

## From the Chair

I would like to welcome all members back from a hopefully nice and relaxing summer. After a busy spring with our study day at the Black Watch Castle and Museum in Perth and a series of events organised by Claire Robinson and Matthew Jarron, the SSAH committee also slowed down its pace a bit over the summer. But we are now back and just met in Glasgow to discuss a series of exciting plans for the SSAH. For the first time, we are offering members a two-day excursion to Kirkcudbright (17-18 October) with an exciting programme that includes a private visit of E.A. Hornel's home Broughton House and a walking tour of this pretty former artists' colony on the Solway Firth. You should have received more detailed information about this trip and I ask you to please do get in touch with Claire by 05 October (Tel: 01334 461682 or email on [cr67@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:cr67@st-andrews.ac.uk)) if you wish to participate. We have a couple more events in the pipeline for the autumn and will send out information in due course.

Membership numbers are healthy and we are working on a new website (thanks to Tara King who has taken on the big task of developing this new site). The journal is now in its production phase and will be available at the AGM in December. Please save the date for the AGM: 12 December in Edinburgh (venue TBA). We are also actively working on having a presence at the Association of Art Historians' annual conference in

April 2016, which is hosted by the University of Edinburgh.

Wishing you a lovely autumn!

Sabine Wieber

## 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 £500 to assist with research costs and travel expenses. Applicants must be working at a post-graduate 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, [sculpthurtado@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sculpthurtado@yahoo.co.uk)

## Project Report by Blake Morris

Postgraduate researcher at the University of East London

Through an SSAH grant I was given the opportunity to visit Deveron Arts, an international arts organisation in the remote town of Huntly, Scotland. My arrival in Huntly coincided with two events: the annual Slow Marathon, led by artist Stuart McAdams, and the Baltimore Uprisings. Over the next few days I alternated between social media feeds and walking archives: tumult in Baltimore on Twitter, archival documents of the original Slow Marathon in Huntly.

Conceived by Mihret Kebede, the original Slow Marathon connected Huntly to Kebede's hometown of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Unable to walk the distance herself, Kebede asked walkers to participate in an 'Accumulative Marathon' (Deveron Arts, 2012). Participants in Huntly and Addis Ababa exchanged shoelaces to further their connection. After the Slow Marathon, participant Ron Brander (2012) comments on a newfound awareness of Ethiopia: 'Never before March 2012 had I encountered or observed anything to do with Ethiopia.' In Washington DC, Ethiopian shoelaces in his pockets, he notices the abundance of Ethiopian cuisine. After Kebede's project, urban and rural spaces are newly linked: DC, Huntly and Addis Ababa.

Six days after the Slow Marathon: *Trayvon Martin*. The name resonates, Ron Brander says, 'like the bagpipes which led us out of Huntly square [ . . . ] "unarmed 17-year old shot dead...an old familiar story..." He sees a copy of the *Washington Post*, dated Friday March 23, 2012, with a headline: 'PERILS OF WALKING WHILE BLACK'. Ten days after the Slow Marathon in Huntly, I see the following post by Marjorie Cohn: '[Freddie] Gray was guilty of nothing other than "walking while black."' From my seat in Huntly I add to the tumult on twitter: an image of Kebede leading a group of white walkers through the hills of Scotland, and another of black slow marathoners in Ethiopia. I imagine new geographies, and link places and histories I never considered together.

In 2015 an American in London travels to the Slow Marathon in Huntly. Ethiopia; Scotland; Baltimore; DC; Stuart McAdams; Mihret Kebede; Freddie Gray; Trayvon Martin - all these names and places connect in the archives. Grounded locally, the work of Deveron Arts reaches out to the world. The resonances may be small, but they open new potential pathways, both literal and figurative.

## Reviews

### Review - tour of the University of Edinburgh Art Collection: *Rediscover*, Friday 17 April

By Claire Robinson, Museum Collections Unit, University of St Andrews

In April, SSAH members enjoyed a tour of the University of Edinburgh's Art Collection with Neil Lebeter, Art Collections Curator. Today, the art collection is composed of the University's original art collection, which showcases the riches of over 400 years of collecting, and the Edinburgh College of Art's collection of drawings, prints, paintings and sculpture.

