



The Art Workers' Guild

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

At the start of 2021, 'Business as Usual' had a different meaning: a closed and darkened house at 6 Queen Square, but a lively computer screen on a Thursday evening, as meetings online had become normal again when the brief suspension of pandemic sanctions ended two months before. The Guild's business continued, conducted by the Committees and the Trustees online, electing new members and making provisional plans. Most important, our finances remained robust thanks to the underlying soundness of the Guild's income and having literally as well as metaphorically mended the roof when the sun was shining over recent years. This allowed our Hon. Architect, Simon Hurst, to enjoy himself installing, painting and gilding an additional leaf frieze in the Master's Room, filling an awkward gap above the members' name boards.

Our talks at the beginning of the year, mostly by speakers held over from 2020, covered some history: Edward McKnight Kauffer, supreme poster artist of inter-war London; Sarah Turner on the hidden history of esotericism in art in the Guild's early decades; Kate Jordan and Barley Roscoe on Sedding and Gimson; and Wendy Hitchmough on how the Bloomsbury Group dressed. There were personal stories interwoven with backgrounds of historical making practices in Celia Ward's turn, from painting to textiles; Diana Springall's passionate defence of embroidery; Stephen Proctor's account of an architect's pursuit of making good ordinary



Cover Image: Bro. Lydia Beanland

Above: Master's summer outing to Suffolk

Opposite: Useful Parallels Architecture. Image – Ash Zul Parquear

houses in a generally adverse world; and Rory Young's extraordinary courtyard project in Cirencester. Current practices in diverse fields were covered in Ayla Lepine's survey of recent art installations in cathedrals, Rachel Dickinson's update on the work of Ruskin's Guild of St George, and an evening devoted to the work of our own Outreach Committee.

Our summer break saw some 20 Guild members and their guests for three days beneath blue skies in Suffolk, with backgrounds of hospitable gardens, flint flushwork churches, North Sea waves and pebbles, and some surprise discoveries behind the doors of private homes. Many thanks to all who contributed and all who came. Back in London, an exhibition of paintings by our much-missed PM, Ed Fairfax-Lucy, was mounted by his family in the Master's Room, with a handsome catalogue designed by Phil Abel, matched in the yellow corridor by Josephine Harris's engraved glass, brought together by our Hon. Curator, Monica Grose-Hodge, also memorialised in a printed leaflet. In the courtyard, East London Textile Arts, led by Sonia Tuttiett and Celia Ward, put on their colourful Kalila wa Dimna cloaks, hats and banners, and a profusion of mice (also textile). With the pandemic in abeyance, even if sadly still a worry, we began properly to inhabit our home, with meetings in the hall, starting with Martin Treu, speaking remotely from Chicago about vintage neon signage in the USA. With our new cameras and their sophisticated controls, funded by a generous legacy from PM Josephine, the Guild can now make the remote watching experience more like being in the room than before, thus retaining the benefit we found of Zoom participation for members while recovering the buzz of real sociability offered by the austere caress of Clissett chairs, the flummery of robes and chains, and a glass in the hand to animate proceedings. Conviviality was recaptured with an evening beanfeast to thank speakers from both years, as well as the members of our various committees.

The autumn programme continued with the scheduled talks, including the symposium on the British Library with Rolfe Kentish and Hugh Cullum, preceded by a members' visit; Bill Dunster's demonstration of a possible future of low-cost living with a negligible footprint in a sophisticated cabin; a substitution of Richard Kindersley's programmed Remembrance Day talk (sadly prevented by illness) with an evening on the artist-poet David Jones and the Great War, with Paul Hills and Tom Durham; and Peter Cormack on the American stained glass artist Charles Connick, conveniently filling our American Night slot. Two further day expeditions explored college



Avenue, mid-Winter, oil on board, 2018 – PM Edmund Fairfax-Lucy

buildings in Cambridge with Eric Parry, Jeremy Musson and Vicki Ambery-Smith, including an ample lunch at Downing College, and a dive into Regency fantasy and excess at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton, where the Keeper, David Beevers, showed the temporary loans from the Royal Collections that complete those fabulous rooms.

I was delighted to spend time at our contribution to London Craft Week in October, when two cycles of



members filled the Hall and Master's Room to display their skills and show their work to the public. Later in the month, a similar transformation took place when an Outreach 'Useful Parallels' day welcomed the students of the London School of Architecture, where I teach, to introduce them to paper engineering, embroidery, bookbinding, hat making, papier-mâché and stone carving.

It might go without saying, and therefore needs to be said with trumpets, that none of this could have happened so smoothly and enjoyably without our fantastic three-person team of Catherine, Leigh and Elspeth, who despite all difficulties have continued undaunted to respond eagerly to all and any suggestions of extra-curricular activities that have helped to bring us back together. Prue Cooper's role as tireless editor of our in-house publications, in print and online, might also be too easily overlooked, but she has expanded the Guild's horizons significantly and broadened our online identity. In the background, our Hon. Treasurer, Alec McQuin, keeps us well above the waterline, while the Hon. Secretaries set the sails. I wish my successors as Master a calmer sea and an ever more prosperous voyage.

Master Alan Powers



Art is Unity

14 January 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Master's Night – Art is Unity
MASTER ALAN POWERS

The Master, Alan Powers, opened proceedings by saying that he thought PM Walter Crane was the last to present two Master's Nights in a row. This was a useful fact as his subject was to be the Guild motto, 'Art Is Unity', as depicted on the panel above the Master's chair made by PM Walter Crane in 1901.

Some recent podcasts by Oliver Burkeman explored the causes of dualism in our approach to the world. 'Art Is Unity' seems to have related to the schisms that existed between the founders and the RIBA on one hand and the Royal Academy on the other, which led to the foundation of the Guild. It came into being to avoid the exclusive overspecialisation the RIBA and the RA represented. As H.J.L.J. Massé, the Guild's historian, wrote, 'The central idea, the vivifying principle, which so appealed to our

Founders ... was the idea, the principle, of the Unity, the Interdependence, the Solidarity of all the Arts.' This he called 'not merely an article of Faith, but the working basis of our daily, common lives as artists.'

The Master went on to set out some of the connections between radical politics and alternative forms of religious belief around the time of the Guild's foundation that seem to support a deeper understanding of its motto.

These ideas, often held in suspicion, grew and developed during the 20th century, leading eventually to conceptual breakthroughs, such as Gregory Bateson's *Mind and Nature, a necessary unity*, 1979, discovered by the Master when researching his own book, *Nature in Design*, 1999. Bateson explained that although the world is set up to be dualistic, this conceals a deeper form of unity. William Blake's 'Without contraries there is no progression' is another way of summarising the matter.

This concept was explored in cybernetics in the Second World War and the discovery of feedback loops, in which information is cycled between two elements, and each modifies the other. Recent interest in neurology and

culture (Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and his Emissary*), offers another way of understanding why the underlying unity of the world is often ignored, and how important it is to recover it.

The last PM of the Guild to serve two terms was not, in fact, Crane, but Hamilton Temple Smith, a director of Heals, at the start of the Second World War, so the Master felt it appropriate to include him as well. Smith was a founder of the Design and Industries Association, at odds with the exclusive craft basis of the AWG and dedicated to creating a different form of unity. The membership of the two bodies overlapped, and the DIA had its office on the first floor of 6 Queen Square until 1939, but we tend to forget their importance in the later history.

In short, this was another dazzling display by the Master, bringing together disparate thoughts, notions and themes, and weaving these disparate threads of influence together with his consummate skill. It has been hard to distil them all in this brief minute.

There is alas not enough room to do justice to the lively discussion that followed. Various Guildsmen popped up on the mosaic of Zoom faces with wide ranging questions and thoughts, including observations from Professor Mike Swash on the left and right brain. Bro. Joe Whitlock Blundell quoted Dr Johnson on the 'yoking together of the most heterogeneous ideas'; Bro. Luke Hughes mused on globalisation and the collapse of land values; and Bro. Rory Young was tortured by thoughts of a conceptual artist who had no notion of the importance of the actual making of the conceit. There were further contributions from Bros Emma Barker and Annette Carruthers before all adjourned into break out 'rooms'. Suffice to say that it all had its own kind of unity, proving if nothing else how lucky the Guild is to have Alan Powers guiding us through another year.

PM Ian Archie Beck

28 January 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Underground Modernist: Edward McKnight Kauffer
CAITLIN CONDELL AND EMILY ORR

The evening opened with a tribute to late Past Master Dick Reid (1934-2021) with moving words delivered by Hugh Petter, Helen Whittaker and Peter Burman.

The talk was given jointly by Caitlin Condell and Emily Orr speaking from the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City, which houses the Kauffer archive. They have jointly edited a book of essays,

E. McKnight Kauffer: The Artist in Advertising, intended to accompany a deferred exhibition on Kauffer, which is now running until 10 April 2022 at the Cooper Hewitt.

In his introduction, the Master pointed out that Kauffer was briefly an Art Worker, during 1924-7. The speakers paid tribute to other researchers in this area, including Peyton Skipwith, Brian Webb and Kauffer's grandson Simon Rendall. They also noted important figures who ensured Kauffer's archive was saved for the Cooper Hewitt – including the poets Marianne Moore and Grace Schulman.

Condell and Orr opened with a selection of McKnight Kauffer's eye-catching posters, but they also showed examples of his book covers and illustrations, graphic identities, carpets, stage sets, costumes, and other ephemera. Kauffer's distinctive artistic perspective quickly gave rise to an outstanding reputation – to the extent that by the early 1920s one of his clients could placate a waiting public between designs by papering billboards with a label: "A New McKnight Kauffer Poster Will Appear Here Shortly." Kauffer was aware that the artist in advertising 'was a new kind of being' with a socially important role to play, ideals set out in 1938 in the book *Advertising Art: The Designer and the Public*.

Kauffer's background was of interest: born in Great Falls, Montana, after spending his childhood in Evansville, Indiana, he left school early to paint scenery for the town's opera house. He left home for good when very young, travelling with a theatre company, moving on to California, and working in Paul Elder & Co, a San Francisco bookshop. He moved to Europe, arriving via Algiers, going on to Naples, Venice, Munich and Paris (where he painted in a Post-Impressionist style) before reaching London by 1915.

He appears to have been completely self-taught as an artist and designer. He was briefly married and had a daughter before building a new life with a fellow designer, Marion Dorn. He clearly had a great capacity for friendship, taking in Arnold Bennett, Sir Kenneth Clark, Alvin Langdon Coburn, T.S. Eliot (the two Americans gave each other nicknames based on the states in which they were born – Montana and Missouri), Roger Fry, Mary Hutchinson, Aldous Huxley, Marianne Moore, S.J. Perelman, and Virginia and Leonard Woolf.

He moved within all kinds of institutions, creating graphics for the London Group, creating powerful self-portrait prints, with some of his work too advanced for commercial use – as was the case with his posters for Hitchcock's thriller *The Lodger*. His work for the London Underground and for Shell was flagged up, as was his role at Lund Humphries, where he shared an office with Man Ray.



Above left: Book cover, *Art Now* by Herbert Read (London, Faber & Faber Ltd, 1933). Simon Rendall Collection. Photo by Hugh Gilbert
 Above right: Poster, *Vigil, The Pure Silk*, 1919. Printed by Dangerfield Printing Company Ltd. Lithograph, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, Gift of Mrs E. McKnight Kauffer. Photo by Matt Flynn © Smithsonian Institution

His costume designs for Ninette de Valois's ballet *Checkmate* suggest his versatility, while his book jacket design for Oswald Mosley's *The Greater Britain* in 1932 suggests a certain pragmatism, as did his book cover for Carl van Vechten's 1926 novel set in Harlem - with a title that was regarded as offensive even at the time. Kauffer was, however, certainly a figure of the left rather than the right if we look at his output overall.

Condell and Orr gave a vivid sense of the material in the Cooper Hewitt archive and of their methodology for studying Kauffer - bringing together social history and a more formalist analysis of motifs used in Kauffer's designs. The archive has been digitalised and strong links have been made between Orr and Condell and the Archive of Art and Design at the V&A.

Kauffer's forced return to the United States with his fellow American, Dorn, in 1940 saw his career flourish at first with war posters and work for American Airlines. But the couple drifted apart and Kauffer succumbed to alcoholism and depression, dying in 1954.



Questions came fast and furious from members and guests: Tanya Harrod asked about Kauffer's politics; Neil Jennings asked if the exhibition might tour to the UK; and John McGill gave news of the re-creation of the mural designed by Kauffer for the foyer of Embassy Court in Brighton. The Master suggested a Brighton visit to take in the mural. Peyton Skipwith reflected on Dorn and Kauffer's apparent desire to seek British nationality in 1940. Chris Boydell noted the ongoing success of Dorn's business, but according to Condell a darker picture is flagged up in Dorn's letters to Mary Hutchinson. Emma Barker asked about Kauffer's time in Paris and his time at Swan Court in Chelsea. It was noted that a book is planned on Swan Court, Chelsea Manor Street.

This was a stimulating evening and discussion continued after our two speakers returned to their responsibilities at the Cooper Hewitt, as they were in the early afternoon of their working day.

Bro. Tanya Harrod

11 February 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

*From a privet hedge in the Highlands
 to Moldovan Mascherata*
 CELIA WARD

Born into the artistic family of John Ward, the portrait painter, Celia and her five siblings lived in a rambling farmhouse on the Kentish downs. She had little encouragement to paint or draw until she was 16, when her father agreed to teach her art, as school was threatening to throw her out. Ruskin's *Elements of Drawing* was soon discarded for his own system. When he had had enough of his daughter, his friends took over and she was hooked.

She applied to read history at UCL, but she was really a guest student at the Royal Academy, toiling away at life drawing. Soon after she left university, one of her pictures was in the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition; commissions appeared and galleries were interested.

A painter's life began. Celia showed images of portraits, interiors, gardens, book jackets and the privet hedge in Scotland. But after 18 years and eight solo shows, she was unhappy with painting the same pictures and showing at galleries without anything new.

The new challenge with her new husband, James, a parish priest, was Blackbird Leys. In the 1960s church Celia painted a mural, a nativity with three Magi in academic robes with the Cowley factory on the skyline. She started a community arts project with Clare Goodall to make mosaics. But the project was all too short lived, despite the keenness, industry and happiness of the volunteers. She vowed that future projects would always have a follow-on, so that people would not be dumped at the end.

In 2002 an offer came to go to Bucharest, where Celia was headhunted at a church fundraiser by Alexander Hergan, a Romanian-American art collector and philanthropist. Wearing a smart pink suit, an advantage when raising funds, she set up the art centre with Tatiana Nichita, a fresco painter and IT wizard. After two years helping Romanian artists develop into successful artists, she handed over the gallery to Irina Abaza.

At a children's hospice, Celia drew children with severe congenital conditions. These portraits often were the only image the nurses would ever have of their tiny patients.

Deep in rural Romania, Celia met Maria, a woman who fostered children, baked bread in large batches, wove tablecloths, sewed her daughter's trousseau, grew vegetables and in her spare time helped in the church.

Inspired by Maria's capable determination and the ethos of Horia Bernia, the curator of the arts centre, Celia's next huge step on returning to London in 2007 was to set up East London Textile Arts, a participatory crafts project working with diverse groups of women of all abilities in Newham.

Knowing only three embroidery stitches herself, she was rescued by Sonia Tuttiett and Lorna Lambert. ELTA soon grew to holding classes five days a week, and including adults with learning difficulties.

For the first show at St Martin in the Fields, Sonia designed *The Newham Map*. It was divided into small squares, handed out for people to embroider as they pleased and then assembled as a quilt; the design was reproduced as a fabric and made into a kimono.

A local dentist encouraged ELTA to help improve oral health. Sonia made bad teeth, Rachael Matthews knitted good teeth, all photographed for an illustrated booklet to be sent to schools and dental surgeries. Two giant puppets, *Cameron the Cruel* and *Hunt the Rat*, were made for a Save the NHS march.

Celia started exploring mischief in art, founding the Centre for Economic Creativity of the Arts, inspiring



Dress from *Climate Change* exhibition Norwich



Early self-portrait with basket of fish – Celia Ward

many booklets, from *An Art Lover's Guide to Tax Havens to Pests in my Garden*, featuring the Wage-Cutter Bee and the Spin Doctor Spider. The epic of Brexit has Gove, Farage and Putin entwined in ivy.

Now Celia is in Norfolk. She is working with the Green Party, and her skills for creative projects have resulted in a show for climate change, mixing textiles, puppets and drawings.

