

our art

Issue 1 The magazine of the Nottingham Society of Artists



Nottingham Society of Artists

Summer edition 2016

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Cover image:
Sandy by Phil Harrison

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of **ourart** magazine, the Nottingham Society of Artists magazine for supporters, members and alumni. We hope that **ourart** will become the medium through which everyone can get the latest news from the society, communicate with others in the society and advertise their events. It will also be a focus point for art related articles, reviews and tutorials. For **ourart** to be successful it needs your support. Contributions, articles, stories, photos will be very welcome - send to publications@nottinghamartists.org.uk

What we have been doing

Our AGM in June is the start of our event year – there has been membership showing at Showcase, Big Picture and Autumn exhibitions.

We have hosted three schools exhibitions for 4-14 years, 14-16 years and sixth form with gratifying support from the parents and friends.

There have been notable private exhibitions by Ala Bashir, Mim Brown & Enid Patrick with Friends, Rita Mitchell & Lynda Child, master classes from Sooqi Atrubi (watercolour), Peter Millward (Chinese brush painting) and Jeannie Clark (printmaking). A film company has also shot sequences in our studio for a forthcoming BBC production.

Good progress has been made in building refurbishment. The top floor studio kitchen is now clean, bright and airy, with better cupboards and worktop on one side and a desk and filing cabinet on the other for the Kitchen Command Centre.

Finally, our outreach programme has encompassed giving a prize to the Nottingham Castle Open with the Holbrook Foundation prize being given at our Autumn Exhibition. KNK gallery has joined us as a free monthly exhibition venue for our members .



About the Society

The Society came into existence in 1880. It was not until 1934 when it occupied its present home at 71-73 Friar Lane, Nottingham.

The first President and founder member was Samuel Bourne. He was President for 31 years so did not see the move to the Society's own premises. He was a renowned Victorian photographer, famous for his pioneering photographs of the Himalayas. When he formed the Society he became a competent watercolour painter – a 'gentleman's' pursuit whereas being a photographer was 'trade'.

In that early period Laura Knight (then Laura Johnson) became a full member (April 1900) but she could not take part in life drawing until 1911. Then as today (we still do life drawing) they had to pay the model in addition to their annual subscription.

Annual exhibitions were held at the Castle until 1892. In those early years there were about 30 members. In 1883 they sold 111 works - that is about half the hanging - and made £940. Today there are about 270 members and we exhibit in our own gallery several times a year. We sell about a fifth of the works and the sale of an individual picture is about the same value as then.

Along with our first President at the start there were about six notable Nottingham figures from the art world to form the Society. Those following Presidents and members comprised Harold Knight, Arthur Spooner, Edward Seago, Theo Else (who sculptured the lions for the market square and St Luke at the top of our building), Laura Johnson and Ken Holt.

Today nationally known members are Haidee-Jo Summers, Ala Bashir, Sooqi Atrabi and the sculptor and new member Wolfgang Buttress.

After 30 Presidents and a change to charity status there is no President. The management of the Society is with a Board - currently Alan Gardner (Chair), Colin Treliving, Ann Clay, John Pooler, Greg Langfield, Margaret Spencer.

The Society is run entirely by volunteers who enthusiastically run exhibitions to show works from 13 city schools with ages running from 4-17 years, support university students showing their degree works, run an open exhibition for all members to enter but, with an external selection process, run by invited guest artists and gallery managers.

All exhibiting members can show their work in the gallery. For six days a week there are painting group sessions in the top floor Studio for the members.

Apart from our commitment to educate with our art, the social aspect of our Society is very important. There is always a good reason to join us in conversation.

The Society is almost unique in owning its own prominent city centre located building with an Art Gallery and huge painting studio and, with 100 years of occupation, possibly only the Royal Academy in London can match that!

The strength of the Society is its membership, their subscriptions ensure financial stability, everyone an inspired and enthusiastic artist. The inclusiveness in a range of ability from beginner to professional artist and national treasure provide a social variety, encouragement and unique community friendship.

Alan Gardner

Maureen Copley
chatting to . . .

Phil Harrison - digital wizard

Although there may be some members who don't know Phil by sight, there can be very few who don't know his name. It appears on most of our NSofA e-mails, Phil being the developer and administrator of our splendid website.

