From the Chair

It seems to have become something of a tradition for me to begin each newsletter with an apology for its tardiness. Unfortunately we have still not been able to find someone capable of taking over the editing duties, meaning that for the time being the newsletter will remain at best sporadic in its appearance. Given that postal costs have increased considerably in recent times and that the society is naturally keen to do its bit to reduce carbon emissions, the SSAH committee has decided that for the present at least, the newsletter should be distributed mainly in electronic form. This would allow us to send out shorter bulletins more frequently (at least in theory!).

Most of you will already receive occasional emails from us. Those of you for whom we do not have email addresses should find a form enclosed asking if you can supply us with one (if this is not present but you have not been getting emails from us, it probably means the address we have for you is out of date - please email a current one to me at m.h.jarron@dundee.ac.uk).

Those of you who do not have email need not worry - we will still continue to send you a printed version of the newsletter and other mailings. And if any of you are interested in taking on the task of editing future issues of the newsletter, please get in touch!

In the meantime, I hope you will enjoy the various features for you in this issue, which includes details of our new research grant scheme and the forthcoming study day on Scottish art education.

Matthew Jarron

Committee News

Sadly we say farewell to Katrina Thomson and Venda Louise Pollock, with grateful thanks for everything they have done for the society over the years. Two new committee members joined us at our AGM in December: Maria Devaney and Luke Gartlan. More about Luke next time, but here is a short profile of Maria:

Maria Devaney

Maria Devaney started at Perth Museum & Art Gallery in October 2005 in the post of Principal Officer (Art). Before that she was based at the Stirling Smith Art Gallery & Museum for fourteen years where she was able to develop specialist knowledge of 19th century Scottish art.

At Perth, Maria has curated exhibitions drawn from the collections a range of subjects including printmaking, The Blairgowrie Boys, picturesque and romantic landscape, Sir David Young Cameron (in partnership with Valerie Hunter at NGS), images of women and Japanese woodblock prints.

She is originally from Sheffield where she gained a degree in History of Art, Design and Film. Later she also achieved a Post Graduate Diploma in Museums Studies from the University of Leicester.

Before her first permanent post as an art curator at Middlesbrough Art Gallery (now known as MIMA), Maria worked a series of temporary contracts in museums around the UK including at The Royal Armouries Museum at the Tower of London.
New SSAH Grant Scheme

As part of our remit to promote scholarship into the fields of Scottish art and art located in Scotland, the SSAH is now offering 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. Applications will be accepted throughout the year, awarding grants as funds are available. Our aim is to handle submissions within three months of receipt. Recipients will also be given a one-year membership to the society and will be asked to write a report for the newsletter, explaining how the grant was used.

To apply please send:
- 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 Daniel F. Herrmann
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art
75 Belford Road
Edinburgh EH4 3DR

For further information contact dherrmann@nationalgalleries.org

SSAH Events

Scottish Art College Collections and the History of Art Education in Scotland

A free study day organised by the Art College Collections Project in association with the Scottish Society for Art History

Stirling Smith Art Gallery & Museum,
31st May 2008, 10am-5pm

Provisional Programme

10.00-11.30 Session One: New Research into Scottish Art Education

Welcome & Introduction

Joanna Soden (Royal Scottish Academy): Upholding the Tradition? The academic versus the practical in art teaching in 19th-century Edinburgh

Matthew Jarron (University of Dundee): From 'fancy picture cult' to 'serious science': the development of art education in Dundee in the late 19th & early 20th centuries

Sarah Fairclough (Stirling Smith Art Gallery & Museum): Leonard Baker & Art Education in Stirling

11.30-12.00 Refreshments

12.00-13.00 Session Two: Collections-based Research Projects

Patricia Cain (Glasgow School of Art): Drawing as coming to know: enquiries into the relationship between drawing and thinking

Penelope Alfrey (Loughborough University): An Embryonic Design School & the Scottish Shawl Industry: the Textile Designs Archives at Edinburgh College of Art & the Edinburgh Shawl Enterprise, 1790-1840

Margaret Stewart (Edinburgh College of Art): ECA Plaster Cast Collection: art, education & culture in 19th-century Edinburgh

13.00-14.00 Lunch

Journal Sale

A reminder that we are still offering back issues of the SSAH Journal at a special reduced price. Volumes 1-10 may now be purchased for £7.50 each (including postage), and Volumes 11-12 for £10 each (including postage). To order copies, please send a cheque payable to Scottish Society for Art History to Matthew Jarron (contact details on the back page).
14.00-15.15 Session Three: Case Studies & Collection Overviews 1

Peter Trowles (Glasgow School of Art): An introduction to the collections of Glasgow School of Art

Matthew Jarron (University of Dundee): An introduction to the Duncan of Jordanstone College Collections

Philippa Sterlini (University of Dundee): Recent work on College Collections by the University of Dundee Book & Paper Conservation Studio

Ewan Manson & Janey Muir (practising artists): Still Life with Rabbits – a contemporary art exhibition using College Collections

Julie Brown (University of St Andrews): Wanted – investigating the mysteries of the Duncan of Jordanstone College Collection

15.15-15.30 Refreshments

15.30-16.30 Session Four: Case Studies & Collection Overviews 2

Helen Smailes (National Galleries of Scotland): An introduction to relevant collections at the National Galleries of Scotland

Joanna Soden (Royal Scottish Academy): Collections relating to art education at the Royal Scottish Academy

Wilson Smith (Edinburgh College of Art): An introduction to the collections of Edinburgh College of Art

Justin Parkes (Robert Gordon University): An introduction to the collections of Gray’s School of Art

16.30-17.00 Final Discussion & overview of the Art College Collections Project

The aims of the Art College Collections Project are:
- To raise awareness of and increase access to collections held by the Scottish art colleges and related institutions
- To improve understanding of these collections, their role in the history of Scottish art education and their potential for future use

Booking Information

Attendance at the study day is free but booking is required. A buffet lunch will be available for £8 (please make cheques payable to Scottish Society for Art History). SSAH members who are on our email list should already have received a booking form. Otherwise, please send a note of your name and contact details (with cheque if you are wishing to book lunch) to:

Matthew Jarron, Museum Services, University of Dundee, Dundee DD1 4HN
Email: m.h.jarron@dundee.ac.uk Tel: 01382 384310

Cartoon by Joseph Lee from The City Echo, 1911.
Courtesy of University of Dundee Archive Services
Features

Aberdeen Art Gallery: New Acquisitions

With the aid of a grant from the National Fund for Acquisitions and with the assistance of the Brownington Foundation, Aberdeen Art Gallery have purchased four photographs by the American artist Francesca Woodman (1958-1981).

