

THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Newsletter: 42 September 2014

EXHIBITIONS

Ivan Chermayeff: Cut and Paste. De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill on Sea, East Sussex TN40 1DP. 19 July 2014 – 14 September 2014. Free entry

A prolific designer, illustrator and artist, Ivan Chermayeff, known for creating some of the world's most memorable logos was appointed an Honorary RDI in 1991. This exhibition looks at another aspect of his graphic design, his passion for cutting, slicing and tearing rubbish to create collages featuring abstract forms, strange animals and faces. Held in the 1930s pavilion designed by his father, Serge Chermayeff, the exhibition has been designed by Ivan's architect son, Sam, bringing together three generations of a family with a keen graphic eye in the same space. Listen to Ivan Chermayeff in conversation with Mike Dempsey RDI at



http://www.thersa.org/_data/assets/file/0015/1752/rdinsights201207.mp3

Quentin Blake Artists on the Beach. Jerwood Gallery, Rock-a-Nore Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3DW. 19 July 2014 – 15 October 2014.

This exhibition shows Sir Quentin Blake's response to ten of his favourite artists in the Jerwood collection and is part of the summer Jerwood Drawing Festival. Blake opted to draw each artist on a canvas on the beach. Although he has a home in Hastings this is the first time he has drawn the beach. He talks about his selection of artists in this YouTube video. http://youtu.be/xQqb0oBcizA. Blake was elected to the Faculty of RDIs in 1981.





Quentin Blake: Inside Stories. House of Illustration, 2 Granary Square, King's Cross, London N1C 4BH. 3 July 2014 – 2 November 2014. £7.00 (£5.00 concession)

In July 2014 the House of Illustration opened the doors to its first permanent home at the heart of the King's Cross regeneration area. Here the public can come and see illustration in all its forms, from adverts to animation, picture books to political cartoons and scientific drawings to fashion design. There are also workshops and educational programmes to help teachers and pupils to develop visual communications. On display in this

inaugural exhibition are the storyboards, rough drawing and finished artworks from Roald Dahl's *The Twits*, as well as other illustrative work by Quentin Blake, founder member of the House of Illustration.

The Artists Rifles: From Pre-Raphaelites to Passchendaele. The Sainsbury Gallery at Willis Museum, Lesser Market, Basingstoke RG21 7QD, 5 July-27 September 2014; and The Gallery at Gosport Discovery Centre, High Street, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 1BT, 4 October -27 December 2014.

Former cavalry and TA officer, paint and colour expert and WSG member, Patrick Baty, FRSA, has curated this exhibition of some sixty works by members of the volunteer regiment known as the Artists Rifles. Established in 1860 in response to a perceived threat of a French invasion.



Cap badge

With its headquarters in Burlington House, behind the Royal Academy, musicians, architects, actors, authors and intellectuals joined painters and sculptors to take part in drill practice twice daily, with additional training and musketry practice on Wimbledon Common and Hampstead Heath. The Artists Rifles won more gallantry medals than any other regiment. Five past Presidents of the Royal Academy belonged to the regiment, and its members, include Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne Jones, John Everett Millais, and later members include Paul Nash, the painter of desolate battlefields, poets Wilfred Owen and Edward Thomas, the cartoonist Fougasse, and poster artist Tom Purvis. John Ruskin was proud to be an honorary member of the regiment. Their number included members and prize winners of the Society of Arts. The work on display spans over 80 years of membership of the regiment, looking at the artists, the art they produced and the regiment itself, and includes loans from the Imperial War Museum, British Council Collection, the Royal Academy, the Arts Council and many other regional and national institutions. After the Second World War the regiment was incorporated with the SAS.



Bernard Lens, George I, c.1714

The First Georgians: Art & Monarchy 1714-1760. The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, London SW1A 1AA. 11 April -12 October 2014. Tickets £9.75 (£8.95 concession)

To mark the 300th anniversary of the beginning of the Georgian era, *The First Georgians: Art and Monarchy 1714-1760* explores royal patronage and taste in the reigns of George I and George II as a product of a time when Britain was the world's most liberal, commercial and modern society. It brings together over 300 works in the Royal Collection from royal residences across the UK.

