The Art Workers' Guild

Proceedings and Notes – No. 35 – January 2021

MINUTES · REPORTS · CONVERSATIONS · REFLECTIONS

How little we knew what was coming when we began 2020! The programme all fixed up, a trip for members in place, and a big effort for London Craft Week for the spring were all in waiting. Thankfully, owing to reasons unrelated to premonitions of pandemics ahead, the second week of March was when a group of 19 members convened in a cliff-top house in Cornwall. The shutters had not yet come down across our corner of the world, and we enjoyed a busy if bracing stay with local excursions before re-emerging into a world of mask-wearing and one outing in the day.

Prior to that moment, the Guild had held five meetings of varied content (if we include Master's Night), covering weaving (Emma Sewell), teaching street children print making in São Paulo (Catherine Dixon), and two involving brothers in a literal sense: my own brother Anthony Powers on English music and landscape, and PM Prue Cooper on her extraordinary brother, Heathcote Williams. We now grasped the potential of electronic media for meetings, with enthusiastic audiences for weekly online quizzes alternating with short homemade and home-delivered talks by members, all brilliantly choreographed by Leigh, our Assistant Secretary.

Giving Leigh a well-earned break in August, we held two outdoor meetings, one in Brompton Cemetery on one of the hottest days of a hot summer, and a second at Snape in Suffolk. September saw the resumption of online talks before, on the first of October, we reoccupied our hall to the accompaniment of trumpets blowing a fanfare from the rooftop; something of a false dawn, as it turned out when the shutters came down again, but a brief release all the same. Annette Carruthers and Mary Greensted spoke on Ernest Gimson to a live audience but from their homes. Rosemary Hill was there in person to unveil the world of 'rough automata'. Matthew Eve introduced us to the late Bro. C. Walter Hodges, the illustrator and author, and Roger Kneebone explained the meaning of 'expert'.

The year ended in suspended animation, but we have much to be thankful for. We have maintained our morale and our members, learning that we can extend the reach of our regular lectures and other activities beyond London – and will continue this when live meetings return. Our finances are in a sound condition and we are grateful as ever to our Hon. Treasurer, Alec McQuin. We participated online in the delayed London Craft Week with recorded talks and demonstrations, and Catherine, Leigh and Elspeth have worked in Queen Square and remotely, not just to keep things going but also to enrich our website with blogs and virtual exhibitions, curated by our Hon. Editor, PM Cooper. I am personally grateful to everyone for their good humour, hard work and tolerance as I embark on an exceptional second year as Master (the first since Walter Crane in 1889), which the committee kindly proposed. The speakers deferred from 2020 take up most of the 2021 programme, with a few additions posted in the gaps.

Master Alan Powers

Cover Image: Bro. Ruth Martin, above image: Bro. Graham Miller
Opposite: Bawdsey, Suffolk – watercolour by Alan Powers, 1988

9 January 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Master's Night – William Morris and me

MASTER ALAN POWERS

The Master Anne Thorne made a brief speech thanking all those who had helped make her year such a memorable one. She in turn was thanked by Hon. Sec. Charlotte Hubbard for the diversity and excellent planning of her year, which was followed by thunderous applause. The Master left the dais accompanied by Master Elect Alan Powers.

The new Master entered to renewed applause. His subject was to be 'William Morris and me'. He said that he felt it was egotistical to talk about just himself, but that there was likely to be more about him than Morris. He opened with a quote from May Morris describing a Guild meeting in the old days as 'an Eve-less paradise'. Alan said that he became conscious of Wm Morris as a child through the curtains which hung in his childhood home. 'Old things,' he said, 'loomed large' in his childhood. He was fascinated by the loose change in his pockets. It was still possible to find a Victorian bun penny among the various everyday coins. He was quite the young antiquarian. He took brass rubbings and enjoyed every aspect of it. He was very much supported in this by his parents. They lived at 21 Downshire Hill in Hampstead, which Alan declared to be still the most beautiful street in London. Their house had previously been occupied by Roland Penrose and Lee Miller, and Alan said he was delighted to have been born in the heart of British surrealism.

His was a childhood of enlightened progressive parents, Ravilious nursery china, wooden bowls by Barnsley, and Abbatt wooden bricks and toys. Even the Abbatt toy shop had been designed by Ernö Goldfinger. Visits to nearby Kenwood kindled his enthusiasm for Adam architecture. He drew Tudor-style houses and castles complete with floor plans. He was taught italic handwriting at school by an enlightened teacher. It was the gift of a Pollock's Toy Theatre when he was eight that really excited his interest. He eventually worked in the Pollock's shop and museum on Saturdays, encouraged by the owner, Marguerite Fawdry. Performing with the theatres, he said, was never easy but LED lights were what toy theatres had been waiting for. His mother taught him to ride on the heath where he was sure he was in training to battle for Charles I. The 1960s saw a Wm Morris revival. Alan showed an image of a Morris fabric in a single colour using the indigo discharge

Detail of cover for *Matrix 10* by Alan Powers, autolithograph, 1989

method, which he found fascinating. He bought an Adana printing press in an Oxfam shop for 12/6d. He studied John Ryder's book, *Printing for Pleasure*, but said that the Adana was difficult to use. His father, an architect, had worked at Bryanston School, and knew Bro. Reynolds Stone. On his first visit to view the school, Alan and his father went on to Litton Cheney to visit the Stones, and was shown round the garden by the young Emma Stone. He showed some of his father's accomplished watercolours of buildings and landscapes, which had encouraged him to continue with his own paintings. We had already seen a watercolour of his boyhood room, complete with horn gramophone and modish cardboard chair. Inventive and fluent paintings followed, including an imaginary house for a Russian industrialist and studies of Easton House. At fifteen he decided he wanted to be an architectural historian, despite not knowing if such a thing existed. His father consulted John Summerson, who tried to put him off. Alan wrote a thesis on Norman Shaw and used a bright yellow Morris design on the cover. At Cambridge he came under the influence of David Watkin, Gavin Stamp and Robin Middleton. Gavin was teaching then and became a very important figure in his life. Alan designed stylish posters for the May Balls and settings for *The Vortex* by Noël Coward, and for Gilbert and Sullivan. His PhD thesis was on Edwardian Architectural Education, and Summerson, who was his supervisor, declared, sitting back and with an Embassy cigarette in one hand at the Soane Museum that he had 'turned an extraordinarily dreary collection of people into something quite interesting'.

Through John Martin Robinson and Gavin Stamp he met Past Master Glynn Boyd Harte and his wife, Carrie (Bro. Caroline Bullock), who were also to become very important to him. He touched briefly on the collaborative Guild Pantomimes.

After Cambridge, Alan's career took off with a dizzying succession of projects: from painted furniture and mural painting, which in turn led to discovering neglected mural artists and eventually producing a book, to the purchase of his house in Judd Street, which became both a gallery and shop, where he happily exhibited craftsmen of all kinds. The last bastion of Victorian snobbery was in academia, with its disdain of trade. He showed and discussed his various (and numerous) books, starting with *Modern Block Printed Textiles* and moving on through an astonishing variety of titles on the graphic arts and architecture, including Eric Ravilious, Enid Marx, Serge Chermayeff, Edward Ardizzone, and the Bauhaus. Alongside his casework with the Twentieth Century Society, his numerous lithographs and watercolours, a whole series of curated exhibitions and the journals he has edited was his decade of teaching at the Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture and subsequently at the London School of Architecture. His astonishing energy and output surely put the rest of us to shame. Ending with William Morris, he said that Morris was a proto-Green, and would surely have approved of the idea of low-carbon building. There was one last quote from Morris likening work to play. The talk ended with wild and prolonged applause.

PM Ian Archie Beck

Group Photo at Blackwell, Windermere. L to R, Glynn Boyd Harte, Susanna Curtis, Alan Powers, Carrie Boyd Harte and John Martin Robinson. 26 August 1979. Image - Gavin Stamp

House of a Russian Industrialist by Alan Powers, watercolour , 1969

Painted pine box by Alan Powers, 1977

Seaside Lithograph by Alan Powers, from a portfolio of eight prints, 1986

Lambswool woven honeycomb throws, 'Perkin' on banister. Image – James Champion © Wallace Sewell

23 January 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Wallace Sewell –
colour, composition and collaboration
EMMA SEWELL

The evening opened with the welcoming of two new Brothers: David Dobson, maker/printmaker, mountaineer and inventor of 'the new blue', introduced by Bro. Jo Volley; and the visual artist Chila Burman, who explores the aesthetics of Asian femininity, introduced by Bro. Frances Spalding.

It had been a pretty miserable January week, with a lot of freezing rain and grey skies. Despite this the hall was full of cosy cheer and colourful scarves, the Master looking jolly in his, made by the evening's speaker – Emma Sewell, one half of the partnership Wallace Sewell.

Emma and Harriet Wallace met at Central St Martins in 1985. After graduating, they went to the RCA, both specialising in Weave, with very different approaches. Harriet loved experimenting with industrial power looms, making outrageously big checks with as much colour as possible. Emma was a printer at heart, but wove structure and texture, using shrink buckles and over-twisted elastics to produce 'mad surfaces', which she then boiled and dunked in buckets of dye.

Ambitious to weave, they both worked with mills outside the college, learning how to think on industrial scales. Harriet continued with the checks, and Emma developed a two-way stretch body-con for fashion. However, the money they were offered for their designs was not enough to live on, as fashion had so many other processes to account for. As the 90s recession kicked in and gloom descended, Harriet and Emma met for a 'mad lunch' where they decided to get a studio together. All they could afford was a 10ft square space on the Holloway Road, and as their work was so Yin and Yang, their plan was only to provide moral support for each other in setting up their careers.

Traipsing around design studios they came to realise that they might produce work which was 'Craft, made on an Industrial Scale'. Harriet would need a loom, and Emma a tumble dryer for her shrinking, so they applied for a Crafts Council setting-up grant. Their successful application also provided them with a stall at Chelsea Craft Fair, for which they were totally unprepared. Thirty-six hours before the fair opened, they still had nothing to sell. Somehow, they pulled themselves together, collaborated on making some stuff, put up a display and then went back to the studio to make more. To their shock, the work kept selling. Barneys New York put in a massive double order, and it was their on-going relationship with Barneys that really helped them to build their business. Barneys were endlessly patient and continued to place orders until folding last year.

Emma believes that it was naivety and doggedness that made their business take off. Many people, including the Crafts Council, said that their ideas about 'Craft made Industrially', couldn't work. Their approaches were too different, the designs were technically challenging, and weaving with industry was a risky business. These two sole traders stood strong in defiance, arguing that their

Above: Emmeline pinstripe rug, with Cecil block cushion and Beatrix pinstripe throw. Image – James Champion © Wallace Sewell
Below: Lambswool woven block throw, River. Image – James Champion © Wallace Sewell

Vecelli lambswool pinstripe wrap.
Image – James Champion © Wallace Sewell

connection with colour was strong, and their combined experience proved that hand weave and machine weave were essentially the same.

By 2000, Wallace Sewell had accepted that they were a partnership. Many mills were going out of business, and didn't want short runs, but they had found good people to work with, who fully understood their instructions. Shafts lifting were shown in green, and weft orders shown in red, but the plans looked much more complicated than that sounds! All was going well, Emma was pregnant, the Crafts Council was impressed, and then disaster struck. Their mill was destroyed in a flood. Uninsured, it went out of business. Harriet and Emma salvaged some soggy wool and then went on a road trip to find a new mill. Mitchell Interflex, in Lancashire, well known for their technical fabrics, were hesitant to get involved with Wallace Sewell, but gradually they came around and have never looked back. Mitchell Interflex look after Wallace Sewell, stitch with them, take on their crazy ideas and appreciate them, even though sometimes finding them annoying.

Emma then took us on a tour of Wallace Sewell inspirations and themes. Harriet has a passion for Bauhaus and its proportions, Emma a love of Klimt and Art Nouveau. Emma loves the considered lines of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Russian Constructivism. Harriet loves to paint with expensive watercolour pens in the Dorset countryside, while Emma takes photos of inner-city architecture.

The weaves often evoke the paintings they love. Lifting 'mad and bonkers' combinations of colour, they form stripe cards. Colour is a bit like cooking, being a play of interlace, where you don't really know what will happen. Stripes are as infinite as colours, and besides, their cat loves to sit on them.

As strong styles evolved, a diffusion line was created, keeping the production tight and offering a variety of cheaper products. Fitting four designs onto the same warp, with 4/8 colourways, with different weft threads, enabled them to collaborate and diversify.

Their list of commissions was astonishing. As guest designers for the Tate they have designed around Matisse, Paul Klee, Barbara Hepworth, Tove Jansson, and Adriaen van de Velde; all have had tributes paid to them with scarves.

Then came the project that really impressed their parents: designing seat covers for Transport for London. Starting with a tramline in South London, they made velvet moquette in 4 colours, which taught them enough to go on to win commissions from the Central and Bakerloo lines. This was complex work, squashing design repeats of London's monuments into small spaces, and offering over 30 colour variations to choose from. An unexpected white and purple design for the Elizabeth line has just been made, and Emma and Harriet now love to travel by tube.

Scale enlarged with the introduction of blankets, starting with Jimi Hendrix's new bedspread for the Handel & Hendrix house, bedspreads for King's Cross hotel rooms, and bedspreads for new student bedrooms at the Bauhaus. This work is now leading them into furniture.

Emma finished by expressing gratitude for their connection with industry, the maintaining of creativity, and a strong friendship. They could never have predicted the diversity of their projects and they love their wonderful team of seven people, who hold everything together through the ups and downs.

After a great round of applause there were many questions, including Frances Spalding's query about the Annie Albers effect after the Tate Modern show last year. There was agreement that the show had been long overdue, with the Master expressing the opinion that galleries are guilty of not showing enough textile work. In his year's programme he has tried to make up for that in a small way.

Bro. Rachael Matthews

6 February 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Heathcote Williams: poet, playwright and countercultural activist
PM PRUE COOPER

After the introduction of a sterling group of new Brothers – Maiko Tsutsumi, Joe Whitlock Blundell and Ruth Guilding – followed by various housekeeping announcements, the evening was set for Prue Cooper to speak. It was one of the most moving and fascinating talks yet heard at the Guild. Cooper opened with a recording of Heathcote Williams's marvellous voice reading the opening lines of his 1988 book-length poem *Whale Nation*. Cooper spoke of the poem's reception by figures as diverse as Ted Hughes and Grey Gowrie. *Whale Nation* was the first of a series of long poems that included *Sacred Elephant* (1989) and *Autogeddon* (1991), each reflecting on man's impact on the environment. As the writer and editor Francis Wyndham observed, Williams's horror at man's impact on the planet made him 'the Savonarola of Flower Power'.

Williams's heroes were Swift, Blake and Shelley, and he too was an anarchistic, utopian thinker and activist in the great tradition of British dissent. Heathcote Williams was Prue Cooper's brother and, as she pointed out, she is the last remaining person to have known him for his entire life. Although she spoke of living his last 20 years in obscurity, his death in 2017 was announced on the *Six O'Clock News*, trended on Twitter and was followed by extended obituaries in all the major newspapers. His was a mind that encompasses poetry, drawing, performance, sculpture, pamphleteering and much else. After his death, Prue Cooper helped his daughters China and Lily go through his voluminous papers, box upon box, including letters from figures as diverse as Al Pacino and Harold Pinter, drafts of his play *AC/DC*; all manner of scribbled notes and many unopened bills. After a year of sorting Cooper felt proud but bemused by her extraordinary brother. His archive is now in the British Library.

