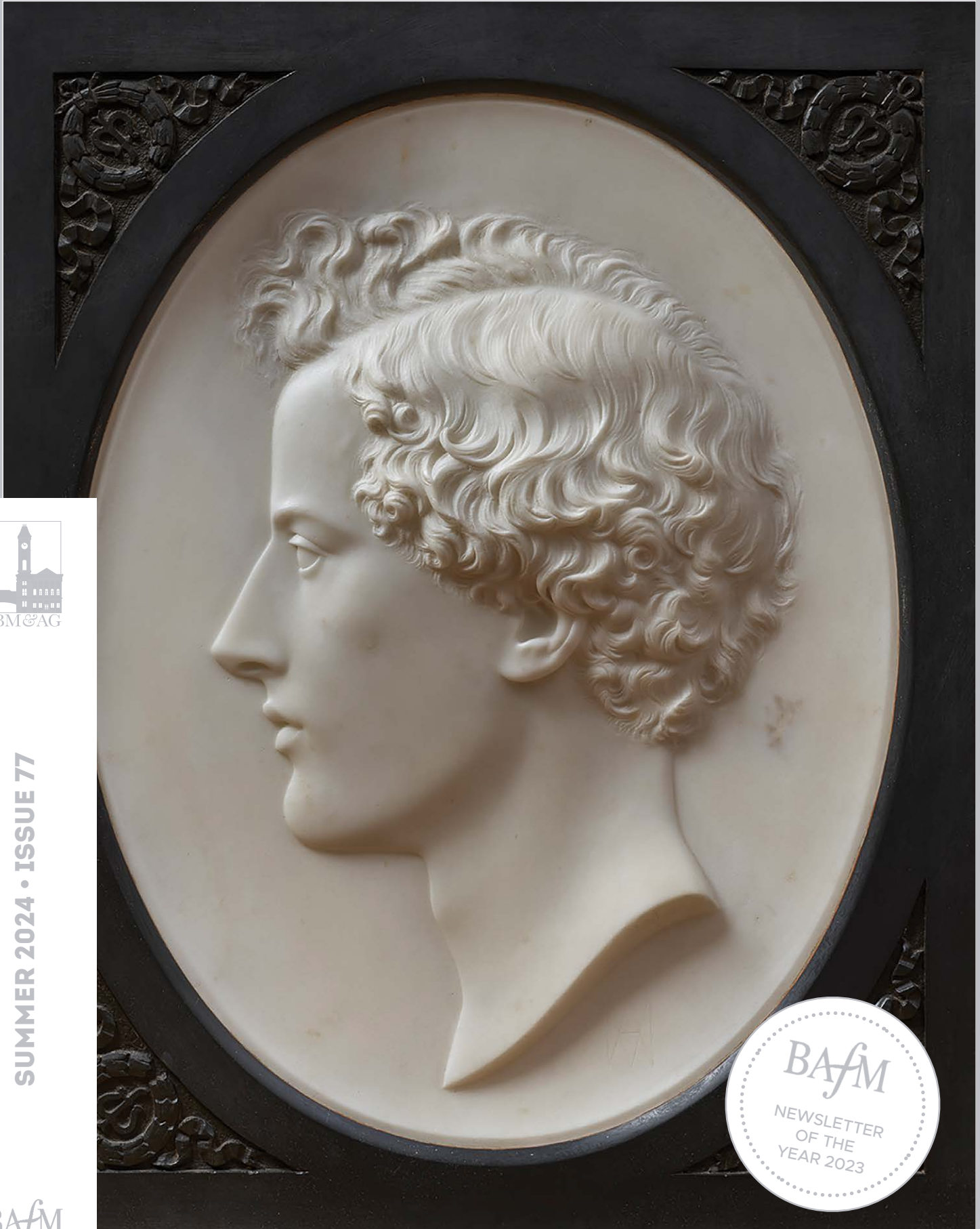


ARTEFACTS



SUMMER 2024 • ISSUE 77



MEMBER OF
THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF
FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS



FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS & ART GALLERY MAGAZINE



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EDITOR'S NOTE

For those of you who may not know, Tamara is going to have a little brother! I will be starting my twelve months maternity leave at the end of May, just over 4 years after my last period of maternity leave. It is incredible to think that, as I left the Friends office in February 2020, we had no idea that we were only a few weeks away from a worldwide pandemic!

I have now been editing 'Artefacts' since Summer 2015, with a break from Summer 2020 when Covid prevented publication until we started production again in Winter 2021.

Since I took over as Editor the magazine has gone through a re-design and has changed format, enabling us to include a wider range of articles and larger, higher resolution full page images.

In December 2022, we received the news that PW Media, the publishing company with whom the Friends had produced 'Artefacts' for many years, were entering into voluntary liquidation. Luckily Paul, PW Media's long-standing and committed designer, asked whether he might contact printers for quotes to enable his own

company, PB&J Publishing, to keep 'Artefacts' up and running. And since then, 'Artefacts' has gone from strength to strength, winning the British Association of Friends of Museums Newsletter of the Year Award in 2023!

I have thoroughly enjoyed watching 'Artefacts' grow over the years. It is the hard work, dedication and valuable contributions of a number of key people that brings each edition of the magazine together. My 'dream team' comprises the regular contributors who write the articles and submit copy, our Crossword aficionado, my superb proof-readers, and of course Paul and Jess from PB&J Publishing.

From June 2024 any future 'Artefacts' Editorial correspondence will need to be sent through to Paul at PB&J Publishing, who will be taking over from me as Editor whilst I am on maternity leave. I feel very confident that I am leaving the magazine in capable hands! Please could you send copy and correspondence on 'Artefacts' to: paul@pbjpublishing.co.uk. And, of course, I look forward to reading the next edition of 'Artefacts' in due course!

By Melissa Hughes,
Artefacts Editor and Friends Administrator

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ON THE COVER

'Portrait of John Everett Millais' by Alexander Munro, 1853; 2020.15; purchased for Birmingham Museums with the support of the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery in 2020; image courtesy of Stuart Lochhead Sculpture





CHAIR'S OBSERVATIONS

BY PETER MILES

I am surprised that I have already completed my first six year stint on the Friends Committee – half of it as your Chair. How those years have flown by!

And those years have been difficult for the Friends. We have had to contend with the pandemic, which as you will all know meant the closure of Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG) and the Historic Properties.

And when Birmingham Museums Trust's sites would have been able to open again, Birmingham City Council (BCC) had to carry out essential maintenance works which meant that BMAG remained closed. Luckily a small part was able to be opened temporarily for the Commonwealth Games, so that a selection of Birmingham's spectacular collections could be showcased.

But what looked like a difficult time for the Friends at the start of the pandemic has fortunately been resolved.

We now have a full complement of Trustees and a very active Events Sub-Committee giving us a varied programme. Look out for the details of the Friends Events programme, which includes a Friends Lunch on 12th November, on pages 6-8.

Our Friends finances are sound due to the work of our financial advisers, Brewin Dolphin. In addition to their financial advice, I want to thank them for allowing us to use their offices for our regular Committee meetings and a number of other small meetings.

Both during and since the pandemic our membership numbers have been on the decline, something also experienced by many other societies like ours. However, as I write this, the decline has been reversed. Over the past month some lapsed Members have rejoined and in March we had twelve new members – we believe primarily due to Members of the Friends receiving free entry to the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition.

But this wind of optimism and resurgence



is not confined to the Friends. Despite the threat from BCC's financial crisis, BMT is planning BMAG's phased opening. We are excited that the Round Room, Industrial Gallery and Edwardian Tea Rooms are due to open mid year, and the Friends are delighted to be offering financial support to enable this to happen.

As you will already know, BMAG has already opened its doors with the wonderful 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition in the Gas Hall. This exhibition, which previously toured the United States of America, is superb and has been very warmly received. But this isn't a surprise given Birmingham has the best collection of Pre-Raphaelites in the world, many of which are currently on display. I have been to visit a number of times and it is like meeting old friends whom you haven't seen for a long time.

On display for the first time is the last item the Friends purchased before the pandemic - 'Portrait of John Everett Millais' by Alexander Munro (see page 14). It is a

particularly striking piece and whenever I have visited the exhibition there has always been someone looking at it. And, of course, the purchase is acknowledged by the display of our new logo, which was adopted at our 2023 AGM.

I have my favourites. There is the statement piece of a gilded chest - 'The Garden of the Hesperides Cassone' designed by Edward Burne-Jones and decorated by Thomas Matthews Rooke.

And, of course, there is 'The Last of England' by Ford Madox Brown which needs no introduction. It remains as popular as ever and I can always remember seeing it in the gallery.

Remember to go and see 'Victorian Radicals' if you haven't already done so – and being a Friend gets you in free! ■

ABOVE: 'The Garden of the Hesperides Cassone', 1888; Designed by Edward Burne-Jones, Decorated by Thomas Matthews Rooke; 2005.0121; Bequest of Mrs Helen Mary Gaskell, 1941; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0.



