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contemporary art society for wales
cymdeithas celfyddyd gyfoes cymru

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Newsletter

1

www.casw.org.uk

**Visit our website for all you
need to know about the Society**

- illustrated history of the Society, its objectives and support for the arts
- programme of all activities for the year
- complete archive of our acquisitions since the Society's inception, with an easy search facility
- images and notes of all our acquisitions since 1999
- details of membership - including on-line application
- useful links to contact officers, museums and galleries

In this Issue

Chair Chat

The Year in Brief

Lisbon Study Visit

North Wales Study Visit

Venice Biennale

Glasbury Arts

London Study Visit



CHAIR CHAT 2011

D Gareth Davies *CASW Chairperson*

Jean, in her 2011 The Year in Brief, continues in her role as the Society's able chronicler, recording anew and with her customary style, a fulfilling year of activity and achievement. This leaves me my almost habitual task of reflecting on aspects of CASW's governance and of musing.

My Chair Chat 2010 revolved at some length around major management issues concerning the need to prioritise objectives and update operational activities to ensure the Society remains fit for purpose. This was set against a background of changing circumstances within CASW and the wider visual art community, particularly in the context of our diminishing finances. Fortunately, on this occasion I need only report that the actions outlined then are being successfully progressed and that you, the members (the Society's life blood), stoically have even come to terms with a short moratorium on art purchasing. Consequently, CASW continues to provide meaningful support to contemporary art in Wales. Our impressive Distribution Exhibition at MOMA Wales (Y Tabernacl. Machynlleth) and the subsequent arrangements for gifting works testify to this. These were all under the skilful and inspirational direction of David Moore, ably assisted by Sue Hiley Harris, a clear vindication of the Executive's decision to contract out these activities if and when appropriate finances were available. In this instance CASW was able to secure a £5,000 grant from the Arts Council of Wales to whom we are grateful, though it was a small investment on the £100,000 of artworks on offer and the actual costs involved. Fortunately, two private charities came to our rescue and the Morel Trust and the Gibbs Family Trust each provided £1,500. Without this additional £3,000 the distribution exercise would have been seriously compromised and we are hugely grateful for their enlightened support. Needless to say Y Tabernacl's involvement was, as usual, highly supportive, as was our Carrier, Pete Goodridge, and much appreciated. The Society again benefited from a further grant of £1,000 from CyMAL, administered by the RCAHM Wales, to undertake a collection survey which will usefully inform CASW future policy. Again, David Moore was our Consultant and we are most appreciative of the support of all concerned.

My musings and reflections, as usual, revolve around the membership. At the 2011 AGM two officers who have served the Society with dedication and expertise, Bernard Rees, past Membership Secretary and Vice Chair, and Peter Clee, Treasurer, retired. They will be sorely missed and to mark the respect and affection in which they are held, both were elected Vice Presidents.

But their loss is as nothing (as they would readily agree) to that wrought on the Society (and the wider cultural community) by the death of Hugh Jones, truly a senior figure in CASW. Latterly a Vice President, he had previously served with distinction as a most able Chair, bringing to the Executive a range of professional skills and quiet charm. Perhaps his greatest quality was dedication, which never diminished even when he was seriously ill, a condition which he kept firmly hidden. A cultured man of standing, nothing was too menial and he attended to his duties as Society 'barman' at Lisvane Lecture/Lunches, winter evening lectures and pre-prandial sherry occasions at Aberdare Hall Society dinners as assiduously as any other duty. He is missed, as a person of substance committed to CASW's well-being and, for those of us privileged to share his friendship, for very much more. *Melys yw cofio.*

My term as Chair comes to an end at the Society's 75th AGM in 2012 (our Constitution was formerly adopted in 1937 at a founding meeting in the Great Western Hotel, Paddington) and I shall not be seeking re-election. After 11 years as Secretary and 5 as Chair I am fast reaching my 'sell by date' and there is so much talent and dedication available to replace me. This is my last Chair Chat and offers me the opportunity of conveying heartfelt thanks. I have benefited hugely from so much support from you, the members, as well as from the Executive. There are too many to mention, especially with the danger of inadvertently missing someone out. You know who you are.

But, I can and do hugely thank you all for your kindness and friendship. I hope I have given something to CASW; certainly the Society has given much to Sonia and me.

*CASW
Festive Greetings
and Best Wishes*

Cyfarchion y Tymor



Jean Williams CASW Secretary

The CASW Distribution Exhibition held in the Museum of Modern Art, MOMA, in Machynlleth, was undoubtedly a highlight of our calendar this year.

