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**TASO Newsletter December 2021**

Dear Members and those on our Waiting List

As we approach the end of another year of disruption due to Covid-19, I am sure we are all hoping that 2022 will bring us closer to normality. With the arrival of a new variant, however, we cannot predict what the next stage will be and it is possible that further restrictions will be placed on our lives and affect the ways in which our programme can be delivered. For the present, we will continue with our plans to begin gradually meeting in person in small group visits, study days and, of course, in lectures.

Our first ‘hybrid’ lecture last month, combining a live presentation at Magdalen College auditorium with simultaneous transmission via Zoom for those who wanted to watch online, had some technical problems. Issues with the microphone system in the auditorium, combined with building noise from outside, meant that the sound quality both in the auditorium and at home was poor. We apologise for this and are working with Magdalen College and their technician to try to remedy these problems before the next lecture. If there are any sound technicians among the members, we would love to hear from you!

**1.** **December lecture**

This lecture will be for members only and will be given live in Magdalen College lecture theatre and simultaneously broadcast on Zoom. **We will not be using a booking system** for the live lecture as, based on the number who booked for the November lecture, it is likely that there will be no problem with maintaining social distancing. You should just turn up to your usual morning or afternoon session and sign in.

A link to the online lecture will be sent out nearer the time.

**Lecture Wednesday 8 December at 11.00 am and 2.00 pm**

**‘Angels from the Realms of Glory: The Wilton Dyptych and the Roof of Westminster Hall’**

The Wilton Diptych is one of the most beautiful yet enigmatic paintings ever made and the hammer-beam angel roof of Westminster Hall has been described by the architectural historian John Harvey as ‘the most outstanding individual work in the whole history of English art’. Both appeared in the last decade of Richard II’s turbulent reign and they represent the high watermark of a period rich in artistic achievement. This lecture will focus on these two works of art but will also include other examples of art and architecture from late medieval England.

**Lecturer Mark Cottle h**as spent his career in education and training at home and abroad. He has lectured at Exeter College on Medieval and Tudor history, St Mark’s & St John’s University College, Plymouth, and at Bath University on Anglo Saxon and medieval England. He currently runs two small companies providing training and study breaks.

**2. Visits**

There will be a virtual tour, for members and those on the waiting list, of the **Monumental Squares and Fountains of Rome on Wednesday, 15 December at 11.00 am**.

Join professional Rome tourist guide Stuart Harvey for a virtual stroll through the heart of Rome to discover some of the most iconic monuments of the Eternal City. Highlights of this visit will include in-depth looks at the Trevi Fountain, Pantheon, Spanish Steps and Piazza Navona, with much more to see along the way.

Look out for the email giving the full details and the necessary link in the coming days.

**3.** **Study Day on Tuesday, 18 January 2022 from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm, live at Rewley House**

**‘The Age of Augustus John’**

You should already have received details of this Study Day, which is open to members and those on the waiting-list, with members having priority. Only **60 places** will be available to allow for social distancing in the lecture theatre, so we recommend applying for your place as soon as possible. The closing date for bookings is **Tuesday 14 December**.

**Speaker Dr David Haycock** will give three lectures:

Lecture 1. ‘The Slade Way’

Lecture 2. The Crisis of ‘isms’

Lecture 3. The Great War

These three lectures will explore how, in just a few decades, the art world changed forever and will look at some of the leading British artists swept up in that revolution. More information on the lecturer and details of the study day can be found on the TASO website.

**4. Could you be TASO Membership Secretary?**

This role is vital for the continued existence of TASO, and we are sure there is an existing member, or someone who is keen to join TASO (we will immediately extend a welcome to you from the waiting list), with the necessary skills.

·       Are you an organised person with general office and IT communication skills?

·       Would you like to contribute to the running of TASO but prefer a back-room job that is not ‘people-facing’?

·       Would you like a role that is flexible on a day-to-day basis? You can largely decide when you do things and timescales are generally not tight.

If you can answer ‘yes’ to these questions, we would love to hear from you. You could also become a Trustee and be involved in decision-making about the running of TASO. Training and support will be provided for the person who takes on the role. Please do contact me at [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com) and I will get back to you.

**5. About Community Arts Projects and TASO Charitable Giving**

Since TASO became a charity, members’ subscriptions have helped many local organisations with small grants for arts-related projects. Many of you may wonder how this process works.

Applications for funding are dealt with by The Community Art Projects Committee, which currently comprises 4 members, all of whom have experience dealing with community groups and applying due diligence to organisations within the Oxford area. The Committee receives and discusses applications, decides whether they conform to the Society’s criteria and makes a recommendation to the Society’s Trustees. All the documents relating to this procedure can be found on the TASO website, and applicants are encouraged to read these before making an application for funds. The amount of money available each year is set by the Trustees and can vary in value depending on the expenses of the Society as a whole.

Application forms are carefully scrutinised and, if necessary, the applicant is contacted either by email or telephone for further clarity on the proposed project. Some of the areas that have recently been considered worthy of an Arts Project grant have included: providing materials for children of prisoners to work with artists at an Oxford art gallery; supporting the elderly in the community; mental health projects; music to help those with a learning disability; the John Radcliffe Children’s School; encouraging schoolchildren to express feelings through their own art. You can find more details of the variety of recipients of TASO funding listed by year on the TASO website.

The CAP Team is actively considering applications for funding. If you know of any small Oxford organisations with imaginative arts projects that you think could benefit from TASO financial support do get in touch via [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com).

**6. And finally…**

It has been drawn to our attention that there are two exhibitions at Compton Verney that our members may want to visit: ‘John Nash: the Landscape of Love and Solace’, which closes on 23 January 2022, and ‘Grinling Gibbons: Centuries in the Making’, which closes on 30 January 2022. In addition, those who enjoyed Sue Doran’s lecture to TASO on ‘Portraits of Elizabeth 1’ in July may be interested to know that she prepared the exhibition catalogue for 'Elizabeth & Mary: Royal Cousins, Rival Queens' at the British Library, which is on until 20 February 2022

I should like to extend my personal thanks to all members who have supported TASO over the past 12 months. We have been grateful for all the messages of encouragement and thanks we have received from you. I don’t think any of us would have anticipated that we would end 2021 with continued uncertainty about the future.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Trustees, the teams organising the lectures, visits and study days, the CAP team and Pam Eyton with her group of ‘techies’, and all of those who have worked enthusiastically to ensure that our programme and activities have been able to continue uninterrupted during 2021.