As a child he was where the action was, a player of practical jokes, showing his paintings on the railings in Sloane Square, a restless schoolboy at Eton, expelled for joining the Young Communists, with a QC father who was hard on him but a mother who fought her children's corner. Being paid by his father to read aloud from Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* may have influenced what Grey Gowrie called his 'cadence-aware' writing. He had thoughts of a monastery

Heathcote Williams and Toyah Wilcox in Derek Jarman's *The Tempest*

but took to the road, agreed to read law at Oxford, failed to take finals but used his time well. Both children were taken to Speakers' Corner and Petticoat Lane by their father, and *The Speakers* was Heathcote's first book based on friendships with individuals who spoke there, above all the mysterious Billy MacGuinness, King and Queen of the Gypsies, an inspirational spell-casting figure. *The Speakers* was admired by Anthony Burgess and by Harold Pinter. He was soon to write the play *AC/DC*, staged at the Royal Court and hailed by the *Times Literary Supplement* as 'the first play of the 21st century' in 1970 – part comedy, part visionary tract, part psychedelic nightmare and an attack on invasive mind-conditioning media. It was developed from his earlier equally disturbing play *The Local Stigmatic* – from which Prue showed a short extract. This play came to obsess the great actor-director Al Pacino. Prue Cooper charted Heathcote's spells of intense creativity followed by breakdown and periods of reclusiveness.

She spoke of his steadfastly loyal partner, Diana Senior, met at Oxford, and of Heathcote's attitude to money – paid £100 for a song for Marianne Faithfull he left the cash as loose change in a bowl with the rubric: 'Take what you need; the rest is greed.' Prue Cooper described political activity in Notting Hill Gate, his Ruff Tuff Cream Puff estate agency for squatters and the creation of the state of Frestonia, with Albion Free State stamps and passports. 'Clean up your spark

plugs, Nosferatu Nerdniks!' was his clarion cry, together with counsel from Billy MacGuinness: 'Do nothing, slowly.' In 1975 the agency housed more people than Westminster Council. Geoffrey Howe was moved by the concept of Frestonia and wrote his appreciation, making the link with G.K. Chesterton's *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*. When Michael X was hanged in Trinidad, his death warrant signed by HM Queen, Heathcote expanded his graffiti activity to the walls of Buckingham Palace. Prue brought in Bro. Richard Adams (who was in the audience, as were Heathcote's two daughters), who as Open Head Press collaborated with Heathcote on every kind of printing from posters to pamphlets in the 18th-century dissenting tradition – 'anarchist porn'. We had a glimpse of the film *Wet Dreams*, linked to Williams's role in the first erotic film festival held in Amsterdam in 1970.

Prue Cooper emphasised that Heathcote was keen on making and hands-on activity, taking a course at the Whittington Press. He was drawn to learning fire-eating with frightening results and to the elusive directness of conjuring and magic, an interest turned into mainstream viewing in the Christmas TV show *What the Dickens*, a witty look at the performances Dickens arranged for the Foundling Hospital. In 1979 Williams was cast as Prospero in Derek Jarman's *The Tempest*, one of many parts in films over the years. His trilogy of book poems were written in Port Eliot in Cornwall, where he led a reclusive life that became dismayingly successful and influential. All profits were given to Greenpeace. The spoof documentary *Every time I cross the Tamar I get into Trouble*, of which we saw a clip, touched on his elusive qualities. It featured Al Pacino, Harold Pinter and Heathcote himself in various disguises.

In 1993 Williams returned to live with Diana Senior, then living in Oxford and pursuing an obsessive interest in wasps. But his anger at the world's injustices was undiminished. He maintained, as few do, the intensity of his youthful utopianism. Still astonishingly prolific, he returned to writing his own form of hard-hitting documentary poetry and prose, attacking his long list of favourite targets – corporate greed, the arms trade, Trump's America, the abuse of power, and very presciently, Boris Johnson. His short book on Johnson, *The Blond Beast of Brexit*, sold over 100 copies in the first hour at the London Review Bookshop. He also celebrated his heroes – Badshah Khan, the Islamic peace warrior, Christopher Smart, Shelley, and William Blake. Describing poetry as 'heightened language', he believed that 'language exists to effect change, not to be a tranquiliser', and 'if poetry isn't revolutionary, it's nothing'. He wanted to bring poetry down from its ivory tower and change lives. With an actor friend, he started up a project organising spoken-word workshops for marginalised young people round the country. 'Poetry teaches the heart to think,' he said. He worked on a play about Christopher Marlow, and another narrative poem linking the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, the Swing riots of the 1830s and today's Occupy movement.

When Heathcote died, having mostly neglected his health, Prue Cooper told us that the keys of his laptop were blank, all the letters erased by constant use. To the very end, he was an optimist, an anarchist and a utopian. As *The Economist* obituary commented: 'There are plenty of poets left, but no fire-breathers.'

Questions came thick and fast after this remarkable account of an unusual and, in many ways, exemplary life and the talk was cheered and clapped.

Bro. Tanya Harrod

Detail from *The Road Across the Wolds* by David Hockney

20 February 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Music and the English landscape
ANTHONY POWERS

The lecture began with the edgy, fractured, spiky sound of percussion and brass. A couple of minutes later the room was filled with the dreamy, evocative strains of *The Lark Ascending*. Birtwistle and Vaughan Williams – two very different visions of the English landscape, each presented through sound alone.

This lecture by the composer and teacher Anthony Powers (brother of Master Alan Powers) set out to explore the complex relationship between music and landscape, bringing into view the tensions between words, music, vision and the bodily experiences of space and setting.

The focus throughout the presentation was the experience of listening. A series of carefully selected extracts from English composers at key periods focused the audience's minds and ears on the narrative flow of the presentation. Unusually for a Guild lecture, there were no visual images. This had the effect of heightening perception and focusing on the spoken word and instrumental music. Yet throughout the lecture, Powers drew comparisons with the visual, showing how composers have used the palette of music to capture and respond to the variety of countryside and shore. Powers explored the expressive vocabularies of music in unexpected and sometimes challenging ways. By inviting us to listen to fragments of compositions he provided an overview of both landscapes and the music that inspired or was associated with them.

By highlighting the transient nature of musical experience, Powers drew attention to the work every listener has to do in order to make sense of what they are hearing. With aural evocations of landscape, composers sometimes give specific points of reference, such as bells, the sound of wind or (as with Benjamin Britten and the *Four Sea Interludes),* the sucking undertow of a windswept Suffolk shore. More often, however, music gives a more general sense of place, inspired by specific landscapes but not tied to them.

'Landscape music' has a long pedigree. Generations of composers, from Beethoven to Schubert, from Mendelssohn to Brahms, Wagner, Mahler and Richard Strauss, have drawn inspiration from the Alps, the Rhine and other parts of Europe as they responded to the beauties and terrors of the natural world. But the subject of this lecture was England. Through a series of examples ranging from the 19th century to the present day, Powers explored how composers have integrated literature, poetry and regional folk music as well as the visual arts. For towering figures such as Elgar and Holst as well as for lesser-known composers, folk tunes remain a crucial source of inspiration.

Certain characteristics of English landscape music run through the examples Powers chose. Music, as he pointed out, operates in time. Many composers, from Elgar to Delius, from Bax to Britten, loved walking and found it a powerful stimulus for musical invention. The moderate tempo of their compositions often reflected the rhythms of their feet as they tramped through the fields and hills, while their orchestral or

chamber arrangements seem suffused with seasons and weather.

Landscape can be strikingly specific in terms of the places it evokes, from Britten's East Coast to Tippett's West Country. Powers' own composition *Terrain* was inspired by his Herefordshire home, looking from the Black Mountains across to the Malvern Hills. And such music can have a nostalgic element, made especially poignant in certain cases, as with Butterworth, killed in action in the Great War.

The lecture ended by highlighting the contemporary resonances of landscape for composers, both as a source of inspiration and as a focus for concern at a time of ecological peril and environmental fragility. Powers concluded by bringing the aural and the visual together, quoting John Ruskin's advice to Victorian painters, 'Go to Nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thoughts but how best to penetrate her meaning'.

Questions from many Brothers and guests, including Rob Kesseler, Jane Dorner, Peyton Skipwith, Carrie Bullock, Rory Young and Luke Hughes, prompted a lively discussion. Points included the tension between nostalgia for an imaginary past and current concerns around fracking, landfill and climate change; the use by composers of titles to declare the relation of their music to the countryside; issues around the borrowing and rearranging of existing material, resisting the 'wretched aim of originality'; and the place of the vernacular in music.

Bro. Roger Kneebone

Guild closed due to Covid-19 pandemic – virtual meetings only

Guild reopens

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1 October 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Ernest Gimson: Arts & Crafts designer and architect
ANNETTE CARRUTHERS & MARY GREENSTED

Ernest Gimson was born in Leicester in 1864, into a close, 'free-thinking' family (although he claimed later to be an atheist) and, thanks to the success of his father's engineering business, was blessed with independent means. He spent three years training as an architect and studying at Leicester School of Art. The family were active in the Leicester Secular Society

Interior of the Bedales School library designed 1918 and built 1920-21. Photograph © James Brittain

and when Ernest and his brother Sydney had taken on the running of that society, they invited William Morris to lecture in 1884 on 'Art and Socialism' – the talk, stressing the importance of worthwhile work in pleasant surroundings, proved formative for them both.

Morris advised Ernest to broaden his experience and go to London. There, he joined the practice of PM John Sedding as an 'improver' (a form of internship) in a building next door to the 'treasure house' of Morris & Co. London also offered museums, lectures, concerts, exhibitions, and many new friends, in particular Ernest Barnsley and his brother Sidney, Robert Weir Schultz, Francis Troup (the designer of the lecture hall), Detmar Blow, Walter Butler, W.R. Lethaby and Philip Webb. There were many others actively engaged, not just in the AWG and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) but also in the continuing debate over whether architecture was an art or a profession.

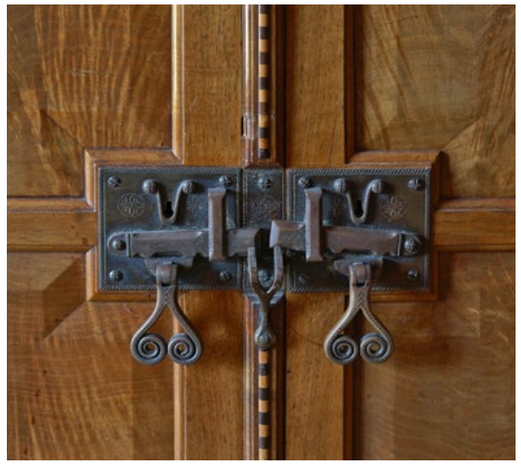
In London, there was a lot of drawing, observing, travelling (twice to Italy) and, in the best AWG traditions, dressing up.

Apart from architecture, there were three main areas of practical work that most attracted him, which proved important to his idea of himself as a maker as well as to the understanding it gave him about materials: furniture, plasterwork and embroidery.

There was a short-lived foray into a commercial enterprise, Kenton & Co, making furniture in partnership with other architects as he explored his own aptitude for making and means of working; this ultimately depended on outsourcing to and working closely with professional cabinetmakers.

Photos from two exhibitions of Kenton & Co's work at the AWG in July and December 1891 showed a distinction between Gimson's highly decorated pieces (with elaborate marquetry) and very plain, chunky, rural oak pieces. A lasting legacy came from his working with the Herefordshire chair-maker Philip Clissett, who made the rush-seated ladderback chairs that Gimson saw when he came to AWG meetings.

By the time he was ready to move out of London, he had imbued much training from this self-education and from his new friendships, together with newfound shared beliefs in solidarity, common purpose and collaboration. He had also acquired a healthy lack of respect of professional bodies (he never joined the RIBA) and a clear view about the importance of where and how to live. This proved to be the Cotswolds, where he moved with Sidney Barnsley in 1893.



Detail of a walnut sideboard with a drop spring latch – Ernest Gimson. © The Keatley Trust. Image – James Brittain

Gimson and Barnsley initially set up at Pinbury Park, near Sapperton. Later, in 1900, he set up a small furniture workshop in Cirencester, moving it to larger premises at Daneway House. There, he concentrated on designing furniture, made by local craftsmen under the Dutch cabinetmaker Peter van der Waals, whom he engaged as foreman in 1901. As work increased, he entered into a partnership with Edward Gardner, son of the sawmill owner at Daneway, to make the chairs, but also later set up a smithy at Sapperton, initially with Alfred Bucknell, the son of the local blacksmith.

Gimson was astute about publicity, aiming for commissions from the wealthy and well-connected and supported by a showroom in the tower at Daneway and the distribution of high-quality photographs. Notable displays included exhibitions at the Royal School of Art Needlework in 1904, at Debenham & Freebody in 1907, and at various Arts & Crafts exhibitions in London, Ghent and Paris between 1913 and 1914. He died from cancer in 1919.

Whilst the culture of Gimson's operation was based on close, classless relationships with the craftsmen, mutual respect and 'liberated from the norms of social etiquette', the designs were rooted in traditional forms. Philip Webb wrote about these: 'Some of the old patterns are so admirable – good country work with no thought of style; the making of them is pleasure enough.' It's a comment that goes to the heart of the Gimson legacy.

And what a legacy it was, not just in the buildings (such as the library at Bedales, Stoneywell or Waterlane House), not just in his little-attributed work for SPAB (such as Salle church in Norfolk), not just in the continuity of his approach by his architectural assistants (such as Norman Jewson and Geoffrey Lupton) but also in the inspiration of furniture makers of future generations, including Alan Peters, John Makepeace, Bro. Martin Grierson, Bro. Rod Wales, Bro. Luke Hughes, Richard Platt and Sam Cooper. In 1935, Peter Waals moved on to pass those same standards on to students at Loughborough Training College, a post subsequently taken up in 1937 by Sidney Barnsley's son, Edward, whose own workshop, at Froxfield in Hampshire, continues to this day.

Questions followed this fascinating pair of presentations: from Bro. Nicholas Cooper about the use and identity of professional makers involved in creating the designs in the early days; from Bro. David Birch about the miraculous survival of many of the Gimson drawings; and from Bro. Luke Hughes about the astonishing continuity between the generations of makers over the last century, which appeared to go to the heart of the continuing relevance of the AWG's philosophies right through to the present day.

The audience was left with a tantalising glimpse, not just of the richness of the speakers' new book, *Ernest Gimson: Arts & Crafts Designer and Architect*, but also the importance of the role of the AWG as the crucible from which such a legacy of alchemy was forged.

Bro. Luke Hughes

15 October 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Suddenly it's now: Paul Spooner and the School of Rough Automata
BRO. ROSEMARY HILL

The Master strode into the hall resplendent in a bicorn hat plumed with goose feathers (made by Brother Jane Smith). A minute's silence was observed in memory of PM Josephine Harris and several heart-warming tributes were read out. Alan Dodd described her as excelling in charm and diplomacy. PM David Birch shared some photographs, and Master Elect Tracey Sheppard described her as looking like a little mushroom in her beige beret. Jacqueline Taber said she loved the Guild, and the Guild loved her, which we did. PM Alison Jensen said she had left behind a big Josephine Harris-shaped hole. Tributes continued from PM Ian Archie Beck, Juliet Johnson, PM Sally Pollitzer, Jane Muir and Rachael Matthews.

After the other notices, those present in the hall, perhaps about 30-40 of us, all socially distanced, had the rare treat of watching the non-virtual version of the evening's talk, by Rosemary Hill, whilst many others tuned in from the comfort of their own homes.

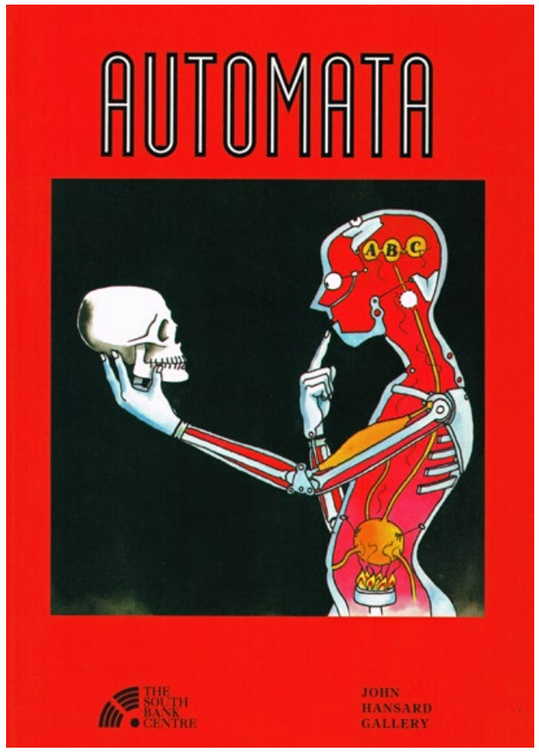
Rosemary's talk was titled: *Suddenly it's now: Paul Spooner and the School of Rough Automata*.