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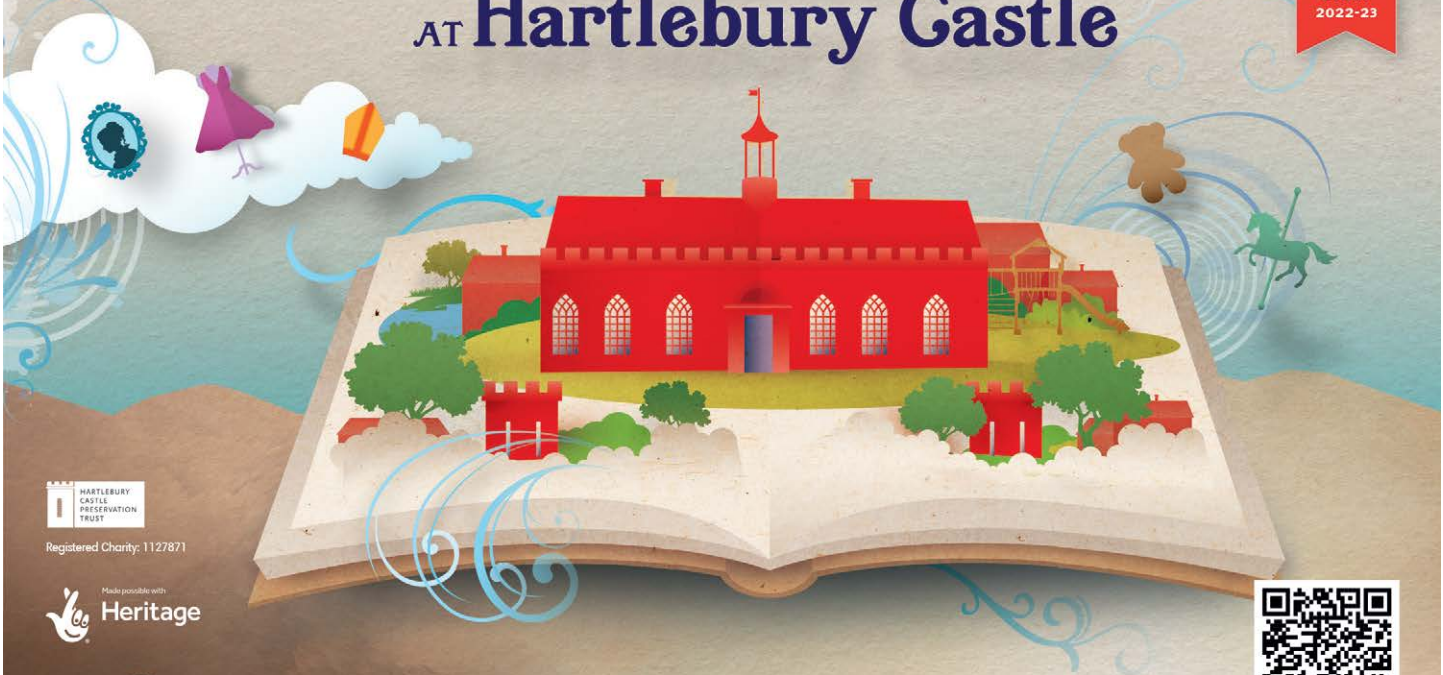
IKON/60



Ikon is supported using public funding for the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and Birmingham City Council. Ikon Gallery Limited trading as Ikon. Registered charity no. 528892. Image: Ikon Gallery. Photo by Tom Jones.

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FRIENDS' EVENTS

HOW TO BOOK EVENTS - EITHER BY EMAIL OR BY POST

BY EMAIL

Send an email to friendsofbmag@gmail.com listing: all the events you would like to go to, how many tickets you would like for each event, and whether the tickets are for members or non-members. Please include your membership number if applicable.

You will be sent an email reply and information about how to pay for the events by bank transfer. Once the bank transfer has been received you will receive a further email confirming your booking.

BY POST

Write to us including: all the events you would like to go to, how many tickets you would like for each event, and whether the tickets are for members or non-members. Please include your membership number if applicable.

Please work out the total amount due and send a cheque, made payable to 'FBMAG', to: The Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, c/o The Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope so we can issue you with your ticket(s) and confirm your booking(s).

VICTORIAN RADICALS: FROM THE PRE-RAPHAELITES TO THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

Date: Monday 20 May 2024 [NB. This date was advertised in the Spring 2024 edition of 'Artefacts'. If you have already applied to attend this event, please do not reapply.]

New Date added: Monday 21 October 2024

Tour Guide: Jane Howell

Cost: £10 but Members are encouraged to make an extra donation of £5 towards the museum reopening costs. Members only.

Meeting Point: The Gas Hall Foyer entering by the lift at 10.45am for an 11am start

Please note: the exhibition is closed to the public on Mondays and Tuesdays so these special tours offer an exclusive opportunity for Members to admire these remarkable works of art in the company of Jane Howell, an experienced and knowledgeable guide. Each tour is limited to a maximum number of 20 to allow participants a closer view than is normally possible.

This major exhibition sees Birmingham's world-famous collection of Pre-Raphaelite art on display in the city for the first time in over five years. 'Victorian Radicals' gives visitors the chance to discover the story of the Pre-Raphaelites – Britain's first modern art movement – and its influence on

artists and craft workers well into the twentieth century. This tour will explore, in detail, a few of the 160 of Birmingham's most loved works, rarely seen all in one place at the same time.

IKON GALLERY NATIONAL TREASURES

Date: Friday 7 June 2024, 2pm for a 2.30pm start

Cost: £10 members, £12 non-members (Members are encouraged to make an extra £5 voluntary donation towards BMAG opening fund)

Meeting point: Foyer of Ikon Gallery, 1 Oozells Square, Brindley Place, Birmingham B1 2HS

Tour guide provided by Ikon and will last an hour

How to get there: Plenty of public transport including trams and buses on Broad Street. Short walk from either New Street or Snow Hill stations. Car parking in Brindley Place multistorey.

Come and join the Friends in celebrating the Bicentenary of the National Gallery and the 60th anniversary of the Ikon Gallery with this visit to the 'National Treasures' exhibition featuring 'Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria' by Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1564), on loan from the National Gallery. Simultaneously the Ikon will be showing 'Mirror Martyr Mirror Moon' a solo exhibition by Dublin based contemporary artist Jesse Jones which is informed by her research into the iconography of Gentileschi's self-portrait. After the tour there will be the option to adjourn to Yorks Café for refreshments, overlooking the delightful Oozells Square.

WALKING TOUR AROUND THE MOOR POOL ESTATE

Date: Friday 21 June 2024, 1.15 pm for a 1.30pm start

Cost: £10 members, £14 non-members (includes refreshments)

Meeting Point: Moor Pool Hall on The Circle on the Moor Pool Estate, B17 9DY

By car: There are no parking restrictions on the roads around Moor Pool. By bus: The Number 11 bus comes along the Lordswood Road and drops off at the top of Carless Avenue, which is a 10 minute walk from The Circle. The 23 and 24 buses drop off in Harborne High Street, which is approximately 15 minutes to Moor Pool. From the High Street, turn onto Station Road and then Wentworth Road. Turn right onto Wentworth Gate, which will bring you onto The Circle. [NB. This event was advertised in the Spring 2024 edition of 'Artefacts' and is now FULLY BOOKED.]

VISIT TO THE WEST MIDLANDS POLICE MUSEUM - TALK ON FORENSIC PROCEDURES

Date: Saturday 13 July 2024, 10.30am

Venue: West Midlands Police Museum, The Lock Up, 40 Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham City Centre, B4 6BJ (Opposite The Children's Hospital). Disabled access with lifts and ramps

EVENT KEY



ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



LUNCH



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING

is available alongside in Coleridge Passage.

Cost: £15 members, £19 non-members (includes refreshments)
[NB. This event was advertised in the Spring 2024 edition of 'Artefacts'. If you have already applied to attend this event, please do not reapply.]

A return visit to the fascinating Police Museum has been arranged to include a talk on the development of forensic procedures and how scientific techniques have been used in the pursuit of justice. There will also be an opportunity for participants to further explore the lock up cells and to discover what life was like both for those who worked there and those who were incarcerated there including, of course, the infamous "Peaky Blinders".



BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM COLLECTION CENTRE

Date: Wednesday 24 July 2024, 11am – 2.30pm

Venue: Museum Collection Centre (MCC), 25 Dollman Street, Nechells, Birmingham, B7 4RQ.

Workshop delivered by Suzanne Knibbs, Dynamic Collections Participation Officer and Ayesha Hussain, Collections Information Coordinator, Birmingham Museum Trust

Cost: £10 members, £12 non-members

How to get there: By car: MCC is located 1 mile east of Birmingham city centre, close to Curzon Circus on the ring road. For google maps and Sat Nav use postcode B7 4RQ. Entrance to the MCC is off Dollman Street. There is a free car park at MCC. The public entrance is a further 2 minute walk. Walk back out the vehicle gate. Turn right onto Dollman Street. Turn right at the next junction (Nechells Business Park). Turn right into our public entrance. By Bus: Catch the Number 14 bus from The Priory Queensway (in front of B&M) in the city centre. Get off at Duddleston train station. With the station on your right, walk straight on until you reach Dollman Street, where you turn right. Walk straight on for 500m until you get to our entrance on the left hand side of the road. By Rail: Duddleston station is a 5 minute walk away (see instructions above).

This is a unique opportunity to see how museums work behind the scenes. Join the Friends at the Museum Collection Centre for a 'Dynamic Collections' session. There will be a tour of the site which houses an incredible range of objects. We will go into areas not open to the public and see an assortment of fascinating artefacts in a behind-the-scenes atmosphere. You will have the chance to get hands-on with some of the collections by taking part in museum auditing activities, including object record and condition checks, and understand the role of Museums in preserving our history. Limited number of places available for this rare opportunity so please book early.



ANXIOUS APPLES: WHY DO ARTISTS PAINT STILL LIFE?

Date: Friday 16 August 2024, 10.45am for an 11am start

Venue: Thinktank – Birmingham Science Museum, Millennium Point, Birmingham, B4 7XG. Entrance will be via the Event Suite reception on Level 3 of Millennium Point.

