



Christmas lunch

On December 9th the Council hosted a Christmas buffet lunch in the board room of the Mall Galleries. It was well supported with about 60 members and invited guests attending and it was a most enjoyable occasion.

Chris Russell presented the Astor College for the Arts Award to Peter Kelly for his long time service and dedication to the RBA. Fellows and new members were also given their diplomas by the President.

Judith Gardner

From the President

I hope that you and your close ones had a happy Christmas and I wish you all good health and a prosperous New Year.

In the last newsletter I spoke of the longstanding problem of disappointing sales, particularly in connection with covering the rent for the galleries. I need to stress yet again that our society is not alone in struggling to find a solution. I have pointed out on a number of occasions to the FBA that it is their responsibility to promote the exhibition fully, since they are the main recipients of better sales and should share the responsibility not only of success. Despite this, I promised that the council and I would make this issue a priority. I would however emphasise that this is a responsibility that should be shared by all members of the society not only in producing good work, as was clearly the case in the last exhibition, but also in forwarding ideas for the council and I to consider. It might be a good idea to review your own personal mailing list to include possible buyers.

You might be interested to know that in addition to the promotion that has been undertaken in the past, at no cost to the society it is hoped that the following new initiatives might help;

- The Bowman Trust in collaboration with Mike Fairclough, Fellow of the RBA and Head Teacher of West Rise Junior School in Eastbourne secured a one hour radio programme featuring the Junior Academy for the Visual Arts which is affiliated to the RBA. I was allocated fifteen minutes to talk about the RBA. This was followed up with a spread, in colour in the Times Educational Supplement in



Peter Kelly receiving the ships decanter from Chris Russell

which the Junior Academy and the RBA were mentioned a number of times.

- In sharing the problem of sales with Chris Russell, Fellow of the RBA and Principal of the Astor College for the Visual Arts in Dover, at no expense to the society, he will arrange for all works in the forthcoming annual exhibition to be photographed, put on disc and forwarded to the leading 300 plus companies, associated with purchasing works of art.
- The Council and I are keen to expand the programme of events available to Patrons. I am particularly keen to produce a list of members' studios which could be on offer for them to visit. If you wish to participate in this scheme, please inform the Honorary Secretary with suitable visiting dates and times so we can produce a pamphlet.
- I have for some time been working on an idea to publish a book on the RBA in which all members will be featured. This has been unanimously supported by the Council. Further details will follow in the near future explaining the format and how you can contribute to the book.

Finally, it is with great sadness that I report the death of our patron HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. On your behalf I send condolences. I have also written to request the possibility of a new Royal Patron and hope to hear back in time for the 2005 exhibition.

Romeo Di Girolamo

Christopher Hall

Translated from an article in the September 2004 issue of 'Raccontare Recanati'. 'The English painter who found love and inspiration in Recanati'



Christopher Hall was born in Slaugham in Sussex and after national service attended the Slade School of Art, a contemporary of Michael Andrews, Paula Rego and Euan Uglow.



Upon graduating at 23, a friend suggested a journey to paint a remote part of Italy, and through a contact of his father, a writer, lodgings were found for them close by the Pensione Emilio in Recanati which, over the years was to become a second home to him. On 7th September 1954 they arrived

in a 1929 Austin, and he began his long association with this beautiful town. His first paintings were of the roadman's house at Palazzo Bello and of the nearby village of Montecassiano. People soon began to notice this tall bespectacled young man who wandered around the town looking for those wonderful views of the Marche that would soon become a trademark of his painting.

One evening, as he parked his car, he met by chance Maria Galassi, a girl of 16 who worked in Loreto making rosaries. The girl's beautiful smile touched him and she did not forget his wondering, detached expression. After three months painting, however, he returned home to teach in private schools.



On his third visit to Recanati he and Maria became engaged, and one year later were married in the nearby Church of San Michele. At the wedding were his family and several good friends, one a fellow student John Corbidge, who hitch-hiked from England in sandals!

Christopher's interest in Goya and the French impressionists were his initial reference, but the Italian landscape soon inspired him.



Enrico Franchi, journalist of the 'Carlino', wrote 'he has become known and appreciated by the locals as the 'English painter' of the beautiful triptych landscape that he gave to the little church in which he was married'.

Quite soon, as the demand for his work grew, Christopher stopped teaching and concentrated full-time on painting.

