

# PRISM

September 2020

News of art & events



[www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk](http://www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk)

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by St Albans Art Society

**PRISM Editor: Janet King**

**Associate Editor: Edward Bevin**

**[www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk](http://www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk)**

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## MEMBERS FORUM

Please note for this issue, the  
Cover Story is on page 6...

### WANTED

The Art Society is looking to fill  
the following 2 vacancies on the  
committee.

#### 1 TREASURER

#### 2 PROGRAMME SECRETARY FOR LECTURES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

If you are interested in either of these roles  
and would like more information, please  
get in touch with the Secretary Valerie

### Workshops in the autumn with Jan Munro

In the autumn, Jan Munro is running one day  
workshops instead of weekly classes. The venue  
is Whelpley Hill Coronation Hall, HP5 3RJ.

If you would like to know more details contact Jan  
by email:

[janmunro2@gmail.com](mailto:janmunro2@gmail.com)

### Autumn watercolour classes with Bridget Tompkins

Bridget is restarting her watercolour classes from  
the end of September in the Charles Morris Hall,  
Tyttenhanger, AL4 0RN, on Friday mornings  
10am - 12.30pm. If you would like to know more  
details contact Bridget by email:

[bridgettompkins1@gmail.com](mailto:bridgettompkins1@gmail.com)

**Enclosed in this issue:**

● Membership Card

## THE CHAIRMAN WRITES...

### Covid-19 impacts on the Art Society's programme



For well over a century, our art  
society has been in existence,  
perhaps the odd name change has  
taken place, and has battled through  
devastating events along the way. The  
Spanish flu of 1918-19 killed 200,000,  
the Asian flu of 1957-58 recorded  
33,000 deaths the Hong Kong flu of  
1968-69 wiped out 80,000. And now  
we are battling with Covid-19 showing  
46,000 deaths in this country. The  
society also existed through the two  
World Wars of 1914-1918 and 1938-  
1945. Come what may, I sincerely  
hope that we can show the stoicism  
shown by our forebears in the past, as  
we regroup and search for light at the  
end of the tunnel.

As the Secretary writes, Covid-19  
has ruined our plans and halted in a  
flash much hard work in arranging  
lectures, demonstrations, life drawing  
sessions and workshops. The same  
problem has been replicated  
throughout the country. I have spoken  
to a large number of individuals and  
organizations to ascertain how their  
future is looking. One such society in  
Cornwall reported that lockdown

forced upon us all by the disease,  
means that it will be a year before they  
can resume activities.

I am mentioning all of this because if  
PRISM is a publication of record, then  
future generations will be reminded of  
how this horrid virus affected us. But it  
has to be said that in the doom and  
gloom we have heard of many acts of  
altruism.

Perhaps we should call this year a  
sabbatical. And yet our enthusiastic  
committee will not only be keeping a  
close watch on the situation, but will  
be looking ahead to moving up a gear  
or two in our communications, and  
how we can best keep in close touch  
with our membership. In particular,  
there are plans to streamline the  
website to build on the efforts over the  
last few years of Tracey Gent. And this  
flagship publication, PRISM, will  
continue its important service to you  
all.

In the meantime, I hope you are able  
to enjoy the summer. And happy  
painting!

**Edward Bevin Chairman**

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Members' input is very popular so please carry on sending in your  
articles for inclusion in the magazine and your feedback.**

Our Programme and Workshop Secretaries worked hard to put together exciting programmes for the coming year. Unfortunately, because under current legislation only 15 people can meet at Marshalswick we have cancelled all our meetings until Christmas.

We are also not planning an AGM until next May. Items which would have been on our 2020 AGM agenda have been dealt with as follows.

1. End of year reports have already been presented by Committee members in our March edition of PRISM.

2. Accounts to 31/3/20 and the name of the Independent Examiner are presented on the right.

3. Details of our Interim Committee are also in this copy of Prism as usual. Our Officers currently remain unchanged but our Committee Members are different. Gina Dunstan has retired and a vote of thanks for all her work was made at our recent Committee meeting on 24/7/20. Janet Blackham and Janet King remain on the Committee but will no longer organise our Annual Art Exhibition. They have worked very hard for the last five years and were presented with a gift and thank you cards in recognition of all their work. Two additional members were co-opted. We are joined by Kim Lawrence who helps to run life classes and Gordon Bridges who will lead us on all things technical and will upgrade the website. We will be sad to lose Tracey Gent later in the year, but our best wishes will go with her when she leaves to take on her new role of motherhood. Sadly, since the Committee meeting, Jan Munro and Sue Bergquist have also decided to leave the Committee. They too have worked hard for the society and will be sadly missed but happily will remain as members.