Born in Denver, Colorado, Woodman was, despite her short life, a remarkably influential and important photographer. Appearing in most of her photographs, her work concentrated mainly on her own body and her surroundings. At times the two would seem to merge into one. Woodman often used long-term exposure and double exposure so that she could insert herself into the composition.

Woodman grew up in an artistic family (her mother is the well-known ceramic artist Betty Woodman) and at an early age discovered photography, developing her first pictures at the age of 13. Between 1975 and 1979 she attended the Rhode Island School of Design. In January 1981 she published her first (and only work while she was alive) collection of pictures, Some Disordered Interior Geometries. Later that month, she committed suicide by jumping from a window of her New York studio at the age of 22.

These four photographs date from the key formative periods in Francesca Woodman's career and are of the intimate scale with which Woodman is usually associated.

Woodman tested the boundaries of bodily experience in her work. Using her own body in various stages of transformation, deformation, alteration and effacement, the ensuing photographs suggest a strong sense of self-displacement. Often nude except for individual body parts covered with props, sometimes wearing vintage clothing, the artist is typically sited in empty or sparsely furnished, dilapidated rooms, characterised by rough surfaces, shattered mirrors and old furniture. In some images Woodman quite literally becomes one with her surroundings, with the contours of her form blurred by movement, or blending into the background, wallpaper or floor, revealing the lack of distinction of both - between figure and ground, self and world.

The gallery has also recently been presented with a sculpture created by artist Hermann Gross. Founder of the Camphill movement Karl König invited Gross to Aberdeen in 1963 where he became the community's artist in residence, enjoying his most productive period.

The talented painter and sculptor, who was an active and respected member of the Camphill community until his death in 1988, shied away from the limelight seeing his work as social art. The silver head has been presented by the Hermann Gross Trust.

Aberdeen Art Gallery is open 10am-5pm Monday to Saturday and 2-5pm Sundays. For further information please contact keeper of fine art Jennifer Melville on 01224 523703.

Hermann Gross, Head of a Man (undated) sterling silver.

Courtesy of Aberdeen Art Gallery

Hermann Gross: War Artist

As Aberdeen Art Gallery celebrates its acquisition of Gross's silver head, Robin Jackson, a member of the Hermann Gross Trust, tells us about one intriguing aspect of the artist's career.

Hermann Gross was born in Lahr in Germany on 4th April 1904. He trained as a gold and silversmith and sculptor with some of the most eminent practitioners in these fields in Germany – Paul Haustein, Waldemar Raemisch and Robert Wlérick. In 1926 he moved to Paris where he worked with Picasso. His work was exhibited at the Salon d’Automne in 1929. Because of family circumstances he was obliged to return to Berlin in 1935. In 1940 he was conscripted into Luftwaffe Propaganda Company 3, which was based in Paris, where he acted as a war artist. After the war he
spent several years in Paris before emigrating to the USA. Whilst in the USA he had two exhibitions at the Macbeth Gallery in New York. Both exhibitions received unanimous critical acclaim from New York art critics, but Gross never felt settled in the USA and returned to Germany in 1956. In 1963, to the astonishment of all his friends, he accepted an invitation to go to Scotland and act as artist-in-residence in a Camphill community in Aberdeen. This final chapter in his life was one of his most creative and happy. One reason why Gross’s work is not widely known is because he did not seek to promote it. He saw his work primarily as social art which belonged to the Camphill community of which he was an active and valued member. Hermann Gross died in Aberdeen on 1st September 1988.

It is to Gross’s experience as a war artist we now turn. In 1940 Gross was called up and served in Hermann Goering’s Luftwaffe propaganda unit which was stationed in Paris. His selection almost certainly resulted from his specialist knowledge and expertise. It was also in 1940 that Goering helped to establish the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR); the official Nazi office charged with confiscating important, mainly Jewish, art collections in the western Nazi-occupied territories. ERR was housed in the Jeu de Paume Museum in Paris and operated there from 1940 to 1944: it is believed to have looted more than 21,000 individual objects from over 200 Jewish-owned collections. By 1945 Goering possessed over 2,000 individual pieces, including more than 1,300 paintings. Given his location in Paris, it would have been impossible for Gross not to have known of the existence of the ERR unit and what it was doing. The fact that Gross was a witness of, and indirectly complicit in, the wholesale plundering of the artistic heritage of the city he loved by his own countrymen must have had a devastating psychological effect upon him.

It is known that Gross’s work in the propaganda unit involved him in a wide variety of activities. One of the more bizarre tasks he was called upon to undertake was to ‘doctor’ photographs of air battles. Photographs would be rearranged so as to show attacking Hurricanes or Spitfires being caught in a hail of bullets from diving and triumphant Messerschmitts or Heinkels. These fake pictures had then to be approved by the propaganda section before being sent to the newspapers for printing. The faking of the photographs had to be done very speedily so that no-one would suspect the deception. The German people would then be provided with ‘evidence’ not only of the supremacy of the Luftwaffe but also the magnificent achievements of Reichsmarschall Goering, head of the Luftwaffe. The truth was that the Luftwaffe was sustaining heavy losses, knowledge of which would certainly have dented national morale.

