From the Chair

Since our last issue we've enjoyed several inspiring events, which you can read reports of here, and at the time of writing I'm just back from our latest trip to Aberdeen to see From Van Gogh to Vettriano – an exhibition providing a rare chance to see major paintings from private collections around the north east of Scotland. We have a number of other events currently in the planning, including an important conference provisionally scheduled for 17 November - further information to follow but please keep the date free!

I'm delighted that Shona Elliott of the University of Aberdeen has now taken over the editing of the newsletter - please continue to send your news to her on s.elliott@abdn.ac.uk. Meanwhile we're delighted to welcome another new committee member, William Rough from the University of St Andrews, and we provide profiles of him and another recent addition to the team, Sabine Wieber from the University of Glasgow. This year will be my last as Chair so I’m very pleased to have so many enthusiastic people on board to ensure that the society continues in good hands.

Matthew Jarron

New Committee Members

Dr Sabine Wieber:
Dr Sabine Wieber is a Lecturer in History of Art at the University of Glasgow. She holds a PhD from the University of Chicago and her research focuses on Austrian and German art and design from 1850 – 1930, with a particular focus on the modern interior, gender and national identity. She is also interested in medical history and has recently published on the issue of mental illness in fin-de-siecle Vienna and has co-curated an international loan exhibition on this topic at the Wien Museum, Vienna in 2010. She is currently working on German Jugendstil tapestries and preparing an essay for publication on Viennese death-masks.

Dr William Rough:
Dr William Rough is based at the University of St Andrews in Fife where he is a Teaching Fellow and the School of Art History’s Evening Degree Co-ordinator. He was awarded his PhD from St Andrews, on Walter Sickert and the theatre c.1880 - c.1940 in 2010.

William has written articles on Sickert’s links to the New Drama of the early 20th century for the Tate Gallery’s Camden Town Research Project, Sickert’s relationship with the music hall for the British Art Journal and Whistler’s
etchings and dry points held in the collection of Dundee’s James Guthrie Orchar for the Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History. He has a particular interest in the relationship between theatre and art.

He is currently continuing his research into Orchar’s collection as well as a wider study of paintings of the theatre in the 19th century. He is also writing an article on the relationship between James Pryde and the theatre designer E.G. Craig.

SSAH Research Support Grants

The Scottish Society for Art History promotes scholarship in the history of Scottish art and art located in Scotland. To facilitate this, the SSAH offers research support grants from £50 to £300 to assist with research costs and travel expenses. Applicants must be working at a postgraduate level or above and should either be resident in Scotland or doing research that necessitates travel to Scotland. Application deadlines: 30 November and 31 May.

To apply please send via e-mail:

- a cover letter
- current curriculum vitae
- a brief project description (300-500 words) specifying how the grant will be used and how it relates to a broader research agenda
- a budget
- the name and e-mail address of one reference

Address applications to:

SSAH Research Support Grants
c/o Dr Shannon Hunter Hurtado
sculptthurtado@yahoo.co.uk

Upcoming Conference

Emblems of Nationhood, 1707 - 1901
10 - 12 August 2012, University of St Andrews
http://www-ah.st.andrews.ac.uk/Emblems_of_Nationhood/Home.html

‘Emblems of Nationhood – Britishness 1707-1901’ will be a three-day interdisciplinary and international conference exploring British national identity. National identity is a central point of enquiry that is repeatedly called upon in contemporary social and political rhetoric. The conference will address the roots of this theme by discussing depictions of Britain and Britishness in art, architecture, literature and philosophy between the Act of Union in 1707 and the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. Conference speakers will explore how the visual arts interact with and relate to the broader culture climate in Britain between 1707 and 1901. They will also consider how expressions of nationalism have moulded both critical perspectives on national identity and their creative products.

The SSAH will be offering bursaries to PhD students presenting art-historical papers at this conference, covering the conference registration fee and a small contribution to their subsistence. Any enquiries about applying for these bursaries should be directed to: emblemsofnationhood@gmail.com.

SSAH Events

Tour of the ‘J.D. Fergusson and France: Colour, Rhythm and Form’ exhibition,
University of Glasgow, 10th December 2011
Review by Benjamin Greenman

This exhibition of the Scottish Colourist John Duncan Fergusson brought together work from collections in France and Scotland with the purpose of exploring the artist’s lifelong
engagement with France and its significance for the development of his life and work. The curator Sarah Skinner gave us an insightful tour of this compact and rich exhibition that charted the breadth of a career which saw Fergusson’s formation as an artist in the dynamism of the Parisian art scene at the beginning of the 20th century, the importance of his sojourns in the South of France and his later life in Scotland.

