



# The Sketch

The newsletter of the Cambridge Drawing Society

March 2024

## From the President

*Susan Abbs*



I am excited. It is such an honour to be asked to be the President of Cambridge Drawing Society and I hope I will do a good job. A huge thank you to my predecessor Paul Rodhouse for an excellent job steering us through the pandemic; organising our first ever online exhibition and zoom talks; starting this newsletter; making the society more sustainable; and creating a Friends representative on the committee.

CDS has been around for 142 years - it has only survived for this long thanks to an army of volunteers. Being part of such a society, I believe we should all do our bit to help in whatever way we can. This is the reason why I agreed to take on the presidency.

When I joined the Society 10 years ago, I had just moved from London to Cambridge and did not know anybody. I wanted to join an art society not just to gain exposure for my art but also to meet other likeminded creatives who understand the joys and frustrations of creating. Us artists are loners, we work alone, so it is wonderful to have a club where we can meet fellow artists, art enthusiasts, potential collaborators, get inspired and then disappear into our cave/studio again.

Who else understands the depths of despair over a misplaced mark on an artwork or the high after a good day of painting? So I urge you to get involved, be part of a great art community, and help our Society continue towards and beyond our 150th anniversary.



*Nearly Home*

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To encourage a sense of community and foster inclusivity, I'd like to introduce the CDS WhatsApp group - this can be used for discussing anything with fellow Members and Friends; for example it can be a platform to ask for advice on relevant topics such as framing, or to seek company when you fancy going out somewhere to paint. You can join the WhatsApp group here: <http://tinyurl.com/3m2rj3sb>

Secondly, I'd like to introduce more collaborations with the arts community in Cambridge and more events where we can meet the artists behind the artworks. First up is a special private view at Heong gallery and a talk by a leading art gallery on the best way to present our work to a gallery. Details coming up on the website, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and via email.

Following that, there are plenty of exciting possibilities to explore. How about a monthly weekend meetup to sketch somewhere in Cambridge such as a museum or a band rehearsal? Or a quarterly challenge followed by an art critique - for example a collage challenge using recycled materials, which you could present in a safe and encouraging environment for feedback by our collage experts? Or how about a monthly Zoom meet-up where we could paint in company? Great for times when we find it hard to feel inspired to pick up our paint brushes.

Please let me know if you like any of these ideas or if you have more of your own. And of course we will need volunteers to help get these events going so let me know if you'd like to help. It's our society and if we all do our bit we can make it even better: a society you want to be part of, where we can learn, share and network with other artists and enthusiasts. Let's get involved.

Susan Abbs



*Boathouse*



# Exhibition Screens

*Tim Duckworth*



The society has decided to replace our existing stock of exhibition screens. The existing screens are up to 20 years old and it no longer possible to replace individual screens when they fail. The committee therefore took the decision to buy a new set of 50

screens after a successful trial using 4 new screens at our last exhibition at the Leys school.



The new screens are scheduled to arrive in time to be used for the first time at our spring exhibition. They will all be grey giving a more uniform and smarter appearance than the old ones. No one comes to an exhibition to look at the screens, but hopefully they will provide a subtle improvement. It is also hoped they will be slightly easier to set up. As of the time of writing, I am trying to find a new home for our existing stock of screens.

Finally, screens are available to hire out from the society as explained on our website: <https://www.cambridgedrawingsociety.org/2022/10/20/exhibition-screens-for-hire/>. If you are interested in hiring screens for your own exhibition, please e-mail: [screens@cambridgedrawingsociety.org](mailto:screens@cambridgedrawingsociety.org).

## CDS Summer party Sunday 23rd June

*Save the date!*



*Cartoon by Fionn O'Berine*

## Member Profile - Craig Allan Lee

In my pursuit to capture both atmosphere and a sense of place on canvas, there really isn't any other medium I would rather use than oil paint. My inspiration mostly comes from life's everyday moments. In particular, I enjoy painting family scenes - a reflection of being a father, perhaps.



