



NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER 2

Let us have an art which is new and vibrant, which reaches out to everybody, and which reveres and builds on the art of the past. It is one of the great joys of art that we can 'tune in' instantly to the work of artists from very different cultures and times from our own. Their pictures allow us a way into their experience of life from a visual point of view. This is true of contemporary art as well.

At the New English we offer art which has this way in; a recognisable element which in our case is based on a study of nature. We aim to draw the viewer into our vision of the world, and once in, all sorts of unexpected elements of colour and form and ideas will be found.

I was asked to write the text for a new NEAC brochure. This deals with the history of the club from its origins in 1886, its relations with the Royal Academy and the Camden Town Group, and now its clear position as an organisation which champions figurative painting. The brochure, which has the title 'The New English Movement and British Figurative Painting', is illustrated with fine paintings by Members. It celebrates the NEAC as a framework within which artists can work, show their pictures, exchange ideas with each other and with the Friends, and give encouragement to artists outside the Club by exhibiting their own work. The School of Drawing offers tuition in the practice and understanding of our shared artistic language.



Richard Sorrell
August 2001

NEWS AND EVENTS

- **The Friends' Annual Dinner, Tuesday 30 October 2001**
Last year's inaugural Dinner was a great success, and arrangements are now in hand for this year's Dinner to take place two days before the opening of the NEAC Annual Exhibition. This will give the Friends an opportunity to buy pictures before the Exhibition opens. Invitations from the President **Ken Howard** to all Friends and Members of the NEAC will be sent out soon. The Dinner was oversubscribed last year, so please respond promptly.
The Guest Speaker at this year's Annual Dinner will be **Sir Ronald McIntosh** who with **Lady McIntosh** supported the NEAC's exhibition at Bankside in June.
- **Michael Holroyd** will open the Annual Exhibition at 12.30pm on 1 November.
- A selection of the work of **Augustus John** will be shown during this year's Annual Exhibition. **Tom Coates** will give the 2001 NEAC lecture *Augustus John*, at 7pm on 6 November at the Mall Gallery.
- **Daphne Todd** has drawn Tom Stoppard OM; the drawing will go to the Queen's Collection at Windsor. She has recently completed a portrait of Lord Sainsbury for the National Portrait Gallery, and her work is included in *Mirror Mirror: Women's Self Portraits* at the National Portrait Gallery from 25 October.
- **Jacqueline Rizvi** will give a lunchtime talk (12.30-1.30) *Watercolours: an Artist's View* on 22 November at Dulwich Picture Gallery. This will be in association with the exhibition *The Golden Age of Watercolours* selected from the Hickman Bacon Collection, 19 September – 6 January.
- We thank **Richard Sorrell** for his drawing on the front page. He is a member of the RWS, the RBA and the NEAC. For his recent work see the Exhibitions Diary.
- **Jane Bond** has been commissioned to paint a portrait of the Very Reverend Dr. John Moses, Dean of St. Paul's.
- **David Gluck** is Featured Artist in this year's Royal Watercolour Society autumn exhibition at the Bankside Gallery (see Exhibitions Diary).

Last year **Wendy Baron** opened the Annual Exhibition which featured a display of work by **Walter Sickert**. She spoke of the origins of the NEAC, of Sickert's paintings 'stunning artists and enraging critics', and of the ability of the NEAC to regain the initiative from fashionable sensationalism and to foster a renewal of figurative painting in this country. The full text of this excellent talk is available from Caroline Burmaster, Secretary to the Friends, telephone 020 7373 6379.

**THE ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB WILL
TAKE PLACE AT THE MALL GALLERIES, THE MALL, LONDON SW1
2 – 12 NOVEMBER. PRIVATE VIEW, 1 NOVEMBER 11am – 8pm.**

FEATURED ARTIST: MARGARET THOMAS

Margaret Thomas was born in London on 26 September 1916. She was introduced to the world of artists, at the age of 12, by her governess Dora Salman who had been at the Slade with Ethel Walker before the Great War. She took Margaret to see Walker at her Thames-side studio and introduced her to other women artists such as Clare Atwood, Beatrice Bland and Eleanor Best.