4. Finally, completing the agenda, I am pleased to announce that there will be no membership fee charged this year for existing members.

We cannot know what the next few months will bring but the Committee are looking at ways to preserve our post Christmas programme, regardless of coronavirus, with the help of technology. More information will follow in the December issue of PRISM and on our website.

Valerie Chivers Secretary

End of year commentary

Mel Hilbrow BA MBA, Honorary Independent Examiner, has examined the accounts together with supporting journals and receipts and is satisfied that they are a true record of the Society's transactions in the period for the year ending 31st March 2020.

OVERALL Incomings for this financial year were £16,483 and outgoings were £15,154, resulting in a net income of £1,329 - very similar to last year. On comparison with the last financial year, monthly trends in income/outgoings were also very similar - though there is a dip in both income and outgoings in March as the impact of covid-19 began to be felt.

Regarding the ongoing impact of covid-19; as of writing, this has reduced our income since the end of March 2020 to almost nothing (aside from negligible amounts of interest). Outgoings have also dramatically reduced for this period due to the cancellation of the rest of our 2019-20 programme and, sadly, our summer exhibition. However, there has still been some expenditure to cover the costs for the March PRISM printing and mailing; website maintenance; Blue Box storage for our exhibition screens; and SAA 3rd party liability insurance which will cover next year's exhibition (around £1,600 in total).

Exhibition 2019

We have a surplus of £564, largely due to an increase in exhibition entry fees and commission. More work was sold compared to last year (85 pieces of art sold in main sales compared to 68), and while some of our costs (SAA insurance, screen man-and-van transport hire) have gone up slightly, others (print and admin, plus any one-off expenses) have gone down slightly, so our exhibition expenses ended up £45 lower than last year.

PRISM print and mailing

PRISM costs (net cost of £1,592) were slightly higher this year than last year - simply because our membership increased, so more issues were needed.

Untutored studio/lifedrawing sessions

As usual, these drawing sessions make a (small) loss, this year of £367, but since they are popular and considered a useful offer to our members, we subsidise them from our

other income. This year the outgoings appear higher than in the previous two years, partly because we booked a few extra sessions this year, resulting in higher room hire costs (and model fees), and also because several of the previous financial year's spring sessions were delayed going into the account until the current financial year, and so have ended up in this EoY report rather than the previous one.

Wednesday lectures/demonstrations

Wednesday lectures/demos cost £1,315; slightly lower than last year, mainly because the room hire cost has dropped sharply. While this may be partly explained by our holding two fewer lectures/demonstrations this year, please note the room hire estimate this year may not be directly comparable to last year's - hence the apparent sharp drop in cost! [Also

please note that studio/lifedrawing tutor fees are currently grouped together with demo/lecturer fees, slightly misleadingly; this may be split out from next year onward].

Saturday workshops

Saturday workshops continued to be very successful this year, with a comfortable net income of £775. The average workshop tutor fees were slightly higher this year than last year - we wanted to host some specific tutors who charged higher fees for their tuition / had greater travel costs - and the higher room cost is mainly due to the payment for one session in the previous year failing to clear until this financial year. However, the costs are comfortably offset by the good attendance of the workshops.

Membership subscriptions

Our membership subscriptions this year were £4,385 - slightly lower than last year and slightly higher than the year before.

Other

The high 'Other' outgoing (a net outlay of £1,121) is due to the one-off equipment costs: ● getting a proper projector and stand for the Wednesday lecture/demonstrations (£85); ● materials for the exhibition end-screens kindly made by Ray Copeland (£236); and ● Equipment for the printing workshop (~£80). ● Additionally, public liability insurance (for the exhibition) being slightly higher this year than last year, as at the time of booking we had over 200 members and had to pay for a higher membership insurance band.

However, the remaining £143 'Misc' costs were in fact slightly lower this year than last year, comprising mainly thank-you vouchers and gifts. Website costs were also lower by £50, since last year we had to pay a 1-off cost for upgrading our site security certificate.