Ten photographs of sketches drawn by Gross whilst serving in the propaganda unit were found recently among his personal papers. It remains something of a mystery that Gross was able to photograph this sensitive material and then keep copies of it. All the drawings concern the defences that were being constructed along the French coast – Hitler’s Atlantic Wall (Kanalküste). From the topography it appears we are looking at the chalk cliffs somewhere along the Normandy coast. Hitler’s Wall was intended to reduce German military weakness in the West and thereby deter or impede an Allied invasion. The work on the Wall was undertaken from late 1942 to the summer of 1945.

Hermann Gross, photograph of untitled sketch, c.1942-5
Courtesy of the Hermann Gross Trust, Aberdeen

The question arises as to whether what we see in these carefully drawn sketches is a simple and straightforward representation of what lay before Gross. Are these matter-of-fact drawings or could it be that Gross was trying to communicate a hidden
message, which if it had been detected would almost certainly have resulted in harsh punishment? In the first sketch it would appear that the bunker is the principal focal point, yet it is what lies beside the bunker that catches our attention. Is it co-incidental that the discarded planks have fallen in the shape of a cross? At the top of the central plank there is a circle of barbed wire. Is it too far fetched to imagine this as the crown of thorns on Christ’s brow? If this interpretation is thought to be somewhat fanciful, it is worth noting that after the war Gross was obsessed with producing an endless series of dark brooding pictures of the crucifixion and resurrection. The longer one looks at the planks entangled in the barbed wire, is it also possible to detect a distorted Star of David swathed in barbed wire? Is this an allusion to the internment of Jews and others in concentration camps?

The sketch is interesting for a further reason. We have a juxtaposition between an object – the bunker – which is represented in stark simplicity and the seemingly chaotic arrangement of planks and wire. To what extent is this an allegorical allusion to Hitler’s known support for traditional realistic art and his loathing for abstract art which he viewed as degenerate? What else might this sketch be saying? We are presented with a reinforced and sharply angular concrete building, the simplicity, functionality and brutality of which mirror features of Bauhaus architecture. The irony here lies in the fact that Bauhaus architecture was discredited by the Nazi regime not least because of its association with the Weimar Republic. A feature of the bunker itself is that the observation platform is empty. It is eyeless: it is a construction that lacks vision.

Whilst the bunker sketched by Gross gives all the appearance of something solid and permanent, the chalk cliffs behind it, which Gross highlights, remind us that nothing is enduring in the face of the sea. And so it has proved, for most of the 15,000 bunkers and other defensive fortifications built along the Channel coast are in the process of disintegration, having been affected by erosion and rock falls. Could Gross be implying that tyrannies, like bunkers, do not last forever?

In the second sketch we are presented with a meticulously clean and aseptic tiled underground operating theatre. It is striking for a number of reasons. All the soldiers, including the person who is being operated upon, are accoutered in incongruously shiny jackboots. What is significant here is that the jackboot is usually taken as a symbol for cruel and authoritarian behaviour or rule. There is a high degree of irony here too in that even jackbooted soldiers are revealed as vulnerable and require dedicated care and attention in order to survive. The operation is conducted adjacent to a cupboard on which there is what one must assume to be a Red Cross - the symbol that is placed on humanitarian and medical vehicles and buildings to protect them from military attack! Whilst there is always a danger of reading too much into a drawing, it is noticeable that the stability of the trolley upon which this delicate operation is being performed is dependent on the cross bracing joining the legs. Without such cross bracing the table would collapse. Put another way, without the cross (i.e. Christianity), civilization will collapse.

Hermann Gross, photograph of untitled sketch, c.1942-5

Courtesy of the Hermann Gross Trust, Aberdeen

The notion that Gross was seeking to communicate hidden messages in these sketches should not be too hastily dismissed. Art in Northern Europe has been rich in hidden symbolism since the 15th and 16th centuries. For example, Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden, two masters of Northern Renaissance art, used symbols to communicate messages which would have been viewed as heretical and subversive if spoken or written at that time. Through their art they were able to allude to the kind of shortcomings in the Catholic Church that Martin Luther was much later to condemn. This was a very risky business because their livelihood depended to a significant degree on church patronage. They were taking a gamble just as Gross was doing; however the stakes for Gross were much higher, as he was commenting critically upon the brutal character of the Nazi regime. Towards the end of the war, Gross was posted to Poland and Russia, where he served as a guard for the command headquarters. Whether Gross’s subsequent transfer to the Eastern Front
stemmed from official concerns raised by his work as a war artist will never be known. It is more likely that that the transfer was part of a major deployment of military personnel from the Western to the Eastern Front which was crumbling in the face of the remorseless Russian advance. It is known that Gross never fully recovered from his experiences during the war.

This article has been about what I see in these two sketches. What do you see?

**From Dundee Decorator to Buffalo Bill: The Rise of James Watterston Herald**

A new exhibition of works by the Angus artist J W Herald will be opening this Easter at the University of St Andrews. Here, one of its curators, Julie Brown, tells us more about his extraordinary life and career.

Jimmy Herald was a modest and quiet sort of chap, content to live a meagre existence in Arbroath in the latter part of his life. Having dipped his toe into London circles, he preferred to return to the harbours and fishwives which were his bread and butter. A notable frequenter of the pubs of this east coast fishing town, he left an array of instruments in each, so if not frantically running off sketches à la Rolf Harris (can you guess what it is yet?), he would entertain musically, for his next whisky, but with his fiddle rather than a didgeridoo! Forfarian by birth in 1859, it was in Arbroath he died, a lonely, well-liked, alcoholic in 1914.

Self-taught, he began his artistic dabblings on his mother’s floor in their Forfar home, and after schooling at Forfar Academy was sent by his father to the Dundee School of Art (then at the High School of Dundee) between 1873-4. Although only present for one year, his talent shone through and he was gifted the school prize for drawing and was said to be the art master’s most distinguished pupil. However after this excursion his father wished him to pursue a more stable career, and encouraged him to put his painting talent into houses, thus he was apprenticed to Baillie Drummond decorators in Dundee. This proved to be the first of many periods in Herald’s life where he became restless, and he soon lost interest in this pursuit. He could often be found waylaid copying the great masters from books at the Albert Institute (now the McManus Galleries) in the town. The story goes that one day, embarrassed at having been sent to Broughty Ferry and forgetting the house address, he tossed his paint and brushes into the Tay and walked back to Forfar, never to return. This existential enlightenment ended his career as a painter and decorator and thus began the life of James Watterston Herald, bohemian artist.