You may already know his artwork; large, dramatic nudes, usually painted in oils but recently done in pencil, to beautiful effect. He has also produced some fascinating images on his tablet computer. The printed results have been an intriguing addition to our exhibitions. Last year he shared this expertise in an NSofA workshop and there was interest and enthusiasm from attendees for a follow-up.

He runs the Tuesday evening 'Big Picture' group, which is very popular.

Another great interest for Phil is folk music. He has, on occasion, entertained us in the studio (there were many requests for more of the same!).

What follows is the result of a recent conversation.

So let's begin at the very beginning, Phil, with memories of your early years.

I was born in Cardiff, one of three boys. We lived in a bungalow and on one side of us was an Irish family with five boys. On the other side were three Polish boys. Behind our houses was a field and there was a great deal of football played.

At eleven, I went to Cardiff High School, choosing cross-country running rather than rugby. Academically I was science-orientated and did double maths and physics at A level. I was very interested in computers by this time, so when I went to Manchester University, it was to do a degree in Computer Science.

My first job was with ICL in Manchester. Then, in 1972, a job was advertised at Nottingham University Computing Centre. It sounded interesting, being a new department with a young staff. I decided to apply and, if I got the job, I'd stay for two or three years. I did get the job and stayed until my retirement in 2010, by which time I was leading a team of engineers running the University's computer network.

What about your non-professional life, your marriage and hobbies?

In 1978 I married Liz, having met her at a folk club in Beeston the year before. We went on to have four children, Sam, Anna, Sian and Naomi. They're all grown up now, of course.

As a family with a camper van, we've enjoyed some wonderful holidays. One of our favourite places is the island of Sanday in Orkney. Liz's brother has a farm there and has played host to us for many years. It was an important part of our children's growing up and they have great memories of good times there. We'll all be up there for a great family gathering later this year.

Painting and folk music are my special interests.

I had my first decent guitar when I was sixteen, so I taught myself to play and I joined a folk club. It was when I came to Nottingham that I got properly involved in the folk scene and it was then that I began performing solo, as a "floor singer".

Liz and I enjoy going to folk festivals, maybe five or six a year. Last year we went to one abroad for the first time. It was called Costa del Folk and was in Portugal. We're going again this year.

I don't remember much about how my interest in art developed. I know that I drew a lot when young. It wasn't until I came to Nottingham, though, that I decided to take an A level course in drawing and painting at



Clarendon College. I took the course, but life intervened and I didn't do the exam.

Later on I took Adult Education courses on different art skills. Importantly for me, I joined a life drawing class at Shakespeare Street. Mik Godley, a marvellous artist and very good teacher, ran this. I progressed from drawing to painting. It was difficult at first, but it got easier with practice. Rob van Beek latterly took over from Mik as tutor for the class. Rob was member of the NSofA and organised an exhibition for the class at St Luke's House in 1999.

Around 2000 the Shakespeare Street course was discontinued and so at Rob's suggestion most of our class started out on our own, renting Mark Beaven's Sherwood studio. I took over running the group from Rob in 2001, and we called ourselves The Big Picture Group.

I joined the Society around 2003 and our group moved from Mark's studio to the NSofA, hiring the top floor studio on Tuesday evenings. The Big Picture group still flourishes.

It's always interesting to have an insight into people's background, so thanks to Phil for sharing his fascinating story. We owe him an enormous debt for all he has done and continues to do for the Society. It's to our benefit that his talents (and fate) brought him to St. Luke's House. Long may he remain!

Membership Survey

The results...



One year on so what happened ?

It may seem quite a long time since the Society's first general survey in 2015 so what did happen – what were the main findings ?

Of course the survey does not represent the views of all members. Only 56% responded although every member was circulated by Email and post. Those who did not take up the opportunity to have a say were indicating by their abstaining that they had no strong views for the direction the Society should take in the future. So we could only work with the data collected and the results were summarised in tables.

What has happened with the survey information? First, an open forum was held with Associate and Affiliate member categories and votes were taken for action affecting their groups.

Then a meeting was held specifically for the Fellows and they too were asked to vote on actions which would change their group and Society membership as a whole.

