

ART APPRECIATION 2018

January 2018: SURFACE GALLERY, SNEINTON

We met at The Surface Gallery in Sneinton this month. It was an exhibition of postcards sent in from far and wide. There were about 500 postcards on display and for sale for £15 each. The subjects ranged from places, people and abstract political statements. So something to please everyone. Most postcards were painted and some were a collage of material and lace. There were some very accomplished designs and some simple patterns.

February 2018: BILLIE IRELAND

It's always extra special when you can talk to the artist themselves about their work but it doesn't happen very often. The art appreciation group had that privilege when Billie Ireland, a Nottingham artist now living in Wales, came to Lakeside to talk to us about her exhibition '*The Hormone Hermit and The Hairy Moon*' which opened yesterday, February 24th and runs till March 31st.

The exhibition charts Billie's experiences of pregnancy, birth and motherhood, having given birth to a daughter and twin sons in the last 4 years. It's a spiritual and physical journey in artworks, linking to the past and her loss of her own mother when Billie was only 4.

The exhibition is touching, colourful, humorous and exciting and Billie herself is a breath of fresh air, unpretentious, chatty and funny as well as extremely talented.

March 2018: ERIC RAVILIOUS

In March we took a look at the artwork of Eric Ravilious, presented by Brian. Most of us did not know of this artist who died too young at 39, but during his life he prolifically produced water colours, in his unique style and interesting limited palette. He also made many engravings and was a talented designer of ceramics, furniture, textiles, wallpapers and glassware.



He was an official war artist and this was reflected in his work but he also loved the South Downs which he represented in his interesting style, which often had strong lines of perspective leading one's eye to the horizon. He also produced commercial work for London Transport and other organisations that were keen to produce quality posters reflecting their strengths and delights.

The V & A has a good collection of his work and also it can be found on YouTube as we discovered after some initial difficulties but it came right in the end!

April 2018: SCALING THE SUBLIME

We visited the Djanogly Art Gallery for a guided tour of their current exhibition, Scaling the Sublime. The talk was given by the co-curator, Nicholas Alfrey, who took the group around several of the works on display. The 'sublime' was a term used in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by painters, to demonstrate the position of man in relation to nature.

In this exhibition contemporary artists have attempted to show the same sense of awe but delivered in a form other than traditional painting. An example of this is an installation entitled After Life by Mariele Neudecker, in which the artist had crated a large, white area, representative of the Antarctic, which attempts to demonstrate the vastness of the continent.

May 2018: DERBY ART GALLERY

The group's meeting in May was at the Derby Art Gallery and Museum to view the current exhibition *"The Art of Industry: From Joseph Wright to the 21st Century"*.

The exhibition is designed to show artwork which reflects the human, environmental and aesthetic impact of industry on local society across this time frame, from the buildings and processes to industrial workers and their employers.

The exhibition examines the various ways artists have viewed industry since the early days of the Industrial Revolution to the present day, from buildings set in sublime landscape to the 'dark satanic mills' as well as technological power houses of today.

The 'Iron Forge' painted by local artist Joseph Wright in 1772 is on loan from the Tate and has returned to Derby for the first time since the 18th century. Other notable artists on view include Ford Maddox Brown, L.S. Lowry, Graham Sutherland and Sir Edwardo Paolozzi.

The exhibition was thoroughly engrossing and enjoyed by all of us, provoking a lot of comment and discussion.

July 2018: BALINESE ART

'I learned so much, my head nearly blew off'. 'We thanked Paul with tears in our eyes'. 'I never knew there was so much art in Bali'. In the interests of reporting integrity, I should point out that only one of these statements is true.

We did however look at the evolution of art in Bali in the twentieth century. In the space of around 40 years, art changed from a religious, ceremonial and largely anonymous craft with strict stylization and muted colours. It became far more fluid with artists who developed a recognizable individual style, a more colourful palette and subjects drawn from everyday life and landscape.

We looked at around 60 pictures to illustrate these changes which were due in no small measure to the influence of three European artists: Rudolf Bonnet, Walter Spies and Arie Smit, all of whom had made Bali their home and who sought to aid and develop local artistic talent.