The Herald family moved to Edinburgh in the 1880s, where his father thought Jimmy might be able to nurture his talent, but he still shied away from the art world. One of his paintings, *Queen Street by Night*, was exhibited at the RSA and subsequently purchased by the Fine Art Society, but other than this slight foray into the artistic establishment, Herald remained resolutely on the periphery of commercial success. Feeling Edinburgh life did not suit him he returned to Arbroath, and by all accounts did make a modest income from his talents, watercolours in particular – so much so that he afforded to leave and surprisingly enrolled at the well-known Hubert von Herkomer art school, in Bushey, Hertfordshire in 1891. During his stay of less than a year he lodged with the Beggarstaff...
Brothers, James Pryde and William Nicholson, who were also present at the school. Herald was his own man, and felt stifled by Herkomer’s technique whereby a good student was one who copied his style, rather than forming original work. Herald stood by his value: ‘chaps that belong to no school, or clique, that are always alone and left to think for themselves – they are generally the best.’

J W Herald, Design for greetings card, undated. Ink on paper

Copyright University of St Andrews Museum Collections

Herald decided to join his elder brother Will, a successful accountant, and try his luck in London. Seemingly Pryde’s use of pastel on brown paper had been inspirational to him and infiltrated his own art, which he continued to develop throughout the London years. This period also developed Herald’s skill in observation, favourite subjects including the society ladies, cathedrals, buildings and everyday people going about their business. Particular areas frequented by Herald were the society stomping ground of Crystal Palace and the bustle of Piccadilly Circus. These places and people he found there inspired the caricatures he created for the *Frivolity* social satirical magazine, which was the *Private Eye* of its day. Herald excelled as an outsider and enjoyed the anonymity of life in a large city, playing at being a *flaneur* enhanced his individuality and set him apart from his contemporaries. One critic at the time noted he had found ‘a new way of seeing London’. In Angus he did not so often draw directly from life, but formed work from memory in the studio; here he could much more be afforded the opportunity to sketch from life in this anonymous setting, and here his sketchbooks were incredibly well filled. He spent an almost ten year period in London, much of the time holed up in his studio in Croydon, which was an old bookbinders’ shed. Herald’s parents moved to London to live with his brother Will, who had long set up home in Norwood. His father and brother visited him in his studio every Sunday to see his latest offerings, and his father was not always sympathetic. After a particularly harsh criticism by his father, James reportedly told him ‘gaewa, ye’re juist an auld blether, ye ken naething aboot art,’ content with his own ability and style.

A great schoolfriend and later patron of Herald’s, John Taylor Ewen (who by this time was HM Inspector for Schools), encouraged him to consider travelling and broaden his artistic horizons in Paris or Italy; however the farthest he seems to have ventured was the Channel Islands, on holiday with Ewen. He was content to visualise Parisian life, and pay homage to Europe through postcard images. Forever in his thoughts was the county of Angus where he belonged, the Forfar spire of his birthplace often added to other town scenes. He spent a great deal of time in Norfolk and Suffolk, whose windmills often appear in his work. But his heart belonged to Scotland and on a supposedly short term visit back home in 1901 he decided to stay, and never set foot in London again, leaving behind his Croydon studio where he was at his most prolific, and the promise of success in the art world. Rather than be confined to London and gain fame as a Scottish impressionist, he wished to return to the place which always inspired him, where he felt welcome and free to create as he pleased, with no pressure from outside influences in the art trade. He arrived in Arbroath by train with only a cigar case in one hand and his pastels in the other and never looked back. From 1901-1902 he contributed to another short-lived publication *Imprints*, which was to be an arts quarterly magazine orchestrated by his good friend Henry Wyse, a well noted craftsman. *Imprints* was in late art nouveau style and showcased the work of these artists alongside other contemporaries such as David Foggie.

Herald did have an exhibition in the capital’s Baillie Gallery in 1910 which brought him great acclaim in London circles, but he still refused to go back, preferring artistic isolation, in his home county. He famously stated ‘I am an artist, not a sausage machine’ when asked to return to carry out the numerous commissions requested of him by galleries down there. He remained stoically true to himself, and would create works on his own terms. Herald was the epitome of the artist as a hermit, a recluse,
and though lived a relatively short life he was prolific throughout. Heralds were once a local currency in Angus.

As he was not fond of self-promotion, and shied away from the profiteering art world, when Herald died, so did the appreciation of his artistic efforts outwith Angus. The Forfar librarian Ernest Mann was a Herald fanatic and did much to raise his status in the 1960s and 70s with several exhibitions at the Meffan in Forfar. Kenneth Roberts, an Arbroath art teacher who wrote the seminal Herald text published by Mann in 1988, also did much to keep the reputation of Herald alive.

Recently there has been a resurgence of interest in Herald, sparked by the Buffalo Bill controversy. Herald produced a series of paintings which seem to depict the 1904 visit to Arbroath of Buffalo Bill Cody. However Tom Cunningham in his recent book about Buffalo Bill’s tour of Scotland, Your Fathers the Ghosts, claims that this was not Buffalo Bill but in fact the Scottish pretender Buff Bill – the Peeblesshire entertainer William Kayes. Rather than having had a derogatory effect on sales of these works (there are reputed to be at least 15 in the series, as Herald continually worked on particular themes until he grew tired of them, and if someone saw an example of something they liked he would just paint another) it may in fact have done the opposite – as shown by the recent sale just before Christmas of a Herald Buffalo Bill for £29,000 at Lindsay Burns auctioneers in Perth. A world record price for a work by Herald, he is now more collectable than ever.

Fittingly this year sees the first Herald exhibition in 20 years, ahead of the 150th anniversary of the artist’s birth in 2009. The exhibition is being organised as part of the St Andrews University postgraduate programme of Museum and Gallery Studies, and was instigated by a very generous donation to the University Museum Collections of a host of Herald memorabilia, from scrapbooks and drawings, to letters and his famous decorated envelopes (some of which he negated to address conventionally, just an accurate drawing of the place with an ‘x’ marks the spot – and miraculously they found their owners!).