I and the Trustees send you all our very best wishes for Christmas.

Ann McIlhinney

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**TASO Newsletter November 2021**

Dear Members and those on our Waiting List,

The Society’s 2021-22 programme is now well under way. We are taking our tentative first steps towards live events which with a continuation of online events we hope will provide something for everyone.

I am delighted that our New Members Coffee Mornings are going ahead live for the first time since 2019. By the time you receive this, the first one will have taken place and the second one will happen soon. It is great to be able to meet new members face-to-face again.

Our big venture this month is the delivery of ‘hybrid’ lectures with live presentations at Magdalen College auditorium for those members who wish to attend in person, combined with simultaneous transmission via Zoom for those who want to watch online. Another challenge for our technical team!

A detailed Covid-19 risk assessment for the return to the lecture theatre has been undertaken and can be found in the Policy and Other Documents section of our website [www.theartssocietyoxford.org.uk](http://www.theartssocietyoxford.org.uk/)

**1. For those who joined TASO in the past two years**

Several members who came to the New Members Coffee Morning mentioned that they cannot remember whether they are morning or afternoon members. Please check the header on this email to find out which group you are in. With online lectures, this information has been irrelevant because you have been able to watch morning or afternoon as you wish, but it is important for controlling numbers in Magdalen College auditorium that you attend the appropriate session as the College has a limited seating capacity. For those making their first visit to the auditorium, it is accessed through the entrance on Longwall Street and not through the main college entrance on Magdalen Bridge.

**2. Recruitment of a Membership Secretary**

This very important role remains to be filled. It requires an organised person with general office and IT communication skills. It is a flexible role on a day-to-day basis, as you can largely decide when you do things and timescales are generally not tight. Training and support will be provided for the person who takes on the role.

We are sure there is an existing member, or someone who is keen to join TASO (we will immediately extend a welcome to you from the waiting list), with the necessary skills . I would be delighted to discuss the above post with anyone interested. Please do contact me at [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com)and I will get back to you.

**3. Looking forward to TASO activities**

**Lecture for members on Wednesday 10 November at 11.00 am and 2.00 pm on ‘Photography as Fine Art’**

Should we accept that the very best photographs can be regarded as Fine Art? This question is at the heart of this lecture, which argues that photography can equal, not to say exceed, more traditional disciplines in the key genres of portraiture, landscape and still life. Photography, moreover, has carved its own area of excellence in depicting the human condition.

Lecturer Brian Stater is a Senior Teaching Fellow at University College London. His principal academic interest lies in the appreciation of architecture, while a strong personal enthusiasm is for photography. He therefore explores both business and pleasure by offering lectures on each of these subjects.

This lecture will be given live in Magdalen College lecture theatre and simultaneously broadcast on Zoom. If you wish to attend the live lecture, you will need to book a place and you should already have received an email with information on how to do this. If you are coming to the live lecture, the doors will be left ajar to aid air flow through the room, so please wear appropriate clothing. A link to the online lecture will be sent out nearer the time.

**Save the dates for events in December and January**

·       Virtual tour for members and waiting list of the **Monumental Squares and Fountains of Rome on Wednesday, 15 December at 11.00 am**.

·       Study day for members, live at Rewley House, on **Tuesday, 18 January 2022, 9.30 am – 3.30 pm.**

Dr David Haycock will give three lectures on **‘The Age of Augustus John’**, which explore how, in just a few decades, the art world changed forever and will look at some of the leading British artists swept up in that revolution. More information on the lecturer and details of the study day can be found on the TASO website.

Further details of these two events will be emailed to you nearer the time so, for now, just put them in your diary.

With best wishes from the Trustees and myself.

Ann McIlhinney

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**TASO Newsletter October 2021**

Dear Members and those on our Waiting List,

**Welcome** to the new Society year and I apologise in advance for what will be a long newsletter.

After a year in which most of our programme was held online, we will hopefully be moving during 2021-22 towards a mixture of live and online events. However, our priority as trustees is to keep our members safe as well as wanting to deliver a varied programme and more information will be sent out for each individual event closer to the time.

A particularly warm welcome is extended to our new members. TASO’s normal practice in the autumn is to hold a **New Members Coffee Morning**, when trustees very much enjoy meeting members who have just joined us and explaining more about our society. We are currently exploring possible venues and an email with details of the event will be sent out to new members in the near future.

**Firstly, a recap on the TASO AGM**held on 15 September 2021.

For those of you who were unable to attend or who would like to re-read, you will find the Chair and Trustees Report, the Financial Statements and the Draft Minutes on our website <https://theartssocietyoxford.org.uk/>

Many previous Trustees retired at this AGM and particular thanks went to Sarah Whiteley who has been a very effective Chairman for the last four years. Thanks, were also given to Allan Taylor (Treasurer), Pam Eyton (Secretary), Diana Gordon (Membership Secretary), Celia Robinson (Community Arts) and Stephanie North (Study Days) who also stepped down during the year.

A full list of elected trustees can be found at the end of this Newsletter. We are delighted to welcome David Baron (Treasurer), Ruth Burdett (Secretary), Julia Reece (Study Days) and David Stern (Programme Secretary) as new trustees.

**Could you be our next Membership Secretary?**

Maintaining a healthy Society, with new people participating and fresh ideas emerging, depends on you offering your time and experience – and of course willingness to help!

Our most pressing need now is to recruit a Membership Secretary, to commence as soon as possible. This role requires someone who is well organised with some general/IT communications expertise; training and support are available within the team for this.

I and other trustees would be delighted to discuss the above post with any interested member, or someone on the Waiting List, where immediate membership would be offered in return for your specific support. Please email us at [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com) and we will get back to you.