KNITWEAR Chanel to Westwood. Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. 19 September 2014 – 18 January 2015. Closed Mondays. Tickets £8.80 (£6.60 concession)

From a 1920s Chanel jersey to the experimental work of Julien MacDonald this exhibition shines a spotlight on 20th century fashion knitwear. It also features the work of the Missonis (RDI 1997) and Vivenne Westwood (RDI 2001). An exciting combination of famous names and visually exciting pieces, the exhibition charts the influence of art movements Pop, Punk and Deconstruction alongside new knitwear technologies and design innovation.



Knitwear by Vivenne Westwood

Anarchy & Beauty. William Morris and his Legacy 1860-1960. National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London. 16 October 2014 to 11 January 2015. Tickets £14 (£13 concessions)

This exhibition explores the work and ideas of the great Victorian artist-craftsman, designer, poet and visionary thinker, William Morris. Through portraits, personal items and fascinating objects, many of which will be on public display for the first time, the acclaimed author and biographer Fiona MacCarthy illustrates Morris's concept of 'art for the people'. The displays will include original furniture and textiles designed and owned by Morris, as well as work by his contemporaries Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, etc. The exhibition also showcases the work of twentieth century designers, including the work of RDIs Abram Games, Eric Gill and Terence Conran.

William Morris was an active member of the RSA's Applied Arts Committee and on several occasions he gave the Society the benefit of 'his ripe judgement'. In 1892 was awarded the Silver Medal for his paper on 'The Woodcuts of Gothic Books. Several years earlier Sir George Birdwood proposed (unsuccessfully) William Morris as a worthy candidate for the RSA's most prestigious award, the Albert Medal. The artist Frederick Leighton lent his support, 'It



Daisy wallpaper, 1862. William Morris Gallery

would be difficult to over rate, I think, the importance primarily of Morris' Applied Arts in almost every form among us, and it is with great satisfaction that I should have him honoured in this way by our Society'. The physician, R. Brudenell Carter wrote to say that I 'will support your candidate, but I fear he is, art workmanship apart, a very objectionable animal'. However, Birdwood was disappointed as the chairman, Sir Frederick Bramwell, used his casting vote to award the Albert Medal to Dr John Percy for his researches into metallurgy. Morris was put forward in future lists for consideration but was generally put aside for older candidates and died before the Society could honour him.

From Owen Jones to Marianne Straub: 150 years of the Warner Archive – Study Day, Lydia & Manfred Gorvy Lecture Theatre, V&A Museum, South Kensington, London SW7 2RL. 20 September 2014. Tickets: £45, concession £35, students £15

To mark the $150^{\rm th}$ anniversary of the archive this study day, Mary Schoeser, Christina Boydell and others will look at the designers, including Owen Jones, William Morris and Marianne Straub and include vibrant examples of Warner's production from the Art Deco, Contemporary and Pop periods.

Sir Frank Warner was an active member of the RSA who was instrumental in establishing of its annual competitions to encourage young designers in 1924. This scheme became the Student Design Awards, which still runs today. His son-in-law, Sir Ernest Goodale, served as Director for Warners from the 1930s to the 1960s, and was also an active member of the RSA serving as Vice-President and



Chairman of Council, and Chairman of the Industrial Arts Bursaries Board. He was also awarded the RSA's Bicentenary Medal in 1957 as someone who 'in a manner other than as an industrial designer has exerted exceptional influence in promoting art and design in British Industry'

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¹ BL Mss Eur F216/12

REPORT ON WSG SYMPOSIA 2014

On Friday 4th July Fellows and members of the WSG met in the Durham Street Auditorium at the RSA for a symposium to commemorate the centenary of the adoption of the style 'Fellow' by members of the RSA in 1914. Chairman of the RSA, Vikki Heywood, welcomed the delegates before Susan Bennett, WSG Honorary Secretary, spoke on some of the networks that could be found in the early membership of the Society. Dr Georgiana Green (University of York) introduced the 'Eighteenth Century Clubs, Societies and Networks' database. Professor Jon Mee, who has led this project, then looked at John Clennell FSA who he had identified as a networker of knowledge from Newcastle to Hackney. Joanna Corden, Archivist of the Royal Society of London considered links between the two societies from 1754 to 1914. Another source



Dr Georgina Green, Susan Bennett and Professor Jon Mee

of 18th and 19th century networks is the archive of the printer John Nichols discovered, catalogued and demonstrated by Julian Pooley. The symposium concluded with a paper from the RSA's Historian and WSG Honorary President, Dr David G.C. Allan, who looked at the question of the post nominal letters used by members of the RSA. Thanks were given to the RSA for generously providing the meeting room and refreshments.