Speaker: Henrietta Lockhart

Cost: £10 members, £14 non-members

How to get there: By car - parking: The closest car park is Millennium Point Multi-Storey Car Park on Howe Street, B4 7AP. By train: 10 minutes walk from Moor Street station, 15 minutes from New Street. By bus: Catch numbers 14 and 94 from The Priory Queensway (in front of B&M) in the city centre to Jennens Road.



Artemisia Gentileschi, 1593 – 1654 or later, 'Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria', about 1615-17. Bought with the support of the American Friends of the National Gallery, the National Gallery Trust, Art Fund (through the legacy of Sir Denis Mahon), Lord and Lady Sassoon, Lady Getty, Hannah Rothschild CBE and other donors including those who wish to remain anonymous, 2018 © The National Gallery, London.

Still life has been a popular subject for artists since Roman times, and a still life painting is always more complex than it appears! Even a simple apple can carry a wealth of symbolic meanings. This talk will range from the wall paintings of Pompeii to 21st-century photography, while exploring many other genres along the way including the tulip mania of 17th-century Holland and the experimentation of the cubists. Attendees will be welcome to visit Thinktank before or after the talk free of charge.



FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Tuesday 10 September 2024, 10.15am for an 11am start

Venue: Sir Arthur Sullivan Hall, Birmingham and Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS

The Friends AGM will be held in the Sir Arthur Sullivan Hall at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on Tuesday 10 September at 11am. We would like to invite you to join us for tea and coffee from 10.15am. Please make sure to put this important date in your diary. It will give you the opportunity to hear the latest news from the Friends and to ask any questions you might have. After the AGM Martin Ellis, Co-Curator of 'Victorian Radicals', will talk about the exhibition (see details below).

We do not charge for the AGM and so if you wish to make a donation towards the costs of the meeting prior to the event please do send these to us. Donation plates will also be available on the day. It is important that we know numbers for catering and quorum purposes so please email friendsofbmag@gmail.com or write to us at the address above to RSVP or if you have any questions. We very much hope to see you there.

NB. More details about the AGM will be appearing in the Friends Committee Report and Financial Statements, which will be sent to you by post in the Summer.

CONTINUED OVER THE PAGE



VICTORIAN RADICALS: A JOURNEY TO AMERICA

Date: Tuesday 10 September 2024, 12noon – following on from the Friends AGM (see details above)

Venue: Sir Arthur Sullivan Hall, Birmingham and Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS

Speaker: Martin Ellis, Co-Curator of 'Victorian Radicals'

Cost: Free for Members attending the Friends AGM

When we visit an exhibition, we engage with a finished product – something complete, tidy, textually polished and visually dramatic, with eyecatchers and telling juxtapositions carefully worked out. But the often chaotic process of creating an exhibition is a different matter. In this talk Martin introduces us to some of the fun, challenges and concepts that made the creation of the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition such an exhilarating experience.



FRIENDS LUNCH AT CHAPTER RESTAURANT, EDGBASTON

Date: Tuesday 12 November 2024, 12noon for 12.30pm

Venue: Chapter Restaurant, 5-6 Greenfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 3BE

Cost: £35

How to get there: Chapter is located five minutes walk from Edgbaston Village Tram stop.

By car: Use the address above. Easy access to pay and display. By Bus: Along the Hagley Road, Harborne Road, and Calthorpe Road. Chapter is fully accessible by wheelchair with disabled parking to the rear.

Join us for a Friends Lunch at Chapter Restaurant! We will be dining at the award-winning restaurant in the heart of Edgbaston Village, where the focus is nature-led, fiercely rooted in seasonality and committed to quality produce from the British Isles.

The menu will be: Ham Hock Terrine with grain mustard dressing; Fillet of 'Day boat Fish' with crushed potatoes and butter sauce; Orange Crème Brulee and shortbread; followed by Coffee. It will also include a glass of wine or soft drink on arrival. When booking please indicate any dietary requirements. Our guest speaker will be Rowena Dean, BMT's Director of Development, who will talk about what has been happening during the year at BMT.



VISIT GURU NANAK GURDWARA SMETHWICK AND STATUE

Date: Friday 22 November 2024, 10.45am for an 11am start

Venue: Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick, 130 High Street, Smethwick B66 3AP

Meeting point: Main entrance

Cost: £8 members, £10 non-members. Includes a langar tasting menu, fully vegetarian.

Getting there: Bus: Regular 87 bus route from City Centre;

Train: Rolfe Street Station is 2-3 minutes away, Galton

Bridge: 10 minutes away or 87 bus. Car: Parking is limited but around the corner in Trinity Street there is parking

Join us on this first trip by the Friends to the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Smethwick, just over the Birmingham border. Outside is a ten-foot bronze statue - 'Lions of the Great War' - a commemoration of those soldiers from the Indian subcontinent who fought for Britain in both world wars. The Gurdwara itself was established in 1961 as Europe's first and largest Sikh Gurdwara and continues to have a global reach. The tour will finish with a traditional langar taster menu of vegetarian food to round off what promises to be an enlightening morning.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

19-22 May 2025 – Visit to Krakow, Poland. Flying from Birmingham.



'Preparations for a Feast', Attributed to Pieter Aertsen, Delft School, 1575-1625; 1925P344; Presented by J A Kenrick, 1925; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0.

BLACK TUDORS: NEW NARRATIVES



as Cattelena of Almondsbury, an independent single woman who sold dairy products from her rural home near Bristol; Jacques Francis, who was a diver who salvaged valuables from shipwrecks; and a silk weaver from London known as Reasonable Blackman.

The staff at Selly Manor Museum, including the Heritage Engagement Officer Louise Deakin, sought help and advice from Black Arts Forum and eminent local photographer Dr Pogus Caesar to arrange the display. It was decided that four local artists, representative of the diverse communities of the West Midlands, would be invited to create artworks which honoured and depicted these four people from history. The four chosen artists were Jade Eynon, Nina-Simone Brown, Annie Pearson and Nompumelelo Ncube, with additional poetry by Amanda Hemmings.

This exhibition – ‘Black Tudors: New Narratives’ – was on display at Selly Manor Museum from 26 January until 22 March 2024 and was created in partnership with Black Arts Forum and funded by West Midlands Museum Development. ■

By Peter Baker, Friends Trustee



TOP: Jacques Francis - artwork by Nina Simone-Brown; photo by Selly Manor Museum.
ABOVE: Dressmaker Mary Fillis - artwork by Jade Eynon; photo by Peter Baker.

Full credit to Selly Manor Museum for staging a small but remarkable exhibition showcasing the research of Miranda Kaufmann for her book ‘Black Tudors – The Untold Story’. From her research, it seems that there were about 200 black people living and working in this country during the Tudor times before the Crown, under Elizabeth I, saw the opportunity for fiscal progress in the colonies using enslaved people.

The only named Black Tudor for whom there is an identifiable image is John Blanke, who was a trumpeter at the court of Henry VIII. It is thought that he came to England in the retinue of Catherine of Aragon for her first marriage to Henry's brother, Prince Arthur.

The exhibition featured four other Black Tudors whose names appear in the archives which give brief but tantalising details of their lives. England was their home where they made a living and where they worshipped, married and had families. Their descendants live amongst us today and, although they may no longer have black skin, their family heritage has influenced and shaped the Britain of today.

The four historical figures who appeared in ‘Black Tudors’ were Mary Fillis, a dressmaker born in Morocco; a woman known only

FRIENDS TOUR OF ‘MAKERS AND MACHINES: CREATIVITY IN THE COMPUTER AGE’ AT THINKTANK



In February 2024, the Friends arranged a visit to Thinktank to see the exhibition ‘Makers and Machines: Creativity in the Computer Age’.

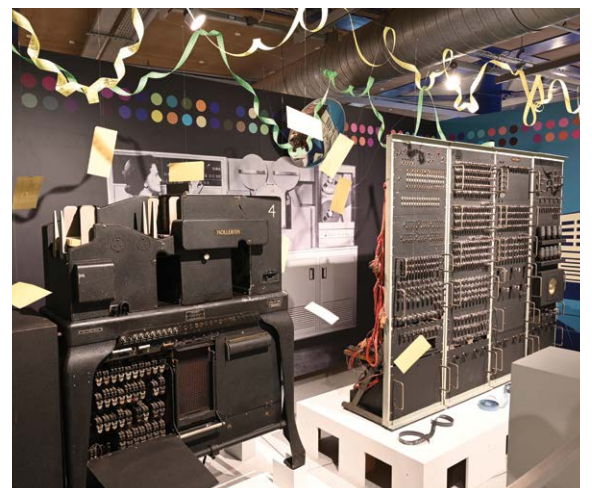
Felicity McWilliams, BMT's Curator of Science and Industry, was our guide. She explained that Thinktank was very popular with families and school parties but was trying to broaden its visitor profile with exhibitions like this. She pointed out that coding languages owe much to knitting and crochet patterns as well as the punch card technology of Jacquard weaving looms. A theme of the exhibition was to challenge the concept of the ‘male computer boffin’ by giving credit to women pioneers of computing.

A Tabulating Machine of 1951 was on display, developed jointly by Kathleen Burke and her husband in a Warwickshire barn. There was an information display paying tribute to Dame Stephanie Shirley of Sutton Coldfield, who had arrived age 5 on the Kindertransport in 1939. She referred to herself as ‘Steve’ when she suspected she was being overlooked and introduced family friendly working practices for women in computing.

In addition, from her base in Yardley, Mary Lee Berners-Lee researched the potential of computers in aviation for Ferranti in the early 1950s.

