



## Welcome To The New RI Review



Here is the new version of the RI Review – a newsletter which covers all the exhibition events held during 2009 and future plans for 2010 together with other features of interest to members. This will be helpful to those who are unable to get to London to visit the Mall Galleries and to other shows planned during the year.

The 'High Watermark' exhibition of the RI & RWS Members proved to be very successful and will be featured again in 2011.

I appreciate all the work of my fellow Officers and Council, particularly my thanks to Sandra Walker and Andy Wood for their initiative in producing this first issue.

*Ronald Maddox*  
*RI President.*

### 198th Annual Exhibition 2010

#### Essential Dates

Receiving Days:

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February

Selection Days:

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February

Hanging:

Saturday (afternoon) 17<sup>th</sup> April + Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April and/or

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April

Buzzacott Evening: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April

Private View: Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April

President's tour: 23<sup>rd</sup> April 11:00am and 2:30pm

Art Event Evening: Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April

Closing: Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May (time to be announced.)

AGM: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May

### RI Website

The RI's excellent new website has been up and running for almost a year. It plays a vital part in our campaign to raise the RI's national (and international) profile as well as being a very valuable marketing tool, enabling members with websites to make their work available to a wider public. It has also proved to be an important and useful resource for research. Currently receiving between 300 & 400 visits per month the aim in 2010 is to double this and to increase the website's ratings with search engines such as Google.

Please send all website suggestions, inclusions, etc. To  
Andy Wood, Hon. Secretary, at  
[honsec@royalinstituteofpaintersinwatercolours.org](mailto:honsec@royalinstituteofpaintersinwatercolours.org)  
or use the contact form on the website.

### RI REVIEW Highlights of 2009

#### 197<sup>th</sup> RI Annual Exhibition



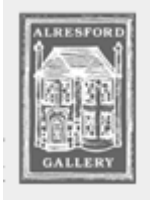
Despite the G20 demonstrations and the Easter Holidays occurring during its run, our 197<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibition was a great success: visitor numbers were good as were the comments on the exhibition. Many art societies came to see the show and published their praise on their websites or newsletters, the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists even took the trouble to send us a letter of congratulations. While these visitors may not buy many paintings, they certainly do spend their money in the FBA shop, boosting the sales of catalogues books and cards not to mention coffees, teas and cakes in the café.

Partly due to the adverse weather during the receiving days the open entry numbers and fees were down on the previous year's figures. Also, apart from the highly successful Buzzacott preview evening, all of the Mall Galleries planned evening events were cancelled. Even so we comfortably exceeded the sales target set us by the FBA with takings of almost £62,000.

Congratulations and thanks to everyone for making 2009 a great success, let's see if we cannot make 2010 even better.

# Highlights of 2009 (continued)

## The RI at Alresford



In May 2009 the Alresford Gallery hosted an exhibition of 52 paintings by members of the RI.

The gallery, situated in Alresford, Hampshire, was established by Brian Knowler, a member of the RI, and it has been run by Kerrie Cunningham since Brian's death 10 years ago.

Many people attended the preview including the President, Vice President, Secretary, Membership Secretary and several local members. The selection of work was thoughtfully hung and all agreed that it was an impressive presentation for the RI.

The end result: the venue was great, the work was great and everyone enjoyed the experience. In our ongoing bid to increase awareness in the RI, this exhibition was a great success.

- Terry McKivragan

## RI/RWS High Watermark Exhibition



This, the first combined exhibition between the two leading English watercolour societies in 178 years, was a brilliant success. Crossing boundaries established almost two centuries ago, bringing together the best watercolour painters in the world, spanning two galleries and, some would say even more amazingly, linking North and South London, the

exhibition was the culmination of more than a decade of discussion and negotiation.

The paintings were shown both at the Bankside Gallery and at the Mall Galleries. The exact same collection of works by the leading watercolour painters of today looked so very different in the two venues. South of the Thames the Bankside was intimate and friendly with the paintings in close proximity to each other and most definitely in a spirit of comradeship, not competition. On the other side of the river the Mall Galleries spacious rooms gave the paintings a chance to breathe and be seen as individual pieces while retaining the sense of combined purpose so strongly felt at the Bankside. Both receptions were opened by The President of the RI, Ronald Maddox; at the Bankside Gallery the RWS was represented by the current President David Paskett and at the Mall Galleries by Trevor Frankland a past President of the Old Society.