The first resulting action had an effect on the gallery programme. It was reworked so the booking system ran from Monday to Monday – a full week booking turn round instead of a booking system allowing part week bookings and often finishing with a Sunday taking down of pictures. This has we hope made the booking system more controllable, less work and keeping a full day opening on a Sunday – one of the best public viewing days. This also aligns with the Castle closing days of Mondays and Tuesdays which reduces footfall on Friar Lane throughout the year.

The second move has been to change the members exhibitions from exhibitions of the different groups – Affiliates, Associates and Fellows to Members exhibitions on a specific theme – Small Pictures, Light night and studio painting, Show Case, Autumn and Christmas.

The third move is to change the membership classes in line with the majority of the membership's surveyed views. What members wanted was a simplification and clearer understanding of what categories in membership meant. So after several attempts to achieve this aim, we are going to vote to amalgamate Affiliates and Associates as one group called simply 'Members'. There is a sentiment to have a grading to aspire to, so maybe we keep the Fellows but discard any sub-category.

However there is one sub-designation which we must have and that is for a Member to progress to 'Exhibiting Member' to take part in our members' gallery exhibitions.

If a senior membership group of 'Fellow' is to be retained there will have to be changes from it being just an honorary title to one of some increased responsibility over that of an ordinary member - but what that will be is a future debating issue.

So that is where we are – nearly everyone wanted membership grading to be simplified, to be inclusive and not elitist and they want the three strands of our Society to continue – painting in the studio groups, educational support and gallery exhibitions.

If there is dissent, it is as ever, in the detail of how to do the changes!

Article contributors - Suzie Reeves, Phil Harrison and Alan Gardner

Answer Options	Important and I would prefer more opportunities	Important and I think we have enough opportunities	Not important to me	Rating Average	Response Count	total % of members who think important	% who think not important	% who think important and should be more opportunities
1 Learning new skills, techniques, art forms	72	42	18	1.59	132	86%	14%	55%
2 Being able to join groups and practice art	58	72	6	1.62	136	96%	4%	43%
3 Meeting like minded people and making friends	49	76	11	1.72	136	92%	8%	35%
4 Meeting other artists	44	75	8	1.72	138	94%	6%	34%
5 Being able to work with live models	48	64	21	1.80	133	84%	16%	36%
6 Learning more about art generally through talks and visits	51	62	26	1.89	128	80%	20%	40%
7 Being able to exhibit my work	44	70	19	1.81	133	86%	14%	33%
8 Being able to attend demonstrations	58	39	33	1.81	138	75%	25%	45%
9 Having an opportunity to find out more about and be part of the local art scene	45	69	22	1.82	126	83%	17%	36%
10 Being able to sell my work	36	57	39	2.02	132	70%	30%	27%
11 Participating in social or networking events	29	55	41	2.10	125	67%	33%	23%
12 Promotion of myself as an artist via the website	30	24	68	2.31	122	44%	56%	25%
Any comments you would like to make					28			
					answered questions			142
					skipped questions			1

What can we deduce?

- The majority of members responding (39%) would get rid of the current classes
- The Fellows preferred to keep the Fellows class and merge the other two
- There is certainly agreement to change the current classes (68%)
- Interestingly over a third of members surveyed did not know which class of membership they belonged to

Attention all Members!

Saturday Morning Workshops 10am start

It has been evident for a long time that some kind of teaching would be a welcome addition to the activities of the Society.

With this in mind we've made a start, offering four Saturday morning workshops between September and Christmas this year. The idea is that each of these will be a one-off session, led by an NSofA member with a particular interest or skill to pass on.

Non-members will be welcome, so feel free to bring friends (for whom there will be an increased charge). We hope that there is good support for the venture.

So far, the following subjects have been organised:-

Rita Mitchell

Watercolour Techniques - 8 Oct

Whilst this might have particular interest for beginners, there is always the opportunity for experienced painters to learn more. Rita will have many interesting ideas to share.

Colin Treliving

Pastel Familiarisation - 29 Oct

Colin will introduce us to the different papers, pastels and other equipment that he uses in his work. There will be lots of opportunities to have a go.

Lynda Child

Printing - 12 Nov

An illustrated talk on different printing methods, with opportunities to practise some simple techniques. Depending on interest, this could be a taster for a masterclass later in the year.