It began with a brief history of how the Cabaret Mechanical Theatre came to Covent Garden in 1985 and its proprietor, Sue Jackson, propelled the likes of Tim Hunkin and Paul Spooner into the public realm. We were shown one of Paul Spooner's early automata: *The Last Judgement*, a skeletal figure with souls in Purgatory revolving within the rib cage whilst demons relaxed in Hell's café below.

Sue had begun her working life in Falmouth with a craft shop near to where Paul lived and she encouraged him to develop his automata from very simple beginnings with a boring elephant that did very little, into far more complex mechanisms such as the Anubis one we were shown. He had seen the abstract work of Peter Markey, which inspired him to be more creative.

Other figures on the Falmouth automata scene included Ron Fuller and we saw one of his creations, entitled *The Overconfident Lion Tamer*, in which the tamer only just escapes the snapping jaws each time.

We were then told of 'The Ride of Life', commissioned for Meadowhall Shopping Centre, Sheffield, but sadly never installed. The idea was to be transported from birth to death on moving sofas. This had room sets by Hunkin, Spooner and others. Paul's was a scene set in



Above: *Mechanical Hamleting* – cover image by Paul Spooner for the exhibition *Automata* at the Royal Festival Hall, 1992. Image – Rosemary Hill.
Below: *Peter Markey* by Paul Spooner. Image – Paul Spooner.
Opposite: *Suddenly it's now: Paul Spooner and the School of Rough Automata*, 2017. Image – Rosemary Hill

Heaven where rows of identical heads in Mao jackets all singing *My Way*.

Next, we saw a video of Tim Hunkin's *Chiropodist* in action. The punter puts a foot into an opening at the base of the machine, inserts a coin and then the matron-like chiropodist is seen to descend inside the box out of view upon which the 'patient's' foot is tickled and massaged by various mechanisms and then the chiropodist rises back into view ready to receive her next victim.

Automata, we learned, are either 'smooth automata' or 'rough automata'. The former are the high end, complex and finely wrought clockwork examples stemming from the 18th century: the mechanical swan in the Bowes Museum being an exemplar. The 'rough' form, which make up this talk, are 'clever ideas delivered with primitive mechanisms,' whereas the 'smooth' are dumb ideas delivered by complex mechanisms, as in the case of the ubiquitous singing birds in cages. Paul had been drawn over to the smooth side on some occasions, such as when he integrated a pipe organ into one such automaton.

In 1992 Rosemary was instrumental in organising the Automata exhibition at the Royal Festival Hall, and included a potted history – from Leonardo Da Vinci's mechanical lion, which opened its chest to reveal to the king its loyal heart, through to moveable toys in the early 20th century.

Rough automata are often slightly subversive or darkly humorous. When Paul was asked to make an automaton collecting box for Greenpeace, he came up with a case full of baby seals continually squealing whilst being clubbed to death by 'Eskimos', this only relented for a minute or two by the insertion of a 50 pence piece before the culling resumed.

Paul is still going strong with a recent exhibition featuring *Physics for Cats* and others, in the Bloomsbury windows of an architect's office, which caused many a pedestrian pile-up outside.

Rosemary left us with Paul's representation of her writing the Pugin biography, seated in Albert's place within the Albert Memorial. Many questions followed the applause. It was noted that those of us who were on the Master's Cornwall trip had the pleasure of visiting the shop of the automatist Keith Newstead and seeing many works by Paul and others in the Falmouth Museum.

The evening ended with socially distanced mingling. Elspeth's sandwiches were conspicuous by their absence, but there was at least alcohol to redeem this Covid-induced situation.

Bro. Simon Hurst

Guild closed due to Covid-19 pandemic – virtual meetings only

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29 October 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

C. Walter Hodges: a life illustrating history
BRO. MATTHEW EVE

First there is the Zoom waiting game, as Guildsmen arrive on screen in little clumps. Greetings are exchanged across the ether, glasses are raised; there are mutings and unmutings, and the occasional overheard comment.

The Master, Alan Powers, rang his bell to call everyone to order. He announced that the minutes of the last meeting would be published in Proceedings & Notes rather than read out loud online. He also announced the publication of various books: a study of the life and work of Bro. Luke Hughes, with an introduction by Bro. Tanya Harrod; the Master's own new book, a history of Abbatt Toys, published by Design for Today and designed by Bro. Laurence Beck, and *Sardines* by PM Glynn Boyd Harte, a facsimile edition of a book of lithographs of various and delightfully vernacular Sardine tins originally published by Warren Editions and now faithfully reproduced, also by Design for Today. The Master said the contents page especially delighted PM Boyd Harte, as it consisted of the words: Contents … Sardines … and was the only text in the book.

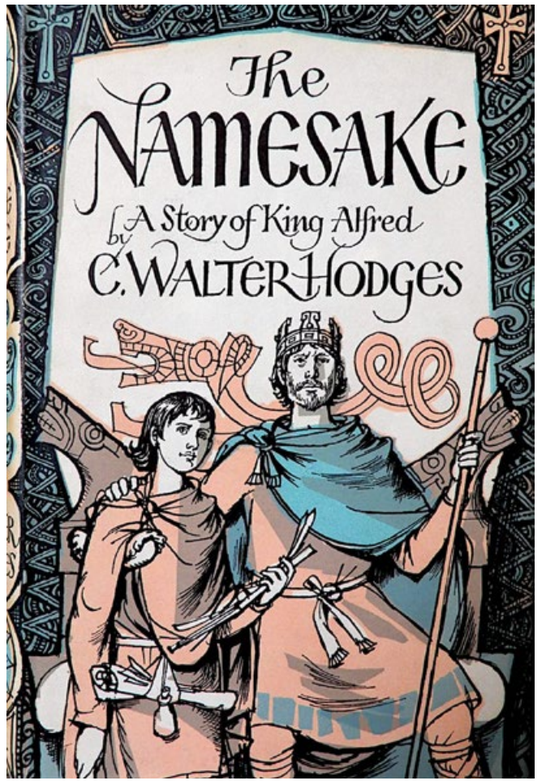
The Master then introduced Bro. Matthew Eve, book historian, illustrator, lecturer in design and graphic communication at the University of Reading and a distinguished chocolatier.

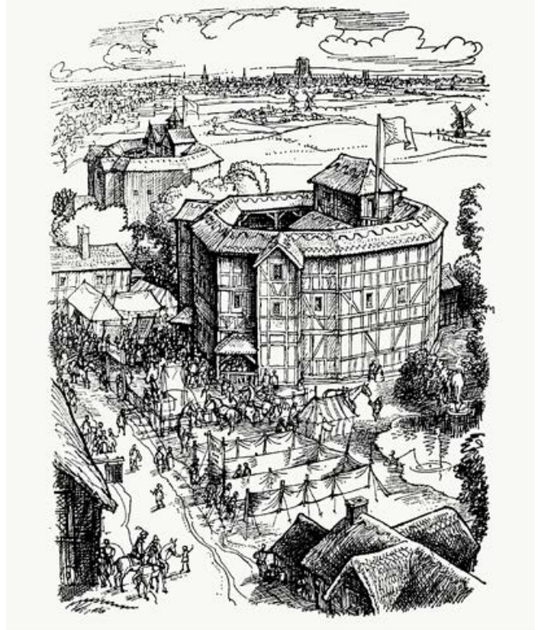
Bro. Eve announced that he was dedicating his talk to two late past masters, Ed Fairfax-Lucy and Josephine Harris, both of whom were much loved and would be greatly missed. His subject was to be the life and work of the author and illustrator C. Walter Hodges. He was dividing the evening into two sections. First Hodges's life and work, and second readings from letters exchanged between them over a number of years.

CWH was born in 1909 at Beckenham. His father was an advertising manager for Lever brothers and his maternal grandfather was a landscape painter, although his pictures seemed to be mostly brown. CWH attended Dulwich College between 1922 and 1925, but always felt that he was self-educated. He discovered a love of Shakespeare early on and was keen on the idea of theatre and stage design, falling under the spell of Edward Gordon Craig. But 'writing', CWH said, 'was the thing.' It seemed that he enjoyed writing more than drawing, despite his obvious ability at the latter. At Goldsmiths College he was taught by PM E.J. Sullivan, who nurtured quite a roster of illustrative talent and had a big influence on his students. His own work was distinguished by free and fine expressive pen line work, an approach that CWH followed. Matthew Eve showed examples of some of the over 600 drawings that CWH made for the Radio Times, including a rare Christmas cover in colour from 1938. Other early work displayed the influences of EJ Sullivan, Heath Robinson and Rex Whistler. CWH also worked as a freelance illustrator for advertising and books, developing versatility and learning to cope with tight deadlines. He married a dancer, Greta Becker, and they moved briefly to New York. This offered new opportunities. His book *Columbus Sails*, which he both wrote and illustrated, was almost immediately hailed as a classic. The writing was dignified, and the story was seen from the points of view of various characters involved in the voyage.

World War II interrupted his career. Like many artists he worked in camouflage. After the war things took off. He illustrated *The Little White Horse* by Elizabeth Goudge and *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, among others. All were distinguished by his vigorous pen work. He developed his scholarly love of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan theatre over the whole of his career, starting with *Shakespeare and the Players* in 1948 with detailed diagrams of the theatres and maps of Elizabethan London and continuing with further books on and around the subject. The last, *Enter The Whole Army*, was published when he was 90. It was a matter of great regret and understandable annoyance that he had not been consulted on the making of Sam Wanamaker's Globe Theatre on the South Bank. He continued to write and illustrate his own historical fictions, winning the Kate Greenaway medal in 1964 and being short-listed for the Carnegie medal in the same year, thus narrowly missing out on an unprecedented double. Through developments in printing technology he was able to develop his colour work in a series of delightful picture books. *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* contrasted the skinny piper in his colourful medieval outfit with the drab and portly burghers. He illustrated *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* in an experimental way verging at times on a kind of expressive Cubism. He taught part time throughout the 1960s at Brighton College of Art, and worked well into old age, producing a set of stamps on Elizabethan theatres in his 80s.

Matthew Eve began a long correspondence with CWH when he was just 13, and their letters and exchanges continued until CWH's death in 2004. Matthew showed and read excerpts from CWH's letters, which were





Above: Front cover design for *The Namesake* by C. Walter Hodges, G. Bell & Sons, 1964.
Below: Illustration from *Shakespeare and the Players* by C. Walter Hodges, Ernest Benn, 1948

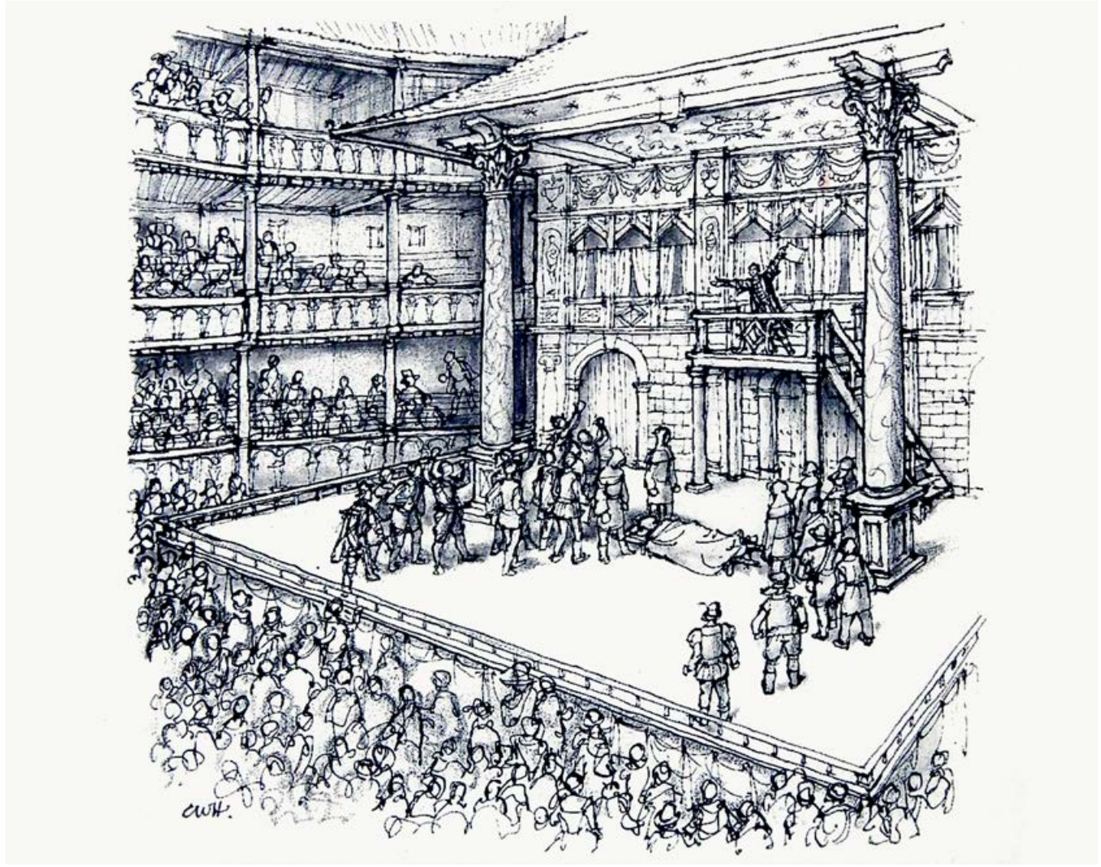


Illustration from *Enter the Whole Army* by C. Walter Hodges. Image – Paul Spooner

beautifully lettered and full of advice and encouragement for the younger artist. It was obvious that they got on and saw eye to eye, and that CWH became a kind of second father to Matthew, taking a keen interest in all stages of his education and development. His letters always included details of what he might be working on, and drawings were often scattered in the margins. His final letter, written from the nursing home where he spent his last few years, ended touchingly 'Have a good life Matthew'.

It was clear that the Guild had been entertained and moved by this portrait of a hardworking and gifted artist/writer. Discussion centred on his teaching methods and the qualities of his drawing and his fine handwriting, as well as his many generosities. Other contributions were made by PM Ian Archie Beck and the illustrator Peter Bailey, both of whom were taught by CWH, and by Rory Young, Emma Barker, Jane Smith and the Master, Alan Powers.

PM Ian Archie Beck

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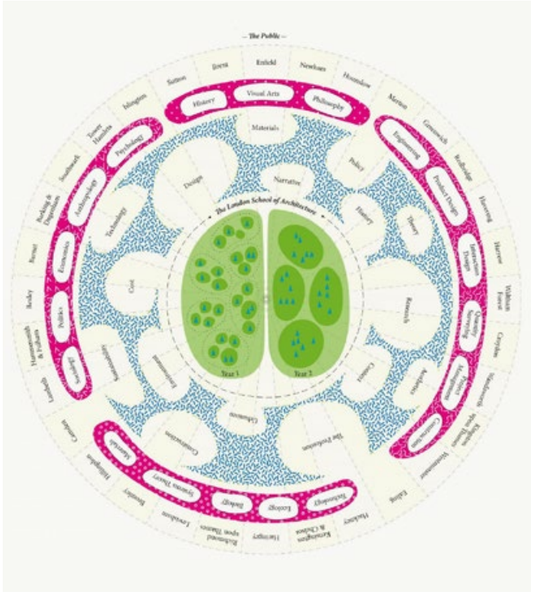
12 November 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Radical models for architectural learning at the London School of Architecture

WILL HUNTER

Will Hunter founded the London School of Architecture in 2015, 'a new school for a new century – for independent minds rather than for independent means.' The school is located in Hackney, and currently has over 100 enrolled students. However, almost all teaching takes place on the premises of associated bodies and collaborating practices. Its underlying philosophy might be described as integration – integrating teaching with practice, with research and the development of ideas, offering an inclusive mode of architectural education to as wide a range of students as possible, collaborating with related disciplines and above all, 'educating across the whole of society to improve the way humanity lives'. The LSA and its



London School of Architecture -
Relationship Diagram by Will Hunter

students are envisaged as 'a network, not a hierarchy,' a principle illustrated by a diagram in which the LSA – represented by two halves of a (green!) brain – is surrounded by contextual factors: by concepts and principles, as well as by relevant and contributing organisations and supporters.