In 1934 Margaret enrolled at Sidcup School of Art where the influence of the Head of Painting Barry Craig has remained with her to this day. In 1936 she won a scholarship to the Slade, which she did not enjoy. The teaching was stuffy and the teachers, with the exception of Alan Gwynne-Jones, were unknown as artists in the world outside. She applied to move to, and was accepted by, the Royal Academy Schools, where the teaching was more progressive and disciplined. Sadly the school closed in the war and Margaret, being an ardent pacifist, went to work on a dairy farm and an apiary in Wiltshire. There she discovered her love of the countryside.

After the war she built up a career with portrait commissions and one man shows, the first at the Leicester Galleries in 1949. She was elected to the New English Art Club in 1951 and has exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition for 46 consecutive years.

Rivers have played an important part in her life: the Norfolk Broads, near her father's home, and the Thames at Shorne, Gravesend, Bankside, Greenwich and Cherry Garden Pier. In 1956 she bought her 'Edinburgh eyrie' with views over the Forth and the city. In 1972 she found a little boathouse studio on the quay at Orford in Suffolk, which served as her escape from London.

Since 1984 she has lived in a watermill in Norfolk with her constant companions, a line of Bedlington terriers Larrie I, II, III and IV and Sir Edward and Lady Rosie Bear, teddies of noble bearing. There a river flows below the huge studio window and in summer the garden is filled with shrub roses, while in winter the river, sunsets and bare trees provide Margaret with her inspiration.

As Ian Collins says, the key influences in her work have been Braque and Philip Wilson Steer resulting in a flow, over seven decades, of evocative pictures underpinned by robust draughtsmanship and deft almost abstract design. Nature in all her guises inspires her work. The late Peter Greenham wrote of her paintings 'they never tell the same story twice: every picture she paints is an excursion into a country dreamt of, seen sharply, but until that moment, unmapped'. Bernard Dunston notes that her handling of paint is very personal. 'Each touch is put down with a full brush, and her obvious pleasure in her medium communicates itself directly to the viewer'.

Diana Calvert, August 2001

There is to be an 85th birthday celebratory exhibition of Margaret Thomas's work at Messum's Fine Art, 8 Cork Street, London W1X 1PB, from Wednesday 12 to Saturday 29 September.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Jane Corsellis: A Personal View – Painting in Oils and Watercolours**, by Robin Capon. David & Charles 2000, £19.99.
- **Fred Cuming RA: A Figure in a Landscape**, edited by Christian Taylor with an introduction by Richard Holmes. Unicorn Press 2000, £40.
- **A Personal View: Gouache**, by Pamela Kay. David & Charles 1995, paperback £12.99.
- **Travels with a Tangerine: A Journey in the Footnotes of Ibn Battuta**, by Tim Mackintosh-Smith, illustrated by Martin Yeoman. John Murray 2001, £18.
- **Ken Howard: A Personal View – Inspired by Light**, by Ken Howard with Sally Bulgin. David & Charles 1998. Now reissued in paperback, £9.95.

ARTISTS' VIDEOS

The following videos are available from APV Films, 6 Alexandra Square, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 5HL. Tel. 01608 641 798. Prices incl. p&p £27.95.

- **Jane Corsellis:** Landscapes in Oils
- **Fred Cuming:** The Art of Fred Cuming
- **Ken Howard:** Inspired by Light
A Vision of Venice in Watercolour
A Vision of Venice in Oil
- **John Ward:** The Art of John Ward
- **Tom Coates:** Figures in Pastel (due out in October)

INDEPENDENT TUITION BY NEAC MEMBERS

Jason Bowyer: drawing and painting. For details please contact The Studio, 7 Kew Bridge Steam Museum, Green Dragon Lane, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 0EN.

Stuart Denyer: autumn and winter courses. For details please contact The Studio, 50 Lilford Road, London SE5 9HX.

Karn Holly: drawing and painting '*Evening River Light*' at Chelsea. Drawing days at the V & A by arrangement. For details please telephone 020 7376 8331, evenings.