Although much of my work is figure based, I'm just as likely to find inspiration from a fruit bowl, some distant fields, a facial expression or a life model's pose. I find that the quick decision making, and colour notes taken whilst painting outside, as well as from my life drawing sessions, are invaluable tools when it comes to my studio paintings.

I love to work with the palette knife, but I also paint using a combination of both the palette knife and brushes. I would describe my painting style as being loose but considered, using a limited palette. I joined CDS in 2017 and currently sit on the selection panel for the Society's Spring exhibitions.

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As well as exhibiting with the Cambridge Drawing Society, I have also been exhibiting at the Royal Institute of Oil Painters open exhibition since 2017, the Royal Society of Marine Artists since 2019, the Artists Exhibition at Patchings, where I have won a number of awards over the years for my figurative work, and the Chelsea Art Society. In 2019 I was awarded the Society for All Artists (SAA) Artist of the year.



*Cambridge Street Scene*

# From CDS to Spaceships - Tim Duckworth

*Interview by Fionn O'Beirne*

My voyage into the CDS Committee continues to surprise. I'm discovering worlds that I didn't know existed, and now it's Science Fiction.

Tim Duckworth and his wife, Jackie, are always doing something vital to the running of CDS. In Tim's case, at the moment, it's sorting the screens. Screens, to me, seem to be a necessary nuisance, but not to Tim who presents as a spaniel but is more like a terrier. He's energetic, focused, and determined. He's also running the CDS website (you'll have noticed the changes) and is set to take over as Membership Secretary when Steve goes.

We met at the Old Bicycle Shop, and yes, it turns out that Tim is a bicyclist and wears Lycra. He bikes at week-ends, but is not an obsessive. We had a good conversation about cycle paths out to Cottenham which I knew nothing about.

Tim's first words to me were, 'I am not an artist'. I see a pattern emerging of committee members who state they are not an artist, and instead are married to one, or an amateur, and by the end of the interview, I'm thinking, well, you are an artist after all.



*Tour de Cherry Hinton, 1997*



*The figure is 25mm tall...*

*Setting up the Eastercon Art Show  
Birmingham 2023*

With Tim, his imaginative soul emerges through Dungeons and Dragons [and anyone who's seen how they paint those tiny figures knows that it qualifies them as an artist], through wargames with miniature figures, and emerges triumphantly at Eastercon, the UK national science fiction convention, where he (and Jackie) are heavily involved with running an art show.



As we chatted, I realised I'd never see this other world of Science Fiction: I floundered around and suggested Jules Verne, H G Wells and, Asimov. He updated me with IainM Banks and Ursula Le Guinn. I had NO IDEA that since the 1940's there have been Conventions of Science Fiction Fans. Did he and Jackie dress up as characters from Star Trek, with buns? No. He told me the Eastercon Conventions feature panels, workshops and an art exhibition (ah ha...Jackie), and events that anyone can join in with - and a impressive carpet!



Tim with one of his dogs

The CDS committee AND Eastercon seems, to misquote Oscar Wilde, like carelessness to me. Not to Tim. He enjoys helping and supporting both CDS AND Eastercon (and other conventions,) in his modest, self-effacing way. It soon became clear to me how skilled he is.

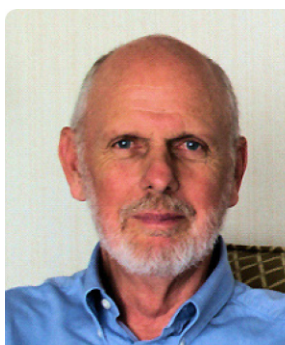
Tim began life as a scientist: a chemist with a degree and a PhD from Cambridge. (Jackie, he said with pride, has 2 Cambridge degrees). From research into organometallics as potential catalyst material, he moved sideways to become a European Patent Attorney. As a Patent Attorney (not a lawyer), he worked on all kinds of chemical & pharmaceutical inventions, leading a whiz kid career round the world, avoiding the Earth quake in Japan, with multiple visits to the USA and much time spent in Munich. Although a Partner, money didn't distract him and he DID retire early. And we Friends and Members of CDS are benefitting from his expertise.