The exhibition was curated by David Moore, ably supported by Sue Hiley Harries. What a task to organise the show – 83 paintings, prints, sculptures, ceramics and textiles – as well as organising for public institutions in Wales to view and apply for the works. The exhibition was formally opened by David Alston and it was good to revisit the works that had been in storage, some since 2005. The accompanying catalogue was superb, as was the article written by David in the journal *Planet*. The exhibition also attracted media interest, with pieces in the *Western Mail* and an excellent TV piece done by Wedi 3 for S4C, which we viewed at the AGM in July. Over eighty works have subsequently been gifted to public galleries, museums, and public institutions across Wales.

Our year began early in January with a Lisvane lunch, to which we welcomed Julian Mitchell, the playwright and screenwriter. His talk *The Wye Tour and its Artists* was based on the exhibition he had curated for The Chepstow Museum.

The Tuesday night lecture series also restarted in January, with an engaging talk by the artist and lecturer Osi Rhys Osmond. *The cutting edge of Welsh Art : where is it now?* gave us all plenty to think about.

In the February lecture *Ceramics as Fine Art : what's happening in Wales now?* Ingrid Murphy provided an impressive review of the work being done in Wales by ceramicists, some of whom we have welcomed to CASW events.

The artist Iwan Gwyn Parry gave the Tuesday lecture in March. He gave a thoughtful and poignant talk on his tutor and mentor entitled *Peter Prendergast : a memoir*.

The April Annual Dinner again saw us at the SWALEC Stadium, where we enjoyed good food, convivial company and insights into paintings chosen by members from their collections.

In preparation for the Lisbon Tour, Roger Pinkham, Art Historian, gave the May Lisvane lunch in his talk *The Masterpieces of Lisbon* many of which were viewed by members on the Study tour in May, organised by Ilse and Tom Hayes.

June and July were busy months for CASW members. Professor Jonathan Osmond gave the June Lisvane Lunch lecture, *Looking German : historical resonances in modern German Art*.

Later in June, we enjoyed the hospitality of David and Angela George, viewing their impressive collection and appreciating their support for locally-based artists. A lunch at Sketty Hall and visits to the Maritime Quarter galleries formed part of our busy Swansea-based day.



A viewing of Clive Hicks Jenkins' retrospective exhibition, at the National Library in Aberystwyth, began our study tour of North Wales. Glorious weather, a programme of excellent visits to galleries and gardens made this a memorable tour.

The AGM took place at the University of Glamorgan. In the morning we were pleased to welcome David Moore, who presented an overview of the CASW Distribution Exhibition. After lunch, members had the opportunity to view the Art collection at the University, under the guidance of Professor Tony Curtis. Our buyer this year was Dr Chris Evans, CASW Vice-Chair and Events Secretary.

The Lisvane lunch in September saw Terry Setch RA, in an engaging conversation with Tony Curtis. Many members recalled a CASW visit to his studio whilst he was creating one of his early large scale works.

Visits to the exhibitions at the Arsenale and Giardini under the guidance of David Alston featured in the Study tour to the Venice Biennale. A highlight was the visit to the new Welsh pavilion in Castello showing the work of Tim Davies.

An October visit to St Teilo's, the reconstructed medieval church in St Ffagan's, provided an opportunity to experience the church as it would have looked c.1520. Madge O'Keeffe, interpreted the features and the richly symbolic decoration for us.

Our Tuesday night lectures began in September with Dr Peter Wakelin providing a scholarly review of the work and impact of the Dowlais-based artists in his talk *The Dowlais Settlement : Artists and influences*.

The artist Brendon Burns gave the October lecture in his *Shadow into Parent light* in which he shared his artistic journey with us.

The final Tuesday event was a scholarly lecture *Piper and Abstraction 1933-39* given by the art historian Karen Hiscock.

Two lectures completed the Lisvane lunch programme, in October, Professor David Skilton revisiting us with a talk *Sublime, appalling, iconic: painting the Thames across the ages*.

The final Lisvane lunch was a sell-out, as Dr John Gibbs presented a lecture on *The growth and development of the Methodist Art Collection*.

Once again, the November London Study Tour proved hugely popular. Based around the iconic Leonardo Exhibition at the National Gallery we experienced a varied and superbly organised programme of successful visits.

Works from the CASW collection continue to be shown at the November Glasbury Art Exhibition; this year providing the opportunity to see the iconic Alfred Janes *Salome* and an early Kyffin Williams.