In this first half of the gallery a compelling sense of the dynamism and preoccupations of Fergusson’s Paris were conveyed. A Benin bronze, the type of artefact that early modernists were enthralled by, sat alongside Fergusson’s declarative painting Les Eus (1910) which appeared in this exhibition as the fruition of the artist’s time in Paris. Echoing the motif that Matisse had asserted several years earlier, Fergusson depicts the circle of dancing figures in stark, muscular, rhythmic forms. The inclusion of publications that Fergusson contributed to indicated the artist’s growing preoccupation at the time with the philosophical ideas of Henri Bergson as well as the importance of rhythm in his work.

The second half of the exhibition demonstrated an ongoing set of formal preoccupations in the landscape and other paintings that Fergusson produced in the South of France and Scotland. Alongside familiar works such as the Hunterian’s own Spring in Glasgow (c. 1942) were notable works such as Eastre, Hymn to the Sun (1924). This brass sculpture, Fergusson’s response to seeing sun on a Renault car, showed the artist exploring, with other sculptors, the essential elements of form as well as alluding to the pervasive machine aesthetic of the period. The inclusion of documents and publications in this part of the exhibition also highlighted Fergusson’s importance for other artists. Motivated by his experience of the Parisian artistic culture decades earlier, Fergusson was active in establishing the New Art Club in Glasgow, instilling an idea about art and life that had animated his own career. The exhibition, and Sarah’s engaging and insightful commentary, offered a compelling sense of the importance of location and circumstance for the development of the artist’s work as well as his commitment to those ideals forged at the very beginning of his career.
Tour of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 2 December 2011
Review by Ellen Graves

We were very lucky to have the erstwhile Director, James Holloway, to lead us round the revamped galleries. Overall, two features in particular of the refit and rehang came to the fore. One is how the original intentions for the building to be a ‘cathedral of art’ have been fulfilled – for the first time in some cases – by the use of spaces which were previously either occupied by the Society of Antiquaries or used for storage. And this has meant that art that has never been displayed, or very seldom, now has room to spread its wings! The second striking feature of the reopening is a very strong curatorial intention and vision of placing works in their context to make them more meaningful, which this viewer at least, found resoundingly successful.

First view of the revamp was the spectacular glass lift, a foretaste of delights to come. We then encountered the new look of what was previously the Library of the Antiquarian Society (which has been relocated one floor down), now the top floor of the SNPG – a return to the original intentions of the architects in fact, fulfilled for the first time since the Gallery was built. There are now ten galleries on this floor, up from three – meaning so much more on display and out of storage!

The 17th century area now has several superb Lelys which have never been on display before. The Miniature collection, one of the best in the UK, is now shown to much greater advantage also. And for this viewer, one of the most welcome works is the newly-restored self-portrait by George Jameson, Scotland’s first internationally known portraitist, which has only very intermittently been on display in the past, and suffered from centuries of dark varnish. George is shown left foreground, palette in hand, smartly dressed in best Aberdonian burgher style, indicating his skill in all five genres: history painting, portraiture, genre painting and landscape are shown as pictures on the wall, while still life is cleverly included as a depiction of various articles assembled in the right foreground! James pointed out that the SNPG has very strong holdings in this particular area, pre-18th century Scottish art, as the predominant genre then was portraiture.

In this and all other chronological ‘areas’, there has been a strong and highly successful curatorial drive to provide meaningful context for the Gallery’s portrait holdings – sometimes in the form of other works of art, but also including information and other objects too. This is one of the most striking features of the curatorial vision at work here, and it deserves full credit.

Richard Wilson, Flora Macdonald 1722-1790
(Courtesy of The Scottish National Portrait Gallery, www.nationalgalleries.org)

The displays of 18th century art include some ‘whopper’ history paintings designed for the Great Palace; in truth, there was little market for such paintings at this time in the UK but many ambitious painters were keen to educate their patrons into commissioning such works! A very user-friendly feature of this area
is the pull-out drawers and cabinets with covers, containing collections of small items of metalwork and the like, which can be viewed by visitors. The ‘Citizens of the World’ gallery focusing on David Hume and Allan Ramsay now has the famous portrait of Ramsay’s wife, formerly located in the upstairs rooms of the Scottish National Gallery.

One of the most interesting features of the rebuild is how the former picture stores behind the arches in the second level - now showing a lovely group of Tartan portraits – have been reincorporated as Gallery space, following the original intentions of the architects. Before, these arches were completely filled in and, indeed, were hardly discernible as architectural features. Now, with the arches completely opened again, the resemblance to a ‘Cathedral of Art’ with side aisles etc, as was originally intended, can be seen by visitors.

