



# The Sketch

The newsletter of the Cambridge Drawing Society

April 2025

## From the President

**Susan Abbs**



### Reflections on my first year

As I look back on my first year as President of the Cambridge Drawing Society, I feel an overwhelming sense of pride in what we have achieved together. This has been a year of growth, creativity, and connections—both within our Society and with the wider arts community.

### A Proud Moment at the Cambridge Arts Festival

One of my proudest moments was seeing our members shine at the Cambridge Arts Festival. We helped launch the festival by hosting a special SketchTogether session at the Museum of Cambridge, where, for the first time, members of the public joined us to sketch. Watching our members welcome and encourage newcomers was truly heartening. People who had never drawn in public before left feeling excited and inspired - all thanks to the warm and supportive spirit of our members. Seeing CDS featured on BBC Look East, with some of our members interviewed, was the icing on the cake.

It was incredibly rewarding to hear this feedback from the festival organiser:

*"I want to send a special thank you to Susan and the Cambridge Drawing Society for their commitment to working with the public and creating a fun and comfortable environment. It was really special to work with such a prestigious organisation."*

This event was a turning point, proving that we are not only a thriving artistic group but also a visible and reputable presence in Cambridge.



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## **A Stronger Sense of Community**

Strengthening our sense of community has been one of my key goals, and I'm delighted to see it happening. Our CDS WhatsApp group has become a vibrant hub of conversation, with 73 Members and Friends actively sharing news, opportunities and artwork. Our SketchTogether sessions have also been a wonderful way to bring our Members and Friends together. These monthly gatherings have got us sketching all over Cambridge, from Fitzwilliam Museum and Quayside to the Shakespeare Festival rehearsal and even the Bridge the Gap charity walk. More than just an opportunity to sketch, these events have been a fantastic way to socialise, connect, and explore new places together - often ending in a very sociable lunch. With around 25 participants regularly attending, it's been wonderful to see how these sessions have strengthened friendships within the Society.

I am especially pleased to see our Friends getting involved in these events, joining in the sketching and becoming an active part of our creative community. It's fantastic to see how welcoming our members are, and I know many of our Friends have found these sessions a great way to connect with like-minded people and develop their artistic confidence.

We have even more exciting outings planned, including the Cambridge Country Show and St John's College, and we have been invited back to Bridge the Gap. If you haven't been to one yet, I really encourage you to join us - it's a brilliant way to get inspired, see different parts of Cambridge, and get to know each other.



## **A Growing Reputation**

Beyond our own events, our reputation as a leading art society continues to grow. We have strengthened our connections with the Cambridge arts community, holding a special private view at Heong Gallery, inviting the manager of Cambridge Contemporary Art to share insights on approaching galleries, and collaborating with other cultural institutions. Interest in membership is so high that we had to pause applications last year and we now have a waiting list of over 70 artists eager to join. CDS is officially the art society to be part of!

## **Exhibition Success**

Both our Spring Exhibition at the Pitt Building and our Autumn Exhibition at The Leys School have been hugely successful, with strong sales, record visitor numbers, and an incredible standard of work on display.

Meanwhile, CDS members have continued to make their mark beyond Cambridge, exhibiting everywhere from the Royal Academy and Mall Galleries to Los Angeles. It is an honour to lead such a talented and ambitious group of artists.

## Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, I'm delighted to welcome two new committee members:

- Annelies MacIntosh as Events Secretary, who will be bringing fresh ideas and energy to our programme of talks, workshops, and the summer party.
- Tim Milner as Treasurer, ensuring our Society remains on a firm financial footing as we continue to grow.
- In addition, Tim Duckworth, our screens manager and web admin, has added another role to his repertoire - he is now also our Membership Secretary.

It is an exciting time for CDS. Our Society is thriving, our Members are achieving incredible things, and - most importantly - we continue to support and inspire one another as a creative community. Thank you all for making this such a fantastic first year. Here's to another great one ahead!

## Committee Q&A

### *Tim Milner - new Treasurer*

I joined CDS in 2014, I have always been passionate about drawing and art in general. It is a place where I can develop my art and learn a lot from others. I relocated to Cambridge from the South Coast in 2014 to work for a tech company. I originally come from Lincolnshire.

#### ***What is your favourite subject in your art?***

My favourite subjects are buildings and nature. I love architecture and being in town, I like observing people and the variety of characters that one sees in Cambridge.