This donation from Mrs Alison Roberts, wife of Ken Roberts and grand niece of J T Ewen, who had long been Herald’s source of sustenance and rent, has provided great insight into the working practices of this underrated and important Scottish artist and gives a unique starting point to an exhibition which aims to raise further awareness of Herald, and show not just the common conception that his work is all watercolours, as impressive as they may be. Alongside the watercolours will be a selection of his pastels and oils, as well as drawings and sketches aiming to get to the soul of this man and his working processes. We are hoping it will give a sense of his inspirations throughout his life and show the common themes of his work: the towns of Angus he loved; the society in London where he never belonged and was content to be a Scottish voyeur – a fish out of water – which led to his homecoming to the harbours and fishing communities of the east of Scotland. And all the while his joy of festivities and outdoor life, whether it be a local roup, or the town organ grinder. Herald had a real love of music - if not seen with a brush in his hand it was usually his fiddle. An acquaintance of Scott Skinner, famed Aberdeenshire musician, a message from him sums up Herald’s life perfectly: ‘talent does what it can, genius what it must.’ The ambition Herald had was for his art, not for himself – it was his need to create that was his driving force. We hope that this low-key life and its artistic achievements can now gain a greater appreciation and bring him forward to a new audience and a new place in the history of art in Scotland.

Sketches from Life: The Art of James Watterston Herald will run until 18th May 2008 at the Gateway Galleries, University of St Andrews and from 31st May–5th July 2008 at the Meffan Museum and Art Gallery, Forfar.

For more information about the exhibition please contact Julie Brown on jamb2@st-andrews.ac.uk or c/o School of Art History, University of St Andrews.
Paul Reid

The paintings of Scottish artist Paul Reid are classical in their subject matter yet still compellingly relevant to modern audiences. Later this year his work will be on show in his home-town of Perth and in Dundee, where he graduated ten years ago from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design. In this extract from the exhibition catalogue, Laura Gascgoine describes his art.

‘Before there was any earth or sea, before the canopy of heaven stretched overhead, Nature presented the same aspect the world over, that to which men have given the name of Chaos...’ So begins Ovid’s Metamorphoses, with its mythical tales of the magical transformations of gods and men into animal, vegetable and mineral forms. No classical text has had greater influence on the Western literary and artistic imagination than this collection of sometimes savage stories exposing the existential chaos beneath the surface of civilisation. The fact that we no longer read them could mean one of two things: either we’re too civilised to need them, or we’re in denial. The Greeks had an answer to both in the story of Pentheus, the priggish King of Thebes who doubted the power of the god of wine, Dionysus, and was torn apart by the god’s frenzied followers, led by his mother.

Paul Reid, Pentheus, 2000, oil on canvas.
Courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Perth & Kinross Council

Appropriately, this story is the subject of a painting by Paul Reid, the young Scottish artist described four years ago by Guy Peploe as ‘one of the most exciting painters to emerge from the primordial broth of postmodernism’. For the past eight years, Reid has been painting mythological subjects left untouched for more than a century. While his contemporaries, crushed by the weight of art history, have chosen the postmodernist way out, Reid has opted to play Atlas and shoulder the burden - a decision which, in art critical terms, makes him as much a freak of nature as the prodigies he depicts.

Paul Reid was born in 1975 on the industrial estate of North Muirton, Perth, moving in his early teens to Scone. There were no artists in his family, although his mother could draw and used to amuse him with pictures of Superman. As a boy, he learned his first lessons in anatomy from the musculature of comic book superheroes: ‘When it came to life drawing,’ he recalls, ‘I knew where everything went’. At Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee he painted still lifes and portraits, without quite knowing where they were taking him. It was while looking at Rubens and Titian that he became curious about the names of the characters in their paintings, and decided to investigate. He began with Ovid. ‘It was amazing,’ he says. ‘I opened the pages, and there were a hundred pictures waiting to be painted.’

The fact that none of his tutors knew the myths was of course a problem and, in the current conceptual climate, he was given a hard time. But he persevered, and for his graduation work painted his first ambitious mythological set piece on the theme of The Death of Actaeon. He graduated with First Class Honours in 1998, won a John Kinross Travel Scholarship and left for Madrid and Florence to continue his mythological art education. Other classical subjects followed - Pentheus, Marsyas, The Helades, Hermes and Argos, Orion, Endymion, Theseus and the Minotaur – touching on themes of intellectual pride, overreaching ambition, the quest for eternal youth, the monstrous consequences of unbridled desire. He has not been tempted by more modern sources: ‘There’s plenty enough in classical myth,’ he says.

Reid is a classical painter not simply in his choice of subjects; he is also a picture-maker in the old-fashioned sense. Picture-making, for him, isn’t just about composition; it’s a process that begins from the ground up. Since his student days, when he discovered Max Doerner’s classic manual on old master techniques and read it ‘from cover to cover, like a Bible’, he has made his own grounds and mixed his own colours. When I visited his studio during the painting of Odysseus on the Isle of Circe, figures in traditional black and white grisaille were taking shape on a deep red ground, with a thicket of green trees growing up around them. ‘I tend to fit the landscape around the figures,’ he told me. At this stage in a
picture’s development the iconography has been plotted, but the painting process remains fluid.

*Courtesy of 108 Fine Art*

In the case of *Odysseus*, Reid had decided to depart from Homer’s version of the story, which has the hero land on the enchantress’s island to find that earlier mariners have been turned into swine. He preferred a version on an Attic black-figure cup showing Circe’s captives as men with different animal heads. Returning to original sources can suggest new ways of treating old stories: his unusual idea of a resting Minotaur was based on Apollodorus’s account of Theseus discovering the monster asleep (although the composition owes more to Velázquez’s painting of a groggy Mars the morning after the night before with Vulcan’s wife). Ancient sources are fleshed out with contemporary visual references: the gorilla-head of one captive mariner is modelled on a live example in Edinburgh Zoo, the goat horns of another on a stuffed specimen in the Museum of Natural History. For the human figures, Reid draws on his friends: ‘I trade on their vanity,’ he says. (He doesn’t include his enemies: ‘They wouldn’t pose’.)