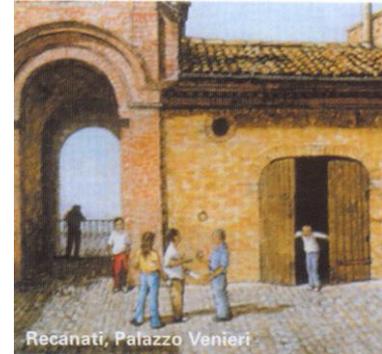


Maria and Christopher have always been very close and she has accompanied him on his painting trips to Spain, Portugal and France as well as to Italy. On these frequent visits Christopher has always spent hours capturing the scenes with a sure eye to the drawing and to the rich colour around him.



Renowned for his sensitive painting of landscape and urban scenes, he has work in the Arts Council Collection, the London Museum, the Ashmolean and other public collections. He exhibits regularly in London and was elected to the RBA in 1987, and in 1994 to the Royal Cambrian Academy. Terence Mullaly of the Daily Telegraph defined him as 'an artist with a fresh vision for the familiar'.

It is, however, in the lovely Italian town of Recanati that he first found the inspiration to paint the subjects



Detail

RBA Patrons Evening

On Wednesday 5th October the RBA held its first Patrons Evening at the Fine Art Society in Bond Street. Over 100 patrons and their friends came to see 'Works on Paper' by Walter Sickert who was President of the RBA from 1928 to 1930. Sickert is known mostly for his oils, but he was also a prolific draughtsman and produced over 100 prints. As a young man he had worked as a studio assistant to Whistler and had acquired an interest in printing which remained with him all his life.



'The Old Middlesex', 1914 Etching

The exhibition at the Fine Art Society was a unique gathering together of all Sickert's known prints, along with many drawings and some oils. The collection of 117 prints had been assembled over many years by Ruth Bromberg who had decided to sell them and move on to other areas of collecting. This is probably the only time that all Sickert's known prints could be seen together, including etchings, dry points, aquatints and lithographs.

that have been greeted with much success in his many exhibitions.

Maria and Christopher have three children, who live in Newbury, Thailand and Oklahoma.

We were honoured that Wendy Baron, the leading expert on Sickert, was able to address the group with an outline of the artist's working methods. We learnt that Sickert had twice been a member of the RBA, resigning along with Whistler in 1887, when Whistler stormed out of a meeting with the famous comment 'The Artists are leaving: the British remain'. However Sickert later repented and rejoined the RBA becoming President in 1928. Apparently when he heard that Phillip de Laszlo was interested in becoming President, he simply wrote a note to the committee saying that he thought de Laszlo would make a much better President and that he was standing aside forthwith.

The evening was a great success and we hope to have another event in the future. The RBA is extremely grateful to Patrick Bourne, Simon Edsor, Andrew Patrick and all the staff at the Fine art Society for their help and hospitality.

Members of the RBA who have friends who would be interested in becoming Patrons should let me know : the Patrons are vital to the future success of the RBA.

Julian Halsby

The address can be found on the back page of this newsletter.

Members News

Peter Kelly

Peter won the award for long time service and dedication to the RBA – see the photograph on the front page - and had a show at the Oakham Galleries which finished on 23rd December. He had 3 paintings in the annual NEAC exhibition at the Mall.

This year he has shown with the Small Paintings Group at Piers Feetham Gallery, in Fulham Road and has paintings with John Adams Fine Art, Ebury Galleries, close to Sloane Square and with the ManorHouse Gallery in Chipping Norton.

Peter is having a one man show at the Chappel Galleries, in Essex, from May 28th to June 19th



'The Hidden Vase' Oil on panel 19" x 12" Peter Kelly

Cinzia Bonada

Cinzia had 2 paintings in the NEAC and has exhibited work with the Small Paintings Group at the Piers Feetham Gallery, which ran from 26th January to 12th February.

Barbara Richardson

Barbara had a painting in the NEAC and work in the Russell Gallery, Putney and the Churzee Gallery, Wimbledon in their Christmas shows. And from April 16th to May 7th at the Red Rag Gallery in Stow-on-the-Wold, in the RBA exhibition.

William Selby

William Selby demonstrated his skill and ingenuity as an artist with his one-man exhibition at the Richmond Hill Gallery, Richmond-on-Thames, 10th to the 31st October last year. William is a very popular and distinguished painter whose work is always a delight to see. In this exhibition he manifested his brilliant use of colour together with his imaginative compositions. His vibrant colours are always beautifully controlled and give the observer a most exciting visual experience.

