



The Sketch

The newsletter of the Cambridge Drawing Society September 2025

From the President - Unsung Heroes

Susan Abbs



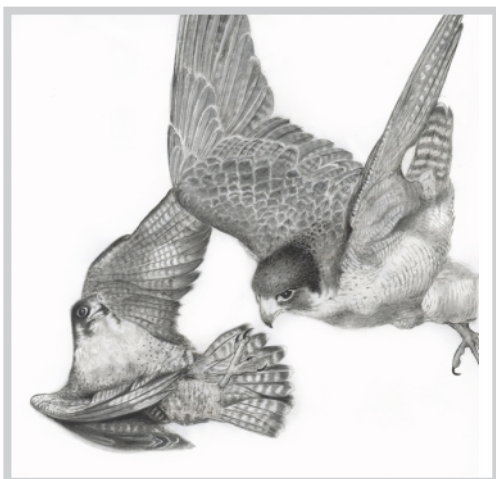
I hope you've all had a lovely, relaxing summer - whether that's been on holiday, pottering in the garden, or simply enjoying some painting time.

While many of you have been taking things a little easier, I've been constantly reminded how lucky we are to have such a dedicated committee working away behind the scenes to keep CDS thriving.

After our Spring Exhibition, Tim Milner, our Treasurer, has been quietly sorting the finances - paying the bills, balancing the books, and making sure sales money found its way back to the right artists. Monica Alikoviene, our Exhibitions Secretary, is already deep into planning for the Autumn Exhibition, and Jane Taylor has been preparing all the publicity so the word gets out.

Tim Duckworth, our Membership Secretary, has been patiently handling queries about membership, screens, and the website, while Steve Ashman has been steadily improving our database to make life easier for everyone.

Our Events Secretary, Annelies Macintosh, has lined up some cracking activities: from a Sumi ink workshop with Sachiko Purser, to a webinar on pricing your work, and our first CDS outing - a visit to the Courtauld Gallery. I can't wait!



Peregrine Falcons
Sumi ink painting
by Sachiko Purser

I have really enjoyed running the monthly SketchTogethers with Maureen Mace, with highlights including sketching at a Cambridge Shakespeare Festival rehearsal and the Cambridge Country Show. Next up - sketching the wonderful Bridge the Gap charity walk.

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On social media, Diane Firth has been introducing new members on Facebook and Instagram, and keeping us all up to date with what's happening in the society.

Pamela Barrell and Fran Godwood have led the Summer Sketch Group into some gorgeous private gardens - such a treat! And, of course, Jackie Duckworth has once again worked her magic to pull all of this together so beautifully in these pages.

It's thanks to the energy and generosity of this team that CDS is such a vibrant and active society. Here's the thing - volunteering isn't as serious as it sounds! It's fun, sociable and a lovely way to feel more connected. If you'd like to play a part, do think about giving it a go.

Most of all, next time you see one of the committee, please join me in saying thank you. I'm so grateful for everything they do.



Summer Sketch Group (L to R)

Victoria Parker-Jervis, Helen Clarke, Fran Godwood, Emily Fowke

Isabelle Tombs, Susan Abbs, Pamela Barrell

Autumn Exhibition 2025

Monica Alikoviene



We are looking forward to welcoming visitors to our forthcoming Autumn Exhibition at The Leys School, running from 26th October to 1st November. This year's publicity features a beautiful painting by John Glover, winner of the Public Favourite Vote at the 2024 Autumn Exhibition, created specially for this purpose.

Around one hundred artists will be exhibiting more than 250 new original works in a wide range of styles and media. For the first time at The Leys, our new card racks will showcase a wide variety of greeting art cards, making it easier for visitors to browse and enjoy them.

Based on previous years, we anticipate more than a thousand visitors across the week, and we hope that many Friends and Members who are not exhibiting this year will come along to enjoy the show and support the Society.

The exhibition promises to be another inspiring celebration of our Members' creativity. Looking ahead, the next Spring Exhibition will take place at the Pitt Building from 18th to 25th April 2026.