Again a varied and enlightening programme of events, made possible by the inspiration, imagination and sheer hard work of organisers, ably supported by members of CASW. As an executive we are particularly grateful for the support given by members in organising the Lisvane lunches. A huge amount of preparatory work goes on behind the scenes to ensure we have what someone has described as the best value and most enjoyable lunch in Cardiff.



STUDY TOUR TO LISBON MAY 2011

The pre-tour briefing by our hospitable tour organisers, Ilse and Tom Hayes, took place on a balmy spring evening as we sipped Portuguese wine in their delightful garden in Lisvane. It was a very pleasant prelude to a week of culture and conviviality.

We were greeted at Lisbon Airport by Manuela holding up the familiar CASW logo. She was to be our very knowledgeable guide on a memorable day out to Sintra, with a stop on the way at Cabo de Roca, the most westerly point of mainland Europe. Our expert driver navigated the tortuous narrow roads up to the hilltop town of Sintra, with its many palaces and aristocratic houses. As a foretaste of the Disneyesque creation we were about

to visit we embarked on a motorised wagon, called a *Tschu Tschu*, for the final drive up to the entrance of the Maria Pena Palace, a castle built on the site of an ancient monastery. A mish-mash of architectural styles and ornamentation, it makes our own Castell Coch seem positively minimalist. Perhaps a bit OTT for some of us but, nonetheless, the views from the terraces were spectacular and the interior with its series of rather small interconnecting rooms, filled with Portuguese furniture, seemed quite cosy, or perhaps *gemutlich* would be more apt. as it was the Saxe-Coburg husband of Queen Amelia who was the inspiration behind this union of Kitsch and Moorish Portuguese styles. Ludwig of Bavaria would have felt at home here.



After lunch, we proceeded to the aptly named Quinta da Regaleira, a real garden of delights, with its dripping grottoes and shady paths. There was another unmissable delight in store for us in Cascais; the brand new Casa das Historias da Paula Rego. The president had asked me to point out that the latest exhibit in the Chiado Museum of Contemporary Art in Lisbon was dated 1910 so I hope that those who were bewailing the dearth of modern art were now placated by this new gallery.

Paula Rego's "house of stories" lived up to its name, with its huge canvases filled with weird animals illustrating, for example, *The Prol's Wall* in George Orwell's *1984*, or another in her Opera Series of funny animals, this time depicting the characters in *La Traviata*. The influences on Paula Rego's work were very evident in the temporary exhibition of works chosen by her from the British Council's London store. This was an expanded version of an exhibition she originally mounted at the Whitechapel Gallery in London. As a child, in Lisbon, I was first introduced to British masterpieces in an exhibition curated by the British Council. Here I was, a little over half a century later, back in Portugal, being brought up to date with the big names of British contemporary art – Jason Perry, Lucien Freud, Augustus and Gwen John – and some exquisite drawings by David Hockney.

Another gallery where the exhibits were determined by the personal choice of the collector, was the "Gulbenkian", which houses the collection bequeathed to the nation by Calouste Gulbenkian. We were introduced to the benefactor's very eclectic personal tastes, displayed in a purpose-built building looking out on to shaded gardens and ponds. One progressed from ancient jewellery, expertly lit to show the intricately worked heads of gods, past priceless oriental rugs, tapestries, suites of Louis XIV furniture, collections of cartouches and trinkets, and on to Corots and Manets, ending with what is probably the world's finest collection of Lalique glass and jewellery.

After this opulence, a short restorative walk across the shady park takes one to the Gulbenkian Museum of Modern Art, housing temporary exhibitions and some interesting videos offering opportunities for a furtive siesta in a darkened room, away from the humid heat outside.

The voracious appetite of CASW members for museums was well and truly sated after five days. It would have been a pity to have missed the former nunnery, which now houses the Museum of Azulejos, with its lively display of a Moorish art form which Portugal has made its own – from the tiled *Panorama of Lisbon* before the great earthquake of 1795, to fanciful animals, scenes of everyday life, including a terrifying illustration of colonic irrigation, and modern designs for Lisbon's subways.

Across the city from the Tile Museum is the tourist area of Belem, with the Explorers' Tower, the Manueline Jeronimos monastery and the Berardo Foundation, which is housed in part of the huge pink marble Cultural Centre built to celebrate the Portuguese Presidency of the EU, in 1992. Nearby is the impressive Maritime Museum, a new Gulbenkian Planetarium, and the magnificently tiled home of another great Portuguese treasure, the *Pasteis de Nata* or Custard Tart. The demand for this delicacy is so great that security guards are stationed outside to monitor the queues. The newest museum along the waterfront is the Museum of the Unknown of which, not surprisingly, little is known.