A second symposium was held on Saturday 5th July, thanks to the generosity of Richmond upon Thames College, Twickenham, to consider Educational Concerns and the RSA. Dr Allan spoke about William Shipley and Education. Pat Francis considered the RSA's 19th century survey of educational need in Bethnal Green in her paper 'Habits of Thrift and Industry'2. Dr Jana Sims looked at the Mechanics Institute Movement in Surrey before the meeting concluded with a look at the 21st century educational missions of the RSA and the RUTC presented by Professor Paul Leonard and Nilar Zaw. As well the current work of the art & design students their presentation also included designs by RUTC students who had been successful in the RSA's SDA scheme.



Nilar Law, Paul Leonard, David Allan, Pat Francis and Jana Sims

Our thanks to RUTC for hosting the symposium and providing the refreshments.



2014 SDA winners with their awards

ROBIN LEVIEN RDI & 2014 STUDENT DESIGN AWARD

Robin Levien RDI (1995; Master 2009-11) was inspired to base his design on a stepping stone, 'I felt this represented the essence of what the RSA Student Design Awards are for the young designers fortunate enough to win'.

Machined by computer from solid Corian and hand polished each award is a perfect ellipse, weighing 800 grams. They feel cold to the touch and good in the hand.



www.studiolevien.com

 $^{^{\}rm 2}$ In course of preparation for publication

SIR DAVID CHIPPERFIELD RDI

Sir David Chipperfield (elected RDI in 2006) has been appointed the Royal Academy's representative trustee for the Sir John Soane's Museum and the art dealer Katrin Bellinger is the RSA's representative trustee. Following the Act of Parliament, which set up the museum in 1833, nine trustees were charged with preserving the building and its contents. The RSA and the RA are two of the five institutional trustees. The Duke of Sussex, Prince Albert, the writer Samuel Redgrave and the architect Sir Albert Richardson are among those Trustees who have previously represented the RSA. Soane was elected a member of the Society of Arts in 1790 and he employed a number of the prize-winners of the Society's architectural drawing premiums.

DENNIS SHARP ARCHIVE

The Paul Mellon Centre has announced that their work on the Dennis Sharp archive is now complete and the resulting catalogue descriptions are now available online http://www.calmview2.eu/paulmelloncentre/calmview/image.gallery.aspx and see this link

for a spotlight on the collection. http://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/380/. A practising architect, teacher, author and editor, Dennis Sharp (1933-2010) took a life-long interest in the work of the modernist architects, Amyas Connell, Basil Ward and Colin Lucas. During his extensive research he gathered together original plans, drawings, photographs and correspondence produced by their practice.

In 1979 the RSA selected Dennis Sharp to receive the first W.J. Parker award to enable him to concentrate on the research and writing of a book concerned with an investigation into the derivation and



development of ideas in twentieth century theatre, particularly where they parallel the changing ideas and products of twentieth century art and architecture. W.J. Parker FRSA left a legacy to the RSA with the intention that it was to be applied to the benefit of students of architecture and structural engineering.

PLAQUE TO DESIGNER OF ORIGINAL HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE

The engineer and architect, William Tierney Clark FRS (1783-1852), who was elected a member of the Society of Arts in 1819, designed the first suspension bridge across the Thames at Hammersmith in 1827. He was also an early member of the Institution of Civil Engineers. Clark designed a number of suspension bridges including the first bridge that linked Buda and Pest and was opened in 1849. Sixteen years after a memorial commemorating the bridge at Budapest was installed in 1998, a bronze plaque was unveiled in front of St George's new residential development at Fulham Reach in June this year.