**1. Lecture Programme**

**Wednesday 13 October at 11.00 am and 2.00 pm, members only.**

**Titian – The First Modern Artist:**During a long, successful, and immensely lucrative career, Titian established himself as the foremost painter of northern Italy. He developed the Venetian love of light and colour but adding a sense of drama and immediacy that charged his religious, mythological and, most importantly, his portraits, with a realism hitherto unknown to the arts. Tough, astute and ambitious, he is often seen as the first ‘modern’ painter, developing a brilliant new style of painting that shaped the art of the Baroque and cast its influence over every painterly painter of the next four centuries.

**Lecturer Douglas Skeggs** read Fine Arts at Magdalene College Cambridge and has been a lecturer on paintings since 1980. In that time, he has given over 8,000 lectures to universities, colleges and art societies. He was the director of The New Academy of Arts Studies for three years and is presently a regular lecturer at The Study Centre, Christie’s course ‘The History of Arts Studies’ and other London courses.

**PLEASE NOTE: this lecture will be delivered twice on Zoom Webinar only, at 11 am and 2 pm. You will receive an email with full information and the links nearer the time.**

**2. Study Days**

During the past year our online Study Days have been limited to a morning, with two shorter lecture sessions, and time for questions and coffee (your own I’m afraid!) after each one. We hope you enjoyed the recent Study Morning on The Riches of Islamic Art and Architecture by Professor James Allen.

The next study day will be on **18 January 2022**on **The Age of Augustus John**. We hope very much that by then we will back at our usual venue of Rewley House. More information will be provided nearer the time.

**3. Visits**

It has been a great step forward to organise live Oxford short walking tours and museum visits for members and we hope this will continue. The Zoom Visits and talks from places further afield, such as St Petersburg, have also been enjoyed and will continue.

Please **save the date Wednesday 3rd November**for the Virtual Tour:**The Graffiti and Street Art of Spitalfields and Shoreditch – East End Part 3**with **Pepe Marinez.**This completesthe East End series started in November 2020 and continued in February 2021. **Pepe Martinez** is an award-winning London Blue Badge Tourist Guide. Born and bred in the East End, he worked both as a stage and a tour manager before qualifying as a London Blue Badge Guide in 2011. He has since received an award for Best Overall Practical Guide. An engaging and knowledgeable guide, he has given many virtual tours during lockdown, and says these tours enable guides to show a level of detail that one would not be able to see in real life. **Details of the Virtual Tour will be issued during the week before.**

**4. Members' help with TASO's Charitable Giving**

The Community Arts Projects committee would very much welcome applications from local Oxford charities which TASO members might know of or wish to recommend for their community involvement. The committee will be considering new applications and hope to help charities who would benefit from small grants for arts related projects.

The contact email is: [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com) and the website <https://theartssocietyoxford.org.uk/?page_id=4329>  has all the information for applicants to read and apply to us for funding.

**5. Heritage Volunteering**

We have been sent information from Greater London Heritage Volunteering about a ‘working-at-home’ project making ‘Book Trousers’ from high quality, conservation grade paper, which is cut into a specific shape. These ‘Book Trousers’ are to be wrapped around volumes of the Parliamentary Archives to enable them to be barcoded and clearly referenced prior to being moved as part of the Archive Relocation Project. Volunteers will need a large cutting mat, a steel ruler and a craft knife but if they have not got these they will be supplied. You will need hand skills and manual dexterity, the ability to follow instructions and accurately use a template, and to be able to use a ruler and Stanley knife.

If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Rosalie Gowlland ([rosalie.gowlland@gmail.com](mailto:rosalie.gowlland@gmail.com)), giving your name, postal address and the name of the society to which you belong.

I hope you have digested this wide range of information, and are looking forward to joining a variety of events as we move into autumn.

Very best wishes from the Trustees and myself

Ann McIlhinney

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**The current Trustees are:**

Ann McIlhinney (Chair)

David Baron (Treasurer)

Ruth Burdett (Secretary)

Hilary Reid Evans

Julia Reece (Study Days)

David Stern (Programme Secretary)

Carol Brownson (Communications)

Alison Madden (Visits)

**September 2021 Newsletter - Update on Activities**

Dear Members

The main event which launches our new Society year is our AGM in September. However, we have two other events to tell you about, one at the beginning and one at the end of the month, therefore it seems a good idea to give you a comprehensive overview of the month now, so you can put the dates in your diaries!

**AGM Wednesday 15 September at 1030 am online.**

You will receive the relevant papers towards the end of this month, including Trustees Report, Society Financial statement and voting forms, with the deadline for returning the latter.

The Trustees are very aware that the Society reserves have grown significantly over the past 18 months, largely because we have had no venue fees to pay – for lectures, Study Days or AGM. This is something the incoming Board of Trustees will be looking at.

However to start the year, we would like to make this September **‘Free to Members’** month in recognition of your support. **Neither of the events below will carry any charge to members**.

**Virtual Tour of St Petersburg Monday 6 September at 11 am online**

Further details on this exciting event will be emailed to you in the near future.

**Study Day Wednesday 29 September on Islamic Art and Architecture, to be given online**

The detailed programme is on our website (<https://theartssocietyoxford.org.uk/> ) and will be emailed later in the month.

**We do hope you will be able to join us for both of the above, and of course, following the AGM, our lecture Clara: Rhino Superstar, Artistic Inspiration and Wonder of the Grand Tour by Clive Stewart-Lockhart which certainly promises to be unusual!**

Best wishes

Sarah Whiteley

Chair, TASO

**TASO Newsletter July 2021**

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List

**New TASO Membership Year**

Firstly a warm welcome back to those who have renewed their membership for the coming Society year, and to those joining us as new members. The renewal process is almost complete, with the final few places being confirmed this week. As part of your confirmation you receive next year’s programme, which promises to be as varied and interesting as always.

Our membership is at full capacity, but to reassure those on the Waiting List, you will be invited to join Visits and Study days where spaces permit, and to take part in our online Virtual Tours, which we will offer as part of next year’s programme.

