

## So much to see and do!

The New Year is really starting with a bang – and I don't mean the fireworks but the many great exhibitions within range. Browse through our New Year's Newsletter to find out what's on offer to fill up those grim winter days ahead.

And don't forget that alongside our regular Thursday WOKAS meetings, we have a Saturday workshop with Victoria Wainwright on pen and ink work in February. Sign up now to secure a place!

### The Christmas Party

Our Christmas party this year was well attended despite the chilly winter weather. It was great to see so many of us gathered together, and the food everyone brought was delicious. The highlight of the evening was a quiz devised by Alison. She did a sterling job and must have spent hours hunched over her printer. She made the quiz very inclusive as members could team up together or do the quiz independently. Being the maverick I am I decided to go it alone. That was overconfidence as the quiz turned out to be rather challenging. Alison had laid out three tables, each with ten paintings and a list of artists' names, titles and dates. Our task was to match the pictures to the correct artist, title and date. One table featured winter scenes, many of which were obviously Impressionist, but several of them featured roads in the snow! So the difficulty was

which impressionist artist did which painting! Another table featured many religious renaissance paintings by Giotto, Caravaggio, Durer et al. I felt more at home with this having studied Renaissance art in the past and I did rather well. The final table majored in more modern art including Tracey Emin, Banksy and other more esoteric artists. The best I could do was to try to match a title to a painting. Not so easy and I did not get many answers correct.

After we had done our best, Alison revealed all and, as we marked our own homework, we didn't suffer any embarrassment for any lack of knowledge (in my case of C20 and C21 art!).

I urge those who did not make it this year to come next year. I really enjoyed the evening. Our thanks to Alison for creating such an entertaining quiz.

*Wendy Phillips*



**CAN YOU GUESS!**



If you missed the Xmas quiz have a go at guessing who painted this fascinating version of the Adoration of the Magi!

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEAD A SESSION?**

Our Meet and Create sessions are always run by members. So far our volunteers have always come from the committee, but if you have a special talent you would like to share, please don't be shy! Speak to a committee member and we can help you set up a session with any materials or tech support you need.

## AND NOT TO BE MISSED:

**Nordic noir: works on paper from Edvard Munch to Mamma Andersson**

British Museum  
until 22 March 2026

**Turner & Constable: Rivals & Originals**

Tate Britain,  
until 12 April 2026

**Theatre Picasso**

Tate Modern,  
until 12 April 2026

**Radical Harmony**

Helene Kröller-Müller's  
Neo-Impressionists  
National Gallery,  
until 8 February 2026

**Anna Ancher:**

**Painting Light**

Dulwich Picture Gallery,  
4 Nov 2025 - 8 Mar 2026

**Banksy Limitless**

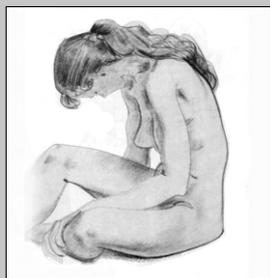
exhibition in London  
Sussex Mansions, South  
Kensington

**Coming soon...**

**David Hockney**

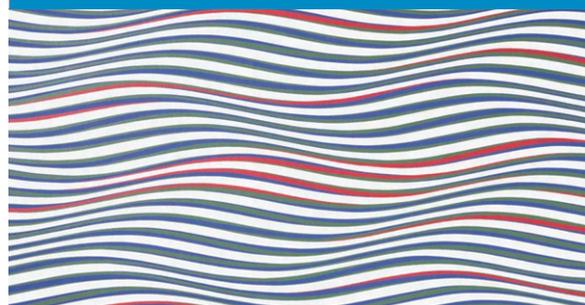
Serpentine North Gallery  
12 March - 23 August 2026  
Free

## LIFE DRAWING SUCCESS



Our recent series of figure and life drawing sessions has proved to be popular with members. Depending on demand, we hope to be able to add further sessions to this winter's programme and we are definitely planning to incorporate more life drawing into next winter's programme.