A fascinating and informative tour. ■

By Peter Baker, Friends Trustee



TOP: Photo by Liz Baker
ABOVE: ‘Makers and Machines’; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

Unfortunately, as many of you have recently discovered, since our office move we have been having problems with Royal Mail not being able to deliver post to us at Aston Hall's North Lodge. As a result, we ask you to please send any written correspondence to us at The Birmingham & Midland Institute until further notice. The address is as follows: The Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery, c/o The Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret Street, Birmingham, B3 3BS. Alternatively you can email Sarah at fbmagmembership@gmail.com; or ring: 0121 348 8330 (our office is open on a Tuesday).

The Friends are delighted to be supporting 'Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts & Crafts Movement', which is currently on display in the Gas Hall at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. The exhibition is open from Wednesday until Sunday from 10am – 5pm. Members of the Friends will have FREE entry to the exhibition on presentation of their valid Membership card, but you must pre-book a timed ticket before arriving. Please visit the BMT website to book your tickets: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/exhibitions/victorian-radicals.

Since our formation in 1931, the Friends have enhanced Birmingham's collections by supporting the purchase of over 2,700 acquisitions. Our Friends' Acquisitions database provides a comprehensive list of all these acquisitions and can be found on the 'Publications' page of our website: www.fbmt.org.uk. To celebrate over 90 years of support for Birmingham's Museums, each week one of these works is added to the Friends' Facebook page, to showcase the Friends' contributions to Birmingham's world class

collections. Please visit our Facebook page - FriendsBMAG - to follow our updates and to find out more!

At the 2023 AGM, the Friends' Deputy Chair explained that the current Membership Subscription rates had remained unchanged for the last 10 years - since 1 October 2014 and that the Friends' Membership subscriptions needed to cover the administrative costs of being a Member of the Friends. It was agreed to increase the Friends Membership Subscription Rates from 1 June 2024. It was also suggested that we invite voluntary donations above the new Rates if anyone would like to give additional funds. These rate rises have been included on the application form in this edition of 'Artefacts'.

Joining the Friends will give you the following benefits (T&Cs apply):

- Free entry to Birmingham Museums' Historic properties: Soho House, Sarehole Mill, Blakesley Hall, Aston Hall and Museum of the Jewellery Quarter. Please check birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices
- 'Artefacts' magazine, which is published quarterly, and the Friends' E-Newsletter
- The opportunity to join the Friends' social events and outings
- Discounts in the shops and cafés at BMAG, Thinktank and the Historic properties
- 50% entrance discount to Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum at Millennium Point: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank
- 10% discount at the Birmingham and Midland Institute's Coffee Lounge on production of a valid Friends membership card
- 10% discount off purchases in both the shop and the café at Potteries Museum & Art Gallery and Gladstone Pottery Museum: www.stokemuseums.org.uk

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to our new Members: Mrs Audrey Wells, Mr Leslie and Mrs Anthea Law, Dr Geoff and Mrs Angela Barnbrook, Mr Christopher Davis, Miss Anne & Miss Elizabeth Robson, Ms Christine Irvine, Mr Clive & Mrs Linda Kent, and Mr Nicholas & Mrs Dianne Dean.

GIFT MEMBERSHIP

Gift membership is available all year round and includes 3 extra months free. A Gift Membership form can be downloaded at: www.fbmt.org.uk/subscriptions/. Alternatively, you can complete the form below with the recipient's details and send it with a covering note giving your own name and contact details.

FRIENDS OF BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY AND ANNUAL RATES

(Please tick)

SINGLE £35

DOUBLE £52
(full rate Includes 2 children under 16)

CONCESSIONARY RATES

(60+/unwaged)

SINGLE £23

DOUBLE £40

STUDENT £16

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HELLO FROM BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS

I'm sure you all share our great joy at having part of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG) now open, with 'Victorian Radicals' in the Gas Hall.



The exhibition has been hugely popular with almost 15,000 people coming to see the show (as at 28th March) which opened on 10th February. The show has also generated over £130,000 in much needed income and, for the first time ever, we've introduced a donation ask at our till point which has generated an additional £2,000. The numbers are wonderful to see but it's the real happiness that it's bringing to visitors that makes all of the hard work to get the exhibition up and running worthwhile. Recently, I was walking around the exhibition and struck up a conversation with a visitor. She had desperately missed BMAG whilst it has been closed, in particular the Pre Raphaelite collection whilst it was on tour. When a museum is closed it really does leave a gap in people's lives and that fuels us all the more to do everything that we can to re-open as soon as possible. We're getting closer now - with paintings being hung in the Round Room, works ongoing in the Industrial Gallery and ideas emerging as to how we can best tell the stories of Birmingham's amazing collection and its

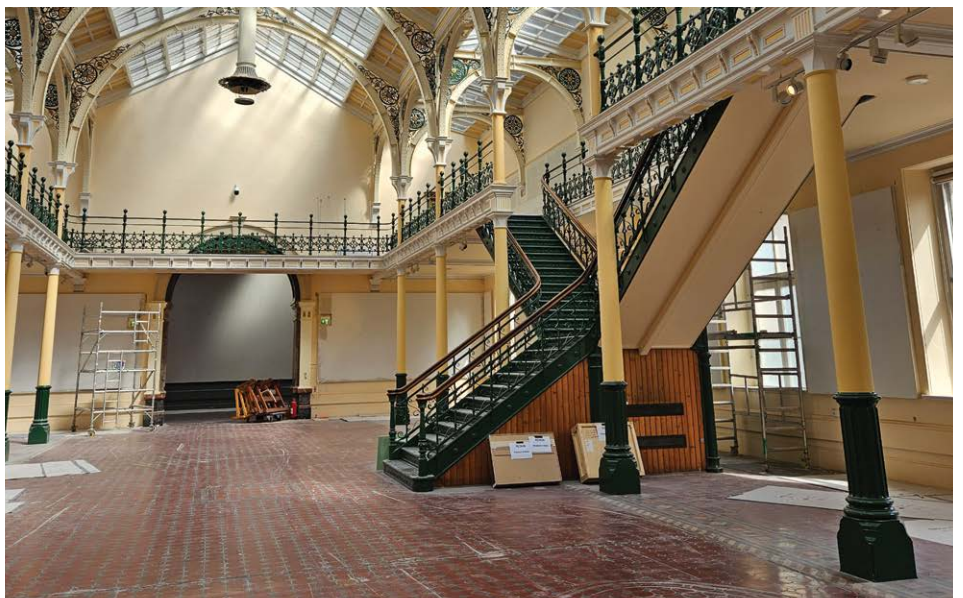
people. From July, visitors will be able to visit these areas and we cannot wait to see you there.

It won't be lost on you that it remains difficult times in Birmingham right now, with rising costs and lack of availability of public funding. Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) is not immune to this and the team are working incredibly hard to put together plans that will help us weather this storm and come out of it stronger than ever. Thanks to funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund, we are undertaking a project called 'Laying the Foundations' which brings together extensive audience research, collaboration with organisations that share our vision and the first ever Citizen's Jury held by a museum organisation in the UK (more to come on Citizen's Jury in future issues). All of these elements will come together in a new plan for the Trust that will take us up to 2030, ensuring that we can continue to deliver one of the best museum offers in the country whilst building a strong financial future.

As I write this, we're heading towards Easter which is a wonderfully busy time for museums. Particularly if the British weather stays true to form and we have a rainy bank holiday! It's at these times that Thinktank fills with families, providing a space for kids to learn through play and come up close to real objects from the past, starting conversations between grandparents and grandchildren and providing experiences that will always be remembered. Our welcome team work incredibly hard during this time to keep everyone safe and happy - so do say hello if you visit.

At BMT we are always grateful for your support as Friends, but perhaps now more than ever. The Friends support for BMAG to open in these early stages has been invaluable. The support of people who care deeply about our museums is a very powerful thing, particularly in these times of great change. ■

By Rowena Dean
Director of Development





CHANGING BIRMINGHAM ~ ITS PEOPLE AND PLACES

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF ART - THE NATURE OF GOTHIC

Visiting the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition and reading the last edition of 'Artefacts', which included an article on Myra Bunce, a prominent common element which came to mind was the Birmingham Municipal School of Art. You may well have passed by this Grade I listed building on your way to the Gas Hall, which fortunately survived the cull of Victorian buildings in the 1960s.

The key influence behind both the architecture of the building and the activities which take place inside is the Victorian art critic John Ruskin. The architect for the building was J.H. Chamberlain (1831-1883), with his partner William Martin, and it was recently described as the: 'finest expression of Chamberlain's Ruskin Gothic manner'. However, unfortunately Chamberlain did not live to see the completion of the building.

Heavily influenced by such works as 'The Nature of Gothic' by John Ruskin, it is made with red brick from nearby Adderley Park with a naturalistic ornamentalism, organic design and an architecture that evolves from the function of the building. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the three gabled bays facing onto Margaret Street. Each bay is unique in design and proportion with the end gables containing north lit studios. The left-hand bay has a beautiful 3.6 metre roundel in buff terracotta, designed by Chamberlain and executed by Samuel Byfield. So do take a closer look when walking past next time as the pause will be highly rewarding.

One of the key personalities in persuading Birmingham City Council to undertake the project was the head of the existing Art School, Edward Henry Taylor (1838-1913), mentioned in 'Artefacts' Issue 76, with his supporter John Bunce. We have a unique insight into Taylor's approach with his speech at the opening of the School of Art as reported by 'Building News' on 25th September 1885. In his address he noted that 'for the first time in the history of the Country a municipality has undertaken the charge of a School of Art', thereby providing ideal facilities and hopefully a higher tone. Taylor draws a parallel



between Birmingham's ambitions and the great Italian city states of medieval Europe, which fostered artists like Bellini and Titian, giving an insight as to how he would have promoted the scheme to the City Councillors of the time.