Fundamental questions guide the whole of the learning experience: why and how, and what needs to be done and what can be done to supply it? Analysing this further, other questions arise: how to provide for the wants of a predominantly metropolitan culture; how to attract and use ideas from outside the conventional scope of the architectural discipline; how to develop the collaborative working essential in a complex society. In terms of a learning programme, this can be expressed by three further questions: what change do you want to see in the world? How does your architecture contribute to that change? Who do you want to be as a designer?

Recognising environmental issues is also seen as fundamental, guided by the United Nations' goals for sustainable development. We are at a pivotal moment in the evolution of the planet, where the interdependence of every aspect of the human and natural worlds needs to be recognised. Bruce Mau has said, 'It's not about the world of design, but the design of the world', while Peter Buchanan has described architecture as 'the nexus where all disciplines and fields of knowledge converge'.

LSA aims to attract students on a basis of values, but over and above the school's underlying principles are practical matters. Much architectural teaching is expensive, and consequently socially exclusive. The way that teaching is set up at the school allows students to earn their fees through placements with collaborating practices, thus also giving them a range of real-world experiences through which they will discover with colleagues how projects meet the actual needs of users. This practical experience also helps them to explore the complex contextual problems that must nevertheless be solved in human terms, balancing value sets in ways that can never be done through artificial intelligence. At the same time, by discovering and developing their own aptitudes and abilities, they become better able to identify the tasks that may require their particular skills and knowledge now and in the future.

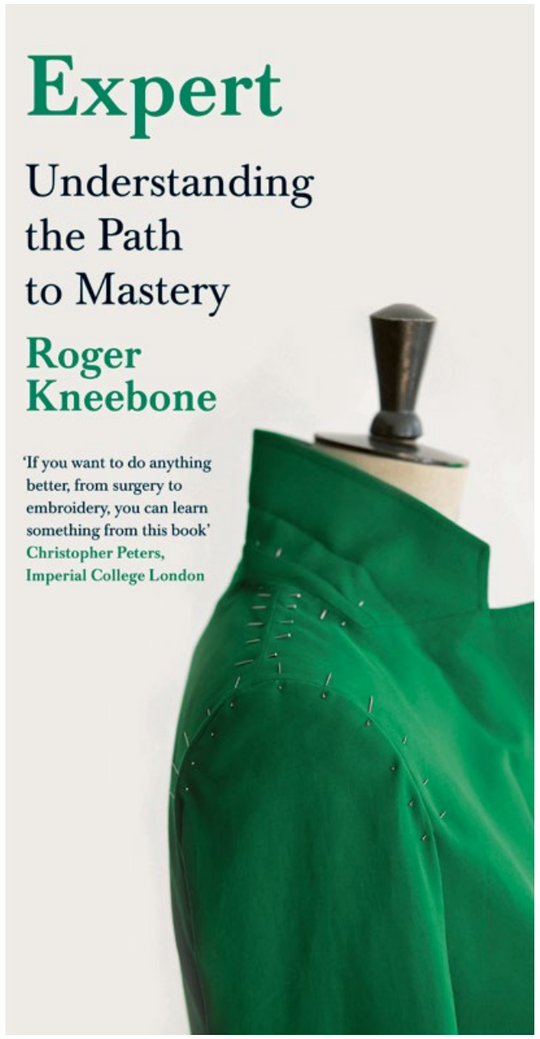
The school offers a two-year graduate programme broken down into various segments, all intended to help students think about design and the analysis of problems and methodologies. More detailed studies contribute to these objectives: history, materials, structure, sustainability and so forth. Project work is marked on three criteria: whether it is relevant and worthwhile, whether difficulties and complexities have been successfully identified, integrated and resolved, and what its impact might be. Practicality is stressed equally with innovation in considering how a building may be used and whether its users' needs have been adequately analysed and understood, as well as how it can contribute more broadly to the well-being of society and the planet.

Many in the Zoom audience contributed to the questions and discussion that followed. These embraced *inter alia* the question of whether collaborative working stifled creativity, the civic values of traditional building forms, how pressures on time and money have increased on both students and educators, and whether the German term Baukunst – the building art – might more truly describe the full range of learning experience offered by the LSA. While architecture in the 20th century sometimes seemed increasingly divorced from the real needs of society, the Master observed that the principles of the LSA appeared to him and to many others closely to parallel those of the Guild's founders in 1884. At the end of the evening the audible applause from those who had unmuted, and the vigorous hand clapping visible to all, spoke for the audience's appreciation of Will Hunter's talk and its warm support for the LSA's principles and ambitions.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

26 November 2020 · ORDINARY MEETING

Becoming Expert
ROGER KNEEBONE



Expert - Understanding the Path to Mastery
by Roger Kneebone

This enjoyable and entertaining lecture drew on the speaker's recent book of the same title, and, like the book, was aimed not at specialists but the general public. Professor Roger Kneebone's aim was to have wide appeal (although it has to be noted that eight out of the nine experts represented in the lecture were men) and his message was relevant to anyone interested in gaining mastery, whether in the making of embroidery or the design of hybrid engines for future aeroplanes.

Introducing himself, Kneebone mentioned that he directs the Imperial College Centre for Engagement and Simulation Science and the Centre for Performance Science, jointly shared between Imperial College and the Royal College of Music. His enthusiasms and his interest in places where science and the arts overlap and intersect make him an active networker and the creator of unorthodox teams of mixed experts. He had previously appeared at the Guild in connection with the project Thinking with your Hands, in which members of the medical profession exchanged ideas and experience with art workers. Kneebone's own hands were very much involved in his initial career as a surgeon, especially when he worked in Soweto during a troubled time in the history of southern Africa, and where most of his patients had undergone trauma. Feeling that this work had often pushed him beyond the comfortable edge of surgery, he eventually left it to become a general practitioner and, finally, an academic.

The path towards mastery, identified in his lecture, involved three stages: Apprentice, Journeyman and Master. He admitted the pathway was based on that of the medieval world, but argued that it still had relevance today. Some of the skills and understanding gained at each stage, such as 'getting it wrong and putting it right' seemed commonsensical, but were ramified by clips of film in which experts talked about their craft, such as wood engraving, tailoring, stone carving or hairdressing. One story about making mistakes involved Kneebone's mastery of flying. Taking off solo, in a tiny plane, he was told to turn left at a water tower and then to continue flying until he came to Rand airport, where permission to land had been granted. When he finally descended he was surprised to see jumbo jets on some of the airport's runways and was soon made aware, by a furious voice on air traffic control, that he had overshot his destination and had landed by mistake at Johannesburg, then the largest and busiest airport on the African continent.

It is impossible not to be charmed and encouraged by Kneebone. His transparent openness as a scientist to ideas from other disciplines is rare and encouraging. The medieval path may seem a little out of step with today's world, but indubitably the period still has a strong hold over our imagination and the path he urged us to follow, from apprenticeship to mastery, is still a useful one to consider. When practised in a way that engages the changed demographic constituency of today's Britain, it will be a transformative route to follow.

Bro. Frances Spalding

The Vine Corridor at the House of Falkland

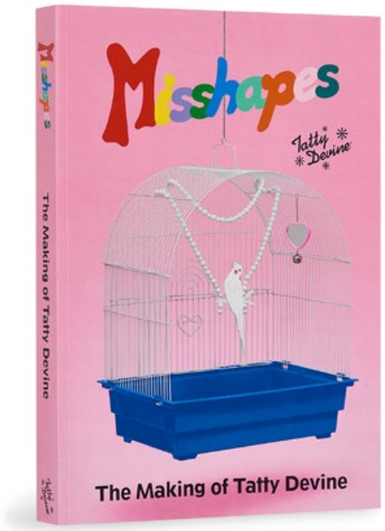
The AWG goes virtual, 2020
MASTER ALAN POWERS

Silent streets in Bloomsbury and much home baking: how could the Guild keep its spirits up during lockdown? Leigh came up with the answer, and together we put together an alternative programme of shorter online talks with alternating quiz evenings on our regular Thursdays. This is a summary of the talks, which were recorded through Zoom and made available on Vimeo, an unexpected bonus not just for members but for the wider world and for those who come after us. As for speakers and audience, we could look into the homes of our fellow members, and while missing the camaraderie of Queen Square, it still felt convivial enough to know we were all participating in the same event, from anywhere in the world.

The first quiz was on 30 April, and a week later, Joe Whitlock Blundell began the talk series with a short film, *Locked down? Look up!*, made at home by his family, who were gathered there during the lockdown. In the film, he walked from room to room, pointing out work by Guild members much of it arising from his work at The Folio Society commissioning illustrations and binding designs. It was full of surprises and showed how Joe, who only joined the Guild in February, was already widely connected to its networks.

Two weeks later, it was the turn of Jane Smith, whose email address 'janethehat' conveys her single-minded devotion to her craft. This was not a general survey of hats, however, but a close-up view of the bicorn, the cocked hat we associate with Napoleon, Wellington and their era. Guided by historical images and evidence from surviving examples, we learned about the construction and use of these hats, which are still made (by Jane among others) for ceremonial roles at Court, in Parliament, and for civic ceremonial throughout Britain. Her main work is for films and TV, all based on meticulous research, not only into the look of the hat but the process of making it. Seeing her workshop on screen was a bonus, full of ancient wooden hat blocks, signage and tools of the trade.

The next in line was Peter Burman, speaking from Falkland, Fife, where he lives and which was also the subject of his talk. The 3rd Marquess of Bute, best remembered for his patronage of William Burges at Cardiff Castle, bought the House of Falkland, the still relatively new mansion outside the historic royal burgh, as well as Falkland Castle, formerly a hunting lodge of the Stuart kings. Burges died young, and Lord Bute employed a range of designers and craftsmen to make lavish embellishments in the 1890s, chiefly Robert Weir Schultz, a past master of the AWG. In addition to Schultz's work, Peter showed us wall paintings and stained glass by Horatio Walter Lonsdale (an AWG member), inlaid panelling, carving and plasterwork. Currently in use as a school for children with learning difficulties (who often leave to join mainstream education) the House of Falkland is a hidden treasure which we were privileged to discover.



Misshapes – The making of Tatty Devine Bookcover © Tatty Devine

Rosie Wolfenden is one half of the partnership Tatty Devine with Bro. Harriet Vine, jewellery makers, charting their extraordinary joint journey from the 1990s, starting with fine art degrees and moving to bold and simple personal adornments, initially from leather and later from plastic. It was an artistic story but also one about the skilful building of a brand. Rosie's storyline was based on the creation of a retrospective exhibition sponsored by the Crafts Council in 2019, *Misshapes: the making of Tatty Devine*. 'Our art school training really made us look at objects,' she explained, and she went on to show how ingenious, witty and inventive they have been, as well as hardworking and agile in finding new directions.

At first sight, Julian Bicknell's world seems a very different one, but his title, 'The Accidental Classicist' also told of unexpected turns in the road that led him to meeting George Howard, a trustee of the Royal College of Art where Julian was working, and then to small commissions for him at Castle Howard and the transformation of a burnt-out room into the set for the 1980s TV *Brideshead Revisited*. This in turn led to the design of Henbury Hall, the Palladian villa commissioned in Cheshire by Sebastian de Ferranti. His timing was good, as the late-20th century showed that classicism had a clientele, and Julian became fascinated by learning the disciplines involved, commissioning craftsmen such as PM Dick Reid and Simon Verity, and digging deeper into the complexities of geometric planning, via the study of the late Baroque churches of Bernardo Vittone. This did not preclude diversions such as a classical golf club and a Shakespearean theme park in Japan, where, as he explained, daily life is treated as theatre, which was one of his first loves.

By now in mid-July, Rory Young presented 'Objects to Hand', a carefully structured tour of objects that surround him in Cirencester, each telling a story of making and use. These ranged from a medieval pottery curfew, found in the garden, to original panes of glass from Hardwick Hall and a hollow conical tile from Soane's Bank of England. Not surprisingly for those who know Rory, lime kilns came into the story, as did the architectural historian Howard Colvin and PM Joan Hassall, who gave Rory a fine mocha-ware mug with tree patterns on the glaze. If Rosie's art school training taught her to really look at things, Rory showed the same eagle eye and ability to dig deeper into the endless curiosity of the world and join things up.

Shawn Kholucy's talk, 'Tailoring for a carpet, talk of Plato, Prior, pottery and plate; props for paintings', moved from his family history, combining England and Egypt, and certain inherited objects connecting both cultures, to his own house-extension in Suffolk, in which these pieces now reside. But the attractive timber structure with pointed bay windows actually reveals a deeper awareness of the geometric principles and symbolism that unite the Arabic world with the west. Once again, small details expanded into whole universes in the history of ideas, revolving back via well known Past Masters of AWG, E.S. Prior and C.R. Ashbee.

At the end of July, Stephen Fowler's entrancing exposition of 'Rubbish Printmaking' ('I thought I'd get that in before someone shouts it out') was all the more eloquent for being delivered from a room where he both lives and works. Stephen is a modest man, but he is in fact the world king of rubber stamp printing, author of the standard work on the subject, famous in Knoxville, Tennessee, for his partnership with Picasso Gaglione and Darling Darlene, and on Instagram everywhere. We travelled beyond rubber stamps to include kitchen-sink lithography (involving tinfoil and Coca-Cola), and using a pasta-making machine as a roller press. It was not just technical but full of haunting imagery inseparable from the way it is made. 'Totally liberating,' as Bro. Claire Dalby said in the discussion that followed.

After an August break we reconvened in September, starting with Ian Archie Beck, portrayed in another homemade but highly professional film, working on the watercolour artwork for a myriorama – a revival of the Regency-period parlour game of interchangeable cards showing objects in landscape with a continuous horizon. Ian's follows a script by Philip Pullman. Much technical knowledge and detail was conveyed, together with a sense of calm progression between sketches and finished work, all in a garden shed.

Speaking from Amsterdam, Lydia Beanland too showed work done during lockdown, but she also described her earlier career as a textile pattern designer in the menswear business, initially for Paul Smith and later for Calvin Klein – her offcuts now turning into a 'Menswear Quilt'. Her ability to invent patterns, even within the rather narrow colour-range of the genre, was stunning, but having already decided she needed a break, Lydia has been inventing Rembrandt lace collar glass plates, a Vermeer advent calendar, collages, painted picture mounts and gilded scallop shells. What will come next?

Taslim Martin began his career as a carpenter and joiner before studying ceramics and is an artist in many media at different scales. Some of his ideas can become products, others take the form of public art at quite a large scale, outdoors and in museums and galleries. All embody technical challenges, whether or not collaborating with expert fabricators, including brick companies and Armitage Shanks. His talk was modest, funny and astonishing in the range of his achievements.

Those who braved the technology to join these meetings are to be congratulated, and those who missed them can still enjoy a feast of varied objects and ideas on Vimeo. I feel pleased that this strange, and in some cases distressing, year has produced this unexpected bonus.

Above Left: Potteries by Rory Young
Above Right: Water-colour by Glynn Boyd Harte for frontispiece to *Where Angels Fear to Tread* by E.M. Forster (Folio Society) – from Joe Whitlock Blundell's talk, Locked Down? Look Up!
Below: Print by Stephen Fowler

Bro. Chila Kumari Singh Burman's Winter Commission at Tate Britain. © Tate. Image – Joe Humphrys. 'This joyous, teasing and magnificent transformation of a landmark façade coincided with Diwali and performed ten times better than most Christmas lights.' *Bro. Frances Spalding*

Overview of the AWG Blog
PM PRUE COOPER

Much of what the Guild does best is now of course impossible, so a lot of thinking has gone into finding ways to fill gaps and finding new ways for Guild members to participate.