Tracey Gent Treasurer

St Albans Art Society - Accounts for the year Ended March 31st 2020			
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	£	£	£
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Exhibition	6,528	6,998	6,897
Subscriptions from members	3,895	4,780	4,385
Entrance charges	0	0	0
Net income - Studio sessions (excl. room hire)	300	400	533
Workshops entry fees	2,350	2,700	2,762
Donations received	10	4	10
Net cash sundry income	0	16	50
Bank Interest	1	3	5
Other (e.g. Summer studio / DVD rentals / table hire sale)	0	7	44
	13,709	14,958	16,493
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Exhibition	5,798	6,848	6,133
Next Exhibition (2020)	-	277	0
Wednesday speaker/tutor/demonstrator fees	920	1,180	1,225
Workshop Tutors' & models' fees	1,505	1,525	1,835
Rooms hired - ALL	1,791	1,458	1,385
Excursions - Travel and Entry tickets	0	0	0
PRISM - Print	851	874	1,008
PRISM - Mail	409	444	504
Copying and Printing (non-PRISM)	82	77	84
Net cash Sundry costs	102	0	0
Public Liability Insurance & CVs membership	155	164	245
Web site maintenance	144	288	218
Postage (non-PRISM)	90	64	94
Other (e.g. equipment)	87	240	644
	12,559	13,578	15,154
<b>Balance Sheet</b>			
Balance brought forward from last year (31st March)	10,009	11,108	12,598
Income total	13,709	14,958	16,493
Deductions total	12,559	13,578	15,154
Deduct net deficit / add net profit	1,149	1,380	1,329
Balance carried forward to next year	11,158	12,538	13,897
<b>Funds held as of 31st March</b>			
Bank - Reserve	2,500	2,500	2,500
Bank - Current	8,658	10,038	11,367
Total in Bank	11,158	12,538	13,897
Cash	0	0	0
Total of Funds	11,158	12,538	13,897
<b>Examiners Statement</b>			
I have examined the above accounts, together with the supporting journals and receipts, and I am satisfied that they are a true record of the Society's transactions in the period covered.			
Mel Hilbrow BA MBA Honorary Independent Examiner			

## Your own Personal Greeting Cards

This autumn why not plan to produce your own personalised Christmas Cards to send out to people that mean so much to you. Use your own paintings or prints as a front cover to give your card a unique and personal feel.



We take your images and produce the professional artwork required to make the cards on a variety of paper stocks to your taste. Envelopes can also be supplied – all at a great price.

*Don't forget we offer large poster printing from A4 to A0 and signs.*

**STOP PRESS:** We now offer personalised Christmas wrapping paper!

**Macpro**  
DESIGN & PRINT

Unit 5-7 Pickford Road  
off Sutton Rd, St Albans, Herts. AL1 5JH  
01727 850 771  
info@macprodp.com macprodp.com

## COVER STORY



## Speedy expressive drawings and no rigid lines

Member **Chris Darby** has created two exciting illustrations for the new membership card. Here he explains how his dynamic sketching helps him in his job.



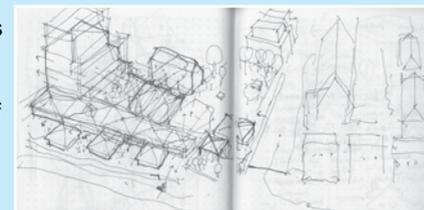
**F**or me, sketching provides light relief from the breadth of computer software necessary in my architectural work, however sketching is in no way undervalued in the role of an architect. I believe a common misconception is that the architect is depicted drawing rigid straight lines and dimensions, however architects use sketching as a way of communicating ideas, and this is always fast and often expressive in order to get others on-board with an idea. Whether that be a client or a colleague, without sketching a lot of ideas would go un-noticed.

Sketching in-situ is an essential element of my approach to drawing. Whether communicating ideas

on the job or recreational sketching, the principle is the same. I must immerse myself in a setting in order to capture the essence of that place, and for me drawing from a photo just doesn't achieve this. When developing an architectural project, we begin to imagine ourselves immersed within it, I therefore use sketching to describe that project to others, but more importantly as a tool to develop and strengthen the scheme.

I try to keep my drawings quick. If I labour a drawing for too long it often

becomes overworked and loses the expressive dynamic nature that I long for in my work, but also to be honest, I just don't think I have the patience.