Mural painting has become a renewed hobby. An Australian friend's corridor has kookaburras and a 'faux' Aussie landscape. At home, she has English birds in her bathroom, both on the wall and in the garden.

Celia's lecture was lavishly illustrated with images of her painting and her textiles and it was joyously received by the brethren, several of whom said it was one of the best Guild talks they had heard – informative, entertaining and inspiring.

Questions followed from Nicholas Cooper, Rachael Matthews and Emma Barker.

Bro. Mark Winstanley

25 February 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

What do you mean by Embroidery?

DIANA SPRINGALL

We were treated to an inspiring walk through the history of contemporary embroidery by the embroiderer Diana Springall.

Diana trained as a painter, but she soon realised the importance of adding craft skills to her teaching career, and after trying various crafts she felt drawn to embroidery.

She has been an avid collector of contemporary embroidery since the 1960s, not as investment pieces but out of a deep love and respect for fellow embroiderers' work. Diana has always been very keen to show these artworks to anyone who is interested, and indeed her collection grew from the realisation that it was far better for her students to see and handle original pieces during classes than to look at photographic slides.

She explained that her mission for many years has been to get a major exhibition of contemporary embroidery, but up until now she has faced a huge amount of rejection from museums and institutions.

British contemporary embroidery is unique because it is founded on drawing. To illustrate this, Diana introduced us to several key artists and showed us examples of their work.



Gaze IV - Audrey Walker, 1999, hand and machine embroidery

She explained that there was a period when the art school system founded all material skills on the principles of art and in the 1950s the crowning point was when embroidery was granted equal qualification status alongside painting, sculpture and illustration at Glasgow, Goldsmiths, and other institutions. She pointed out that in no other country could you take a degree (or equivalent) that was stitch-based. It was a period that differed from and preceded the heavy dependence today on digital printing and lack of specialisation in techniques. Sadly, since 2013, art schools are no longer offering degrees in embroidery.

Diana introduced us to the wonderful work of Margaret Nicholson, Audrey Walker, Jan Beaney, Pauline Burbage, Alice Kettle and Claire Johnson Knight.

Each of these artists have used different techniques, such as machine stitching, hand stitching, appliqué and patchwork, to great effect and Diana gave us a resumé of their work and lives.

What was equally enthralling were the preliminary drawings and sketches which Diana had carefully collected from each artist. From these, one could see clearly how the embroidery was based on a painterly approach to the subject and that each embroiderer was an accomplished artist.

It was wonderful to see how the embroidery added layers of depth, colour and texture that transformed the sketches into dramatic and expressive works of art.

She ended by talking about embroidery as an applied art and showed a piece that she had designed



Alice Kettle standing in front of her work
Odyssey, 2003, machine embroidery

and made as a commission for Logica, in memory of one of the founders, Pat Coen. It was a participatory piece of an incredible scale – 21 feet high – and she very cleverly used a design of circuit boards and resistors to create a computer puzzle that commemorated his life. His family and colleagues were involved in the stitching, which added a touching personal element to the work.

Diana ended by mentioning that plans are in place to donate her collection of contemporary embroidery to the Sunbury Embroidery Gallery when a suitable extension has been built, and in the meanwhile she issued a generous invitation to anyone interested to view the collection in her home – but do phone first!

A lively discussion followed, with much appreciation of the quality and beauty of the works that Diana had shown. Suggestions were made about galleries that might offer space for a show. There was some discussion around the suggestion that embroidery is not acceptable as art because traditionally it has been the preserve of women. It may be best to draw a tactful veil over the discussion around Mr Hunt's commitment to embroidery and the textile arts during his time as director of the V&A, but suffice it to say that brothers were on the whole agreed that Diana's mission to mount a major exhibition of contemporary

embroidery was a missed opportunity on the part of the V&A and other institutions, given the tremendous popularity and interest in the Opus Anglicanum and Quilts exhibitions in past years at the V&A.

All were agreed that embroidery should be taken much more seriously as art, and that Diana's intimate knowledge and passion for contemporary embroidery had made for an inspiring and fascinating evening.

Bro. Sonia Tuttiett

11 March 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

An invitation to engage
THE AWG OUTREACH COMMITTEE

The presentation began with an introduction to the aims and activities of the Outreach Committee over the last year, and then divided into presentations highlighting events that reflected the aims of the committee, projects that are intentionally wide-ranging, reflecting the diversity of the Guild membership. The evening was an inspiring revelation of the variety of achievements over the seven years since the committee's inception, and a call to participation.

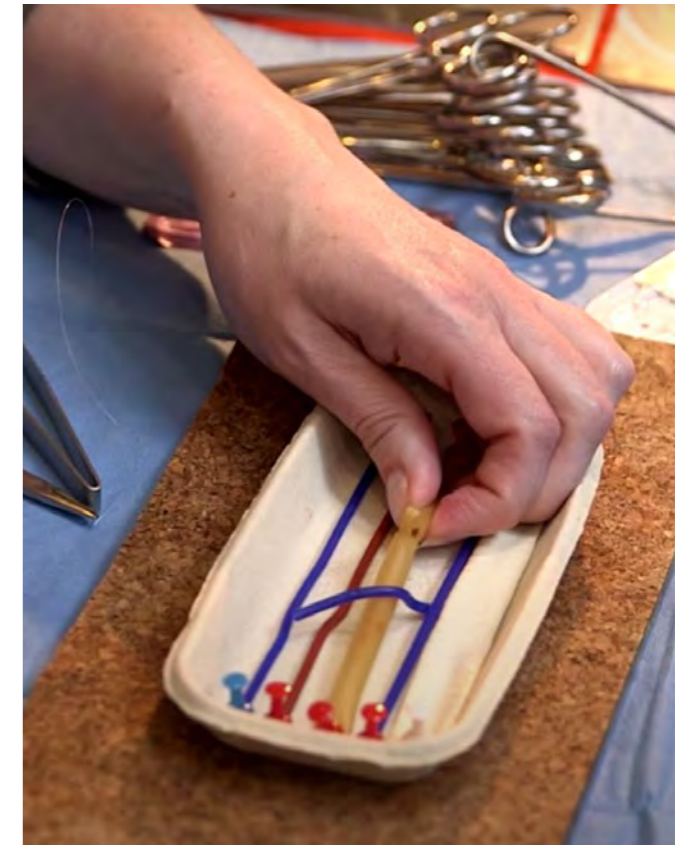


Rachael Matthews teaching transferable skills
at *Useful Parallels*. Image - Nick Carter

Hannah Coulson introduced the committee members – Prue Cooper, Jane Cox, Tanya Harrod, Nick Hughes, Rachael Matthews, Seher Mirza, Jeremy Nichols, Fleur Oakes, Flora Roberts, Anne Thorne and Sonia Tuttiett – and explained how the advent of the virus had given them an opportunity to redefine shared intentions. The committee acts as a bridge, looking outwards to support exchanges through which everyone can learn, and inwards to the knowledge and skills of the Guild.

PM Prue Cooper highlighted the aims: 'To bring people from different worlds and disciplines together for exchange', referencing the original intentions of the founders of the Guild, and 'To be an exploration of outcomes rather than predetermining them'. The Mentoring Scheme, an initiative of PM George Hardie, is one such outcome. The Intelligence of Touch, the first collaboration with Roger Kneebone, brought other apparently dissimilar organisations into the Guild to consider the common ground of using mind and touch in unison. This event spawned ideas for further events, something which has been replicated across all projects.

PM Jane Cox (Chair 2018-21) spoke about the aim 'to open a door to new materials, processes or ideas', demonstrated by two Useful Parallels events, focusing on Clay College but including three further art schools.



Surgery demonstration at *Thinking with your Hands*. Image – Paul Craddock

Fifty ceramics students were hosted at the Guild, with demonstrators from the Guild exposing them to new ideas, processes and ways of thinking. Practical sessions pushed students in unfamiliar directions, with first-time demonstrator Nicholas Hughes re-inforcing to us how fruitful the 'multiple minds' approach is.

Rachael Matthews, focusing on the aim 'to uncover and share the value of creative working and thinking', introduced the video outcome of the Thinking with your Hands session. Guild members mixed with scientists and visitors, demonstrating how craftsmanship is as important across a range of scientific fields as it is for art workers. It inspired further events: Fleur Oakes' successful Thread Management event produced several strands, including another video, while a session with computer programmers investigated how arts and crafts ideas could influence programming. East London Textile Arts exemplified projects with grassroots communities.

Reflecting the aims 'to open up to people who might otherwise not come to the Guild' and 'to widen perceptions of craftsmanship', new Chair and PM Anne Thorne invited volunteers to join future activities. Plans for Useful Parallels events for architecture students, a dyeing workshop, projects with V&A East described by Sonia Tuttiett, Cultural Parallels events and a schools roadshow were highlighted. Jeremy Nichols described

how this latter project, a pilot scheme at a school in East London, is aimed at introducing children throughout the country to a variety of art and craft practices that might not have been seen or even known about as options.

The talk engagingly exposed the wealth of what has taken place, and provoked questions (which raised the final aim: "To meet the agreed budget, to be documented and evaluated") and suggestions. For more detail, watch the videos and the talk itself on the Guild website, and join in.

Bro. Charlotte Hubbard

25 March 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Enchanting the modern: Art, Craft and Theosophy
SARAH TURNER

Under normal circumstances, Sarah Turner would only have had to walk across Bloomsbury from Bedford Square and the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, where she is deputy director for research, to deliver her talk in Queen Square. Even on Zoom, however, Sarah's warmth and enthusiasm came over very vividly. Her talk focused on the Theosophical Art Circle, which was founded in 1907 by the writer Clifford Bax; its ethos, based as it was on the idea that all art is unity, is obviously similar to the AWG's, though there does not seem to have been any actual overlap in membership. Another Bloomsbury connection is the building that Lutyens designed in 1912 as the Theosophical Society's London headquarters in Tavistock Square (now the British Medical Association), the size of which demonstrates the scale and ambition of the movement in the early-20th century.

It was as a PhD student at the Courtauld Institute that Sarah first began to explore interconnections between art and Theosophy in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Her research, she noted, represents a contribution to the revisionist scholarship that, in recent years, has challenged conventionally canonical accounts of Modernism, particularly by investigating the impact of esoteric ideas and groups on artists and movements of this period. Attention has been drawn to previously little-known figures such as the Swedish artist Hilma af Klint and the British spiritualist Georgiana Houghton, both of whom have now been the subject of highly successful exhibitions. Notions of a secular, 'disenchanted' modernity are gradually being replaced by a more nuanced understanding that recognises that



Saint Bride – John Duncan, 1913, Tempera on canvas,
National Galleries Scotland

the modern also embraces a concern with spiritual, otherworldly modes of being.

The Theosophical Art Circle was a spin-off of the London branch of the Theosophical Society, which had been founded in 1877, only two years after the parent organisation was founded in New York. For seven years, from 1907 until 1914, when the First World War brought it to an end, Bax and a group of artists, writers, musicians and actors joined together to explore the idea of the spiritual in art and ultimately, they hoped, to create a worldwide mystical art movement. They disseminated their ideas and inspirations, along with their own work, through their journal, *Orpheus*, which explored a very diverse range of topics, including women's suffrage, astrology and the Celtic Revival. They published some of the first accounts of the work of contemporary Indian artists, along with early writings by Ananda Coomaraswamy; the Circle thereby played a significant role in spreading knowledge about non-European art.

The members included Olive Hockin, whose work reveals an interest in the Pre-Raphaelites that was shared by other members of the group. As well as being an artist, Hockin was an active suffragette, who designed the cover of the Suffragette newspaper, *Votes for Women*, and was sent to prison in 1913. Another artist connected with the group was John Duncan, who played a leading role in the Celtic Revival in Scotland; the shimmering surface of his painting *Saint Bride*, which was reproduced in *Orpheus*, mimics other art forms, such as metalwork and embroidery, in which Duncan was very interested. Also noteworthy is Maud McCarthy, one of the founder members of the Theosophical Art Circle, who was an authority on Indian

art and music; she contributed an essay on the idea of artistic brotherhood to the March 1914 issue of *Orpheus*, in which she argued that 'the exchange of art between races is one of the greatest [...] factors in the world peace movement'.

When the Theosophical Art Circle folded, it merged with another organisation, the Brotherhood of the Arts, which shared many of its ideals and helped carry them on after the First World War. As Sarah emphasised throughout her talk, these ideals brought together not only art and spirituality but also science and politics. Seeking to create a new beauty in the modern world, they were deeply engaged with the pressing issues of the day, from women's suffrage to anti-imperialism.

Bro. Emma Barker

15 April 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Stone, silk and neon:
contemporary art in British cathedrals
THE REVEREND DR AYLA LEPINE

Commenting on how good it was to be a little freer due to the easing of some constraints of lockdown, the Master opened the meeting. He reminded the assembled company of the recent death of Hon. Bro. HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and said that the Duke's contribution to art and design had been seriously understated in the obituaries. He hoped that this omission might be rectified by some future publication. He announced that PM Josephine Harris had left the Guild a legacy of £20,000.

The Master introduced the speaker, the Reverend Dr Ayla Lepine, by saying that she worked in two fields of endeavour: she is both an art historian and a teacher of note with a particular interest in church buildings and the Gothic Revival; she is also an ordained Church of England priest, currently chaplain of King's College, Cambridge.

Dr Lepine began by saying that in recent decades there has been increasing interest in collaboration between the church and contemporary artists. This often results in ingenious experimentation, and the resulting work is not always religious and does not necessarily use Christian iconography. As a trustee of the charity Art+Christianity, our speaker has witnessed fascinating intersections between art and church.

This thought-provoking lecture was richly illustrated throughout, beginning with an image of

a neon work by Ian Hamilton Finlay, *The Star in its stable of light*. Dr Lepine said that this phrase might well describe a work of art in any cathedral and how important it is to remember that, whether temporary or permanent, an artwork impacts upon the community which houses it.

Jake Lever's 2015 community art project for Birmingham Cathedral, *Soul Boats*, encouraged 2,000 local people of all faiths and none to decorate paper boats with imagery which reflected their journey through life. The artist gilded the boats, creating the impression of medieval reliquaries. The boats suspended above the nave sail in an orderly easterly direction.

Order and grids featured in the next image. Stephen Bann's *The Garden as a Parenthesis* was shown alongside William Morris' wallpaper design *Trellis*, both works illustrating the tension between imposed order and the freedom of nature. Dr Lepine commented that this kind of tension can exist between the institutional Church of England and contemporary art, and that artists can challenge the church by posing questions. She is always delighted when a cathedral takes the risk to install contemporary work.

Commenting on the recent exhibition 'Sin', at the National Gallery, our speaker said that Bruce Nauman's neon work *The true artist helps the world by revealing mystic truths* poses two questions: can a mystic truth ever be revealed? And: what is the nature of any kind of revelation?

Tracey Emin's work *I felt you and I knew you loved me* is visible and yet perpetually untouchable in its position above the West Door in Liverpool Cathedral. Dr Lepine said that the placing of art in cathedrals is problematic because, while most are huge buildings, they are not art galleries. Choices are inevitably limited by the use of the space for liturgical and sacred activity. Returning to Ian Hamilton Finlay's *L'étoile dans son étale de lumière* at St Paul's Cathedral, our speaker felt that the placing was perfect. Framed by two fine pilasters, looking like a shop sign, the work adds a new layer to Christopher Wren's classicism. The installation of a work written in French at the time of Brexit caused some unease and had terrific resonance.

A visit to Salisbury Cathedral followed, where Daniel Chadwick's *Somewhere in the Universe*, a mobile made of semi-transparent plastic discs, was suspended in the space above the nave. Dr Lepine commented that some temporary installations may make you think 'thank goodness it is not permanent!' but that whilst installed that work can make you interact with the architecture in a different way.



Suspended – Arabella Dorman, Canterbury Cathedral, 2018

Examining an altar frontal created by Alice Kettle for the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre in Winchester, she said the style and execution of this shimmering work echoed the fragmentary quality of the surviving wall paintings. She felt that it was underappreciated.

Placed close to the font, making a painful and desperate connection between the waters of baptism and the waters of death, Arabella Dorman's *Suspended* in Canterbury Cathedral reminds the viewer of the dreadful plight of refugees adrift on the ocean. Made with their clothes suspended around a central globe light, the work has an angelic quality.

