

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2013

Wishing everyone a
HAPPY and creative NEW YEAR.

Dear Members,

Watching the snow, from the top of our very slippery lane, having just had to cancel a Committee meeting, my thoughts are turning to the future. I have cleared out several cupboards and have bags of papers to dispose of in the hall. I am getting ready for a new start, more time for my art and a new hoped for clarity to my life. Before the snow came down I saw snowdrops nearly out and even found some violets out, I know they are there growing, under the snow, waiting to emerge. Pure white and bright colour will appear from the gloom. Many of us have been unable to work, studios have been too cold, the flu has hit or we have been spending time with family and friends. It is good to have a break and emerge refreshed with new ideas and ambitions. Mine has been fired by the second of these two and my fingers are itching to get started.

Have you read 'Seven Days in the Art World' by Sarah Thornton? I was given it for Christmas. It came out about three years ago, so I expect many of you have. It is a fly on the wall look at the contemporary art world in the boom years. It covers an auction at Christie's, New York, The Turner Prize, Artforum, Venice Biennale etc., with comments from all the main movers and shakers of the art world. It is a really fascinating read.

A second book, which I admit I bought last week, is a Waterstones' book of the year and caught my eye, 'What are you looking at? 150 years of Modern Art in the Blink of an Eye' by Will Gompertz, the BBC Arts Editor. It would be perfect for someone starting out in art history, as it is very clear but I am finding it refreshing and highly entertaining. It even has a pull out map, similar to a tube map, of all the different styles of art and the artists involved in them, plus a list of where the various works referred to are hung around the world. I am only a third of the way through but I would definitely recommend it.

You will have already been informed of the sad news that Dorothy Biddle, has died, many of us knew how ill she was and we have all admired her art and philosophy on life. Grace Newman writes about Dorothy below.

The AMA was again breaking new ground with the Christmas Charity Auction in November, which went very well. We achieved our targets and had fun doing it. Katharine, who used her expertise to mastermind the

MEETINGS

MORNING MEETINGS.

10.00am. Baptist Hall, Chandos Street, Leamington Spa. Upstairs room via the side entrance. If you are late and the door is locked please press the bell. The meetings normally finish at approximately 12.15pm. Car Park opposite the Hall.

5th February '13 Teresa Wells.

Mixed media tableaux inspired by the Questions 'How do humans behave'. And 'Why not celebrate the Domestic'?

5th March '13 Terry Webster

Leamington figurative/animal sculptor working in resin.

There will be more daytime and evening meeting events throughout 2013. If you have suggestions for speakers please contact Julia with further details.

Dorothy Biddles Obituary can be found on page 3

On My Easel Now...Neil Moore page 7

auction will give you the results, I just want to say it was also a fun start to the Christmas season. A village friend told me she had mentioned it to a Leamington friend, who told her 'There are some extremely good artists in Leamington.' Exactly right!

Congratulations to Ray Spence, who has recently joined, I saw in the Herald that he has been awarded the Royal Photographic Society's Fenton Medal, which is only presented to a few people each year. He has specialised in fine art monochrome printing and lectured on the BA Photography course at Birmingham City University until his retirement earlier this year. He has also written books on black and white photography in the digital age. The award was presented in London, by the President of the Society.

Margot Bell gave us a brilliant look at her woodcuts in December and Margaret Condon has written an excellent Review for you to read.

We start our 2013 programme, on the 5th February, with a lecture by TERESA WELLS ARBS. Teresa, who is also a new member, poses the fascinating question 'How do Humans Behave' and explores this with sculpture (some in miniature) and drawings. She is a member of the Royal British Society of Sculptors. A visit to her website shows an enthralling body of work.

TUESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY, doors open 10.00am for a 10.15 am start.

TERRY WEBSTER, is a Leamington figurative/animal sculptor working in resin, who will be our March speaker on TUESDAY 5th MARCH

We are in the process of putting together a full programme of day and evening meetings and will be sending this out very shortly.

With best wishes for the year ahead,

Julia Hayes, Chair, Tel. 01789 731237.

AMA Exhibitions

Several artists were able to hang work in the Helen Ley Care Centre over Christmas and we hope to call for work again in February. The Helen Ley is a short stay/respite centre for people with neurological conditions, such as MS.

A reminder that WARWICKSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS is taking place again this year, rather than waiting till next year, so if you wish to take part now is the time to think about it as I believe entries need to go in during February. For further information visit <http://warwickshireopenstudios.org>

AMA EXHIBITION at HOLY TRINITY CHURCH. 10th to 19th May. We would like to include sculpture, ceramics, installations and some large paintings if possible.

