

our art

The magazine of the Nottingham Society of Artists

Issue 7

Spring 2020



Dogged Determination
and Inspirational Teachers
Steve Brazier



Denzil Forrester at the
Nottingham Contemporary



Colin Treliving - a snapshot



Light Night draws in hundreds

Nottingham Society of Artists

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Welcome to issue 7 of OurArt magazine.

In the past year many positive actions have continued and we have moved forward ever stronger. The membership is growing steadily now running with more than 210 members. Thanks to Phil Harrison our media presence has continued to grow – we have around a 1,000 followers on Twitter and Facebook. Despite the challenges with the Castle being closed, the gallery still had 500 visitors on Light Night Friday and being open on the Saturday nearly the same public visitors. We were pushing them out of the door at 10pm!

At last the basement is cleaned up following the sewage flood last year. There is now a proper fire escape and entry door from the rear of the building. The builder is back. Soon the space can be made attractive and become art workspace and accessible storage.

The tutored activity for basic skills in screen printing has got going during the year and is now thriving. Investment has been made for new easels and more lockers in the studio. Lighting has been upgraded to LED in the Gallery cutting the electricity consumption.

A commercial cleaner has been engaged to carry out a deep cleaning programme to back the regular general housekeeping. Our expectation is that together with actions from all members we should see a new sparkle to kitchens, studio and gallery. With the present virus crisis our timing could not be better !

Sadly we are losing some of our Directors at the AGM. Margaret, Greg and John are stepping down. Hopefully some of you might show interest in helping to manage the Society. It is definitely not a boring experience and does have its own interest and satisfaction in seeing the Society improve and update.

The magazine is being posted to all members showcasing our art work along with the local art scene. With the disruption caused by the Coronavirus we hope sending OurArt to you will inspire you to keep working in these challenging times until we can all resume our normal Society activities.

Social support - the 2020 viewpoint;

In 2012 we carried out a member's survey to find views and information about how our Society ran. Now we can look back at who we were and who we are now.

Artists you should say - of course!

Admittedly we have variable abilities, styles and techniques, but also we want to do things together. Draw and paint, review our ability with one another, show our work in a public gallery, maybe make a sale...

But what is our common thread? Might it be taking part in a mental process enjoyed by like-minded others? Is it just to work in a warm room keeping messy charcoal and paint away from home furnishings? Is it having a model to draw or an endless variety of arranged still life objects?

With an age profile which rises from mid 20s to the dizzy height of the 90s but a majority of retirement age, is our enthusiasm borne out by how we turn up week after week, struggle up impossible stairs, make cups of tea and much social talk? With our support of university students in degree shows and group exhibitions the strength of our Charity continues into the 136th year!

So what is the most popular group of our weekly calendar – Friday afternoon hits the top spot with around 30 members for a talk about a famous but relatively unknown artist by one of the members attending. That this is not a painting group as you might expect. In painting the capacity of the studio is reached at 25. The painting groups are rarely less than 8 and take place regularly every day except Saturday.

My conclusion from this is that it is the social atmosphere which is as important as the painting ability and helps our membership to live longer! **AG**



Society members exhibit at the Smoothie Art Cafe in Ilkeston

Phil Harrison, the Society's website manager, who lives in Ilkeston was asked to submit some pictures to the regular exhibitions at the Uchoose Smoothie Art Cafe on Bath Street, Ilkeston. Just before Christmas it transpired that the whole of the cafe interior and one window was being made available. So Phil invited some of his colleagues from the Society to exhibit with him.

The result was an exhibition which ran from January 13th until February 8th showing the work of Maureen Copley, Roger Crooks, Gordon Dryden, Jack Findlater, Phil Harrison, Enid Patrick, Bob Sparham, and Colin Treliving.