Next, on to the 19th century in the ‘Age of Improvement’ gallery. Here the ceiling has been raised to give natural top-lighting. The theme of the room is cleverly carried out by curatorial choice of subject matter – industry, geology, and other focuses of 19th-century Scottish discovery. A particularly noteworthy display within this area is called ‘Out of the Shadow: Women of 19th century Scotland’. We were especially struck by early photos of women’s football teams, curling, bowling, cricket…!

The magnificent entry hall and the frescoes, viewable at Mezzanine level, are still much as they always have been – another sound curatorial decision! Last but not least – the café, always a popular venue in Edinburgh, has been greatly expanded and when last seen, was full of visitors enjoying, as before, excellent coffee, tea and baked goods, as well as savoury dishes, sandwiches, etc., but in a much pleasanter space and airier atmosphere.

In short, if by any chance you haven’t been here since the restoration – go! You won’t be disappointed!

Tour of the National Museum of Scotland
Edinburgh, 4 February 2012
Review by Shannon Hurtado

Saturday mornings are a time I like to stay in and relax, but the offer of a tour of the newly refurbished National Museum of Scotland lured me out early on 4 February. I was not disappointed. Curators Godfrey Evans, Stephen Jackson and Rose Watban provided a multi-faceted look at the building and its treasures, some newly acquired, others recently brought out of storage to be showcased in the expanded gallery spaces. Stephen highlighted the redevelopment of the lower ground floor and the re-organisation of the galleries as part of an ongoing project that will roll out over the next few years. Changes were certainly in evidence. Although the objects retain some curatorial ordering, they are also presented thematically; display screens supplant longer explanatory
captions, unobtrusively conveying the necessary information. The lighting is dramatic, strongly focused on exhibits but muted at the peripheries. The new escalator to the upper galleries leads to what seems at first to be a blank wall.

Our visit took us to the European Styles and Art and Industry galleries. Godfrey’s guiding themes for the European gallery (the development of styles, the influence of trade, the effect of patrons and collectors, the relationship between artists and entrepreneurs) are exemplified in a selection of objects. In the collection of French silver, two pieces stand out. The Louis XIV Lennoxlove Toilet Service walnut chest with sixteen silver toiletry boxes (1652-74) and the late neoclassical Borghese Travelling Service, presented by Napoleon as a wedding gift to his sister, are beautiful objects with fascinating histories. Luxury ceramic works produced in Britain and abroad also feature prominently. A recent acquisition, the Saint-Porchaire Ewer (France), is a strikingly unusual piece in white earthenware stamped with tools and inlaid with coloured clay. Pompeian and Oriental influences can be traced in the exquisite Minton vases that were obtained directly from the factory and a blue and white piece from the Bow Porcelain factory, London. Godfrey touched upon the eccentricities of some patrons and collectors. Notably, the Noel Paton collection combines German and Netherlandish arms, wood carvings and silver objects for which he rather romantically claimed more exalted provenances than the objects could sustain.

In the tradition of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the Art and Industry gallery showcases the applied arts arranged in sequence from 1850 to roughly the present day. Displays ranged from an inlaid Art Nouveau dresser to a kangaroo constructed of plastic toys and metals. Rose, who is preparing an exhibition of Scottish contemporary jewellery, drew our attention to the remarkably diverse materials used by jewellers from the 19th century to the present. Victorian mourning jewellery, often made of human hair, contrasts sharply with items produced using new technologies (Computer Assisted Drawing and 3D printing) and unconventional materials (the melted everyday objects used by Peach Chang to make bangles). Although the Art and Industry galleries have been refurbished, the display has not been substantially altered since they opened in 1996. That is about to change. The next phase of the Museum’s project (to be completed in 2016) will encompass exhibts of dress and textiles, new Science and Technology galleries and displays depicting artists’ practices, both traditional and modern. The transformations thus far are impressive. We look forward to seeing the end product in 2016.

**Acquisitions**

**D’Arcy Thompson Art Fund Project**

*By Matthew Jarron, Curator, University of Dundee Museum Services*

![Morphing diagram from Cat and Crocodile](image)

Bruce Gernand, Morphing diagram from *Cat and Crocodile*, digital print, 2011 (© the artist)

The University of Dundee Museum Services have been awarded a grant from the Art Fund of £100,000 to build a collection of art inspired
by D’Arcy Thompson, the University’s first Professor of Biology.