We will therefore be holding an open site meeting at the Church for all those who would be interested in this, to see what we can accommodate within the bounds of health and safety!! This will take place in the next few weeks, possibly on a Saturday morning. We will send out an email. This will give us the chance to assess the situation and ask for the church's approval where necessary before we/you go ahead.

The Committee are working on several other ideas for exhibiting over the year.

Dorothy Biddle Obituary



Dorothy Joyce Biddle (née Leybourne), aged 80, died peacefully at her home in Styvechale, Coventry on 13th January 2013 surrounded by her loving family. She accepted with such strength and graces her fate from terminal cancer.

Warwickshire Artists is saddened to report the loss of a much loved founder member and very dear friend.

"The local art community has lost one of our most talented artists, and the kindest and warmest of personalities," writes her closest friend Grace Newman.

"Dorothy had always been creative throughout her life, but only took up art seriously after her husband died in 1996. After taking her Art 'A' level, she joined the access course at Warwickshire College. This was where, under the tutorship of Neil Moore, Mark Taylor, Dan Pellowe, Ray Spence and Thea Philcox to name but a few, she laid the foundations of her artistic skills and theoretical studies.

A love of sculpture developed as Dorothy progressed to the Dip HE course. She could always be found in the freezing cold barn, experimenting with a variety of materials under the leadership of Colin

Wright, who inspired her and nurtured her zest for learning. Interests in man and nature led to a change in materials, and many a skip succumbed to her searching eyes for recyclable materials. Dorothy loved her time at Warwickshire College and was forever quoting wise words from Colin Hitchmough. A wise and intelligent woman herself, she went on to take her Fine Art degree at Birmingham University and passed with a 2.1 BA Honours in 2002 at the wonderful age of 70.

Since leaving university, Dorothy became interested in woodcarving. She loved the properties of the different woods and joined a local woodcarving class at Finham Park School where she practised her craft. She went on to attend master classes with woodcarver and sculptor Michael Painter. Her proudest moment was being commissioned to carve a monk for an outside alcove in Wash House Court, Charterhouse in London (open to the public by appointment) to replace one stolen. She was the main guest at the opening ceremony and this led to further carvings for the almshouse.

An opportunity to exhibit in France with Warwickshire Artists was another memorable event in Dorothy's life. We travelled by car and ferry to La Grande Galerie in Civray, unloaded the artwork, and then stayed as guests of printmaker Moira Lamont in the small village of Tardiveau with fellow artists David Lewis, his wife Joan and Przemyslaw Chojnowski. The sun shone and, once the exhibition was hung, we had the greatest of times – visiting the best places in the area, playing pétanque and enjoying fine wine and food.

Dorothy was born in Cardiff, Wales and moved to Coventry in 1967 with her husband Watkin Bryan Biddle (deceased). She was a proud mother of Carol Stone and Janice Bird, grandmother to Sarah, Leanne, Todd, Heather, Blake & Spike and loving sister to Frank Leybourne (deceased) and Audrey Leybourne."

Please feel free to add your thoughts of Dorothy on this blog.

Images in memory of Dorothy can be found on our [Pinterest](#) page and will continue to grow. Please Email to info@warwickshireartists.co.uk any images you would like to include.

Grace Newman

If you would like to read the extended obituary for Dorothy click [here](#)



Didn't we do well!

The AMA Christmas Charity Auction, held on the 28th of November, has almost disappeared into the mists of time, but we did so well, it seemed a shame not to visit the subject one more time!

Forty-one works, prints, ceramics, jewellery, paintings and a couple of art books were auctioned, by our star auctioneer David Dewis, of which 26 were sold to a value of £2109. A seasonally adorned, festive bucket and the refreshments donation jar, between them, then raised a further £157. Over £1500 was paid out to the artists/owners, AMA covered its own costs and had a little to spare and, much to all our pleasure, I was able to take an AMA cheque for £571.10 to our chosen charity, Myton Hospice. A hospice representative has since written to us, "Please pass on our thanks to everyone who made a contribution to this terrific sum you clearly understand the importance of our work and our need for the support of the local community". Well done everyone!

Katharine



Elizabeth Marsh's "Green Lane", sold for £170, well above the advertised guide price.



MC Dave Dewis assisted by Katharine Barker keep the bidding moving upwards!