**TALK TO YOUR COMMITTEE**

- CHAIRMAN**  
Edward Bevin
- VICE CHAIR**  
Sandie Ford
- SECRETARY**  
Valerie Chivers
- TREASURER**  
Tracey Gent
- PRISM EDITOR**  
Janet King
- MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**  
Janet Blackham
- PROGRAMME SECRETARIES**
- LECTURES:**  
VACANT
- WORKSHOPS:**  
Sally Griffiths
- MINUTES SECRETARY**  
Margaret Channon
- WEBSITE MANAGER**  
Gordon Bridges
- SUPPORTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**  
Kim Lawrence

[www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk](http://www.stalbans-artsociety.org.uk)  
StAlbansArtSoc@gmail.com



**Herts Open Studios 2020**

**1st-30th September 2020 Herts Open Studios goes virtual, 30 days, 30 themes, celebrating 30 years.**

Visitors can access open studios on phones, tablets, computers or other internet-connected devices, including TVs. Each day of the festival is also tied in with Hertfordshire Year of Culture's #MeetTheMaker theme – based around Herts open Studios.

Simple and effective searches allow visitors to explore their own personal trails via art media, theme and other personal searches. A special section includes live information, featuring up to the minute news from around the county, collated from Social media. Would you like a personal virtual appointment with one of the Open Studios Artists? Just get in touch via their gallery page to arrange an appointment. Want to see working studios? There will be plenty of video studio tours to browse. Want to find out more about an artist? Again, biographies and meet-the-artist videos are a simple and informative way to start.

What started as something that needed to be considered because of the health situation has turned into a golden opportunity to embrace the future and bring more art to more people.

**www.hvaf.org.uk**  
**Twitter:** @HVAF #HertsOpenStudios  
**Instagram** @HertsVisualArts  
**Facebook:** @HertsVisualArts



Venue: St Lawrence Church Ayot St Lawrence, AL6 9BZ £2.00 for adults and free for children.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Ayot Art Show will be postponed to the weekend of **19th - 20th September 2020.**

The Ayot St Lawrence Art Show will this year be held again in the beautiful Paddian Church. We will once again have the art and craft tent that we first introduced in 2019, it will run on Saturday and Sunday alongside the

exhibition, offering opportunities for all ages to try watercolour, pastel relief, linoprint and to make handmade crafts.

To coincide with the Art Show, our lovely 14th century pub, the Broke Arts & Crafts Holdings popular annual beer and cider festival with at least 20 additional "guest beverages" as well as live music and a BBQ.

Each year the Art Show attracts many hundreds of visitors. The success of the Show is ultimately down to

the quality of the artwork. We have a fantastic range of artists, many of whom exhibit with us every year in a variety of styles and mediums including oil, watercolour and acrylic. Each year we keep the Show fresh by inviting new artists to exhibit with us. In addition to the framed art available for sale, there is a much sought-after selection of unframed art, and a variety of greetings cards designed by the artists.

**For up to date information:**  
[www.ayotartshow.co.uk](http://www.ayotartshow.co.uk)



**Website Design, Management and Support**

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Some of our recent website productions

 transformafrica.org	 careexpertise.co.uk	 advocacyinbarnet.org.uk	 psandr.com	 talkingimage.co.uk
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# One scene that encouraged me to shut down the lockdown

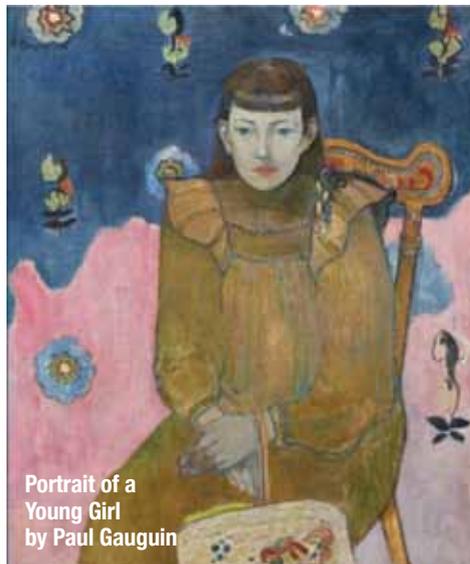
I was overwhelmed by a massive wave of poppies with appealing faces that had broad smiles and seemed to be beckoning me to take a closer look. The scene brought the wow! factor into my head.

Without doubt, the very necessary lockdown brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, ending, tragically, so many lives, together with the constant day by day gloom and doom, media coverage, particularly by the broadcasting organizations, even when the situation was improving, has all been hard to swallow.

