



# BRUTON ART SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

[www.brutonartsociety.co.uk](http://www.brutonartsociety.co.uk)

Lectures \* Workshops \* Exhibitions \* Coach Trips \* Painting Days



## Thank you to Members of the 'Hanging Committee'

The Bruton Art Society annual exhibition took place once again at Bruton School for Girls. We are most grateful to Mrs Nicola Botterill, the Head Mistress and to the Governors of the School for generously allowing us to hold the show on their premises.

Thanks too, to all the volunteers who worked so hard in preparing and stewarding the event.



We were pleased to announce the winner of the Joy Barnes Award 2015 was *Fruit Study in the Garden*, Oil on Board by Marissa Weatherhead.

## Chair's Report

It is a great pleasure to see the Bruton Art Society thriving, with a growing membership and a rich variety of well-supported activities. Our exhibition this year was a particularly fine one. Many congratulations to Tony Langham for having masterminded this, and to the many volunteers who helped in so many ways. Thanks too, to all you artists who contributed so many excellent works.

We are currently planning next year's activities and will be communicating these to you in the programme, which will be published in January. We are always open to suggestions and would welcome any ideas that you may have for events we might organize. Our Annual General Meeting is on Thursday 21 January at 2.30 p.m. at Caryford Hall (BA7 7JJ). We do encourage you to come to this. It is the time when you can voice your opinions about the society and vote members onto the committee. This year we will be presenting a revised constitution for the Society. As well as this Newsletter, you can also keep informed about the Society's activities by visiting our website [www.brutonartsociety.co.uk](http://www.brutonartsociety.co.uk). We also now have a twitter account @brutonarts that also provides much information.

**Will Vaughan**

We at Bruton Art Society are always looking for new members, if you are interested in joining the society please contact Maggie Knight on 01963 350226 or email [mcknightcm@bopenworld.com](mailto:mcknightcm@bopenworld.com)

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# 2016 Bruton Art Society

The 63rd Annual Exhibition of members' work will be held again in August this year. The Head Mistress Mrs Nicola Botterill and the Governors of Bruton School for Girls have kindly agreed that for 2016 the exhibition can be held over 15 days during August.

Sending in day will be on Saturday August 6th, Names beginning with A-M, 10.00– 11.30am. Names beginning with N-Z, 11.30 –1.00pm.

The Private view for Society Members and Guests will be on Friday August 12th 6.00 – 8.00pm. The exhibition runs from Saturday 13th August until Saturday 27th August, 10.00am – 5.00pm. On Sunday 28th August from 11.00pm.

to 12.30pm members can collect their work. To help make this years' exhibition a success we will need help from members on the sending in day, hanging day, stewarding the exhibition and helping to take it down.

Please contact Mrs Damaris Lee , the BAS Secretary if you are able to help or if you need any further information on 0196332671 or email [jldamaris@gmail.com](mailto:jldamaris@gmail.com)

We hope that all members will support us in helping to make this years' exhibition more successful than previous years by entering their most exciting work, getting friends to attend and by helping to advertise the event.

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## Popular Vote

The public vote for best picture was Annie Fry's with this dramatic portrait entitled *Bee Keeper*. There were 329 votes for the favourite picture: 20 votes for Beekeeper by Annie Fry; 16 votes for Zoe by Gillian Zanetti; 15 votes for Masai Bride by Heather Beadles. Congratulations to all artists.

## 2015 Five Schools Art Competition

Organised by Bruton Art Society with the co-operation and help of Debbie Hillyerd, Head of Education at Hauser and Wirth, each of our Five local senior schools, Ansford Academy Castle Cary, (Ansford) King Arthur's Community School Wincanton, (KA) Bruton School for Girls, (BSG) King's School Bruton, (Kings) Sexey's Church of England Academy Bruton (Sexey's) entered 6 works from their GCSE Art exams chosen by their teachers which were judged by a Bruton Art Society panel. (Will Vaughan, Sophie Bellars - who teaches Art at Salisbury 6th Form College – and John Baxter)



The winner was: **Estelle Spinner** of Bruton School for Girls for her work, *Woodland Scene*. (Opposite)



We would like to thank all those schools that took part in the competition , and to Will Vaughan and John Baxter for their contribution in organizing the competition.

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## Art tour in Provence

February is never the most comfortable month in a cold old Somerset house so we decided to take Easy Jet to Nice for a few weeks driving around Provence looking at art. Here are some of the highlights of the trip!

### 1. Renoir's House and Studio, Cagnes sur Mer.

His beautiful house enjoys a wonderful position overlooking the sea, perched in its own estate above orange trees and ancient olives, the very same ones that can be seen in some of his paintings. The oranges, by the way, are extremely bitter [ we picked some off the ground] but one of the staff said they make fabulous jam! There are only a few of Renoir's paintings in the house, the best lent by the Musee D'orsay, but lots of his fabulous sculptures. For me, the highlight was seeing the views from his dining room and bedroom, and the collection of paintings by Albert Andre, one of the master's pupils. My admiration of this virtually forgotten artist was confirmed later in the trip by seeing his large 'Composition with Flowers and Fruits' in the art museum in Toulon. (Photograph of Renoir's Easel and Chair.)