Margot Bell: A Journey into Woodcuts



Compelling and balanced composition; high level drawing skills; and an instinctive understanding of colour. Such descriptors commonly bring to mind a painter. Margot Bell is, however, primarily, a printmaker, although her artistic endeavours extend into other areas of making, and teaching, art. The many who missed Margot's talk missed also a visual feast, and a tale told with humility and humour.

Margot's artistic talent gained early recognition, and she was encouraged by her art teacher to pursue an art school education. At the last moment she hesitated: and as a young adult she pursued a career in nursing and midwifery. She continued, however, to sketch and to enjoy art as a viewer and listener, rather than in active practice. Second time around, as a mature student at Banbury and then Leamington, she maximised her opportunities,

experimenting with painting and ceramics, and discovering her love of printmaking under the guidance of Paul Horden at Leamington.

Post-college saw Margot move into professional practice. She joined, and continues, as a member of the Oxford Printmakers Co-op (OPC). Their large presses enabled Margot to experiment with collagraph, a technique that employs a textured plate that can be printed either (or both) in relief and intaglio, and with drypoint, where the line was scratched into scavenged plastic or metal plates. Woodcut, however, could be done at home, printing by hand. Woodcut became a passion. Margot elegantly wove her explanations of technique into discussions of the various prints she had brought with her, exploring her sources of inspiration and the magic – for there is no other word – of creation. Her tools are simple. Sharp gouges and knives, rollers to transfer ink to the block, and a wooden spoon, a baren, or a stone to print from the block on to paper. Her favourite 'tool' is a piece of Carrara marble, gathered from an Italian beach, and now a familiar friend used to burnish the back of printing paper so that the image transfers from the block to make the print.

The plate is a thin, flat piece of board – mdf, Japanese ply, pine board, hedgerow finds, and oak plank have all been used. Drawing directly on to the board in pencil, Margot reinforces her line with a permanent ink marker, then cuts away the non-printing area with knives and gouges. The flat area that remains is inked up and then printed in 'relief', meaning that ink is rolled on to, and printed from, the surface of the block. In prints that were purely black and white, this means thinking about tonal balance and the direction of cuts – the gouge is used as a drawing tool. Colour is a more complex process. This either involves multiple blocks each carrying a 'key' image as a guide to cutting; or, if using the reduction process perfected by Picasso, the block becomes sacrificial. In this case the block is successively printed in colour and areas cut away. The print from the areas cut retains the colour last used, with the remainder being over-printed: and so on until the last colour finally resolves the image and the print. With experience, Margot happily broke the 'rules'. For example, the 'rules' say print light to dark. But printing yellow over black in a two-plate print gave green in areas where the yellow covered the black, and yellow in areas which the black plate had

Margot Bell continued.....

from a drawing made in the crypt-canteen of St Martin in the Fields. Indeed, many of Margot's prints had an energy that comes only from direct observational drawing, either from objects immediately in front of her, or by development from smaller plein-air sketches. Hand colouring with water-colour, splatter through a stencil, the use of textured and coloured paper, and chine-colle, perhaps most briefly described as collage and print done simultaneously, were all described and shown, producing prints of astonishing variety and immediacy. In size, the prints varied from approximately six inches square to about two foot in height/width.



Margot's sources of inspiration were many. In common with a number of other speakers, she described how she tends to follow a theme, experimenting, developing, and evolving, for perhaps six months or more. Holidays often prove a trigger. A visit to Prague led to a whole series around the theme of puppets and street theatre, a theme that constantly re-emerges and re-invents itself. An informed and instinctive gardener, her engagement with the plant world shows in her botanical prints of seedheads and flowers from her garden. Here, it was not just the colour, and the experiments with colour, that captivated, but the strong sense of composition and the reduction of the image to its essentials. Landscape, developed from Margot's numerous sketches, and reinforced by multiple photographs used as an aide-memoire and compositional tool, is again a recurrent theme. These images had a life of their own, and amusing stories in their wake. Hook Norton brewery was drawn from the comfort of a car – and from a mirror, so that the resulting image, which reversed the drawing on the plate, would read the 'right' way round. And Margot spent so long hanging out of Banbury's multi-storey car park, drawing the street below, that the police turned up – to prevent an 'attempted suicide'. Two very large and powerful prints of the Great Wall of China, developed both from multiple photographs and charcoal drawings, are personal favourites of the writer.

More recent prints demonstrate a Japanese influence. Large areas of delicate, flat colour enhance the tracery of window frames and tree branches. A request from her son produced capricious and quirky minimalist prints of insects invading spaces or walking on wood – the description can't do them justice, but suffice it to say that one was selected for the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, and their titles are as inventive and humorous and satisfying as the print.



