' safety and wellbeing. As a somewhat shy, quiet person generally, I feel as though my communication skills have improved somewhat as a result of my week of work experience. Being quite anxious about interacting with people I don't necessarily know, I was aware



Sophie (left) with Sarah

that this would be my biggest challenge to overcome. However by the end of the week and as a result of everyone's welcoming attitude towards me, I found myself beginning to interact more readily with others which I believe will be a great help to me in the future.

I wish to thank everyone; both members of the Society and those working on the Wollaton Festival, for making this a memorable week. You really opened up my mind to potential future career opportunities and I sincerely wish you all the very best in life and in your art. A special thank you must go to Alan Gardner, who made this invaluable experience at the Society happen. I hope to keep in touch with you all in the future.

Sophie



Matteo D'Alesio our friendly intern experiment!

Our aims

- 1 - It involves younger people than our general membership.
- 2 - Provides focus on keeping the gallery busy
- 3 - Sharpens our social media presence and thereby advertises who we are
- 4 - Supports our general administration.

After only eight weeks of the programme there is improvement on all the above 4 pointers, but I might be the only one noticing, as you all view only part of the picture. I try to see the overview. I do hope you will support continuity of the programme and see the cost as an investment in our future. AG

Matteo's report

I have spent the first month mainly talking with key people within the society, attempting to see where problems lie, how problems have been addressed in the past, and gathering enough information to go forward and solve problems successfully. I have also assisted with the distribution of Jim Brown's work and helped with some of the renovation work in the studio. However, the main areas I have concentrated on are shown below.

The gallery and the lack of bookings is a major issue. There seems to have been a lack of proactive activity in regards to the gallery since Dawn left her role, which means the booking calendar has slowly been getting emptier and emptier, with 2019 looking threadbare.

Footfall for the gallery is another issue. With closure of the castle it seems clear that natural footfall cannot be relied upon, which is why I'm in the process of growing our social media following on **Facebook and Instagram**, through posting regular content. Ideally, I would like to grow the following to 10,000+ people, so whenever an exhibition or event is on, we can simply broadcast the information to our online following.

Another area for improvement is workshops and classes. With the facilities available and our location, it would be good to see us run more workshops, as a means of generating more revenue and getting more people through the door. I have been in contact with Robin Perko in the past few days, and we are in the middle of arranging a workshop to be run in late November or early December of 2018.

These have been the main areas that I have recognised as needing urgent improvement in the first 8 weeks of my time here at the NSoFA.

Hope that gives a good idea of what I've been doing!

Matteo

Re-visiting the 'Very Joy of Art'

The Very Joy of Art is a history of the NSofA. It tells our story from 1880 to the centenary in 1980. It was written by a (now late) member, Marjorie Macmillan.

In 2010 Nigel Corlett, aided by a small team of helpers, added another six chapters. These tell what happened in the next thirty years, bringing it up to 2010, the 130th anniversary.

We thought that it would be entertaining to include occasional short extracts from the book in OurArt.. They make fascinating and often very amusing reading.

This first one goes back about twenty-five years, a period when socialising was almost as much a part of the NSofA as painting.