Born in 1860, D’Arcy was a brilliant polymath whose work laid the foundations for the science of biomathematics but who also had an extraordinary influence on art and design that continues to this day. Many of the 20th century’s most famous artists (including Henry Moore, Richard Hamilton, Jackson Pollock and Salvador Dali) drew on his work, in particular the seminal book *On Growth and Form*, written in Dundee and published in 1917. The grant will allow the University to acquire some 20th century artworks as well as working with contemporary artists to create new pieces for our collection. A key aim of the project is to encourage more of today’s artists to use D’Arcy’s surviving collection in the University’s Zoology Museum as a unique source of inspiration.

A programme of exhibitions and events is being planned to promote the project, involving various organisations including Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee Science Centre and the Slade School of Fine Art in London.

To kick-start the project, two art exhibitions will open in the University’s Tower Building at the end of April. In the Tower Foyer Gallery, the exhibition *Coded Chimera* features the results of an AHRC-funded research project by sculptor Bruce Gernand, who teaches at Central St Martins (part of the University of the Arts London). Gernand’s project was developed in association with the Natural History Museum and the Cambridge Computer Lab and explores the ideas of morphogenesis (the study of biological dynamics) pioneered by D’Arcy Thompson.

Using digital scans of zoological specimens and customised computer software tools, different animal forms are morphed to create hybrid shapes, conveying qualities of fluidity and mutability. The sculptures, models and diagrams shown in the exhibition (which was first staged at the University of Cambridge last year) make connections between the process of sculpture and the principles of biological dynamics. At the heart of Bruce’s project, however, is a less scientific and more poetic concept, the chimera – a composite of different animal features which links to a much longer-standing artistic tradition.

![Roger Wilson, *Cell Life and Diet*, oil, 2011 (© the artist)](image)

At the same time in the Lamb Gallery, three artists present their own responses to the collection displayed in the D’Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum and to D’Arcy’s ideas and writings. Professor Roger Wilson (Head of Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art) has invited fellow artists B E Cole and Stuart MacKenzie to join him in an exhibition called *Heresies*, a term D’Arcy himself used to describe the controversial theories that he would publish in his seminal work *On Growth and Form*.

Whilst the three artists employ different media and approaches, they share a common interest in landscape and the forms that arise from it. All three employ close observation of natural form and extensive experimentation leading to the generation of forms which, they
hope, will add to our visual language and our relationship with science and the natural world.

Both exhibitions run from 27 April to 16 June. On 19 May a special drawing workshop will be held in the D’Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum to accompany the shows. Visit www.dundee.ac.uk/museum or email museum@dundee.ac.uk for further information.

The Art Fund grant was awarded through the RENEW programme, which gave a total of £600,000 to six UK museums to establish new collections of art, collections which connect, in exciting and creative ways, with their existing holdings and current audiences. The University of Dundee is one of two Scottish collections to benefit from the scheme, the other being Glasgow Museums who are using the grant to develop a collection of South Asian art.

**ARKIVAL: a living, evolving artwork for the Royal Scottish Academy Collections**

*By Sandy Wood, Assistant Curator, Royal Scottish Academy of Art and Architecture*

In early February I had the pleasure of visiting Arthur Watson RSA in his new purpose built studio home, to discuss his Diploma Work *Arkival*. Watson has been developing it in recent years and when it is submitted *Arkival* has the capacity to be a groundbreaking work in the Royal Scottish Academy collections.

In general terms the media, materials and configuration of artworks in the RSA collections remain predominantly traditional when considered in the context of contemporary art practice. Recent initiatives - like the Morton Award for Lens-Based Media, which is growing an important collection of time-based media work - suggest what the future holds for the collections in general, but in *Arkival* we will receive a work that will truly change the blueprint of the Diploma Collection.

I have a particular interest in non-traditional contemporary art, via avenues such as materiality, configuration, authorship or inherent change. Arthur Watson’s work ticks these boxes and so I had been excited about what *Arkival* might have in store for the collections department. It turns out it will change the prescribed view of what a collected work is and the cataloguing processes involved in documenting its being. An anthropomorphic phrase is appropriate as *Arkival* will, in many ways, be a living organism.

*Arkival* will consist of three exhibition crates containing material that has the capacity to afford creative and adaptable installation options. The inspiration and source for the project is Watson’s continuing archive of drawing books that he has been working in and developing since 1975. They are his portable studio where he attempts “…to answer questions visual, conceptual and structural through sequences of annotated drawings” (Watson to Sheena Walker, Friends of the RSA).
indigenous oral culture and landscape of North East Scotland and manifests itself throughout his practice (he is currently redeveloping part of 6 Skies, some Family Stereotypes from 1997/2000 for this year’s RSA Annual Exhibition).