Orchard in Winter

John Glover with Jane Taylor

After winning the public's favourite picture choice last autumn (2024), long standing CDS artist John Glover was invited to submit a work specifically for the Autumn 2025 exhibition.

John says: "Barrow, the village in Suffolk where I live is surrounded by apple orchards, hence the subject of the painting 'Orchard in Winter'. I enjoy the challenge of changing light conditions and having to battle with the elements, even in freezing conditions, it certainly makes you work at great speed before frostbite sets in".

A viewer's response to an image is not just about observing the visual image but also evoking the feelings of its creation and consider what made the artist want to paint En Plein Air in winter. Come along to the Autumn exhibition to view his painting "Orchard in Winter' and see if it resonates with you.



John Glover is a graduate of the Glasgow School of Art, Jordanhill College, and the Open University. After graduating he worked for ten years in London as a freelance book illustrator for several well known publishers. He is also a previous President of CDS.

Since 1980 John has concentrated on portraiture and landscape painting, working in a wide variety of mediums. He is well known for his ability to sensitively capture the sitters characters whether it's for an official academic portrait or an intimate family group. His landscapes have covered locations from East Anglian skies and Scottish beaches to the warm colours of France and Italy. Over his extensive career John has received many awards and has exhibited with several UK national institutions including the National Portrait Gallery, The Royal Institute of Oil Painters and The Pastel Society.

www.johngloverportraits.com

Adventures at the Swissartexpo, we're not in Kansas any more

Naomi Tomkys OBE

This strange adventure began in a very average way. I applied, as hundreds of others had, for a grant from Artboxy to cover the cost of a stand at the Swissartexpo. The cost of a booth ranges from £2-6K so I absolutely wasn't going if I had to pay for it. Shockingly, I won the smallest booth size 2mx2m (valued at £2K).

Being completely green to art fairs, I was surprised by the sheer amount of paperwork needed; hanging plans, blurb for the marketing, website, labels. Then to book the hotel, flights and onto the logistics of getting the artwork there. I've been using Packable in Basingstoke for international sales for a while and they did everything, Liam is fab, highly recommended. The art crate arrived 3 days early at the hotel and is yet to return (DHL still have it running around Europe).

I arrived to unpack with about 120 other artists at the venue early the following morning, everyone polite but still organised chaos. I had a screwdriver but no hammer, a level but no tape measure....a hot mess. The hanging was approved by the organisers and so I left, I can only give the illusion of confidence for so long.

Two days later I still had no sales. Lots of people passed by my work but I was feeling increasingly and painfully awkward, overpriced wine and melted cheese did not take the edge off. Then came the 'art party'. Finally, the first sale and it was one of my big paintings. Twenty minutes later came the next two sales. These were bought by a Swiss gentleman in a rather dapper suit. He insisted we went out to celebrate right away so with husband in tow we ended up drinking excellent champagne until 2am, our new friend insisted on paying the bill which was great because I absolutely couldn't have afforded it. To be clear, nights like this are not normal for me. The nice gentleman then talked about his family's art works, the D'Albret Collection which I hadn't realised I was now part of. He invited us to see one of his family's homes on Lake Constance the following day to discuss an art residency there...yes, it felt as unreal as it sounds.



The following morning, with an enormous hangover, I popped into the venue again and sold my last painting. The elation compared to the first two days in Zurich was absurd. That afternoon we went up to the lake with our lovely new friend and to my surprise it was all true, I start the residency in November '25.

Home now, still finishing off the unpacking. Lots of new artist friends from all over Europe and I'm even getting emails from people in Switzerland who picked up my flyers, one has just bought a painting from an exhibition I've got starting at Fitzbillies in September.

It's been a great adventure but I'm not sure I'd do it again. I think a lot of it was luck. Most artists sold one or two pieces and given the financial outlay needed it's touch and go to make it work. It's all a risk but I think deciding to paint for a living might be enough risk for me.

Now back to the river, I've not got anything for the next CDS show so I'd better get cracking.



