



The Sketch

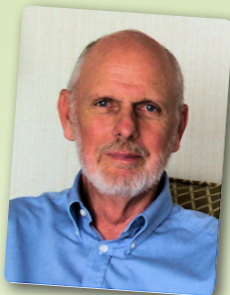
The newsletter of the
Cambridge Drawing Society

Number 9, December 2022

From our President, Paul Rodhouse

DRAMATIC RECOVERY

This year has seen our Society make a dramatic recovery after two years of disruption due to the Covid pandemic. Some of us will undoubtedly have suffered illness as well as loss of friends and loved ones to the disease, our sympathy goes out to you. As a Society we have been able to return to our regular, annual programme of exhibitions and the quality and quantity of artwork remains as high or higher than ever. Numbers of visitors and purchases of work have been comparable with pre-Covid years and so has our financial readout. We have admitted a crop of talented new members and welcomed a number of new Friends. Several of our members have had successes outside the Society and their achievements have been celebrated in the pages of the Sketch. Do please continue to send us news of notable awards and exhibitions.



We have not yet returned to our regular format of evening talks and demonstrations. Given the success of online events perhaps we never will

completely. However, it is our intention to continue to reintroduce in-person events and try to find an optimum mix of live and online. Any feedback to our committee about how you feel about this will be very welcome.

You will have seen in a recent email circulated that there will be no parking at the Pitt building for delivery and collection of artwork this coming spring and many of you will have experienced the inconvenience of parking at the Leys this autumn since the school reduced parking space. It is likely that parking at the Pitt will never return. Your committee is working on solutions that will not only solve the problems but also help to avoid the congestion of Cambridge roads and potentially reduce the carbon footprint associated with our exhibitions. Change is coming, please help us make it work.

Paul Rodhouse

Wishing all our Members and Friends good wishes for the festive season and for the coming year

Rob Ellis enters the 'Portrait Artist of the Year' competition

I got the self-portrait right – the up-the-nose view and bags of 'narrative' for them to get their teeth into – but that's as far as it went. I was panic-stricken from the first phone-call; the judges apparently loved my work and were offering me a place and there was I desperately trying to get out of it. But you can't, of course:

'You'd be mad to turn it down' ... 'chance of a lifetime' ... 'what's the worst that could happen?'

Early on – maybe a month before the recording – I thought I knew what the worst was: a portrait that looked incompetent and didn't resemble the sitter so I practised and

practised and I got quite good at some kind of a 4-hour likeness – but always the mounting terror and every morning I'd wake up with dread, counting down the days and building the tension.

On that cold March day I'd say most of my fellow-artists were also covering rabbits desperate to be put out of their misery by the onrushing headlights... but one or two knew a little secret; Sky Arts are just trying to make a show that will ensnare the viewing public.

So my advice is... learn to talk a great 'process' and don't worry if you fail to produce great work. Go elsewhere – though I unfortunately have absolutely no idea where - for a serious assessment of your painting skills!



PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR ARTWORK

By Tim Duckworth

Photographing your work is increasingly important these days, both for use in promoting your work for instance on social media, and when submitting work for selection for an exhibition

I thought therefore it might be helpful to provide some tips on taking good photographs of your work. I should say that I am by no means an expert photographer (and I know there are people in CDS with much more knowledge than me). I have though picked up a certain amount of 'native cunning' along the way. Most phone cameras these days are pretty good - you don't have to have an SLR to get good photos. However if you do have a D-SLR it's worth using it.

Do take your photos using a high resolution setting – you can always reduce the number of pixels later, if you need to. Use a tripod. They are not expensive and are well worth it. Many come with a clip for mounting a phone (or you can buy a phone clip separately).

Take your photos in an area with even natural light - we use our conservatory. A cloudy day is better

than a sunny one. Don't use flash unless you know how to use it well.

Support your picture on a stand such as an easel, music stand or even a pile of books. Alternatively, hang it on the wall provided there is enough light. It's difficult to take a good photo of a picture lying horizontally on a table without distortion.

Angle your camera so that it is angled to correspond to your stand and so that it is straight on to the work in order to minimise distortion. Fill as much of the viewfinder as possible with the work (without cutting any off). Take your photos using a self-timer (most phone cameras will have such a function). Step away so you so you don't cast a shadow on the work.

Crop your images to remove extraneous background. You don't need specialist software for this.



Note the camera phone is angled to correspond to the angle of the stand

Most phone camera apps have an edit function which includes a crop option; you can also crop your photos with 'Google Photos'. Camera apps can also be used to adjust exposure if necessary.

Finally, don't try to photograph your work behind glass. If photographing 3D work, do take images from more than one angle so that it can be fully appreciated.