Drawing to a close, Dr Lepine recited a private prayer which she had offered up in St Anselm's Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral, in front of the altar created by Stephen Cox. She said that the words might also be appropriate for artists and art historians:

"If you really want me to be a priest, you are going to have to help me with this, because it is turning out to be harder than I thought."

The lecture was enthusiastically received, and prompted a number of questions and an animated discussion.

Bro. Tracey Sheppard

6 May 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Omega Dress
Wendy Hitchmough

Time and again the AWG lecture programme makes history with its extraordinary range of speakers and ground-breaking topics. Yet Wendy Hitchmough's decision to offer a subject connected with Bloomsbury, behind which exists a vast publishing industry, innumerable conferences, films, exhibitions, plays, novels and an informed global audience, might initially have seemed unwise. Surely it would be hard to produce sufficient new information to stir fresh interest. But this is exactly what Hitchmough succeeded in doing. Her outstanding lecture caught attention from the start when she threw up two slides side by side: showing the dress worn by Vanessa Bell in a self-portrait circa 1915, and the white trouser suit in which Kamala Harris, as vice president-elect of the United States, made her acceptance speech. We were immediately made

Press photograph of Nina Hamnett (left) and Winifred Gill (right) modelling Omega Workshops cloak, dress, waistcoat and hats, c.1913



aware that clothes act as signifiers. Harris's choice of colour had multiple resonances that went back through women's history, while Bell's dress made vivid her rejection of the Edwardian emphasis on prettiness. After this, Vanessa Bell remained a central figure in this talk, which was packed with unexpected observations and innovative ideas.

Much original research lay behind this lecture, owing to work undertaken by Hitchmough for her recent book, *The Bloomsbury Look* (Yale University Press). This, itself, grew out of the 11 years that she spent as curator at Charleston, the farmhouse near Firle, in Sussex. Charleston became a Bloomsbury outpost in 1916 and remained so until the death of Duncan Grant in 1978. It is famous for many things, not least the painted decorations that spread over the walls and furniture like a kind of vegetable growth. Wendy's close involvement with the maintenance of the fabric and texture of the house, as well as its position within the social history, has led her to think deeply about its material culture.

Her lecture gave her audience a deeper understanding of Bloomsbury radicalism. This was communicated not just with reference to the more usual sources – the much analysed articles, books, pictures and exhibitions produced by Bloomsbury – but by looking in more detail at the texture of their everyday life, what they wore and how they lived. The emphasis in this lecture was primarily on clothes, materials and decorative habits, such as the Bloomsbury enjoyment in making of paper flowers or the way in which even an umbrella can vaunt a lively pattern.

As Wendy's title 'Omega Dress' implied, the starting point for this radical difference was the Omega Workshops, which ran between 1913 and 1919, with Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and Roger Fry as the directors. The Omega adopted the principles which underlay Post-Impressionism, but allowed rhythm, colour and pattern to spread beyond the picture frame and into the decorative arts. When the Omega officially opened in August 1913, some items of clothing were already available for sale, as press photographs show. Links had been made with the Hampshire House Workshop in Hammersmith, just around the corner from Morris's Kelmscott House, which enabled the Omega to make use of a trained dressmaker. Virginia Woolf was initially appalled by the colour of the materials used by the Omega; after seeing her sister-in-law dressed in reds, yellows and pea-green, she vowed to retire into 'dove colour and old lavender, with a lace collar and lawn wristlets'. But six months later she agreed to a meeting with the dressmaker, as she informed her sister Vanessa: 'I am coming to the Omega on Thursday, to be slightly altered.'

But of course, as Hitchmough showed, alteration lay not just on the surface but went deeper, repositioning the

wearers of these Omega clothes as anti-establishment bohemians. Most people, after all, dress to fit in, with their job or the society in which they live. Bloomsbury gradually dropped this convention. It is very unlikely that John Maynard Keynes sported the crocheted woollen hat made for him by Vanessa Bell when he went in to work at the Treasury during the First World War. But he is wearing it in the portrait of him painted by Duncan Grant in 1917. This shows him seated in the garden at Charleston, drafting a telegram negotiating an American loan to secure Britain's wartime survival. A hat which might have been thought risible in London at Charleston gave him the boldness he needed for this task. Here and elsewhere, this lecture identified a deliberate otherness, an acceptance of dissonance, in Bloomsbury dress and taste.

There may also be an element of what is described in today's word as 'self-fashioning', a phrase that Hitchmough uses in her book and sees as a significant factor in the Bloomsbury Group's formation. However, their disregard for authority and social norms makes it unlikely that they felt the need consciously to form a style of their own. They were, after all, a mixed bunch, with no cohesive manifesto; their boundaries, as Hitchmough herself admits, were porous and elastic enough to accommodate a variety of perspectives. But what is undeniable is the fact that they created a protective environment in which to explore experimental ideas; and by means of their dress and lifestyle, as Hitchmough argues, they set up a system of encoded references that signalled their allegiance to the group.

Bro. Frances Spalding

20 May 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

The texture of living and my work
BRO. RORY YOUNG

Before the Master could call the meeting to order Bro. Rory Young had already discussed the unusual scale of his own head and how its shape was noticeable in a recent film of himself at work.

The Master announced the death of Brother Norma Macaw, a paper restorer. It was she who had instigated the millennium Guild handkerchief, with its cheery linocut designs by Bro. Christopher Brown. She had also been the first to serve tea at the Open House weekends at the Guild. She had moved to Naples some years previously and had died there.



Brother Rory Young introduced himself from his kitchen in Cirencester. The title of his talk as suggested by the Master was: the texture of living and my work.

There followed a dazzling display of skill and erudition, delivered impromptu with a selection of well-chosen images. Like many entertaining and skilled speakers, he was anxious not to outstay his welcome, although he could easily have spoken at twice the length as he had so much to show and share. He is an antiquarian, a sculptor, a memorial letter cutter, a builder and a building repairer.

We were shown a photograph of the very young Rory at play with his sister in a sand pit, proudly showing his first properly constructed arch. It was clear that his future direction was mapped out early on. He loved the ancient patina of buildings and on camping holidays with his parents he had noticed the texture and decay of buildings at an old slate quarry. He built follies throughout his teens and twenties. Building, he said, was in his blood. He showed a recent gargoyle made as a tribute for Christchurch Priory, showing the head of a masked NHS worker. He described the processes of making lime mortar and lime putty, saying lime was the lifeblood of all buildings up until the First World War. He described the repairs to Wells Cathedral that had been achieved with lime. He asked himself if he was a *pasticheur* or a creator? He was able to like and appreciate two widely different sculptors: Henry Moore and Edward Carter Preston; Moore was saying 'look at me', Preston was saying 'look at the architecture'. He also added that it was his firm belief that making was conceptual, the act of making was also conceiving.

His main topic in a wide-ranging set, however, was the *genius loci* of his hometown of Cirencester and his house within it. He was creating a 'Court of Memory' within a wall which he had constructed. This was the fulfilment of a dream. He showed various repairs and finds made during the making. He had used lime wash as the skin.



He had worked with the greatly talented but difficult late Brother Madeleine Dinkel, who had lettered various plaques and inscriptions. He discussed the Northern Renaissance, reclaimed stone, and the use of traditional linseed oil paints. He showed an etching by F.L. Griggs called *The Ford*, which pictured some steps down to a culvert similar to the ones he found when excavating his garden. He touched on 'fictive joints', lines incised into the lime exterior to mimic the courses and joints beneath the skin. He explained that he had completed a set of sculptures for St Albans Cathedral and had revived the idea of polychromy, eventually colouring the stone with acrylic paint, which had proved to be both a technical and artistic challenge. 'Colour,' he said, 'was the servant of form.' He ended by showing designs for his proposed grotto in the memory court, honouring the poet Pope. There was to be a Nymphaeum, the walls of which would be lined with oyster shells found during the excavation. His talk was, he said, 'a fragment of the edifice'.

Discussion ranged from Bro. Simon Hurst confessing that he, too, was building a Roman ruin, to Bro. Jane Dorner asking about the planting of the memory court garden. From a time capsule buried in the wall to homemade nettle soup, the various uses of mortar in Arezzo, Perugia and Rome, the human midden of history, and glazing with acrylic paints. There were many contributors to the discussion.

PM Ian Archie Beck

Top left: Great West Door, York Minster. A wall hollowed out and adorned with micro sculpture, 1340s, 1819 and 1994-98.

Image – Rory Young

Top right: To posterity; text describes repairing a wall during the Covid-19 pandemic, Rory's message in a bottle lobbed into the sea of time.



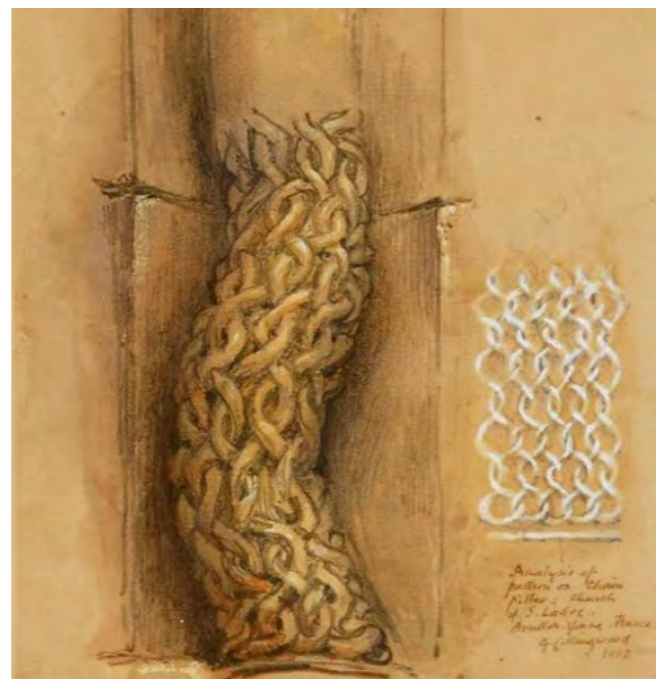
3 June 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

The Guild of St George: Ruskin's vision of a society rooted in Art and Craft
RACHEL DICKINSON

In introducing the Master of the Guild of St George, the Master of the Art Workers' Guild suggested that the four Ruskin and Morris-inspired organisations of the 1870s and 1880s (Guild of St George, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Art Workers' Guild, Society of Designer Craftsmen) should be regarded as 'Makers and Shakers'; greater contact between them could inspire wider audiences and make a greater impact on society.

Rachel began by showing Ruskin's black-and-white 1872 realisation of Carpaccio's *St George & the Dragon*. This became the logo of the Guild of St George, whose declared charitable purpose is to work through the arts and crafts and 'promote the advancement of education and training in the field of rural economy'.

The Guild's source text is *Fors Clavigera*, Ruskin's series of 'Letters to the Workmen of Great Britain'. The first (January 1871) begins, 'I have listened to many ingenious persons, who say that we are better off now than ever we were before. I do not know how well off we were before; but I know positively that [...] we cannot be called, as a nation, well off, while so many of us are



either living in honest or in villainous beggary. For my own part, I will put up with this state of things, passively, not an hour longer'. (Library Edition of Ruskin's Works 27, pp. 1-3).

The following quotation captures Ruskin's key guiding principle:

"THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE. Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration.

That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings; that man is richest who [...] has always the widest helpful influence, both personal, and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others." (*Unto This Last*, 1860-2, Library Edition 17, p. 105)

Rachel summarised the assets of the Guild:

- The Ruskin Collection (books and manuscripts, drawings and paintings, architectural casts, textiles, carvings, and minerals) given by Ruskin in 1875 for the working people of Sheffield, now curated in partnership with Sheffield Museums Trust. The Guild aims to share the collection as widely as possible to inspire artists and craftspeople of today.
- Houses in the Arts & Crafts hamlet of Westmill, Hertfordshire, bequeathed by Mary Greg in 1949.
- St George's Field at Sheepscombe, a precious unspoilt wildflower meadow in Gloucestershire, given by Margaret Knight in 1936.
- Ruskin Land, near Bewdley, Worcestershire, initiated by a gift of seven acres from George Baker, Mayor of Birmingham, Ruskin's successor as Master of the Guild. The two farms adhere to Ruskin's wish that Ruskin Land should be 'beautiful, peaceful, fruitful', and include a studio with facilities for all kinds of educational and training events.

But the Guild's greatest assets are its members ('Companions'): more than 300 of them in 13 countries.

Rachel mentioned some of the steps that have led to a deeper understanding of the Guild's mission and work:

- The Campaign for Drawing in 2000, which has become an independent charity, The Big Draw.
- The Mastership of her predecessor, Clive Wilmer, and his 2019 Ruskin Lecture on What the Guild of St George does.
- The Guild's Ruskin in Sheffield and Ruskin in Wyre programmes, promoting 'creativity in the everyday'.

Rachel's election as the first woman Master itself signals the breaking of new ground, and as a Canadian she has a markedly different perspective from her predecessors. She is clear that the Guild must understand itself as a body that is open to change.

The Guild marked Ruskin's 200th birthday in 2019 with commemorative projects and events: the fine exhibition at Two Temple Place, London, received more than 40,000 visitors, and this and other exhibitions highlighted Ruskin's striking accomplishments as an artist with a phenomenal capacity for 'seeing'.

In 2021, its 150th anniversary year, the Guild decided to look inwards and build a community of dedicated and enthusiastic members, working through consultation to achieve greater diversity and progressive modernisation, in keeping with the Guild's principles, and planning the next big projects. Collaboration with other organisations will be key.

Rachel's talk was followed by an enthusiastic session of discussion and questions, started by Kate Mason, Director of The Big Draw and Chair of the Society of Designer Craftsmen. Several comments noted that 60 years ago the reputations and thinking of both Morris and Ruskin were in the doldrums; today, many people are once more inspired by their writings and actions.

Chila Burman added her thanks for the evening, emphasising that there was still a long way to go for our organisations and for the whole country in achieving full diversity in the arts.

Bro. Peter Burman

Top: *St George and the Dragon* after Carpaccio (1872) John Ruskin, Guild of St George. Image – Sheffield Museums
Left: Analysis of Pattern on Chain Pillar, St Lazare, Avallon, France, 1882, by W.G. Collingwood for Ruskin, Guild of St George. Image – Sheffield Museums

Where do houses live?
BRO. STEPHEN PROCTOR

Stephen Proctor began this very well received lecture with a short simple answer to the question in the title.

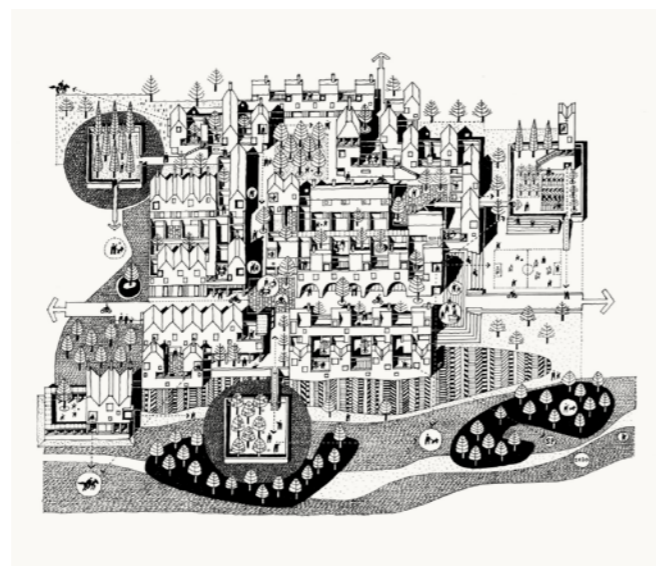
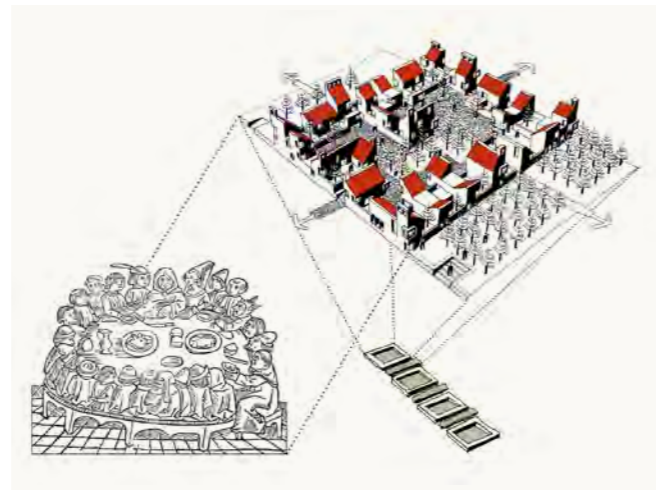
Houses, he said, live on the edge, within defined boundaries. They should provide a clear spatial hierarchy of streets and squares, and an overall design that combines to provide a clear and strong silhouette on the landscape.