**And so to next year**…. We should be cautiously optimistic about returning to live lectures this autumn, after Mr Johnson’s announcement yesterday on the lifting of all restrictions from 19 July. We do still have to wait for the University and its component departments to outline their requirements. The Trustees recognise many of you will wish to remain cautious, and wish to reassure you that your safety and wellbeing are of utmost importance. Any decisions on location / online will be taken in accordance with government and university guidelines.

**TASO AGM**

Recognising all that is said above, the current plan is to hold the AGM on Wednesday 15 September in person at the Maths Institute. The notification process will start next week with an email from our Secretary requesting nominations for trustees and any resolutions. Final papers will be sent out in August, at which stage we shall confirm all details on holding the meeting.

**Lecture Wednesday 14 July at 11 am        Portraits of Elizabeth 1**

A reminder thatwe are offering**members only**a bonus lecture next week to set off the new year. We are delighted that this will be given by Society member Sue Doran, Professor of Early Modern British History at the University of Oxford and Senior Research Fellow at Jesus College. **This will be given at 11 am on Webinar only, and full details, including the link to join, will be sent out at the beginning of next week.**

**Charitable Giving**

As a charity, TASO allocates a budget for local projects each year. You will receive details of this year’s in our AGM report. We are delighted that next year the dedicated sum will be supplemented by £250 donation from The Arts Society, being granted to all Societies, and by £300 from our members who had bought tickets for our Tenth Anniversary event (which did not take place, a Covid casualty) and have agreed to donate into our charitable funds.

**Can I ask members to send in details of any local small project / community arts-related activity that you think could benefit from TASO financial support? Thank you.**

I hope you all spend an enjoyable summer, with a gradual reprise of contact and activities with family and friends. This is my final Newsletter as TASO Chair. I very much look forward to meeting up with you all in person when Society life resumes.

With best wishes to you all from myself and the current TASO Trustees.

Sarah Whiteley

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**TASO Newsletter June 2021**

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List

We are coming to the end of this Society year - a year that none of us could ever have imagined would evolve in the way it has. It has certainly proved a test for all our technological abilities, and I want to send thanks to you all for your virtual attendance at the TASO activities during this period, and repeat particular thanks and praise for the amazing skills and determination exhibited by our trustees in ‘keeping the show on the road’. I do hope you have enjoyed what has been on offer.

I anticipate writing to you all briefly in early July, when we all hope to have received clear government guidelines, and thereafter University guidance, on how to proceed in the autumn.

**Membership Renewal**is an important follow-on, as our new year commences on 1st July. Our lecture programme for 2021-22 is complete and ready for distribution; both Visits and Study Day teams are well advanced in their planning.

The Membership Secretary, Diana Gordon, sent out emails to all TASO members on 9 May inviting renewal of membership for the 2021/22 year by paying the **£45 subscription with a deadline of 14 June. After that date, spare places will begin to be offered to people on our long waiting list**.

Many of you have already renewed, and Diana will be sending individual reminders shortly to those we have yet to hear from. If you do not intend to renew, it would be enormously helpful if you would tell us that. A quick email to that effect to [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com) is all that’s needed. Thank you.

**Volunteering with TASO**

The Society is dependent on your help in building its imaginative and busy programme! Currently both the Visits and Study Day teams are looking to increase their numbers. It is great fun being part of one of these teams – everyone has a new angle or an interesting idea to bring. We ask for a commitment of at least a year in joining a team, and offer membership if you are currently on the waiting list. Please do contact either Alison Madden (Visits) or Julia Reece (Study days) via [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com).

**Charitable Giving by TASO**

This has been a difficult year for organisations operating supportive arts programmes within local communities. Our central body, The Arts Society, is offering all local societies £250 each to support a local community arts-related activity. We should like to hear from our members about any small project within Oxford that you know of, which could positively benefit from such financial support. Do email myself or Celia Robinson, Chair of the Community Arts Project team, at [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com) to discuss further.

**Looking forward to TASO Activities**

**1. June Lecture**

This month’s lecture will be available for virtual attendance on both Webinar and YouTube, and the recording will remain available until 10 pm in the evening. Full joining instructions and links will be sent out by Tuesday 8 June.

### Lecture Wednesday 9 June at 11 am: The Bronzes of Ife and Benin, and an Historical View of the Art and Sculpture of Nigeria

**Lecturer: Richard Thomas’s** career as an academic and as a political and institutional analyst in the field of International Development enabled him to travel widely in Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Richard lived in Nigeria in the 1960s, near Ife, and became familiar with the art of Ife and Benin and the role they played in society. The art, the technology (using the lost wax process) and the cultural relevance of the Bronzes will be illustrated and discussed in the lecture.

**2. Visits**

**Virtual tours** are complete for this year. The first tour for the new schedule is planned for 6 September, visiting St Petersburg and some of the treasures of the Hermitage; there will also be a further Pepe Martinez tour to complete his very popular East End series.

The Trustees have undertaken to provide 2 virtual tours free of charge to members, as part of your membership for the coming year. These will be additional to others, as this way of exploring areas of the UK and potentially other countries has proved very popular.

**Walking tours** in Oxford as part of a small group are commencing this month. The Grandpont walk proved enormously popular and was therefore oversubscribed. These Oxford walks by a number of well-known local guides will of course continue in 2021/22, as they have become established as an important element of our programme.

The Visits team are looking at a range of local, self-drive and further afield trips, in anticipation of both less stringent guidelines, and what members might wish to participate in.

**3. Study Days**

Two Study Days are already booked for next year, in September 2021 and January 2020. We have booked Rewley House for both these, but both lecturers are used to delivering online as well.

The first will be on Islamic Art and Architecture, the second on Artists of the Slade School. The Study Day team certainly look for variety, and hopefully something over the year to appeal to everyone.

**4. A Bonus Lecture for Members in July**

We started this Society year with an extra lecture, and so we are offering to our 2021/22 members the same to launch new society year (prior to the AGM in September).

**14 July at 11 am: The Portraits of Elizabeth 1**

**Lecturer: Sue Doran**is Professor of Early Modern British History at the University of Oxford and a Senior Research Fellow at Jesus College and St Benet’s Hall. An early modern specialist, her research interests lie in the political, religious and cultural history of 16th century Britain, especially the reign of Elizabeth I. Author of more that sixteen books, she has also worked on several major exhibitions and their catalogues.

