

AMA**Association of Midland Artists**
www.midlandartists.co.uk

NEWSLETTER

MAY AND JUNE 2012

Dear Members

*'There are holes in the sky
Where the rain gets in*

*But they're ever so small
That's why rain is thin'*
Spike Milligan.

Well sometimes, but as some bright spark said on Tele 'Thank goodness skin is waterproof.' I hope you all enjoyed the Jubilee celebrations and extra holiday and the weather perks up in time for Open Studios.

Please be sure to read the paragraph below on Open Studios and respond as soon as possible..

Foster Frame Exhibition.

Pick up is 10.00am. Thursday 14th June, unless you have made other arrangements. They will take down and bubble wrap the work the night before so it will be ready to collect. Some of you left packing materials there, which I have returned to the Gallery so please be sure to pick them up.

The exhibition has been well received, with plenty of positive comments but unfortunately only one piece has sold. Nicki thinks people are very jittery over the financial situation at the moment. She has invited us to try again if we wish in the Autumn.

Neil's girl in the jar was the big point of interest – naturally! A gentleman came in to buy it, having seen it through the window with his wife, unfortunately his payment card was rejected twice, rather than trying a third time and having to destroy the card if it was rejected. Nicki sent him to the bank and has not seen him since! The painting remained securely in position. A lesson for us all, unless you know your buyer or are ready to take the risk, get the money in your hand before you even unscrew the work.

A Summer's Evening - 30th JUNE

PRIVATE VIEW at 6.30pm will be followed by **MEXICAN GUITAR CONCERT AND ART VIDEO – NOT TO BE MISSED** .

All of you who use email should have received an invitation to the AMA Group of 10, who are holding a Private View at Holy Trinity Church. ALL MEMBERS OF THE AMA are invited.

The Private View will be followed at 8.00pm by a Leamington Music Concert by **MORGAN SZYMANSKI**, the Mexican Guitarist, of sketches and songs of Mexico.

This will be a delight for the eye and ear, as an exciting video projection of artwork, inspired by the music, by artists from Mexico, Portugal, Ireland and the UK including our own Jane Williams, Artist in Residence for Leamington Music will accompany the sounds. I have seen a pre-view and it is stunning, so do try and join us.

Concert Tickets - £10 (£1 children and students) Bridge House Theatre Box Office Tel: 01926 776438

Online: www.bridgehousetheatre.co.uk. The Private View is of course by invitation and there is no charge.

Warwickshire Open Studios

We cannot unfortunately advertise in the brochure, due to the layout of the new format, which is disappointing as Jane had designed a great advert to fit the space before we heard this. We should however have a good lead to our website.

**We wish to produce a list of members taking part, with if we can do it, a map showing where you all are so that you can display it and advertise each other and the AMA.

I have trawled the website and come up with the following list of participants, but I know some of you are exhibiting in groups so if your name is not here could you let me know as soon as possible so that we can add you to the list.

The names I have so far and apologies if I missed you, it was quite a trawl, are:-

Anne Cole, David Dewis, Ruth Daly, Corinne Spencer, David Lewis, Eleanor Allitt, Howard Watson, Jane Gibbs, Jo Powers, Judith Hickling, Libby January, Margaret Godwin, Moira Lamont, Moira Osborne, Nancy Upshall, Neil Moore, Paul Bark, Sheila Graham, Kathy Webster, Sue O'Grady, Dorothy Biddle, Grace Newman, Victoria Smith, Viv Hunt, Teresa Ashenford, Linda Babb, Margot Bell, Pat Carpenter, Anne Crawford, Margaret Condon, Karen Hands, Elizabeth Marsh, Len Mackin, Fiona Metcalfe

Contact me on 01789 731237 or juliahayes@btinternet.com with your name and venue.

Can I say 'Good luck' to all who are taking part, if you have any problems do get in touch with the Committee, not all of us are opening our studios and we might be able to help.

We have not got a meeting in July as I am sure you will all be busy visiting the many venues and enjoying the variety of work on display, hopefully we will all bump into each other.

Printing for cards etc.

Jane has put on the website details of a printer who has contacted us, who is able to do cards and business cards in time for Open Studios on shortish runs. If you require business cards I would check against Staples for prices etc. but the details are on our website.