The figures start semi-naked and are gradually clothed as items of their wardrobes are pieced together. Props are improvised from odds and sods - Odysseus’s sword was cobbled together from a pepper grinder and a wok handle, wound around with leather: a domestic exercise in metamorphosis. ‘I only need to see where the reflections hit,’ Reid explains. ‘There’s a lot of stage setting involved; it can take the best part of a day to get the fall of the drapery right. Sometimes it can be incredibly frustrating building a painting, because you can’t just go into the studio and say: “I feel inspired today”. But problem-solving is what I enjoy.’

The process is fascinating, the results are extraordinary, but some viewers will still ask the question: why? Does the world Reid recreates in his studio have any relevance at all to the one we live in? The answer has to be yes, or he wouldn’t paint it: every artist necessarily belongs to his age. But although Reid is conscious of the topical relevance of some of his subjects - the genetic experiments of Circe, to take an obvious example - he has no inclination to spell it out. ‘Painting is a pictorial art,’ he says. ‘If I have a picture I want to paint, I don’t feel I have to justify it with a conceptual blurb’. Sometimes the physical challenge of the subject is enough; he’s tempted by the idea of painting Sisyphus, ‘because that would be a great thing for the pushing and the exertion’.

It would also be a potent metaphor for the uphill struggle of a solitary artist against the prevailing trend. But it would be a mistake to represent Reid as a fogey, a reactionary on a neoclassical mission. To neoclassical tastes, he’s not classical enough. His refusal to idealise the human figure, leaving features and physiques so identifiable that you recognise the same model in different pictures, is irredeemably naturalistic. His compositions may conform to classical models – the frieze-like design of a picture like *Odysseus on the Isle of Circe* goes back, via Velázquez, to Roman sarcophagi – but his protagonists are contemporaries in classical dress.

*Private Collection*

The all-over lighting of his interiors, so obviously electric, heightens the feeling that the action is a tableau staged for our benefit, and that as soon as
we’re gone the director will cry ‘Cut!’ and the actors will slip back into trainers and jeans. To a neoclassical sensibility, this slippage between the real and the ideal may grate like a grinding of aesthetic gears, but for the rest of us, the conflict lends the work interest. ‘I’m too much of a Northern artist to be a classical painter,’ says Reid. ‘I’m too interested in the faces. If you’re an arch-classicist and you try to make each person an everyman, it becomes very boring.’ To Reid’s eye, physical truth is too compelling: ‘I’m honest when I’m painting. I don’t like to lie too much.’

Reid’s reluctance to lie has tied him to his native landscape, which forms an unlikely backdrop to classical scenes normally set on the sun-kissed slopes of the Mediterranean. It’s a surprise to see the blinded giant Orion striding towards the rising sun across Scottish scenery that might have been painted by Peter Graham, Alexander Fraser or any of the 19th century landscapists in the collection of the National Galleries of Scotland. Reid has never consciously studied these paintings but, as he points out, he has studied the same landscapes. Again one senses a tension between the demands of truth and the demands of picture-making; while he loves the stage set quality of Poussin’s landscapes, he knows it would be ‘utterly unrealistic’ to go looking for it in the real world. Nor is he tempted to incorporate into his pictures the genuinely dramatic landscapes he sketched at Petra and Wadi Rum while travelling in Jordan with the Prince of Wales in 2004. ‘The Wadi Rum landscapes were too “Wow!”’. What I like about the Scottish landscape is that real wildness, and the colour.’

Reid’s honesty and his insistence on keeping it real have made him suspicious of the moral claims sometimes made for art. A review of the recent Velázquez show in London which compared the painter’s surface effects with his ‘inner truth’ made him bristle. To Reid, the business of painting is about appearances; what an audience sees beyond them is their own affair. If there’s an inner truth to his work, he’s not letting on. The myths of antiquity have retained their power over us because their meanings are open-ended; Reid’s pictures operate on the same principle. It augurs well for their longevity.

Paul Reid’s work will be shown at Perth Museum & Art Gallery (10th May – 5th July) and the University of Dundee Tower Foyer Gallery (26th September – 14th November). We are grateful to 108 Fine Art for permission to reproduce the above text and images.

Listings

ABERDEEN

Aberdeen Art Gallery
Schoolhill, Aberdeen
Open: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 12noon-5pm
Tel: 01224 523700 E-mail: info@aagm.co.uk
Website: www.aagm.co.uk

ABERDEEN ARTISTS SOCIETY 74TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION
3rd – 31st May 2008
This major annual “open” exhibition provides professional, established, amateur and emerging artists with a platform to show an exciting range of work including painting, sculpture, printmaking, jewellery, Textiles and film.

RALPH STEADMAN
UNTIL 26th JULY 2008
To coincide with the University of Aberdeen's WORD Festival this display offers an opportunity to see the witty series of etchings of famous authors created by the world renowned artist and illustrator Ralph Steadman. Printed at Peacock Visual Arts in Aberdeen this series includes images of Virginia Woolf, Samuel Beckett, Hunter S. Thompson and many other famous - and in some cases instantly recognisable - faces.

Provost Skene’s House
Guestrow, Aberdeen
Open: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-4pm
Tel: 01224 641086 E-mail: info@aagm.co.uk
Website: www.aagm.co.uk/psh.html

THE LOCAL WORD AND IMAGE: 500 YEARS OF PRINTING IN SCOTLAND
UNTIL NOVEMBER 2008
Traces the development of printing in the city from 1622, through the publication of the first newspaper in Scotland and into the 19th century when Aberdeen was a major printing centre.