The new blog was started to keep hold of a sense of community in lockdown, but gradually it is gaining a wider audience and it has the potential to become something more; it can be part of the Guild's move towards engaging with the world beyond Queen Square, and filling out the picture of what makes the Guild. The aim is to include a broad range of contributors – not just as wide a range of disciplines and approaches as possible, but both new and longstanding members, old and young, London-based and far-flung.

At the start of the lockdown, Mark Hoare kicked the whole project off with a personal 'letter to the Guild', a cheerful account of adapting work and family life to new circumstances. Others also described lockdown projects: Edwina Ibbotson painted a vivid picture of the triumphs and stresses faced by all the Guild's milliners, who combined forces with other hatters to produce an astonishing 77,000 visors for the NHS.

Some, such as Rachel Warr, described how enforced isolation caused her to adopt new ways of making puppets. Geoff Preston, described how his ideals play out in what he creates, Laurence Beck laid out the stages of a particular project. Carolyn Trant and Jane Dorner are both collectors but gave very different accounts of the thinking behind their very different collections. Chila Burman gave an account of a dizzying number of projects, including this year's decorations for the façade of Tate Britain; and Simon Smith posted a thoughtful response to the issue of how to think about statues and monuments, from the perspective of the sculptor.

At the time of writing there have been 24 posts – just a taste of the variety in the membership. More to come.

Overview of Virtual Quizzes
PM IAN ARCHIE BECK

The Master devised the first two quizzes, neatly arranged in two halves separated by virtual mingling in 'breakout' rooms, I devised the third quiz, on 28 May. All were ably managed by Leigh, whose technical expertise was peerless.

I followed the pattern set by the first two. A mixture of art questions featuring details from paintings or works of craft or architecture. I also featured film stills as well as ballet scenes and so on. Of course, with any chance to set such a thing personal obsessions will come to the fore. Bro. Emma Barker set quiz 4 on 11 June. By now all were getting used to the agreeable if competitive routine. The weather was glorious throughout the spring and early summer and some Guildsmen could be seen quizzing in their gardens under sun parasols or their faces gradually dissolved in early evening light during the course of the quiz. PM Prue Cooper and her husband, Nicholas, devised the fifth quiz on 25 June. The sixth quiz on 9 July was set by Bro. Hannah Coulson. Questions became increasingly esoteric, including underground stations in far-off countries, painted feet, surprising TripAdvisor comments on museums, a shield for channelling pee away from the wall of a pub on Fleet street, Damien Hirst, Beatrix Potter, Ozymandias, Charles Addams and PM Sophie MacCarthy. All very Art Workers, and a great success, not least for the breakout rooms, where it was possible to virtually meet and chat with Guildsmen who because of geography are rarely if ever able to travel to Queen Square. So, the Master and Zoom came to the rescue, and saw the Guild through its first lockdown.

Thinking Out Loud
BRO. TANYA HARROD

The anthropologist Tim Ingold has observed that we swim in an ocean of materials that 'flow, mix and mutate'. He urges us to *'take materials seriously, since it is from them that everything is made*'. Ingold would replace fashionable theoretical discussions of materiality with something far more tangible, focused on the properties of materials themselves and the ways in which we play a part in their transformation. Tim Ingold's books and essays have been a new discovery for me. In the field of art history, the actual material of art/craft/design is often overlooked. Michael Baxandall is one of the few art historians who attempted a serious understanding of materials and their changeable nature. For instance, in his remarkable 1980 book *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* he carefully studied the properties of the various timbers used by late-15th and early-16th century sculptors to investigate what he called the chiromancy of wood.

In this unprecedented time there has been, for some of us, time to reflect. During the first lockdown I got involved, long range, with the exhibition *Etwas Mehr als Arbeit*, [*More than Just Work*] at the Kunstverein Göttingen in Germany. I studied the selected work online – remote from the kind of tangible materiality Ingold or Baxandall would advocate – trying to write an essay for the catalogue. I was seeing but not seeing. The show included some remarkable things. One was the conservator Carolin Bohlmann's struggle to preserve Richard Long's *Autumn Turf Circle*, an artwork made up of cut turfs. She observes that, 'That which we call "things" are assemblies of materials in constant motion. Therefore, a work of art can also be understood as an assembly of materials in flux, in transition'. Conservators, of course, interact with materials all the time, but Bohlmann offers a fascinating account of the restoration of a necessarily unstable work of art. Confronted with the sods of the grass and earth that make up *Autumn Turf Circle*, Bohlmann had to decide which road should be travelled, what kind of work should be undertaken to show this fragile sculpture, albeit one made of a readily available material. Bohlmann's painstaking documentation is presented in *Etwas Mehr als Arbeit*, her intensive labour a cause for wonder.

Work means different things within different societies. Traditional ways of making may continue, but the results are recontextualised. 'Authentic' tradition is peddled to tourists who are also then offered factory-made simulacra of formerly handcrafted objects.

Belt, described by Ethel Mairet as coming from South Yugoslavia. Bought by Mairet during 1927 or 1930. A finely woven example of tapestry technique that would have taken a long time to make – a prime example of the difference between domestic time and industrial time that struck all visitors confronted by folk textiles in the region between the wars. Image: Craft Study Centre, University for the Creative Arts

Such souvenirs are consumed with pleasure by many, despised by a minority, and used ironically by a few. My involvement with *Etwas Mehr Als Arbeit* led me to read the mysterious writer B. Traven's short story 'Assembly Line' of 1966. This is an account of the culture clash between a business-minded holidaymaker in Mexico, Mr Winthrop of New York City, and a nameless Oaxacan, who makes beautiful baskets when not working in his fields. Traven satirises the gulf between capitalist commoditisation, epitomised by Winthrop, and the world of household economics and reciprocity that the 'Indian' inhabits. To his surprise Winthrop finds that the Oaxacan refuses to increase his production of baskets, passing up the chance to become, relatively speaking, a wealthy man. The story is a familiar one. The great modernist craft weaver Ethel Mairet, travelling in the former Yugoslavia in the 1930s, met with a similar 'refusal to transact' when she wanted to buy locally made homespun and vegetable-dyed scarves and bags. Similarly, in the colonial period in Nigeria it proved impossible to involve women in salaried ceramic production. Even though women had traditionally made (and continue to make) supremely beautiful pots in Nigeria, this activity was part of the household economy,

Kasia Fudakowski, García García Fudakowski, 2017, palm weaving, rolled out: 175 × 60 cm, From Fudakowski's Bad Basket project (2017) inspired by the writing of B. Traven. All works realised with the Oaxaca artisans Martina García García, Marivel Hernández Marcelino and Agustín Mendoza. The colour sections are woven by the 'artist'. The undyed sections are woven by the 'artisan'. Image: courtesy of the artist and ChertLüdde, Berlin

together with farming and childcare. Their labour was not for hire.

New thoughts about work, reciprocity and waged labour inevitably float up during this extraordinary time. In Britain the death rate currently ranks as one of the highest in the world as a percentage of population. In this 'new normal' we have, *inter alia*, had to confront making and work afresh. Once the pandemic got underway in the UK, almost overnight the first became last, and the last first. Doctors and nurses, of course, were recognised as vital figures, but so too were other workers on the frontline – hospital cleaners and cooks, and workers in care homes. Delivery drivers, supermarket workers and bus drivers also became heroes. Regrettably, it soon became apparent that our 'heroes' were not being well protected. At the height of the pandemic, hospitals and care homes were dangerously short of what we have come to know as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In normal times the Department of Health and Social Care and the various NHS trusts buy PPE through third party suppliers. Practically all this PPE is produced in China. Suddenly global supplies ran short. It emerged that the British government knew nothing about the textile supply chains involved, nor the specifications for the various PPE items. The government and its advisers were ignorant of how different PPE items were made, nor were they aware of the machinery required to make more specialised types of PPE. Some 10,000 small and medium-sized British firms reached out to the government offering help, receiving no reply. Multiple individuals like our own Brother Fleur Oakes rose to the challenge of making PPE for local hospitals in small workshops.

Although the PPE crisis has to some extent been resolved, the UK government's inability to deal with this very practical aspect of the pandemic highlighted how remote the United Kingdom has become from the world of making and materials.

The pandemic also shone a light on labour in general. News accounts exposed working conditions in the crowded sweatshops of Leicester, where workers, with no rights and no trades unions are crammed like sardines in semi-secret buildings, turning out garments for the fashion industry. A marked spike in virus infections in Leicester was linked to these exploitative workplaces. We need new, more thoughtful ways of responding to human needs. In this contemporary moment artists and makers are important researchers, providing a continuing and necessary illumination of the materials and things that surround us. Suddenly everything appears more fragile. This is going to be a difficult century and Covid-19 has made us realise that labour, manufacture, craft and skill are rarely given the attention and respect they deserve.

Obituary – Past Master Josephine Harris
MASTER ELECT TRACEY SHEPPARD

After a Master's Supper in 2011 Bro. Rachael Matthews made a note in her journal of a conversation between her guest and PM Harris: 'What made you choose to stay in London rather than move out to the country?' Quick as a flash Josephine replied, 'It was the puddles; the reflection of the city in the puddles … it's so interesting.'

This tiny gem captures something of Josephine's essence. Her sense of wonder at the world around her and her ability to surprise and delight others, sharing the magic. Life with her was never dull.

Born in Plymouth on 16 February 1931, she was the only child of Percy and Muriel Harris. Her father was a regular soldier and the family led a peripatetic life. They spent time in York, where, whilst still of school age, Josephine attended life classes at the School of Art. Much of her education happened at home with a governess, but when the family finally settled back in Saltash near Plymouth she went to Moorfield School. She clearly recalled the excitement of wearing a uniform at last and the advice the headmistress gave her – 'Art is your thing. Get on with it'. She did! There followed four years at Plymouth College of Art, where she specialised in illustration under William Mann, ARCA, who impressed upon her the importance of careful observation.

Her first job, working as a guide and lecturer at Plymouth Art Gallery, brought her into contact with school children. She experienced the joy of listening to and inspiring them, something she continued to do for the rest of her life. Children of all ages were entranced by her.

Moving to London in 1958 in the hope of securing a place at the Royal College, Josephine took lodgings in Melville Road, in Barnes, with Commander and Mrs Holman for two weeks – she stayed for 30 years. Sadly, her place at the college did not materialise and instead Josephine found work as PA to the Keeper of Schools at the Royal Academy, first with Sir Henry Rushbury and then, from 1964 with Peter Greenham. Her tiny office up a precipitous flight of stairs became a haven for students, who could be sure of a cup of tea and a listening ear amongst the pot plants. A number of them became lifelong friends.

She frequently returned to her beloved West Country, visiting family and friends and spending time drawing and painting the landscape, its windswept trees a strong feature of her work on paper and later

on glass. There was no doubt though that Josephine loved London, the galleries and museums, the theatre and the lights of the city at night. She learned to drive and relished waving at Eros whilst spinning around Piccadilly. She never quite lost the habit of taking her hands off the wheel to wave or point something out.

Encouraged by colleagues and students and spurred on by the atmosphere at the RA, Josephine drew and painted at every opportunity. On Wednesday afternoons, when it was closed, friends who owned a flower shop would lend her the key and she spent many hours drawing the intricacies of flower form and learning 'not to lose sight of the whole'. She became a member of the Royal Watercolour Society (1967-1974) and the New English Art Club, exhibited with the Society of Women Artists and regularly showed in the RA Summer Exhibition.

A visit to an exhibition of engraved glass by Laurence Whistler changed her life. She had always been interested in rendering the play of light in her work. Here was a medium that relied entirely upon light and she was captivated by it. Joining a part-time class at Morley College taught by Peter Dreiser she met and made firm friends with other converts, joining the newly formed Guild of Glass Engravers (1975) and later serving on the council. In 1993 she was elected Fellow and was subsequently made Fellow Emeritus in recognition of all that she had achieved and contributed. Keen to pass on her engraving skills, she taught part time in adult education at Isleworth College. She was an inspirational teacher who was full of enthusiasm, but woe betide you if she felt you were falling short or letting yourself or your work down. She was possessed of that most potent combination in a teacher: high standards and high praise.

In 1976 she took the huge step of giving up her job at the RA and became a freelance artist and glass engraver, finding studio space in a converted stable yard in Church Road, Barnes. She loved the mixture of studios and workshops there – revelling just as much in the engine oil and rags of the garage mechanic as she did in the fine paper and beguiling tools of the book binder.

At the GGE conference in 1993 Josephine delivered a lecture entitled 'GLASS matters. Glass MATTERS'. She told her audience that she 'used ink and poster paint in a few strokes to create the image on the surface of the glass and then began working with the engraving tools, without slavishly following the guide marks'. This lively, direct and often spontaneous approach on a material not given to easy correction or erasure sometimes, by her own admission, got her into difficulties. More often than not though she triumphed, developing her own unique style, language and technique, responding to shape and subject with equal gusto. She made pieces that celebrated the English landscape and weather. In *Blizzard* we are exposed to the full force of the elements, feeling the winter chill – a small piece of glass imbued with great atmosphere and poetry. *Great Storm* records the terrible destruction of 1987 with terrific vigour. Her sense of humour is apparent in *Raining Cats and Dogs*, where felines and canines descend to earth in Mary Poppins-style suspended from umbrellas. Her love of theatre and carnival was a source of inspiration, and jesters and players danced joyfully around pieces often combined with her own spirited, fluid and flamboyant lettering. Flourished inscriptions, topped with pennants and flags, or dates commemorating important family occasions or public celebrations often occupied her workbench.

Frequently working to commission, she produced many important formal pieces. A large pedestal bowl marking the centenary of Lloyd's of London, pieces for the Tradescant Trust and the Museum of Garden History and many others were glorious in their concept and composition. There were architectural projects too: among them a new door for St Mary's Church, Barnes, in memory of Viera Gray and magnificent panels commemorating the Punjab Frontier Force in St Luke's, Chelsea. Josephine said 'her greatest enjoyment was to use the glass to celebrate, or to commemorate, and to capture the spirit of the occasion'. She unquestionably succeeded.

In 1981, proposed by Peter Greenham, she was elected to the Art Workers' Guild. She loved it, enjoying the spirited debates, excited by the exchange of ideas and the talents, skills and rich experience of the Brethren – her second family – dubbing them kindred spirits. She delighted in the history and traditions, something she often referred to as 'the root of things', but she was very clear about the need to move thoughtfully forwards, fostering and encouraging new members. In 1997 she became Master. It was a role and responsibility which she took seriously and executed deftly, lightly and with immense charisma.

In 1991 Josephine took another leap, moving from lodgings into her own flat in White Hart Lane, which rapidly became a box of delights to visit. She filled it with family photos and treasures as well as works by friends and colleagues – and skip finds (the coffee table in the cellar was a fine repurposed cable drum). The garden or 'Cabbage Patch' (which never grew a vegetable) was a place of sanctuary. A brilliant hostess,

Above: The Great Storm – Josephine Harris.
Below: Tradescant IV by Josephine Harris. Image – Stan Nettle

PM Josephine Harris in her studio. Image – Bro. Lara Platman

Josephine always insisted on ‘feeding the inner man’ and ‘Tea, tea, tea!’

Josephine had a particular way with the English language and a unique timbre, often conducting her speech with her hands. Always elegant, loving sparkle, she owned an enviable collection of berets – one for absolutely every occasion. She had a heart-warming smile and bright, all-seeing eye. Once caught in the intensity of her gaze there was no escape, nor was one desired, as she made you feel as if everything in your life mattered to her. There was a magical quality to time spent in her company. A truly remarkable woman, immensely talented, the finest mentor, dearest of friends and utterly unique.