Après Museum socialising is always a pleasant feature of CASW tours. Informal gatherings in the hotel's comfortable foyer bar allowed us to compare notes, plan and discuss our gastronomic discoveries and organise taxi rides in search of the authentic sound of Fado. Joaquim, the owner of one of the hospitable, local family-run restaurants, was encouraged by our Chairman to open on his day off specially for an ever-increasing group of us. He entertained us generously whilst he watched the UEFA Cup Final!

As ever, the social highlight of the tour was the group dinner in the leafy courtyard of an excellent nearby restaurant. There we were able to formally express our sincere thanks to Ilse and Tom for organising a most enjoyable and successful tour. We are delighted and very grateful that the experience has not deterred them from leading the next CASW trip in October 2012 to Vienna. We look forward to it greatly.

Mary Kellam

JULY 2011

A group of approximately 30 members of CASW left Cardiff on a fine morning in mid-July.

Our first visit was to the National Library of Wales, in Aberystwyth, where we were privileged to view Clive Hicks-Jenkins' Retrospective Exhibition in the company of the artist himself. His work reveals his love of story and myth, of animals and birds, and of poetry as a stimulus to work. His love of colour is beautifully shown in the *Virgin of the Goldfinches* which CASW has gifted to Llandaff Cathedral.

The next day, we journeyed to Anglesey to visit Plas Newydd, where Lady Anglesey, a past buyer for CASW, was there to greet us. The highlight of the tour of the house is probably the beautiful Rex Whistler "trompe l'oeil" mural in the Dining Room, which depicts an imaginary landscape compiled from objects, places and scenes from the lives of both the Anglesey family and the artist, including a sketch of the artist himself as a gardener, in the colonnade. The romantic atmosphere of this mural is enhanced by the knowledge of Whistler's unrequited love for Lady Caroline Paget, and by his death, in 1944, as a member of the Welsh Guards.

Plas Newydd also has a delightful terraced Italian garden facing the Menai Strait, and a small military museum where the Marquess of Anglesey's "Waterloo Leg", complete with articulated knee joint, may be seen.

Oriel Ynys Môn in Llangefnï was showing a collection of work by Kyffin Williams (from the National Library of Wales) – pen and ink, watercolour and gouaches, and oils, completed on his return from his Churchill Fellowship visit to Patagonia in 1969-70.