Margot was modest about her achievements, and their wider recognition within the art community. But the applause, and the questions that arose and were answered in the course of her talk, can have left her in no doubt as to the appreciation of her audience.

On My Easel Now - Neil Moore



The idea for this painting that I am currently finishing has been floating around my imagination for many years. It came to fruition just recently as a result of preparatory work for another painting that I have just completed. Perhaps it would help if I explain more about how I normally generate the imagery for my paintings.



I don't, as many realist painters do, see something that I want to paint and paint it. The images are constructed by me in response to my experience of life either directly or vicariously via the various media. The images are visual metaphors through which I attempt to express what has concerned, confused, intrigued or amused me. I paint to understand and not to be understood. I make no apology for this self indulgence – I strongly believe that it is only by artists uncompromisingly doing what satisfies their own curiosity that anything original arises.

This painting (as yet untitled) serendipitously arose from working on another idea with the two models pictured. I have never been able to afford to have models pose for the duration of a painting so I generally book the models for photographic sessions.



The first session is primarily to explore the idea that is the most compelling at the time but also to try and give some substance to other peripheral ideas. It is usually only when I later see the results of the session that I know what I ought to have done! A second, and hopefully final, session is then arranged at which I take shots that are more targeted toward the specific information that I need for the painting. My paintings can only be as good as the quality of the photographic information I assemble but are only successful if they somehow transcend it (for me this is the infuriating and beguiling 'alchemical' nature of art).

I feel slightly embarrassed to say that I don't use a sketch-book. Having taught in Art Schools for forty years this year I know only too well the emphasis that is given to sketch-books. I did have one as a student but I found it much quicker not to sketch, but just jot down a word to trigger the imaginative recall - so it became a book of lists. I just have a list of 'bullet' points that encapsulate the ideas that I hope at some time to explore visually. My 'list' now has fifty odd ideas which, if I live long enough, I hope will become future paintings. Some items on the list have been there for over thirty years waiting for some additional insight, which will propel them to the front. On average I 'cross off' (paint) eight to ten ideas each year, but the list always grows! So, as long as I am able, I will be happily painting until the end of my days. I have always been a figurative realist painter. I am aware that many people

would find my, seemingly unchanging, technique narrow and stifling. I, however, regard myself as a conceptual artist. The technique is, for me, a means to an end - not an end in itself. While it continues to express the changing 'narrative' of my imagination satisfactorily I don't feel the need to spend time and effort experimenting for the sake of it. I used the words 'seemingly unchanging' carefully because it is continually developing. To use a visual metaphor I am peeling a page of paper to see what is within it, rather than turning the page. I suppose that, unlike the scientists who look beyond earth to make new discoveries, I am looking for the 'Higgs Boson' particle to provide insight.

The photographs of my studio will I hope be of interest. It is the place that I have done all my creative work in for the past thirty five years. As I only paint in natural daylight, I 'hug' the light coming through the north facing bay window (especially this time of year). As you will see I have lots of brushes. I don't feel secure if I don't have new brushes available. Now that there isn't a dedicated art shop in Leamington it does give a spurious justification for this but I confess I have always collected brushes (I have a massive stock of paints, stretchers and canvas too - O.C.D or what?). The large mirror that I have behind me when I paint (that you may see amongst all the clutter) is essential. I spin around from time to time, either on my swivel chair if I am working at the bottom of a painting, or from standing, to see the work with a 'fresh eye'. I find that you can get so used to seeing 'mistakes' that they no longer look mistaken, and it is only by catching the painting unawares that I detect them.

If you were hoping for an explanation of what the painting is about I have to disappoint you. As I said, I have no answers, only questions. You must use your own imagination.
Neil Moore 2013

What's On

LONDON GROUP visual arts since 1913

THE CENTENARY OPEN 2013

CALL FOR ENTRIES

from visual artists working in any medium



Guest Selectors:

Jane England, gallery director/curator England & Co.