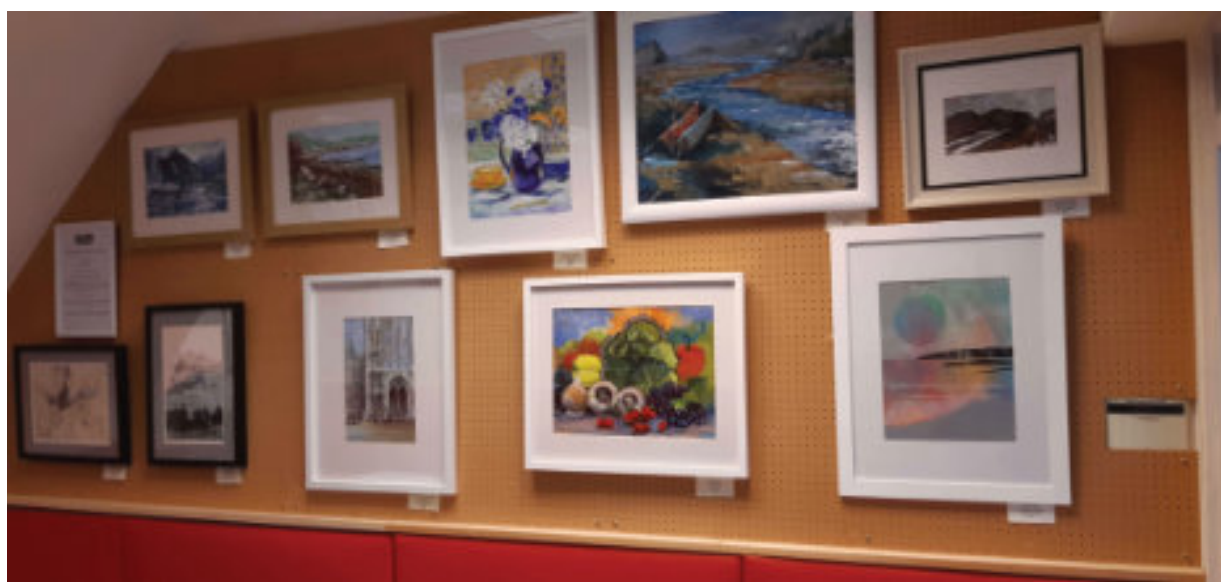
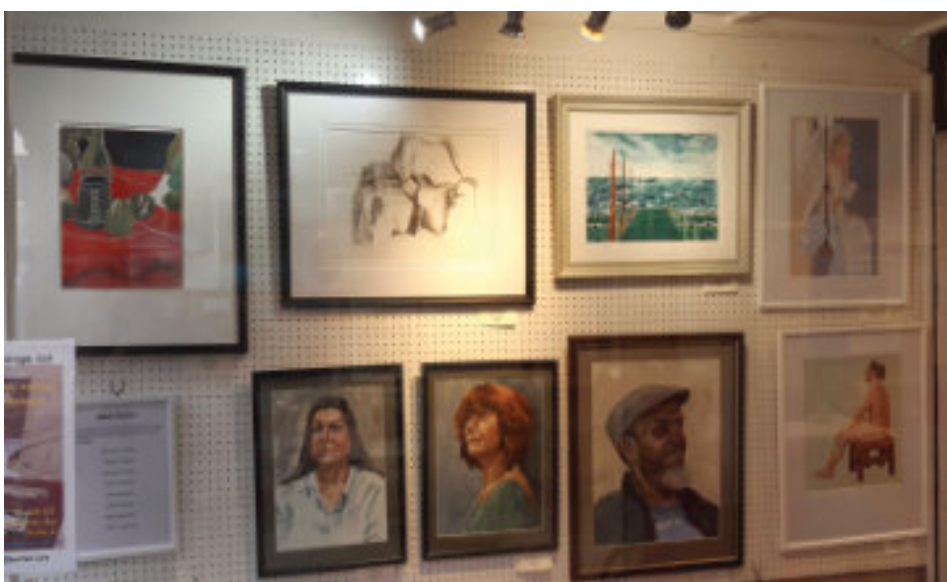
The cafe normally has a running exhibition of work by local artists but this was an opportunity to showcase the Society. The cafe owner, Paul Opiah, said the cafe customers, many of whom are local artists, were very impressed by the exhibition. One picture, "Against the Light", by Enid Patrick, sold within a couple of days.