That houses live on a landscape defined by and defining that space was best epitomised, he explained, by the hill towns of Tuscany. He showed us a view of Buonconvento, ‘the happy place’, a typical Tuscan town very near to the former summer retreat of the late Brother Fiona MacCarthy, which he and his family now share as a retreat with the family of Andrew Matthews, his long-time friend and architectural collaborator.

The practice of Proctor and Matthews, now some 40 years in existence, is a relationship inspired by a mutual love of ancient landscapes and by the texture of Derbyshire gritstone. Stephen was raised right next to the cliff-edge of his grandfather’s stone quarry. Working together from student days in the architecture department of Sheffield University both were fired up with enthusiasm for Italian neo-rationalism – then all the rage. And key texts such as Aldo Rossi’s *The Architecture of the City* and Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter’s *Collage City* provided the vision for their future practice that is in the main focused on low-rise high-density urban development.

The speaker explained that he was very lucky to be so close to those arguing the precepts of ‘urbanism’ and defining models for ‘urban design’ at the time. Michael Wilford – design partner of Sir James Stirling – for whom Stephen later worked, was a tutor. And through the Head of School, David Gosling, he met and worked with Gordon Cullen, the visionary draughtsman whose ideas were so central to the transformation of the dereliction that was London Docklands.

Invited to a conference in Pittsburgh on ‘remaking cities,’ he was called up to speak by none other than David Lewis, the great voice for US community architecture and engagement. When he was very young (in Cornwall) David Lewis was a poet caught up in the artistic surge around the St Ives colony with Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson. He was partner and subsequent life-time friend of Wilhelmina Barns-Graham.



Top: Abode at Great Kneighton
Middle: Mountfield Park concept sketch
Bottom: Post Covid Neighbourhood Sketch

John Dando Sedding and Ernest Gimson: Legacy and Vision
KATE JORDAN AND BRO. BARLEY ROSCOE

As descendants of the Sedding and Gimson families, Kate Jordan and Barley Roscoe have good reason to discuss these two architects, who were among those who shaped the Arts & Crafts movement through their vision of what art could be. Kate suggested that ‘vision’ is central to a reading of both, while the ‘legacy’ of their title refers to the speakers’ inherited passion for craft and design, to the objects and documents that have come down to them, and to the fact that the discipline of architecture passes on skills from one generation to the next.

Sedding is the less celebrated of the two, perhaps because much of his work is in churches whereas Gimson’s was more domestic and is well represented in museums. More importantly, there is no published monograph on Sedding, despite admiring accounts of him by contemporaries after his untimely death in 1891. Kate began by outlining his life, one full of griefs but marked by his positivity and infectious enthusiasm. Having trained with G.E. Street – after Philip Webb and William Morris but alongside Norman Shaw – Sedding joined his brother working in Devon. There, a new church commission transformed his practice and his personal life when he met Rose Tinling, who became his wife. They worked together on his embroidery designs, which reflect his love of nature and gardening.

Sketchbook in hand, Sedding visited Italy in 1874, filling pages with drawings and notes. W.R. Lethaby wrote of Sedding as one of the first recent architects who really learnt to draw and these are attractive works in themselves, but they also provided ideas for his own buildings. Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, for instance, includes forms observed in Pistoia, Tuscany.

Also in 1874, Sedding moved to London, where he nurtured a significant group of young assistants, including Ernest Barnsley, Charles Nicholson, his nephew Edmund Sedding, Henry Wilson and others. Ernest Gimson was among them from 1886 to 1888, learning not only from instruction and advice but also from observation in the office and on site, where the builders and workmen were Sedding’s friends. He absorbed the standards required and became aware of the financial hazards for an architect unwilling to cut corners.

Poetry runs through all the projects engaged with by the partnership. ‘The city is like a great house, and a house a small city’ (Leon Battista Alberti) was an early creative prompt. And again David Lewis himself encouraged the partnership to consider the writings of Italo Calvino as a source. One of Calvino’s ‘memos for next millennium’ was on ‘Lightness’. David encouraged the duo to use such poetic thought to look beyond the pragmatic and indeed the client brief – to defy gravity – the inertia and weight of the world. All their projects have a readable narrative and are a response to the existing stories of the landscape upon which they are built.

Stephen took us through some early works and successes in small domestic architecture and their growing reputation to the great opportunity to work within Ralph Erskine’s scheme for Greenwich Millennium Village, where they were given the sole responsibility to design 350 homes in that development. – ‘the most perfect Italian hill town on one of the flattest locations in England’.

Moments of hilarity were mentioned: actual fist fights in architectural design meetings; curious questions in competitive interviews – Can you guarantee your work will not be listed? – and Have you ever worked with gorillas? This last, for London Zoo, produced the response: ‘No, but we have worked with Essex volume house builders.’

Aside from such amusing anecdotes, Stephen brought to our attention the serious, perennial and very familiar issues that his work confronts. There is an imperative and unavoidable need for new homes right across the country – some 300,000 per year. What will developers support/what are people happy with/how can good design be promoted and sustained?

His partnership has provided guidance documents to help councils confront ‘cookie-cutter’ or ‘gravystain’ urban creep around the edge of existing built communities. He looks for vernacular and traditional responses for the developments he is involved in. The very vocabulary of old communities – ham, bourne, mead, stead – brings a resonance to historical and existing landforms.

There was great interest from the audience in all the many projects described. And through the questions asked, in the break-out groups and after, it was clear that we recognised how precisely the principles of the Guild were certainly being upheld in this most challenging of areas – high density mass housing development.

Bro . Llewellyn Thomas



Watercolour sketch by J.D. Sedding for an altar cloth at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square

Gimson shared Sedding's ability to draw, and Lethaby's approval of this skill. He also enjoyed designing embroideries, though his were rather different, being mostly white on white and secular, apart from one unexecuted reredos for St Andrew's, Roker, in Sunderland. Numerous sketchbooks survive of Gimson's travels in Britain and Italy, along with amusing family letters describing his progress. Barley

showed how sketches stimulated new work, such as the squirrel motif on an embroidered runner, in plasterwork, stone and metal, all based on a carved capital in Winchester Cathedral. Gimson's life in the Cotswolds and his architectural career were discussed in a previous talk, so this was a chance to see more of his pattern design.

Barley finished with the thought that the legacy of Sedding and Gimson could be found in the people of the Guild and its hall, where their principles live on. Discussion followed on architectural issues, the input of the women who executed the embroideries, and reminiscences of traces of Gimson and the Barnsleys in the Cirencester area circa 1970.

Bro. Annette Carruthers

30 September 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Signs, streets and storefronts in the USA
MARTIN TREU

Martin Treu, an American architect, photographer and author, joined us via Zoom for an immersive talk about the history of signs in the United States. His book *Signs, Streets and Storefronts*, published in 2012, unpicks the story of how signs evolved, in terms of both style and manufacturing, running alongside the growth of towns and cities from the 1700s to the present day.

Between the 1700s and the 1840s, signs are described as painted landmarks; these signs were 'rural' and most often painted by a signwriter, which at the time would often have been house painters, decorators or coach painters. Signs of this period often featured illustrations as well as lettering, catering for an only partially literate audience.

From the 1850s to the 1920s greater literacy, competition between sign companies, and printed catalogues of prefabricated letterforms meant styles evolved quickly and signs proliferated in the urban landscape, covering almost every surface of the building, rather than just the fascia board as before.

In 1892 the first electric sign appeared on Broadway NYC, paving the way for the explosion of the 'Electric Cityscapes' of the 1930s. Then and into the 40s, architects and sign companies worked in unison to treat shop fronts almost as posters, with incredible modern shapes exploding from the windows and drawing in customers.

Animated neons began to take prominence, with flipping pancakes and zipping arrows coming to



Martin Treu – Signs, streets and storefronts in the USA

life with expert metal fabrication and neon bending by hand.

In the 50s and 60s, signs became monuments – almost sculptures – stretching outside the buildings as 'super pylons' with exciting new materials such as plexiglass.

From the 1970s to the 2000s corporate America and civic reductions caused many of these treasures to be lost and a new trend to scrape clean the layers of history became prevalent.

Ending the talk, there was a positive note about the huge resurgence in signwriting and sign manufacture both in the US and worldwide with movements such as The Letterheads enjoying a thriving new membership of those wanting to keep the craft alive.

Bro. Ged Palmer

14 October 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Inside the British Library
BRO. ROLFE KENTISH AND BRO. HUGH CULLUM

The hall was packed for this meeting for the first time in over 18 months, generating an upbeat atmosphere and energy.

The talk had a rather unusual format, with two speakers recollecting the parts they played in building the new British Library in St Pancras, followed by numerous contributions from the floor, largely from others involved in that project; it was an impressive gathering of the surviving participants.

Rolfe Kentish kicked off with an account of the genesis and execution of the new library, accompanied



Colin St John Wilson inside a working daylit model of the Entrance Hall by Bro. Hugh Cullum c.1983
at Northampton Lodge, Canonbury Square, London N1

by many fascinating illustrations. The first of these was the painting of St Jerome by Antonello da Messina, which he said epitomised the atmosphere the architects were striving to create. He described the roles of the key figures: Sir Colin Alexander St John (Sandy) Wilson and Bro. Mary Jane (M.J.) Long, partners in life as well as work, emphasising particularly the critical management role played by M.J. He ran briefly through the 36-year timeline of the project, including the aborted plans for a site in Bloomsbury, the intervention of politicians for good and evil (stressing the important role played by Lord Eccles as Minister of the Arts) and the involvement of Prince Charles. He showed numerous models and drawings, and striking artists' impressions by Eric Winter and Carl Laubin. Among the aspects of his own role, Rolfe mentioned his visits to Sweden studying comparable works there and to Italy to source the travertine stone. He also spoke of the other artists and stonecutters who worked on the project, including the Cardozo Kindersley workshop, Will Carter, Eduardo Paolozzi and Ron Kitaj.

Hugh Cullum entertained us with a brief history of architectural model making, from Michelangelo to the

present, taking in Wren and Gaudí, Louis Kahn and Eero Saarinen. He showed examples of the clay models used by Italian Baroque architects as display pieces, and plaster casts which are well suited for representing concrete buildings, but said that Sandy's preferred medium was beer-mat cardboard for its ease of cutting and rapid adaptability. Hundreds of models were made for the British Library, mostly now destroyed.

From the floor, Iain Exley asked Rolfe to expand on M.J.'s role in pushing the project through with so few changes – the Carl Laubin impressions of the entrance hall are virtually identical to the finished building. Rolfe said that Sandy was equally persistent in ensuring that the designs were carried out to the letter. He also pointed out that they had far more freedom with the entrance hall than elsewhere. Hugh said credit is also due to Rolfe for closely controlling the quality of the actual fabric of the building.

Annette Carruthers, through the aether, commented on the beautiful design of the loos. Rolfe said they had occupied two people full-time for several years and that the design was inspired by Adolf Loos.

Peter Carolin, who was involved in the project from the outset, said the Bloomsbury site would never have been workable, due to inadequate fire protection. He also said that M.J. had been responsible for key aspects of the overall design: the breaking down of the original plan for a single large reading room into four smaller ones, and the alignment of the two wings with the adjacent streets. Appropriately, her bust has been positioned at the exact point where the two grids diverge.

Ed Maggs praised the building, but asked what the effect had been on Sandy of the brickbats hurled at it? Rolfe said they had not put him off his vocation and he had continued working on major projects till the end.

Hon. Sec. Mark Winstanley asked about the building of the conservation department and was told it was a joint project between Long & Kentish and McAlpine.

Peter Denny said the most enjoyable part of the project was working on the final stages, with which Rolfe agreed.

A final comment came from Richard Nightingale, who said the sheer length of the project should be viewed positively: the reason why the library is so well designed and built is that it took so long to happen, so every issue was thoroughly worked through.

Bro. Joe Whitlock Blundell

28 October 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

Affordable homes in the age of climate emergency BILL DUNSTER

The Master Alan Powers introduced Bill, a trailblazer in the zero-carbon movement, noting how apposite this talk was, just days before the COP26 on climate change in Glasgow. The Master charted Bill's career from working for Michael Hopkins, where he introduced green elements into Hopkins Architects' projects, before going off on his own and building the iconic Beddington Zero Energy Development (BedZED) in Sutton, south London, the first of its kind in the UK, completed nearly 20 years ago.

Bill began his talk pointing up to the bust of his hero, William Morris, and declaring his interest in craft as well as a career-long dedication to producing zero-carbon homes. Back in the early 2000s people thought he was mad to be pursuing this aim, which creates homes with zero energy bills. But now it is at last something much more at the forefront of current thinking, although Bill's maverick approach was still pushing the boundaries – as his talk demonstrated.

He showed us his invention of a glazed roof with embedded photovoltaic cells, which could generate twice the electricity that was needed. He declared his hatred of solar farms, where swathes of countryside are smothered in solar panels, and showed us numerous images of how – if we accept a new aesthetic in architecture – such solar panels could be integrated into the design of roofs for stadia, covered streets, market buildings and individual homes, rather than be afterthoughts. Of course, most architects hate this idea, as it constricts their creativity. But Bill argued that if this became mainstream, we would need no more nuclear power stations and we could all have zero fuel bills.

He then talked about tapping into the potential of using farm gas to generate power, thus decarbonising farms by using this bio gas to generate an income, run electric vehicles etc. We will need more power in the future, he said, so we must be more creative in how we generate it.

On the subject of the rural economy, he highlighted the serious issue that in places such as the Cotswolds, where agriculture is a prime economic generator, property prices are so inflated that farm workers cannot afford to live there. His ingenious and somewhat controversial solution was modular plywood flat-pack micro houses,



Bill Dunster's net-zero, ultra low impact flatpack dwelling prototype – achievable with small scale local production and local labour and materials



Detail of Bill's net-zero, ultra low impact flatpack dwelling prototype

which could be bought as a kit and self-built using scaffold poles concreted into post holes as foundations, potentially bypassing planning restrictions, to be off-grid homes for key workers or holiday lets to drive the rural economy. They had composting toilets, used very little concrete so the foundations cost £500 rather than £15,000, and only needed to be plumbed into a water supply, so could be located very flexibly.

He showed us images of his large old barn, where his computer numerical control (CNC) milling machines could zap out slot-together sheets of birch ply to make wall panels that could be stuffed with rock fibre insulation. The whole kit could be delivered in two or three trailer loads. They were cleverly space-saving, such that the mezzanine bedroom spaces were so low in headroom that you could only crawl on hands and knees into bed. This kept the external envelope, and costs, to the absolute minimum. They could be clad outside with chestnut boarding or screen-printed ceramic tiles; the possibilities were endless. Bill expressed his frustration that on showing his proposals to politicians, he was greeted with deafening silence.

As the slides flashed before us at lightning speed, we were treated to Utopian visions of streets, urban centres

and rural settlements all generating the electricity they used and us all driving in electric cars, or on Bill's own design for an electric bike. As the Master commented at the end, we were left feeling both optimistic that there was a solution, but pessimistic that it would come to fruition soon enough. Many questions followed. When asked by Past Master Prue Cooper why the politicians were so negative, the answer was that house building is driven by the volume house builders and their generally 'chocolate box' aesthetic. Bill said we need a new vernacular and in the UK there was resistance to change, more so than on the continent. Bill defended his 'Eco Functionalism' and said we needed to expand our horizons away from the Neo Georgian. Past Master Anne Thorne applauded the low-energy approach, but was concerned about the small scale. Bill made the point that these micro homes were very much starter homes for young single people or couples, not families, and they were preferable to renting a room in a shared house.

The Master warmly thanked the speaker for his mind-broadening talk and hoped it would all come to fruition, which was met with applause from the duly inspired audience.

Bro. Simon Hurst

11 November 2021 · ORDINARY MEETING

David Jones, artist in the shadow of the Great War
PAUL HILLS

With passages from In Parenthesis and The Anathémata spoken by Tom Durham

[Before the evening's talk began, the Master led a short silence to remember Bro. Patrick Reyntiens, and Bro. Caroline Swash delivered a vivid and affectionate valediction – Ed.]