NEW WSG OCCASIONAL PAPERS

No.26 Some Noble Patriotic Members and Prize Winners of the Twickenham Area Supplemental Paper by David G.C. Allan.

The elapse of two decades is an appropriate time to fill in a number of gaps in this study. As well as considering names chronologically under six headings a section has been included on local visits by Royal members and, and another for medal winners. Appendix III includes the complete texts of reports to the [R]SA Council on the existing stage of education in Richmond, Twickenham, Mortlake and Neighbourhood, and of Ealing and Brentford. This Supplemental Paper is available with the original text published by the Borough of Twickenham Local History Society (the two tied together with a silken ribbon) at a cost of £8.00 (+£1.20 p&p) or £5 for a single paper (plus p&p)

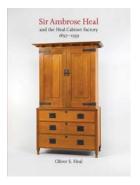
No.27 *Habits of Thrift and Industry: Improving Bethnal Green* by Pat Francis with a new edition of *One Square Mile in the East End of London* by George C.T. Bartley.

Bethnal Green came to the attention of the Society of Arts for two reasons. First, through the Society's interest in manufacturing techniques and secondly, as hand-weaving became redundant, the weavers and their families descent into poverty.

BOOK REVIEWS

Oliver Heal, *Sir Ambrose Heal and the Heal Cabinet Factory* 1897-1939. Wetherby: Oblong Publications (2014). ISBN 978 0 957599239 £58. Oblong Creative Ltd, 416B Thorp Arch Estate, Wetherby LS23 7FG, UK. Cheque payable to 'Oblong Creative Ltd' or phone 01937 849949 to pay by card

This is the first in-depth study of the designer, manufacturer and retailer of furniture Sir Ambrose Heal (1897-1939). This well large format illustrated volume on the man and the Cabinet Factory has been written by Heal's grandson, Oliver Heal.

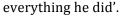


Heal was knighted in 1933 and appointed a member of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry six years later. This body held a celebratory luncheon for him on his 80^{th} birthday. The following year he was awarded the Albert Medal 'for his services to industrial design' by the RSA. Although his contribution to British design was well recognised during his lifetime, indeed the art critic John Gloag wrote:

I doubt whether any one man in the whole history of furniture design in this country has had quite such an individual and far reaching effect

Heal rarely got a mention in the first histories of 20th century design. However this omission has been repaired with this well researched and frank monograph which reveals the previously unknown difficulties and failures, as well as the successes, of the man who commanded fierce loyalty from his staff. The attention he paid to stock labelling and signage saw him become an early exponent of branding. He incorporated the Mansard Gallery into his Tottenham Court Road shop and held exhibitions of contemporary arts and crafts. He was one of a group of designers, industrialists and business people who established the Design & Industries Association (1915) with the slogan 'Nothing Need Be Ugly'.

His friend and fellow furniture designer Sir Gordon Russell RDI described Heal as a man who shared his own passionate mission to improve the quality of design. He wrote that Heal's 'outlook was not just the fashion of the moment, it was a deeply felt way of life with him and





Heal's original design drawings are shown alongside images of the finished pieces. Combined with details of the cabinet factory's production from 1897 through to 1939, to make this a valuable work of reference for anyone interested in 20th century furniture history, and in the retail and social history of the period. Oliver Heal has also provided a lively portrait of his grandfather, a man who was respected for his leadership and what he achieved but was ruthless in his determination to obtain his objectives.

WEDGWOOD MUSEUM

A public appeal has been launched to save the Wedgwood Museum pottery collection threatened with sale and dispersal to pay the ceramic firm's pension bill. The Art Fund has already raised the bulk of the sum required but a further £2.7m is needed by 30 November to ensure the survival of the 80,000 works of art, ceramics and pattern books covering 250 years of the firm's history. 'This wonderful archive', explained Carole Souter, CEO of the Heritage Lottery Fund, 'shows how Josiah Wedgwood interacted with his peers, the influence he had and

how his thinking led to a completely different approach to industrial manufacturing. If the appeal is successful the Art Fund plans to lease the collection to the V&A Museum. To find out more or to make a donation see http://www.savewedgwood.org/

For the RSA's connection with the Wedgwoods see J.K. des Fontaines, 'The Society of Arts and the early Wedgwoods (i-ii)', *Jnl.RSA* Vol.119 (1971), pp.327-331, 407-410.