### 2. Fondation Maeght, near St Paul de Vence.

This is the place to see one of the most beautiful Chagall paintings in the world, La Vie. The museum was built by Aime Maeght and his wife, Marguerite. He was a former furniture salesman who became one of the most important art dealers in France, representing Braque, Chagall, Miro, Giacometti and Calder. According to a recent article in the Economist, the Fondation is now on its uppers, finding it impossible to fund its reported £3 million annual costs from visitor revenue. It cannot sell artworks under its present constitution, even though it houses 400 of them, many of fabulous value. It is indeed a slightly surreal experience to stand in the garden next to Giacometti's Walking Man, another version of which sold for over \$100m in 2010.

We thought the place looked very tired, with no-one there but us, and with bored guards standing around chatting loudly. Several of the rooms have been filled with some rather strident contemporary art, presumably in the hope of attracting more visitors. It is a sad truth that art is subject to fashion, and the likes of Calder and Miro are not the current mode. But for me the Chagall made it all worthwhile.

### 3. Chapelle de Vence, above St Paul de Vence.

Sister Wendy Beckett's favourite destination, with murals by Matisse. He wanted to thank the nuns for nursing him back to health. Its modest entrance and ticket desk staffed by elderly nuns do not prepare you for the magnificent simplicity of his designs, notably the Stations of the Cross, a masterpiece of imaginative drawing.

### 4. The Bonnard Museum, Le Cannet.

Opened three years ago, this is the museum I have most looked forward to visiting for a very long time, and was not disappointed. The Musee D'Orsay has stepped forward and made some excellent loans of major pictures, backed up by many loans from private collections. Many of the exhibits have never been reproduced. The highlight for me was 'Le Dejeuner', a painting of Marthe Bonnard and Bonnard's brother-in-law, Jean Terrasse, which has rarely been seen since the 1930s. Everywhere there are images of Marthe, the reclusive and difficult wife of the artist. She disliked going out or receiving visitors, and famously needed to lie in the bath for several hours a day. We tried to see their house above the museum, a modest villa called Le Bosquet where he lived from 1926-1947. There he painted some 103 landscapes, including 24 of the garden, and 153 of the inside of the house. Unfortunately it is only open a few days a year, and by prior

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## *Art In Provence .....*

appointment. Sargy Mann has published a fascinating book about Bonnard's working methods, showing how Bonnard made tiny, quick but highly accurate drawings in and around the house, from which he painted his large canvases. The walk there is quite steep and passes several sites where he did his drawings. It is marvellously interesting to see how a particular view would then be re-created into one of his imaginative creations. It is quite easy to get lost in the labyrinth of lanes above Le Cannet, particularly if you use the inadequate map supplied by the museum, and our little walk turned into a 3 hour hike as we tried to find the car! Luckily my long-suffering wife has a sense of humour.

4. Arles and St Remy, on the Van Gogh trail.

Arles is a beautiful but economically depressed town, dominated by the famous roman amphitheatre. It is rather curious that Van Gogh did not paint it [ unless you count the building's high roofline, seen in a distant view of the town from Montmajor] .We had lunch in the Cafe Arlesienne, next to the famous Yellow house in Place Lamartine where he entertained his friend Gauguin, and where he mutilated his ear-lobe after their famous disagreement. The house has gone, destroyed by a stray bomb in the war, but inside the cafe there are photos of it on the wall. Similar thoughts about Van Gogh's choice of subject matter

occurred to me when we came to St Remy. A spectacular roman triumphal arch, and the largest roman funerary monument in Europe, lie within 300 yards of the main gates of the nearby asylum of St Paul de Maussole, where he spent 18 months. Can anyone explain to me why he did not paint them? He was allowed out, accompanied by an attendant, to do his paintings. Perhaps he wasn't allowed anywhere near a main road? The reconstructed bedroom in the aslyum [ the so-called Van Gogh bedroom] was not actually his bedroom, which was situated in the adjacent block. That building is surrounded by the huge walled garden filled with pine trees, where he did so many of the paintings. It is not accessible to the public, as it is still used as a mental asylum by around 100 patients. Rather poignantly, we noticed a modern day patient, accompanied by an attendant, walking outside the asylum in the lane. Back in Arles, we had a coffee sitting at a cafe table next to the over-priced Cafe la Nuit, the cafe made so famous in the starry night picture. Not much in the view has changed. It is ironic that Arles does not own a single work by Van Gogh, the man they thought was a nuisance and a nutcase. The authorities have recently built a ' Van Gogh Foundation' in Arles, which shows rather overblown and pretentious contemporary

art for a steep entry fee. I shall merely quote one sentence of curatorial artspeak from the catalogue describing the current exhibition of Yan Pei-mei's huge paintings : 'From great intimacy to media spectacularisation, he reassembles beings in the hutong [sic] of his painting'. I think that says it all, really. Given the difficulties of driving round the very complicated motorway system in the South of France, I wouldnt say this was the most relaxing art tourism we have ever done. Aix in particular is a nightmare for parking, and it is best to head for the main underground car-park, if you can find it. This makes a visit to Cezanne's studio particularly challenging, as it is some way up a hill from the centre on foot, and the nearest underground parking is at the bottom of a long steep climb. I would say, however, that February is the best time to go. The sheer logistics of getting around in the crowds and the heat of summer would make it unbearable. We enjoyed a good many sunny days, and ended our stay with lunch outside in Nice on the Promenade Des Anglais!

**Fletcher Robinson**

### **Contributions**

Any contributions to future newsletters would be most welcome. Please email to [tony.langham@btopenworld.com](mailto:tony.langham@btopenworld.com)