How serendipitous that the planned and perhaps equally suitable subject and speaker for the evening was at the last moment replaced by this wonderful event provided by Paul Hills and Tom Durham. The resonance of this dual performance on this the eleventh day of the eleventh month (and one of the first of the post-Covid meetings) was most profound.

Dr Paul Hills had met David Jones some 50 years ago while still a student. Since then, Paul has led the parallel life of a distinguished scholar of the Renaissance and curator and key proselytiser

for the work of this minor but significant painter and poet.

Dr Hills explained that Jones was not a war artist, neither officially nor actually. He had sketched in the trenches, but no great works were done there. He had served straight out of art school into the trenches, from 1915 to the Armistice. Works in word and image that seem to us to be a direct response to those years only in fact appeared long afterwards. Jones was a south London 'City Boy' who clattered by accident into what was to become his subject matter. His Great War is handed down to us as romantic reminiscences rather than grimly profound representations; as Jones himself wrote – 'a trench lived in in 1915 might easily "get into" a picture of a back garden in 1925'.

It important, moreover, to realise that Jones saw more actual physical service than any other soldier-poet or war artist, official or unofficial. And as an ordinary private – unlike Tolkien, say – his daily engagement was the most basic, arduous and exhausting. His war was fought with a spade not a rifle. But his war was also one of close comradeship, one exposed to the elements and spent in friendship within and under the earth. As an artist, he carved himself into his landscape and for him his 'dug-out' was a place of romance rather than of horror. He owned the land and the sky – they were marked out as his. It was a place of love and beauty.

The speaker took us through a discussion of the details to be found in Jones's visual works, where a symbolic order is created from depictions of timber, water and earth. Nature is ordered, propped, mended, arranged. Natural materials are transmuted to an almost religious purpose. Most revelatory – to the audience familiar with much of Jones's work – was to be persuaded to see a coloured drawing of a Brockley back garden as a re-ordered 'no-man's land'. The garden bench a fire-step, the flowerbed a careful burial plot, the palisading fences trench patterns, and the parallel fringing terraces the opposing armed forces. And no people in evidence – these are empty gardens for the armies of the dead.

Tom Durham gave us a powerful rendition, from memory, of a mesmerising passage from *In Parenthesis*, Jones's master work prose poem commenced in 1928. The distance of history brings perhaps to us a more powerful meaning in the text than for Jones's contemporary audiences.

With the sheer precision of word, sound and image in this piece and works such as *Curtained Outlook*, completed contemporaneously with his final work



David Jones, *The Artist*, 1927, wood-engraving, frontispiece to *Christianity and Art* by Eric Gill

on *In Parenthesis*, it is perhaps not surprising that Jones then suffered a complete nervous breakdown. 'I was conscious that I was straining every nerve to do something more than I had the power to do,' he wrote later.

But in recovery his voice was recognised, and during the 1930s he was to show work with the leading British artists of the day. This all the more remarkable as most of his output is inscriptions or prints and drawings on paper.

Tom brought the evening to an end with another powerful passage from Jones's second great text, *The Anathémata*.

Comments and questions from the floor were many and various. There was a special and moving appreciation from Bro. Joanna Migdal, listening as part of the new virtual audience that the recent technological upgrade in the hall has made accessible.

Bro. Llewellyn Thomas

*Charles J. Connick's adventures
in light and colour*
BRO. PETER CORMACK

This was a wonderfully celebratory occasion: the last lecture for the year 2021, with Alan Powers as Master. A goodly number of members and friends had assembled, with a wider audience enabled by newly installed Zoom.

The speaker, Brother Peter Cormack, was introduced by the Master as a contemporary of his at Cambridge University. He'd been 'a very cool person' who had created drawings for a weekly cartoon strip in the student newspaper, *Broadsheet*, about a delinquent teddy bear called Bane Kincaid. The Master added that Peter had followed university with a long and energetic stint as curator at the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow and a definitive survey of Arts and Crafts stained glass, published by Yale University Press in 2015. This was the occasion for the Guild's traditional 'American Night' and the subject title 'Adventures in light and colour' referred to an American stained glass artist – Charles J. Connick (1875-1945).

Connick's remarkable life began in Springboro, Pennsylvania, where he passed a very happy rural childhood. The family then moved to Pittsburgh, which in the 1880s was a lively industrial city and there his father found a job as a journalist, and young Charles subsequently found work drawing 'streetcar' advertisements for the local paper. Later, he was offered an apprenticeship in a local stained glass business. This he accepted, thoroughly learning the craft on a daily basis. This was the splendid period of John La Farge and Louis Comfort Tiffany, assisted by the designers Frederick Wilson and Charles Collins, in which the 'Pictorialist' effect was so cleverly achieved, entirely with opaque glass. The speaker felt this was overrated, ineffective when placed in churches, and responsible for the neglected reputation of Connick and other contemporaries who used transparent glass.

However, the dynamic and prolific church architect Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942), a master of the Collegiate Gothic Revival style, shared this dislike of Tiffany's products. As professor of architecture at MIT he was enormously influential, and he had read Westlake's and Winston's books on stained glass and had corresponded with Christopher Whall. What he

wanted for his buildings was stained glass 'perfectly medieval and perfectly modern'.

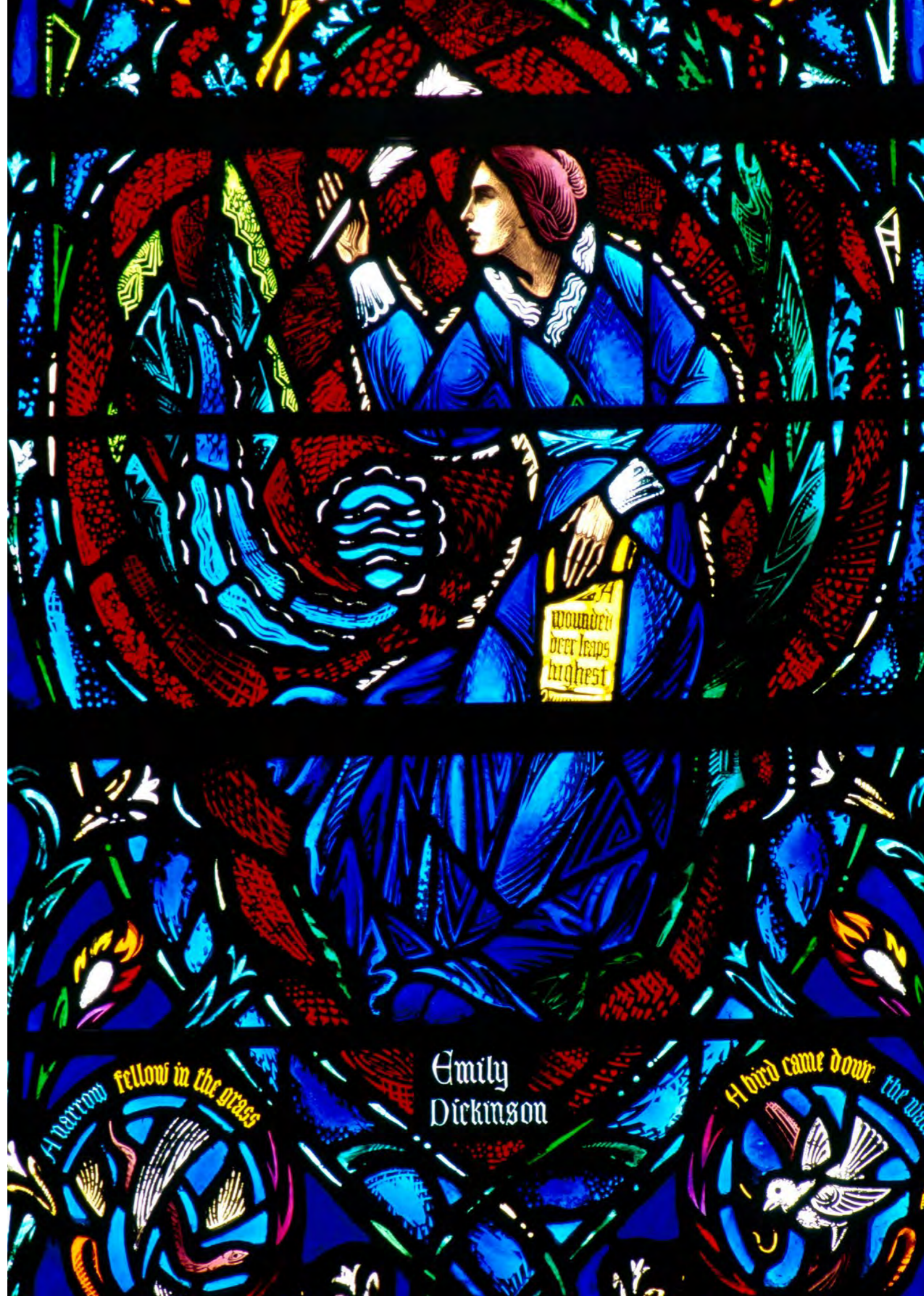
Peter described the occasion when young Connick was asked to unpack some stained glass by Whall and fit the panels into the clerestory openings of one of Cram's new churches. Taking the panels from the boxes, Connick was shocked at the messiness of the painting, but once they were visible high up in the correct position, he realised why Whall had painted the glass in that way. 'I became his convert overnight,' he had said. Cram listened and sent him to London in 1910 to see Whall and his studio. Connick enjoyed his time there and was impressed by the absence of commercial considerations, noting that 'everyone had a lot of fun, a really creative life'. When he left, Whall sent Connick to Whitefriars to look at their new glass products, then advised him to go to France to see the stained glass at Chartres, Soissons and Bourges. There, Connick became aware of the visual as well as the structural uses of 'lead' as a strong line within the design composition of each stained glass window, and during this experimental period he became especially fond of 'slab glass' for the interesting variety of its tonality, importing a considerable amount of it from Whitefriars to give himself the colour palette that he wanted for his windows.

His output was prodigious. One of his best-known windows remains the Holy Grail window, commemorating the First World War. This 'Princeton Window' was much praised, helping revive the use of stained glass in the USA. He began to be called the Burne-Jones of America and continued to visit France to refresh the source of his own inspiration. Later he supplied the windows for the American Church in Paris. Peter showed us details of some of the many windows Connick had designed and worked on, and revealed that he had left the studio to his employees, who continued work there under the name Connick Associates until 1986.

The Master thanked the speaker for a fascinating talk with excellent images about an artist who should be better known, and a discussion followed, including questions from the hall and online. Afterwards, some members and guests moved to the Master's Room, where the most amazing range of food was much enjoyed by all and with grateful thanks to the brilliant purveyor of the feast, Bro. Jane Dorner.

Bro. Caroline Swash

Emily Dickinson (detail) from window by Connick in the Heinz Memorial Chapel, Pittsburgh, Pa. Image by Peter Cormack



• REFLECTIONS •



Turtle Jacket embroidered by ELTA designed and made by Sonia Tuttiett. Image by Frederic Landes

Kalila wa Dimna, costumes and textiles Courtyard exhibition
East London Textile Arts
BRO. CELIA WARD

East London Textile Arts (ELTA), led by three brothers of the Guild – myself, Sonia Tuttiett and Rachael Matthews – has been busy throughout the pandemic. Its exhibition in the courtyard follows an earlier ELTA/AWG exhibition, based around the Victorian Orientalist painter John Frederick Lewis, which was the culmination of a two-year collaborative project between ELTA, the Watts Gallery and the Art Workers’ Guild.

The current exhibition draws on Kalila wa Dimna, a collection of fables first written down in India during the 4th century CE. Over the course of many centuries the fables spread to most of the world. It became a classic Arabic text during the 8th century, and from this translation spread far and wide, arriving in Spain in the 13th century and becoming one of the first books to be printed in Italy in the 15th. Throughout their long history, the fables have provided inspiration to artists. Alongside the early texts are enchanting illustrations full of storytelling, which form some of the most treasured of illuminated manuscripts. The earliest surviving copies are from the 13th century, and it is from the simple, stylised illustrations of 14th-century Syria that ELTA took its inspiration.

The project is the brainchild of Dr Rachel Scott of Royal Holloway College, University of London, and curators Rania Mneimneh and Ghazaleh Zogheib. It is part of a flagship project, ‘Language Acts and Worldmaking’ funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Nine artists from around the world were invited to re-interpret one fable, *The Story of the Four Friends*, with its themes of friendship and migration. ELTA was asked to explore the fable with community groups in Newham, where levels of migration are, and always have been, high. The resulting work will be shown at the Arab cultural centre the P21 Gallery in London during May 2022.

ELTA began work in autumn 2019, teaching weekly classes to women in different parts of Newham, some very experienced, others new to textiles. The participants were diverse, bringing a wealth of different cultures and interests, as well as energy, to the project. A group of adults with learning disabilities joined after the first year.

However, six months later the pandemic arrived. Undaunted, the project continued throughout lockdowns, with Bro. Sonia Tuttiett kept busy delivering work by bicycle and communicating through WhatsApp, telephone, Zoom and email. Work continued apace. The pandemic gave another interpretation to the fable: the project showed how, during a bleak time of isolation, people could stay connected to community and keep their spirits up, through sharing of friendship and purpose.



The Guild exhibition is the result – textiles made and assembled with great care over many hundreds of hours. *The Turtle Jacket* is made of turtles embroidered by many different people, appliquéd onto cloth and made into a jacket. *The Hunter* is embellished with eyes, mostly made by adults with learning disabilities, representing contemporary online ‘hunters’ secretly surveying their prey. *The Deer* is clothed in a rag-rug made with old pieces of cloth picked up from the streets during lockdown. *The Crow’s* costume has feathers, each embroidered by a different person, while the *Mouse-Maid* is covered in little stuffed mice made by various hands.

A fully illustrated children’s book of the fable will be designed, using details of textiles made on the project, and will be for sale at the P21 exhibition. The project also includes textiles by children from local schools and a short film, *Migration Tales*, where people connected to East London Textile Arts talk of their experiences of migration.

ELTA presents textiles made by non-professional people from many different backgrounds, all done as part of daily living. ELTA is not about training people for the rag trade or to become professional crafts people. It does not run one-off projects but is a long-term developmental project, working with people and communities, developing textile skills over many years. It teaches traditional techniques, but welcomes innovation and makes exhibitions around themes relevant to our lives. Many embroiderers are older or in poor health, and some have learning disabilities. Though classes are weekly, much work is done at home. It is for people who enjoy collaborative making, learning from each other as well as from tutors, creating works celebrated in local communities and becoming involved in the life of their city. It is part of an arts and crafts movement seeking a world where skills and creativity reach into the lives of all, giving delight, not only to the makers but also to their communities and those strangers who see their work. We thank the Art Workers’ Guild for finding space in their building for this work.



Top left: ELTA participants modelling the Kalila wa Dimna costumes made by ELTA. Image by Frederic Landes

Top right: The Hunter cloak embroidered by ELTA designed and made by Sonia Tuttiett. Image by Frederic Landes

Above: Modelling the Kalila wa Dimna costumes made by ELTA. Image by Frederic Landes

The Art of Making
London Craft Week
PM JANE COX

This event serves to demonstrate to the wider world the collaborative nature of the Guild and the active interest and support makers share in each other's work and development. In addition, it affords makers an opportunity to showcase and demonstrate their work and skills.

AWG participated in LCW in 2019, opening its doors to the public on just one day, Sunday 12 May, with demonstrators showing and exhibiting their work in the hall.

The Trustees discussed the possibility of a larger scale event spread over more days and using all the building, showcasing the AWG to the public, with a selling event to include demonstrations as well as talks. The idea was initially raised a few years ago by Tony Wills, the former Chair of Trustees, and the current Chair, Phil Abel; they looked into the potential costs of renting other venues, but these proved too expensive. Therefore, it was decided that by using our own building, spreading the event over two floors of the building, and expanding the event over several days of the week, the Guild would be able to showcase a larger and more varied number of works by Art Workers.

The event was held over four days in October; demonstrations and exhibitors were spread over the hall and Master's Room with four talks per day taking place upstairs in the Gradidge Room. The event was initially scheduled for May (the usual time when LCW takes place) but the Covid pandemic meant it had to be postponed to October. Happily, the large majority of guild members who had signed up to participate in May stayed on board for October and wholeheartedly supported the event. We had exhibitors from the following disciplines: jewellery, ceramics, mixed media, wood carving, leather, glass, textiles, letterpress printing, weaving, printing and natural dyeing.