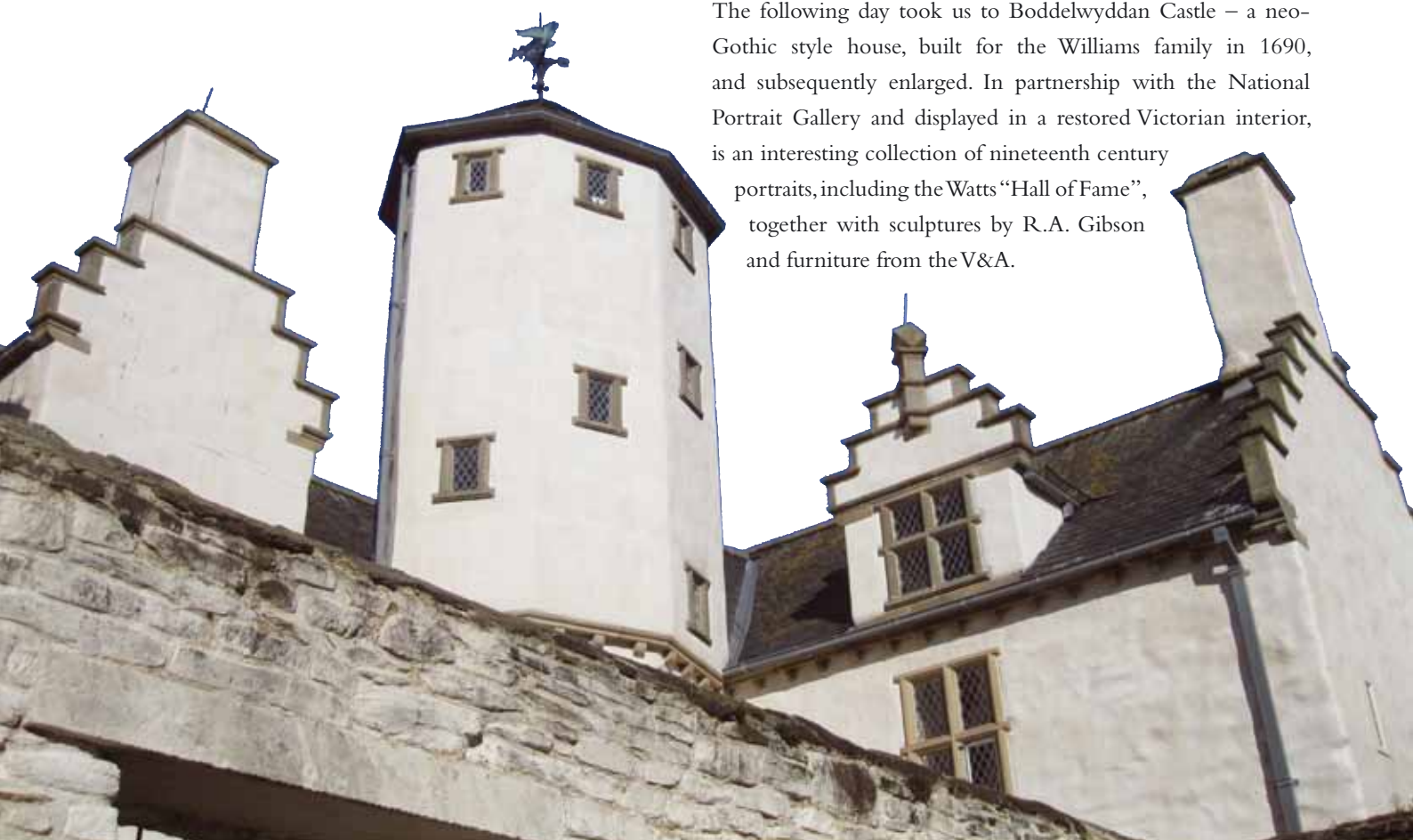


Eleri Jones held an exhibition entitled *Little Things*. A pupil of Peter Prendergast, at Bangor, she comes from a rural background – her treasures are ornaments, memories of family life and domestic interiors.

Charles Tunnicliffe was much admired by Sir Peter Scott as a wildlife artist. His upbringing on a Cheshire farm is revealed in his natural studies of farm animals and birds. His field sketch books, from his time at Malltraeth, show the anatomy of birds in beautiful detail.

Oriel Tegfryn Menai Bridge had a summer exhibition of artists who will be familiar to visitors to the Martin Tinney Gallery, in Cardiff, which has been associated with this gallery for two years, as a new venture.

The following day took us to Bodelwyddan Castle – a neo-Gothic style house, built for the Williams family in 1690, and subsequently enlarged. In partnership with the National Portrait Gallery and displayed in a restored Victorian interior, is an interesting collection of nineteenth century portraits, including the Watts "Hall of Fame", together with sculptures by R.A. Gibson and furniture from the V&A.



Bodelwyddan Hall Hotel, adjacent to the castle, now owns the garden which was laid out by Mawson early in the twentieth century, and hopes to continue with its restoration.

Denbigh Library Gallery, in the town centre, was another highlight of our tour as we had with us Dilys Jackson, a member of the “Iron Maidens” group of British and American female sculptors, casting in iron. Dilys had two pieces of her own work in the exhibition, which was much admired by members. The Anglo-American exchange initiated by Coral Lambert means that the work will travel to the USA later this year.

Ruthin Craft Centre, an attractive modern complex of studios and galleries, was our next stop. We were given a comprehensive review of the shows held, since the opening, by the curator, Philip Hughes.

Eleri Mills, a Creative Wales ambassador who is taking her work to Columbia University, NYC was in her studio, and spoke to us about her use of paint, fabric appliqué and embroidery to portray the landscape.

In total contrast, the next day took us to Bodnant Garden where we were free to roam through woodland and garden borders. Bodnant has many specimens collected by the great Victorian botanists. At the time of our visit, the roses on the terrace and the water lilies in the ponds were perfection. One can see that, since



VISIT TO VENICE 54TH BIENNALE OF ART

SEPTEMBER 2011

The journey to Venice

Our journey began at 7am on Wednesday 21st September, when our coach left central Cardiff for London Gatwick, and proceeded smoothly until we arrived at Marco Polo Airport, which serves Venice. After clearing customs and border checks we walked for just over five minutes to a quayside, where we embarked on two

the new Head Gardener and team were appointed in 2006, much clearing and planting in the woodland areas is taking place.