Ronald Morgan

David Eustace

David has had an exhibition at the New Grafton Gallery in Barnes which he shared with Robert Wells, it began on the 18th January and ran to 5th February.. He had 26 works on show.

Later this year in mid June he is to have a one man show at the Rowley Gallery, Kensington Church Street.

Christopher Hall

Christopher had work in the Christmas Show at the Russell Gallery, in Putney and will have a one man show in April at the Rona Gallery, 1-2 Weighhouse Street, Mayfair. Their website address is: www.ronagallery.com

Brian Douglas

Brian had a painting in this years NEAC exhibition and is included in the International Biographical Centre, in Cambridge.

Ronald Morgan

Ronald has been exhibiting work with the Small Paintings Group at Duncan Miller Fine Art and Piers Feetham during December and January and at Pattersons Fine Art, 19, Albermarle Street in the 'Venice in Peril' exhibition, which runs from 25th January to 18th February.

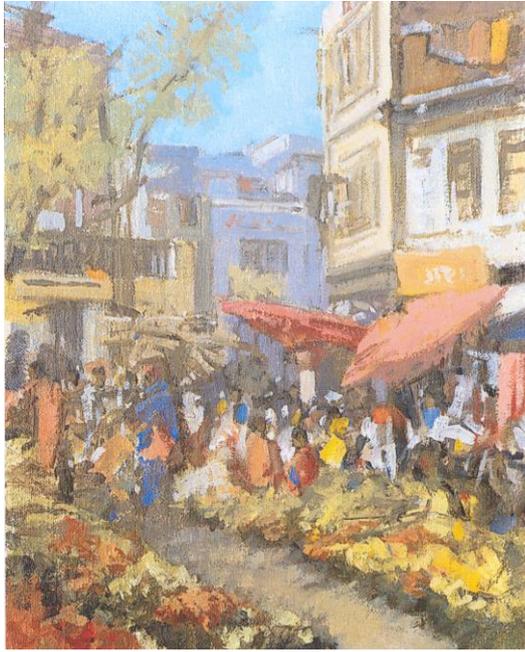
He will also be showing with the ROI at the Shell House Gallery, Ledbury, Herefordshire, from 5th February to 18th March.

Ann Heat

Ann has been exhibiting with the Small Paintings Group in Hampstead and at the Piers Feetham Gallery in Fulham Road. She has also had work with the Churzee Gallery, in Wimbledon

On my head in Udaipur

Udaipur in Rajasthan is a beautiful city on the edge of a lake, as many RBA members may know. Painting there last year I was inevitably attracted to the lake as the main motif. For a change, on my last day, I decided to paint in the vegetable market, having been advised that there would be plenty of room to set up my easel.



'Vegetable market, Udaipur' Oil 10" x 8"
Christopher Miers

The market was more crowded than I'd expected, but I found somewhere to paint without - I thought - getting in anyone's way. There was a clear passage between me and a shop which seemed not to be doing very much trade. I drew the scene carefully on my canvas and made good progress with the painting. Inevitably, a crowd of boys gathered around me, larking about and asking the usual questions such as "where are you coming from?" or even "what is the purpose of your painting?"

The owner of the shop must have felt that his business would do better without my presence, for he began to gesticulate that he wanted me to go. Having already applied plenty of paint I was reluctant to abandon.

Some minutes later a great gush of water descended upon my head, my palette and my half-finished canvas. The contents of a bucket had been thrown over me from a first-floor window. My first

thought was "I hope it's water". Thankfully, it was. My second was "oils and water don't mix". So I carried on as though nothing had happened, finished the painting and walked off. I felt the best way of getting back at the objector was to take not the slightest notice and to leave without so much as a backward glance.

I am happy to report that this painting was the first to be sold at my recent exhibition at Rafael Valls Limited. Nevertheless, next time I go to Udaipur I think I'll stick to the lakeside.

Christopher Miers

Steven Outram

Steven has been showing work with the John Noott Gallery, and with Linda Blackstone in Pinner, Middlesex, also with Island Fine Art, in Benbridge on the Isle of White and at Century Fine Art, in Datchet.