The centrepiece of the University's original collection is the Torrie Collection of 17<sup>th</sup> century Dutch and Italian Masters with works by Ruisdael, ten Oever, Van der Meulen, Pynacker, Rosa and van de Velde. One of the highlights that we viewed on our tour was Mario Pastori Giambologna's *Anatomical Figure of a Horse* cast in bronze.

Next, we had the opportunity to find out more about the Edinburgh College of Art Collection. We saw early works by former ECA students who are now recognised as leading names in Scottish art history, including John Bellany, John Houston, Alan Davie and Eduardo Paolozzi. One remarkable recent find was a previously unidentified Barbara Hepworth oil on board work entitled *Three Groups on a Pink Ground* dating from 1949. Rescued from cupboards and teaching rooms, many artworks from the ECA collection are in some need of TLC. As part of the tour, we met paper conservator, Emily Hick, who has been treating works from the ECA Collection in the University's Conservation Studio. The conservation

of the ECA Collection is a considerable project that will last many years.

Members also met Emma Smith, curator of the exhibition *Something Blue* (2 April - 27 June 2015) in the exhibition space at the University of Edinburgh Main Library. From 'bluestockings and opals to lullabies and rhapsodies', this insightful exhibition explored exhibits from across the University's collections. All of the exhibits related to the colour and concept of blue. One of the artistic highlights of the exhibition was David Batchelor's 2011 work entitled *Blob 05 (blue)*. This multi-textured work was constructed from the artist's inspired use of gloss and matt paint on aluminum. The paint was poured onto an aluminum sheet and allowed to dry to find its own form. Months later when the paint had dried, Batchelor found that the artwork displayed textured, almost lunar surfaces.

Our visit to the University of Edinburgh's Collections provided a great overview of the wealth and diversity of their holdings. A particular highlight was the opportunity to see rediscovered gems from the ECA's Collections. A big thanks to Neil Lebeter and the Collections team at the University of Edinburgh for hosting such a wonderful visit.

**Review - Ally Wallace's solo exhibition, *Seaside Modernity*, at Rothesay Pavilion, 30-31 May, 2015**  
By Susannah Thompson



Rothesay, the main town on the Isle of Bute, looks straight back at the Ayrshire coast. Like many seaside resorts, the town's appeal lies in a slightly careworn yet resolutely cheerful demeanour.

On the north side of the promenade, the Rothesay Pavilion (archt. J. Carrick, 1938) stands like a scaled-down, dry-docked cruise-liner, designed only a few years after Mendelsohn and Chermayeff's De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea and Oliver Hill's Midland Hotel at Morecambe, amongst others. The rich architectural subject matter, then, is surely 'the draw' for Ally Wallace's exhibition *Seaside Modernity*, a body of work made exclusively in response to the Pavilion. Or is it?

Exhibited in the 'prow' of the building, a light-drenched 'daring bulge' which formerly housed the first floor cafe in a glazed, bow-fronted, cantilevered space, Wallace's small-scale drawings and studies in pencil, ink or gouache are shown together with cut-out card 'drawings', a large hanging textile and small resin plaster casts. A film is also screened as part of the show - a guided tour of the building interspersed with sequences of digitally drawn and animated sketches of the site. All are exhibited and installed in a less than ordinary manner - drawings are not wall-mounted but hang from slender strips of wood, like clothes on a line. A small card cut-out - a study of a window and curtain - is shown on the window it depicts, that graceful, expansive sweep of curved glazing. Elsewhere, an A6 sketchbook with studies in coloured biro hangs, as though falling or thrown, suspended from an interior pillar in the space. Other artworks are attached to Wallace's bespoke timber constructions while Pavilion furniture - a table, a clothes rail, rope barriers and screen stands - act as spindly, precarious plinths for drawings and sculpture, themselves sculptural, to create a whole work of art, an installation which reveals Wallace's sensitive familiarity with the Pavilion and his desire to integrate these new works with the existing fabric, fixtures and fittings of the building. The drawings and sketches, shown as they are, could be, variously, flags, banners, or elaborate spurs. Standing in the space, they appear as though poised on the brink of a performance, waiting to be animated. As an installation, the works could be

anthropomorphic, kinetic sculptures in repose, choreographed and ready to move - to spin, twist and twirl across the polished floor.