High quality facsimiles of selected pages from the drawing books, some edited with additional media, form the contents of the first crate, while the second crate contains framed mounts for adaptable display. The third crate will contain objects, small sculptures and multiples but may grow with soundtracks and other inspirational items, all relating to explorations in the drawing books that have been their analytical proving ground.

A limited number of the ideas mapped in the drawing books are made. When they are it is often achieved collaboratively with other makers to realise their full vision. Arkival is no different and the collaborators in this project are the RSA collections department. Arthur and I have begun working on the cataloguing template, which is now in its testing phase. This collaboration will grow and develop after the work has entered the collections, creating a new strand to the dynamic relationship the Royal Scottish Academy has with its Members.

Arkival is based on the Scandinavian spelling. This was the artist’s preferred form. Watson has a particular interest in the aesthetic nature of words, their archaic meanings and the reactions and memories they invoke. The fact Arkival also contains the word ‘ark’ is no accident. The following interview, conducted with the artist at his studio on 3 February 2012 delves further into the ideas and practicalities surrounding Arkival.

Sandy Wood: Something I’m interested in, in terms of a lot of the ideas that underpin your work, is evolution and change; how change is bound up with tradition and with your interest in song and in things being passed through different generations. Would this work continue evolving after it has entered the collections?

Arthur Watson: Quite possibly yes and of course I very rarely exhibit the same thing in the same form twice so it makes sense for that to be reflected in Arkival.

SW: Do you see the number of boxes in Arkival as being quite fluid?

AW: The solander boxes [containing the drawings] were always seen as being inside their own crates. I've exhibited crates in the past and actually made crates as components for exhibitions.

SW: And those crates would form part of the displays of Arkival?

AW: Yes, so the three-dimensional objects, small sculptures and multiples, which are in one of the crates would then use that crate as a plinth.

SW: Like a self-contained adaptable installation?
**AW:** That's right. Because my problem was, I could have put in an individual work...a piece of sculpture, but it's a long time since I've made sculpture to be seen on its own, maybe twenty years since I've thought of things as individual sculptures. I tend to think of them as parts of installations and they do migrate from one installation to another...I thought this was a way of getting some of that essence. Maybe at some point in the future where there is an installation that packs down reasonably small, I could drop that in to further extend the Diploma work.

**SW:** Considering the social elements in your work, do you see that as being a part of *Arkival* as well? So when it is reconfigured or displayed in the future that the person involved becomes a participant.

**AW:** They become a de facto collaborator, yes. So what would be nice for the collections department to take on is any time any aspect of this [is displayed] - because you can show one drawing from it or sixteen framed drawings or you could put shelves up and show the entire body of drawings or just show one of the objects - would be to record that in the work. So that *Arkival* has its own archive.

**SW:** It's a very personal submission and it's interesting within the context and the space of where it's going as to how it relates to artists' bequests. Did this context influence your thinking at all?

**AW:** Well yes of course, the other thing is that this is a bit of a tip of the iceberg because I would expect that all the [drawing] books would eventually come to the Academy. What I am now doing is organising my library into related sections that tend to relate to streams of work that I'm doing. So I've got all the books relating to the Demarco archive and exhibition in one place, along with all the papers of his. There's another section where the books only relate to Academy Members, plus catalogues and such like.

**SW:** So cataloguing and archiving is very central to your life in general.

**AW:** Well, yes because I had to deal with archives; transferring the Peacock [Printmakers] archive to Aberdeen Art Gallery and all the years of work I did on the Demarco archives is part of that too.

**SW:** It's interesting how *Arkival* relates to all these different strands of your experience and how they have influenced your work.

**AW:** That's why I'm interested in it and why I haven't rushed into completing it. Every aspect of this is a detail of a bigger work and then the three boxes of *Arkival* are a detail of the bigger picture: this large crate around us which is evolving as my new studio.

**SW:** It really is an Ark, a living studio with the past, present and future all binding together.

**AW:** It should be pretty self-contained. I remember standing outside the college [Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design] three years ago with these huge suitcases that you get in cheap shops and a colleague said "I've always seen you with rather interesting luggage and that's not your style at all", I said "That's an entire exhibition of the Demarco archive in there that's going to Poland...and it's been designed to go into this case, look I can lift up an entire exhibition!" I remember Richard Demarco saying "How do we get it back?" I said "No, it's ephemeral, these are just facsimiles mounted on kappa board, either take it back, leave it there or throw it away!"

**SW:** We talked about the fact part of your work derives from the process of museological cataloguing. How does the research involved in this impact upon your work and your studio practice?