Review.

Margaret Condor, an experienced printer, has written an excellent Review on May's speaker, a member of the Milton Keynes Printers, who took us through the different types of printing and showed us examples of the work he does, where he puts the background in and then prints over it. He was a first class communicator, and for those like me, who have printed in the past it was a real refresher course. As is normally the case at the morning talks, he found he was amongst some fellow etchers and went away with some useful tips!

Iain Hodgkinson, Printmaker : Talk 1 May 2012

Braving a morning of heavy rain, a hardy band of AMA members and guests gathered in the Baptist Hall to hear our May speaker. Despite these difficult economic times, Iain has abandoned a safe job and regular pay packet to work full time as an artist, returning to his first love: printmaking. Promise shown in student days resulted in an early painting being selected for exhibition at the Mall galleries – where alphabetical order meant that it hung next to no less a luminary than Howard Hodgkin. As a mature working artist, with work in six galleries, and a programme of workshops, he is clearly making a success of his return to an art career.

Iain enjoys the fact that printmaking contains an element of surprise, and requires him to take risks: and clearly enjoys sharing his enthusiasm with others. The relaxed formula of his presentation allowed questions as they arose, and made for lively and informed discussion.

He began with a brief history of printmaking as an art medium, before discussing the main techniques and forms of printmaking, and a very personal definition of just what a print is. The first was generously illustrated with examples of worked plates, as well as images and originals of his prints. The second certainly drew a response from the floor, as Iain talked about gallery 'limited editions' – giclee prints or 'glorified photocopies' of works produced in another medium; and about the grey area of digitally generated prints as original artworks. The latter were neatly admitted by reference to David Hockney's recent exhibition. 'What is a print?' remains, however, a sore subject for any printmaker, and Iain was keen to stress that a print should always be an artist's original, whether produced as a unique paper print, or printed by hand in multiples to produce an edition from a unique, artist envisaged and created, matrix.

Iain's main, but not sole, source of inspiration is the landscape of Cumbria and his native Lancashire. His prints, derived from plein-air drawings, as well as photographs, can be broadly termed abstracted figuration, shown in simplified masses of shape and colour, but still recognisable as a named place and view, and aiming to capture, in essence, each special atmosphere. What drew particular interest was his combinations of technique – drypoint or etching with collagraph for texture, or chine collé for colour. The latter technique requires the application of thin paper such as

mulberry paper, glued and overprinted as an integral part of the paper print in a single pass through the press. The same combinations could be made with woodcuts. Here, there were other variations also. Printing through an etching press produced embossed marks from the un-inked but gouged portions of the wood block or lino, adding energy to the overall printed surface. There was especial interest in his overprinting of acrylic paintings – produced as hand painted original ‘duplicates’ in numbers appropriate to the edition – and then overprinted in black with the woodblock. This could produce quite fine nuances of colour so that, for example, high yellows against dark or muted greens against the black of the ink picked up the way the light constantly shifts on the fells that are one of his main subjects, whilst the black overprint added gestural and directional marks that defined the forms, and could not have been produced by any other means. Iain was generous in sharing the alchemy of making plates and printing them. In terms of style and subject matter he is his own man: but his hero is the reclusive artist Percy Kelly (d. 1993).

Question time continued into coffee. Several members left promising themselves experiments with woodcuts and mixed-media printmaking; and a buzz of excitement that is surely a compliment to the speaker.

For those who missed the talk, or who would like to be reminded of the images, Iain’s work can be seen at <http://www.iainhodgkinson.co.uk/> .

Postscript: art supplies

Iain spoke of his enthusiasm for the vibrant colour of a new acrylic paint being made by Pip Seymour. These, and other interesting products, including handmade oil paints and pastels made from English earths, can be bought on-line from <http://www.pegasusart.co.uk/> or www.theartpalette.co.uk; and are supplied by Cornelissen (near the British Museum) and a number of other independent art shops. Printmaking supplies, including specialist paper, can be bought from T. N. Lawrence or Intaglio (website, telephone, or in person).

COVENTRY OPEN EXHIBITION

The Entry Forms for the Coventry Open at the Herbert Art Gallery next month are now available to download from the website.

Julia Hayes (Chair)