



Friends of the Hatton Gallery

President: Professor Eric Cross

Bulletin August 2016

CHAIRPIECE

Hello Friends,

This is a newsletter of firsts. It's our first since the gallery closed, the first of a new schedule of bi-monthly newsletters, and my first chairpiece. I want to start this off by thanking everyone at the AGM for their confidence and by hoping that I can even begin to fill the shoes that Vhairi has left me. Vhairi's passion for the Hatton and the Friends is immeasurable and working with her over the last three years as the vice-chair has taught me a lot. Don't worry, Vhairi's still around, so we can trust her enthusiasm will still continue to help drive our group.

That said, I'd also just like to add that it's a privilege to work with the people that I do – from the committee members, all of whom are just as passionate as Vhairi, to the members that deeply support the Hatton Gallery - "Thank you". Without your support and energy, the Friends group wouldn't exist.

Because the gallery is shut, we need to think of new ways of communicating. One of these is to offer newsletters now on a bi-monthly basis, to continue to offer you updates on the Hatton refurbishment. We hope to bring you more information about the gallery, events in and around Newcastle, and art related news. We're also hoping for member contributions: so if there is anything at all you'd like to say (or show), please get in touch with our new editor (information below.)*

Also because the gallery is shut, we are reaching out to other Friends groups and societies in and around Newcastle to continue to bring you a varied and exciting events programme while we have no physical location. Be on the lookout for events through the Natural History Society, Shipley Art Gallery, and more.

In September, the Friends will be invited to a presentation that will offer a first look at the new Hatton Gallery and what it will offer. The Friends have been working very closely with Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums to ensure that we're represented. There will be some really wonderful volunteering opportunities in the coming months and beyond – this presentation will shed some light on exactly what and how you can take part.

There is a lovely blog entry by Richard Hakin, Hatton's Project Officer, that you can access here: <http://blog.twmuseums.org.uk/revitalizing-the-hatton-whats-happening-while-were-closed/>

Please check your standing orders to make sure that they reflect the current subscription price: £5 student / £15 single / £20 family

*If you would like to contribute to our newsletter - photos, paintings, write-ups of local or relevant exhibitions or events - please get in touch with our new editor, Heather Baker at habaker86@gmail.com, we'd love to hear from you.

We will continue to supply print versions of our newsletters to those that would like them, but these will be sent in black and white. Colour copies will be available through our email list or online at our website: <http://friendsofthehatton.org.uk>

With best wishes,

Alysia

A Message from the Treasurer for members who pay their subscriptions by Standing Order

Dear Friends of the Hatton,

It was unanimously decided at the AGM held in 2014 that the subscription rates should be raised: to £20 for family membership, £15 for individuals and £5 for students. This modest increase was the first in many years and, I believe, well below inflation.

While many of you have increased your SO's to the new levels a number have not yet done so. As a result FotH is currently losing about £200 a year plus anything that we could claim back from HMRC in gift aid. While this may not seem a huge amount, it adds up over time, and every little we can bring in goes to help the Hatton Gallery and maintain the FotH programme of events.

So would you please all check to see that you are paying the correct subscriptions? If you have not yet increased your SO please contact your bank and arrange to do this.

It was decided at the same AGM that subscriptions would be reviewed regularly in future. At this year's AGM it was agreed that there would be no further rise in subscriptions until after the Hatton refurbishment programme is finished in about 18 months. So it is likely that we will look at this issue again in 2018. If you have any thoughts or suggestions about subscriptions or other funding methods, or would like to make any donations or bequests, please contact me or any other committee member.

John Dance

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Forthcoming Events August – September 2016

MFA EXHIBITION, Newcastle University

Friday 19th August to Saturday 3rd September: Open daily 10am -5pm

Preview 19th August 6.30 - 9pm

All Friends welcome.

MFA TOUR, Newcastle University (to begin in Hatton foyer)

Thursday 1st September 4 - 6pm

The Tour will once again take place led by some of this year's students of the end of year exhibition.

Followed by wine and nibbles in the students cafe.

ART AND NATURAL HISTORY ARCHIVES, Discovery Museum, Blandford Square, Newcastle

Saturday 10th September, 11am - 1pm

The Natural History Society of Northumbria's archive has 16,000 amazing artworks, photographs, letters, diaries, notebooks and other autograph material. These items and their stories are inspiration for artists, naturalists, writers, scientists and researchers. The Society has kindly offered to give a private viewing of the archives for Friends of the Hatton. This is a great opportunity to see some amazing items which are not on public display. The viewing will last 1 hour followed by 1 hour to study any items in detail or carry out sketching, etc.