Taylor's speech directly references the influence that Ruskin had on Chamberlain's design: 'he asked the students to remember what Ruskin had laid down - namely, that the excellence of an artist depends upon the refinement of perception'. Whilst illuminating aspects of fine art he is equally comfortable and focussed on proving that the study of form is just as useful, not only to the 'decorative artist, but to the ordinary working man'. Artisan craft workers such as jewellers, japanners and brass workers are seen as a group which could notably benefit from a School of Art. Using various examples, such as an untrained lampshade maker, he argues that manufacturers should give more time for the study of art and concludes his speech with an example of how the poverty of nail makers could be alleviated by giving them the skills to produce higher value products.

Taylor's approach is neatly summarised by the following statement, taken from his book 'Drawing and Design for Beginners', published in 1893, in which he argues that students must have the: 'knowledge of the properties of the material, of the process of execution,

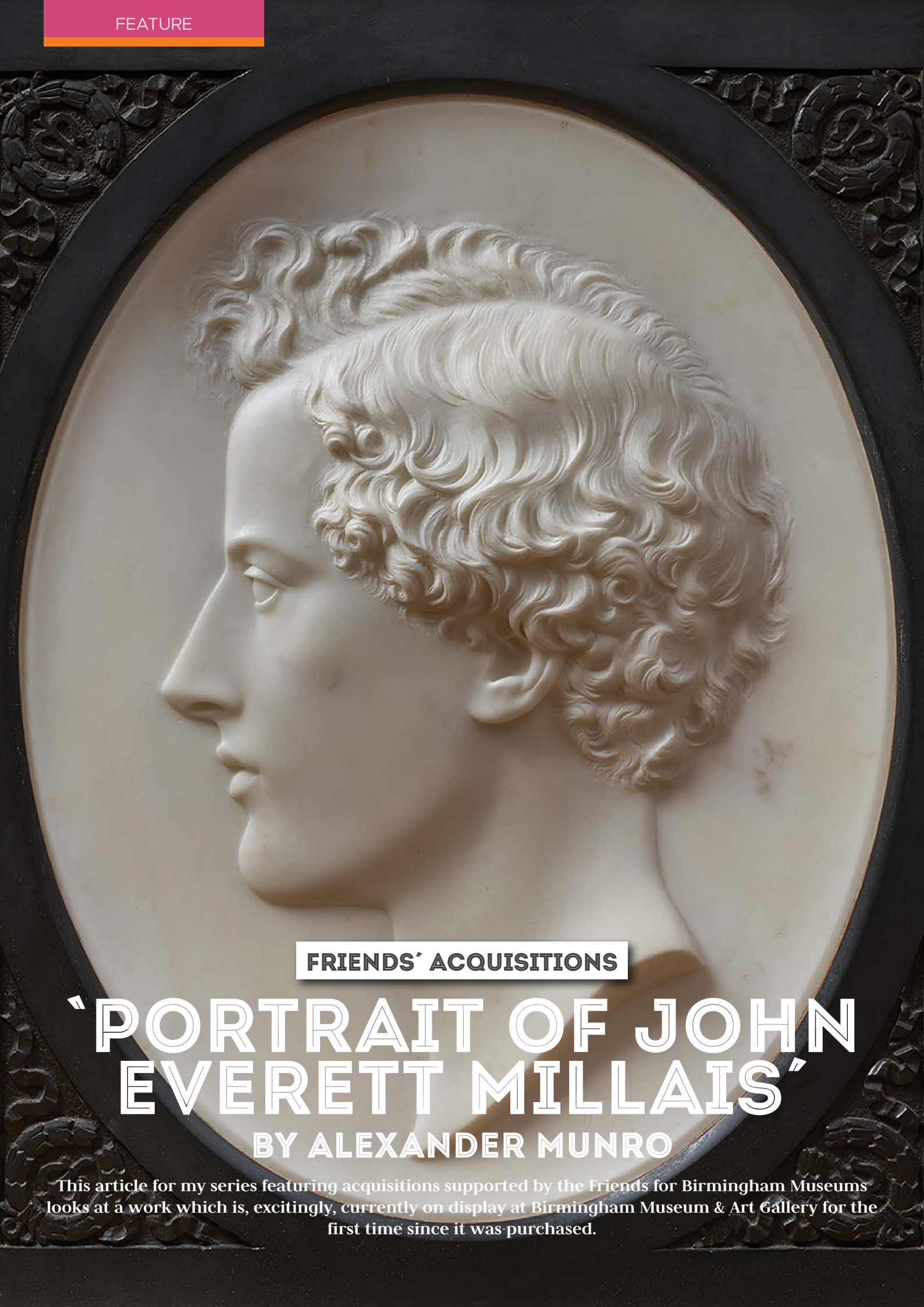
and of the purpose or to which the object should be put'. Uniquely he introduced 'art laboratories' providing practical training for men and women in areas such as enamelling, metalworking, embroidery and jewellery making on the principles of 'executed design', enabling students, particularly women, to become very employable on completion of their studies. By 1900, the high standard of the work which the School produced resulted in it being heralded as the: 'first or among the first, in the Kingdom'. Part of that success was due to Taylor's refusal to exclude women from any aspect of the School, despite being instructed to do so by external examiners at times. This resulted in many successful female designers such as Georgina Gaskin, Mary Jane Newill, Florence Rudland, Kate and Myra Bunce, Mabel Greenberg and Caroline Copson, whose work was exhibited in 1914 at the Paris International Exhibition. Taylor went on to found the Ruskin Pottery studio in Smethwick in 1898, but that is another story. ■

By Jim Wells, Friends Trustee

For more information, sources and further background reading please visit our website: fbmt.org.uk/publications.

LEFT: 'The Matriarch' by Mabel Greenberg (d.1933), 1930; 1933P483; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CCO. Mabel was born in Birmingham in 1889. Her father, Israel Greenberg, worked in the Jewellery Quarter. She studied at the Birmingham Municipal School of Art and her work was exhibited in both the Midlands and London, winning a number of prizes. 'The Matriarch' was presented to Birmingham Museum and Gallery by Mr I. Greenfield in 1933, as reported in the Birmingham Gazette on the 19 December 1933: 'The picture is a fine example of the work of the Birmingham artist whose early death cut short a promising career'.

ABOVE: 'View of the Bay of Naples and Vesuvius' by John Ruskin, 1840; 1937P382; Presented by the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery on behalf of Alderman W.A. Cadbury, 1937; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CCO.



FRIENDS' ACQUISITIONS

“PORTRAIT OF JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS”

BY ALEXANDER MUNRO

This article for my series featuring acquisitions supported by the Friends for Birmingham Museums looks at a work which is, excitingly, currently on display at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery for the first time since it was purchased.

Alexander Munro's 'Portrait of John Everett Millais' is currently playing a key role as part of the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition in the Gas Hall.

The Friends' support for this purchase was agreed in 2019-20, just before the start of the Covid pandemic. We were delighted that the Friends' contribution was supported by two Legacies from longstanding Members: from money bequeathed by Richard Busby and by the sale of pewter left to the Friends by Timothy John Swift.

The portrait's subject is John Everett Millais (1829-96). Millais was one of the founding members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. A child prodigy, he entered the Royal Academy Schools at the age of 11 – the youngest student the Schools had ever had – and he was only 18 when he and fellow artists Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and their friends formed the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848.

Millais' portrait is by the Scottish sculptor Alexander Munro (1825-1871), who was born in Inverness and was the son of a stonemason. His father's employer, the Duchess Sutherland, recognised his talents as a sculptor from a young age and she provided financial assistance with his education. From 1842 he trained in Edinburgh in the studio of Scottish sculptor Alexander Handyside Ritchie (1804-1870). He moved to London in 1844, studying sculpture under Charles Barry (1795-1860) and enrolling in the Royal Academy Schools in 1847.

Munro was one of two leading sculptors associated with the Pre-Raphaelite movement. From 1852 he shared a studio with painter Arthur Hughes, and from 1854 began teaching at the newly opened Working Men's College in London along with fellow sculptor Thomas Woolner and other members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Munro exhibited at the Royal Academy in London from 1849 to 1870; and in the Great Exhibition of 1851. His work was also shown at the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh from 1939 to 1958; the Academy of Arts in Leeds in 1853; the Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts in 1865; and at the International Exhibition in London in 1862. In 1856 he became a member of the Institute of British Sculptors.

The relief depicts Millais in 1853, carved in low relief from a marble oval and set



in its original black slate setting. Munro produced the portrait in the same year that Millais became an Associate of the Royal Academy. It is carved with remarkable sensitivity, capturing the artist's famously refined and handsome profile.

This portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in 1854 and a number of plasters were made after it, one of which is in the National Portrait Gallery in London and another of which is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Alongside an oil painting by C.R. Leslie, which is in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery (NPG 1859), this is one of very few portraits made of the young Millais during the 1850s and in the brief, five-year period before the original Brotherhood effectively dissolved.

Birmingham is renowned for its collection of Pre-Raphaelite works, which comprises over 3,000 objects representing the full range of Pre-Raphaelite fine and applied art practice including paintings, sculpture, works on paper, prints, textiles, furniture and stained glass.

The recent acquisition of this portrait played an important role in developing Birmingham's holdings of work by Millais and Munro. Birmingham has over 250 paintings, drawings and illustrations by Millais and a smaller but significant group of works by Munro. The final marble version of Munro's most famous masterpiece, 'Paolo and Francesca', which was completed in 1852, is in Birmingham's collection. Alongside William Holman Hunt's early 'Self-Portrait' from 1845, aged 18, and his portrait of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, aged 24 (although painted retrospectively after Rossetti's death in 1882-3), this

portrait of Millais enables Birmingham's Pre-Raphaelite displays to represent all three leading members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as young artists.