#### ***Do you have any hobbies?***

I love the game of cricket and used to play when I was younger. I cycle, walk, I like growing vegetables. I build the odd computer too! I used to play a lot of role playing games like D&D, these days I mostly play these type of games on a PC.

#### ***What would your superpower be?***

Teleportation.

#### ***What did you want to be growing up?***

I wanted to fly aircraft as my father was an aircraft engineer. When I got older I realized I was scared of heights!

#### ***What is your most treasured possession?***

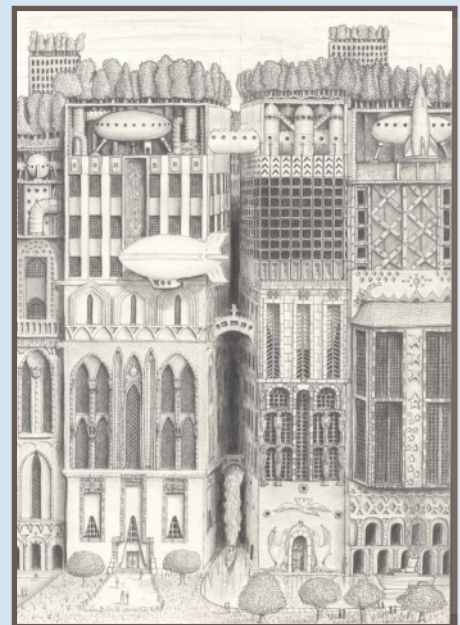
An old oak desk, it came from a drawing office in an engineering company.

#### ***What is your guilty pleasure?***

Peanut Butter. I once brought 10 jars of my favourite brand back from Texas.

#### ***Anything else?***

For most of my life I have been an engineer working on computer chips, but I've always been the creative type. I've always had several drawings on the go and I write journals, short stories, etc. My job has been filled with numbers and problem solving, so I hope I can bring this to the role of treasurer and give something back to the society that I so enjoy.



*The City*



# Four Ways of Seeing

*Jill Ogilvy*

Four Ways of Seeing is a new exhibiting group co-founded by myself and three other professional artists; sculptor Sue Law, painter/printmaker Judy Logan, and textile artist Deanna Tyson. We formed 4Ways to create exhibition opportunities that allow us to explore shared themes while celebrating our differences as artists.



*4 Ways Artist group: (Left to Right) Sue, Deanna, Jill, Judy.*

The idea for the group arose from a sense of dissatisfaction with local exhibiting opportunities. Rather than simply discussing the issue, we decided to take action and challenge conventional ideas of what's considered 'in' or 'out'. As Judy put it, "Each of us works in very different media, and we know we work well together—we're a feisty bunch!" Having exhibited alongside each other in various venues for over a decade in London, Norwich, and Cambridge, it made sense to pool our skills and collaborate in curating, marketing, and exhibition planning.

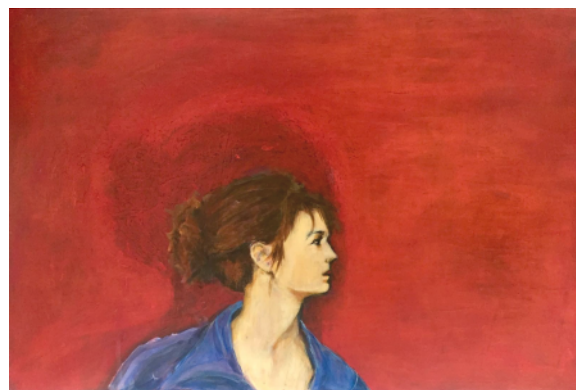


Our first exhibition, Disconnect–Reconnect, was held at Cambridge Artspace in May 2024. The show responded to the shared experience of the recent years of disconnection, raising the question: how do we reconnect? Each of us created a new piece addressing this theme, using our respective disciplines. The exhibition was well attended, and the opening event sparked thoughtful discussions with visitors. Speaking directly to our audience about our work was a key part of the experience, and feedback suggested this added a special dimension to the show.

*Two's Company - Jill Ogilvy*



In October, we took a step beyond Cambridge with a larger exhibition at Anteros Arts Foundation in Norwich, aiming to introduce our work to a new audience. However, just weeks before the opening, a change in management at the gallery led to unforeseen challenges. Whilst we had been assured that all publicity was in place, we later discovered that no announcements or invitations had been sent out.