Paul is keen to forge a link with the Society with the possibility of future exhibitions. The cafe is well worth a visit and further details can be found on their website at <http://www.uchoosesmoothie.co.uk/>

The cafe is at the top of Bath Street in Ilkeston with plenty of car parking close by. Travelling by bus from Nottingham, you would take "The Two", the yellow Barton's bus leaving the Victoria Centre bus station every 10 minutes, and alight at Wharncliffe Road in the centre of Ilkeston. From there the cafe is a short walk across the market square.



Views from inside the Uchoose Smoothie Art Cafe



Messages on the wall

Part two of three articles by Gordon Dryden questioning....

The Message of Art

Why do we draw and paint? We don't really know why; just that we do. We relate to our environment through the visual arts. Although we may not understand the compulsion that drives individuals to develop the necessary skills. A landscape can be a way of expressing admiration for a scene or to capture a sense of time and place for subsequent nostalgia

A portrait can be a statement of affection for the sitter or a product in a commercial transaction. The Arts, generally, serve the purpose of something approaching therapy for the artist but also an attempt to communicate something to another individual or to a wider anonymous public.

In some respect, a painting or drawing is a message from the artist even if a viewer focuses only on their own response without thinking of another individual as the originator of the visual statement they are looking at. That probably doesn't matter for most paintings insofar as an artist displays their interest in or affection for a view or an arrangement of flowers. A viewer of a painting can derive their own pleasure from looking at the depiction of the subject. That is not the case for all Art. I find it hard to accept that fifteen thousand years ago individuals walked miles into caves with only small lamps to make large drawings of animals as a mark of their liking for the natural world. Their work almost certainly had an important function in their community. The work of Greek and Roman art was a public expression of human achievement and power, an acknowledgement of the power of the gods



and, at a domestic level, an assertion of the importance of family tradition and the gods of the hearth. The church made even more specific reference to biblical narrative, reinforcing the centrality of religious observance and related morality. In all cultures the works of art were intended to carry messages to a wider population.

At times, the visual arts have become self obsessed with the artist regarded, at least by him or herself, as a uniquely important individual. Over the past 70 years this concern with the individual has been hijacked by market forces so that a piece is valued for the financial

value placed on an artist's name. Hence, a banal piece of work by a student but under Damien Hirst's name is worth a million pounds, turning the work into a form of currency. That may be unimportant to artists except that the monetisation is accepted by critics as a basis for "artistic" evaluation. The result of this critical abdication has seen colleges promoting attitudes to art that encourage students to seek styles that meet market trends. In the current climate of monetisation this has led to an emphasis on marketing. The descriptive excesses of restaurant menus are a model of restraint when compared to the language of student manifestos where a cardboard dressing table is invested with existential significance.

This isn't an attack on all conceptual art. I admire Andy Goldsworthy whose work makes a serious comment on our relationship with our natural environment, but his work is based on a deep concern with his subject matter rather than its commercial value or on his own fame. Colleagues at the NSA show the same focus on their subject matter and on developing the skills that will help them explore the subject and depict their response to it more effectively. I was always impressed by Jim Brown's approach to his work. Not everything he did was successful, but he was always committed to refining his technique to express himself more economically and some of his drawings bear comparison to any work by much more famous and expensive artists. There are plenty of other colleagues whose work I admire because of the clarity of the artist's response to the subject; Jean Jago, Mary Austin, Jack Findlater. We will all have our particular favourites.