Bruce McLean, international performance artist, painter and sculptor

Nicholas Usherwood, independent curator, art critic and writer on contemporary art and culture, Features Editor of *Galleries* magazine

Prizes up to £5000 + a Solo Exhibition at The Cello Factory: £1500 Chelsea Arts Club Trust Stan Smith Award for an artist under 35, the Moich Abrahams prize for the most innovative work (1st prize £1000, 2nd prize £250, 3rd prize £100), £750 Winsor and Newton materials prize for painting & drawing, £550 sculpture prize, £500 services from John Jones, £350 photographic services from Patrick Gorman

All exhibitors included in the catalogue

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS 15 MARCH 2013

Part 1: 14 May – 24 May
Part 2: 28 May – 7 June

Details and submission form
www.thelondongroup.com

The Cello Factory
33-34 Cornwall Road
Waterloo, London, SE1 8TJ



We are pleased to announce that we now have two further studio spaces available for rent, one onsite at Althorpe Studios & Gallery and one in the building next door.

1) Althorpe Studio 5:

3.35m x 3.32m; 11ft x 11ft (approx),
18 plug sockets,
Wi-fi,
No window (although internal window to communal corridor can be installed),
Secure 24HR access. (Alarm security & fire system)

£100 pcm, includes rates but excludes utility, internet & ADT bills which are shared equally between each of the seven studios on a quarterly basis.

2) Althorpe Studio 8: (located at No.4 Althorpe Street, next door to Althorpe Studios & Gallery)

4.15m x 3.5m; 13ft x 11ft (approx),
10 plug sockets,
Wi-fi,
Large South-facing window
Secure 24HR access. (Alarm security & fire system)

£180 pcm, includes rates and some utility, internet etc bills - details to be confirmed later.

Please do let us know if you are interested in either of these studio spaces as soon as possible and we will arrange viewing. Both studios are available to be shared, (rental contracts are arranged per person, not per studio.)

Contact: Jonathan or Suminder althorpestudio@yahoo.co.uk

SPRING STONE CARVING WORKSHOPS

Tutor *JUDE TUCKER BA Fine Art (hons), ATC, MAFA*



Lizard bowl



Tutor - Jude Tucker



Bas relief project



Sculpture carving

I am offering 3 day structured workshops for adults which are suitable for both the complete beginner and those with some previous experience. Students will be guided through basic stone cutting and carving techniques. Complete beginners will make a small bas relief carving (approx. 10" square). The soft limestone will be provided and can be taken home at the end of the course. Intermediate students will design and make a bowl, also in a soft limestone for which there will be a small charge. Students will learn to carve using basic hand tools which will be available for use during the course.

Spring 2013 workshop dates:

Saturday courses: Consecutive Saturdays: S3 6th / 13th / 20th APRIL (beginners)
S4 1st / 8th / 15th JUNE (intermediate)

Thursday courses: Consecutive Thursdays : T1 4th, 11th, and 18th APRIL (beginners)
T2 2nd, 9th and 16th MAY (intermediate)
T3 6th, 13th and 20th JUNE (beginners)

Weekend courses: W/E 1 4th, 5th, 6th APRIL (beginners)
W/E 2 4th, 5th and 6th MAY (bank holiday) (beginners)
W/E 3 18th, 19th and 20th MAY (intermediate)

Fees are £180 for each 3 day workshop. A non-refundable deposit of £40 is payable on registration. All Courses are limited to a maximum of 6 students.

The day will begin at 10.00 am (prompt!) and finish at 4.00 pm with a half hour break for lunch. There will be an unlimited supply of tea/coffee and biscuits! Please bring your own lunch.

My sunny and airy workshop is situated in beautiful countryside near Long Marston, which is 5 miles south of **Stratford upon Avon**. There is ample parking on site. Please contact me for further information. Full instructions and a list of requirements will be supplied on registration.

JUDE TUCKER, an artist all her life, has carved stone exclusively since 2004. She won the Worshipful Company of Masons Carving Award in 2006 and the Bernard Noble Sculpture prize in 2011. Commissions have included grotesques for St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Her work is represented by Jaggedart Gallery in London and can also be seen at the Gallery at the Guild in Chipping Campden. And during the summer at The Garden Gallery, Stockbridge, Hants.

Telephone 07971 489449
e-mail heyjude@btopenworld.com
web site www.judetuckersculpture.com

ISA - Imaging Services for Artists



Wendy Bicknell



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I am able to provide high quality digital files of any artwork - paintings, drawings, sculpture, jewellery, textiles etc from a starting price of £20. I can photograph your work at your studio, exhibition or in my own studio based in Warwick.

Please visit my website or contact me if you are interested.