Sales were good. August is usually a poor month for selling paintings in London but, after a slow start at the Bankside, people began to buy the work in droves when the exhibition transferred to the Mall Galleries. Also press interest increased as the show progressed. The Times featured major coverage of the exhibition and interviews with both Presidents were recorded by the BBC. Also a documentary was made by SkyTV for broadcast at a later date. Although the architects of this revolution remained calm and relaxed there was a palpable sense of history being made and a heady spirit of joint endeavour. It is a new beginning that promises an exciting and cooperative future for us all.

## Visions of Water Colours Today – Landau



Nineteen members responded to the call for entries for this joint venture between the RI and the German art society, Kunstverein Villa Streccius, which took place in Landau, Germany in early Autumn. Eight members representing the RI were present

at the formal launch of the exhibition, having already met with a most warm and generous welcome. Members stayed with German families in their homes, and enjoyed visits to Heidelberg, Worms and Baden-Baden, a highlight of which trip was a visit to a superbly presented exhibition of the work and philosophies of The Blue Rider group.

The RI/KV exhibition, which the group helped hang, was held in the Villa Streccius, the handsome former home of a notable apothecary, and now property of the state. The elegant, spacious rooms provided a perfect setting, and the private view was enlivened by several speeches, including one from our Honorary Secretary, and a choir performing from a vantage point on the grand staircase. A month later, the closing ceremony was attended by our President and Vice President who both gave speeches partly in German thereby cementing the firm new friendship between the societies.

Members are advised that copies of the very handsome catalogue accompanying this show will be available for collection at the AGM.

## Russell Gallery



The RI exhibition at this highly respected London gallery took place in November.

The gallery had originally planned an exhibition by invited members of the RI only. However, after viewing the superb 197<sup>th</sup> Annual at the Mall Galleries, Sarah

Russell, the owner, decided to open the exhibition to all members, each one entering two paintings.

The gallery specialises in oil paintings so this exhibition was seen as testing the water, so to speak - for the first time showcasing an exclusively watercolour exhibition. And it worked, the interest was gratifyingly high. It seems very likely that there will be more exhibitions by RI members in this excellent venue.

## Coming Up In 2010

### Mid Cornwall Galleries

The RI have been invited to show at this excellent, spacious gallery set in a former Victorian School at St Blazey Gate near St Austell, Cornwall. The RI exhibition will run from 17 to 31 July and the gallery are asking for two paintings from each member. Full details will be sent to members soon.

### Chappel Galleries

The Chappel Galleries are set in open country near the Chappel Viaduct in the Colne Valley near Colchester. Planned for November 27 to December 24, full details of submission dates etc. will be sent to members as soon as arrangements have been formalized.

# Opportunities

## D.A.C.S.

Following recently enacted legislation, a means of acquiring a modest payout from an artist's copyright entitlement can be found at DACS – the Design and Artists' Copyright Society.

There are clear benefits to be derived from membership which is free of charge. For example, any work illustrated in books or magazines become eligible for royalty payments to the artist. This rule also applies to television appearances. The only requirement enabling payment to the artist is the completion of an application form.

Design and Artists Copyright Society  
33 Great Sutton Street  
London  
EC1V 0DX  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7336 8811  
Web: [www.dacs.org.uk](http://www.dacs.org.uk)  
E:mail: [info@dacs.org.uk](mailto:info@dacs.org.uk)

## RI Painting Holidays

A wonderful opportunity has arisen for the linking of the RI with the cultural travel company Authentic Adventures ([www.authenticadventures.co.uk](http://www.authenticadventures.co.uk)).

The first proposed painting trip is to Taroudant in Morocco near the Atlas Mountains, scheduled for October/November 2010. It all sounds very exotic with guests staying in a historic palace with luxuriant gardens. If this painting holiday is successful, it will generate further such holidays, sending out different RI tutors. From the RI's viewpoint, this not only gives members opportunities to travel and teach in new and exciting places, it also makes new people aware of the existence of vibrant and exciting groups of water colour specialists.

In addition Authentic Adventures have promised to donate a sum of money to the society for every trip undertaken. So let's make sure friends, clients etc. know of the RI's Paintings Holidays and let the idea blossom and go from strength to strength.

- *Julia Sorrell*

## The RI Archive

The archive of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours is a large one, it completely filled the van which I hired to collect it from George Large.