Phil Harrison

Tablet Painting - 26 Nov

This will be an extension of Phil's earlier talk on computer art. However, it's not necessary to have attended the earlier class to benefit from this one; there will be a revisiting of that ground.

Masterclasses will be of longer duration. Members might lead these, but not necessarily so.

Gordon Dryden has already posted e-mails and flyers about his Life Drawing classes on 17 Sept, 15 Oct, 19 Nov and 17 Dec.

Please watch your inboxes for details of dates and charges. At the time of printing this article the booking procedure is still being organised. Notices will also be posted in the Studio.

If you don't use e-mail, ask friends who do to keep you informed or contact your Group Representative.

Your suggestions for future topics are welcomed.

Email publications@nottinghamartists.org.uk



New Chapel Gallery venture at Ruddington

The Society is delighted to have joined with the Framework Knitters Museum in a new co-operative venture to open up the Chapel Gallery in Ruddington.

Artists from the Society will be presenting their work at three monthly intervals and it is hoped that this will benefit the artists, the museum and the visitors. All works will be for sale and commission from the sales will be used to support both the Framework Knitters Museum and the Nottingham Society of Artists.

The private view for the first exhibition in the Chapel Gallery took place on Thursday 28th April and was well attended by members of the Museum and the Nottingham Society of Artists and their guests. The NSofA artists exhibiting first were Colin Treliving, Maureen Copley and Roger Crooks pictured left.

Just beginning the second three month exhibition period are members Helen Kerry and Steve Brazier and also Julian Pinnick.

(Photos by Ryan Brucass, AS-I-C-iT Photography)



We would like to thank the following for their support and sponsorship throughout last year.

Fraser Brown Solicitors
John E Wright
Eirian Bell

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johnwright

6 - Around the Groups

Members are able to attend any or all of the following groups. What a fantastic opportunity! All of the groups offer the chance to work in a well-equipped studio and meet with others who will offer support, advice and encouragement – and a half-time coffee break.

Apart from a small fee (currently £3 or less per session) for attendance at those classes where a model is provided, attendance at all of these groups is included in NSofA membership.

If you're a member and haven't yet tried some of these classes why not give some a try – or try out a new one? And if you're reading this and not yet a member, perhaps you should think about joining.

Monday Morning Group

Group Secretary - Edwin Wilson

Members attending this group work in oils, acrylics or mixed media on their own compositions, giving each other support and encouragement. Presently, there are between six and ten attendees.

Monday Evening: Portrait

Group Secretary - Nigel Cooley

This group gives members the opportunity to tackle that most difficult of challenges – to achieve a likeness of the sitter. Those attending use a variety of material, ranging from charcoal to oils.

Tuesday Morning: Life

Group Secretary - Bob Sparham

Life drawing and painting, with the same model and pose being used for up to 3 weeks. This enables those who attend to produce a substantial finished work. A helpful critique is held at the end of sessions, where members encourage, offer suggestions and give advice to each other.

Tuesday Afternoon: Still Life

Group Secretaries - Enid Patrick and Mim Brown

Up to twelve members presently attend this group, working in a variety of materials. A different still life subject is set up each week, mostly from the selection of objects available in the studio. Those attending the group suggest and help with setting up the still life arrangements – flower subjects are always popular!

Wednesday Morning: Clothed Model

Group Secretary - Moira Bailey

This is a figure session, currently attended by between eight and twelve members, who work in their own choice of medium, drawing or painting a clothed model. Models and costumes used are varied, giving lots of opportunity to convey the personality and spirit of the sitter.

Wednesday Evening: Life

Group Secretary - Chris Open

This life drawing session presents members with the challenge of lots of short poses – ranging from 60 seconds (yes, that is seconds!) to 20 minutes. In the course of the evening members get lots of drawing practice to help hone their observational skills as well as use lots of paper! Try this for a few weeks and you'll be amazed how much your drawing will improve.



Thursday Morning: Clothed Model or Life

Group Secretaries - Alan Gardner and Roger Crooks

This popular figure painting group tackles costume, portrait and life, with a different model each week. A varied range of poses and props are used and, occasionally, members are presented with the challenge of a moving pose. There's lots of opportunity to discuss work with others, pick up new ideas and receive advice and encouragement.