Regards

Ray Spence FRPS

www.rayspence.co.uk

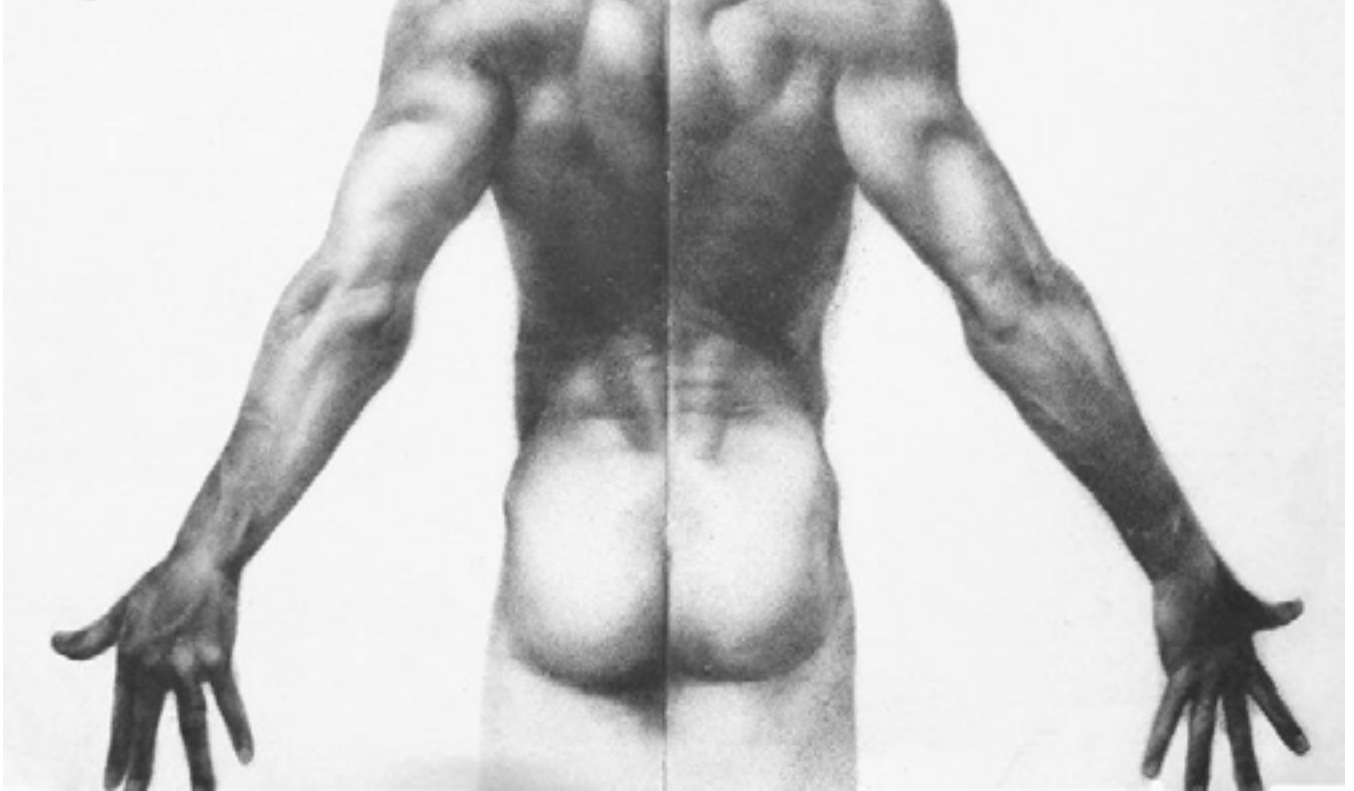
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LIFE DRAWING WORKSHOP

Saturday 2nd February

At Shottery Memorial Hall (nr. Stratford-on-Avon)

10am – 4.00pm. Cost £40 (A.M.A. members only £36)



The day begins with lots of quick poses which are gradually extended to allow full tonal drawing. The price includes basic paper (white cartridge and newsprint) and light refreshments. The nearby village pub, The Bell Inn, does good food at lunchtime if you don't want to bring your own lunch. The studio is fully equipped with drawing boards and easels etc. There is plentiful free parking just outside.

For details please contact:-

Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum Open 2013



OPEN 2013 2 May – 14 July 2013

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum's biennial OPEN exhibition will feature selected work by artists based in the West Midlands. A distinguished panel of judges will select from a wide range of work including painting, sculpture, drawing, printmaking, photography, digital media and craft. There will be one overall prize winner and a People's Choice Award. All exhibited works will be for sale.

If you are interested in submitting a work for the OPEN 2013, please contact Alice Swatton, Curatorial Officer, alice.swatton@warwickdc.gov.uk