David Parfitt: drawing and painting, one-to-one tuition, at Strand on the Green, Chiswick. For details please telephone 020 8995 9997.

Richard Sorrell: courses in painting, drawing and clay modelling, at The White House, Chapel Lane, Mickleton, Gloucestershire GL55 6SD. For details please telephone/fax 01386 438 860.

Charles Williams: individual tuition in oils, watercolour and other media, in his studio at Molash near Canterbury. For details please telephone 01227 751 583.

Ken Howard has negotiated a 10% discount on artists' materials for NEAC Friends at Bird & Davis Ltd., 45 Holmes Road, London NW5 3AN. Tel.020 7485 3797. (Proof of identity and membership required)

FEATURED ARTIST: CHARLES WILLIAMS

To work from observation. Is it to look fixedly at a face or body in a room and draw or paint what we see? Is it only about looking at some bottles and jugs or a flower or a landscape? After all, there was the famous Ruskinism about an intelligent fawn. What do we see when we look at that world out there? Observation surely involves a critical faculty, maybe a comment, an empathy or some intervention by the artist, beyond a little editing. Intuitive or willed – or something in between? Or is it the artist's duty to remove himself?

So, what are Charles Williams's paintings about? Why is he in the NEAC? Is this observation? In the past his work has touched on many things. 'Them and us', a work painted around 1996, contrasts the often strained relationship shared by the younger artist and their gallery. Sometimes the paintings have been about the relation of the painter to the buyer, sometimes about exploring the position of painter to partner. Or, with a shift of emphasis, delving the relation of the painter to his work. I remember with affection a work depicting the 'artist' standing with a mixture of pride and embarrassment before his tiny, all red, minimal painting. A lovely absurdity, a familiar feeling to anyone who has ever shown the results of their efforts to another soul. Stirring memories of one's first ever picture – or one's first one man show.

Later as he worked as a taxi-driver, real events or possible events intermingled with his subjects, which ranged from the humorous to the tragic. I loved 'Small Upset'. It is night, a woman is removing her clothes while standing on the roof of a dark car. Her shoes lie pathetically on the pavement, an oddly poignant touch. Maybe she really is having a good time.

Time moves on, the paintings change. The subject merges increasingly with the formal content. What is the subject now? A young woman in a room with a striped rug, tissues on the floor, applying deep red lipstick at the same time as smoking a cigarette. Standing there, the detritus of a manicured life all around her. These paintings are about ordinary people, people who struggle slightly. Or are these paintings about stripes and shapes and visual punctuation marks, experiments in reformulating a more inclusive space? Are they about a particularly sensuous combination of colour noticed on the palette and referenced inventively into a complete self-contained anecdote?

What is a painting? Such an elusive object to define. What makes just two colours sing in such a significant way – with sweetness or with melancholy? And where do the best images come from? Can it be with so much painful trial and error? Or is it luck? Sometimes they turn up unpremeditated and complete.

Charles Williams's paintings have been familiar to me for years since I knew him on his foundation course in 1985. Later I wrote a catalogue entry for him... 'The atmosphere is highly ambiguous. It is a sardonic vision tempered with tenderness. These are paintings full of longings and lustings, painting like Human Shows...'

At our framers recently, I saw an etching of a young girl with mobile phone, large flared trousers and two bored dogs at her feet. I have a young daughter, complete with mobile phone and large flared trousers (but no dogs yet), and seeing this etching brings home the sense of Charles Williams's kind of observation.