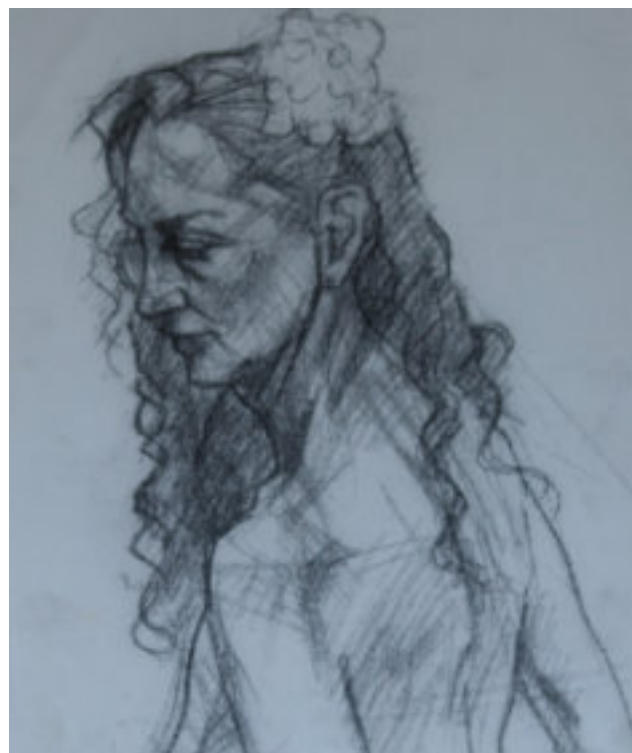
My own work is a product of my training; a composite of the human figure and abstract painting. The interest in abstract art has resulted in the colour planes that form that background to most of my work but my background in sculpture has resulted in a subject matter focused on the human form combined with an enjoyment of texture. I leave plenty of evidence of changing my mind in the layer on layer of pigment because I'm simply trying to find an expression of what I understand and feel about the subject. Inevitably, this reflects a sort of conversation between me and the painting so that whatever I started off trying to do is changed when I actually see the paint on my canvas. This is especially important in painting portraits. The expression of a sitter inevitably changes every few seconds, as does the lighting, sitting position and my mood. All of that impacts on how I perceive the sitter. I paint what I think I see at the time and over a number of sittings, the changes accumulate to leave a trail of

complex and sometimes contradictory features in the portrait. I regard this as a benefit in reflecting the kind of ambiguity we all experience talking to someone face to face. I would worry if I was talking to someone with a frozen expression like a photograph. I have no interest in trying to be a camera; I have a phone camera for that.



I do choose particular subject matter which over the past decade has primarily been about the changing moods, experiences and the assertiveness of women. Why women? They make up the majority of available models; the female form has a wider range of metaphorical references and I find that the particular models I work with are imaginative and creative in contributing to the ideas I put into the paintings. A point insisted upon by Jim Brown was the professionalism of the models he worked with, the need to respect them as colleagues and to recognise the importance of their contribution to his work. I agree with him entirely.

The descriptive excesses of restaurant menus are a model of restraint when compared to the language of student manifestos where a cardboard dressing table is invested with existential significance.?



Pint of Science 2019 and 2020

Two NSoFA members were involved with 'The Pint of Science Creative Reactions' event in 2019. Paired with scientists from the University of Nottingham, they were tasked with producing a work of art related to the research being carried out by the scientists. It was an exciting project which Audrey Adams and Roger Crooks both enjoyed although their respective scientists were researching completely different fields.

The resulting work was displayed at 31K, a bar in Hockley, along with other artists' work from around Nottingham.

Pint of Science is an annual event that was started in 2012 by two research scientists, Dr Michael Molskin and Dr Praveen Paul at Imperial College London. They organised an event called 'Meet the Researchers'. It brought people affected by Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Motor Neurone Disease and Multiple Sclerosis into their labs to show them the kind of research they do. It was inspirational for both visitors and researchers. They thought if people want to come into labs to meet scientists, why not bring the scientists out to the people? And so Pint of Science was born in May 2013 and they held the first Pint of Science festival in just three cities.

The events are held at local venues where the public are invited to listen to scientists discussing the latest thinking in their chosen field. As most of the venues are pubs then it's easy to see where the title 'A Pint of Science' comes from.