This lecture concentrates on the context, iconography and patronage of the portraits of Queen Elizabeth I, and will take a close look at paintings, prints and miniatures.

We are benefitting from a spell of ‘June as it should be’ at present. I hope you are all enjoying the sunshine, verdant gardens and, most importantly, contact with family and friends!

With best wishes from myself and the TASO Trustees

Sarah Whiteley

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**TASO Newsletter May 2021**

Dear TASO Members and those on our Waiting List

Welcome to the penultimate Newsletter as we are drawing to the close of our Society year. I am sure we are all hoping that our individual lives, as well as that of our Oxford Society, will gradually return to a more positive shape free of restrictions over the autumn months of 2021. Trustees are constantly discussing options for next year, but you will appreciate we are waiting for the University, which is waiting for the Government to deliver ongoing guidelines.

I should like to start this Newsletter with two important items:

**1. Membership Renewal**

The Membership Secretary, Diana Gordon, will be sending out renewal notices from next week for TASO membership 2021/22. You are encouraged to renew as soon as possible so we can allocate remaining spaces to our Waiting List. We hope you have enjoyed the varied programme, if very different in its delivery over this past year. Having included an ‘extra summertime lecture’ at the beginning of the year, we plan to offer the same this July. I think we have all welcomed the advent of Virtual Tours, and again we plan to offer 2 free tours to members next year.

Membership subscription remains at £45, unchanged for 8 years, and terrific value for money.

**2. Recruitment of a Secretary to the Trustees**

Trustees are delighted to be making good progress with building the Board of Trustees for the next Society year. Two current trustees will put themselves forward for election as Co Chairs and we are delighted to confirm that David Barron has been co-opted as a trustee with immediate effect, and will stand for election as Treasurer at the AGM. Allan Taylor has done sterling work in this role, supporting us on a ‘temporary basis’ for the past eighteen months.

**Secretary**is the all-important role which remains to be filled. We are very fortunate that our current Secretary, Pam Eyton, will remain as support in all issues technical and managing the website – she has been invaluable in building and supporting our tech team this past year. The Secretary role will particularly focus on admin support for the Trustees, and handling communication around the AGM.

We are sure there is an existing member, or someone who is keen to join TASO (we will immediately extend a welcome to you from the waiting list), with the necessary basic minuting and admin skills. Trustees are welcoming and supportive by nature! Please do contact myself or Pam via [tasoxford@gmail.com](mailto:tasoxford@gmail.com)

Now to News of upcoming events.

**A. Lecture on Wednesday 12 May at 11 am and 2pm, members only**

**Pots and frocks – the world of Grayson Perry**

Widely known for his outlandish appearances dressed as his feminine alter ego, Claire, Grayson Perry is now a core part of the art establishment. A Turner Prize winner, Royal Academician, popular broadcaster and colourful character, he’s possibly one of the world’s best known contemporary artists. This talk will examine Grayson Perry’s works, his exciting and thought-provoking exhibitions, and the unique character inside the flamboyant frocks.

**Lecturer Ian Swankie** is an official guide at Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Guildhall Art Gallery and St Paul’s Cathedral, and gives tours at each venue. He is also a qualified and active freelance London guide and a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Art Scholars.

**PLEASE NOTE: this lecture will be delivered TWICE on Webinar ONLY, at 11 am and 2 pm. There will be no YouTube recording to watch later in the day.**

**You will receive the email with full information and both links after the weekend.**

**B. Study Morning on Tuesday 25 May at 10 am, on Webinar only**

**Swedish Grace and Swedish Design**

**Speaker, Anne Anderson** divides her subject into two presentations:

The first, Swedish Grace, focuses on the work of Larsson and Zorn . Larsson ‘exemplifies Swedish Grace, desire to live in simple but beautiful surroundings’. Zorn has been compared with John Singer Sargent.

The second, Swedish Design, is rooted in clean Neo classical lines, the style does not tolerate clutter. The Architect Gunnar Asplund championed Nordic Classicism.

**More information will be sent out to Members and those on the Waiting List later in the month**

**C. Visits**

The Visits team are organising a **Virtual Tour of** **Iffley Church and Vicarage** for the beginning of June.

We are very much hoping to reintroduce **small group walking tours in Oxford** later that month.  These will complete our Visits programme for this year.

More information on both of these will come out by email.

**Email communications from The Arts Society**

We received comments from some members on the recent circulation of an offer from The Daily Telegraph via The Arts Society (central body). TAS House describe these as ‘Sponsored Content’ emails, playing an important role in providing a commercial subsidy against their core costs, and are sent to all members and non-member subscribers.

Please be aware you can specifically unsubscribe from these emails via a link at the bottom stating: **‘To unsubscribe from Sponsored emails, please update your preferences’**

**Finally** it is always enjoyable to receive a recommendation from a member on a rather unusual find (thank you Rumi Ringshall!) <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/uffizi-hidden-frescoes-1961451>

Do spend a moment reading this. It is a remarkable find in the Uffizi, in surprisingly good condition, and perhaps one to add to the list of ‘places to visit’!

In the meantime there is plenty to see both online and through booked slots in Oxfordshire Artweeks.

<https://www.artweeks.org/sites/default/files/news/oxfordshire_artweeks_may_2021_festival_guide.pdf>

Best wishes from myself and all Trustees. Let’s hope for slightly warmer weather as we can be out and about a little more!

Sarah Whiteley

Chair TASO

**TASO Newsletter April 2021**

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List

I hope you were all able to enjoy the weather leading up to Easter, perhaps with family, friends or neighbours. Back to warm clothes! Our magnolia which was resplendent over the Easter weekend now has a brown canopy, but the spring bulbs and cherry blossom are very cheering, and there is a gradual opening up across the country.

You are all now aware lectures will remain online for the remainder of this Society year. I have no further update on the beginning of next year as yet. Both the Maths Institute for our AGM, and Magdalen for ongoing lectures, await University guidance - and this is dependent on further government guidelines. Further research is being undertaken on the form ‘hybrid’ lectures might take – live for some in the auditorium, by Zoom for those at home.