Free but booking is essential due to limited spaces.

THE HATTON: A HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDED PROJECT, Laing Art Gallery**Tuesday 13th September, 3.30 - 5.30pm**

You are invited to join Julie Milne, Chief Curator of Art Galleries, and Lindy Gilliland, Hatton Development Client Project Manager, for a presentation about the Heritage Lottery funded project. The presentation will include a walk through the refurbished facilities using architect's drawings, interpretation and brand designs, an insight to the future exhibition and events programme and Friends' volunteering and training opportunities, followed by Q&A.

ART AND HISTORY COLLECTIONS, Discovery Museum, Blandford Square, Newcastle**Saturday 24th September, 11am - 3pm**

The Natural History Society of Northumbria has an internationally important and fascinating collection of half a million items. This includes dinosaur fossils, the bones, skins or preserved specimens of birds, mammals, and invertebrates, plants, minerals, Egyptian mummies and ethnographic items from around the world. Many of these items are on display in the Great North Museum: Hancock but the vast majority are held in a special storage facility in the basement of the Discovery Museum. Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums have kindly offered to give a private tour of these collections for Friends of the Hatton. This is a great opportunity to see some amazing and inspirational items which are not on public display. The tour will last 1.5 hours followed by a 1 hour break for lunch (lunch not included) and then 1.5 hours to study any items in detail and carry out sketching, etc.

Free but booking is essential due to limited spaces.

Future Events October – November 2016**BRINGING STILL LIFE TO LIFE WITH JENNY PURRETT, Newcastle Art Centre****Saturday 15th October 10am - 4pm**

During this day-long workshop, we will be exploring different approaches to still life drawing. Using variety of materials you will consider how viewpoint, time-lapse, movement and mark-making change the essence of your drawings.

The workshop is designed for anyone who wants to have fun, be challenged and experiment with different drawing materials and approaches. Suitable for all levels of drawing experience.

Jenny Purrett is an experienced teacher and practicing artist based in the North East. For more information go to www.jennypurrett.co.uk

Cost £20. Please complete booking form

BOOKMAKING LED BY CAROLINE COODE, Newcastle University Print Room**Saturday 19th November, 10am - 4pm**

Caroline will look at how to make 'Easy Hand-Made Books'. This is an excellent way to assemble small items or sections of prints which haven't quite 'worked' and present them in a new, attractive and interesting way.

Cost £18. Please complete booking form

Final Word Simon Court

A discussion on the Imbrication, Aesthetics and Social Renewal in the Arts and Crafts Movement



The Arts and Crafts movement emerged during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901), a time of major industrial, social, political, scientific and cultural change. It was a reaction to the mechanization of design and production of artifacts and a move away from the neoclassical decorative designs of the 'style anglais', exemplified by Adam, Hepplewhite and Wedgwood. William Morris (1834-1896) and the company he established (Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co) were a focal point and continuing inspiration for the Arts and Crafts Movement. As a poet, printer, painter, craftsman, designer, cultural critic, educationalist, socialist, naturalist, ecologist and social reformer Morris personified the aesthetics of the movement he and others had inspired. John Ruskin (1819-1900) artist, art critic, poet, naturalist, patron of the arts, philanthropist, academic, and a major influence on Morris, was in turn influenced by the writings and work of the architect Augustus Pugin (1812-1852). These were men of faith, strong opinion, and educational zeal, who all saw in the use of traditional material and methods a way of reforming design in architecture, the arts, and crafts. They wanted to raise the status of the craftsmen by codifying the value and morality of craftsmen's work.

The mechanization of agriculture and production processes triggered unregulated population shifts from the countryside to the towns and the major cities, creating misery, overcrowding, privation, and desperate housing conditions all contributing to widespread social malaise. The Industrial revolution initiated an age of mass production by machines, associated with exploitation of the workforce and natural resources. For the manufacturers and landowners there was great affluence. There was also a developing middle class, but for the majority there was great poverty.