DUNDEE

Dundee Contemporary Arts
Nethergate, Dundee
Open: Mon-Sun 10.30am-5.30pm
Tel: 01382 909900 E-mail: mail@dca.org.uk
Website: www.dca.org.uk
ELLIPSIS
UNTIL 22ND JUNE 2008
Ellipsis features works made by three artists who were pioneering the use of self portraiture in photography, film and video in the 1970s and 1980s. This is the first joint exhibition of their work. Although born ten years apart and in very different circumstances, the three artists featured in this exhibition each profited from the turn to still photography, and other lens-based technologies – film, slide projection and the newer medium of video that dominated vanguard art practice in the late 1960s. Taking themselves, their bodies and their immediate circumstances as their point of departure, during the 1970s all three made performative work for the camera. Tellingly, the sites they favoured were mostly their own studios or domestic interiors.

University of Dundee Lamb Gallery
Tower Building, University of Dundee
Open: Mon-Fri 9.30am-8.30pm Sat 9.30am-4.30pm
Tel: 01382 384310 E-mail: museum@dundee.ac.uk
Website: www.dundee.ac.uk/museum

WINDOW TO THE WEST: THE HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS IN ART
UNTIL 21ST JUNE 2008
An exhibition of artworks responding to the Scottish Highlands, from the collections of the University of Dundee, the University of Edinburgh and the Royal Scottish Academy.

City Art Centre
Market Street, Edinburgh
Tel: 0131 5293993
Website: www.cac.org.uk

RECOGNISED: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE COLLECTION
UNTIL END OF DECEMBER 2008
The City Art Centre has one of the best collections of Scottish art in the country. This was acknowledged by the Scottish Government in October 2007, when the City Art Centre’s collection of Scottish Art was recognised to be of national significance, in a scheme managed by Museums Galleries Scotland. Its core is the collection of the Scottish Modern Arts Association, founded in 1907, and donated to the city in the early 1960s. It contains key works by all the major Scottish artists from McTaggart to Eardley. At the same time, Miss Jean F Watson established a Trust enabling the City Art Centre to continue to acquire work.

As a result the collection is exceptional. There are views of Edinburgh and portraits of citizens. The Glasgow Boys are represented, as are the Scottish Colourists. The collection includes works by the Edinburgh School including Gillies and Redpath, while the post-war generation is represented by Davie, Paolozzi, Blackadder and Bellany.

In 1997 the City Art Centre was given part of the Scottish Arts Council collection and has recently acquired challenging contemporary work through the National Collecting Scheme for Scotland. The City Art Centre collection’s new status will ensure that it is cared for, protected and promoted to a wider audience. Recognised will include iconic works from the collection, giving a taste of its range and diversity.

NORTH LIGHT:
CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY FROM THE CITY ART CENTRE COLLECTION
UNTIL 8TH JUNE 2008
This exhibition features recent acquisitions by Albert Watson, Wendy McMurdo and Jane Brettle. It also includes work by leading Scottish photographers such as Calum Colvin, Owen Logan and David Williams.

John MacWhirter, An Highland Loch, c.1880s
Copyright University of Dundee Museum Services
FROM SICKERT TO GERTLER: MODERN BRITISH ART FROM BOXTED HOUSE
UNTIL 22ND JUNE 2008
This exhibition celebrates the lives of Bobby and Natalie Bevan and the works that hung on the walls of their home, Boxted House in Essex, which became a gathering place for artists after the Second World War. The exhibition contains important works alongside unusual and private works, and archival material from the period 1894-1970.

Boxted House was the home of Bobby and Natalie Bevan from 1946 until 1974. Bobby (1901-1974) was the son of the artists Robert Bevan (1865-1925) and Stanisława de Karlowska (1876-1952) and was Chairman of the leading advertising agency S.H. Benson Ltd. Natalie Denny (1909-2007), a renowned beauty and hostess, modelled for many artists, most famously Mark Gertler.

Bobby and Natalie married in 1946, and together they created an exceptional home; paintings by Bobby’s parents and their friends, including Walter Sickert, Harold Gilman and Charles Ginner, hung beside works by Bobby and Natalie’s own friends, such as Christopher Nevinson, John Armstrong and Frederick Gore. The house became a social centre for artists, particularly those associated with East Anglia, like John Nash, Cedric Morris and Lett Haines.

This exhibition celebrates the colourful character of Boxted House, its hosts, its guests and the works of art which filled its walls. It is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated catalogue.

MATURETY: IMAGES OF MOTHERHOOD
UNTIL 22ND JUNE 2008
This exhibition of works from the collections of the National Galleries of Scotland explores the theme of motherhood in art, showing how the image of the mother and child has endured and been re-interpreted by artists over the past 500 years. The works on show range from the early Renaissance to the present day, and include works by Sandro Botticelli, George Romney, Pablo Picasso and Christine Borland.

182ND RSA ANNUAL EXHIBITION
10TH MAY – 25TH JUNE 2008
The RSA Annual Exhibition is a highlight of the exhibiting year for artists, architects and members of the public. Showcasing around 350 works by the best of both established and emerging artists from across the country, it aims to present a comprehensive cross section of contemporary art in Scotland. In addition to selected works, expect to see RSA Members such as Elizabeth Blackadder DBE, Calum Colvin, Bill Scott, Adrian Wiszniewski, Michael Visocchi and Barbara Rae. The exhibition takes up all 12 of the magnificent RSA Galleries and includes painting, sculpture, film making, photography, printmaking, architecture and installation. There are also a number of cash prizes and awards in kind available to artists. Most works are for sale.

SKETCHES FROM LIFE: THE ART OF JAMES WATTERSTON HERALD
31ST MAY – 5TH JULY 2008
See Gateway Galleries, University of St Andrews for details

PEOPLE WATCHING WITH PHIL MAY
UNTIL 8TH JUNE 2008
This display of drawings and cartoons by Phil May celebrates the 25th anniversary of the Burrell Collection in Pollok Park and the breadth of William Burrell’s collecting. Phil May was one of the most
popular cartoonists of the late 19th century. He was unusual in having a gift for both lively drawing and snappy punchlines. The exhibition has been designed for families, with plenty of hands-on activities to encourage visitors to look closely at Phil May’s work.