## Margate in January? Yes!



I did wonder if I was mad making the long trip across to Margate just after the New Year, but it really was really worth it. My goal was to visit the Bridget Riley exhibition Learning to See and have a good look at the JMW Turner oil

sketch currently on display there. I wasn't convinced that Riley's art was my "thing", but the exhibition is free so there was nothing to lose.

In fact, the impact of Riley's art seen face to face was far greater than I could have imagined. Those seemingly sterile geometric forms previously seen only in photographs produced amazing illusions of movement and 3d when seen in reality. The exhibition features a number of works, many of which are very large and there is plenty of room in the 3 generous rooms to experiment with the different effects the works can produce when seen up close or from a distance.

The exhibition was a definite hit with and well worth the £5 gift aid I had grudgingly donated on booking a ticket! However, my head did feel like it was spinning by the end and a quiet sit in the darkened room containing the Turner's Waves Breaking on a Lee Shore at Margate was the perfect antidote. This "oil sketch" has all the quality of a finished oil painting for me and there is plenty of opportunity to get up close and study the mark-making in detail. A QR code on display leads you to a short article about the painting that is worth reading – though you may need to leave the room to get phone reception!

Having achieved my 2 goals, I had a pleasant walk along the seafront and a spell wandering around the shops and galleries of the Old Town before returning for a second quick tour of the gallery – that's how good it was!!



## Eastbourne in January? Maybe...

My second trip to the coast was to the Towner Gallery exhibition Impressions in Water- colour: J.M.W. Turner and his Contemporaries. I had also booked a Behind the Scenes tour of the gallery's art store (available on Sundays and Tuesdays). I had done the tour once before, but it is different every time depending on who leads it and what they choose to highlight, and I would certainly recommend it. After a brief seaside stroll in the sunshine and lunch in a local café, it was back for the exhibition. This was not without interest, but personally I would not have made the trip for this only. The Watercolours by Turner were largely unfinished sketches made as part of his working process with no indications of where they might later have contributed to finished works and the Turners were very much outnumbered by his "contemporaries". However a revisit of the excellent permanent Ravilious exhibition completed a very satisfactory outing!

## Demos to inspire



It was inspiring to see how our two recent demonstrators Adam De Ville and Elaine Almond approached their work. Neither of them works in a totally realistic style, and so it was fascinating to see the different methods they employ to transform something seen into an artwork in their own very recognisable style. I would recommend all our members take the opportunities our demos offer to see the many ways that art can be produced. Whatever your own personal taste, you will always pick up one or two valuable ideas that you can try applying to your own work.

## West Dean opens London campus

West Dean college has long been a favourite for the high-quality art and craft residential courses at its West Sussex mansion. However, with rising costs the price of these may now seem a little daunting. So it is good to be able to report that they now have a new base in Bloomsbury, London only a 20 minute walk from St Pancras. Go to [www.westdean.ac.uk](http://www.westdean.ac.uk) and follow links to London Short Courses to see what is on offer. My initial investigation of train times seems to suggest it is possible to purchase a single (both ways) for the high-speed service for less than the cost of a high-speed day return and travel as early as you need to!

WEST  DEAN



**STAYING  
AT HOME?  
VIRTUALLY  
BRILLIANT!**



If you want to stay home in the warm but still have a hankering for a culture fix, the Wallace Collection has the solution. Rubens: Reuniting the Great Landscapes and Frans Hals: The Male Portrait are both great digital recreations of former exhibitions at the gallery. I particularly enjoyed the selection of Frans Hals portraits that convey the full individuality of each of his subjects.

**OR...**

Download the Bloomberg Connects app that has over a 1000 digital guides of museums, galleries and other cultural spaces. These can be used either to enhance your visitor experience or to give you a virtual viewing at home of places too far afield to visit.