This portrait also serves to demonstrate the important role which funders like the Friends can play in demonstrating local support for acquisitions. This can be vital to Birmingham Museums Trust when they are applying for funding from national organisations. The Friends' contribution to this acquisition played a vital role in leveraging funding from a variety of other sources, including the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Henry Moore Foundation. Grants from these national funders, added to a significant grant from the Public Picture Gallery Fund, Birmingham, and support from Birmingham Museums Acquisitions Fund, made this important acquisition possible.

Please do make sure that you visit the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition to see this portrait if you have not already done so! Members of the Friends have free entry to the exhibition on presentation of your valid Membership card. And if you are not already a Member of the Friends of Birmingham Museums then there isn't a better time to join! Please note – the exhibition can get busy, so please make sure that you pre-book a timed ticket before arriving at the Gas Hall. ■

By **Melissa Hughes**,
Artefacts' Editor and
Friends' Administrator

MAIN: 'Portrait of John Everett Millais' by Alexander Munro, 1853; 2020.15; image courtesy of Stuart Lochhead Sculpture.

TOP: Image of the 'Portrait of John Everett Millais' on display in the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CCO.

DYNAMIC COLLECTIONS

The new ways that Birmingham Museums are increasing access to the collections.



I'm delighted to be writing to the Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery to share some exciting news from the Dynamic Collections team. It's a pleasure to introduce myself as the Participation Officer for Dynamic Collections. Perhaps we have previously met wandering the glorious galleries of BMAG, or whilst welcoming you to beautiful Blakesley Hall. Throughout my museum career, I have primarily worked across the Historic Properties, where the visitor experience was at the heart of my role. Since joining the Dynamic Collections team, I have had the great pleasure of welcoming groups into the magnificent Museum Collection Centre, co-leading on-site project participation alongside Collections Information Coordinator, Ayesha Hussain. Dynamic Collections on-site project activities offer a unique, behind-the-scenes experience to get hands-on with the collections at the main store for Birmingham Museums which is the only place to see an assortment of around one million fascinating artefacts not normally on display.

Dynamic Collections is a 10-year programme launched in 2022, aimed at transforming the accessibility of our collections. Using innovative methods centred around democratisation and digitisation, Dynamic Collections hopes to build a complete, searchable, and publicly accessible collection catalogue, in participation with the public. We want more people to access the city's

collection and to be involved in the steps we take to get there.

It is an exciting time for Dynamic Collections, as we launch another strand of the project. Introducing 'Documentation Detectives: transcribing accession registers' for which we have partnered with crowdsource research platform, Zooniverse, to create a web-based volunteering opportunity. Join volunteers from across the world, delving into the Birmingham Museums Trust archives and helping to unlock our object records. These paper records hold the key information of every object that was added, or "accessioned", into the museum's permanent collection. Our online Documentation Detectives have been helping to transcribe and digitise these records, making them publicly accessible for the first time. Volunteers worldwide can learn how our museums have recorded objects over more than a century, gain transcription skills and join us in making a more publicly accessible database. I'm thrilled to share the fantastic news that 'Documentation Detectives: transcribing accession registers' is now live.

We would like to invite you to become a Documentation Detective too and join a collections focused online community. You can take part in the project as and when it suits you, spending as much or as little time as you'd like. You can learn more about the team behind the project, including Documentation Registrar, Misaho Washizu and Collections

Information Assistant, Alex Pinfold. You can chat to fellow Documentation Detectives and the project team using Talk boards where you can ask questions, offer feedback, and share your favourite object records. With just one click to get started, delve into your curiosity about the collections, anytime, anywhere!

If you would like to get involved and try out your documentation detective skills, please visit: www.zooniverse.org/projects/bmtcollections/documentation-detectives-transcribing-accession-registers.

If you would like to find out further project details, follow our progress and share in our stories, please visit: www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/about/what-we-do/dynamic-collections.

We have organised a 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum Collection Centre' event for the Friends on Wednesday 24 July 2024. This will be a unique opportunity for you to see how museums work behind the scenes! For more information and to book your place see page 7.

As always, thank you for your continued support and happy transcribing! ■

**By Suzanne Knibbs,
Participation Officer,
Birmingham Museums Trust,
with contributions from the
Dynamic Collections Team**



A SUMMER OF FACES & FIGURES AT THE RBSA GALLERY

By Brendan Flynn, RBSA Professor of Art History

RBSA Portrait Prize 2024

7 May – 9 June

Behavioural research has suggested that we assess another person's character and disposition within a tenth of a second of our first sight of their face. Those immediate impressions may be nuanced on further acquaintance but will not be fundamentally altered. So, faces are important in the way we interact, and define ourselves and others. It is this that makes portraiture such a special and potent idiom. We are hardwired to look at faces and to read them.

The best portraits are not simply a recorded likeness but say something about the inner life of the sitter and, intentionally or otherwise, the artist themselves.

The RBSA Portrait Prize 2024, one of the foremost portrait prize exhibitions in the UK, brings together many of the most original and talented practitioners in both Fine Art and Photography. The sheer variety and quality of the works illustrate the present strength and accessibility of the idiom in works that are expressive, experimental, and compelling, but there is space too in the show for more traditional approaches. Works range from the almost cinematic image 'Untitled' by Sumita Darji of a startled woman's face illuminated in a flash of light, to the delicate, mesmerising silverpoint and gold 'Drawing of Mum' by Roy Eastland. We learn a lot about people from the things they collect: the photographic portrait of Paul Beasley in his Emporium by Garry Corbett shows the sitter enthroned amongst his wonderful array of antiques and curios, whilst in 'Hoarding Issues' by Stephen Carse, the happy collector sits in a room awash with Barbie dolls.

The self-portrait format has traditionally offered artists an opportunity to have fun, express themselves, or explore their hopes and fears. Jasmine Collings hides her face from us with her hands; Geoffrey Harrison imagines himself in a business suit, and a nostalgic Jane French flaunts her fabulous Seventies print dress. In contrast, Laura Arnold's troubled face fills the frame, her eyes not looking out at us but inwards.



Paul Jessett, 'Self-Portrait in Shiny Round Balloon'

The exhibition has been made possible by the generosity of our prize sponsors: First prize (£1,000) sponsored by GMC; Second prize (£500) sponsored by Galliard Apsley Partnership; Third prize (£250) sponsored by Judd Medical, and a Student prize sponsored by an RBSA Member.

Interested in exploring the possibility of commissioning a portrait? Contact the RBSA for details of portrait painters amongst the Members and Associates.

Faces & Figures Portraits from the RBSA Collection 1785-2023 25 July – 24 August

Later this summer, the RBSA Gallery hosts an exhibition of selected works from the RBSA Collection, looking at changing approaches to the representation of the face and figure over 200 years.

The exhibition offers some fascinating insights into the cultural life of Birmingham with fine drawings, paintings, and sculpture from the Georgian period to the present. There is something for all tastes, including an exquisite watercolour 'Self-Portrait' (1830) by F.T. Lines, and the first showing of a gift of portrait sketches by Edward Samuel Harper of fellow RBSA members - the men who dominated the visual arts in this city during the early 20th century. In contrast are the expressive drawing,

'Stark Encounter' (1940) by the surrealist Emmy Bridgwater, Jain McKay's startling face and tattooed torso of 'Stuart and the Snake' (2016), and the swirling kaleidoscope of 'Skateboarder' (1991) by C. Anthony Sawbridge. Striking a more sombre and topical note is the patient's eye view of the masked and gowned 'Surgeon Redeployed for Ambulance COVID Transfer' (2021) by Andrew Shorthouse. Unmissable are the haunting 'Girl with Flowers' (1950) by Gilbert Mason and the intense, award-winning 'Self-Portrait' (1937) by Robert Ball, a local child prodigy who was left to his own devices at Birmingham School of Art to develop his talent without tuition.

The sculpture section includes one of the treasures of the RBSA, the famous bust of the painter David Cox (1860) by Peter Hollins, who shows his sitter in the unlikely but conventional garb of a Roman toga, and the Art Deco inspired 'Head of a Man' (1950) by "Birmingham's Michelangelo" William Bloye, whose statues, reliefs, and pub signs adorn every corner of the city. The massive wooden 'Head' (2000) by John Alexander Williams has the commanding presence of a totemic idol while, on a smaller scale, there is something serene and timeless in the female figures by John Bridgeman and Joan Woolard.

All exhibitions at the RBSA Gallery are free admission. ■

A PICK OF THE SEASON'S SHOWS AT THE BARBER

When the galleries at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts open again this summer after an eight-month closure for essential building improvements, visitors can enjoy a whole range of exciting exhibitions and displays.

The stellar permanent collection – worth a visit in its own right – will be joined by not just one new temporary exhibition, but three!

Headlining is *'Claudette Johnson: Darker Than Blue'* – recent and brand-new work by one of the UK's foremost artists, in the refurbished Lady Barber Gallery.

Johnson's primary focus is Black women – including herself – and, more recently, Black men. Her powerful style explores the body, challenging perceptions of identity, sexuality and wider political and social constraints among Black communities.

Johnson studied Fine Art at Wolverhampton Polytechnic, and was a vital member of the BLK Art Group, a radical artists' group founded in 1982 that began the ongoing challenge of redressing the lack of representation of, and support for, Black artists.

'Darker Than Blue' (the title references a 1970 Curtis Mayfield protest song) is Johnson's first solo show in the Midlands. It will also feature a specially created soundscape played on a loop in the gallery by musician and composer Trevor Mathison – the pair's first exhibition collaboration.



Every summer, the Barber, on the University of Birmingham's Edgbaston campus, organises a collaborative exhibition curated by Art History and Curating MA students, working with a major national collection. This year the Barber teams up with the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London, for a visually delightful and thought-provoking display selected of botanical illustrations.