Josiah Wedgwood's Portland Vase is one of the centrepieces to the collection

OBITUARY

SIR DONALD SINDEN (1923-2014)

The renowned theatre, tv and film actor Sir Donald Sinden, who recently died at the age of 90, was elected a Fellow of the RSA in 1966. He was an active member serving on various committees: Programme, Journal as well as the Industrial Design Bursaries Board. Dr David Allan also remembers his support as a member of the Library Committee As an RSA Council Member he presented the medals and prizes awarded in connection with the RSA Exams in 1983. He also took the chair when Viscount Norwich came to the Society to talk to Fellows about plans for 'The British Theatre In his introduction Sinden Museum'. recalled the occasion when he was playing Captain Hook to Russell Thorndike's Smee. As the two men were waiting in the wings 'Russell pulled out his dagger and said to me, "you will never guess what this is -Irving's *Macbeth* dagger!" I said, "No! Snap!' and produced my own Irving Hamlet dagger.'



Sir Donald Sinden and RSA exam medal winners on Great Room landing. (Photographer Donald Southern, supplied by RSA)

In his obituary of Laurence Olivier (who had been awarded the Albert Medal in 1976) for the *RSA Journal* Donald Sinden recalled how, on hearing the news that he was to play Othello at Stratford, Olivier phoned him and asked if he had actually signed the contract. "Get out of it" he advised. "Whatever you do, get out of it – it's a terrible part. All you can do with it is to think of as many permutations as possible of 'Oooh', 'Ohhh', 'Aaah'!" Sinden didn't take this advice and

found out all the pitfalls for himself but, he added, 'he was the only actor who warned me beforehand instead of commiserating afterwards.'

JOHN LAWRENCE ABBOTT (d.2014)

John Abbott, FRSA, Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Connecticut, died on 18 July 2014 in New York City.

Upon achieving the PhD degree at Michigan State University, John joined the Connecticut English faculty in 1964. Over the following half-century he concentrated much of his scholarship upon the literature and culture of eighteenth-century London, work that drew him increasingly to figures associated with the RSA. His first major study was a life of John Hawkesworth, London compiler of Parliamentary debates, publisher of Captain Cook's account of his first voyage, and sometime associate of Dr



Johnson. He published widely on Johnson and his circle. Fanny Burney became a subject of his particular study, work that eventually became part of the McGill University Burney project.

John was both scholar of eighteenth-century Anglo-American cultural relations and, two hundred years thereafter, sponsor of renewed study in that field by American students. During his term as Director of the English Honors Program at Connecticut its undergraduate program of study in London was established, and flourished during his later years as Department Head. He also became associated with the restoration of the Franklin House in Craven Street, which



John Abbott with Nicholas Cambridge (WSG Chairman) at the tomb of John Bunyan in Bunhill Fields

represented an earlier transatlantic connection upon which he wrote and lectured. He continued these undertakings during the decade following his retirement from active teaching in 2003, and until his death exhibited the scholarly habits of earlier generations of RSA Fellows, in his close and active working relationship with the Society and its historian, Dr David Allan.

Prof John Manning University of Connecticut

David G.C. Allan writes: My first meeting with John occurred in 1960 when he came to the UK on a Gulbenkian scholarship to begin his work on Samuel Johnson's connections with the Society. It was the beginning of a long friendship, which extended to his wife Mary. Their annual visits to this country proved memorable events. His death leaves an unbridgeable gap in the Society's History Studies.