Catherine and Leigh, with the assistance of the designer Blue, created a superb programme, dividing it into various sections so people could identify easily which maker was showing when, and with a pull-out section in the middle covering the talks. The exhibition and demonstrations were all free to the public, but the talks had to be booked and paid for in advance via the LCW website.

The delay caused by the lockdown gave us as organisers pause to reflect about any changes we wanted to make, and as a result we made slight alterations to the format of the lectures. They were less formal, often



Bobbie Kociejowski and Charlotte Grierson speaking about their work in woven textiles at London Craft Week

having one maker from a linked discipline interviewing others; for example, Rachael Matthews (knitting) in conversation with Bobbie Kociejowski and Charlotte Grierson (weaving). This worked really well and we had lots of positive feedback: visitors said they had felt welcomed, felt the talks were inviting, and said how much they had enjoyed the shared group discussions that followed.

The event was well attended and very successful, with positive responses from visitors, exhibitors, students and participants alike. The feedback forms also gave good ideas for how the event could be developed and improved upon in the future. A signing-in book recorded visitors, who included students, psychologists, architects, academics, engineers, teachers, makers, medics as well as local residents and professionals from Queen Square – some of whom have worked locally for up to 40 years and had never been inside the building!

We are now planning LCW 2022, which will take place in May, scheduled to run over three days instead of four, but possibly including an evening preview on the Friday (to be decided).

Thank you to everyone who helped make this such a positive event and such a success.

The Art of Making

Insights into the art and craft of beautiful objects



Exhibition,
demonstrations and talks
Thursday 7 October –
Sunday 10 October 2021
11 am – 6 pm

The Art Workers' Guild
6 Queen Square
London WC1N 3AT



**LONDON
CRAFT
WEEK**

• CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN BROTHERS •



Left: Corina Fletcher. Right: PM Brian Webb © Lara Platman

Corina Fletcher and PM Brian Webb

Brian: You've sent the most beautiful Christmas cards over the years, all of which live in little boxes, very carefully stored. When were you aware that you could think in 3D?

Corina: I was completely unaware that it was anything odd, or different. I know how I ended up in graphic design; I really liked the whole idea of communication and information. I sort of stumbled into Central St Martins, not realising that this was a really good place to be. And at the end of my second year a fellow student said, 'You know you only think in 3D?' And I thought, 'Oh, yes, you're probably right. Everything I'm doing is packaging, or books, or holes in things, or backs of things.'

Brian: That's the thing, isn't it? How you make a 3D project from a flat brief.

Corina: Yes, I think I probably had already subverted every brief without realising it. So, how did you get into it then, Brian? And was it called graphic design back then?

Brian: I had no brothers and sisters, so I spent a lot of time drawing and amusing myself, and I'd always made things, three dimensional things. My dad was an engineering designer, so we made 3D things always.

Corina: Oh, funny. My dad's a mechanical and production engineer. What did you draw?

Brian: Whatever came to mind. Early on I drew a lot of trains. Actually, by the time I'd got to school, I was doing graphic design things, but I didn't know that was what it was called. And certainly, it didn't cross my mind that you could actually do this for a living.

Corina: So, you applied to art school to do general art?

Brian: Yes, but honestly within about 20 minutes of being there, I realised that I wanted to be able to control all the stuff around the drawing. I still didn't realise that was graphic design. I was in Liverpool and we used to go to The Cavern on Wednesday lunchtime for a shilling to hear The Beatles. But I couldn't play the guitar, and no-one in Liverpool employed graphic



Corina Fletcher, RSA Calendar of pop-ups – fireworks, designed by Trickett & Webb

designers, so I came as far south as I could and did a graphic design course. And that was just heaven, everything fell into place. And the absolute best person that ever taught me was a lovely man who got me to realise that graphic design wasn't just surface decoration. It was actually a thinking process: analyse a problem, collect information, synthesise it and present it as an idea. And that was another life-changing moment, I think.

Corina: I think, for me, letterpress was the way into typography, because it was so physical.

Brian: But – are you an engineer, a sculptor or an artist? Really you're a crossover.

Corina: I am, I think I am, yes.

[...]

Brian: In an ideal world, all the component people come together at the beginning of a project. But that happens so rarely that generally, you end up with a publisher saying, 'I've got this text, it needs illustrating and designing. Here it is, go away and bring it back in three weeks please.'

Corina: Yes, but the best jobs are always when you're all sitting around the table, with ideally the author, the illustrator, the paper engineer and the designer. The jobs where they say 'Can you do this, please,' that's no fun. I have to synthesise the idea, and do things that they could never even dream of.

Brian: Well, do you remember the Royal Society of Arts calendar we did? They decided they'd go into popular entertainment. We did a whole product range, but in amongst it all (and it possibly was because of you) they said, 'We'd like to do a pop-up calendar.' It had fireworks.

Corina: It did, yes.

Brian: The invention! And it was such a nice idea. The problem was that we were talking about a three-dimensional object that had turnover images, on a wall, vertically. And we had to devise a way to actually hold these things in position for a month. That was very enjoyable.

Corina: It's really nice to do a pop-up that's face on, not a tabletop.

Brian: Wasn't it just? We did six pop-ups, I think, all illustrating schemes that the Royal Society of Arts had been involved with. The very first photographic exhibition was held at the RSA. And they were involved in the hybridisation of vegetables, so we did a pop-up carrot. And then fireworks, and oh! an oak leaf for tree planting in the 18th century.

Corina: Did you do the research for it, Brian? Because I don't think I did.

Brian: Yes, yes. Look at that carrot. God, it's good, isn't it? And fireworks – the RSA brought fireworks from China in the 18th century was the theory. I mean, thinking back to the carrot, which is probably not the most complicated pop-up in the world ...

Corina: Very bold.

Brian: Has there ever been a request for something that you've found impossible to make?

Corina: Well, I always swerve one thing. People sometimes say, 'Can you make a globe, or a sphere?' It's incredibly difficult to make them convincingly. Other people have taken on the challenge and made it really technically, carefully. I just think there's other more creative ways to explore the idea. But the great thing about the RSA calendar was that I finally got to do a white pop-up. All my work starts in white and I always think it has a form and an illustrative quality of its own. I work with fantastic illustrators, but sometimes I just think, 'Oh, wouldn't it be lovely if it stayed in white?'

Brian: Yes, all of a sudden the intrusion of colour can be very upsetting, yes.

Corina: Well, the best jobs are the ones that start with the illustrator next to you and then you work on the

collaboration together. And also, some of the most lovely jobs I've worked on have been adaptations of good bestsellers. They want to make a new version and I get to do the pop-up one. And that way I bring my graphic designer's mind into it as well, because you're trying to get inside the minds of the author and illustrator who made it in the first place.

Brian: We did a box set of Harry Potter books with Brother Andrew Davidson, who is absolutely brilliant. The books had never been designed or illustrated as a set, they'd always been done with different illustrators.

Corina: Didn't you do Lyra's Oxford as well?

Brian: We did do Lyra's Oxford. That was a joy, too. And they said, 'Oh, can we design a map of Lyra's Oxford?'

Corina: Yes, it's beautiful, I remember having a copy.

Brian: I wanted Brother John Lawrence to illustrate it, and he did the map, which was an incredibly difficult thing to do, because it's part real and part imaginary.

Corina: One of the questions I was going to ask you was about the whole Art Workers' Guild mantra of 'working with your hands'.

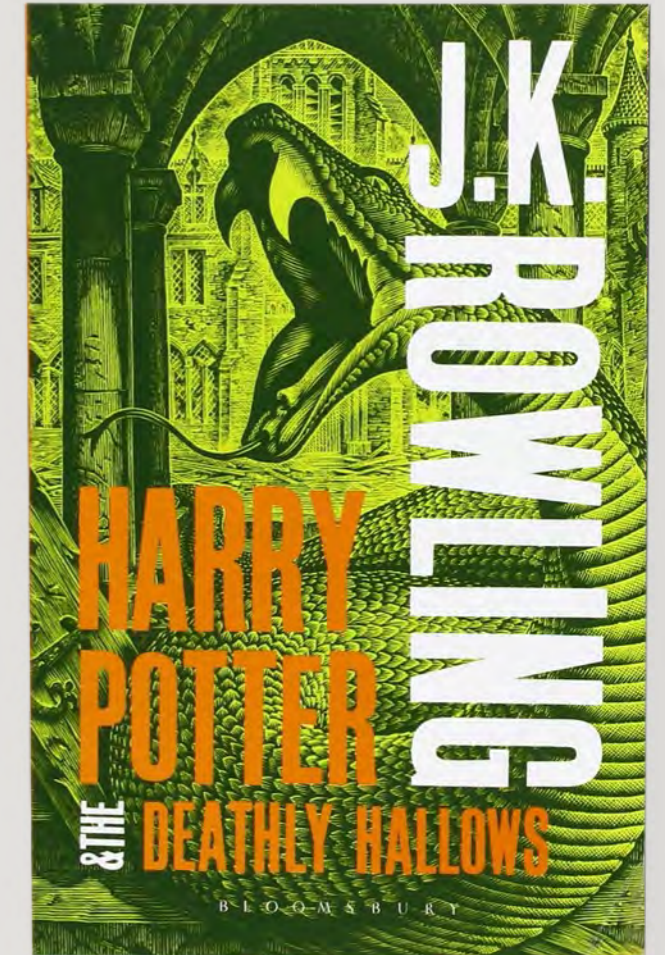
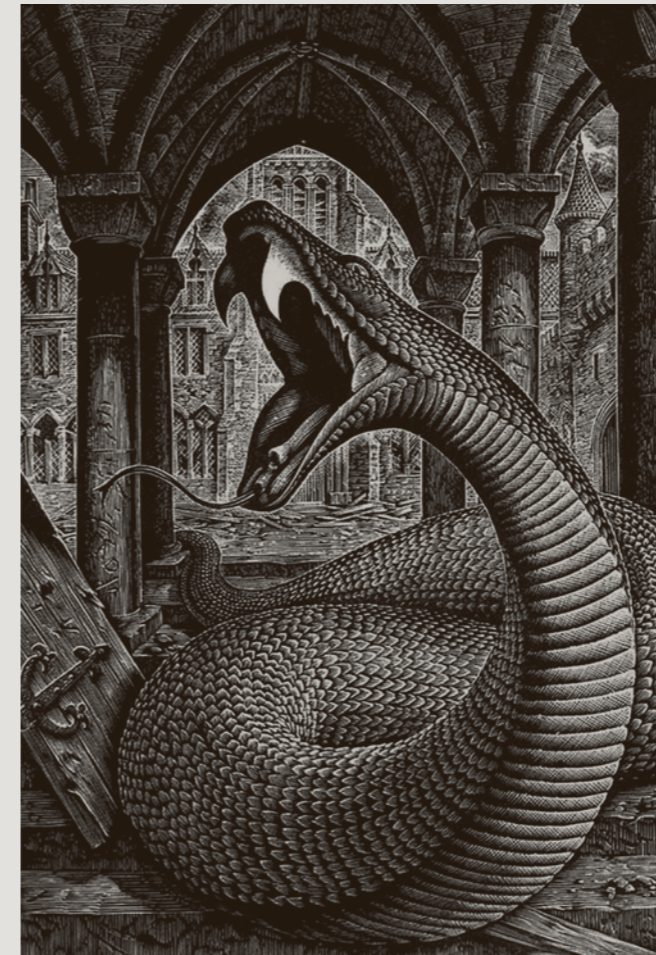
Brian: Yes, and brain.

Corina: And brain. But you seem to me to be someone who loves working manually.

Brian: I don't really use a computer as a design tool. I use it at the end of the job maybe, and people in the office use computers. But I still work with pencil and paper. I've always found drawing a better way to remember things than photography. Because you actually process it through your eyes, through your hands, into your brain. Whereas for me a photograph is, there's an object, look at it – snap – and it's filed somewhere else. It's not filed in my brain.

Corina: So, you start with pencil and paper?

Brian: I start and finish with pencil and paper, and then people have to translate my drawings. Up on the top shelf, up there all the way along, are books that store my brain in them. I've got 30 years' worth of little sketch books that mean nothing to a lot of people, but mean an awful lot to me. And writing it or drawing it is processing it in the brain; if you don't write it down,





by the time you've done six other things you've totally forgotten what it was you were thinking of. So, I store my brain up on the shelves along the top.

Corina: Yes, I scribble on paper first and, like you, it goes onto the computer at the very end. I don't work on computer, I don't design on computer. I refine on computer and nail it down on computer. But I sketch in paper and Sellotape. That's how I do it.

Brian: And do you do final artwork on a computer?

Corina: Yes. I will do the cutter guides on computer. I start with a squiggle and I just think, 'Well, that looks like it might go somewhere,' and then I'll start immediately with scalpel, cardboard, Sellotape, really scruffily, and then Sharpie to work things out. And then, it's just refining and refining and refining, until it gets to the right point.

Brian: Yes. When's the next job going to be ready and am I going to enjoy it?

Corina: It's a job with no deadline. I hope you'll enjoy it.

Brian: I can't work without a deadline.

Corina: You're absolutely right, it's quite unnerving not having a deadline or a budget. I like to have the constraints. For me, there's no parameters with 2D, then as soon as I step into three dimensions I have parameters.

Brian: That's interesting. Because what I try to nail down with the client, apart from the budget, is 'always give the client more than they expect'. Yes, surprise them.

Corina: That's why my job is so fun, because that's exactly what I'm meant to do.

And wherever I see a client, I've never, ever sent work off in the post. I have to be in the room; you need to gauge the response. I don't like to present work when I don't know it's going to absolutely hit the spot. I suppose I'm really fortunate that I'm in a medium that is just basically meant to bedazzle and impress, and if it doesn't make you go, 'Oh, how'd you do that,' then it hasn't worked.

Brian: Do you collect pop-up books?

Corina: Only if I think there's something interesting in them.

Brian: You don't collect old ones?

Corina: I have a couple for research but, no, I don't pursue it as a collection.

Brian: As you can see, I do have quite a lot of mechanical books and 19th-century pull-tab books; such as a book with a tailor measuring down the back of a jacket.

Corina: They're so fragile, those books.

Brian: But they're nice. Our kids always had the Supermans; I love Clark Kent walking into a phone box and you open the pop-up and he comes out as Superman. That's magic. It's audience participation, isn't it? That if you can actually involve the hands, the eyes and the brain all at the same time, you've got a captive audience.

Corina: That's when pop-up is so useful. It can take the narrative forwards, it can say things a picture can't. I think it's a bit like cartoon strip, isn't it? When you look at the next frame.

Oh, and I'll tell you what I didn't note down: there's your quote, which is your mum saying, 'Did you write it, or did you do the drawing, or did you take pictures?' And you said you always answer, 'No, I made this happen, it's called design.' So, when people say, 'What's a paper engineer?' I say, 'Well, I don't do the words and I don't do the pictures, but I do everything else.'

Corina Fletcher is a paper engineer
www.corinaandco.com

Brian Webb is a graphic designer
www.webbandwebb.co.uk / @webbandwebb

Previous pages top: *Harry Potter & the Deathly Hallows* book cover for Bloomsbury Publishing, illustrated by Andrew Davidson, from the set designed by Webb & Webb
 Previous pages bottom: Paper craft for the Tearaway platform adventure video game – Corina Fletcher
 Opposite top left and right: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust – gloves and carved pear – Corina Fletcher
 Opposite bottom left: Garden Museum, London, *The Garden Café: A Year in the Kitchen* book design, with four seasonal ribbon markers – Webb & Webb
 Opposite bottom right: The Royal Mail Classic Science Fiction stamps, 2021. To coincide with the 75th anniversary of the death of HG Wells and the 70th anniversary of the publication of *The Day of the Triffids* – Webb & Webb



Real butterfly – Bridget Bailey

making a model of hyperbolic space. Crochet is one cell increasing, then another one does, and that explains something in mathematics so heady and abstract, but explained so beautifully by making something. I might puzzle like mad about how mathematics works, but there's a crocheted example of something that mathematicians were finding so complicated. Making as a way of describing things physically, without trying to verbalise or mathematise it. Maybe that's feeling mathematics. Fibonacci presented in a mathematical way glazes me over; if I think about how a fir cone works, I feel it, it's interesting. I just thought that was a really strong, beautiful plug for making.

Maiko: It's like when you learn many different languages, it starts to get easier to learn the next. I approach everything as if it's a craft. I bake, I knit and I carve, I do lacquer work. That all comes with its own protocols and limitations and rules and, as long as I cover the key elements, there's lots of freedom inbetween.