But I have discovered light at the end of the tunnel. Taking the short walk to get The Times and the Telegraph, passers by – what few there were – wished me a hearty 'good morning' with the question that was to become the norm – 'are you ok?' By contrast, in so called normal times we usually stroll about down to the corner shop like a bunch of somnambulists. And then going for walks in a secluded village near where we live, that delightful odour of the countryside burst through my nostrils, something I had last experienced during my childhood. The hedgerows were ablaze and the trees were dazzling as I had never witnessed before.

## A massive wave of poppies

And then, one early sunny and glorious morning, I was overwhelmed by a massive wave of poppies in the field opposite, with appealing faces that had broad smiles and seemed to be beckoning me to take a closer look. The scene brought the wow! factor into my head. And it was this that



Portrait of a Young Girl by Paul Gauguin

made me think more and more about nature, and perhaps more importantly, how artists have interpreted it. So I studied the scene, did a rough sketch and took photographs. We have seen umpteen poppy fields – all of us – but quite frankly this poppy field was at the very top.

I could hardly wait to get back home and take up residence in my studio. An array of colours landed on my palette and I was away. I am writing all this because the words demonstrate the power of art and painting because when we begin to think deeply about it and pick up a brush, the

outside world is suddenly shut out, like slamming a door. And so, I produced the poppy field, went back to the scene yet again and fixed it on the tripod to recheck the scene, which fortunately had changed very little.

This was just one of 11 or so canvases I have produced during the height of the lockdown which eased me through the darkest days of it.

## Missed going to galleries

But having said all this, I missed going to galleries. As I write this, these have partly re-opened, but severe restrictions apply and one cannot stroll around as in normal times. I had been invited to a press preview of an exciting exhibition at the Royal Academy in London, where I was given the opportunity to study one of my favourites, Mr Paul Gauguin. That proposed event, *Gauguin and the Impressionists: Masterpieces from the Ordrupgaard Collection* was postponed suddenly and I have now been informed that it is running until 18 October.

The exhibition opens with en plein air, featuring landscapes, seascapes and cityscapes mostly painted in and around Paris, the Normandy coast and London. It shows how the impressionists gave up and broke away from the classical Italianate landscapes. Included are rarely seen canvases of that wonderful forest at Fontainebleau, just south of Paris, where a new generation of painters, such as Monet, Sisley and Renoir went to paint en plein air.

In particular there are also three works by Pissarro, which shows the then lovely landscape around a beautiful house he was able to buy with a loan from his pal, Claude Monet. There is an underlying theme about these



Plum Trees in Blossom, Éragny (The Painter's Home) by Camille Pissarro

canvases, which is very familiar to me, and that is the brilliance and radiance of the light and atmosphere which these artists sought and discovered.

## Gauguin himself

But obviously the highlight of the show features the man himself, Gauguin, together with Cezanne and Matisse who all used in those days, an experimental use of colour and synthetist style which moves away from impressionism. Here at the Royal Academy we have been given a rare chance to see Gauguin's **Blue Trees, Your turn will come, My Beauty** and **Portrait of a Young Girl**. The latter is one of my favourite portraits of the era and was

Painted at Tahiti. Blasts of colour are shown – even the background wallpaper. If Gauguin was intending to show us that life and people in the far distant Tahitian Islands, nestling in the southern Pacific Ocean, were a far cry from Western Civilisation, then my goodness, he succeeded.



Blue Trees, Your turn will come, My Beauty by Paul Gauguin

**Gauguin and the Impressionists is at the Royal Academy, London, and runs until 18 October**

THANK YOU

# Four members leave the Committee

Sadly, four members of the Committee have resigned. The Society is immensely grateful to each one of them for their enthusiasm and sterling work.

## Tracey Gent

Skillfully controlled our purse strings as Treasurer, as well as carrying out much work on the web site, is expecting her first child in early December. She took up the job soon after the 2015 AGM.

## Gina Dunstan

Joined two years later and became Exit Survey Manager when she monitored the voting papers from the hundreds of visitors who decided what they considered was the 'Best exhibit in the show' at the annual summer exhibition..

## Jan Munro

Has also been a keen member of the Committee. Jan is one of several professional artists in our membership and has a splendid reputation for her work. She frequently offered sound advice at meetings. Her critique evenings have always been popular and it is hoped that she will be available to return.

## Sue Bergquist

An exceptional organizer and planned the programme, and life drawing sessions. She introduced new equipment to enable visitors the chance to see close-ups of demonstrations given by visiting artists.



Tracey Gent



Gina Dunstan



Jan Munro



Sue Bergquist