Many of the studies are recognisable in relation to their subject matter, but often only just. These are not - and are not intended to be - 'accurate' architectural drawings, mapping and describing the space forensically, all measurement and precision. Rather, they are glances, impressions, fragments and interpretations - abstracted details presented *in situ*. They are self-referential drawings of a building presented within the building which they purport to describe. But intriguingly, while performing, to some degree, their mimetic function, many of the drawings are also somehow out of kilter, like the building itself in its present state - they are contradictory, imprecise, subject to change, layered. Thus, the works can operate in different ways, beyond their immediate reference points. The small resin casts, for example, might be shown within physical range of the interior decorative woodwork and radiator details from which they were taken, but, equally, they could function removed from this context as minimalist, Modernist netsuke, small enough to be held in the palm of your hand, portable and precious.

Throughout the building, as is shown in detail in Wallace's film (and experienced by visitors to the exhibition on their way from the entrance to the cafe space), a succession of later alterations, adjustments and additions to the interior seem to clash and jar with what we nostalgically imagine to be the purity and elegance of the original 1930s

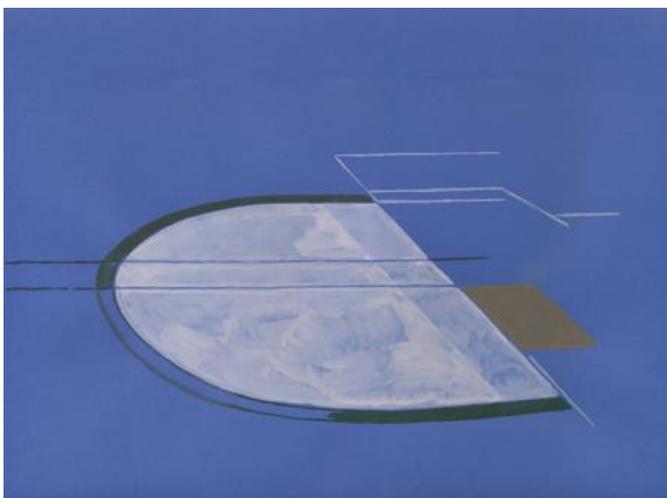
design. These apparent 'improvements', which took place decade upon decade as the use, requirements and tastes of the public changed, were sometimes aesthetic, sometimes functional and often, in latter years, pragmatic (typically to hide areas blighted by damp, damage or decay). All of these changes read now, of course, as 'imperfections', even travesties, to the design purist, but these palimpsests and overlays reveal the social history of the space. As the Pavilion stands on the brink of a major project to fully restore and refurbish the building to its 'former glory' (for which read, its original 1930s state) Wallace's work is imbued with greater significance - the work - completed at the end of this phase of the building's life, captures the metamorphosis, adaptation and change experienced by the site since its beginning, its history inscribed upon worn surfaces, scratched into false panelling and ground into threadbare carpets.

In his studies of the Rothesay Pavilion, Wallace encapsulates this layered, sometimes competing history of the building in the forms of many of his own works. In the large hanging textile work, for example, the exuberant splashes of acidic colour dyed into the cotton seem at odds with the spare, economical line drawings which repeat across its surface. They are evenly spaced across the fabric, but appear to be moving, curving and swarming over the surface like a heady, mesmerising screensaver or tanks on a battlefield, seen from above.

The shapes we are looking at are line drawings of an exterior balustrade at the front of the building but they could be whistles, Art Deco banquettes or 70s tub chairs. We see them again, turning and shifting, as animated sequences in a film which acts as a travelogue or guided tour to the sights and sounds of the building.