Bridget: Do you feel like you're breaking some rules with the way you do things?

Maiko: I've always really liked improvising things, then what's the leeway for this more important part and how much more you can play inbetween? I always did things that way, since I was very small. In primary school, we were given a set of watercolours with 12 colours in it and I was always mixing the colours. I was like, 'It's not possible you can frame the colours in 12 names. There



Dead butterfly made with flowermaking techniques – Bridget Bailey

are infinite shades of ones inbetween, so I must do this.' So something that counts as a rule, the first thing I think of is, 'How can I rearrange it?'

Bridget: Gosh, that's quite bold.

Maiko: Yes, a state of something, or maybe the nature of something, you know. But I'm really interested in language or languaging, that's part of the things I was researching academically. I am often quite aware when I use certain words, there's a linearity in it and English language in particular – it's inclined to be linear. And that's already very different from what we deal with in our studio, which is multidimensional.

Bridget: Writing about work seems ridiculous in a way, but having a fit about the way the world is isn't always very helpful, so actually I am a bit more interested in words now.

Maiko: The Japanese language is structured in very different ways, so it has more room for senses, for a sense of things rather than fine-tuned precise wordings.

Bridget: So that's what you mean by linear, is it? It's very specific, do you think, English?

Maiko: It's very structured, yes. It's hard to think of a good analogy, but the structure doesn't help you to talk about multiple things at once.

Bridget: Yes, I find Zoom a bit like that. Zoom is very



Studio Detail - Maiko Tsutsumi

linear when you're teaching, because you can't catch anything out of the corner of your eyes.

Maiko: Japanese language gives you that view around it, as well as that zoom point, so you have a side view as well with the language, so it's easier to include the feeling of things.

Bridget: I mean, your whole picture of your room is actually put together so beautifully in that shot, with the sticks on the floor and the little characters of work all around it. Maybe it's instinctive.

Maiko: Yes, it's just like music. I always say to people, they are like notes and I just play with different compositions. And I realise that by doing that, other people seem to see that as well, so they spend a long time looking at a set of things.

Bridget: And that power of comparing things, it's such a brilliant way to notice difference, and then you see more in something. Do you have to do a great big dust and take everything away? My studio gets incredibly dusty, so I have to have a rhythm of putting things away, which is really annoying; but laying things out, I think of it like



Studio Detail - Maiko Tsutsumi

collage. Collage comes from my gut, whereas some very difficult making might come from a different place. But the plonking one thing next to another without intellect getting in the way too much, that can be a really good moment for designing. Like a sort of image buffet. One thing next to another brings out a flavour in something.

Maiko: Yes, two things just suddenly become much more than one plus one.

Bridget: And actually, the way other people do things is just so incredibly magical and refreshing, because it's fresh and new and it's not something that you've sweated over yourself.

Maiko: Yes, it's always nice to see other people's creative work processes and hear about it, isn't it? I feel so grateful that we've had this opportunity.

Bridget Bailey is a textile artist
www.bridgetbailey.co.uk

Maiko Tsutsumi is a curator, sculptor,
woodworker and lacquerer
www.maikotsutsumi.com / @thingness



Left: Nicholas Cooper. Right: Simon Hurst

Nicholas Cooper and Simon Hurst

Simon: Creativity was a big thing in my family, I was encouraged to see and draw very early on; the home had a workshop with all the woodworking tools imaginable. I lived by the River Plym in Plymouth, and across the river was a huge cement factory, Blue Circle cement. I found a strange beauty in it. You've got this very functional building, all silos and gantries and chimneys. I was fascinated about the impact of structures in landscape and their setting.

So, I did graphic design O level. Then, in art homework, we were asked to do our aspirations; so I drew my drawing board, a fancy great tower block and a newspaper headline of this new up and coming architect making it big, and a stack of £50 notes. My art tutor thought the £50 note pile was a bit crass, but I explained that it had Christopher Wren and St Paul's Cathedral on the back. It wasn't about me making loads of money, it was all about how architects through history have been celebrated.

Architecture combines so many things: you have a site, the topography, you have a client, you have a budget. Working on a residential thing, you've got a husband and wife, you're a marriage guidance counsellor, you're a psychologist, you're trying to work out how to get them to do what you want to do, which is still what they want. It's a very complicated sort of cake with about 100 ingredients.

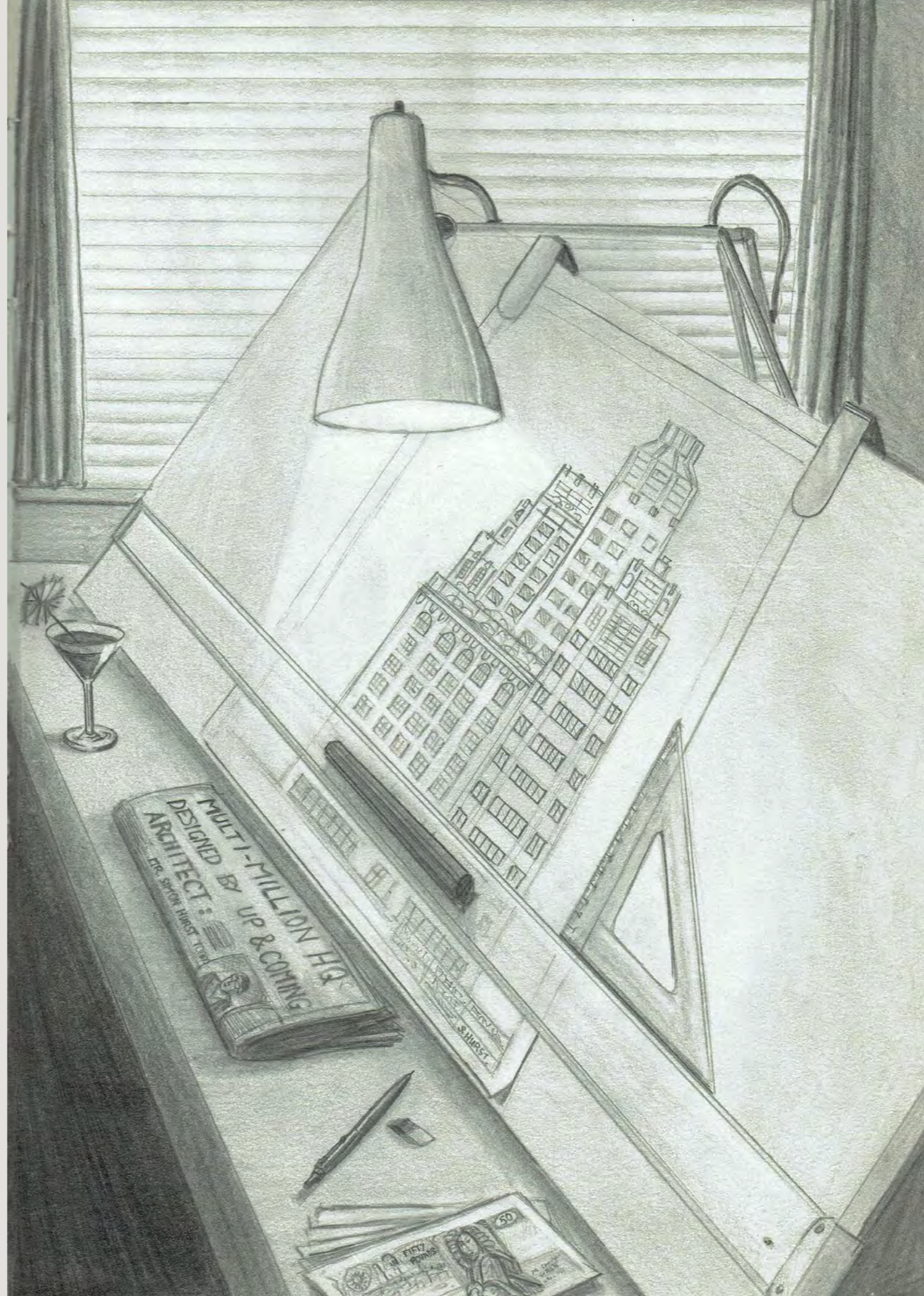
I like to treat every commission as if it's the last, as if they're each a swan song. You put your all into it. I only ever want to do things once, but to make sure they're the best that they can be of their example and then, quite frankly, I don't need to do that ever again because I can move on. I've done oodles of very nice refits of posh houses in Kensington or Chelsea, but there's no real intellectual stimulus any more for that.

Architecture is always about the brain being transferred onto paper into a form that could be translated by some builder to actual, final product. My ambition is to 3D print all the unbuilt projects, model railway scale. So, when I semi-retire my plan is to have a whole model railway with virtually every building I've ever designed. So I can just live in a fantasy world where the only architect is me!

I'm never going to not be an architect. I'll drop dead on my drawing board, I'm sure of it. But, then I can just be as creative as I possibly can be. I've got all sorts of ideas for designing wallpapers and fabrics and 3D objects. I used to do ceramics at uni. I'd love to get back into that.

Nicholas: It seems to me that you were born at just the right time, because constantly down the years there's been a cry for an architecture of the age. I have a lot of

Opposite: My ambitions - Simon Hurst





Heathcote by Lutyens. Not exactly old Surrey



Post-modernism in 1910? A building of its age? Or what??

quarrels with Postmodernism, because a great deal of it is, frankly, crap. And simply the notion that anything goes and if it makes one or two period references, whether it's a pointed arch or a badly designed capital, that's wonderful, that's architecture.

But the upside of Postmodernism is that there is somebody like you who can really exploit the opportunities that Postmodernism can offer. There are not very many people who can exploit those opportunities. I think the commissioning public for the most part don't really know what they want in their architecture. They want reassurance and they want to have a building that will say nothing negative about them, but otherwise, they want a building that will say something about themselves. To that extent, it is form, or at least design, following function. There are a lot of people, (and I hate to say this of contemporary classic architecture to a contemporary Classicist) who want something with classic references simply because Classicism equals class. Because, Classicism equals membership of a certain class with a bit of superfluous cash and is not sure what more there is to it. Except class. But Postmodernism in the hands of the best people, who dare and are able to exploit the opportunities, is a release.

Simon: Absolutely, yes. I used to think, 'I wish I was an architect 100 years ago, I wish I was an understudy of Lutyens or something.' And then I thought, as a humble lower middleclass person, I probably would never even have got into an architect's office, let alone tracing drawings then doing duplicate copies of things. I probably would never have got beyond that. So although I aspire to the architecture where ornament and meaning was commonplace and there was a general consistency of scale. You know, something would fit in. Then everyone can do whatever they like within an established framework. There's a plurality that's allowed now that means that anything goes.

Nicholas: Maybe we now know too much, maybe we now know what a perfectly proportioned, perfectly detailed, ideal classical building should be. Maybe we're in danger of becoming perfectionists. I always think some of the most interesting buildings are buildings that are built at the very dawn of a new style. When you can actually see people working things out. Like Lutyens when he suddenly turned to Classicism. Heathcote, in Ilkley, is a fantastic building which absolutely appalled the client because the client engaged Lutyens because of his terrific reputation for doing Old Surrey. The client, when he came back from nine months abroad,

found himself confronted with Heathcote. Whether he was ever actually reconciled to it, I don't know. But one of the reasons why Heathcote is Lutyens' success is because you feel the sheer power of the architect working things out. Trying to get everything to fit together; it's marvellous.

Simon: So Lutyens' 'Wrenaissance' brings me back to where architecture has been inventive and where the creative mind of the architect is actually manifested in the architecture. It's very easy for anyone to reproduce a perfectly acceptable, well-proportioned façade using all the standard building blocks of Classicism. It's been done before, so what's the point in repeating it? I'm more swayed by the Edwardian Baroque and even 1920s Classical cinemas, where you need to know the rules to break the rules. I think that's what Lutyens would argue, because he somehow brought together something that could not have existed before. And that's just pure genius.

Nicholas: It's more a matter of the language that is appropriate to the function of the building, just like those early 19th-century, quite lavish in some cases, cast iron churches.

Simon: Well, yes, but when you've got a palette of materials, the technology is dictated. Every architect should use them for the best advantage. I did accidentally go to Ronchamp once. Whether you call it architecture depends on what you think architecture is, but to me it was almost like a giant, life-size sculpture that you could go into. And I thought it worked very well; so again, using the material in an appropriate way is fine, if you know what you're doing.

Nicholas: I think that Le Corbusier made a number of dogmatic claims for the principles that he'd employed in Ronchamp which actually don't stand up to close examination. But never mind. As a thing in the landscape it's rather like one of those Cornish dolmens, prehistoric standing stones.

I wonder how many architects who have written screeds and screeds about their buildings, like Sullivan, or Frank Lloyd Wright or Corb., have actually done what you're describing: sitting down afterwards and scratching their heads, and trying to work out some plausible story about that building. This is not to detract from any of the three, all of whom I admire terrifically. But I think sometimes one does have to take what an architect says about his own building with a pinch of salt.



Nicholas Cooper Portrait



BL Royal Insurance

Yet somebody who's actually looked at quite a lot of buildings but doesn't actually know about different proportional systems for setting out the orders – your observant layman – nonetheless recognises when something is right and when something is wrong. And that is some kind of innate appreciation, understanding of proportions. And where that comes from, I just do not know. Many of these traditional proportional systems go back centuries and centuries, if not millennia, like the basic Pythagorean triangle, which allows you to set out right angles and relate squares. And once you've got your basic dimensions, once you've decided what size building you want, you can do absolutely everything else on site just with pegs and a cord.

Simon: Technology now means you can do absolutely anything. You were talking about form following function, I'm all for that in terms of a building telling you what it's supposed to tell you, knowing what its function is, whether it's a school or a church, or a house or an office or a factory. It should just speak the language of what it's trying to be, being honest. And honesty is another interesting thing, because you get a pure minimalism of the early-20th century. You can see exactly what everything is; it's pure, and I like that.

Nicholas: How would you feel if some other architect and another client comes along later and wants to alter it and add to it?

Simon: I just think buildings should be organic. We're too frightened to adapt listed buildings to modern usage. There's a famous case of an American architect designing a car factory in Detroit or somewhere for a

very specific production line for a very specific model of car; then, within about 10-15 years, technology moved on so much, they needed to refit all the production lines, and the building was so perfectly attuned to that one way of making that factory work that they couldn't adapt it, and the company folded and went completely bust. So by describing something as so unchangeable but perfect for a particular use and having no futureproofing, it completely destroyed the client it was there to serve. I'm all for buildings adapting. We're a bit too precious about historic buildings. But I think, hardly ever is a glass box the right answer for a Georgian building,

Nicholas: I think it can work, like the Holburne Museum in Bath, where you've got a good classical box in the front and a glazed box of the same proportions, the same size, at the back. I think they work together very well.

Simon: Yes, I think the spaces inside are amazing.

Nicholas: And then some bloody historian like me comes along and says, you know, a couple of generations on, we think, 'What a wonderful, rare survival. How much it speaks to our grandfathers' times! We can't allow that to be brought down'. I think that's probably a good note of concord on which to end.

Simon: We could talk for hours – this could evolve into an entire book!

Nicholas Cooper is an architectural historian

Simon Hurst is an architect
www.schd.co.uk



School art - Simon Hurst



School art - Simon Hurst

• MEET THE NEW MEMBERS •

Joanna Bird
Associate Brother
Curator



Joanna Bird originally trained as a potter for three years with Michael Cardew and practised in her own right, before setting up a contemporary ceramics gallery in 1994. Over the last 20 years she has built an international reputation in ceramics and sought out fine works, which have been acquired by museums and collectors worldwide. As a leading ceramics expert, Joanna also specialises in commissions on all scales, especially installations.

She represents a broad stable of ceramic and glass artists, showing their work in the company of important historic collectors' pieces at selected London and international galleries and art fairs at her own gallery.

In 2012 Joanna set up the Joanna Bird Foundation, with a mission to support emerging talents in the decorative arts, nurturing education and exploring new concepts within the wider field of the arts.

Opposite top: Co-host of the Earthshot Prize, Clara Amfo, wearing Teatum Jones' first ReLOVE zero waste suit made entirely from organic cotton drill and embroideries designed from production waste collected from all of their London factories.
Image – Earthshot Prize
Opposite bottom: *Bonfield* – Cameron Short

Neal Shasore
Associate Brother
Architectural
historian



Neal Shasore is Head of School and Chief Executive Officer of the London School of Architecture. He is passionate about diversifying architectural education, heritage and practice. An architectural historian by training, his research and writing have primarily focused on architectural culture in Britain and the Empire in the first half of the 20th century, and this critical perspective informs his own pedagogy and practice. He is a Trustee of the Architectural Heritage Fund and the Twentieth Century Society (C20).