By 1834 Thomas Carlyle and Augustus Pugin (1812-1852) had begun to point to Mediaeval society as a golden age, advocating a Gothic revival and with it a restoration of the Christian spirit. For Pugin Mediaeval cathedrals were, 'the noble edifices of the middle ages'. He recognized they required great skill from engineers, masons and carvers and that such traditional work was intrinsically good and had a moral purpose. His writings 'Contrasts' and 'The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture', provided the foundation from which the moral aesthetics of the Arts and Crafts Movement evolved. Pugin's rules for design defined the nature of Gothic and became important principles for the Arts and Crafts Movement. These were firstly, 'All features of a building should be necessary for convenience, propriety or construction' and secondly, 'All ornaments should consist of enrichment of the essential construction of the building'. Although best known for his work on the Palace of Westminster his influence can be seen in the Victorian churches and Civic buildings across the country. William Burges and George E. Street, both Gothic revivalist architects and followers of Pugin, took responsibility for both the exterior and interior design of buildings together with their decoration and furnishing.

Britain had become the workshop of the world, affirmed by the Great Exhibition of 1851. Morris objected to the capitalist motives of the industrialists, who used the Exhibition as a showcase for their mass produced wares, with separation of design, production and decoration. Ruskin and Morris recognized the negative aspects of this separation, associating it with poor quality and poor design of artifacts. Morris and Ruskin wanted reform; they and the Arts and Crafts Movement reacted by looking to the previous traditions of mediaeval craftsmanship, in which all elements were undertaken by an individual craftsman.

The Arts and Crafts Movement was more than simply a reaction to industrial mechanization, squalor and profligacy. The motivation was social and moral, 'Its aesthetic values derived from the conviction that society produces the art and architecture it deserves' (Naylor, G: *The Arts and Crafts Movement: a study of its source, ideals and influence on design theory*, 1971) 'It had evolved out of the strict design morality of the Gothic revival, nurtured, supported and helped

along its path towards a moral but free aesthetic' (Cumming E, Kaplan W. *The Arts and Crafts movement*, 1991)

Ruskin stressed the view in the 'Nature of Gothic' that 'Any building or object must be created with enjoyment to be of value' (Ibid) He also identified the beauty of architectural ornamentation carved by hand as it reflected 'the sense of human labour and care spent upon it'. Both Morris and Ruskin placed high value on the creativity of craftsmen, their use of natural materials and the visibility of the process of construction that allowed imperfections. They looked to past traditions of craft arguing for the improved social status of the artist craftsman.

Ruskin supported the freedom of expression for the designer and the direct study of nature as a source for both the artist and designer, this was taken up by Morris. Both were advocates of craftsmen working collaboratively in communities and looked to the Guilds of Mediaeval craftsmen as a model. Ruskin developed the Guild of St George, with particular codes of behavior and simple apparel. Some in the Movement e.g. Eric Gill, sought the rural idyll and developed small artistic communities in the countryside. C. R. Ashbee (1863-1942) developed the Guild of Handicrafts in London eventually forming an experimental community in the Cotswolds.

Marx's *Das Kapital* had been published in 1867. To Morris, having seen at first hand the consequences of unfettered capitalism, socialism must have seemed a natural progression, addressing as it did the role of the working craftsman, the work place environment and the primacy of honest moral work as opposed to toil. In 1883 Morris joined the Social Democratic Federation, a Marxist organization, but subsequently set up the Socialist League. In 'Art, Labour and Socialism: Art under Plutocracy' delivered in Oxford 1883 he brings together his views on traditional craft labour ('Art is man's expression of his joy in labour') and how the needs of workers are best met by socialism. In 1884 Morris wrote 'A Factory As It Might Be', arguing that individualism would be fostered and not crushed by socialism, 'Our factory then is a pleasant place... stands amidst gardens...our factory must make no sordid litter, befoul no water, nor poison the air with smoke'.

It would be easy to dismiss the Arts and Crafts movement as retrospective romanticism. For Morris there was an inherent tension between the ideal of a single artist craftsman, and the creation of a successful business, requiring turnover, patrons and an affluent educated middle class, ironically, often industrialists. This was exemplified by the Kelmscott Press, set up by Morris in 1890. Using the example of Mediaeval illuminated manuscripts, he produced small numbers of very expensive hand printed books using hand made paper and a type face he had designed based on 15th century letter forms. Nonetheless the Gothic revival and Arts and Craft Movement have influenced the architecture of our towns and cities and Morris's naturalistic designs can be seen in embroidery, wallpaper samplers, furniture, stained glass and jewellery today. Indeed Morris, his image and ideas were central to the work presented in the British pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale.

If you have seen an exhibition or been to an artist talk recently that you would like to discuss, or if you have something interesting to say on a particular artist, artwork, or movement, then please email me at habaker86@gmail.com to be considered for Final Word

Heather Baker