Elsewhere, colourful gouache works on A3 paper could be pure abstraction, just colour and form if we did not have at hand (or foot) the immediate, architectural cross-reference of geometrically patterned Pavilion floors. Such drawings, as objects in their own right, could be seen to reference High Modernism if seen as stand-alone, abstract, flat, formal works, divorced from

their context. But like the building which gave rise to them, the works, in their current, exhibited state, simultaneously allude to and undermine the very principles of Modernism through the nature of their display - contra medium-specific purity, they revel in external 'real world' subject matter, however quotidian. This is the essence of Wallace's work. *Seaside Modernity* is not an homage to Modernist architecture or an attempt to reveal 'forgotten' architectural gems (there are more than enough of those in contemporary art). What we find here is an artist who has stumbled serendipitously across the object of his desire, an enthusiast who wants to know everything about his subject matter, good and bad. There is a delight in marginalia, absurdity, overlay and contradiction in Wallace's work as it considers both the form and function of the Pavilion through a detailing of visual fragments from all eras of the building's (almost) 80 year history.



Wallace's work has been informed by careful, rigorous research conducted both by making work on site and by getting to know current workers, visitors and residents. Today, pre- restoration, the building still hosts tea-dances, once hugely popular, now more forlorn affairs as numbers dwindle amidst the cavernous ground floor theatre and dancehall. More in demand are the spin classes taken in a smaller room on the ground floor, whose pumping, hi-energy soundtracks incongruously reverberate around the building. Both are documented in the film through sound, as are

anecdotes which similarly bring the building to life, beyond canonical design or architectural history.

Over the course of the work's production, Wallace was a regular visitor, inhabiting the space for days on end and given free reign to access all areas in which to make work and closely familiarise himself with the building. In tandem with the building itself, *Seaside Modernity* is multi-faceted in how it expresses and translates the history of a place. Wallace's treatment of Rothesay Pavilion is the very opposite of what has become a trope in contemporary art - the cool, mannered, formal translation of classic Modernist design. This work breathes - it is human, flawed, mutable and full of colour.

The film featured in the show can be seen by visiting <https://vimeo.com/129773153>. Filmed in and around Rothesay Pavilion, the video includes sound snippets from the tea-dances and spin classes that take place in the building.

All images courtesy of the artist.

## Exhibitions

### ***Scottish Artists 1750-1900: From Caledonia to the Continent***

The Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyroodhouse  
6 August 2015 to 7 February 2016

This is the first ever exhibition devoted to Scottish art in the Royal Collection. It brings together paintings, drawings and miniatures collected by monarchs from George III to Queen Victoria.

The show includes the work of painters who were born in Scotland and travelled abroad, such as Allan Ramsay and Sir David Wilkie, and of those whose inspiration remained firmly rooted in their native land, such as Alexander Nasmyth and James Giles. In particular, the exhibition highlights the importance and influence of artists whose work was shaped by the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment.

## ***Recording Scotland: World War II Through Artists' Eyes***

Gateway Galleries, St Andrews

5 September 2015 – 27 February 2016

By Claire Robinson, Collections and Exhibitions Curator, Museum Collections Unit, University of St Andrews

A new exhibition showcasing artworks from the University of St Andrews' Recording Scotland Collection opened to the public on 5 September 2015. *Recording Scotland: World War II Through Artists' Eyes* examines the impact of the war on artists who took part in the wartime artistic documentary project, Recording Scotland. Their personal stories and the artworks on display provide a revealing insight into the relationship between art and war.

Launched during the Second World War in 1942, the Recording Scotland scheme was designed to provide employment for artists during the war and was also created in response to fears about the threats posed to the nation's historic scenes, sites and buildings. These threats ranged from enemy action, such as aerial bombing, to growing urbanisation, industry and motor transport. Funded by the Pilgrim Trust, it was created as an extension to the Recording Britain project, which focused on England and Wales. Recording Scotland was guided by the vision of Sir James Colquhoun Irvine, who was Chairman of the Recording Scotland Committee and Principal of the University of St Andrews.

For many of the 47 artists who took part in the Recording Scotland project, the war had a major impact on their lives and careers. This exhibition explores how war art initiatives, such as Recording Scotland and the government's British War Artists Schemes, provided artists with income and opportunities that may never have been available during peacetime. Several of the Recording Scotland artists featured in the exhibition, such as James Miller, Alexander Macpherson and Alan Ian Ronald, were also official war artists.