Tom Wanless

In addition to showing at the Mall Galleries, Tom has a busy schedule for the months ahead. In April, the Russell Gallery in Putney will be holding an exhibition of around forty of his recent oil paintings and, once again, he will be taking part in the Leeds Art Fair organised by Services to the Arts in Leeds.

In May and June he will be exhibiting at the Blake Gallery (York) and the Zillah Bell Gallery (Thirsk). Tom has also been invited to take part in the 4th exhibition of Northern professional artists in Ripon Cathedral during the summer. Tom has an excellent web site: www.t.b.wanless.btinternet.com

Denis Baxter

Denis has a print called 'Sound of Silence 2001' in the Originals 05 exhibition, which is organised by the Bankside Royal Society of Etchers and Engravers and held at the Mall from Wednesday 16th to Saturday 26th February. During the terrible BSE crisis, when all the cows in his neighbourhood disappeared he was struck by the awful silence and the print shows an empty cowshed.

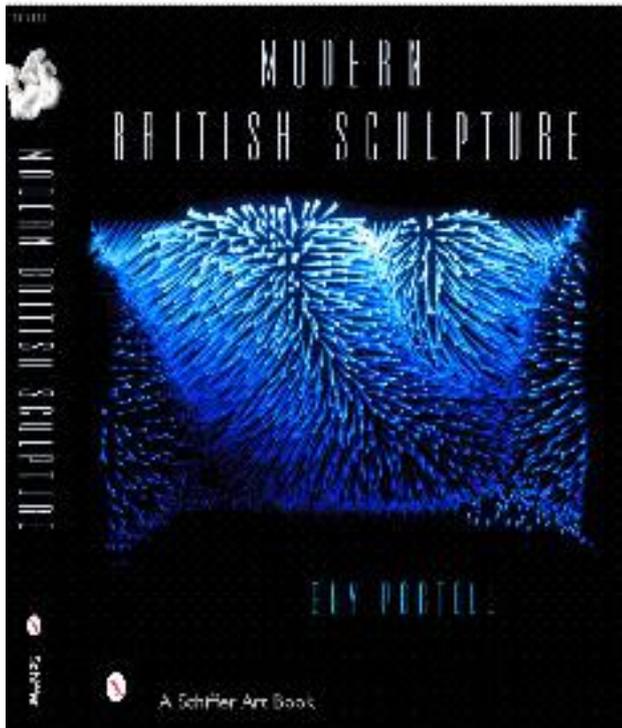
Peter Peterson

Peter had a one man show at Gallery 49, The High Street, Falmouth which ran from the 10th to 23rd January.

Guy Portelli Modern British Sculpture

Guy has written a comprehensive study of modern sculptural developments in Great Britain. The book is chronologically arranged to show the influences that touched each of the artists' lives. The artists themselves have selected most of the pieces to represent their work and are liberally quoted with personal statements to interpret them. 780 photographs both in colour and black and white, display the wide range of materials, themes, styles, and settings used.

There are essays on the St Ives group of the 1940's and figurative sculpture of the 1950's and the past president of the Royal British Society of Sculpture (RBS) sets forth the purpose and results of this prestigious group today.



This beautiful book can be obtained from:

Bushwood Books
6, Marksbury Avenue
Kew Gardens
Surrey
TW9 4JF

Phone: + 44 (0) 208 3928585
Fax: + 44 (0) 208 3929876
E-mail: info@bushwoodbooks.co.uk
Contact: Victoria Hansen
Email: Victoria@bushwoodbooks.co.uk

ISBN: 0-7643-2111-0

Price: £69.95

Debate at the RBA

As the debate last year was a huge success we are grateful to Peter Peterson, David Miller and Ronald Morgan for arranging another which will be held at the Mall during our exhibition.

The motion will be: **'THIS HOUSE BELIEVES THAT THE CONCEPT OF PROGRESS IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO ART'**

So far **Michael Daley** artist illustrator and editor of Art Watch, **David Lee** editor of the Jackdaw, **J.J. Charlesworth** writer on art and Editor of 'The Future', **Professor Peter Abbs** of Sussex University, author and poet, and **Jill Headly** the Director of the Contemporary Arts Society have all agreed to be on the panel. **Tiffany Jenkins** of the Institute of Ideas will be in the chair.

It will take place on Friday 20th May from 7 - 9 pm during our 2005 exhibition.