We usually start our membership renewal process at the end of this month, but this year we shall be contacting you in mid May. Further details will come out in the May Newsletter.

**1. Volunteering with TASO**

Maintaining a healthy Society, with new people participating and fresh ideas emerging, depends on you offering your time and experience – and of course willingness to help!

The Society operates a 3 year cycle of trusteeship, overrunning this time because of the pandemic. We have had a couple of changes during the year (in Study Day team and Visits), and the trustees have a plan for maintaining continuity in the Chair role as I shall be stepping down at the AGM, and for identifying a treasurer.

Our most pressing need now is to recruit a Secretary, to commence from the AGM in September. This role requires some general/IT communications expertise; training and support are available within the team for this.

Other areas where additional pairs of hands are required:

Programme organisers to work alongside the current team, looking ahead to plan for 2022/3;

Study Day team member, to assist with all practicalities in a return to Rewley House;

Support for treasurer, to assist with individual discrete tasks;

Technical / IT assistance for a range of small tasks.

You can see from the above that we would welcome all sorts of input to maintain our service to over 500 members! I and other trustees would be delighted to discuss any of the above with any interested member, or someone on the Waiting List, where immediate membership would be offered in return for your specific support.

**2. April activities with TASO**

Lecture for Members on Wednesday 14 April at 11am and 2 pm. Faces, Figures and Forms: Exploring Sculpture in the UK’s Public Art Collections. The UK’s national collection of sculpture is arguably the finest in the world and is being catalogued in a unique and ambitious project called Art UK (http://www.artuk.org). The lecture explores a range of works from across the country and recounts some of the fascinating stories behind them. Lecturer Mary Rose Rivett-Carnac started working part-time for the Public Catalogue Foundation, now called Art UK in 2007,and gives lectures all over the UK and in Europe.

PLEASE NOTE: this lecture will be delivered TWICE on Webinar ONLY, at 11 am and 2 pm. There will be no YouTube recording to watch later in the day. You will receive the email with full information and both links after the weekend.

Virtual Tour, open Members and Waiting List, on Wednesday 28 April at 11 am Secrets of Henry VIII’s Palace: Hampton Court. Join Historic Royal Palaces guide lecturer, Siobhan Clarke, for a virtual tour, using maps, paintings, photographs and music to progress through courtyards, rooms and galleries, along the corridors of royal power and pleasure. Guide Siobhan Clarke has worked for Historic Royal Palaces for 20 years, delivering tours and lectures. She is an author and historian. Her latest book, ‘King and Collector: Henry VIII and the Art of Kingship’ will be published in April 2021. Details about the tour will be sent out nearer the time. There is a small charge of £5 for this event.

**3. Save the dates for May**

Lecture Wednesday 12 May on the world of Grayson Perry (Members only)

Study Morning on Tuesday 25 May on Swedish Grace (Members and Waiting List)

More details in the May Newsletter.

**4. Visits update**

The Visits team is planning to re-introduce small local group walks in May and June. There will be more information on these in the next Newsletter.

The visit to Elton Hall in Cambridgeshire – postponed from last year, and now moved forward again – will hopefully take place in June 2022. The Events team there has been enormously helpful. The house and gardens, owned by the same family since 1660, have expanded their presence on Facebook and Instagram, and independent visitors are welcome from the end of May if you are tempted to get a preview. Take a look at http://www.eltonhall.com

The trip to the Hague in September 2021 is fully subscribed. Should any vacancies arise over the next months, these will be advertised to members.

The monthly Newsletter gives me the opportunity to thank all the trustees on your behalf for the amazing amount of work that goes on behind the scenes to ensure we can keep you, our members, interested and entertained. Each month feels a little like a cliffhanger, wondering what we shall be able to achieve in the new Society year – and frustrating of course, not to be able to give a definite answer.

Best wishes to you all from myself and the trustees

Sarah Whiteley

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

**TASO Newsletter March 2021**

THIS NEWSLETTER CONTAINS THE LINK FOR THIS WEDNESDAY’S VIRTUAL TOUR SO PLEASE KEEP IT SAFE. LOOK UNDER "VIRTUAL VISITS" FOR DETAILS AND THE LINK.

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List

I am writing this looking out at uninterrupted blue skies with a multitude of daffodils showing colour in my small garden. These last few days have really felt that spring is approaching, and we have encouraging news in the government’s published ‘Roadmap’ out of Covid restrictions.

The Trustees met last week to consider the Roadmap implications for TASO. I am sure it will not surprise you that lectures will remain online until the end of our Society year in June. If we can introduce small ‘live’ group activities, we shall notify you immediately!

Magdalen College has confirmed our lecture theatre bookings for the next Society year from October. Depending on progress over the next 6 months, we shall be exploring the possibility of ‘hybrid’ lecture format, offering a live lecture and a recording. Guidance and support is expected from our central organisation The Arts Society on this, and I shall keep you informed.

Since November we have been joined every month for lectures and virtual tours, and for one study day, by members from The Arts Society Abingdon. For each event their committee has made a significant contribution directly to the lecturer or guide, and of course members have made the same honesty payments as you. Their new year launches in April, and we wish them a successful year.

What to look out for in March

Monthly lecture on Wednesday 10 March at 11 am. on Webinar and YouTube

A Garden like no other: Edward James & Las Posas

Lecturer: James Russell studied History at Pembroke College, Cambridge and then enjoyed a lengthy stint selling contemporary paintings and sculpture in Santa Fe, New Mexico. James has curated major exhibitions at Dulwich Picture Gallery and for museums around the country. He bases his lectures on wide-ranging original research into the subjects that fascinate him.

Ranging around the world and across the 20th century, this colourful lecture tells the story of Edward James, a rich English eccentric and Surrealist, and Las Posas, a garden he created in the depths of an enchanted valley in the Mexican jungle in the last century. Members only

Virtual Visits

Wednesday 3 March at 11 am on Webinar only

A tour of St Peter’s College

Guide: Lizzy Rowe.