The title of *Archivist to the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours* is a grand one. The people who approach the present archivist concerning the history of certain artists, do so with respect. They little know that he is the merest amateur. The position should be taken by a computer literate scholar, familiar with the history of British watercolour painting, with the leisure to devote at least two years full-time work to the archive. Unfortunately I am none of those things.

In the short time that I have been archivist it seems to me that a typical inquiry comes from a person who has acquired a painting which they believe may have been executed by an RI. They simply want information about the artist, background which will enrich their enjoyment of their painting. They want to know anything which paints a picture of the artist as a human being.

I am at present trawling through the archive looking for artists' histories. If any contemporary RI member would like to let me have a short history of themselves and perhaps a photograph of an example of their work and one of themselves, I will add it to the archive. Who knows, in perhaps 100 years time it will enable the RI Archivist to satisfy and enrich the owner of their painting.

- *Ian Bliss RI, Archivist*

# Member's News

## Paul Banning

Paul had a one-person show at the Alresford Gallery this past year and also had a painting accepted in the Sunday Times Watercolour Competition at the Bankside Gallery.

## Mike Bernard

April 2010 sees the publication of Mike's newest book "Colour and Texture in Painting". He also has upcoming solo exhibitions at Marine House, Devon in March, the Broadway Modern, Worcestershire in June and the Oldham Gallery, London in November.

## Aimee Birnbaum

Last year an article written by Aimee, including a mention of the RI exhibition in Landau, was printed in the Jewish Chronicle.

## Charles Bone

Charles has been appointed President of the Farnham Public Art Trust. As Chairman of the William Cobbett Statue Charitable Trust he organized a fundraising dinner at Farnham

Castle which raised £20,000 toward the casting of Cobbett's statue. He has also become a Patron of the Botanical Society at Hampton Court. In addition he has arranged an exhibition of the sculpture and drawings of his late wife, Sheila Mitchell FRBS, at the University of Surrey.

## Ian Bliss

Ian will be having his third one-person show at the Russell Gallery in June. Last year he also had a painting accepted in the Royal Academy Summer Show.

## Michael Morgan

Recently Michael officially opened the new art Department at Axe Valley Community college in Axminster. It will be called, fittingly, The Michael Morgan Studio.

## Jean Noble

Illustrating the fact that RI members are a hardy bunch, Jean is currently sketching along the Regents Canal in preparation for an upcoming show. Recently, her work has been shown with the SWA at Art UK, Doric Arts in Holt, and the Hertford Annual Art Fair.

## Members News (continued)

### George Politis

Last year George had the honour of being elected President of the Society of Visual Arts Artists of Northern Greece. Additionally, he was given the American Frames award for his entry in the 2009 International Watercolor Show of the Northeast Watercolor Society (New York).

### Julia Sorrell

In 2009 Julia was elected a member of the RBA. This Spring she will be having a one-person show at the Bedford School and she will be artist-in-residence at Bingham Church in Norfolk 29-31 May.

### Robert Tilling

The National Portrait Gallery have just included Robert's 1979 portrait photograph of the poet Charles Causley in their collection. Robert's superb 1992 book on the great bluesman Rev. Gary Davis (1896 - 1972) has just been updated for re-publication in the USA this year. One of Robert's drawings was included in the exhibition "Drawn to Draw" at the Jersey Arts Centre in May.

### Shirley Trevena

Shirley has just finished filming a DVD for Townhouse Films entitled "Breaking the Rules of Watercolour". In addition, she will be guest artist in the 7th International Watercolour Festival of the Belgian Watercolour Society.

## Guest Column

### A View from France

*by Janet Skea RI*

Moving to a quiet, tranquil corner of France has been wonderful, and, I have to admit, having a break from painting has been beneficial as well.

Now I am gradually creeping into my attic studio more and more – with new ideas and renewed energy.

As I have always done, I have enjoyed seeing lots of exhibitions here. There is a strong tradition here of artists putting on their own or joint exhibitions in 'Salles des Fêtes' in villages and towns and other spaces for hire. I don't know why I had higher expectations of French contemporary painting, but somehow I did. Probably the history and innovation and wonderful painting in France in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and also the strong traditions that were drummed into me at art school by my Paris-trained teacher. But I can't deny that I have been disappointed with the majority of painting that I have seen: weak drawing, overcooked ideas and lots of "muddy" use of paint in both oils and watercolours. When I see a work that has stopped me in my tracks it has often been that of an English painter, and it makes me realize what a strong and important English tradition watercolour is. In my experience here in France it is hard to find watercolour paintings that come anywhere near the high professionalism, freshness, strength, variety, and standards of the RI members.