Reply to Peter Peterson's letter to the Tate

The trustees noted your concerns, and those of your colleagues. However, they have asked that I should make the following points of response:

Trustees were confident that the intervention to *The Kiss* had proceeded and with a full risk assessment. They accepted no responsibility for the 'protest' that the work had provoked and shared your abhorrence of this act of vandalism.

Trustees took the view that Tate had the legal right to use a work from the historic Collection in this way. They noted that there were several precedents, including Cornelia Parker's use of Turner's lining canvases and tacking edges in the 1990's, but also a work by Braco Dimitrijevic, accessioned in 1985, that incorporated a work already owned by Tate, Modigliani's *The Little Peasant*.

Trustees were satisfied that, having signed off the broad direction of the Programme, decision making on specific projects should be undertaken by the executive under the terms set out in the 1992 Museums and Galleries Act (that the Board delegates the general exercise of its functions to the Director and his staff).

I hope you will understand that I now consider this matter to be closed.

Paul Myners, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

An Introduction to 'A Short Account of the life of Philip De Laszlo and his relationship with the RBA.' by Leigh Parry

"Hungarian who conquered the world of Society portraits" is the heading of a notice appearing in the Times of January 3rd 2004. It goes on "An Exhibition celebrating the career of Philip de Laszlo the fashionable pre-war society portrait painter" opens at Christies in London on Tuesday and is further described as "a classic rags to riches tale, the son of a Budapest tailor who became the most successful court painter in Europe." Illustrated on the page there was a striking likeness of the late Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, then the Duchess of York.

The catalogue lists 138 exhibits and Christopher Lloyd writes "Statistically it is probably safe to assert that Philip de Laszlo depicted more royal sitters than any other painter in the history of art. Perhaps only Franz Xavier Winterhalter (1805 – 1873) offers a serious challenge ... but de Laszlo's oeuvre extends to include Popes, Archbishops and Presidents of the USA, in addition to the highest ranks of society."



*'Mrs Edmund Buchanan nee Doreen Bury', 1929
Philip De Laszlo*

Until this dazzling exhibition he had to me been little more than a name associated with a much coveted medal in the RBA, a similar award in the RP and personal association with both Societies. Having seen this show at Christie's which included his fine old style RBA Diploma looking like the Magna Carta and having read the summary of his career in the Times there was now an appetite to know in more detail the steps along the way, the fortuitous contacts and the single mindedness behind this 'rags to riches' tale and, for those of us fortunate enough to be involved with the RBA, his association with us and ours with him.

The story is so fascinating that if there be but one other member of the RBA whose knowledge of him is as scant as was mine, it has been worth trying to set this out in a little more detail than was in the Times succinct summary and to record his unfortunate treatment at the hands of the RBA during the 1914-18 war.



*Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, when
Duchess of York, 1923. Philip De Laszlo*

Reminders for our next exhibition

Once again we would like to display **POST CARDS** of Members work for sale during our exhibition and would be grateful if you could send them to our Hon Secretary Judith Gardner before May – her address is to be found below. Many thanks to all of you who sent in shortened **CV A4 sheets** for our

information folder as it created a considerable amount of interest amongst visitors. However there are several gaps and we would like to ask all those who have not so far sent one to try and do so well before May.

Patrons

If you have any names to add to the list of Patrons please send details to:

Judith Garner
72 Gladstone Road,
Broadstairs, Kent,
CT10 2JD.

Julian Halsby
44 Claremont Road,
Highgate,
London, N6 5BY

Patrons Event – Open Studios

It is hoped that those of the members who would be willing to open their studios to patrons would let Judith Gardner and Julian Halsby know. We hope to have a list of names ready for the next newsletter mailing.

Dates for your diary

The RBA private view will be on 18th May and the exhibition will continue to 29th May, closing at 1 pm for our **AGM**, after which paintings can be collected.

Paintings must be in on Friday 1st or Saturday 2nd April between 10 am and 5 pm.

The debate is to take place on Friday 20th May in the Mall Gallery from 7 – 9 pm.

The candlelight supper will be held on Saturday 28th May.

Many thanks for all the items received for this newsletter. I should be most grateful for any news you may have for the summer issue, which is planned for the **end of September**. **Please note that they should be received before the last day of August 2005.**

Please contact me at:

Barbara Richardson, 71 Engadine Street, London, SW18 5BZ

Telephone: 020 8870 9605 Email: barbara.richardson@btconnect.com

Thank you.