The Art of Making at the AWG – London Craft Week
BRO. JEREMY NICHOLS

Having dipped our toes into the London Craft Week water for the first time last year, we were all set this year to capitalise on the opportunity for promoting and celebrating the Guild and its values that we’d found the event could offer. The experiment in 2019 had been a single day of demonstrations with 10 members, from 8 different disciplines, showing the skills and techniques involved in making their work. The day had been successful, with a large number of visitors and good feedback, suggesting we could build on it to good effect this second time round.

So it was a greatly expanded programme that the organising group of the Master, Alan Powers, and PMs Jane Cox and Anne Thorne put together for this year’s event in April. Over four consecutive days, the programme was to consist of talks, all-day running demonstrations and a selling exhibition, all selected to cover a wide range of subjects and of 2D and 3D techniques.

But then Covid struck, and the week was moved to October in the hope of the crisis being over by then. At the Guild this was also the hope, and the selected participants were advised of the new date. However, in June, with the course of the pandemic

Left: Cathryn Shilling. Top right: Jeremy Nichols. Bottom right: Bridget Bailey

becoming clearer, it was felt best to wait until next year to launch this new programme, rather than try to run it this year in what would inevitably have to be a compromised way.

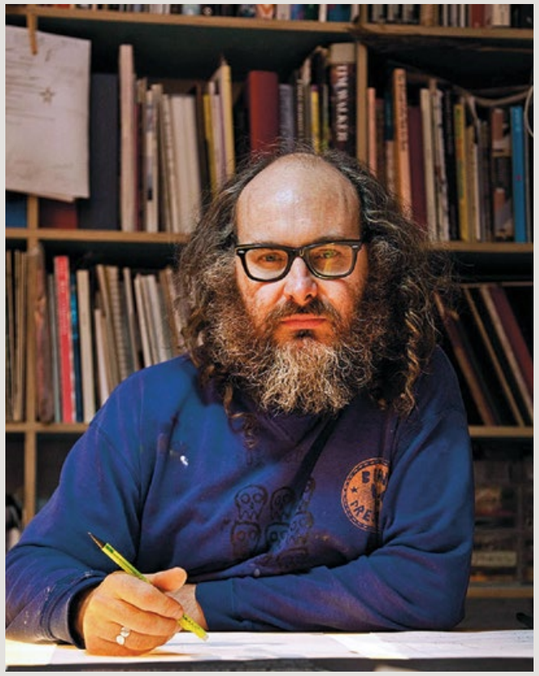
It was decided instead to take advantage of the greater online presence LCW was now offering and Catherine and Leigh swung into action, contacting the participants to see who could contribute a video talk or demonstration to a line-up of online presentations for the public to access through the Guild website.

After much hard work on Catherine’s and Leigh’s part, organising and marketing the production, *The Art of Making v.2* went live on the site in September with nine presentations as below. These remain available for viewing on the News page, so you can still see:

Bridget Bailey showing through still images and video clips the evolution of her flora and fauna creations and the processes and techniques she uses;
Ha Nguyen’s film showing the process of creating a moon face ring, from original drawing to finished carved wax model ready for casting into metal;
Simon Hurst guiding his virtual visitors on a conducted tour of our building, explaining its history, original features and recent additions;
Rebecca Jewell discussing in her slide talk, her residency at the British Museum’s Department of Oceania and her practice as an artist;
Agalis Manessi’s film introducing viewers to the contrasting environments of her London and Corfu studios and how she makes her majolica work;
Jeremy Nichols’s slide talk tracing the evolution of his salt-glazed open handle teapot designs;
Sally Pollitzer showing through her slide talk the uses of, and differences between, stained and painted glass in historic and contemporary architectural settings;
Tracey Sheppard explaining in her slide show how she uses her dental drill and its various attachments to engrave glass artefacts and panels; and
Cathryn Shilling’s film showing her collaboration with other glass artists to combine woven glass meshes with blown glass to create her figurative pieces.

Visitors to our LCW page during the 10 days it was run live exceeded 600, and, with the presentations remaining available to view as mentioned above, these numbers can only increase. LCW 2021 is scheduled for 10-16 May and Covid willing we’ll be back with an ambitious mix of demos, talks and exhibitions both in the ‘real world’ at Queen Square and online.

On everyone’s behalf I’d like to thank the organising group for ensuring a strong presence in LCW as an important way we can carry our voice into the public sphere over the importance of craft; and to Catherine and Leigh for doing the heavy lifting so patiently in making it all happen.



Left: Rob Ryan. Image © Hugh Kelly. Right: Rosie Wolfenden © Tatty Devine

Rob Ryan and Rosie Wolfenden

Rosie: This is such a bizarre thing we're doing – a video call, that we're recording, that will be transcribed. I don't know if it's old school, or left field, or what. Somehow in the ether it becomes a thing.

Rob: Oh, it's so nice to see your face.

Rosie: What are we going to talk about? You start.

Rob: Well I haven't really got a lot of projects on, so I've been going back and doing stuff that I'd never got round to doing before; going back into sketch books and finding stories I've written years ago and working them up and printing them, and actually, it's so nice to have this time to catch up.

Rosie: I think, in terms of creativity, it's been a really magic time. The finance and the health side is horrific, but on a creative level, working from home, just having that shift in time and space I can just do so much more. It's a whole different headspace, isn't it? It's like someone pressed pause and actually let you catch up with yourself somehow.

Rob: Yes, at first it was weird, I didn't want to work at all, because I literally thought it was wrong. I thought the world is falling apart, the world is collapsing, what relevance does art have now? I couldn't really work for a month.

Rosie: They're big, big questions, aren't they? It's where you get a little bit existential because you really have to find a purpose in the work that you do. We had that. We found absolute purpose in keeping everybody's jobs, we've got a studio team of 20 and we just needed to make sure that everybody was safe and paid. Keep everyone safe seemed to be the word we just kept saying every day. But I've spent the last six months, seven months, eight months, just being so grateful that I'm not my parents. Because my parents ran a hotel.

Rob: I mentioned in my email to you earlier that I viewed my work career as almost like a relationship. And I compared it to a marriage with yourself and like with a real-life marriage you don't want to end up losing touch with the other person. You want to fire the other person up and the other person fire you up, and life always be an exciting, new, invigorating and enchanting thing.

Rosie and Harriet © Tatty Devine

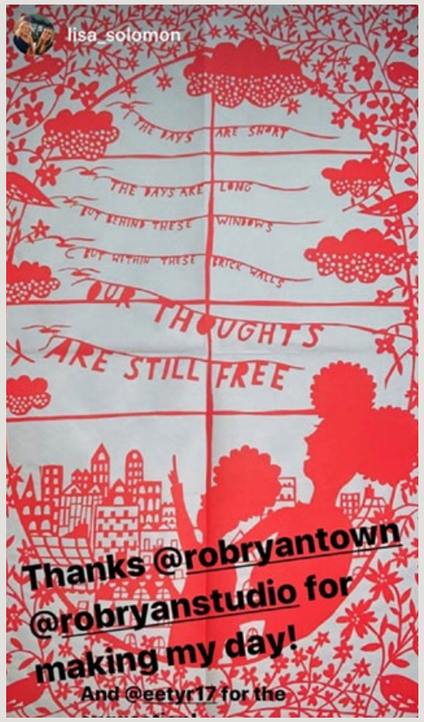
Rosie: Absolutely. I think the thing which genuinely excites me and always has done, is how much it excites others. And I love the fact that we create things that allow people to express themselves and it might be about who they are, it might be what they're thinking, it might be political. But our joy becomes a real signifier to people to express themselves, and quite often people don't have the words. Sometimes you don't need actual words. I think the jewellery gives people those words and that genuinely excites me. So, I always have this urge that we make things that are relevant to people or become a signifier of the time – and times change at such a pace. People change at such a pace.

Rob: But that's one of the things I love about what you and Harriet do, it's so full of life and joy, and I think there came a point when I was at college, where I saw people who were taking themselves almost too seriously for their age. Because we did fine art, didn't we, you and me? And people were walking around reading Kafka or they're doing these big angry things, and I said, 'Well, you know, you're from quite a middle-class family in Surrey and you're only 19, you haven't got too much to be angry about really'.

Rosie: Yes, quite.

Rob: And at the same time, I read Andy Warhol's biography, From A to B and Back Again, *and I realised that things that make out that they're quite deep are actually quite shallow sometimes. And I thought, well, sometimes shallow things, they've got quite a lot of meaning. And that seemed to be the ethos of Pop Art and later people like Keith Haring and I suppose what I'm saying is, I wanted my work to be for everybody. I put my work out there for anybody that likes it. That's maybe not people who would want to walk into a gallery.*

Rosie: I think that elitism and exclusivity has always turned me off.



Instagram images from recipients of Rob Ryan's special lockdown print for people living in flats

Rob: But shallow is only a different emotional way of looking at things as well. And when I started making my work a lot of people said, 'Well, this is sentimental nonsense.' But really, sentimentality isn't actually nonsense, it's about people's emotions. And I always think that the word is fairly condescending, because it's looking down on people who attach value to things that mean things to them. And you can take it as far as you like.

Rosie: Talking about art college, yes, we went to Chelsea and I didn't paint for three years because I really, really struggled with how heavy it all had to be – deep and meaningful. And I suddenly had this realisation that, actually, making work that people want to put on their wall, and that means something to them and talks to them, is way more valid than creating something that gets bought as an investment and put in a safe.

Rob: Yes, I just didn't want that either, the weight of a single painting and a single canvas. I wanted to make art that reached out to people. And I always felt that if I stepped into that room with a big canvas and started doing Francis Bacon copies, or whatever, then I'd go down a road that I didn't really want to.

Rosie: You do want to interact with people, and you do want to share ideas with people. You want to give people something to respond to. Something that makes them feel something.

Rob: Yes. I mentioned earlier that, when the lockdown started, I couldn't really work for about a month. I literally just watched the news, because I thought, 'This is so bad.' But I just kept thinking, I really want to do something for people who are locked up in flats.' So, we did a print run of this print. And we just said to people, 'If you live in a flat, send us your name and address and we'll send you a picture just to lift your spirits.' And we got a massive response from it. And it wasn't, I think, because people really wanted something for nothing, I think it was really because they felt that somebody else was thinking about them and cared about them.

Rosie: But it was an interesting time where suddenly there was this really 'altruistic wave,' People felt – if they had the capacity to be creative and give, people did. And it felt, you know, this country is propelled by the kindness. Interestingly, Rob, my new mantra is that we need to be collaborative not competitive. And I'm using that as a guide for business, but also in the team. This is a time to work together.

Rob: Yes. So, hopefully, people might start thinking differently. Who knows?

Above: Courage Calls Brooch © Tatty Devine.
Middle: EU Passport Brooch © Tatty Devine.
Below: European Necklace © Tatty Devine

Left: Katharine Coleman in her studio. Image © Bro. Lara Platman. Right: Vicki Ambery-Smith. Image © Chris Terry

Vicki Ambery-Smith and Katharine Coleman

Katharine: So, I have a little list of things we were planning to talk about. Here we go. Vicki, do you work from home or do you rent a studio?

Vicki: I do work at home; back in the day I had a workshop in Clerkenwell, and that was fantastic, but rent became so expensive I moved and shared a workshop with five others; that was a disaster of course. I don't think there are five people in the world that can share a space, it was mostly a disaster, because the others treated it like a café and an ashtray. They'd turn up and have a coffee and a smoke and go, and somehow they never had any commitment with the place. So, at that point I moved to work at home, as I thought temporarily – but actually working at home with the kids was pretty damn perfect, because I could grab the moment waiting for the pasta to boil.

Katharine: And your children didn't fight too much and try to distract you?

Vicki: A little bit at times, if I was doing Goldsmiths' fair. What about you Katharine, I don't know what you did before glass?

Katharine: Before glass I researched Spanish colonial Peru, but that all fell apart when I had children, so I became rather a disgruntled mother for a bit and discovered glass engraving by chance as a hobby. I trained with Peter Dreiser at Morley College and loved it, but to do engraving with a lathe on glass where you hold the glass up to the lathe takes about five years to learn. You have to learn to cut and flatten copper disks and rivet them on to steel spindles with which you cut the glass and, of course, you have to make them run completely true and a lot of other metal skills. It's rather like giving somebody driving lessons and saying, 'Here's your car, but first you must put the wheels on the car.' So, it took nearly 10 years to become proficient and I did various boring jobs, which paid me far more than I'll ever be paid as a glass engraver. But I've found it wonderful to become full time and I really am so glad to make things with my hands.

Vicki: Yes, yes. And I think handmade is being respected and admired again, collected again.

Katharine: Well maybe jewellery, but it's completely knocked out wheel engraving on glass. Sixty years ago, in this country there were maybe 200 people engraving glass with lathes. There are three of us left now, all of us over 70.

Vicki: And do you think to some extent it's because people aren't seeing it, aren't aware it goes on?

Katharine: No, I think the problem is partly to do with the way that the crafts are taught now, largely in universities where IT is king and where practical skills aren't taught as thoroughly as they used to be. Mainly because of teaching time, space, materials, insurance, you name it. Even the Royal College got rid of most of their engraving lathes a long time ago now.

Vicki: And is this cost?

Katharine: It's cost and lack of interest. When I was trying to get going it was just before the internet, which may, may, may save us, because we're all communicating more by the internet now; but when I was trying to get going in the 1990s I had still only photographic slides. Do you remember the days?

Vicki: Yes.

Katharine: A lot of galleries take my work now, but side by side with a little glass that cost £30 to blow. That blower can make 50 in an afternoon and mine would have taken three weeks, a month. And the person looking at them in the gallery won't know the difference and quite a lot of gallerists don't know. But I find it more rewarding than production work.

Vicki: Absolutely. I'd rather do a different thing every time. Actually, with my commissions they are very personal, it's more like a tribute to someone. This is a commission for a famous classicist, for her son's wedding present. She sent me several ideas and we settled on these two. They're ruins, so in recreating them I had to decide whether I was going to repair them from the rather dilapidated ruined state, being 2,000 years old. And I decided to restore them to their former glory; I just thought it would look unfinished on my part, if I left them as ruins.

Katharine: Do you find you're trying to find out what they want, so the knack is to guide them into a successful design that will please you to make as well?

Vicki: Yes, and often I'll know what's going to work better than perhaps the idea they thought they had. But you have to be a little bit careful how you say it.

Katharine: How did you happen to end up with architecture? How did you discover this wonderful bond of the two?

Vicki: Well, I grew up in Oxford, so I used to go through the middle of Oxford to go to school. And I didn't think of that as anything exceptional, of course, until I left it and came to London for art school. I'd had a brief dalliance with architecture, but just thought no, I haven't got the right skills for that, but for a while I was really keen to do theatre design. And I somehow stumbled into this; you never know what little influence, moment or thing you might see will just spark something, so I like to think I'm doing kind of theatrical architecture.

Katharine: Your work certainly reveals a miniature world within it.

Vicki: I don't know why. I suppose the scale feels manageable to me.

Katharine: I was going to say your tools must be mainly geared to the scale you work at.

Vicki: Indeed, yes. If you're reducing the scale of something you can be an editor, pare it down to its essentials, and play with the proportions of things. This chimney is actually much taller, and I think I even reduced the number of windowpanes, but no one's going to know. But I can do that. Because I'm the editor. You're after the character of the thing not every tiny detail.

Katharine: That's exactly what I do.

Vicki: You must also work out your piece from every angle.