These beautiful and beguiling works range from scientific diagrams, documenting medicinal plants, to calendars and even merchandising images on seed packets. The selection features plants that have historically had their own particular uses and values: the common-or-garden foxglove, harvested for centuries for its life-saving – although, sometimes, lethal – sap; the flamboyant tulip, whose bulbs were worth more than their weight in gold in the 17th-century Dutch Republic; and the sunflower, used to clear radiation at Chernobyl – among many other examples. Stories that are now, often, forgotten.

The stunning illustrations, alongside items from the University's Winterbourne House and Garden and Cadbury Research Library, have been chosen for the beauty and biographies of the plants. They offer valuable insights on the roles these alluring and complex

living organisms played in medicine, commerce, gender and colonial histories. Students' research will be presented in conversation with contributions from gardeners and natural scientists, social scientists and curators, revealing the fascinating and often unexpected lives of plants and the images representing them.



The Barber's latest coin exhibition spans nearly 2,000 years and more than 2,500 miles – from London to Ctesiphon (now Baghdad), and from representations of gender-fluid deities of the 3rd century BC to Elizabeth II in 2022.

'Women in Power' focuses on the female rulers, potentates and icons whose stories have often been distorted or diminished over time. In addition to reviving the histories of the women who ruled empires and shaped religion – and were underestimated in their day and diminished by historical, largely male authors – it explores the changing presentation of gender on numismatic depictions through time and cultures.

As ever, exhibitions are accompanied by the Barber's exciting range of talks, workshops and other activities: find out more at www.barber.org.uk.

Finally, in the Barber's Green Gallery, familiar works from the Renaissance have been rearranged into thematic groupings including the Crucifixion and depictions of the Virgin, portraiture, and the influence of antiquity. Look out for interlopers from elsewhere in the collection – as well as an important visitor to the Barber... Watch these spaces! ■

LEFT: Claudette Johnson: 'Blues Dance', 2023. The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust) © Claudette Johnson. Image © The Courtauld. Photo: David Bebbler.
TOP MIDDLE: Unknown Chinese artist, 'Castor Oil Plant (Ricinus communis L)', about 1760 – 1825 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London
ABOVE: A Byzantine gold nomisma of Theodora, 1055/6 © Barber Institute of Fine Arts



THE MATERIAL OF TIME: CONTEMPORARY PÂTE DE VERRE

A unique exhibition of internationally acclaimed Pâte de Verre glass artists from several countries and continents.



The exhibition is based on the comprehensive book "Pâte de Verre: The Material of Time" (2022) by Dr Max Stewart and Tone Ørvik. Entitled 'The Material of Time: Contemporary Pâte de Verre', the exhibition includes the work of Emma Varga (Australia), Alicia Lomné (US), Keith Cummings (UK) and other pioneers of contemporary Pâte de Verre.

For this exhibition Stourbridge Glass Museum is cooperating with the Contemporary Pâte de Verre Association (CPdVA). CPdVA works to support new investigations into Pâte de Verre and what this glass technique can do in sculpture and new narratives for our rapidly changing world. CPdVA was started by Stewart and Ørvik with US-based glass artists Evelyn Gottschall Baker and Tali Grinshpan, and offers conferences, workshops, and exhibitions worldwide.

This exhibition is open to the public until Sunday 23 June 2024.

About Stourbridge Glass Museum

Located in the heart of England's historic glassmaking region with a globally significant glass collection, Stourbridge Glass Museum is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the rich heritage of glass artistry. Through exhibitions, workshops, and educational programs, the museum provides a

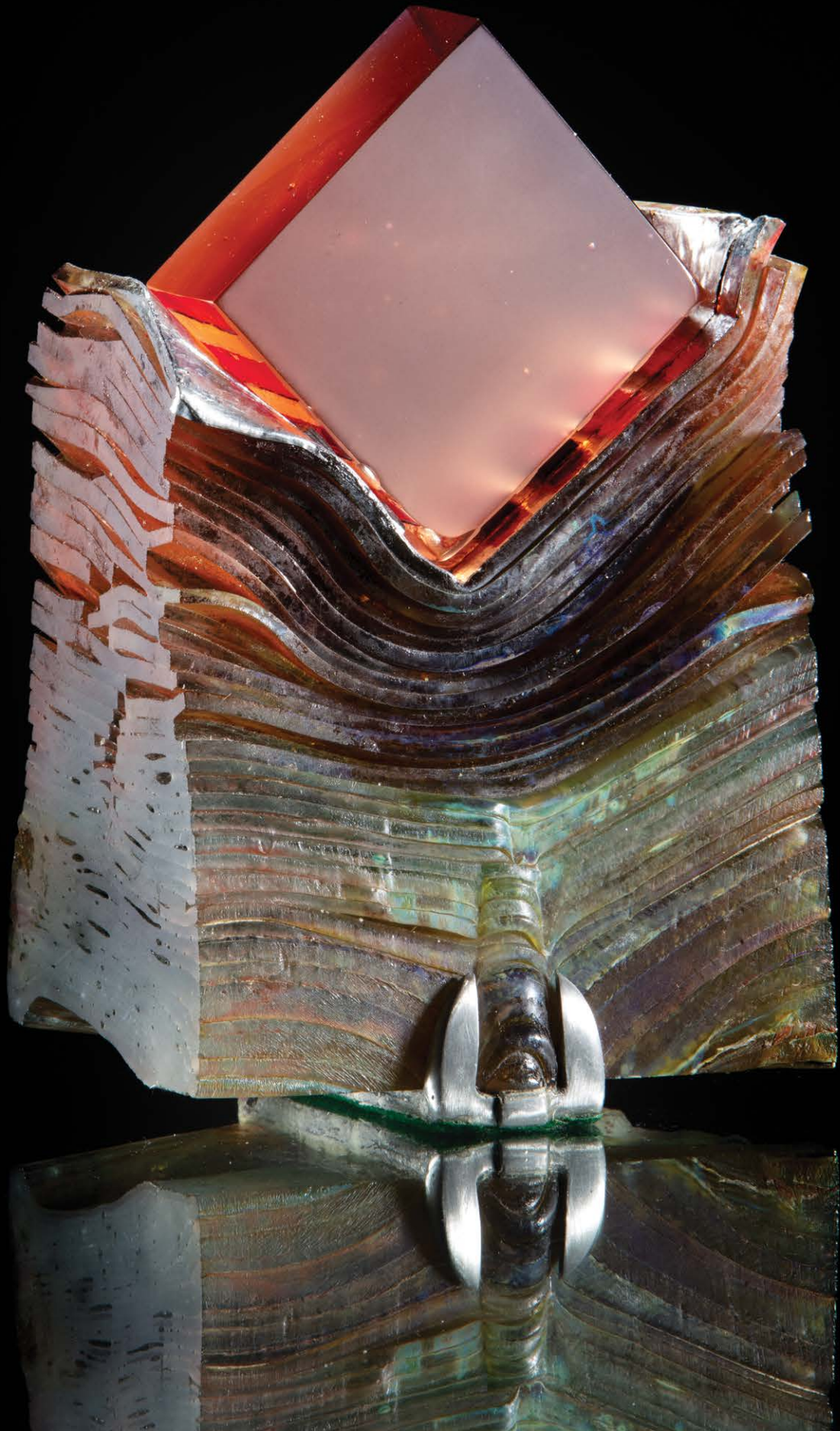
platform for both established and emerging artists to showcase their talent and creativity. Artists in residence demonstrate hot glass and glass engraving and the Museum houses a globally significant glass collection.

About Contemporary Pâte de Verre Association (CPdVA)

The Contemporary Pâte de Verre Association is a global community of artists, scholars, and enthusiasts committed to advancing the art and craft of Pâte de Verre. Founded by Dr. Max Stewart, Tone Ørvik, Evelyn Gottschall Baker, and Tali Grinshpan, CPdVA promotes collaboration, innovation, and dialogue within the field of contemporary glass artistry. ■

www.stourbridgeglassmuseum.org.uk

TOP: Tali Grinshpan, 'Secrets V'
RIGHT: Keith Cummings, 'Red Stack 2'.
Photo: Simon Bruntnell
LEFT: Emma Varga, 'Fire Bush #9'





BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET IN RESIDENCE AT BMAG

Normally to be found tucked away in their headquarters at the back of Birmingham Hippodrome, or on tour around the UK and beyond, the amazingly talented dancers and musicians of Birmingham Royal Ballet are one of the artistic gems of the City's cultural scene.

And for a few days in June, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery are delighted to be welcoming the company to the Water Hall for a short residency. There will be an exhibition and demonstrations, chances to watch and chances to join in dance classes, performances, and practical workshops offering an introduction to making an iconic ballet tutu.

If you'd like to find out a bit more about all aspects of life in a ballet company, including costumes from iconic shows such as 'La Fille mal gardée' and 'The Nutcracker', or to find out more about Carlos Acosta's Birmingham trilogy, 'City of a Thousand Trades', 'Black Sabbath – The Ballet' and the forthcoming 'Luna', which is premiered this October, then pencil 26 to 30 June into your diary.

Plans are still being finalised, but make your way over to brb.org.uk/BMAG for the latest news and to sign up for updates. ■



BIRMINGHAM ROYAL BALLET

Director Carlos Acosta

Sir Frederick Ashton's

La Fille mal gardée

25 – 28 September

H BIRMINGHAM
HIPPODROME

brb.org.uk/Fille

 Birmingham
City Council

 ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



HARVINGTON HISTORY Festival

"There is history in all men's lives"
(Shakespeare: *Henry IV part 1*)

This year Harvington's History Festival will delve into the lives of many Tudors: monarchs, famous names, the slightly less well-known and those you've never even heard of before.