Alan Ian Ronald, *Red Row, Limekilns*, 1942.  
University of St Andrews, Museum Collections  
HC106

*Recording Scotland: World War II Through Artists' Eyes* highlights that many artists were compelled to record their experiences of the war, and the emotions that it inspired, for future generations. The artists David Foggie and Margaret Wright were inspired to document the daily reality of life on the wartime home front. For Aleksander Zyw, who was the official war artist to the Polish Armed Forces in Britain, the war changed his life and artistic career forever.

It also considers the effect of the Second World War on the working practices of the Recording Scotland artists. Whilst sketching outdoors near military and coastal sites, artists were often suspected of being spies by the military, police and civilians. Art materials were sometimes in short supply due to the rationing of raw materials. Like most of the population, the artists took on wartime roles to 'do their bit' for the war effort.

This exhibition accompanies the *Recording Britain: Life and Landscape during World War II* exhibition at MUSA, Museum of the University of St Andrews, which runs until 6 December 2015. Together, these exhibitions provide visitors with an exciting opportunity to see works from both the Recording Britain and Recording Scotland Collections, which have never been publicly displayed together before.

*Recording Scotland: World War II Through Artists' Eyes* is complemented by a series of exciting events for families and adults. For full event details see <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/museum/events/>.

Opening times: Monday to Friday, 9 am- 3.45 pm, Saturday 12 – 4 pm. Free admission.

### **George Jamesone: Portrait Painter**

Aberdeen Maritime Museum

23 August September – 29 November 2015



*David Anderson, architect and his wife Jean Guild*

By George Jamesone

© Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections

Exploration of the life and career of Aberdonian George Jamesone, Scotland's first eminent portrait painter. The exhibition is accompanied by a series of talks:

4 November

*George Jamesone: Life and Times* (History Team)

11 November

*Scottish Portraiture in Aberdeen Art Gallery's collections* (Alison Fraser, Lead Curator, Art)

18 November

*The Ship and Aberdeen's Shipmaster Society in the 17<sup>th</sup> century* (Meredith Greiling, Curator)

25 November

*Aberdeen Silver in the 17<sup>th</sup> century*

(Christine Rew, Art Gallery & Museums Manager)

All talks take place on a Wednesday from 12.30-1.00pm at Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Admission is free but advance booking is required on 01224 337714. A George Jamesone walking trail has also been produced, featuring a plaque for the site of the House and Studio of George Jamesone, and embroidered hangings associated with Mary Jamesone. Opening times: Monday - Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 12-3pm

### **Classical Art: The Legacy of the Ancients**

The McManus, Dundee's Art Gallery and Museums Continues until November 1 2015

The McManus has extended the run of its exhibition on classical art. *Classical Art: The Legacy of The Ancients* illustrates the enduring influence of ancient Greek and Roman culture through paintings, sculpture and ceramics from Dundee's nationally significant collection of fine art.

The Greeks were the greatest myth-makers of all time. Stories of gods, heroes and men were enacted in plays, depicted in paintings and individual characters sculpted in bronze.

The exhibition includes a red-figure wine bowl dating to 450 BC, a 19<sup>th</sup> century bronze head of Dionysus, a watercolour titled *Lonely Torso* by William McCance and Kate Whiteford's *Votives and Libations*, a contemporary take on classical forms.

Following the successful partnership with the British Museum *Roman Empire: Power & People* exhibition earlier this year, visitors have another opportunity to see local Roman artefacts from the City's collection. The rare Lorica Scale armour found at Carpow dates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, and is the best-preserved example from Western Roman Europe to survive. To supplement the display are archaeological finds from ancient Egypt which include a terracotta head of Medusa made from mud from the Nile.

Also featured in the exhibition is the 1816 trophy from the Doncaster Gold Cup, one of the oldest established horse races in Britain. This is the first time that the neoclassical-style trophy has been shown with a piece that inspired its creation – a 5<sup>th</sup> century BC Greek wine vase.



## 2015 Committee Members

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