The Royal Cambrian Academy & Gallery in Conwy, founded in 1881 as a legacy of the artists' colony at Bettws-y-Coed, led by David Cox, is a thriving Education Centre for adults and young people who enjoy workshops and tuition throughout the year, and it holds a summer exhibition.

Nearby Plas Mawr, a previous home of the R.C.A., provided light relief in the shape of “Blodwen”, a servant to Robert Wynn, who built the house in 1576 in the centre of Conwy. Blodwen regaled us with family stories and secrets as we followed her from kitchen to attic, and left us eagerly anticipating our own Society Dinner at the Castle Hotel that evening.

On our home journey on Friday, we visited the Ffin-y-Parc Gallery near Llanwrst – a new venture – to see an exhibition by Robert Pitwell who trained as a printmaker. *Breaking the Surface* used oils on aluminium to portray the landscape in various seasons and moods. The owners also have a magnificent Peter Prendergast triptych on display, in one of the gallery rooms.

Our last visit on our pilgrimage was to MOMA in Machynlleth, celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. Here, Ruth Lambert had arranged a viewing of some of the work which CASW has purchased in the last twenty-five years, including the ceramic *Remember Tryweryn*, an Eisteddfod winner in 2009, here assembled for us in all its fragility. MOMA has extension plans, using the adjacent Tannery building, and is actively fund-raising.

As we left MOMA it began to rain, and we felt that reality was intruding into our idyll. We had all been challenged, stimulated and educated on our travels. We had enjoyed the company of like-minded friends; we marvelled at the perfect weather; we appreciated the lovely food; and most important of all, we were grateful to Dan and Chris for arranging such an amazingly diverse itinerary in one week in North Wales. *Judith Hart*

water taxis for a magical thirty-minute journey across first a lagoon and then into the Grand Canal and to the Hotel Ala. The hotel was quite centrally placed and well suited for our purpose.

Giardini della biennale

On Thursday morning, David Alston came to our hotel for our first briefing before we travelled by *vaporetto* to the Giardini. He reminded us of the instructions given onboard planes by the stewardesses, in case of an impending emergency; viz. “Brace, Brace” as he felt this would prepare us for our first visit, to the Swiss Pavilion where Thomas Hirschhorn was showing *Crystal of Resistance*. His advice was really helpful since this was powerful stuff and showed, amongst other things, many examples of man's inhumanity to man.

Among the pavilions we visited were Great Britain, where Mike Nelson had reworked an earlier version of his *Magazin: Buyuk Valide Han*. In this there was a series of rooms in which dust seemed to cover all the objects. In the French pavilion, Christian Boltanski had filled the space with complex scaffolding, where



images of newborn infants spooled at a hectic pace. His work was profoundly affecting and has been praised by critics as his greatest so far.

Outside the American Pavilion was an upturned Centurion tank, on top of which was a treadmill, and at intervals the tank tracks burst into life, driving the treadmill on which an athlete exercised. This was just one of the many works that either openly or more subtly questioned the need for nations to rush to conflict.

In the Nordic pavilion, Andreas Erikson presented a thoughtful and more calm presentation, which included a scene of birds. Before leaving the Giardini Site we visited the Central Pavilion, where there were three paintings by Tintoretto, chosen by way of emphasising that he was a master of light and linked with the theme of the biennale this year which was ILLUMInazioni. The group met at the exit and walked to the new Welsh Pavilion at Ludoteca Santa Maria Ausiliatrice, Castello which is a former sixteenth-century convent and lies between the Giardini and the Arsenale. There we saw Tim Davies' work, the first of which – *Cadet* – was based on a series of Remembrance Day services, filmed at different UK locations. His work aimed to reflect on the futility of war. In a series of modern rooms he presented a series – *Bridges* – based on his earlier finding of a post card showing the bridge at Mostar, destroyed during conflict and since rebuilt. These were to lead us to a recognition of man's ability to conquer obstacles. There were also two films *Drift* and *Friari*. The new Welsh Pavilion is I believe an excellent choice; very well sited, and the welcome we and other visitors received was extremely warm. This first full day was rounded off by a champagne reception which was much appreciated.