Arthur Neal, August 2001

For Charles Williams's forthcoming exhibitions see the Exhibitions Diary

EXHIBITION DIARY 2001-2002

- 10 – 28 September
Richard Sorrell and Charles Williams: The Sheen Gallery, 245 Upper Richmond Road West, London SW14 8QS (Tel. 020 8392 1662). www.thesheengallery.com
- 12 – 29 September
Margaret Thomas, 85th Birthday Exhibition: Messum's Fine Art, 8 Cork Street, London W1X 1PB (Tel. 020 7437 5545). Her work is also included in the subsequent exhibition at Messum's, *The Painters and Sculptors of East Anglia*, 26 September – 13 October. www.messums.com
- 12 – 29 September
Arthur Neal and Charles Williams, Small Paintings: Cadogan Contemporary, 108 Draycott Avenue, London SW3 3AE (Tel. 020 7581 5451). www.artcad.co.uk
- 12 – 22 September
James Rushton, Singer & Friedlander/Sunday Times Watercolour Exhibition: Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 (Tel. 020 7930 6844). www.mallgalleries.org.uk
- 13 – 29 September
Ruth Stage, Six Egg Tempera Painters: New Grafton Gallery, 49 Church Road, London SW13 9HH (Tel. 020 8748 8850). www.newgraftongallery.com
- 19 – 29 September
Karn Holly (solo exhibition): Elgin, Cassian de Vere Cole Fine Art, 50 Elgin Crescent, London W11 2JJ (Tel. 020 7221 9161).
- 19 September – 5 October
Jason Bowyer, Stuart Denyer, Karn Holly, Mary Jackson, David Parfitt and Jacqueline Rizvi, Painters and Draughtsmen: Frank T.Sabin, 46 Albemarle Street, London W1S 4JN (Tel. 020 7493 3288). www.ftsabin.com
- 19 September – 7 October
David Carpanini, Print Noir: Bankside Gallery, 48 Hopton Street, London SE1 9JH (Tel. 020 7928 7521).
- 22 September – 12 October
Roy Freer, Charles Hardaker, Karn Holly, Pamela Kay, Salliann Putman, Dawn Sidoli, Michael Whittlesea and other NEAC Members: Langham Fine Art, Hillwatering, Langham, Bury St.Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3ED (Tel. 01359 258 948). For further information please contact the gallery.
- 5 – 20 October
Michael Fairclough (solo exhibition): New Ashgate Gallery, Wagon Yard, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7PS (Tel. 01252 713 208). www.newashgategallery.com
- 13 – 29 October
Fred Cuming (solo exhibition to coincide with the Canterbury Festival): Nevill Gallery, 43 St Peter's Street, Canterbury, CT1 2BG (Tel/Fax 01227 765 291). www.nevillgallery.com
- 13 – 31 October
Jacqueline Williams (solo exhibition): Adam Gallery, 13 John Street, Bath BA1 2JL (Tel/Fax 01225 480 406). www.adamgallery.com
- 6 – 20 October
William Selby (solo exhibition): Thompson's Gallery, 5 Church Street, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire GL54 1BB. (Tel. 01451 832 564).

13 – 14 October

Peter Brown (solo exhibition) *Peter Brown: Charcoal and Pastel*: Widcombe Studios Gallery, Alton Place, Bath BA2 4PR, 10 am to 5pm. Catalogues available. For further information ring 07767 431 263. www.peterbrownneac.com 25 September – 14 October.

18 October – 18 November

David Gluck (featured artist), *Royal Watercolour Society Annual Exhibition*: Bankside Gallery, 48 Hopton Street, London SE1 9JH (Tel. 020 7928 7521). Many NEAC Members are also members of the Royal Watercolour Society and will show work in this exhibition.

23 – 31 October

Salliann Putman and **Maurice Sheppard**: Hilary Thompson Dredge, Shottercombe, Rake Hanger, Hillbrow, Liss, Hampshire GU33 7NP (Tel. 01730 893 246).

24 October – 27 November

Peter Kuhfeld (solo exhibition): W.H. Patterson, 19 Albemarle Street, London W1X 4LA (Tel. 020 7629 4119).

27 October – 24 November

Richard Pikesley (solo exhibition) “*Not far from Paradise*”: *an Artist’s Year in Dorset*: The Gallery, 20 Durngate Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1JP (Tel. 01305 267 408).
www.gallerydorchester.com

2 – 12 November

The New English Art Club Annual Exhibition: The Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1 (Tel. 020 7930 6844). www.mallgalleries.org.uk

7 – 24 November

Daphne Todd (solo exhibition): Messum’s Fine Art, 8 Cork Street, London W1X 1PB (Tel. 020 7437 5545). www.messums.com

13 November – 3 December

Bob Brown (solo exhibition): Alresford Gallery, 36 West Street, Alresford, nr. Winchester, Hampshire SO24 9AU (Tel. 01962 735 286).