Hats and Shoes on the Cam

www.tomkys.com

Fitzbillies Café will play host to a solo exhibition of new oil paintings by Naomi Tomkys OBE. It runs from 12th September to 8th December 2025

The Seven Heavenly Virtues of Framing for CDS!

Jackie Duckworth and Dave Pettifer

- Stick a label on the back of the picture, and attach a dangling label, and check that ALL the details on BOTH match your submission details.
- Check that the frame is good quality and undamaged with no gaps at the mitres.
- For small artworks we recommend HangRight clips so they don't pitch forwards.
- Use a proper board backing, securely attached with tabs or points
- Attach D rings to the back of your picture
- Use picture cord or wire, not string
- Seal the back of your picture with framing tape

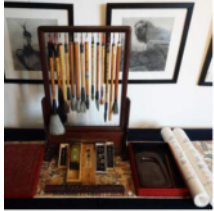


Autumn Events Updates

Annelies Macintosh

Most events and talks are free for Members and Friends, while members of the public may attend for a fee. For workshops, Members and Friends receive priority booking at a discounted rate.

For more details see our Events page: <https://www.cambridgedrawingsociety.org/events/>



Workshop

Introduction to Sumi-ink brush painting with Sachiko Purser

Sunday 21st Sept 25 2pm-4pm



Social Events

CDS Visits The Courtauld 'Masterpieces from the Barber Institute of Fine Arts'.

Saturday 4th Oct 25



Seasonal Pub Social, The Red Bull Newnham

Thurs 4th Dec 25, 7.30pm onwards



Talks

Richard Farleigh **'Art as Legacy: Documenting and Preserving Practiices.'** at the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Friday 7th Nov 25, 10-12pm & 2pm-4pm



Q&A Session : **'Pricing and Selling Your Artwork. Live Q&A** session with artist coach Claudia Kennaugh'

Wed 12th Nov 25, 12pm - 1pm



SketchTogether group

October - Hilton Piano Bar

November - Museum of Classical Archeology

December - Mill Road Winter Fair

Would you be interested in giving a talk, demonstration or workshop for the Members and Friends of CDS? This is a paid opportunity also open to non-Members.

The Drawing Society will handle the administration of the event and book the venue for you. If interested, email anneliesmacintosh@gmail.com for more details.

Breathing in Colour

Niki Chandler



Which came first - the textiles or the prints?

I have always produced an initial body of drawing, or other art exploration, in order to know how to progress my ideas. These concrete investigations help me to develop the composition, find elements to translate into stitch and textile techniques, to know what I am aiming to capture, to gain an overall sense of the visual outcome I seek to express. Over time the two elements, printmaking and stitched textiles, have become inextricably linked in how I create my art feeding back and forward into each other.

The making process of the stitched pieces is long and slow, often needing to be meticulously planned, taking weeks and months to complete. Printmaking has always been at the heart of how I generate a direction of travel and a unique aesthetic. My go-to print technique is monotypes. Making monotypes, using the fabric as a substrate for transferring the inks onto paper, allows me to work with pace, to work on multiple pieces at once exploiting the inherent properties of the printmaking process i.e. the ghost print, the image left on the acrylic sheet that holds the inks once it has been passed through the printing press. And because with monoprinting there is no fixed plate it has a wonderful serendipitous nature that allows for the reveal of the unexpected happy accident that can take you in a new direction.

What are the links between the two media in your art?

Most of my work over the past 25 years has concerned itself with the humble shadow as a metaphor to express the evanescence of life and the transient nature of time passing. All my work is abstract thus giving it a timelessness.



My textile practice sits within the traditional craft of patchwork and quilting. Often small units are made and pieced together into a grid framework to make a larger whole. I have found this useful in creating larger print compositions as I only have a small printing press.

Since 2022 I have been working solely with synthetic dance net using the simplest geometric forms often employed in creating patchwork blocks,(square, circle, triangle), in order to concentrate on developing and understanding my working process and to see how far I can go with one material. My current body of work, *Breathing in Colour Series*, is looking at colour mixing and colour blending. Because the netting is an open mesh it allows one colour to speak through another colour making the eye work to blend them. In both genres I start with a limited palette of colours creating differing hues by over printing many times or over layering the net squares.