The Arsenale

Our second day was spent at the Arsenale Site, where David Alston had identified James Turrell's *Red Shift* as a piece that we ought to see and, since only three viewers at one time were admitted, very wisely guided us to make a bee-line for it. Our group was very enthusiastic and the queue at opening time was fifteen-strong and came from Wales! On entering, we were asked to put covers over our footwear and then climb up a few steps onto a platform. The room was filled with light, which changed slowly from blue to red, providing us with a unique sensory experience. We then followed our instructions to walk through the next sites, until we came to *The Clock*, by Christian Marclay, and awaited the arrival of our companions. It was a fine choice in several respects. Firstly, it was an excellent work, which had been awarded "The Golden Lion" award for the best artist in the show and, secondly, it had very comfortable armchairs to sit in! Christian's work was a composite of pieces from films, some well-known, others not so, in which clocks appeared.



The Chilean Pavilion had a striking exhibit from Fernando Prats, *Gran Sur*. The artist had worked in an area where there had been a severe earthquake, causing great damage to buildings and disruption of the strata of rocks he worked, using as pigments materials that had been thrown to the surface.

We spent the day in the Arsenale and both here and at the Giardini we all benefited enormously from David Alston's guidance. I feel sure that without this I personally would have rapidly become lost, such was the number of exhibits competing for attention.

We visited the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in the Palazzo Venier on Saturday and among many exhibits saw a superb group of Jackson Pollock paintings, that showed his style moving towards his drip paintings, as well as a good number of paintings by Max Ernst.

It was a visit to be remembered. All the arrangements throughout were superbly managed, in an unobtrusive way, by Bryan supported by Elizabeth, for which many thanks.

Norman Robertson CBE

GLASBURY ARTS EIGHTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Four years ago CASW supported the Glasbury Arts Annual Exhibition for the first time, and has gone on doing so ever since, by either allowing them to borrow works from our collection or facilitating loans from elsewhere, or both. The effect has been to encourage established artists to want to exhibit, less well known artists to “up their game” to compete and bring in more visitors interested in the visual arts.



no different. Exhibits included the CASW 70th Anniversary print portfolio, which created a great deal of interest and a sale! Gareth Davies facilitated the loan from Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Gallery of *Mountain landscape*, by the late Kyffin Williams and the stunning *Salome*, by the late Alfred Janes, both gifted to the museum in earlier days. From our point of

view, bearing in mind Glasbury is a small village and Glasbury Arts is run entirely by volunteers, CASW's support is invaluable.



In addition, this year one of Wales leading sculptors, Sally Mathews, who is well known to CASW members, made an amazing new piece of work out of natural materials such as feathers, straw, twigs and wood, for the exhibition - a life-size Welsh Mountain pony. This was positioned so that it was the first thing visitors saw, and made for a dramatic entrance.



glass work can truly be described as innovative and beautiful.

What makes the exhibition different, however, is that it is a condition that all artists are prepared to have their work exhibited alongside pieces from our local secondary school arts department. It is part of our commitment to make the visual arts more accessible and to enthuse young people at a time when the arts are slipping down the educational agenda. To date, every artist who has exhibited at Glasbury has been very keen to share the commitment, resulting in a significant influence on young people who have gone on to arts-related careers.

John Fitzgerald

LONDON STUDY TOUR

NOVEMBER 2011

We set off from the National Museum, with Mike at the wheel, on a grey misty morning, knowing that the next four days promised us an exciting programme of visits. In hindsight, I underestimated quite how exciting and varied it would be – CASW members are fortunate in having such capable organisers. Alan, Bob and Bronwen were leading the tour but, unfortunately, Chris was unable to be with us this time.



First stop was the Watts Gallery at Compton, recently re-opened following a superb restoration. Our tour commenced in the Sculpture Gallery, dominated by two immense sculptures, original plaster models for the equestrian sculpture *Physical Energy* and

of Watts' friend, Alfred Lord Tennyson. Our guide's excellent account of Watts' life and achievements helped our appreciation of his art, including large-scale works of social realism such as *Found Drowned* and *The Irish Famine*, and the iconic painting *Hope*. Lunch at Guildford Cathedral Refectory followed, with time for a quick view of the *Walking Madonna* by Elisabeth Frink, in the Cathedral, before heading to our London hotel.

Within the hour we were en route to the Deutsche Bank where, over wine and nibbles, Alistair Hicks, the Bank's art advisor, described the ethos behind the art collection: the purchase of



contemporary artworks as a cultural benefit for the staff rather than a financial investment. To this end, 97% of the collection, largely works on paper, is on display in the Bank's offices worldwide. A company brochure states 'There is art around every corner at Deutsche' and indeed there was. We toured conference rooms named after the artist represented on its walls, viewing works in the Freud, Frost and Heron rooms, amongst others, before returning to the Reception area where Alistair discussed the splendid twelve-part painting by Keith Tyson, *12 Harmonics*. We would all have happily spent the rest of the evening here, listening and enjoying so much art on display.