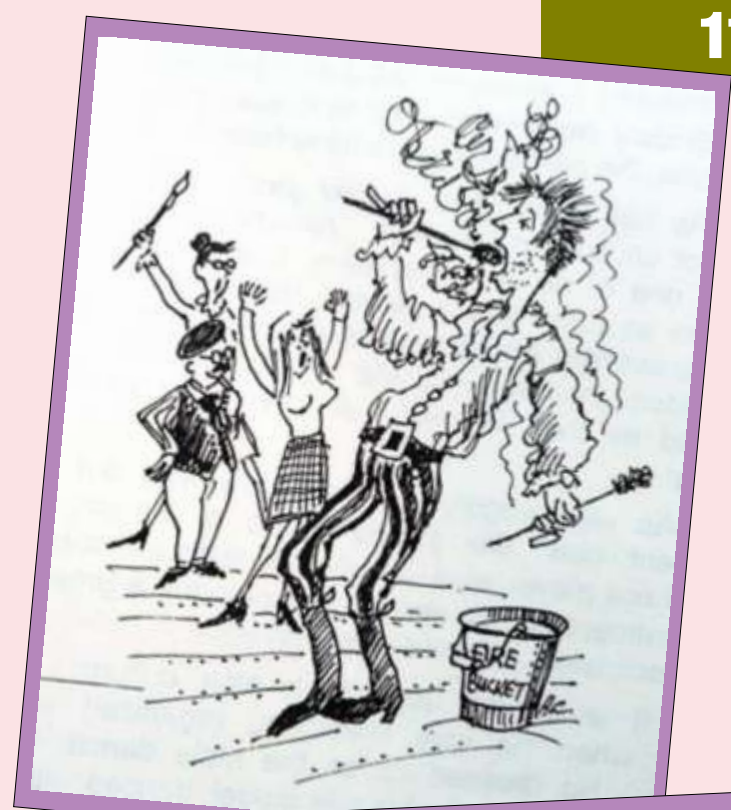
"Musical soirees were not unusual in the Society. Annette Currie-Wood, the wife of one of our late members, Edin, was as gifted a musician as she was a painter. One evening Annette came with her string quartet members, some of whom sketched as they listened.

As we struggle up the stairs with our painting equipment now, we should spare a thought for the harpsichord player who, on another evening, carried the instrument up the stairs to accompany a group that included wind players.

It wasn't all such high culture. Sydney Barker, when he was President, organised a French evening. He dressed up as the male dancer from the Moulin Rouge and, like his role model, danced with a large doll. There were lots of berets and strings of onions in evidence, together with lots of splendid French food and wine.

Another act to appear was a fire-eater with real flames. As he exhaled mightily, the fire alarm reacted promptly and enthusiastically, causing great amusement all round. Fortunately there was someone in the audience who was able to quickly turn the alarm off.

A closer brush with fire happened when Leslie Goodwin gave a demonstration using (alarmingly) a blowlamp that he played gently over the surface of his oil painting. Done with great skill, as Les showed, it resulted in a most wonderful effect on the canvas. One of the members, Nancy Glendon, who had a purpose-built studio at home, was captivated by what she had seen. Inspired, she set about trying to emulate Leslie. We have no record of how far she succeeded because, in the process of producing her masterpiece, she set fire to her studio which, alas, was burned to the ground. Happily, no-one was hurt but maybe it demonstrates the wisdom of the advice 'Don't try this at home'."



Drawings by Hedley Carrington

Shooting your art

A few tips for better photographs of your artwork

Photographing your work is becoming an essential today especially if you want to enter one of the many art competitions where a digital entry is required. You may be called upon to supply an image for a publication such as OurArt or for an NSofA exhibition poster. You might also want to upload your images to a website such as <http://www.nottinghamartists.org.uk> or you might just want to keep a record of all the work you do.

No matter what camera you own or whether you only use the camera on your phone, some basic guidelines will help you get a more usable image.

1 - Taking the picture. Hang the picture on the wall at eye level. This will make it easier to set up your camera, preferably on a tripod. Align your camera so that it is parallel and square to the artwork. If you do not get good alignment, the result will be distorted and you could end up with a 'keystone' effect which will look



unprofessional and require extra work at the pre-press stage to correct.

2 - Lighting. Outside - natural soft indirect daylight is often preferable to artificial lighting which can give unexpected results with strange colour casts. Indoors - If you are using artificial lighting, try to make it cast an even and soft light on the artwork. Angle any lights at 45 degrees from both sides, diffusing if possible.

Avoid flash - this is likely to create highlights and reflections. If your artwork is behind glass, remove it.

3 - Auto White Balance will help improve the accuracy of colours and choose a low (100) ISO setting if your camera has the facility.

4 - Fill the frame with your artwork image leaving only a small surround to allow for pre-press cropping.

5 - Ensure that the image is in focus. With auto-focus this is easy as long as the artwork has something that the camera can focus on. Often a painting may have little to focus on and the camera becomes confused by vague, soft areas. If this

Keystone effect to be avoided!