Friday Morning: Portrait

Group Secretary - Mim Brown

Character sittings are used, with one pose being used for the whole session.

Friday Afternoon: Art In The Afternoon

Group Secretary - Andrew Craig

A fortnightly illustrated talk of about twenty minutes on an artist, an art movement or a theme such as 'Rainy Days' or 'Through a Window' is used as the inspiration for members to produce works of their own. The rest of the session and the week in between talks gives members time to work in the studio prior to displaying their finished pieces in the studio before the next talk. This is a popular group, with the picture showing/ talk sessions attended by around thirty members. Talks are given by both regular attendees of the group and other members of the society, and offers for new subjects for talks are always welcome.

Sunday Morning Group

Group Secretary - Jean Jago

These sessions alternate between Life and Still Life. Life sessions use a variety of models and poses, with the same pose usually being used for the whole session. Still Life arrangements are set up by group members and aim to present a range of different challenges. The

group is usually attended by eight or nine members, who support and encourage each other to improve their work.

Bond Group - Outdoors

Group Secretary - Jean McLennan

The 'plein air' group meet up in the summer months to sketch or paint at various outdoor locations. Locations are mostly accessible by bus and new venues are added each year – the City Farm being a popular new addition.

Details of exact timings of groups and contact numbers for group secretaries can be found in the Painting Groups 2016-17 card.



Send us your stuff!

This page is for stories, pictures and news from your group. Send in to see them published and keep other groups in touch with your activities.

publications@nottinghamartists.org.uk





The model

Once you find a model and set up an appointment for working together, get your space ready. Keep in mind that models are living, breathing - and very often naked - human bodies. Temperature and the nature of surfaces (hard or soft) have a big impact on their comfort and happiness. Here's a checklist of items for your studio setup:

platform or model's stand - make sure the model is safe

lights - overhead or spot - try not to dazzle model or artists

timer to mark pose length

temperature control (heater, air conditioning) - crucial for nude models

chair, stool, cube/box, cushions, selection of drapery to add variety to poses

Models should be booked well in advance and an agreed fee carefully noted to avoid any misunderstanding. They can be booked from the list of models provided or by asking the NSofA Model Co-ordinator, Dan Jackson for advice.

Once you have reached agreement and set a date it's a good idea to contact the model the day before the session to confirm he/she is still able to appear. Nothing is worse than a room full of expectant artists with paint brushes at the ready but no model! (Double booking is nearly as bad and quite embarrassing for the secretary). A model who fails to turn up for an agreed session without warning might be removed from your list for future sessions. Obviously, if your model rings in sick, then Dan may still be able to book a replacement or as a last resort, ask for a volunteer from the group.

Plan how to use your time. In a group situation, the secretary usually dictates the length of the pose - Ideally a model should be given a short 'stretch' break every 20 minutes or so. This may depend on how experienced the model is and the difficulty of the pose. A standing pose or an uncomfortable pose can mean cramped muscles or circulation loss.

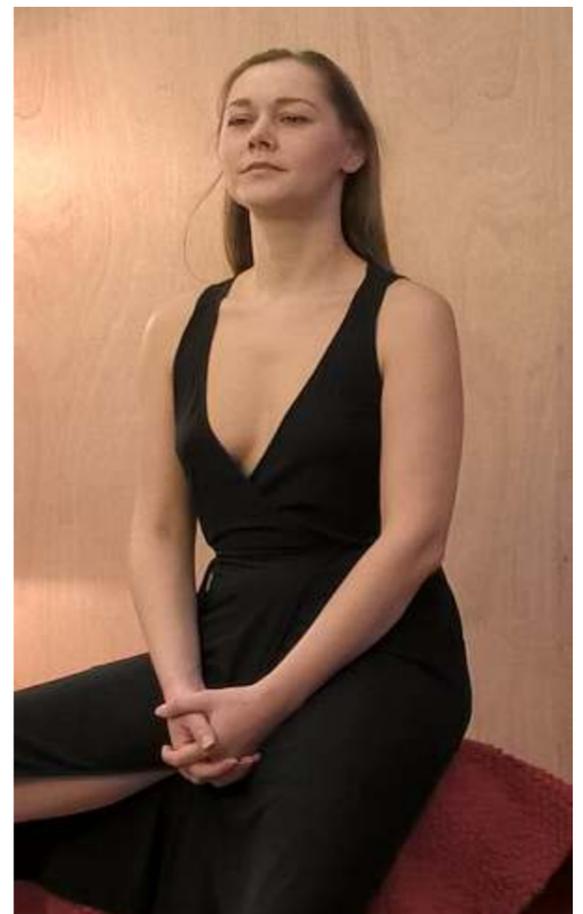
If you want the model in a specific position, illustrate it with your own body or describe it verbally. In general, touching the model at any time should be avoided. Before the break, mark the position of feet, hands and so forth with masking tape so he or she can take the correct position again. Conversation with the model should be kept to a minimum during the pose; reserve talking for breaks. Keep an eye on the time - it is unfair to let the model suffer by going over the agreed time. A timer to announce the end of the session is a good idea and will help prevent over-runs when the secretary is distracted or out of the room.