Saturday morning meant the eagerly awaited visit to the Leonardo exhibition at the National Gallery – the hottest ticket in town. With our timed-entry tickets, we felt particularly privileged as we bypassed the long queues snaking around the pavement. The exhibition exceeded expectations – the depth of colour in the paintings alone left me breathless – as did the collection of sketches and preliminary drawings. These were a great delight

and provided further insight into the immense power of the paintings.

Lunch then Tate Britain, followed by the dramatic John Martin exhibition *Apocalypse*. Starting with *The Bard*, the last Welsh Bard in solitary defiance before Edward's invading army, the exhibition peaked in a stunning theatrical son-et-lumière show focused on the triptych *The Last Judgement*. The Barry Flanagan exhibition of works provided an appropriate contrast, charting his early sculptural development and ending with his 1982 work *Large Leaping Hare*. I particularly liked the early works using soft folds of coloured material, and sand-filled cloth shapes.

Sunday morning saw Mike expertly manoeuvring the coach through Holland Park, avoiding five jay-walking peacocks, to Leighton House, the former home and studio of Lord Leighton. In the last 18 months, the house has been restored and refurbished painstakingly, following old photographs, and much of his collection of works, by artists including Millais and Watts, has also been returned. Our tour started in Leighton's painting studio, with its great North window and separate entrance for his models. Our first-rate guide provided a vivid picture of the artist's life-style as we toured the rooms, finally descending the stairs past walls lined with vibrant peacock blue tiles by William de Morgan to end our visit in the astonishing gold-domed Arab

Hall, designed to display Leighton's collection of thousands of Islamic tiles, surrounding a central pool. Our guide described the house style as 'Sumptuousity and Gorgeousness' – an apt description for this amazing house.



Lunch at the Imperial War Museum, on Remembrance Sunday, gave us the chance to view the Women War Artists exhibition – it was particularly pleasing that one of the first works on show, as we entered, was Rozanne Hawksley's intensely moving *Pale Armistice*. Our next stop was the studio of the landscape artist, Norman Ackroyd RA, who explained his printmaking techniques, working with tools and processes most of which would still be familiar

to Rembrandt and Dürer. He uses both copper and zinc plates – a recent work comprised 40 etched stainless steel plate images of the Galapagos. We viewed prints of St David's Bishops Palace, Worm's Head and Anglesey, amongst others, while the artist, his assistant Niamh, and his son Simeon answered all our questions – a wonderful experience.

On Sunday night the traditional drinks and dinner gathering was held – my first experience of this remarkably friendly event, and my thanks go to everyone for their warm welcome. At the dinner, Chair Gareth gave a much-deserved vote of thanks to Alan and Bob for their splendid organisational skills in arranging such a remarkable trip.





CASW LEGACY

CASW promotes artistic taste and the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the arts among the people of Wales. CASW principally fulfils these aims by purchasing works of art for donation to appropriate institutions for enjoyment by the public, and organising lectures and study visits in the UK and abroad.

A gift to CASW in your Will, will help to further fulfil these objectives and is an important source of income for the Society. Once you have looked after your family and friends, please consider a legacy to CASW.



Whilst there are a number of ways in which one can make a Will, CASW recommends that you consult a solicitor with experience in Will writing. A professional will ensure that all the legal formalities are correctly followed and that the Will is valid – giving you peace of mind that your wishes will be carried out as you intend. If you do not already retain a solicitor, ask family or friends for a personal recommendation. Alternatively, you can find a solicitor in your locality through the Law Society - www.lawsociety.org.uk. Follow the links to Find a Solicitor. The Law Society will give you independent advice on choosing a solicitor.

More details are available on our web-site www.casw.org.uk or available from

Jean Williams, CASW Secretary, Hafod y Dail, 19 Woodland Park, Ynystawe, Swansea SA6 5AR briallu@aol.com

JANUARY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday January 10th

Tim Davies – Artist *Venice and other adventures*
7.30pm Birt Acres Lecture Theatre School of Architecture,
King Edward VII Ave, Cardiff

Saturday January 28th

Dr Bernard von Lierop – Artist and Art Theorist
Art, Power, Money and Crime
Lecture and Lunch : Lisvane Memorial Hall

Looking ahead

Friday March 30th
Society’s Annual Dinner
SWALEC Stadium, Sophia Gardens