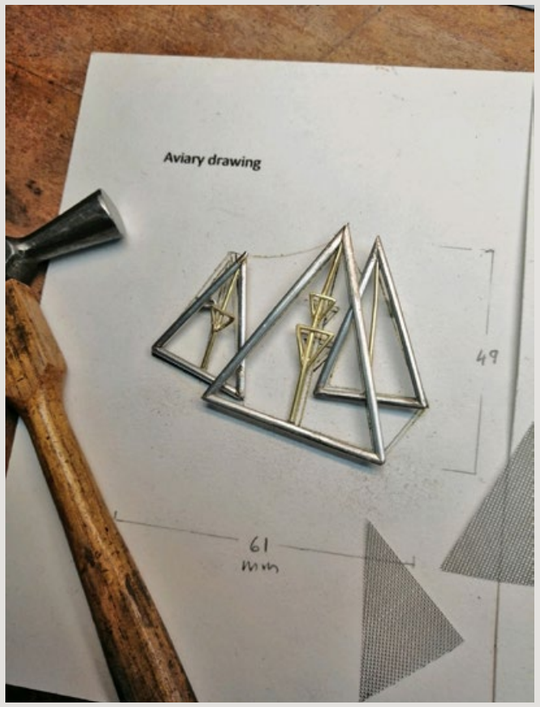
Katharine: I do. But in my drawings, I'm bearing in mind how the refracted image is probably going to look.

Vicki: And you must know that through experience?

Katharine: That's experience; you know how big to do the stuff on the outside so that what reads on the inside is still readable, because it's so much smaller.

Vicki: And your use of colour is so wonderful, clearly colour interests you.

Katharine: Colour interests me; it gets me away from the pedant collectors who believe 18th-century clear glass is the only glass to collect, so I can sort of separate myself off from there. And the glass engravers of the 1970s and 80s – I love those people's work, Laurence Whistler, John Hutton's wild great windows in Coventry, even though it's different; I like the deeply unfashionable colour overlay which is really German and Czech, because that's where all the colour came from. Stourbridge did a load of it at the turn of the century, but it was considered to be rather lower-class then.



Above: Work in progress on a condiment set based on Tower of the Winds – Vicki Ambery-Smith.
Below: Design for a brooch based on the aviary in London Zoo – Vicki Ambery-Smith

Vicki: Things change!

Katharine: With the time and costs of both our crafts, you have to love your materials to bits, I think.

Vicki: Yes, somebody asked me why silver and I was just dumbfounded by the question; I thought well, of course, what else?

Katharine: We have both of us studied in Germany, the Germans being so into craft skills, with their technical high schools, the equivalent of our secondary moderns – they are brilliant because they give practical training in particular materials. Kids go through that full technical training as well as schooling from the age of 14 and then they can either go straight into jobs fully trained or they can go to university. And that's what we lack here. It was a wonderful group of people who helped re-establish the school system and the syllabus in post-war German education. Sad we didn't do the same.

Vicki: Indeed.

Katharine: But let's think of something positive. What's really positive for me at the moment is the spirit of activity and a future for handwork that's coming out of the Art Workers.

Vicki: Yes, yes. I think it's all very encouraging, the interest in handmade things and all the Guild is doing. And people are always interested in process. They're really interested to know what goes on behind a thing, not just a finished item. But what went into it.

Katharine: And the tools.

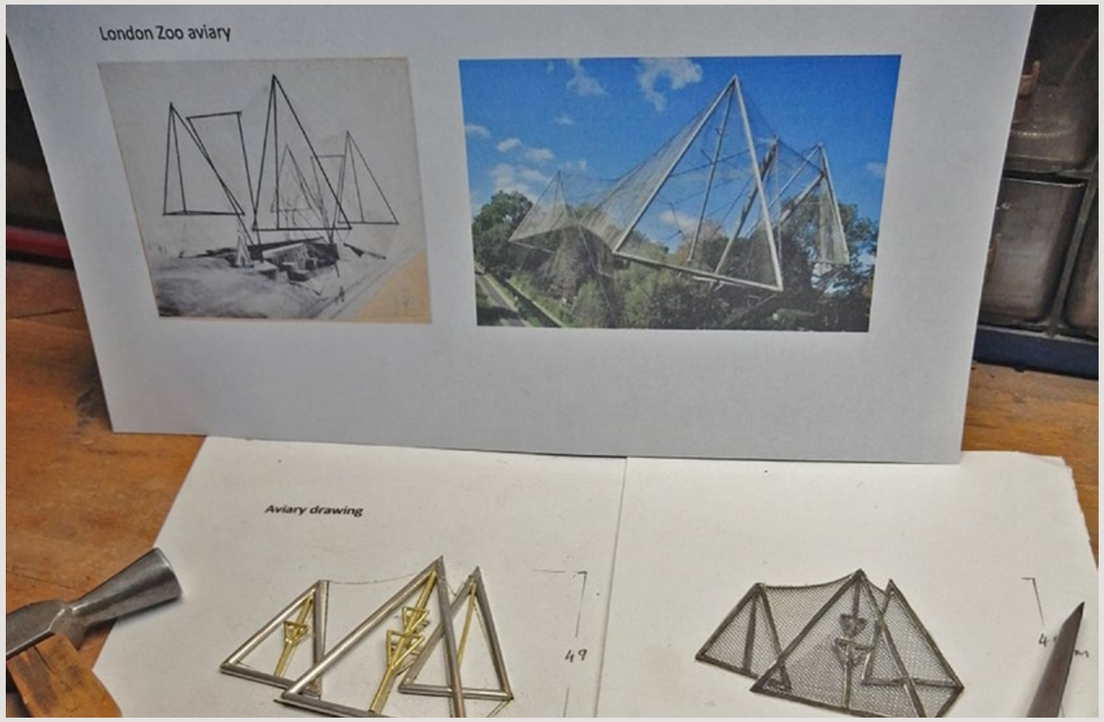
Vicki: Yes. We haven't had an exhibition of tools, have we?

Katharine: The tools are so spectacular.

Vicki: Yes, they are. And there was an occasion when we each brought a tool or two to talk about and that was very interesting, because you never would have imagined what this gadget did until you're told about it, and some of them are so niche. So unique to the job for that particular skill. Fantastic.

Katharine: Well, I think we've gone well over time. I hope they'll invite loads of other people.

Vicki: Yes, it would be interesting. To read all their stuff.



Above: Designs for a brooch based on the aviary in London Zoo – Vicki Ambery-Smith
Below Left: Canary Wharf detail by Katharine Coleman.
Below Right: Canary Wharf by Katharine Coleman images © Ester Segarra

Left: Anthony Paine. Right: Geoffrey Preston

Geoffrey Preston and Anthony Paine

Geoffrey: You and I are much of an age, but I have this core memory of what buildings were like in the 1950s and the early 60s. I remember going into some of those big buildings in Shepherd's Bush in the mid-60s when they were really run down, with a sort of smell of the past wherever you went at that time. Some of my friends were interested in buying old clothes, and we'd go to Petticoat Lane in these houses with rooms just full of old clothes that you could go in and rummage around – very squalid! All that's really disappeared. And sometimes I've worked from old photos to reproduce something or very carefully tried to copy something, and you're sort of channelling the past, aren't you, that way?

Anthony: This thing about historical accuracy is one of the curses we have today. Life is not a historical moment that stays the same. Everything changes and buildings change and if you're working with a tradition you should be able to respect whatever the building is, respect its history and respect its language and work with it, but not being so anal and historic that you cannot touch anything that's been done in the 18th [century].

Geoffrey: Jenny and I have an argument about how old our house is, but anyway it is an old house and somebody replaced all the windows with plastic double-glazed windows and though I hate them, maybe one has to take a view that we don't get rid of them because it's terribly wasteful to take out something that's doing a good job.

Anthony: With listed buildings, the planners have relented to a certain degree, because conservation of energy is terribly important now.

Geoffrey: I think the form and the beauty of things is very connected with the materials, I suppose that's what I would go back to. The SPAB, despite what you were saying a bit earlier, has been very good about this sort of thing. Local materials are hardly ever used now, that's another issue in my mind. In Exeter, walls in the city are beautifully built. It's such a pleasure sometimes to see walls that 100 years ago would just be taken for granted as just being walls.

Anthony: They apprenticed properly, and we should get back more to this idea of apprenticeships. The removal of apprenticeships has really removed a whole lot of very talented people who never had a chance to really develop properly. In the 18th century apprentices often started at 10 or 12. By the time they get to their late teens they're masters of their craft, and I remember in Morocco going to some of the joinery shops where they'd be carving a screen and they could knock those out so quickly because it's so engrained in their head and in their hands that they could produce these things that would take me a week just to draw one panel to understand it. It's that learning which obviously we don't have today, because of education and schools finishing much later in age. If they were trained when they were 10 or 12 the muscles had formed in their fingers and they could mould the shapes so much better and so much more quickly and accurately than trying to learn it when you're in your 20s.

Geoffrey: Yes, and it's taken for granted in music: you're going to be a good musician the earlier you learn your instrument.

Anthony: Absolutely.

Geoffrey: I don't employ people all the time, but I need people for certain projects. But usually the skill level just isn't there. When I was at college I seemed to fall in with the zeitgeist and it was two fingers to life drawing and the traditional way, but when I had a holiday job with workmen on a building site and they'd say, 'Well, what are you doing?', you say, 'Oh, I'm at art college' or something and they might say 'Well, let's see something you do'. You'd show them something and they'd say, 'Oh, that's not art, I don't understand it.' As I got a bit older my own work started to take a different turn, when you communicate to the broader number of people. And I feel it's a big compliment when you put a ceiling up and the other workmen come along and they say, 'God, that's really good,' because they're gobsmacked by the skill in it. It's not an emperor's new clothes thing, and that's one of the benefits or one of the joys I've got out of the way I've been working.

When I was at college, because I hadn't got the grounded skills, I couldn't do what I wanted to do. My apprenticeship was as a stonemason, after college, but learning how to use the tools and the materials you have the ability to realise something, which is quite an important personal sense of fulfilment.

Anthony: Yes, absolutely, yes.

Geoffrey: I'm a bit afraid that we might just be talking like a couple of old farts about what's wrong with the world today. But I have noticed in the last 20 years that hardly any young men come to learn. There's such a lot of emphasis on internet and computer technology and so on and getting into a place where 3D printing is happening, that sort of thing. One notices these things in architects' drawings and interior designers. I get things sent to me by an interior designer or an architect that

Folly, Germany by Anthony Paine.

Rotunda Bookroom by Anthony Paine

Octopus model in progress – Geoffrey Preston.
Image © Jenny Lawrence

Above: The Goring Bar – Geoffrey Preston. Image © Nick Rochowski.
Below: The Goring in progress – Geoffrey Preston. Image © Kasia Fiszer. Right: Stag by Geoffrey Preston

Classical Villa in Bavaria by Anthony Paine

are just appalling, you wouldn't have given them credence 20 years ago.

Anthony: If you're working with an old building, then it becomes important to work with the materials which were current at the time of that building. But if you're building a new building, I don't subscribe to the idea that it's got to be built in the old materials.

Geoffrey: I did help somebody build a barn out of straw bales and then lime plaster it. I suppose there's something quite cranky in me that I'm still a bit of an organic builder really. I was just thinking of a bit of an analogy with organic farming and food and things, because when I became a stonemason, it was a bit like I was the organic building equivalent, with traditional materials and lime mortar. I know this all sounds a bit of a digression, but I always buy organic food and I always buy organic meat. I feel that the people doing it need to be supported by one's own action. So, I don't quite understand how this works in architecture and in building, or in the grassroots local building, but Prince Charles has, somehow, seen the connection there.
Most of my clients are wealthy and I feel really grateful for them having the money to spend on the kind of work that I'm doing. The wealth allows poetry to come in. Lots of wealthy people have wonderful houses and then one is so fortunate that they will want a ceiling in their house. Obviously when you've got the money to do things like that, you're fostering something as well by buying something new. You're really encouraging a direction and I think that's been a phenomenon in the last 20 or 30 years.

Anthony: Yes, I agree with what you're saying. If you go to the classical language or the traditional vernacular languages in architecture and design, it's got such a breadth that you can be original and creative within those languages.

Anthony: So, how are we doing on time?

Geoffrey: I think we should call it a day.

Anthony: Yes, it's been very interesting. I'll be very interested to see what they cut out. I suppose it's the old fart stuff that might be eliminated.

Geoffrey: I reckon the 'old fart' expressions will be in there, but yes, I think one gets to a point where one does a bit of moaning about things, which is okay in a limited way, but you've got to be careful with how much you do. There's a lot of joy out there, which comes across in what you've done. Well, I might hope that comes across in what I've done too.

• REPORTS •

Chairman of Trustees
PM PHIL ABEL

The Trustees have been monitoring the financial situation of the Guild during the coronavirus pandemic with monthly meetings. As you can see from the Hon. Treasurer's report, our financial position is strong despite the severe loss of income caused by the closure of the building. I have been fortunate to witness some of the preparations made for such a situation by Alec, Catherine, Leigh and Elspeth over the last few years, and it is entirely to their credit that we are able to remain financially healthy.

We have also discussed and decided upon the opening and subsequent re-closing of the building in September. Catherine, Elspeth and Simon, our Hon. Architect, put in a good deal of effort to make sure that we met government social distancing guidelines before reopening in September.

The care of our staff is also the responsibility of the Trustees, and we have been monitoring workloads and conditions, and have made changes where needed.

It gives me great pleasure to say that I believe that the Trustees have been managing the Guild prudently and with integrity. Sincere thanks to all those who give service to the Guild, and to the membership as a whole, as it is each of you who make it all possible.

Hon. Treasurer

Year ended 30 September 2020
BRO. ALEC MCQUIN

The year has, despite all the turmoil and uncertainty, been a successful one for the Art Workers' Guild and I am pleased to once again submit the annual accounts as your Honorary Treasurer.

My report below compares the figures achieved during the year against last year's, which are shown in brackets.

It is important to note that the figures and results include normal activities for the five months from 1 October 2019 to 28 February 2020. The Covid pandemic then took hold and the Guild building closed until September and after a brief period of reopening, has again been closed since November.

Despite these difficulties I am pleased to report that we achieved a respectable surplus for the 12-month period. I would like to acknowledge the support and generosity of the individual donations, bequests and trusts which assist the Guild and support our work and in particular the membership for their support during this most difficult of times.

Income
Income for the year was £257,824 against £318,890 last year, a decrease of £61,066 (-19.1%). This however was an excellent result, despite the difficulties and challenges caused by the pandemic. I would like here to acknowledge the hard work undertaken by the Guild Secretary, Catherine O'Keeffe, our Administrator, Leigh Milsom Fowler, and the Guild Steward, Elspeth Dennison, for the exceptional support they gave to us during this challenging and demanding year.

The income was made up as below (last year's figures in brackets):

a. Rental income and investments £95,922 (£95,256) Difference £666 – Plus (0.07%)
b. Subscriptions £37,338 (£38,737) Difference £1,399 – Minus (4%)
c. Donations, bequests, fundraising £4,721 (£4,995) Difference £274 – Minus (5.4%)
d. Hiring of rooms and catering £101,289 (£164,932) Difference £63,643 – Minus (38.6%)
e. Other income: £12,779 (£15,603) Difference £2,824 – Minus (18%)
f. Cleaning and insurance reimbursed: £5,775 (£7,131) Difference £1,356 – Minus (19%)

Expenditure
Expenditure was: £204,459 (£254,548), a decrease of £50,089 (-19.6%). Expenditure was much lower this year as the building was effectively shut for seven months.

Surplus
The accounts show a surplus for the 12-month period of £47,354 against £68,440 last year, a decrease of £21,086 (-30.8%). This was I believe entirely as a result of the Covid pandemic.

Balance Sheet
The balance sheet stands at £473,407 as compared with £426,053 last year, an increase of £47,354 (11.1%).
In addition to the above, the items detailed below should be noted:

- The building is now in excellent condition and only regular maintenance items should be required in the future.
- Despite exceptionally difficult trading conditions for

the last seven months of the year, we have completed the year with a reasonable surplus.

- The administrative team has worked exceptionally hard and supported the membership and myself superbly during this difficult time.
- A full review of our external advisers has been completed during the year.
- Our monthly P&L management accounts are accurate and timely.

At this point in time (December 2020) it seems unlikely that the room hiring will recommence for some time and we have allowed for this possibility within our strategic plan and 2021 budgets.