## Exhibitions

### Sam Fenton RI at Brighton Festival

This will be the first posthumous exhibition of paintings by the late Samuel Fenton RI. The exhibition will be a celebration of his life and work.

Brighton Festival Open Studios: Karren Urben Studio, 11 Solway Avenue, Patcham, Brighton BN31 8UJ  
Open weekends in May from 11:00am to 6:00pm

### Edward Wesson RI RBA

An exhibition by this traditional, very popular, landscape painter who died in 1983.

Alexander Gallery, 122 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol  
BS8 2RP - Friday 16<sup>th</sup> April to Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010

### Victoria: Art and Love

This will include the work of William Leighton Leitch VPRI (1804-1883) and several other RI members whose work was admired by Queen Victoria.

The Queens Gallery, Buckingham Palace from 19 March to 31 October 2010.

### Peter Dawson RI

An exhibition of the work of Peter Dawson was held at the gallery at Wimpole Hall, the National Trust estate in Cambridgeshire. Organised by Sarah, following his death, the display showed a very wide range of Peter's paintings and prints.

The Private View was very well attended and the RI was represented by the President, Ronald and Diana.

## Books

### **The Raft of the Medusa: Gericault, Art, and Race**

This excellent book explores how Gericault's masterpiece reflected early abolitionist sentiment. Lavishly illustrated it gives a unique and provocative look at a seminal work which is central to the history of art.

Author: Albert Alhadeff  
Publisher: Prestel  
ISBN: 3791327828

### **Queen Victoria's Life in the Scottish Highlands**

Out of print but quite easy to find second-hand this is a fascinating book. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert assembled a remarkable collection of watercolours recording their time spent in Scotland. Many professional artists were commissioned to paint Balmoral including RI members William Leighton Leitch, William Wyld, Edward Henry Corbould, William Simpson and Charles Brocky, examples of whose paintings feature in this scholarly publication.

Author: Delia Millar - 1985  
Publisher: Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd  
ISBN: 0 85667 3145

### **Trevor Frankland: Between Clarity and Mystery**

Copiously illustrated, Simon Fenwick's text follows the artist from his childhood in Middlesbrough, describing the rather unusual circumstances that led to a career as an artist, through his time as a visiting lecturer at Hornsey in the 1960s and up to the present day.

Author: Simon Fenwick  
Publisher: Sansom and Company  
ISBN: 978-1-904537-20-9  
Publication: March 2010

### **Alfred East: Lyrical Landscape Painter**

Sir Alfred East RA PRBA RI (1849-1913) was elected a member of the RI in 1887. A prolific landscape painter his work was extremely popular in Britain and the USA. Finally, almost 100 years after his death, a full biography, copiously illustrated, has been published.

Authors: Paul Johnson and Kenneth McConkey  
Publisher: Sansom and Company  
ISBN: 978-1-906593-33-9

## A Double Celebration

50 years a member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours and 20 years its President. Both anniversaries coincided in 2009. It was indeed a bumper year for Ronald and for the RI.

From the Editor and staff of the Newsletter on behalf of everyone - Congratulations!

### **RI On The Board Of The FBA**

Our thanks to Tony Hunt for representing the RI on the Board of Governors of the FBA for the past six years. We are grateful that Robin Hazlewood has agreed to be our new board member, it is fortunate that the RI is continuing to have excellent representation in this crucial position.

### **AGBI**

These are hard times, the credit crunch, the recession, call it what you will, the effect on artists, whose livelihood depends on buoyant financial markets and optimistic investors as well as the vagaries of fashion and the lottery of taste, is harsh.

More than ever artists, and the families of artists, whose work is not selling or who are unable to work are finding it difficult to make ends meet.

Please give what you can, there is still time to send your donation for this financial year.

Paul Banning  
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Woodlands Corner  
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## RI Review - Contact Details

Thank you to all those who have sent in their news, reports and comments. - without you this newsletter would not have been possible.

We aim to publish anything that would be of interest to RI members - news, reviews, information, advice, etc.

Publication of the next RI Review will be in the summer. But please do not wait until then to send in your contribution - do so while it is fresh in your mind. It will be kept on file until the appropriate time.

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