ANNIVERSARIES

2014 marks the centenary of the start of the First World War. On 14 August 1914 the RSA reported that 'as postal communication with Germany and Austria-Hungary is interrupted, the issue of the *Journal* to persons whose addresses are in those countries has of necessity been suspended'. The opening of the 1914-15 session, the RSA reported, 'will commence under conditions which for the last hundred years have no precedent...The Society, like all the Institutions of the country, must needs suffer; but as we all look forward with certain hope to the ultimate triumph of our arms, and to the end of the trouble which now overshadows us, so we are justified in believing that all the various associations which have helped to foster the growth of Science, Learning, Art and Letters will maintain their beneficent labours in spite of sharp trials...We believe that it is our duty to carry on, as far as may be, the work for which this ancient Society was established...it is in our power to devote our energies to the preservation

during the tumult of War of those agencies to which, when Peace again comes to us, we shall look for the resumption of our advance in the arts of civilization and humanity'.

In his 1915 Chairman's address Sir Dugald Clerk stated that 'Our Society has had a long, useful and distinguished career, and it is our duty, as its present members, to see to it that its power for good is maintained and its beneficent course continued to aid a future England. He continued, 'It seems to me more appropriate in these stirring and critical times to reflect the current of all our thoughts, and...as your Chairman...[attempt] a defence of England's position under the title of "English and German Methods Contrasted".

During the course of the war the RSA was able to arrange for those who had been interned by the Germans to take the Society's examinations. Those interned at Ruhleben included among the musicians Sir Percy Hull who revived the Three Choirs Festival and the conductor Frederick Adler who had studied with Gustav Mahler; footballers like Sam Wolstenholme who played for England; and the academic Sir John Cecil Masterman, who would go on to run the scheme that controlled double agents in Britain in the Second World war. Scientists included Sir Charles Drummond Ellis whose work on beta rays helped to develop an understanding of nuclear structure and Sir James Chadwick winner of the 1935 Noble Prize for his discovery of the neutron.

2014 marks the **175**th **anniversary** of the foundation of the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution. One of the oldest such institutions still in existence the Institution is situated in the heart of Highgate Village, overlooking Pond Square, in the building it has occupied since 1840. The Institutions' first President, Harry Chester, was an active member of the Society of Arts. He sat on the Council, was one of the originators of the Society's examinations, and of its Union of Mechanics Institutions.

2014 marks the **120th anniversary** of the official opening of Tower Bridge on 30th June, 'under a cloudless sky and as part of a pageant which delighted tens of thousands of people' by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII). The Society's *Journal* reported that between 9th and 22nd July 1,173,645 persons and 61,257 passed over the bridge (the largest numbers being on the two Sundays), and the bridge was opened 273 times to let ships through. In this same year the bridge designer, Sir John Wolfe Barry, was elected on to the Society's Council and he continued to serve continuously (except for a short break in 1910) until his death in 1918. As Chairman of the Society's Council he bought before the public his views on London transportation.

2014 marks the **25**th anniversary of the invention of the World Wide Web by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, RDI while working as a software engineer at CERN, the large particle physics laboratory near Geneva. It is also the **10**th anniversary of a knighthood for his pioneering work, and the award of the first ever Millennium Technology Prize given to him in 2004. Lee was also honoured as the 'Inventor of the World Wide Web' during the 2012 Summer Olympics opening ceremony. The RSA awarded Berners-Lee its most prestigious award the Albert Medal in 2002 for 'his outstanding contribution to the World Wide Web' and



Sir Tim Berners-Lee speaks after receiving the first ever Millenniun Technology Prize in Helsinki in 2004 (Getty)

seven years later he was appointed an RDI for his 'interaction design'.

Honorary Patron: Lord Asa Briggs of Lewes FRSA. Honorary President: Dr David Allan, FRSA; Honorary Vice-Presidents: Gerry Acher, CBE, LVO, FRSA; Sir Paul Judge, FRSA; Professor Franz Bosbach, Director, University of Duisburg-Essen. Honorary Benefactor: Ronald Gerard OBE, KStJ, FRSA. Honorary Member: Hermione Hobhouse MBE; Committee: Dr Nicholas Cambridge FRSA (Chair); Dr David Allan FRSA (Director of Studies); Prof John Davis FRSA (Deputy Chair); Anthony Burton; Paul Leonard, FLS; Jonathan Rollason, FRSA; Susan Bennett, MA, FRSA (Honorary Secretary, Editor and Treasurer)