Creative Reactions is a feature of the Pint of Science Festival in which artists are paired with research scientists from the University. Scientists and artists meet to discuss how they might create a work of art relevant to the science in question. It is a collaboration that can be a lot of work for the artist but can also bring about surprising results for both parties. Both Roger and Audrey have now been paired with scientists for the 2020 Creative Reactions event.

Roger's collaboration 2019

Roger was paired with Dr Jen Martin and her team at the University of Nottingham where research was taking place into the use of Virtual Reality to help in mental disorders. Meeting with Jen and her team led to a collaboration for a painting which attempted to illustrate the journey that a severe phobia sufferer might undertake with a good possibility of positive results.

The painting will be permanently displayed in the University Mental Health Research Department.



Pint of Science 2020 events are taking place in countries across the world and 40 cities in the UK - follow the link below for more information and tickets for the <https://pintofscience.co.uk/events/nottingham>

Audrey's collaboration 2019

A creative reaction to my discussion with Dr Stephen Alexander of the University of Nottingham whose specialist research is the cannabinoid molecules. Plants, animals and human beings all produce a variety of cannabinoid molecules - phytocannabinoids and endocannabinoids (in the body).

I depict the molecules and their characteristics as two entities 'Endo' and 'Phyto'. Phyto and Endo share some similar structures. The mimicry of the endocannabinoid molecule by the phytocannabinoid enables the phytocannabinoid to be used in research, as endocannabinoids do not last very long in the body.

In my artwork Endo and Phyto are nestled together sharing a connected relationship between them. Endo appears as an amorphous mass with hidden eyes, faces and decayed 2AG, AEA cannabinoid molecules, indicating the transient nature of endocannabinoids existing in every cell of the body. The eyes of Endo watches over and influences the neural pathways of the body. They modulate in times of stress, anxiety, inflammation, pain and mental health issues.

When all is well Endo's receptors receive Phytos mimicking phytocannabinoid molecule eg THC to exert influences on the body sometimes comforting, sometimes depressive, sometimes a giggle, depends on you. A bounded Phyto is nestled with Endo, connected by her mimicking tail like molecular part. She is female and pregnant, she is the bud (of the cannabis plant). She is desired for her THC. The bud of Cannabis Sativa has a higher concentration of the THC cannabinoid molecule than elsewhere in the plant. She is nurturing, she is stem, stalk and leaf, and the whole of her is proving to be medically better than her individual parts. As she plays with the CB1 receptors in every cell of the body and exerts some pain relief influence, her hazard tape turban warns you she can mess with your head.

Audrey Adams

Endo and Phyto by
Audrey Adams



Learning to Fly
by Roger Crooks

Nottingham Contemporary.

Denzil Forrester

“Itchin & Scratchin”

Until May 3rd

For the artist seeking to respond to the subject of nightlife, music and dance particularly now in our technology obsessed age, the traditional media of oil on canvass and charcoal or pastel on paper may not seem to be the most obvious or likely option. However this combination of subject content, materials and technique provides the basis of an extraordinary and engaging exhibition of work at Nottingham Contemporary by the Grenada born British artist Denzil Forrester. A visitor to the show on entering galleries 3 and 4 will immediately encounter large, vibrant colourful paintings and framed drawings of a remarkably expressive and lively character. The genesis and subsequent development of the images also follows a time honoured procedure of preliminary studies produced on location followed by enlargement, elaboration and refinement in the studio. One can readily understand the visual excitement and inspiration which prompted these studies but also appreciate the practical

difficulties involved in producing work in such surroundings.

What can we see as our eyes traverse the expanse of these canvases? We observe the claustrophobic confined space of the dance floor, the stage where the DJs and MCs perform, the sound equipment, the record decks, the towering speaker cabinets and the attire and gestures of the participants. However these images are not primarily about appearances they are about movement, light and above all sound. Looking at these paintings we feel the surge and sway of the crowd, we sense the glare of the spotlights and the staccato flashing of the strobes but we also hear the pounding insistent rhythm of drums and bass, we detect the tension of the momentary pause, the violent explosion of angular percussion and the sonic release as the thunderous hypnotic rhythm returns.