If your partner is a member/friend of the CDS, you can join the committee to help out without being a member, or a friend yourself, no matter your provenance. And, if you were excellent at your job, then you'll find like-minded friends at the CDS.



## Sustainability Corner

**Paul Rodhouse**



A note on art and the environment  
Solvents that we use in our studios are a hazard to the environment and to ourselves. They are toxic if they get into the environment and highly flammable. If we tip them down the drain we are breaking the law. If we can smell them, or if they are in contact with our skin when we are working with them, we are at risk. Do

read the information on containers and search the internet for much more information about safe use and disposal. Working with oil paints in my home studio I wear nitrile gloves. I use Winsor and Newton's Liquin to speed drying time and tiny amounts of slow evaporating Sansodor (a few drops in a milk bottle top) to thin paint. I clean my brushes in alkali safflower oil and then wash with soap and water - I find this works well and my brushes like it too!



# The Cambridge Invitational Art Competition 2023

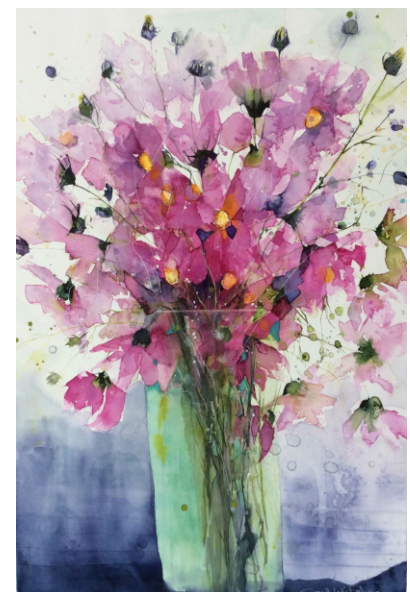
*Carol Whitehouse*



It was both a surprise and a delight to be told I was one of the 12 winners of the Cambridge International Art Competition 2023. I headed off to the Galeria Moderna in the Grand Arcade for the award ceremony on 17 December. Having never won an award for my paintings before it felt very special to receive this recognition and, on the day, also be awarded The Scudamore Art Award. It was very interesting viewing the art works of the other winners as it was a very eclectic range of styles, mediums and sculptures.



"Why flowers?" was a question I was asked. Simple – they give me the opportunity to paint in bold colours and wonderful shapes. I can change the colours and shapes in any way I want to push the boundaries of my paintings. Flowers are so emotive; we give them for so many reasons. We welcome in the seasons with different flowers. Flowers just makes me happy, and I hope that comes through in my paintings!



*Sunflowers*

*Cosmos*

# Surinder Beerh demonstration

*Paul Rodhouse*



Surinder Beerh's watercolour demonstration was a treat to watch. After a brief introduction, in the space of two hours he produced a large painting of a scene at Pin Mill on the Orwell in Suffolk. As he worked, he paused at times to comment on his approach and to answer questions. At the end of the evening, he displayed the finished work, framed by a mount.



Surinder is a regular exhibitor at the Cambridge Drawing Society and several other societies' exhibitions. His main interest is marine subjects: boats, ships, harbours, estuaries and beaches, but he also paints landscapes and cityscapes.

He took up painting after retiring from his position of CEO at Colemont in the City and rapidly fell in love with watercolour for its surprises and the never-ending results that appear out of nowhere. He has been influenced by the art of Joseph Zbukvic, Alvaro Castagnet, Chien Chung Wei and Ian McManus.

He says what he has learnt is to draw and practice every day - brush mileage is the most important thing, and every day is a challenge.



*The Blue One -  
Surinder Beerh*