**AW:** One of the problems I consistently have is that I'm working in a lot of different areas.
Between what I do in the college; what could be seen as a standard research practice, which includes things like the Demarco stuff for instance. Then my own practice; if the Demarco thing is practice led research then what I do in the studio is research led practice, because it doesn't come out of just 'I think I'll assemble these four bits of wood into an interesting structure' it comes out of library research, but I don’t use anyone else's library but my own. So actually building the library is an essential part of the practice... certainly in recent years an awful lot of my energy has gone into getting this complex here up to the stage it's at just now.

As a self-contained reflection of Watson’s studio, Arkival will strike up a dialogue with itself, its creator and its keepers, creating an active entity within the environment of the RSA collections; and in time the work will be accompanied by other material from Watson’s own personal archive and collection. The living studio nature of the RSA collections, characterised by artists’ bequests such as the Gillies Bequest (1973), the James Cumming Gift (2006) and the William Littlejohn Bequest (2006) will develop a new dynamic contemporary art personality. Negotiating the challenges of Arkival is something we look forward to embracing in the collections department. The 186th RSA Annual Exhibition is on from 26 April to 6 June 2012 at the Royal Scottish Academy, The Mound, Edinburgh.

Exhibitions

The Essence of Beauty: 500 Years of Italian Art
Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery,
6 April–12 August
By Patricia Collins

“It would be no exaggeration to claim that Glasgow Museums houses the finest and most comprehensive collection of Italian paintings of any civic museums service in Britain.”

This quotation from the introduction to Professor Peter Humfrey’s catalogue, Glasgow Museums: Italian Paintings may surprise many people, including specialists in the field, but this catalogue and exhibition will, we hope, persuade them that this situation is, in fact, true. The exciting exhibition showcases the very best examples of Glasgow Museums’ wonderful collection of Italian art, and is being held to celebrate the launch of this first fully-illustrated catalogue of Italian paintings in the collection.

no.3359, St Lawrence by Niccolò di Buonaccorso, the earliest painting in the catalogue and exhibition (late 14th century)

Over 40 fine paintings, dating from the late 14th to the 19th centuries will form the basis of chronologically-themed displays in the exhibition, which is curated by Patricia Collins, Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Art at Glasgow Museums. As well as paintings, displays will include decorated arms and armour, fine sculpture, wonderful Venetian glass and the colourfully-decorated ceramics called maiolica, all of which provide a broader
historical and artistic context for the paintings.

Visitors to the exhibition will encounter late medieval religious art, brilliant works of the Venetian Renaissance and richly Baroque figures and landscapes. In addition, classically-themed 18th and early 19th century paintings are included in the exhibition, together with some very attractive 19th century genre pictures. Works by well known artists are, of course, featured as a ‘must’; these artists include Giovanni Bellini, Botticelli, Titian, Salvator Rosa, Carlo Dolci and Francesco Guardi. However, less famous (in today’s terms!), and as-yet anonymous masters are also strongly represented by some surprisingly fine works.

Works by well-known artists are, of course, featured as a ‘must’; these artists include Giovanni Bellini, Botticelli, Titian, Salvator Rosa, Carlo Dolci and Francesco Guardi. However, less famous (in today’s terms!), and as-yet anonymous masters are also strongly represented by some surprisingly fine works.

no.787, Overlooking a Canal, Venice by Luigi da Rios, one of the latest works (1886)

All exhibits, including the paintings’ frames, have been specially conserved in preparation for their moments in the spotlight. Some of the paintings have not been displayed for many years, and will look very fresh and different from the last time they were shown. One particular painting to look out for is a beautiful Renaissance work, an Adoration of the Magi. The finer details of this painting were almost obscured by darkened varnish, which has now been removed to wondrous effect. The exhibition will also be the first chance to see Kelvingrove’s lovely Madonna and Child by Giovanni Bellini displayed in its spectacularly appropriate new high-quality reproduction frame, purchase of which has been generously funded by the Friends of Glasgow Museums.

The quality of this exhibition has proved irresistible to others too – most of the paintings are being sent on tour to the prestigious English venue, Compton Verney, in 2013, and the exhibition will then tour to various venues throughout North America.

Wemyss & Other Wares: A Celebration of Kirkcaldy’s Pottery
St Andrews Museum, 17 March to 13 May
By Tatiana Michaelis

A new exhibition at St Andrews Museum provides visitors with an insight into the ceramics made in Fife during the peak period of the Kirkcaldy potteries between 1850 and 1930. Curated by postgraduate Museum and Gallery Studies students at the University of St Andrews, the exhibition features beautiful ceramics from the collections of Fife Council Museums. Objects on display include decorative and useful ceramics, and the techniques of manufacture as well as the social history side of the industry will be covered. Pieces of ‘modern’ pottery in Fife, represented by Griselda Hill’s pottery, bring the story up to date.