This exhibition is a response to a very particular and specific subcultural milieu - the dub reggae clubs and dance halls of East London from the 1980s onwards – but the work is also informed by early memories of house parties, by the experience of carnival and by a recent visit to Jamaica and

the massive events and sound systems of Kingston.

Forrester's work can be seen as a representation of movement and activity, both individual and collective, as the visualisation of a unique sound sensation, as a cultural statement and also perhaps as an insight into a particular aspect of Afro Caribbean experience in Britain.

Looking at these paintings one inevitably begins to make connections, to draw comparisons and to consider the wider art historical associations. Popular entertainment, night life, music and dance have provided an impetus for artists throughout the centuries. In relatively recent times we might think of the cafe concerts of Lautrec's Montmartre, the music hall of Sickert's Edwardian Camden Town, the jazz clubs of Burra's Harlem and the cabaret of Beckman's Weimar Berlin. Times change, fashions change, new sub cultures arise but for the artist the crowd, the performers, the lights, the music and the movement remain as an infinite and endless source of inspiration.

DWM.

*Denzil Forrester, Velvet Rush, 2018.
Copyright Denzil Forrester. Courtesy
the artist and Stephen Friedman
Gallery, London*

*Denzil Forrester, Night Strobe, 1985.
Copyright Denzil Forrester. Courtesy
the artist and Stephen Friedman
Gallery, London.*



Denzil Forrester, *Catch a Fire*, 2010.
Copyright Denzil Forrester. Courtesy
the artist and Stephen Friedman
Gallery, London



Denzil Forrester, *All Hands on Deck*, 2003.
Copyright Denzil Forrester. Courtesy the artist and
Stephen Friedman Gallery, London.



Light Night Draws in Hundreds...



If you missed Light Night, you missed a treat!

On a cold February evening we were inundated with waves of people flowing into the gallery and around the exhibition - those with children staying to create drawings which were then pinned to the display board in an impressive array.

Our small band of helpers worked tirelessly to set up the exhibition and make the 'Light Night' enhancements and then stayed to enjoy the very hectic evening. In the three years we have been taking part in this event, we have attracted a growing number of families and many potential artists of the future.

It was hard work for those that helped - we had 4 artists demonstrating and Fleur (a regular model at the society) modelled in special floral costume. These attracted lots of attention and potential new members. The children's drawing area was very popular all night and we nearly ran out of BluTac sticking the resulting pictures up.

Sales of cards were good but most people were there for the atmosphere of being in an artists environment. We didn't have much of a light show but we were firmly on the Light Night Trail and taking part in the event is definitely worthwhile. Maybe next year we could make even more of the event. Thanks to all who helped!





Even Mum got involved!



Dogged Determination and Inspirational Teachers

Steve Brazier

I failed A Level Art when I was 18 and it took courage to paint again when I turned 60. Being visually impaired was less of an issue. I have suffered from macular degeneration for many years. Like most who are registered blind, I retain some vision. In my case the central field has gone and I can't read, write, drive or - worst of all - recognise faces. But I retain some peripheral vision and by getting very close, I can still work. I owe a lot to the support of my inspirational teachers at the NSA - Doreen Hunt and Rita Mitchell. But my school art teacher, Dorette Gertrude Outlaw played a formative role.

In 1960 I recall her telling my class that we could do anything if we put our minds to it. "For example," she said "anyone can learn to wiggle their ears if they look in a mirror and concentrate". I have no idea what artistic lesson she was trying to impart but I went straight home that day and taught myself to wiggle my ears. And a wonderful party-trick it has been ever since : entertaining my daughter when she was a baby; raising money in the office for Red-Nose Day and generally impressing my friends. A bigger pay-off than all the Charles Atlas exercises I did about the same age.