Lizzy will be well known to many of you for walks in Oxford. She will take us on a virtual tour of the college before leading us to the SCR Dining Room and the home of the Duncan Grant Collection. Generously loaned to the college by an alumnus, this collection of Grant's work is one of the largest in the UK. A celebrated artist and designer, Duncan Grant (1885-1978) is particularly associated with the Bloomsbury Group and these works present an overview of his life and work, ranging from watercolour portraits of famous Bloomsbury members to designs for opera costumes.

Open to Members and those on the Waiting List

To watch this virtual tour starting at 11am click on the following link https://theartssociety-org.zoom.us/j/95842369701

Details of how to make your honesty payment can be found at the end of this email.

Wednesday 24 March at 11 am Webinar only

A tour of the City of York

Guide: Sarah Cowling, Blue Badge Guide. Details to follow later in the month. Open to members and those on the waiting list.

Forthcoming Events for your diaries

1. Virtual tour in April

The Visits team are planning a virtual visit to one of the Historic Royal Palaces

2. Study Day on Tuesday 25 May

Anne Andersen, a well known TASO lecturer, will bring a Scandinavian flavour to our Webinar morning, with a programme entitled ‘Swedish Grace’.

Planning further ahead

The Visits team are putting together ideas should we be able to meet locally in small groups.

The Study Day team have identified a topic and a date for September. Rewley House is on hold and the lecturer geared up to deliver in person or online.

Our AGM date is booked for Wednesday 15 September at the Maths Institute. Again, this is on hold, and I anticipate it will be June before we can make a definite decision on this.

Community Arts Projects (CAP)and TASO Charitable Giving

Are you aware of a local group struggling to raise funds in this difficult Covid-19 situation we are currently experiencing?

The CAP Committee would very much welcome applications from local Oxford charities which TASO members might know of or wish to recommend for their community involvement. The committee’s aim is to help charities benefit from small grants for arts related projects.

Since becoming a charity, TASO subscriptions have helped provide stimulating day clubs for those living with dementia, Soundabout music for those with a learning disability, an inspiring photographic exhibition at Restore Oxford, supporting disadvantaged children construct masks for the Oxford Festival of Light and funding MOMA’s holiday creative workshops for children of prisoners.

We are actively wishing to encourage applications now, and for next year 2021/22.

Please do contact us at tasoxford@gmail.com and take a look at the website where all the information for applicants seeking funding can be found.

https://www.theartssocietyoxford.org.uk

Heritage Volunteering

It has been a frustrating few months for those of you involved in a small project, or who might like to undertake heritage work. The Royal Philatelic Society is seeking volunteers to archive material for online research on the records of the Perkins Bacon Company, a Security printer established in 1828. They printed a large range of secure paper items, such as bank notes and stamps, including the Penny Black. If you are interested, please contact Sue Bye, Area Heritage Coordinator, email richardbye704@btinternet.com

Finally …

To complement watching the St Peter’s tour, Pembroke College have a fascinating online tour of their art gallery. I’m sure many of you will have visited their JCR Art Collection when it was housed in their series of attics. Now they have a splendid purpose built gallery, well worth browsing online. http://www.pembrokejcrart.org

An enormous thank you to our members and supporters who have been so encouraging over the past months. Face to face contact is looking increasingly more likely in our 2021/22 Society year.

Equal thanks to trustees and their teams who have worked so hard and imaginatively to bring you the programme you have been able to enjoy – and with such technical excellence!

Best wishes to you all from myself and the trustees

Sarah Whiteley

TASO Chair

March 3rd Virtual Tour, further details

You are reminded that for contractual reasons we ask that you do not share this email or the link with anyone else.

This Virtual Tour is only available to watch via Zoom Webinar starting at 11am. It lasts about an hour and a quarter.

Please make your honesty payment of £5 either by bank transfer or cheque.

BANK TRANSFER (our preferred method) to:

Account: The Arts Society Oxford

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account number: 00060686

PLEASE USE YOUR SURNAME and INITIALS as a REFERENCE so our treasurer can account for it correctly.

BY CHEQUE made payable to The Arts Society Oxford and posted to Pam Eyton. Her address is 4 Lonsdale Road, Oxford, OX2 7EW. Please mark the envelope TASO Virtual Tour.

**TASO Newsletter February 2021**

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List

As we head into the second month of 2021 it is such a mixture of news! I do hope you are all keeping safe and well, and that many of you have received your first vaccines – and maybe the second too. However it is clear all TASO offerings will have to remain online for the next few months. Could we possibly have envisaged last March, at the lecture held a week before lockdown, that a year later we should not have been able to meet face to face!

We have agreed with Magdalen to release our booked lecture dates up to and including May, as there are occasions they can use the auditorium for small university events. Our date in June remains optimistically booked, but it is impossible to speculate where we shall be in 5 months.

Feedback on recent events

I thought you might like to know how TASO events are being received and see some feedback from members.

Lectures: Ann and Kate, our Programme Secretaries, do a fantastic job in recording attendance at lectures and analysing feedback. Your responses are really valued. Attendance since October has ranged from 374 to 450, (from which we deduct average Abingdon attendees of 75) – and these are devices not individuals. Our lecturers are regularly rated as ‘Excellent’. I hope those concerned about using Webinar were reassured by the January lecture, with 382 viewers over the 2 sessions.

As a lighter touch, we asked you for your vote on the Turner / Constable Paint Off. 75% of those who watched sent feedback, and Turner was overwhelmingly the winner at 85% – some felt they could not possibly rate one above the other!

Study ‘Day’: an information-packed morning on art in the British Enlightenment and the Industrial Age was held last week. We had 106 attendees and 75% provided valuable feedback - greatly enjoyed and a challenge to absorb so much knowledge and artistic input!

Welcome and thanks to our new Study Day Team, Julia Reece and Mark Gardiner. They have now booked our next online event: the excellent Anne Anderson talking on Swedish art in May. More details on date and content will be available in subsequent Newsletters.

We, the Trustees, are delighted that Julia has joined us on the Board of Trustees, and wish to record our sincere thanks to Stephanie North who has stepped down. I am sure members will agree that she and her team of Felicity Wood and Helen Cadoux-Hudson have been stalwarts in organising an enjoyable and stimulating series of Study days over the last two and half years.