Most of the objects on display come from the collections held by Kirkcaldy Museum & Art Gallery, part of Fife Council Museums, which is currently closed for refurbishments. A small number of special pieces have come from private lenders. The exhibition aims to bring together the social and industrial histories of the Kirkcaldy potteries and demonstrate the connection between the contemporary and the traditional.

Fife had a flourishing pottery industry from around 1850 to 1930. The four main potteries were Fife, Kirkcaldy, Sinclairstown and Rosslyn. Kirkcaldy was well equipped for the industry thanks to local clay, substantial coal deposits, a harbour – and later, the railway –
and a readily available workforce. The potteries produced a wide range of goods, such as bricks, tiles and chimney pots and later, kitchenware, household objects and decorative pieces.

Fife Pottery became particularly popular around 1883 when the then owner, Robert Heron, employed decorators from Bohemia. One of them, Karel Nekola, is credited with reinventing Wemyss Ware that became so successful that the Rosslyn and Kirkcaldy Potteries produced their own versions. The potteries that Sinclairstown pottery produced were characteristic for the brown glaze. Kirkcaldy pottery was especially known for their use of the ‘spongeware’ and ‘transfer printing’ techniques.

The pottery industry came to an end by the 1930s, after the First World War (1914-18) had caused massive economic problems. The industry left its mark on the town in names such as ‘Pottery Street’ and shards of pottery can still be found on local beaches. The 1960s saw a revival of ceramics in Fife when the Crail and St Andrews potteries were founded. Griselda Hill reintroduced Wemyss Ware at her studio in Ceres in the 1980s and the excavation of some of the old factory sites has ignited a renewal of interest in Fife pottery, both past and present.

We are a group of eight students and this exhibition is part of the practical side of the MLitt in Museum and Gallery Studies. For most of us this is the very first show that we get to curate on our own and it is therefore a very challenging and rewarding experience. The postgraduate degree educates students who want to pursue a career in the museums and galleries sector. We have arranged to host a series of exciting and varied events targeted to all age groups during the exhibition, such as children’s workshops, talks by pottery experts and a painting demonstration by painters from Griselda Hill’s pottery studio.

The exhibition is open at St Andrews Museum (Kinburn Park, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DP, phone 01334 659380) from 10.00 am – 5.00 pm daily. Admission is free. Visit our website at: http://www-ah.st-andrews.ac.uk/events/WemyssandOtherWares/Welcome.html to find out more.

Wemyss Matchbox
Courtesy of Fife Council Libraries & Museums, Kirkcaldy Museum & Art Gallery

Hatpins
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Edinburgh Printmakers Exhibition and Events:

- **Negativnights**
  Curated by Ross Christie (Superclub)
  12 & 26 April, 31 May & 07 June 2012
  Tickets £5/£4 conc. or 3 for the price of 2.

  *Negativnights* is a bi-annual programme of underground experimental artist films. This series brings together a selection of works in which comfortable tropes and structures of popular moving image media (film, television, internet and video games) become reconfigured and distorted. Characters, alter egos and doppelgangers seek salvation or encourage downfall in alternative narrative universes and layered realities. This alteration and appropriation of familiar story based concepts can create anxiety and tension in the distortion of a familiar form, explore small, subtle moments in an over saturated visual technological culture or consider and examine the effects that this culture can have on its audience.

  Each screening event will be accompanied by an introduction by the curator Ross Christie and either a Q & A with the contributors or a discussion of their practice with other artists, critics or curators.

  [www.superclubstudios.com](http://www.superclubstudios.com)

- **New Print Generation, 24 March - 19 May**
  Patrizio Belcampo, Sarah Diver, Lyndsay Gauld, Elizabeth Hardman, Rachel Maclean, Francesca Miller

  This exhibition showcases the emerging talent of recent graduates selected from across the four Scottish Art College Degree Shows. These artists have been chosen for their innovative use of print within their artistic practice, which spans a wide variety of printmaking techniques as well as installation, sculptural work and artist books.

  This exhibition also features work by graduate artists created on the New Print Generation (NPG) programme, set up by Edinburgh Printmakers to support recent graduate artists who have each been given bespoke training in the studio as well as an opportunity to collaborate with our Master Printers to produce an edition published by Edinburgh Printmakers and premiered during this exhibition.

- **Etching and Colour Printing Taster Class**
  21 April 2012, 11am-4pm, £60/£45 Conc.