If you would like more detailed information, have a look at the blogs below (one for using a phone camera & the other with a D-SLR):
<https://vandymasseystudio.art/photographing-your-paintings-with-a-phone-a-very-simple-guide/>

<https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/4-steps-to-photographing-your-art-like-a-professional>

NEW FRIEND'S PROFILE

Fionn Obeirne introduces a new friend of CDS, Yelena Karl: The Pick of the Litter

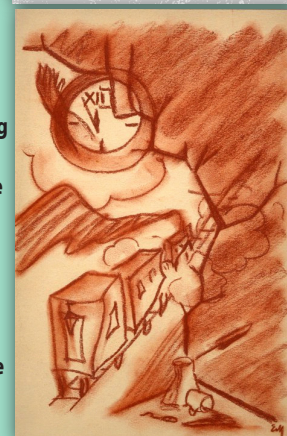
Yelena and I met in the Fitzwilliam Café, and I was late. She didn't mention it. We chose a table and my curiosity kicked in: Yelena was beautifully and casually dressed in a bright red sweater and wearing a delicate necklace with a tiny stone ball, gripped by a minute metal figure. Was she a fan of Miley Cyrus? I never asked. I did realise that this is someone I don't often bump into in Cambridge. She doesn't have that look of 'I've thrown these clothes on trying to look normal'. Yelena is truly an international: born in Russia, married to an American, one child born in Germany, the other here in England, and England is where their home has been since 2001.

She has a wide knowledge of Museums, and traditional artists, but her interest is in the living and contemporary, artists who don't have an established reputation, an expected valuation, and critical reputations. Her art history knowledge is impressive, and her taste inclines towards the narrative and local observations such as a Windmill by Sherry Rea, a local artist. When her friend, Svetlana Baibekova, invited her to the CDS Exhibition at the Pitt in the Spring and at the Leys School in the Autumn, Yelena went and bought some prints. At home she has a canvas which reminded her of her father's home. She loved drawing when young, and would like to get back to it, perhaps, one day. Unless she gets more serious about photography, another hobby of hers.

Here in Cambridge, she's a member of The Cambridge Russian-Speaking Society, a charity. One half of this charity is for the members share the language unifying people from the former Soviet Union, and

the other half for members who want to study Russian language and culture. Each person is welcomed on the basis of humanity, sympathy and friendship, regardless of politics. And, on top of this, Yelena helped to arrange a couple of online Art Auctions during the pandemic, and shared the winnings between the Artist and the Charity. It seems to me that Yelena gets things done. She has firm opinions and useful advice: rather than the CDS forwarding emails on up-coming exhibitions as they arrive, to collect them together and send them out in one email, maybe once a week.

But more than this, Yelena has something unique: she is a purchaser who cares about the art and has the bonus that her antennae are well-tuned: her hopes at buying at the Leys exhibition were dashed as many of the works she liked had that tell-tale red dot. Looking through the leaflet on becoming a Friend of the CDS, she noted that Friends had access before the Exhibitions open. She joined: she would choose the pick of the litter.



AUTUMN EXHIBITION 2022 AT THE LEYS SCHOOL

By Steve Ashman

This Autumn exhibition was the second most successful of all our Autumn exhibitions in the last twelve years, in terms of work sold, greetings cards sold and also financially. Footfall was a little lower compared with previous years, but this year the volume was consistent for each day throughout the week, hovering around 100 visitors each day. 137 visitors attended the Private View.

98 artists participated in the exhibition. A total of 63 works were sold to the value of £10,740 (framed and unframed). The average price of the framed works sold was £198.54. 535 greetings cards were sold.

The Friends draw for a £50 voucher, which can be used towards purchasing work in the Society's next three exhibitions was won by Patrick Baglee. The visitors raffle offered three £50 vouchers. The winners were Sally Ellis (Cottenham), Shelagh Ross (Great Gransden) and Charlotte Rivington (Cambridge). Congratulations to all.

Thank you to everyone involved in helping to make the Autumn exhibition a great success!

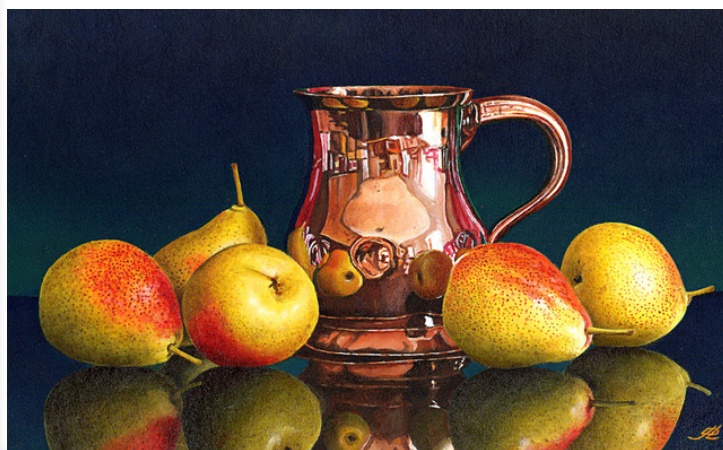
Spring Exhibition 2023

The exhibition will again be held at the Pitt Building in Cambridge. The public exhibition will run from Saturday 25th March to Saturday 1st April. Call for entries for Members and New Candidates will open in the first week of January.