Cameron Short
Brother
Lino block printer

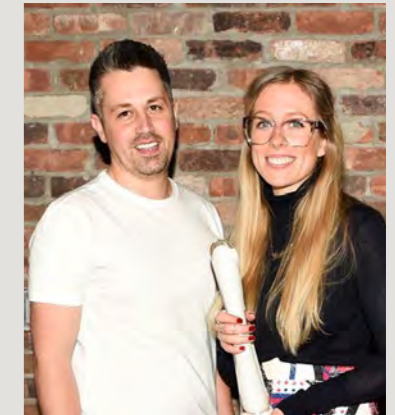


Cameron Short's work is rooted in his love of both the countryside and sea, rural life – its rhythms and traditional skills – and the folklore of trees, plants and animals. It is often created in repeat, and has a strong narrative element. The tools that give his imagery life are carving gouges and scoops, and a wonderful hand-cranked press from 1904.

Together with fellow artist-craftsman Janet Tristram, Cameron runs Bonfield Block-Printers. Their workshop is the old Thorncombe village stores in Dorset, still with its handsome original frontage and timber-lined interior.



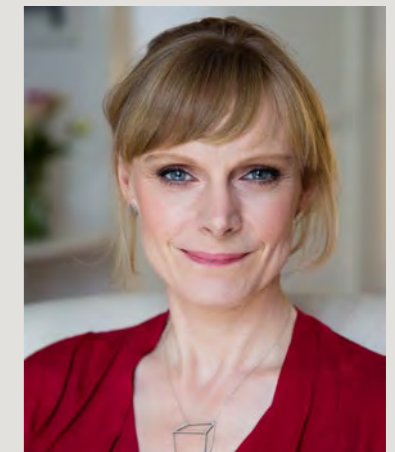
**Rob Jones and
Catherine Teatum**
Brothers
Fashion designers



Catherine Teatum and Rob Jones of Teatum Jones are united by a shared fascination for humans and their stories. They believe in the power of fashion to present a pro-social message of inclusivity and positive identity. They create sustainable and socially conscious fashion that puts the craftspeople and the customer at the heart of their creations. Passionate about zero waste, they use this model to create exquisite textiles layered with emotional narrative. They weave these stories into the fabric and textiles of their collections to create bold, vibrant and modern fashion in their London studio.



Annie Warburton
Associate Brother
Director of
Cockpit Arts



Annie Warburton is CEO of Cockpit Arts, an award-winning social enterprise and London's leading studios for contemporary craft and design. She curates exhibitions and writes, presents and broadcasts on craft, art and design in the UK and internationally. She also chairs the government's industry panel developing the new T level qualification in craft and design. Annie is a fellow of the RSA.

* members elected since the summer newsletter

• REPORTS •

Chairman of Trustees
PM PHIL ABEL

During 2020 the Trustees met monthly to monitor the effect of the Covid pandemic on the Guild's finances. As it became clear that there was no cause for special concern, it was decided to revert this year to our usual schedule of five meetings per year.

I am very pleased that our Treasurer has been able to report that our finances remain healthy. As can be seen from his report, our net value has increased over the past financial year, despite the loss of most of our hiring income. This has been achieved without having to furlough any of our employees. Many congratulations to Alec, Catherine, Leigh and Elspeth for the years of sound financial practice that has made it all possible.

As well as examining and approving expenditure and budgets, the Trustees have discharged the Guild's responsibilities as employers as and when necessary.

Hon. Treasurer
Year ended 30 September 2021
BRO. ALEC MCQUIN

The year, despite all the turmoil and uncertainty, has 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 the agreed budget, which was set taking a very cautious and realistic view. The budget figures are shown in brackets.

It is important to note that the figures and results include very little hiring/catering income, as the Guild was closed for much of the year. Income derived from those activities was only £12,631.00 during the entire year. Despite these difficulties I am pleased to report that we achieved a respectable surplus for the 12-month period.

We did not furlough the administrative staff, as they worked tirelessly, meeting the needs of the membership and completing the myriad list of Zoom meetings, organisation, minutes, blogs, installation of the new AV system, which now allows hybrid meetings to take place (remotely and in person), and the endless administrative and financial details that keep us in check.

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.

I would also acknowledge the support and generosity of the individual donations, bequests and trusts which assist the Guild and support our work, in particular the membership for their support during another difficult year.

Income

Income for the year was £188,763.00 against a budget of £157,108, an increase of £31,655.00 – 20%. This was an excellent result despite the difficulties and challenges caused by the pandemic.

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

- Rental income and investments: £93,939.00 (£93,628.00) +£311.00 (+0.03%)
- Subscriptions: £40,144.00 (£37,825.00) +£2,319.00 (+6%)
- Donations, Gift Aid, bequests & fundraising: £29,797.00 (£13,600.00) +£16,197.00 (+ 119%)
- Hiring of rooms and catering: £12,631.00 (£9,280) +£3,351 (+36%)
- Other income: Guild guests, outings, postcards, outreach and sundry items: £12,340.00 (£10,000) +£2,340 (+23%)

Expenditure

Total expenditure was £156,717.00 (£176,575) – £19,858.00 (-11%)

Surplus

The accounts show a surplus for the 12 months of £32,046.00 against a budgeted loss figure of -£19,467.00. This effectively means that we beat our budget by £51,513.00.

Balance Sheet

The balance sheet stands at £505,453.00 as compared with £473,406.00 last year, an increase of £32,046 (+6.7%).

In addition to the above, the items detailed below should be noted:

- The building is in excellent condition and only regular maintenance items should be required in the future.
- Despite trading almost ceasing during the year, we have completed the year with a reasonable surplus.
- The administrative team have worked exceptionally

hard and supported the membership and myself brilliantly during this difficult time.

- Our monthly P&L management accounts are accurate and timely.

The Art Workers' Guild remains 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 finally our membership for their continued loyalty and support during the year,

Hon. Architect
BRO. SIMON HURST

There is not too much to report. Expenditure has been kept to a minimum, although there have been quite a few essential building repairs: plumbing, electrics etc.

The only decorative thing to have been carried out was the woodgraining of the projector housing in the Meeting Hall, beautifully executed by Bro. Llewellyn Thomas.

Next year we hope to resurrect plans to upgrade the Guild Steward's kitchen with new worktop, hob and oven. Also to look at future proposals to repair/refinish or possibly replace the Meeting Hall floor.

Hon. Curator
BRO. MONICA GROSE-HODGE

It was a very quiet first half of 2021, but London finally opened up in the summer, so we were able to organise two autumn exhibitions of Past Masters we had lost in 2020. PM Edmund Fairfax-Lucy (painter) and PM Josephine Harris (artist and glass engraver).

Master Alan Powers was instrumental in persuading Erica Fairfax-Lucy to hold an exhibition of Ed's paintings at the Guild. Alan also put together from scratch the fabulous catalogue, which is still available for purchase. We had a delightful visit to Charlecote in July to see Erica and discuss the choice of paintings and she came down to hang them with her sons Patrick and Johnny.

I would like to thank the people who helped me put Josephine's work on display. Particularly Brothers Jill Carr and Jacqueline Taber, who not only lent pieces but also helped me source other collectors. Also Master Elect Tracey Sheppard, who wrote a lovely introduction for the brochure and came and talked about her at the ELTA

event; Brother Nick Carter, for taking great photos of the glass for the brochure; and Phil Abel for designing and printing it. The brochure is also still available for sale.

Through these exhibitions and publications, members of the Guild live on in our memories, with fondness and huge admiration for their achievements. This is my last year as Hon. Curator, and I wish the next person to hold this position all the enjoyment and fun I have experienced.

Mentoring Committee Report
BRO. LLEWELLYN THOMAS

Practical and other issues interrupted the planned programme for mentoring during the second half of the year.

Four webinars are now planned for 2022, commencing on 24 January with the theme of creative collaboration and team working. There have been some useful additions to the Mentoring Committee and it is anticipated that the planned programme will go ahead smoothly and become an established and important addition to Guild activity.

Many mentor/mentee relationships have continued usefully and successfully through this difficult time and it is hoped that reports of these interactions will be shared in an appropriate way among our community.

Outreach Report
PM ANNE THORNE

The Outreach group has done a lot this year, in spite of the restrictions. And projects have largely been paid for out of the proceeds of the auction in June, (reported on in the summer newsletter).

In October, we held a third Useful Parallels event, this time for 40 MA students from the London School of Architecture. As in previous Useful Parallels events, in the morning all students had a go at each discipline, and in the afternoon they signed up for a more intensive session at the discipline of their choice, with lunch provided, so no-one would disappear to the pub and not come back! Their feedback was brilliant; they clearly understood the purpose of the day, and appreciated the variety of skills and approaches demonstrated by the seven Guild members whose disciplines they were able to try out – hat making, paper engineering, papier-mâché, wood carving, bookbinding, needlework and stone carving.

Some feedback:

- Experts are still learning – learning with hands/through making.

- Everyone thought of structure of the material and its history.
- How they ‘feel’ about problem solving: experiment, prototype and resolve.
- Sub-millimetre precision and passion.
- I thought the ‘surgical’ approach to embroidery was really interesting, helpful for a different way of thinking in three dimensions
- Working directly with various materials leads to a clearer structural understanding.
- Each craft knew so much about their material and how it behaves, which isn’t so much the case in architecture.
- The range of makers and materials was great. The skill of using your hands in such diverse ways is inspiring. I would love to do this again.
- Modelling as sketching/development/iteration

At the second event – put on jointly by the Guild and Roger Kneebone with Imperial College – a variety of experts, working in paired discussions, expanded on some of the aspects of craftsmanship that Roger explores in his book *Expert*. Guild members Joshua Byrne, tailor, and Will Houstoun, conjuror, each paired up with Roger, as did Fabrice, chief hairdresser at Toni & Guy, and finally Nina Bilbey, stone carver, engaged Sam Gallagher, a surgeon, in the fourth of the thought-provoking conversations.

The panellists ranged over all sorts of unexpected but useful topics – accommodating boredom as you first learn your skills; the role of all the senses in ‘interpreting the feedback’ from one’s materials; the role of performance in the presentation of what we all do – for a client, or at one remove; the teacher/pupil dynamic; and lifelong learning. The discussions were at times extremely funny – the wit and humour detracting nothing from the serious points being made. The audience of about 60 included a number of students and a handful of mentees on the Guild’s mentoring scheme; also educators in a variety of fields, and many other practitioners.

In 2022 we plan two or even three more Useful Parallels events for a range of students, including one for Courtauld students studying on their Material Witness course. We are also thinking of doing one for ourselves at the Art Workers’ Guild.

We will continue the Creative Conversations on Zoom, which bring together makers from different generations, and from within and outside the Guild. No more than a dozen participants – a comfortable fit on a screen – take part in informal, lively and free-ranging discussions around themes that unite makers with different disciplines and perspectives.

Our biggest project yet, planned to start after Easter, is a collaboration with a primary school in Newham. They are very keen to promote the arts in a borough where sport has traditionally had a high emphasis and where there is almost no local museum or exhibition space supporting the arts. Art is timetabled into the school programme, but the teachers’ experience of art and craft practice severely limits what they are able to offer. The school is keen to run a pilot scheme with us and is willing to set aside a considerable amount of time over one term to enable children to work and study with Guild members.

The sociable structure of the Guild engenders the goodwill and sense of common purpose that makes teamwork possible; teamwork makes the outreach projects possible; and outreach projects reward recipients and participants alike.

Anyone who would like to be involved please contact Catherine, or anyone on the Outreach Committee.

Hon. Secretaries
BRO. MARK WINSTANLEY

Charlotte Hubbard is standing down from her post as Hon. Sec. as her work in Oslo makes her commute to Queen Square rather too long.

She has been a very special companion, who has made great efforts to serve the Guild over the last two years and we thank her for the generous and wise contributions.

I am delighted to welcome Isabella Kocum to the office of Hon. Sec. Isabella is the first Swiss national to serve in the post.

Guild Chest

Have you been knocked back by the Omicron virus just as you thought life was getting back to normal? The arts sector has been hit hard, yet again. The Chest may be able to help ...

The Guild Chest is a fund for the benefit of guildsmen and their dependants requiring financial help. It is administered in strict confidence by its Trustees.

At present the Chest can offer help:

- with ill health or bereavement;
- with temporary or permanent cash-flow problems;
- to pay rent/mortgage/other living expenses to any craftsman who genuinely could not otherwise afford to take up an opportunity to further their career;
- to further such other purposes which may be

charitable according to the law of England and Wales as the trustees see fit from time to time.

The Trustees will consider any reasonable request and funds can be made available on terms to be agreed. Loans are always interest free.

If you would like to know more, please contact one of the Trustees. Please feel free to approach one of us at a meeting, or using the details listed below. We will listen and see what can be arranged for a temporary, or more serious, cash-flow situation.

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 Secretaries Report
CATHERINE O’KEEFE

The Guild reopened its doors to hirers in June, and the groups that use our building are slowly returning. There is still some hesitancy, and bookings are down on what we would expect at this time of year, but there are signs of a solid, if slow, recovery. Guild meetings began again in person at the end of September, and everyone seemed very happy and relieved to be back.

The pandemic has spurred the Guild to upgrade its facilities and, at the Master’s suggestion, the Guild now has a sophisticated AV system which allows for hybrid meetings, where people can attend a meeting in person or remotely. Cameras have been installed to allow those attending remotely to see what is going on in the room; they are also able to see the speaker and the presentation live, and ask questions via the chat function.

It took a while to install, but now everything appears to be running smoothly, thanks in great part to Leigh, who has worked closely with the AV company to ensure the system works for us. We now employ a technician to run the system during Guild meetings, allowing Leigh to be on hand for the speaker and members.

The new AV system would not have been possible without a significant upgrade in our internet capacity, initiated by BT, who informed us that our previous system was being discontinued. The wifi system has now also been hard-wired into the Hall, and the Gradidge Room wifi upgraded.



The new camera system in the hall allows remote attendees to follow proceedings and ask questions via the chat function.

Once we reopened it was all systems go for London Craft Week, where, over four days in October, members ran demonstrations, exhibited their work and gave talks. The event was promoted widely on social media, resulting in a flow of keen and well-informed attendees, particularly at the weekend. Members and attendees were very pleased to be back in person, and a good many valuable conversations were had.

We have been working on steadily increasing our presence and reach on social media (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook). This was significantly boosted thanks to Megan Blythin, a freelance digital marketer we took on during London Craft Week, who created posts profiling our participating members in the run-up to the event, and then created videos and posts in real time over the four days.

As a result, both engagement and followers were significantly increased. Over the past year, our followings have increased on Instagram by 23%, with smaller increases on Twitter and Facebook, as you might expect. On Instagram alone, we reached 9,883 non-followers – that’s people who may not already be aware of us as an organisation.

In June, Adam Architecture surrendered their lease on the 2nd floor offices, and Richard Griffiths Architects have taken their place. And finally, a new membership directory, which includes members’ contact details, was produced this year and sent out to members over the summer.

Thanks as always to Alec McQuin, our Hon. Treasurer, our Chairman, Phil Abel, the Master, Alan Powers, and our Hon. Secs, for their support during yet another very strange year.

NEW MEMBERS IN 2021

New Brothers

*Joe Armitage – Architect and Lighting
Product Designer (former affiliate)
Lester Capon – Bookbinder
Robert Cox – Architect (former affiliate)
Eleanor Crow – Design, Illustration and Painting
Richard Griffiths – Architect
Rob Jones – Fashion Designer
Cameron Short – Lino block Printer
Diana Springall – Embroiderer
Jonathan Taylor – Architect
Catherine Teatum – Fashion Designer*

Associate Brothers

*Joanna Bird – Curator
Barley Roscoe – Curator
Neal Shasore – Architectural Historian
Annie Warburton – Director, Cockpit Arts*

Affiliate Brothers

Kit Stiby Harris – Architect

VALETE

*Alan Irvine
Ann Le Bas
Gordon Patterson
David Pocknell
Dick Reid OBE
Patrick Reyntiens OBE*

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2021

*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
PM Anne Thorne
Chair of Mentoring Cttee – Llewellyn Thomas*

ORDINARY MEMBERS

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

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