  This workshop will be run by two of the artists participating in NPG, Lyndsay Gauld and Sarah Diver who both use colour extensively in their own work. Participants will make their own etching on a copper plate. They will then experiment with different types of colour printing producing a number of differently coloured prints. Prior booking is essential as places are limited. To book, email [office@edinburgh-printmakers.co.uk](mailto:office@edinburgh-printmakers.co.uk) or phone 0131 5572479

Exhibitions at the Talbot Rice Gallery:

**Alison Turnbull + James Cumming**
10 March – 5 May, Tues – Sat, 10am – 5pm

While these special exhibitions are separate, they share an approach to drawing and painting that is predicated on careful analysis, observation and attention to detail. Although embodying distinct ideas, both artists’ work treats painting as a means to translate and carry information. Turnbull’s contemporary abstract paintings take charts and scientific diagrams and distil from them colour, rhythm and pattern, to create images of startling clarity and beauty. Cumming’s work brings together careful research with the complex visual language of various artistic movements of the last century to create abstracted figurative images and a multifaceted dialogue with Modern Art.
Alison Turnbull:

“My exhibition at Talbot Rice brings together recent paintings and drawings, shown in the White Gallery, with a new installation created for the Round Room. The exhibition is conceived as a lexicon of looking, a series of encounters that are displaced and then echoed as one moves through the different rooms and spaces. Painting and drawing are in close and constant dialogue. Drawing is a testing ground and a working method, and found drawings provide source material for the larger paintings. Most of these paintings take the night sky – or rather the ways in which we observe and map the night sky – as their starting point. Indeed, the whole gallery becomes a kind of observatory, a place for concentrated looking.

Drawings on found sheets of graph paper, exercise books and scores are presented in three Drawing Tables. The apparent neutrality of the gridded papers, which I’ve been collecting for some years from places I visit, is nuanced and disrupted by the drawn systems I introduce.

The work conceived for the Round Room, which might be viewed as the culmination of the exhibition, is site-specific in various ways. Not only is it drawn and painted directly onto the room’s curved walls, but it is inspired by a manual, Werner’s Nomenclature of Colours, produced in Edinburgh in 1814. This colour manual, functioning as a sort of 19th Century Pantone chart for scientists, was based on mineral specimens once used for teaching in the University and now in the collection of National Museums Scotland. A selection of these minerals and the colour manual are displayed as part of the installation.”

Alison Turnbull was born in Bogotá, studied at Bath Academy of Art and now lives and works in London. She has had solo exhibitions since the late 1980s and her work has been shown internationally. She is represented by Matt’s Gallery, London.

Observatory 2012 by Alison Turnbull
Courtesy of the Talbot Rice Gallery

James Cumming:

“James Cumming’s unique and unmistakable style and his stature as an artist made him a major figure in Scottish painting for over thirty years. The pictorial language he created evolved out of Post-Cubism and produced an idiom of expressive distortions within a powerfully controlled structure and impeccable craftsmanship. His colour sense could be strangely beautiful and haunting, the paintings wrought with immense care – a French belle-peinture of its own.”

The Independent, 28 Jan, 1991

Including rarely seen works, based upon his experiences in Edinburgh, the Borders, India and America, this exhibition celebrates the achievements of James Cumming (1922-1991) RSA, RSW. In addition to finished paintings, sketchbooks and preparatory materials will reflect the level of research and design that went into his work. Cumming’s approach to making art, which has been described as ‘part-archaeological, part-sociologically-scientific’, was exacting and erudite. The resulting mix of figurative and abstract elements are complex and beautiful and do not fit neatly within any one category.

Cumming was a student and subsequently a tutor at Edinburgh College of Art
and was elected Academician of the Royal Scottish Academy in 1970. His work, as an artist, a tutor and an inspirational figure, have had a lasting legacy and continue to influence those touched by his intense, idiosyncratic manner.

*Woman with Second Sight* by James Cumming

*Woman of Moray*, Elgin Museum

31 March to 3 May.

Art exhibition in conjunction with the launch of the book, *Women of Moray: celebrating women’s history* published by Luath Press, 2012. A chapter in this book discusses all the artists in the exhibition. Amongst the works on display are watercolours and landscapes of Moray from the 1850s onwards. Artists include Dorothy Brown, Emma Black, Sophia, Lady Dunbar and Constance “Eka” Gordon-Cumming. There are also several local portraits spanning 30 years from the 1950s, painted by Isabel Chalmers (John Aubrey). These works are from private collections so they are not normally publically displayed. See website [www.elginmuseum.org.uk](http://www.elginmuseum.org.uk) for opening hours and contact details.

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