Avoid flash!

happens, hang something centred in front of the artwork that can be focused on such as a piece of white paper with a black cross. When focused, remove the paper and take the photo.. This technique requires a little bit of practice depending on your camera. You may need

someone to move the paper whilst you keep the focus in hold.

6 - Press and stand back. If your camera has a delay-timer, use this to help avoid any camera shake. Click and move away from the camera.

7 - Print or Web. If your image is to go to a printed publication the demands for quality are higher than those destined for the internet but this will not affect the way in which you take your photograph. However, printed work generally requires a higher resolution of 300dpi or more whereas website images are OK at a much lower resolution - generally 72 - 90dpi. The higher the resolution, the larger the file. This is worth remembering when sending pictures attached to emails. If sending high-res pictures be aware that your email service may balk at carrying more than one or two at a time. There are not usually any problems sending low-res pictures in larger quantities. If in doubt talk to your Publications or Website contact for advice. RC

Exhibitions . .

NOVEMBER

David Ross Abstractions

6 Nov - 18 Nov

Shooqi Atrabi

20 Nov - 2 Dec

DECEMBER

NSofA Small Pictures Exhibition

5 Dec - 16 Dec

John Pooler

18 Dec - 24 Dec

2019

FEBRUARY

Light Night Exhibition

6 Feb - 17 Feb

MARCH

NSofA Members Exhibition

6 Mar - 17 Mar

APRIL

NSofA Fellows Exhibition

10 Apr - 21 Apr

MAY

NSofA Spring Exhibition

15 May - 26 May

JUNE

NSofA Studio Groups Exhibition

19 Jun - 30 Jun



We started with cats so we'll finish with a catty Christmas reminder.....

Gallery Rental

Our gallery is open all year round, the studios are used daily and most evenings

The main gallery is available for exhibitions from £60 a day. Facilities include a kitchen and cloakroom. The lighting is excellent.

Education & Studio

Available for courses, exhibitions and meetings. £40 a session. Facilities include a kitchen and cloakroom. There is a screen and digital projector available.

Join us

Membership is open to all aged 18 and over. There are Sponsors and Supporters, Members and Fellows. All receive event invitations, this magazine and website access.

Members can have painting membership and exhibition membership.

Join online

www.nottinghamartists.org.uk/join

or by telephoning 0115 948 0476

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At the opening of Ala Bashir's exhibition Illusion on 9th September at gallery of Nottingham Society of Artists .

From left - Sudad Shahlan producer who lives in Holland, he is also a well known artist. Alan Gardner, Ala Bashir, Dia Azzawi well known artist. Basim Mehdi, President of British - Iraqi Artists Society. Amel Bashir.



Ala Bashir and the Power of Thinking

By Farouk Yousif, Art Critic

In his latest exhibition, Illusion, at the Nottingham Society of Artists in Nottingham, UK, from 4- 9 September 2018, Ala Bashir blends realism with illusion to produce dreamlike images of reality. Bashir's work does not comprise prettily painted scenes or mere technique, however. He confronts us with an intense reality borne of the duality of logical and abstract thought. He is The Thinker of artists. Bashir's paintings depict his thinking on the mystery of the human existence, of the universe. They invite us into hidden worlds of sophisticated imagery and wisdom a passing glance is incapable to capture. Bashir's works describe the depth of humanity in terms of comfort and torment, with notions of pain and suffering informed by his profession as a physician. Bashir contemplates

concepts of destiny, whereby his art moves beyond the here-and-now to connect us to the absolute.

Bashir's art lies at the intersection of symbolism and expressionism. Through his compact, tense style, he summarizes the story of mankind, which, in the face of unchanging human nature, must also face itself.

Ala Bashir, born in 1939, is a British-Iraqi artist and physician. He started painting as part of the Iraqi Impressionists Group - led by artist Hafid Al-Duroobi- at the end of the 1950s. Bashir kept his distance from what was then described as Iraqi Modern Art, to develop his own modernism in which thinking stands prominent. Bashir is The Thinker in an artist's gown.