If you'd like to find out more, there are some notes copied from Wikipedia below and [click on this link](#) to see a PowerPoint presentation of the photos that we viewed.

Prior to the 1920s, Balinese traditional paintings were restricted to what is now known as the [Kamasan](#) or [Wayang](#) style. It is a visual narrative of Hindu-Javanese epics: the [Ramayana](#) and [Mahabharata](#), as well as a number of indigenous stories, such as the [Panji](#) narrative.



Pre-1920 Kamasan Palindon Painting detail - courtesy The Wovensouls Collection, Singapore

There were many experiments with new types of art by Balinese from the late nineteenth century onwards. These experiments were stimulated by access to new materials (western paper and imported inks and paint), and by the 1930s, new tourist markets stimulated many young Balinese to be involved in new types of art.

Among western artists, Spies and Bonnet are often credited for the modernization of traditional Balinese paintings. From the 1950s onwards Balinese artists incorporated aspects of perspective and anatomy from these artists. More importantly, they acted as agents of change by encouraging experimentation, and promoted departures from tradition. The result was an explosion of individual expression that increased the rate of change in Balinese art. The 1930s styles were consolidated in the 1950s, and in more recent years have been given the confusing title of "modern traditional Balinese painting".

The accompanying *PowerPoint* presentation illustrates this development by focussing on:

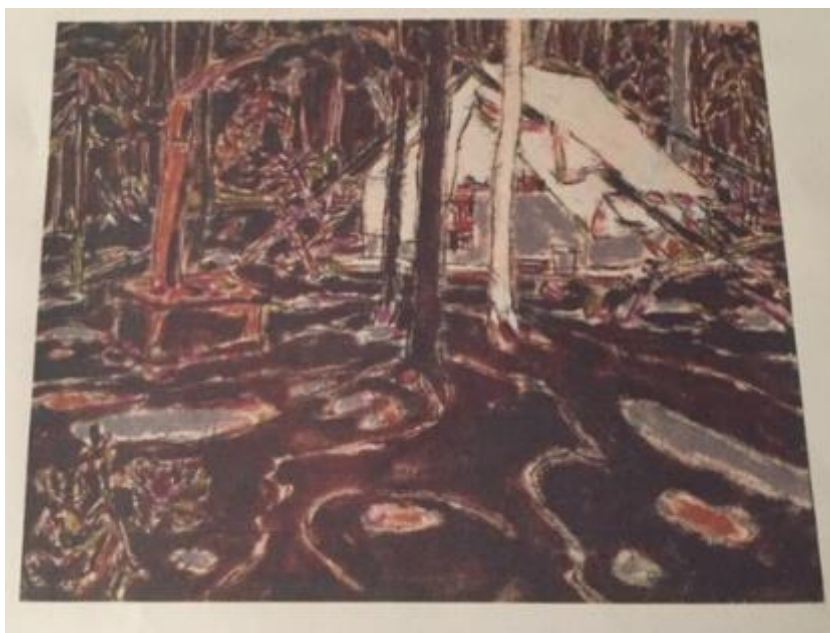
- Johan Rudolf Bonnet
- Walter Spies
- Ida Bagus Made Poleng
- Anak Agung Gde Sobrat
- I Gusti Nyoman Lempad
- I Gusti Made Deblog
- Adrianus Wilhelmus "Arie" Smit
- Contemporary Art from Bali

October 2018: DAVID MILNE

We looked at the work of Canadian artist David Milne. None of the group were familiar with Canadian art so it was interesting to discover a group that was new to us all.

Milne was born to in Ontario, Canada. He was one of the first post-impressionists to appear on the North American scene in the 1900s, and was part of the Armory Exhibition held in New York in 1912. Up until this time Canadian art had been largely representational. His new approach to art was to use dynamic brush strokes and more abstract stylisation, which showed the influence of Cezanne, Matisse and Monet. He often chose black and white to convey atmosphere and what he called his 'dazzle points' to draw the eye to particular points in his paintings.

As his work developed he became more and more economic with his brush strokes and used these to paint his Canadian scenery as well as still lifes.



Tent in Temangi 1929



Pink Reflections Bishops Pond