15 November – 1 December

Tom Coates (solo exhibition): New Grafton Gallery, 49 Church Road, London SW13 9HH (Tel. 020 8748 8850). www.newgraftongallery.com

27 November – 7 December

Fred Cuming (solo exhibition): The City Gallery, 26 Copthall Avenue, London EC2R 7DN (Tel. 020 7256 5815). www.citygallery.co.uk

2 – 16 December

Andrew Macara (solo exhibition): The Contemporary Fine Art Gallery, 31 High Street, Eton, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1HL (Tel. 01753 854 315). www.cfag.co.uk

5 – 24 December

Peter Brown, Jane Corsellis, Peter Kuhfeld, Susan Ryder and **Jonathan Trowell** will be showing work in the *Christmas Exhibition*: W.H.Patterson, 19 Albemarle Street, London W1X 4LA (Tel. 020 7629 4119).

23 January – 13 February

David Gluck, Ken Howard, Karn Holly, Mary Jackson, Pamela Kay, Peter Kuhfeld, Richard Pikesley, Salliann Putman, Jacqueline Rizvi and **Jonathan Trowell**, *Venice in Peril*: W.H.Patterson, 19 Albemarle Street, London W1X 4LA (Tel. 020 7629 4119).

Mid-February 2002

Ken Howard (solo exhibition): Richard Green, 147 New Bond Street, London W1S 2TS (Tel. 020 7493 3939). www.richard-green.com

THE NEW ENGLISH ART CLUB DRAWING SCHOOL

The importance of drawing in private collections

There is much to be admired in a room full of drawings; each one invites you over to look into the imagination and sensibility of the artist. When you buy a drawing you often buy the artist's first thought – a rare privilege. It is a good way to start collecting. The late Sir Brinsley Ford had a collection of extreme beauty, by both contemporary artists and Old Masters. At Private Views and when visiting studios he bought the very best. He would often buy a drawing rather than a painting, recognising that drawing holds the essence of the idea.

Drawing, so fundamental to John, Tonks and Sickert, is still important to NEAC artists, and there are many fine draughtsmen among our ranks. For this reason Members have been invited to send drawings as part of their submission to this year's Annual Exhibition.

I have seen how valuable drawing is in art education and have myself collected many drawings by artist friends and by students. I delight in their simplicity, a richness of line in one, a sensitivity of touch in another. Above all else it is the humanity that surfaces through a drawing and holds my eye.

Jason Bowyer, Curator of the NEAC Drawing School, August 2001

NEAC COURSES

Putney School of Art: A Festival of Drawing, 5 –8 September at Putney School of Art and Design, Oxford Road, London SW15 2LQ. Tutors will be Stuart Denyer, Karn Holly, Charles Williams and Duncan Wood.

Royal Academy Schools: Evening classes in life drawing with Stuart Denyer and other Members of the NEAC. Dates: 1 October – 7 December; 7 January – 15 March; 15 April – 17 May. Wednesday evenings, 5 –7.30pm.

Contact ONLY through the NEAC Drawing School PO Box (see below).

Fine Art Study Days: Looking at drawings with David Gluck and Karn Holly. November (dates to be confirmed):

- 'Rembrandt, an Artist's View', British Museum Prints and Drawings Collection,
- 'Turner, Sketchbooks of the Master', Tate Britain, Turner Study Room.

Canford School/NEAC Summer Course 2002: An intensive drawing and painting week at Canford School, Wimbourne, Dorset, 26 – 30 August. Tutors will be NEAC Members and Canford School staff. Residential and non-residential places will be available.

For ALL further information and details of the above, contact Karn Holly, NEAC Drawing School, PO Box 8760, London SW3 4ZP.

This Newsletter was edited by David Parfitt and Sara Paton.

DATA PROTECTION ACT: Please advise us if you object to having your name and address passed on to Members for their mailing list. Otherwise we will assume that it is acceptable. Contact Caroline Burmaster, Secretary to the Friends of the NEAC, telephone 020 7373 6379

The New English Art Club is registered Charity Number 295780.