Pay your models promptly - usually at the end of the session. Hiring a model, as opposed to using volunteers, helps keep the artist and model relationship professional and clearly defined.

NSofA Rules

In a Life session at the NSofA **ABSOLUTELY NO PHOTOGRAPHY AT ANY TIME.**

In a clothed model session, photography may be allowed by pre-arrangement with the model together with the Group Secretary.



Coming up..

29th Aug – 7th Sep

Leonardo Workshop

A week of activities and exhibition at The Nottingham Society of Artists Friar Lane Gallery. Come and draw our model as Leonardo's 'St. Anne' on Bank Holiday Monday (from 10am - 3pm) and have your drawing exhibited on the gallery wall opposite our visiting artists' works.

Children - bring your parents and grandparents along - all can take part.

There will be projected displays of Leonardo's work in the Gallery.

The workshop and exhibition is kindly supported by the NCC Castle Team and John E. Wright



10th – 18th Sep

Studio Groups

20th – 25th Sep

Schools Exhibition

27th Sep – 2nd Oct

Thoughts of Dust - Ala Bashir

4th – 9th Oct

David Hault - Photography Exhibition

11th – 16th Oct

Spotted Dog Group - Autumn Exhibition

22nd – 30th Oct

NSofA Autumn Exhibition

1st – 6th Nov

Ross Abstracts - David Ross

8th – 20th Nov

Shooqi Atrabi

22nd – 30th Nov

The Brevity of Light Haidee-Jo Summers

3rd – 11th Dec

Small Pictures for Christmas

13th – 24th Dec

John Pooler

Nottingham Society of Artists

Leonardo WORKSHOP

Celebrating Leonardo's drawings with your drawings and invited artists



A week of activities and exhibition at The Nottingham Society of Artists Friar Lane Gallery. Come and draw our model as Leonardo's 'St. Anne' on Bank Holiday Monday (from 10am - 3pm) and have your drawing exhibited on the gallery wall opposite our visiting artists' works. Children - bring your parents and grandparents along - all can take part. There will be projected displays of Leonardo's work in the Gallery.

Mon 29th August until Sun 4th September

Nottingham Society of Artists
71 Friar Lane, Nottingham NG1 6DH
Telephone 0115 948 0476
www.nottinghamartists.org.uk

In cooperation with Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery who are now exhibiting '13 Lessons Da Vinci' from the Royal Collection



Gallery Rental

Our gallery is open all year round, the studios are used daily and most evenings

The main gallery is available for exhibitions from £60 a day. Facilities include a kitchen and cloakroom. The lighting is excellent.

Education & Studio

Available for courses, exhibitions and meetings. £40 a session. Facilities include a kitchen and cloakroom. There is a screen and digital projector available.

Outreach galleries

KnK Gallery

Aspley Lane, Nr. Bluecoates School
Framing and photographic studio with gallery giving exhibition space to one member per month. No NSofA supervision required.

Chapel Gallery

Ruddington Framework Knitters Museum
Good size gallery giving exhibition space to 3 artists for 3 monthly periods. Some NSofA stewarding required.

Join us

Membership is open to all over age 18. There are Sponsors and Supporters, Members and Fellows. All receive event invitations, this magazine and website access.

Members can have painting membership and exhibition membership.

Join online

www.nottinghamartists.org.uk/join

Or by telephoning 0115 948 0476

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