Upcoming events

On a positive note, here is what is available to Members and those on our Waiting List over the next month or so. Could I first repeat a gentle reminder:

The monthly lecture is for members only, and they will receive the appropriate link a few days before the event

We welcome those on our Waiting List to join us for Virtual Tours and Study days for the same small fee as members pay (£5 for the Tours and £8 for a Study Day).

Next lecture: Wednesday 10 February at 11 am, available on YouTube until 10 pm. Paul Chapman on Post-war Australian Painting

Western Art from ‘Down Under’ is often overlooked and neglected, but there are many talented and inventive painters who rose to prominence in the post-World War II era – painters with styles from naïve and expressive to figurative, from abstract expression of landscape to surreal depiction of urban life – all essential in our understanding and appreciating the modern art of Australia and its place in the history of Western Art. Further information on the content can be found on the website.

The lecture will be streamed on both Zoom and YouTube. Members will receive the email containing the links and more detailed information a couple of days before the lecture.

Visits

Firstly please ensure next Wednesday 3 February at 11 am is in your diary for our second Virtual East End Tour with Blue Badge Guide Pepe Martinez. It promises to provide a great contrast to the walk there in December with some of our members, illustrating the transformation that has taken place over the last generation. The email with details and the link will be sent out on Monday.

The Visits Team have been looking at virtual ways of keeping us all entertained while we cannot walk or explore together.

In late February Alastair Lack will take us walking in Oxford again, via a Zoom Webinar. Hopefully he will inspire you to try a different route in Oxford, with your partner or your ‘walking friend’. Details will be confirmed in a couple of weeks. At least there will be no ballot for places!

On Wednesday 3 March we have an exciting new local venture to offer. Lizzy Rowe has agreed with St Peter’s College Oxford to provide a tour of their collection of Duncan Grant and other Bloomsbury artists. Once again, details will be confirmed later in February.

The team is currently negotiating a virtual visit to York in late March, details in the March Newsletter.

Members will have received details on the TASO visit to The Hague in September 2021, organised by Heritage Travel. Booking instructions and form were attached, as this is handled directly with Heritage. Should this not be fully subscribed, details will be circulated to the Waiting List.

Options are being considered for possible visits to a stately home either by coach or own transport in the summer, but you will appreciate that making any such arrangement in the coming months can only be very tentative.

I do hope you will find something of interest to look forward to with TASO over the coming month.

Best wishes from myself and all TASO Trustees

Sarah Whiteley

Chair, TASO

**TASO Newsletter January 2021**

Dear Members and those on the Waiting List,

Happy New Year to you all!

I hope you are beginning the year feeling optimistic, despite the onslaught of a Covid variant and the restrictions we are all under. I am sure some of you will have had your first vaccine jab, and Oxford researchers have really triumphed producing rewards for us all in the coming months.

TASO is geared up for the next 3 months online – we shall look at alternatives as soon as this is practicable. Please bear with us, the trustees have greatly appreciated your support and positive comments thus far.

Updates for January

There is plenty on offer for you to enjoy this month!

A reminder - Monthly lectures are available for our members only, as part of their TASO subscription.

We are delighted to offer those on the Waiting List the opportunity to join TASO members for our Study Days or Virtual Tours, with a small cost attached to each of these activities.

1. January Lecture: Important information, please read!

Many Arts Society lecturers are reluctant to have their lecture held on YouTube for the day, for copyright protection. For this reason the lecture on Wednesday 13 January will be broadcast TWICE on Webinar ONLY, at 11 am and 2 pm. It will NOT be available on YouTube at all. You will receive the links for both times as usual a few days prior to the lecture, so you will be able to watch at either time or both!

Turner vs Constable is the story of the epic rivalry between the two giants of British art, J.M.W. Turner and John Constable. As unlike in background and temperament as their paintings were in style, these two creative geniuses transformed the art of landscape. Our lecturer, Nicola Moorby is an independent art historian specialising in British art of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Full information can be found on the TASO website

https://www.theartssocietyoxford.org.uk and will be included with the email containing the links.

2. January Study Day

Our topic for the online ‘Study Morning’ of Tuesday 19 January is The British Enlightenment: science, exploration and industry in Eighteenth century painting.

In this brief introduction to the emergence of the Industrial and Technological Age, Justin discusses the key events of the English and Scottish Enlightenments, the development of the early Industrial Revolution, and the response to those changing times by artists. This will include depictions of the industrial age by Joseph Wright of Derby, followed by the spread of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, as captured by artists from Turner to Cezanne.

Our lecturer is Justin Reay. After retiring from business in 2001, he studied the History of Art and Architecture at Oxford. He was a senior academic manager at the Bodleian Library, for whom he now acts as a consultant.

Information on this Study Morning will be circulated next week, with an email follow up containing the link and the method of payment (this will be sent out after the January lecture to avoid any confusion)

3. Visits

We are developing our Virtual Tours for the first few months of the year. There are provisional plans for more of our very popular Oxford walking tours with Alastair Lack and Lizzy Rowe for late March / early April should restrictions be lifted enough to enable them. More on this hopefully in the February Newsletter.

Virtual Tours

Meanwhile a date is being finalised for Part 2 of the East End of London tour with Pepe Martinez. So many of our members enjoyed his first tour, this is by popular request – but to reassure those who did not partake initially, this is a ‘stand alone’ tour! This will be online at the very end of January / beginning of February, and you will be given plenty of notice.

Lizzy Rowe (of walking tours) will take us on a virtual tour of the Duncan Grant collection at St. Peter’s College. Date to be finalised for the end of February and advertised in the next Newsletter.

Many of you will have visited Pembroke College’s fine Junior Common Room art collection, now housed in a dedicated gallery space. Highlights of the collection can now be found online at: https://www.pembrokejcrart.org/collection-favourites

TASO visit to the Hague with Heritage Travel, September 2021

The brochure from Heritage Travel, together with booking information, will be circulated, to members initially, towards the end of January. All bookings by members will be made directly with the travel company.

Best wishes,

Sarah Whiteley,

Chair, The Arts Society Oxford

Together with TASO trustees