Miss Outlaw was nearing retirement when I fell under her spell at Wolverhampton Municipal Grammar School. Many years later I discovered that since the 1930's she had travelled around local schools searching for students with artistic talent. She would then persuade their parents to send them to the School of Art and Design in Wolverhampton and organise scholarships for students who would otherwise end up working in industrial jobs. Painting became more of a hobby than a career for her because she was so involved with promoting and working on educational projects. Wolverhampton Art Gallery has some of her craft and ceramic works.

Miss Outlaw's nickname was "Doggie" because her initials "DGO" appeared on our school reports each term. She retired about 1962. I kept getting good marks and went on to do A-Level Art. For this I was much derided by a macho class-mate. "The poor-man's excuse for an A-Level" he said. It was certainly less work than the History he did and which I ducked. But he had the last laugh because I failed A-Level Art. In fact four out of the five of us who took it that year failed. I was



*Self-portrait of
Dorette G Outlaw from Wolverhampton Art Gallery
exhibited at 'Influential women of Wolverhampton'
(2010) and 'Painted Ladies'; (2019)*

*Cover picture - The cyclist:
'Dryden Street, Nottingham' (watercolour)*

Below - '10.11 to St. Pancras' (oil)



nevertheless awarded the sixth form art prize, which was a mystery - not least to the pupil who passed.

People often ask how I can paint despite being visually impaired. I tell them about Miss Outlaw and wiggling your ears. Of course, nowadays computer technology offers a lot of help to the visually impaired. Images can be massively enlarged. With a smart phone or tablet held to my left eye I can use the small area of the retina which still functions. Many painters struggle to attain freedom and 'looseness'. I have no difficulty there as the world always looks like that to me. My use of colours also draws comment. I once asked a woman who had just bought one of my paintings at the University Summer Exhibition what she liked about it. "It's blue" she replied. Perhaps the disability contributed again. I don't see colours as I once did and can have happy accidents. The university picture was supposed to be blue but perhaps it was bluer than I had intended.

Macular degeneration is the most common cause of blindness in Britain, particularly in its age-related form. If you know someone whose sight is deteriorating, do encourage them. It is hard to adjust but with help and persistence, there really are silver linings to the clouds. At least, they look silver to me.

Colin Treliving - a snapshot

Colin was born on the north side of Newcastle upon Tyne near Gosforth Park, Newcastle.

He attended The School of Art and Industrial Design, studying commercial art and display. He then worked as a window dresser for The John Lewis Partnership before moving to Cardiff where he worked in retail sales furniture.

He moved to Nottingham in 1975 working for Cavendish Woodhouse.

His interest in art began when he started sketching, mainly self-taught. He also developed a passion for theatrical work – acting, singing and production. He is presently chair of the play selection committee at the Lace Market Theatre in Nottingham. He is a lover of musical theatre and has been involved in many productions both at the Lace Market Theatre and The Nottingham Arts Theatre. He continued sketching and developed his skills by attending sessions at The Place in Sherwood. He joined the Nottingham Society of Artists in 2007 and is now a Fellow and board member.

He has worked with most media but has, for some time concentrated in pastel. He has been influenced by many artists. Valeny Gridnev, Jane Corsellis, and Susan Ryder are a few of his favourite living artists, but there are many more.



I asked Colin a few (hopefully revealing) questions.

- **What drives your desire to paint or draw?**
It is really the effect that light has on a subject that fascinates me, it makes me want to paint.
- **Who would you invite to your ideal dinner party?**
A tough one – maybe The Queen Mother, W. S. Gilbert (& Sullivan) perhaps Noel Coward and Laura Knight I think.
- **Of all the places you have visited, which are the most memorable?**
The Canadian Rockies and of course Venice.
- **Could you name your favourite movie(s)?**
Cinema Paradiso and Some Like it Hot.
- **How about your type of music?**
That's easy – Musicals –love them! Other music as well!
- **Which celebrity(s) would you like to paint?**
I think Lenny Henry would be interesting and also W. H. Auden.
- **Which comedy shows/programmes tickle you?**
I love 'Would I Lie to you?' and 'Dad's Army' still makes me laugh.
- **What do you dislike about the Art world?**
The ridiculous prices that are asked and paid for some work and how art has become more to do with money and investment.