*Unseen Connections - Judy Logan*

Although we had promoted the show ourselves, we had been counting on the gallery to help attract new visitors to see our work. As a result, the opening was disappointingly quiet. Although this was hugely frustrating, it was a learning experience, and we are determined to ensure better communication with venues in future. Those who saw the exhibition were all very complimentary, remarking, *"So full of life and thought, a wonderful experience," "Wow Wow Wow! So glad I got here." "Absolutely fantastic, what variety,"* and *"Loved all your work."*

Looking ahead, we have several exhibitions in the pipeline and are currently researching new venues. In the meantime, we would love to invite CDS members to our next show.

'Figure it Out...' will be open from 24–26 May at Cambridge Artspace in Green's Road, Cambridge. The Private View is on Friday, 23 May, from 6:00–8:00pm, and the exhibition runs throughout the bank holiday weekend. There will also be workshops on Saturday and Sunday providing an opportunity to meet the artists, explore their work, and join the conversation. We look forward to welcoming you!

Opening times: Saturday and Sunday: 11:00am–5:00pm. Bank Holiday Monday: 11am – 4pm.

Workshops: Saturday and Sunday: 2–4pm Monday: 12 Noon – 2 PM.

Keep an eye out for updates in the CDS news and on social media!

Deanna Tyson: [www.deannatyson.co.uk](http://www.deannatyson.co.uk) / @deanna.m.tyson

Sue Law: [www.suelawart.com](http://www.suelawart.com) / @suelawart

Judy Logan: [www.judylogan.co.uk](http://www.judylogan.co.uk) / @judylogan101artist

Jill Ogilvy: [www.jillogilvy.co.uk](http://www.jillogilvy.co.uk) / @jillogilvyartist



*I Don't Do Angry III - Sue Law*

*The Artist and his Muse - Deanna Tyson*

# A New Look for the Spring 2025 Exhibition

*Steve Ashman*

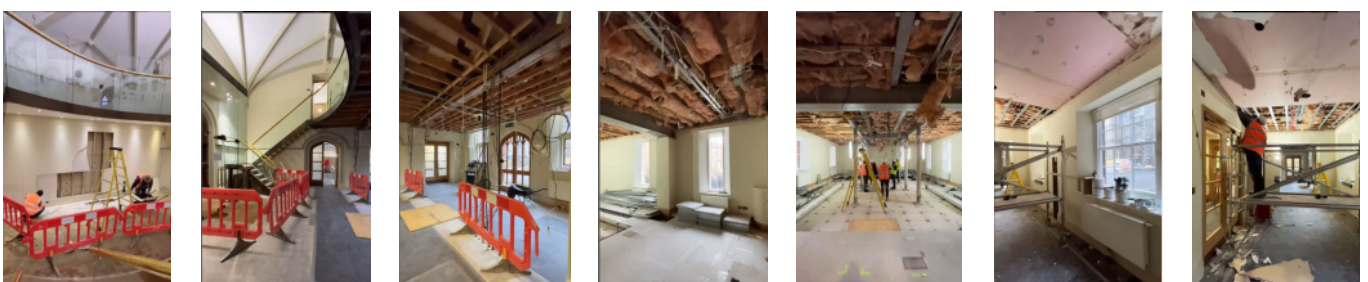


The 2025 Spring Exhibition is going to look and feel a little bit different this year. Extensive refurbishment of the Pitt building over the last few months, planned to complete on 25th April, will deliver a complete new look reception area, opening up an area from the front to the back of the building, and including a new accessible ground floor toilet. The smaller of our two exhibition rooms, the Newton room will have the cosmetic pillars removed, creating a complete open space to display artworks. Both the exhibition rooms will be completely redecorated. All this work will result in a vibrant and welcoming environment for our Spring exhibition.

Because this building work overran the original planned completion date, our exhibition has been moved to later in the Spring this year. The public exhibition will open on Saturday 31st May and run through to Saturday 7th June. It will be interesting to see what effect this later date has on the visitor demographic, and of course, the anticipation is the weather will be brighter and warmer than during our usual exhibition dates in March.



*Work in Progress at the Pitt Building - 14/3/25*





For 2025, we have re-introduced an open call for new candidates to apply to become members of the Society. At the time of writing, 73 local artists have registered an interest and submissions are starting to come in. On the selection day It is always exciting to see new works from the population of new talent in Cambridge and the surrounding towns and villages.

Although it is too early to be precise, the Spring 2025 exhibition is expected to have some 120+ artists exhibiting over 400 pieces of new, original work. It is going to be a marvellous event for all.

