

Smallhythe gallery owner and artist to review Wokas online exhibition

Local artist, gallery owner and Wokas member Rowena McWilliams has agreed to select 3 highly commended entries and two more commended entries from our forthcoming online exhibition Art Unlocked 2. She says: "The qualities I will be looking for: strong composition; originality; sensitivity; use of materials. It is always good to

have some sort of checklist or criteria to help. Beyond that there is always a gut feeling! It also means it will not just be best artist – a painting I don't like might have a strong composition or show an interesting use of materials for example." Rowena is used to selecting art and artists for the exhibitions she hosts at her gallery at Smallhythe Studio*.

*Smallhythe gallery will be open on Tuesdays 13th, 20th and 27th April from 10am – 4pm for viewings of its exhibition of the work Rowena and her Zoom art group have produced over the past year. Rowena would love to see you and, though entry will be limited to 6 visitors at a time, she is supplying coffee outside for anyone who has to wait. Alternatively, you can contact her on 07905948525 or rowena@denecottage.com to select a time to visit on a Thursday afternoon. Viewings in May will hopefully continue along the same lines.



ART TO LOOK OUT FOR...

As lockdown restrictions are eased and we all become a little braver about going out into the world, it is worth remembering you do not have to go to London to view art.



Farley's Sculpture Garden at Chiddingfold, East Sussex plans to reopen on Thursdays and Sundays from the 18th April until 16th May. Here you can admire the works of Roland Penrose and Lee Miller alongside contemporary works in a beautiful garden setting. From May 20th onwards, it is hoped the site will be open in full with access to the gallery and house tours.



Ditchling Museum

also hopes to open its exhibition Taking a Line for a Walk featuring the beautiful work of illustrator John Vernon Lord. From 27 May – 26 September,



Hastings Contemporary

(formerly the Jerwood Gallery) presents Seaside Modern: Art and Life on the Beach with work by major modern British artists including Paul Nash, LS Lowry, Eileen Agar and Laura Knight, as well as advertising posters and archive photographs. And on 18th May, **The Towner Gallery, Eastbourne** reopens with The Landscape of Love and Solace presenting the most comprehensive major exhibition of the work of John Nash in over 50 years. Although less well known than his brother, he was one of the most versatile and prolific British artists of the 20th century so this is an important exhibition.

Please check websites for up-to-date information and remember most venues now require advance booking.

How we judge art and ourselves

When we first start to paint, we are buoyed by the positive feedback from friends and family. Then it's the reactions from complete

strangers which validate our paintings. But it's only when you see your own work displayed next to other people's efforts and interpretations that you are able to put it in perspective and to gauge its impact. Every piece of



work is an attempt to create something special, striking, original, meaningful to the beholder. So have I succeeded with my painting? Just looking at paintings such as Emil Nolde's 'Pensioner' or Francis Bacon's self-portraits it is easy to see that opinions may be divided.

Every 'beholder' will probably give you a different answer. One person will focus on your faulty perspective and lack of technique – yet the

painting manages to evoke strong emotions in another viewer and sells quickly. Someone may be scathing about your use of colour – yet that colour combination arose from the anger you felt on the day

you painted it and you would never part with that painting. So while we should always be open to criticism from others, we need to be both critical of and kind to ourselves – in the knowledge that the beauty of art and painting lies in its amazing diversity.

Painting days off to a flying start!

After a very long winter with no meetings allowed for our art society, we were keen to restart our outdoor painting days somewhat earlier in the season than usual. It is a little more difficult to organise with group size limited to six, but worth it to see how enthusiastically our members responded to the first opportunity – despite the risk of cold weather at this time of year! However, we need not have worried: the heavens smiled upon us as our first group of six assembled in St Mildred's churchyard and the sun came out to make March 29th a truly beautiful day. We were all glad to be out painting; some felt a little rusty after the months locked up indoors, but were glad to "get back on the horse" and have a go, others felt they had managed to capture something of our local landmarks. Whatever our success, we were all just delighted to be out and about again. Our thanks go to St. Mildred's for welcoming us and, of course, for arranging the weather!



Future newsletters

As life begins to return to normal and our painting days programme is put in place for the rest of the summer, we will be reducing the frequency of our newsletters. We still welcome your feedback, suggestions and contributions for future issues, so please keep in touch! Alison Chandler at a.j.chandler@hotmail.co.uk

Why paint “en plein air”?

As the days get warmer, the Society will continue to organise a programme of en plein air painting days in a variety of interesting venues; in the past we have painted local landscapes, gardens, villages, farms, castles, rivers and seascapes.



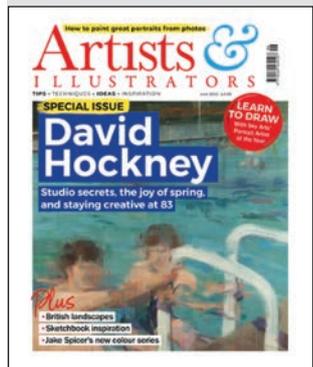
Painting outside the studio allows the artist to observe the changing light and subtle freshness of colour and tones. It helps you to organise your colour palette and develop your technique, composition and perspective.

Although it was the Impressionists who made painting outside into an art form, English artists such as Gainsborough, Constable and Turner actively sketched in the landscape and developed their sketches into masterpieces in their studios.

We hope that you will join us on future painting days where you can meet up with other members, discuss your work over lunch and, after April 12th, enjoy a pint! Once the “rule of six” is abolished (hopefully on May 17th), we will publish a full programme of venues and dates for the rest of the summer with no need to “sign up” in advance. **Clive Dand, Chairman**



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Sensing the unseen

The National Gallery has created a truly meditative experience with Sensing the Unseen, its first online exhibition designed for mobile phones and tablets. It allows viewers to experience Jan Gossaert's The Adoration of the Kings in incredible detail with the added bonus of sound. The painting was the centrepiece of an immersive exhibition at the gallery that was

forced to close last December because of the Covid lockdown. This mobile/tablet experience allows you to view six sections of the work in detail, while listening to six poems in the voice of Balthasar, the black king pictured to the left of Mary. At the end of each poem, you have the opportunity to move the lens around to examine the painting in even more detail to the accompaniment of beautiful sound effects.



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Weald of Kent Art Society
 Online Exhibition and
 Sale of Original Art by Local Artists
 May 1st to May 31st 2021
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