Exhibitions

The Coronavirus outbreak is expected to disrupt the programme of exhibitions. Please check before travelling.

APR
NSofA Fellows Exhibition
29 Apr - 10 May

MAY
Jethro Adlington
12 May - 17 May

NSofA Spring Exhibition
27 May - 7 June

JUNE
NSofA Studio Groups
24 Jun - 5 July

JULY
David Ross
6 July - 12 July

Schools Exhibition
15 July - 26 July

Charity Exhibition
17 July - 28 July

AUGUST
Spotted Dog Art Group
13 Aug - 18 Aug

As 5 See
21 Aug - 28 Aug

SEPTEMBER
NSofA Autumn Exhibition
4 Sep - 15 Sep

Pots & Pictures II
Sarah Burton, Elaine Thompson,
Phil Harrison
17 Sep - 22 Sep

Mike Siebert
24 Sep - 30 Sep

OCTOBER
Rufford Art Society
2 Oct - 6 Oct

Inspired by Trees
15 Oct - 20 Oct

UoN Architecture
15 Oct - 20 Oct

In8 Art Group
29 Oct - 3 Nov

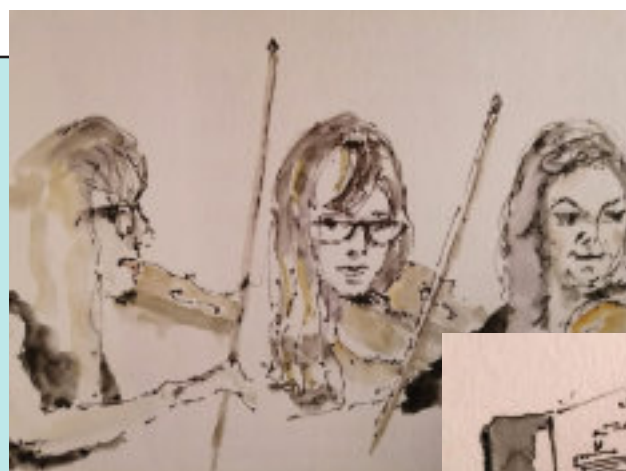
NOVEMBER
Different Perspectives
Thursday Morning Group
5 Nov - 17 Nov

Nottm Vision Collective
18 Nov - 21 Nov

John Tomlinson, Digital Fine Art
22 Nov - 28 Nov

DECEMBER
NSofA Small Pictures
4 Dec - 15 Dec

John Pooler
16 Dec - 22 Dec



Musical drawings

Friday lunchtime in term time at the Djanogli Gallery music rooms for three quarters of an hour, University students who enjoy playing jazz or classical come together to play at a public performance you can listen to for free! The standard is really high and they are not necessarily music students.

For some years now I have been going along and enjoying the music delivered with such young enthusiasm. I listen and draw – whilst they play so I only get the length of a tune to record the action and sometimes it is a full orchestra of about 30 and about 3 minutes for the musical piece No challenge then!

Fortunately there are days with a smaller group flutes or woodwind or just a piano. See how I got on and maybe you would be encouraged to try too.

All they ask is a small donation to their weeks chosen charity at the performance end.

Get a tram to Lakeside there are performances most term time Tuesdays and Fridays 1.15 - 2pm.

Friday afternoon update

The Friday group (Art in the Afternoon) usually works by individual members of AitA presenting the work of an artist, school of art or topic and then those who feel inspired producing a piece of art work to be later presented the group for comment.

Now we want to expand to include experienced NSA members as speakers and therefore the summer 2020 programme is going to be an exciting one.

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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