Finally, I must mention the great job my successor, Monica Alikoviene, is doing preparing for this exhibition. Monica formally took over the role of Exhibition Secretary from February, and we have been working together for some months to enable Monica to learn all the activities associated with planning the Society's exhibitions. We continue to work together for the Spring exhibition and look forward to it being a great success.



## Easy Like Sunday Morning

***Monica Alikoviene***



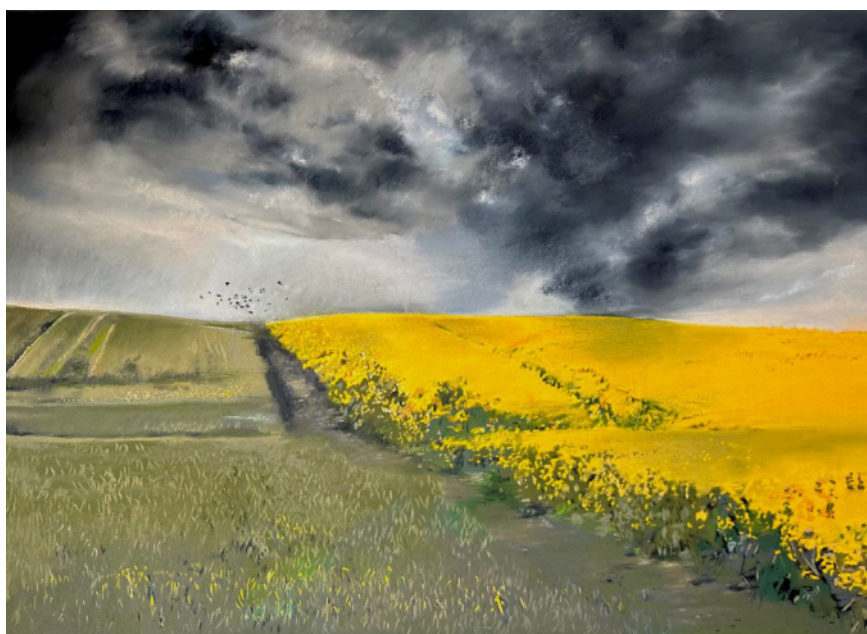
There's a certain kind of magic in slow Sunday mornings—the kind where the sunlight filters softly through the curtains, the scent of fresh coffee lingers in the air, and time itself seems to stretch in the most gentle way. This painting is my attempt to capture that feeling—the ease, the warmth, and the quiet joy of a day that unfolds at its own pace, when life feels effortless and when the world slows down just enough to be savoured—no rush, no worries, just the comfort of a new day beginning with light, warmth, and beauty.

*Monica's new painting will be on show at the Spring Exhibition, and has featured on all our publicity material.*

*She was invited to create a piece as the winner of the public vote for favourite artwork at the Spring Exhibition 2024.*

# Taking Flight

*Katy Bailey*



*Flight*

The Pastel Society's 126th exhibition, was held at the Mall galleries, London Jan 22nd- Feb 8th 2025. I was very lucky to have two works go straight through to final selection out of the five I submitted. Sometimes they go to pre-selection for another viewing before a decision. Usually I submit my newest pieces, over the years these have been landscapes. This year I wanted something quite strong that would stand out from a distance and used the yellow canola fields as inspiration.

The day before the Private View I had a notification to say I had won the West Dean-Faber Castell award and to ask if I would be attending to accept it from the President of the Pastel Society and the CEO of Caran D'Ache. The Private View was so busy, and a lot of wonderful artists, members and viewers stopped me to compliment me about my work. It was very encouraging.



The Pastel Society has changed their entry criteria. To become a Member, in addition to getting at least two works in over three consecutive years, a portfolio is requested for Members to vote on. There are 1600 entries from non members each year and just 3-8 candidates for membership. I was very lucky to have got this far. Unfortunately I didn't quite get a majority vote this year, but I was strongly advised to try again next year. It has been a dream for a long time; the Society had Degas, Whistler, Rodin and Brangwyn amongst notable past members since the Society began in 1898.

On the back of this show I had The Gallery in Holt ask for five pieces for their Dry Lines exhibition in the Summer and I have several other opportunities to consider.

In the years that I have made pre-selection and selection it has been very exciting. There is a strong camaraderie, all singing the praises of dry media and encouraging others to take it up. If you are thinking of applying, it is very worthwhile.