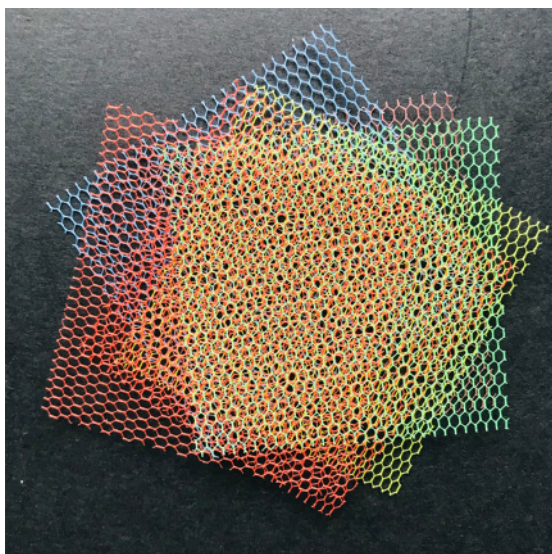
My latest textile panels have experimented with coloured backgrounds as oppose to a neutral white. This may be the next logical step to explore in my monoprint works.



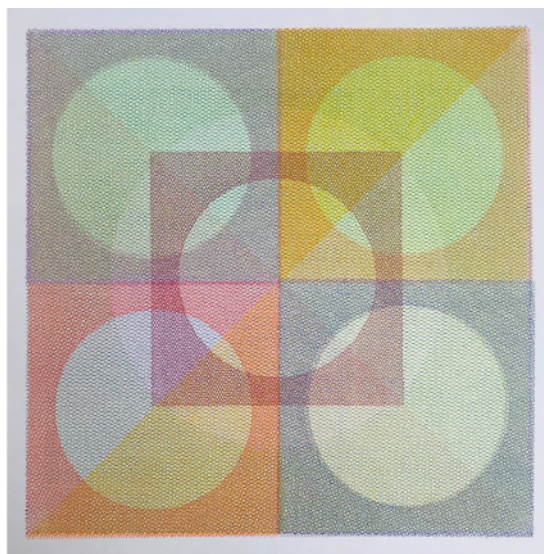
Edge of Land

What inspired you to become a textile artist?

Making and stitching is a natural part of my heritage as there are couturier dressmakers on both sides of my family. I originally trained as a theatrical set & costume designer for the stage and television. During shallow periods of design work I would make costumes for West End shows and the Royal Ballet, Covent Garden, hence my affection and association with ballet dance net in my current artistic practice.



Tulle dance net



Floating Patchwork Square Circle

Is textile art still controversial?

Textiles have a long history of being associated with both craft and women's work and thus a more lowly and less relevant fine art genre for collectors. In my own small way I aim to challenge that idea. Though textile art has come a long way within the upper echelons of the Fine Art Establishment, smaller galleries still find it hard to know how to present textile art to the public and will not represent textile artists.

I have previously exhibited my monotype textile prints at CDS, and I am hoping to hang them alongside the related stitched textile panels in the future.

Are you part of a group of textile artists?

I belong to two exhibiting textile art groups, Prism Textiles, an International group and Anglia Textile Works. I appreciate being involved with others who are representing textiles in their work, often in innovative and imaginative ways that elevate the genre, spreading an awareness of what textile art can be.

The Prism Textiles group have an annual selected exhibition in London working to a unifying title. The selection process keeps you pushing at the boundaries of what is possible and keeps your work contemporary and forward looking and of the highest standard much like the CDS annual Spring Show.

www.angliatextileworks.com/niki-chandler.html

Niki will be exhibiting monoprints and textile pieces at the Wightman Gallery, Saffron Walden 28 August - 28 September, including *The Light & The Shadow I, II & III*.

The gallery is open Tuesday - Sunday 11am until 2pm

www.wightmangallery.com



The Light and the Shadow (left)