It is also clear that the Covid pandemic is having an effect on the general economic climate and this is having, and will continue to have, an impact on all charities, including the Art Workers' Guild in the coming years.

We are fortunate that our major building programme is now complete and that financially, with the continued support of our membership, we are in a positive position.

The Art Workers' Guild is a viable and successful charity and continues to strive to fulfil its aims and objectives.

I would conclude by thanking everyone for their support and encouragement in the year, in particular our Chairman, Phil Abel, and our Master, Alan Powers. I would also thank the Trustees and Committee for their constant support and help and our membership for their continued loyalty.

Hon. Architect
BRO. SIMON HURST

The year started well, with the cast iron handrails going into production; and the new bookcases were ordered for the planned Library refit.

Then things went weird, but actually this meant we had plenty of free time when the building was unoccupied to go around carrying out general maintenance and refitting the Library.

Elspeth has been enthusiastically touching up scuffed paintwork throughout the building, and even restaining and polishing the Master's Room and Yellow Gallery pine floors. The place has never looked so cared for. The Library has been completely refitted and redecorated, with new tea station and new lighting. Bro. John Nash has provided the finishing touch by numbering each shelf.

I completed the painting of the Master's Room cornice and new leaf frieze, as well as chopping down the Meeting Hall projector housing so that it is even less dominant.

Works are ongoing to hang Masters' portraits in the Yellow Gallery and in other locations around the place.

The cast iron handrails were finally installed this autumn and are looking very fine indeed. Let's hope they get some use soon.

Hon. Secretaries
BRO. MARK WINSTANLEY AND
BRO. CHARLOTTE HUBBARD

What an unpredictable year! It seems an unbelievably long time ago that we enjoyed the Master's night together in the hall. This year of starts and stops has produced extraordinary reactions and responses revealed in the Master's selection of talks, which have been so fantastically rich, and in the growth of the blog with its contributions from across the brotherhood, allowing us to enter the lives of each contributor, despite the lack of physical connection.

This year has seen the development of an exceptional online presence: we are supremely grateful for Prue's dedication to editing the blog, and to Leigh's exceptional work in getting the electronic sessions up and keeping them running, her management of the breakout groups, support for the speakers and the blog, and the work of the Outreach group is now also visible online with the uploading of two videos. Our thanks also to the compilers of the immensely enjoyable online quizzes: the Master, Tanya Harrod, Neil Jennings, PM Ian Archie Beck, Emma Barker, Hannah Coulson, PM Prue Cooper and Nicholas Cooper.

The talks, from those that were held in the hall to the numerous presentations online, have been a great contrast, covering histories of earlier brothers, past histories of present brothers and recent stories of responses to the unexpected world we find ourselves in, the diverse directions pursued, offering a great stimulus to just get on with it and see where it takes you…

Hon. Editor
PM PRUE COOPER

The contents of this year's Proceedings and Notes will, unsurprisingly, be different from that of previous years. Several members have been asked to contribute thoughts and discussions of aspects of their work, their thinking, and their approaches; the idea being to communicate something of what makes the Guild tick. This was also the thinking behind the new blog, described earlier. Leigh's skill and patience are key to its success.

Hon. Archivist
BRO. FRANCES SPALDING

My predecessor, Nicholas Cooper, had paved the way for my takeover as Hon. Archivist with great kindness and care. Not only was I given a digital copy of the catalogue to the archives, but I also benefitted from his summary appraisal of the existing archives and his recommendations as to the management of future material. Another great helper has been Catherine O'Keeffe. She showed me round the geography of the archives, which took me into parts of the building I did not know existed. Glimpsing the actual contents of certain boxes gave some idea of the as yet untapped interest buried within the archives. There was a pile of material that needed cataloguing, and doing this in the office, alongside Catherine, gave me further insights as to how the cataloguing system works.

Covid-19 limited access to the building, and as a result my familiarity with the archives is still in a very early stage. But I have been able to dip in and out of the digital catalogue and it was in this way that I noticed that in 1996, the year of William Morris's centenary, a lecture had been given on him and the manuscript of this lecture was in the archives. The entry in the catalogue gave no mention as to who the speaker had been, but Leigh kindly sent me a scan of the document and that revealed that it was by the award-winning biographer of Morris, Fiona MacCarthy, who had died shortly before the first lockdown began.

She began: 'I would like to start this lecture by asking you to think about sheep.' Amused by this, I read on. Soon I realised that not only is Morris a perfect subject for a Guild lecture but that Fiona's own role within the design world over many years had given her a very good understanding of art workers and of the way Morris's legacy still informs the making well of whatever needs making today.

Now that MacCarthy's lecture has been beautifully set on the page by Phil Abel, I have been reading it again in proof form, and certain lines have lodged in my memory. But it is the ending of her lecture that I will give here: 'He saw how art regenerates itself even when – as perhaps now – the whole tenor of events and politics appears against it. It is in human nature to rebuild. It's a wonderful honour to be standing underneath the bust of Morris addressing the Art Workers in this year of his centenary. You are his heirs.'

Hon. Curator
BRO. MONICA GROSE-HODGE

The year started with a wonderful exhibition of the Master's personal collection of present and past members' work. It filled the Master's room beautifully and was enthusiastically received.

We also had a small exhibition in the Gallery of items from the archives – something I would like to see more regularly, as it is important to remind members, and anyone that comes into the building, of the incredibly rich history we share.

As the pandemic set in, 6 Queen Square was closed to members and the public, so we must look forward to next year for more visual treats. I hope like me, you have enjoyed virtual galleries, exhibition tours and panel discussions online this year. It has not escaped my attention that the virtual tour can reach a much wider audience. So, members should seriously consider creating one when having an exhibition at the Guild.

The Guild did host Bridget Bailey's virtual exhibition *Life Cycle of Making* (16 November to 22 November 2020) on our website. She was due to exhibit in person at the Guild, but due to Covid she decided to make her film and show that online instead. We also did two virtual events alongside it, which went well – all the info is on the website here https://www.artworkersguild.org/what-we-do/events/virtual-exhibition-life-cycle-of-making-by-bridget-bailey/

I am looking to put together an exhibition on textiles early next year and will be contacting Brethren in the next few weeks for advice and participation. Please do get in touch with any thoughts or advice, they are always welcome.

Hon. Librarian
BRO. RACHAEL MATTHEWS

I'd like to start by praising to the Hon. Architect for his wonderful new library design. He has created a smart, peaceful and inviting space, where the books shine under carefully thought-out lighting.

Years ago, my husband sent me to an allergy testing clinic to find out why I sneeze so much, and the very unhelpful answer came back that I am allergic to old books. I might not agree to re-arrange an entire room of dusty books for library refurbishment if they weren't so mind-blowingly inspiring. A big highlight of this summer was passing books up and down a two-metre ladder to the Master, who taught me so much

more about the wonders of the Art Workers' Guild. It confirmed for me how we are all connected through this small but important collection.

In September we held a small Zoom chat about the books we had been reading over the summer. The idea was to think about how the Library could be used as a social space for sharing thoughts and interests. It was decided that we didn't want a 'book club', but rather we could be a 'Library group'. This title is vague enough to invite those of us who don't have time to read very much. We could chew over selected writings relating to a current theme or we could meet for card games or to make paper aeroplanes. The main thing to report is that we can now invite you to watch this space!

Outreach Committee
PM JANE COX

It has been a stimulating year for Outreach, continuing its stated aim to seek to promote craftsmanship and the understanding of it, and to nurture dialogue and collaboration across disciplines and generations 'with a sense of fun and purpose'.

We hosted a second *Useful Parallels* event for 50 second-year students from Clay College, CSM, Camberwell and Farnham in February (just before lockdown) with Guild demonstrators from eight different craft disciplines. The day was aimed at broadening students' minds, with exposure to new and different materials and processes, and was very popular. This time we included a number of AWG Brothers who hadn't demonstrated at the Guild before: Julie Arkell (papier mâché sculpture), Tony Wills (product design), Lesley Strickland (acrylic jewellery) and Nick Hughes (graphics and printing), who all contributed greatly to the event.

Next year Outreach plans to host a similar day for second-year architecture students in September 2021.

East London Textile Arts (ELTA) have been forging ahead with their new project, Kalila wa-Dimna, working on embroideries and creating costumes for the exhibition at the Guild in October 2021. They are working in conjunction with Dr Rachel Scott of King's College, who is organising a collective of artists (including ELTA) and writers to exhibit at the P21 gallery in Camden in 2021. In addition, they will be organising public workshops as part of the event. Throughout lockdown they have been providing an Emergency Embroidery Kit delivery service for their participants and have held outdoor embroidery sessions in East Ham over the summer.

Rachael Matthews is furthering her work with the Psychology of Programming Interest Group (PPIG) by assembling all the material and research on a website for all to consult. This is a longterm project which will develop and expand in the future.

During lockdown the Outreach Committee has been meeting regularly on Zoom, honing its priorities and working out how it can broaden its base within the Guild.

In future, as well as running and organising projects itself, it plans to facilitate projects run by other Guild members. With this in mind, on 11 March 2021 Outreach will be hosting an ordinary Guild meeting evening to present its work and projects to stimulate discussion, interest and engagement.

The Outreach Committee has also used the time in lockdown to reflect and review how it is organised and has restructured, with various committee members now taking responsibility for different roles. This information will be made available on the Guild website, making it more accessible to the wider Guild and operate more efficiently.

PM Jane Cox will be standing down as Chair in March 2021 and PM Anne Thorne will be taking over the reins.

Mentoring Committee
BRO. LLEWELLYN THOMAS

The Guild's mentoring activities for this year moved forward effectively with a broad cast of mentees and enthusiastic mentors, and initiatives can proceed purposefully when 'normal' returns.

The areas where mentoring has been requested and set up are broadly in line with the wide range of activities and skills of the brethren. We are keen to foster an even wider appeal to the skills and knowledge within the Guild for which there has been no take-up. The areas currently engaged with are:

Ceramics, textiles, letter-cutting, curating, interior design, architecture, graphic design, painting, stained glass, sculpture, metal, glass, basketry, jewellery, silversmithing, print making, instrument making, innovation and entrepreneurship.

There are 29 mentees currently engaged in some way with their allocated mentors. Mentors have sent in reports that all demonstrate, even if in a small way, that our initiative is clearly 'up and running' in spite of the difficulties of this year. A prime purpose for the meetings that did take place early in the year was to define the practice of mentoring and emphasise the distinction between mentoring and teaching. The other key principle to establish and understand was that the activities of the mentor-mentee partnership had to be mentee not mentor led.

Within the reports submitted were many commentaries around the use and usefulness of social media websites and distance communication generally. While these practices have been very much in the forefront, they should not perhaps be seen as a fall-back resource but rather a way of allowing worldwide engagement with the Guild and its mentors.

Mentoring is naturally a first point of call for young creatives newly emerged from art colleges. However, many in the current mentee cohort are poorly prepared for a mentor relationship and work now needs to be done to guide mentees to find the critical questions to which their mentor may have an answer.

While no intended timetable for mentoring at the Guild this year could have been practically carried out, we are reminded that mentoring is a long relationship that can help to find a way for mentees to persevere through short, medium, longterm and even global issues.

Guild Chest

The Guild Chest is a fund for the benefit of Guildsmen and their dependants in financial need. It is administered in strict confidence by its Trustees, who will consider any reasonable request on terms to be agreed. It can offer interest-free loans to help with ill health or bereavement, or to cover a temporary or more serious cash-flow situation.

If you would like to know more, please contact one of the Trustees. No one else will ever know the details of Chest transactions. Feel free to approach us at a meeting or using the contact details below. Trustees will listen and see what can be done.

Bro. Angela Barrett (Chairman):
abarrett316@btinternet.com | 020 7833 3262

Bro. Jane Dorner:
jane@editor.net | 020 8883 2602

Bro. Simon Smith:
info@simonsmithstonecarving.com | 020 7277 7488

Guild Secretary
CATHERINE O'KEEFFE

This has been an 'interesting' year, to say the least. All our normal routines, habits and expectations have been turned on their heads by the pandemic. And yet, we have continued to survive, even thrive.

This is in no small part due to our successful transition to an almost exclusively online presence. We must all be very thankful to Leigh, the Guild Administrator, for navigating the intricacies of Zoom, online presentations, interactive talks and exhibitions. As a result, we were able to hold Guild meetings and quiz nights throughout the strictest part of the lockdown, and have continued to maintain our online presence since, no mean technical feat given the building's very basic IT infrastructure.

Leigh and I have been working mostly from home. When things eased up in the summer, the Hon. Architect, Elspeth and I prepared for 6, Queen Square to be Covid-safe, which allowed us to hold two meetings in the building in October, before having to shut down again. We can only hope that we will be able to reopen before too long and our efforts will not have been in vain.

In the meantime, we had a successful online presence at London Craft Week, which attracted many times more visitors than we could have hoped to achieve if it had been held at the Guild – though less fun, of course. And Bro. Bridget Bailey's planned exhibition took place entirely online and included a demonstration and a talk between her and Bro. Roger Kneebone on the creative experience.

I am delighted to report that our members have been wonderfully supportive during this year, both physically and financially. Membership numbers have held up remarkably well, and I have seen many members online whom I have never met in person, which has been a real treat. And everyone was very understanding when, after an initial hiccup, the new platform for paying subscriptions was introduced.

The fly in the ointment has been the almost complete disappearance of room bookings. Our hirers were unable to use the building during the initial lockdown, and have been very nervous about returning, even when it was possible. They have not abandoned us entirely, however, as many have simply postponed their events until later this year, by which time we will all be hoping that the vaccine will have changed everything.

The upside of this is that Elspeth has spent many, many hours on her hands and knees and up ladders, touching up the paintwork and revarnishing the floorboards on the ground floor. So, the building will be looking at its absolute best once we are finally able to return.

Thanks, as always to Alec McQuin, our Hon. Treasurer, our Chairman, Phil Abel, the Master, Alan Powers, and our Hon. Secs, of course, who have helped steer us through this very strange year.

NEW MEMBERS IN 2020

New Brothers

Chila Kumari Singh Burman – Artist
Karen Butti – Architect
David Dobson – Printmaker, wood engraver
Tessa Eastman – Ceramicist
Agalis Manessi – Ceramicist
Ruth Martin – Illustrator, printmaker
Eric Parry – Architect
Sam Price – Structural engineer
Sue Ridge – Artist
Henry Sanders – Architect
Charlotte de Syllas – Jeweller
Francis Terry – Architect
Maiko Tsutsumi – Curator, sculptor, woodworker, lacquer work
Joe Whitlock Blundell – Book designer, photographer

Associate Brothers

Hugo Burge – Director of Marchmont House
Annette Carruthers – Historian
Mary Greensted – Curator
Ruth Guilding – Art and design historian
Will Wootton – Academic

Affiliate Brothers

Aliénor Cros – Study of decorative art
Seher Mirza – Textiles, social innovation

VALETE

Hugh Bulley, Jocelyn Burton, PM Ed Fairfax-Lucy, Peter Farlow, Tom Gamble, PM Josephine Harris, Fiona MacCarthy, Caroline Webb

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2020

Master – Alan Powers
Immediate Past Master – Anne Thorne
Master Elect – Tracey Sheppard
Master Elect Elect – Fred Baier
Past Master – David Birch
Chairman of Trustees – Phil Abel

HON. OFFICERS

Hon. Secretaries – Charlotte Hubbard, Mark Winstanley
Hon. Treasurer – Alec McQuin
Hon. Architect – Simon Hurst
Hon. Librarian – Rachael Matthews
Hon. Archivist – Frances Spalding
Hon. Curator – Monica Grose-Hodge
Hon. Editor – Prue Cooper
Chair of Outreach Cttee – PM Jane Cox
Chair of Mentoring Cttee – Llewellyn Thomas

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Emma Barker, Hannah Coulson, Tanya Harrod, Paul Jakeman, Neil Jennings, Flora Roberts

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Guild Secretary – Catherine O'Keeffe
Guild Administrator – Leigh Milsom Fowler
Guild Steward – Elspeth Dennison

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