The Society staged its Autumn exhibition at the Leys School in Cambridge. The public exhibition ran from Sunday 23rd October to Saturday 29th October. The Friends of the Society preview was from 11am - midday on Saturday 22nd October, followed by the formal Private View, which ran through to 3pm. The extension of the Friends preview to one hour was greatly appreciated by those attending, and I am pleased to report this will continue for all future exhibitions



Two works tied for the visitors vote for favourite work; Pond Life, a large acrylic work by Megan Ecclestone and Pears with an Old Copper Tankard, in oil, by David Leathers. Both were sold during the exhibition. Congratulations to Megan and David.



(Left) The Exhibition Hanging Team (from left to right); Emily Fowke, Niki Chandler, Rob Jones, Fran Godwood, Victoria Parker-Jervis, Phil Cope, Sue Smith, Tim Duckworth, Yang Yuxin, Steve Ashman, Naomi Tomkys and Paul Rodhouse (behind the camera).

KAREN STAMPER FEATURED IN THE ARTIST MAGAZINE

In November 2021, *The Artist* asked me if I would write about my collage paintings. The deadline was September 2022. It makes you realise how far ahead articles are planned in magazines such as this. It also shows how important social media is for getting noticed.

I keep my website up to date: www.karenstampercollage.com and regularly post on Instagram @karen_stamper_collage. I have Jo, at Cambridge Open Studios, to thank for pushing me, over 10 years ago, to get going on Instagram and Facebook.

From *The Artist Magazine* 'We have noticed your exciting collage and mixed-media work online, and I wondered if you would be interested in the idea of contributing an article, or more, for publication in a late 2022/early 2023 issue of *The Artist magazine*, based on your own approach, working methods and teaching please?'

With many months to plan and write the article I started photographing the stages of a couple of paintings ready for the article. It helped that I had two to choose from. Otherwise they wanted to know about development, working practice, challenges etc. It was fun to write and they didn't change anything. I didn't think that I would get so much positive feedback from the article, and due to my international followers on social media, people asking where they could buy it in Australia and America! The painting sold in the summer from the Thomas Henry Gallery in Newlyn, Cornwall.

In the last year I have been pushing my collages in a new direction, as well as continuing the boat paintings. This new work is bigger, bolder and more abstract - I might contact them again see if they dare to be a bit different!



Key 2023 Dates for your diary

**Annual General Meeting: Mon. 20th February
7pm, Wilkinson Room, St. John's Church, Hill Road,
Cambridge**

**Spring Exhibition: Sat. 25th March to Sat. 1st April, The
Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge**

**Autumn Exhibition: Sun. 22nd Oct. to Sat. 28th Oct.,
The Leys School, Cambridge.**

**NEW
MEMBER'S
PROFILE**

Mariya Myronova



Mariya Myronova was born in Berdyansk in the Zaporizhia Region of Ukraine in 1978. She recalls that her artistic instincts were very strong from an early age and on one occasion, her parents were summoned to her school to clean and varnish her desk, which was covered in her ballpen art! She was accepted into art college at the age of ten and after five years' study, left with a diploma in Art and Design.

Mariya longed to study art in Kyiv and become a professional painter and, though her parents insisted that she should remain in Berdyansk and train to be a languages teacher, she continued studying art with local artist Yuri Zatoria. Five years later, Mariya graduated with honours and moved to Kyiv to do a PhD in languages. Once in the capital, she took two part-time jobs, one as manager of an international school, the other as an apprentice in graphic-design. After just two weeks, however, Mariya was given a full-time graphic-design contract and worked in Kyiv for five years.

Mariya married in 2004 and moved to Cambridge, where she now lives with her husband and three children, and until 2020 continued to work as a graphic-designer. At this time in her life, painting (as opposed to graphic-design) was a hobby for Mariya - for relaxation and recreation - but it became particularly important to her after her father died in 2016. She recalls that 'It was the only thing that

returned me back to life. I discovered a completely new, happy world of art with unlimited creativity and freedom. It was the time when I started to teach art and share my love of creativity and free thinking.'