**Gallery of Modern Art**
Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow
Mon-Wed 10am-5pm Thurs 10am-8pm Sat 10am-5pm Fri and Sun 11am-5pm
Tel: 0141 229 1996
Website: www.glasgowmuseums.com

**CONTEMPORARY COLLECTION**
**UNTIL 2009**

The exhibition features work bought by Glasgow Museums Contemporary Art Purchasing Panel, as well as a gift presented by the Contemporary Art Society, London. The Panel is currently focusing on collecting work by Glasgow-based artists at different stages of their careers. All the artists represented in this exhibition studied at Glasgow School of Art, and most continue to live and work in Glasgow. On display are works by Clare Barclay, Christine Borland, Douglas Gordon, Ilana Halperin, Lucy Skaer, Hanneline Visnes, Daphne Wright, Richard Wright and 2005 Turner Prize-winner Simon Starling. A new acquisition by Martin Boyce, Our Love is like the Earth, the Sun, the Trees and the Birth (2003), will be on display soon in Gallery 2.

**Hunterian Art Gallery**
82 Hillhead Street, University of Glasgow
Open: Mon-Sat 9.30am-5pm
Tel: 0141 330 5431 E-mail: hunter@museum.gla.ac.uk
Website: www.hunterian.gla.ac.uk

**A RENAISSANCE MASTER: PRINTS BY PARMIGIANINO**
**UNTIL 30TH AUGUST 2008**

Francesco Mazzola (1503–1540), known as Parmigianino, is one of the most important printmaking artists of the Renaissance. He was born in Parma, where he worked with Correggio, and moved to Rome in the 1520s. In 1527 he returned north after the Sack of Rome, and much of his later work was produced in Parma and Bologna, where he may have learnt to etch with Marcantonio Raimondi.

Parmigianino was a remarkable and very idiosyncratic painter. He was also a superb draughtsman who, unusually for the period, drew for pleasure, and left a very large body of drawings. He made a small number of etchings and is one of the very first artists to have exploited the sketchy and spontaneous qualities that were later considered essential to medium. Both versions of his celebrated Entombment etching are included in the display.

Vasari’s life of Parmigianino emphasises his cooperation with Antonio da Trento in making chiaroscuro woodcuts. These striking tonal prints were an important graphic development, intended as printed wash drawings, and they were aimed mainly at the enjoyment of collectors. Parmigianino probably drew the images on to blocks that were then cut by Antonio da Trento. Woodcuts made this way are complicated to print, and they remained rare until a short-lived revival in Mantua around 1600. There are some beautiful examples on display, including the great Diogenes by Ugo da Carpi, as well as fine examples made together with Antonio da Trento, including Parmigianino’s print masterpiece, the powerful Martyrdom of St Peter and St Paul.

**RUBENS TO MACKINTOSH**
**UNTIL 6TH SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Hunterian print room contains an important but undervalued holding of drawings. Whistler and Mackintosh dominate this important resource with hundreds of works. In addition, there are about 1000 drawings by other artists of all periods, with a number of great names represented, for example Rubens, Benjamin West, Fergusson, Peploe and Eardley to name a few. Rubens to Mackintosh presents a selection of the best drawings belonging to the University of Glasgow. Chosen for their quality, the selection integrates the artists and periods on this basis and is the perfect showcase for the strength of the Hunterian collections.

**Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum**
Argyle Street, Glasgow
Open: Mon-Thurs and Sat 10am-5pm Fri and Sun 11am-5pm
Tel: 0141 276 9599
Website: www.glasgowmuseums.com

**HARRY BENSON: A PHOTOGRAPHER’S JOURNEY**
**30TH MAY – 14TH SEPTEMBER 2008**

This exciting homecoming exhibition includes intimate photographs from the 60-year career of Harry Benson, the internationally renowned photographer from Glasgow.
Harry Benson’s career is a roll-call of contemporary history and culture, and some of his images have achieved icon status. Benson arrived in America with the Beatles in 1964. He has photographed every American president since Dwight D Eisenhower, was just feet from away from Bobby Kennedy when he was assassinated, and was in the room with Richard Nixon when he resigned.

On display are a range of images of world leaders and events; icons of fashion, music and film; and Scottish and American athletes. There are also images from his recent book Harry Benson’s Glasgow.

MILNGAVIE

Lillie Art Gallery
Station Road, Milngavie
Open: Tues-Sat 10am-1pm, 2-5pm
Tel: 0141 5788847
Website: www.glasgowgalleries.co.uk/lillie.htm

JOAN EARDLEY DRAWINGS
UNTIL 21ST MAY 2008
The first of an annual display of drawings by Joan Eardley from the gallery’s permanent collection

PERTH

Perth Museum & Art Gallery
George Street, Perth
Open: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm
Tel: 01738 632488 E-mail: museum@pkc.gov.uk
Website: www.pkcgov.uk/museums

PAUL REID: PAINTINGS & DRAWINGS
10TH MAY - 5TH JULY 2008
Heralded as one of the most talented new painters in Scotland, Paul Reid was born locally in Scone. He trained at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee, graduating in 1998. His classical themes are reflected in his equally classical figurative style of painting. A series of paintings inspired by the Minotaur will form the core of this show.

ST ANDREWS

Gateway Galleries, University of St Andrews
North Haugh, St Andrews
Mon-Fri: 9am-5.30pm Sat-Sun: 10am-5pm
Tel: 01334 462417

SKETCHES FROM LIFE: THE ART OF JAMES WATTERSTON HERALD
UNTIL 18TH MAY 2008
The first exhibition in 20 years of the Forfar-born artist, this looks back at Herald’s artistic achievements from all the major periods of his life, and incorporates the themes which inspired him: towns and harbours, London society, music, and outdoor events. The exhibition makes use of Herald’s sketchbooks and other unique memorabilia donated to the University of St Andrews Museum Collections. This exhibition has been organised by postgraduate students from the University of St Andrews Museum and Gallery Studies course.

Committee Members

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Ellen Graves (The Open University)