The pandemic of 2020 brought big challenges, of course. Along with a hundred other colleagues, Mariya was made redundant with little financial compensation. Though shaken and depressed by the loss of her job, she began a new phase in her life, in which she was able to concentrate on new studies, her art, family and teaching art. Her home became her office, her studio and her classroom. Mariya followed on-line classes with Stanislav Brusilov, an artist from The Moscow Surikov Art Institute, Helena Tatkina, Olga Guseva and many others. Mariya combines Art-history and creativity in her teaching methods and Gustave Klimt, Rene Magritte and Claude Monet became her mentors: 'You will never run out of ideas with such a rich art heritage.'

Mariya works in a range of media; mainly oil and oil-pastels but watercolour, soft pastels and acrylic also have their place in her studio. She describes her style as 'classic realism, conceptual art, surrealism and impressionism'. She sees art as her language and her pictures are conceived and developed in her imagination over a long period. She is currently working on two series; one about Ukraine and another called 'Mind Games'. She says that if her paintings give hope, motivate, open eyes and provoke thought, she is happy! 'Our conversation starts when you stop in front of the painting and read my mind.'

Mariya joined the Cambridge Drawing Society in 2022. She has shown work at the 2022 'Human Faces and Figures' on-line exhibition at Las Laguna Gallery in California and contributed to the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee Exhibition in Cambridge. She opened her art studio to the public in July as part of the Cambridge Open Studios in July 2022 and exhibited her paintings at the CDS spring and autumn exhibitions. Most recently she held a fund-raising auction called 'Happy memories of Ukraine', in aid of the people of Ukraine.

Naturally, the current war in her homeland is very painful for Mariya and she finds it difficult to talk about it: 'The wound is too big and sore.' She says that the situation has turned her whole life upside down. 'With every news from Ukraine my heart and soul are cut alive.' She has helped many friends and family to escape the war zone and found places for them to live. She takes an active part in fund-raising art projects and recently ran two art masterclasses for Ukrainian refugees in Cambridge, one of which was to create a five-meter-long picture of a golden wheat field with blue sky above, bearing the signatures of dozens of Ukrainian refugees, a banner now used at events organised by the Ukrainian community in Cambridge. Mariya says her efforts to support Ukraine 'Often it feel like a tiny drop in the ocean but I will never stop trying.'

Colin Lees

Adding Texture to your Watercolours

6th November
Workshop Summary - by
Elizabeth Jane Taylor



Q: What do you do on a wet and windy Sunday?

A: Enjoy a day making some art and learn new techniques by attending a workshop.

What a treat to be able to attend this workshop run by CDS

member Caroline Furlong. A group of six in total attended to learn about the use of mediums (excluding salt and masking fluid) in water colour painting, this was a new area for me, Caroline had prepared a large selection of mediums for the workshop participants to try out. Each of these mediums had a demonstration sheet to provide a visual record of the outcome and we all appreciated seeing examples of their use in some of Caroline's completed pieces.

During the first session before lunch we made our own reference sheets of the different mediums.

After lunch we discussed the planning of the order for painting our chosen images, this is where the reference sheets we had prepared

earlier were useful, so we could choose the most appropriate medium for selected areas on our paintings.

I used collage and gesso for texturing in my piece, see the different stages below. It is still a work in progress but I do feel that I have gained an insight into the use of different materials. So if you get an opportunity to participate in a workshop don't hesitate.

Many thanks to Caroline for generously sharing her knowledge, it was a great day out despite the gale force weather outside.



OBITUARY

Elizabeth Hunt

16th December 1922 - 13th September 2022



Members who knew her will have been saddened to learn of the death of Elizabeth Hunt, just a few months before her one-hundredth birthday. Usually known as Betty, she became a member of the CDS in 1960, though she did not exhibit her work at Society exhibitions until the mid-1970's. She was an honorary member of the Cambridgeshire District Arts Circle and was for many years part of the Haslingfield and Harlton portrait group. Raised in the countryside, Betty was always inspired by nature; she painted rural scenes in watercolour and enjoyed drawing trees. She also made portraits and still-lives, mainly in pastels. Betty and her husband Val founded the Cambridge Pottery, first at Scotsdales Garden Centre, later at Penn Farm, their home near Haslingfield. Here, Val made the pots and Betty decorated them. Always a popular and positive creative force in her community, she painted stage scenery for many local amateur theatre groups, most recently for the Haslingfield Little Theatre.

(Grateful thanks to Betty's friend, Jennifer Gore, who provided this information. *Photo of Betty courtesy of the Cambridge Independent.*)

Edited and designed by Colin Barker

Further information about the Cambridge Drawing society can be found by checking in to

<http://www.cambridgedrawingsociety.org>

Note. All website URLs in this newsletter are active. Just click on them to open.