Famous historians, broadcasters and authors will again take to the stage this July in the grounds of this beautiful Elizabethan Manor house in North Worcestershire. Weaving tales to illuminate the past they will bring to life how these individuals lived, loved, and even thought, proving there is history in all lives.

Their subjects include an account of England's own version of the Borgias: the scheming Dudleys (by Dr Joanne Paul), revelations about the most secret lives of Tudor Royals (by Dr Tracy Borman), a fascinating account of Catherine Howard, Henry VIII's fifth wife (by Gareth Russell - his book on Queen Catherine entitled 'Young and Damned' was BBC History Book of the year 2023). In addition, best-selling historian Alison Weir will consider how Queen Mary, a well-loved princess full of promise, turned into 'Bloody Mary' and Dr Estelle Paranque will reveal whether the true Francophile, Ann Boleyn, was in fact betrayed by the French.

Two dramatic and entertaining royals are included in the line-up: the tragic Mary Queen of Scots (portrayed by Lesley Smith), and an audience with King Henry VIII (John White).



But as well as royals and other famous Tudors, this year's festival will dive into the lives and behaviours of little-known characters from the period. Insults, gestures, brawling and scandal is the subject of famous broadcaster Ruth Goodman's talk. Melita Thomas will look at the lives of extraordinary 'ordinary' people, and Dr Katrina Marchant will expose the propaganda and spin that encouraged Elizabethans to get involved in exploration, trade and even settlement in the unknown 'New World'. The whole programme is rounded off by Hall Manager, Phil Downing, and Paul Hodgetts (son of Michael Hodgetts, the authority on priest hides) looking into the precarious lives of Catholic priests during this era of persecution through the mysteries of their secret hiding places. Harvington Hall has the largest number of surviving priest hides in England (seven in total).

In addition to words and pictures the Festival Concert will transport audiences with the beautiful sounds of Elizabethan music demonstrating how Catholics expressed themselves in sacred and secular music both here in England, and in Europe.

Last year witnessed the first ever Harvington History Festival. Its huge success drew thousands of visitors from all over the region, and far beyond, helping to secure the history festival as an annual event to bring history to life and raise funds for much needed preservation work for this 16th century Elizabethan Manor house. ■

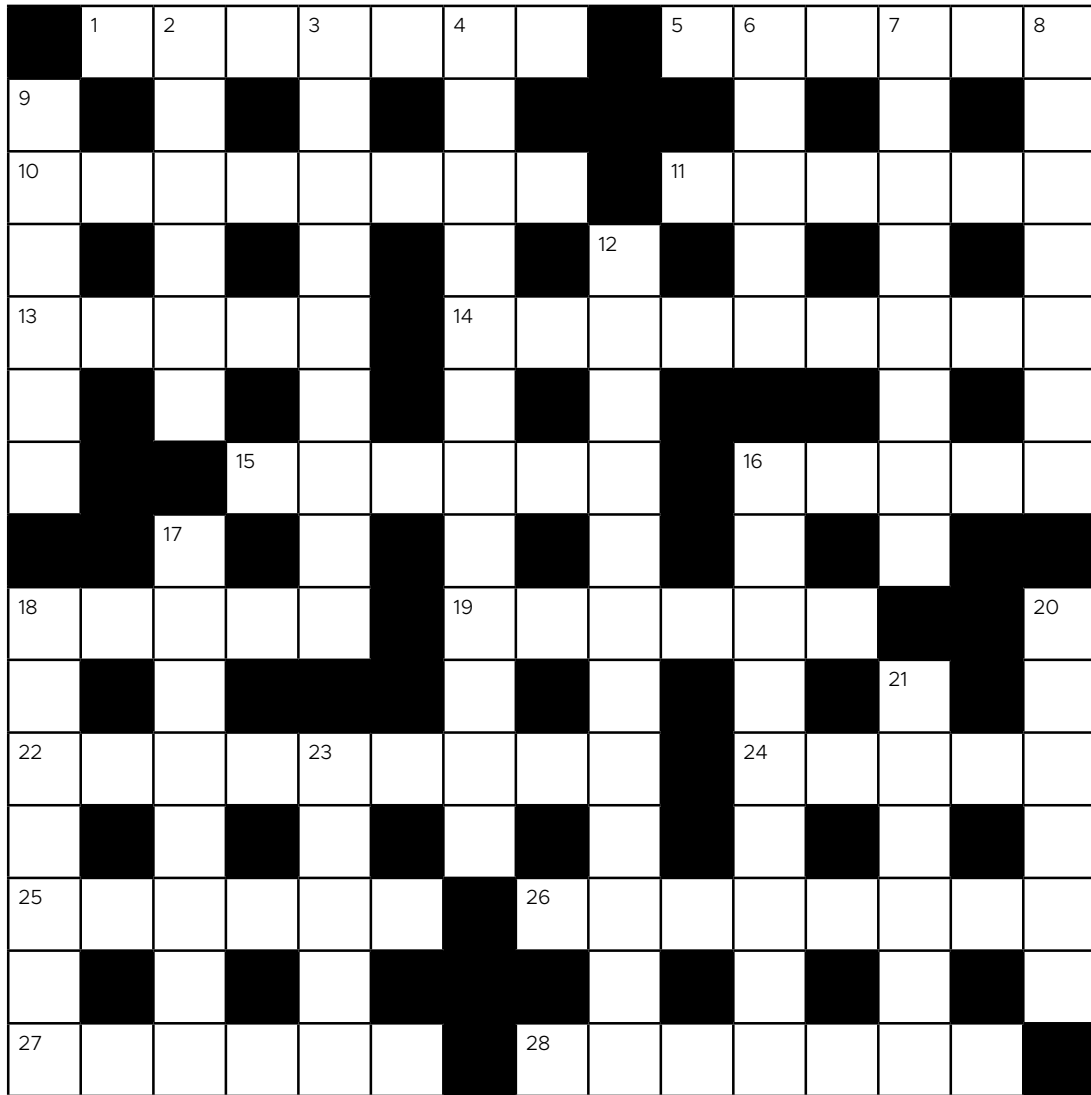
By Hilary Boszko

Harvington Hall Festival, 25 – 30 July 2024. Tickets on sale now from £10 – 20, available by scanning the QR code or visiting www.harvingtonhall.co.uk or tel: 01562 777846



BOTTOM L-R: Helen Carr, Nathen Amin, John White, Gareth Russell, Estelle Paranque, Tracy Borman, Joanne Paul, Ruth Goodman, Lesley Smith





FRIENDS' CROSSWORD

BY COLIN JONES

ACROSS

- 1. Austere and frugal, like the Greek city state the term derives from. (7)
- 5. He designed Birmingham Town Hall, as well as a famous two wheeled horse drawn covered vehicle which bore his name. (6)
- 10. Someone who likes to do things on their own might be described thus. (4,4)
- 11. This person has the final say in any publication. (6)
- 13. A government of military leaders, as for example in Argentina at the time of the Falklands War. (5)
- 14. The Greek goddess of love, beauty and desire. (9)
- 15. This club organises Crufts. (6)
- 16. Essential pieces of ice hockey equipment or, if apostrophised, belonging to Robin Goodfellow? (5)
- 18. Walton Hill is the highest point in this Worcestershire range. (5)
- 19. Calm and dignified or to put to sleep. (6)
- 22. Jacobean house besieged by Parliamentarians in 1643 with a cannonball hole in its staircase to this day! (5,4)
- 24. Balsall Heath born Oscar Deutsch opened the first of these entertainment venues in Perry Barr in 1930. (5)
- 25. To split or sever forcefully, for example using an axe on wood. (6)
- 26. A political reform mass movement whose demands, when rejected, led to the Bull Ring riots of 1839. (8)

- 27. Disconcert a famous conductor? (6)
- 28. A person who advocates significant social, political or cultural change. (7)

DOWN

- 2. A grilled sandwich made with Italian bread. (6)
- 3. Someone with high natural ability but lacking formal coaching or tutoring may be said to possess this. (3,6)
- 4. This follows Halloween. (3,6,3)
- 6. To supplement or build on. (3,2)
- 7. A football free kick or a military pitched battle could both be described as this. (3,5)
- 8. Looks in wonder at. (7)
- 9. The nickname for Birmingham University's Chamberlain clock tower. (3,3)
- 12. US city whose name in Greek means brotherly love, and where the declaration of independence was signed. (12)
- 16. An unusual mixture of interesting things, or a scented jar of herbs and flowers. (3,6)
- 17. An item of clothing worn by priests during church services. (8)
- 18. The father of English literature. (7)
- 20. The complete set of DNA in an organism. (6)
- 21. The second holiest city in Islam. (6)
- 23. Gazing at this may lead to you becoming too self-obsessed. (5)

ACROSS: 1. Spartan 5. Hansom 10. Lone Wolf 11. Editor 13. Junta 14. Aphrodite 15. Kennel 16. Pucks 18. Client 19. Sedate
 22. Aston Hall 24. Odeon 25. Cleave 26. Charism 27. Rattle 28. Radical
 DOWN: 2. Panini 3. Raw Talent 4. All Saints Day 6. Add To 7. Set Piece 8. Marvles 9. Old Joe 12. Philadelphia 16. Pot Pourri
 17. Vestment 18. Chaucer 20. Genome 21. Medina 23. Navel



BIRMINGHAM MUSEUMS WHAT'S ON

'La Donna Della Finestra [The Lady of Pity]', 1881 by Dante Gabriel Rossetti; 1885P2465; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0

Please visit www.birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date information about opening hours.



ASTON HALL

Trinity Road, Aston, Birmingham, B6 6JD

See birminghammuseums.org.uk for up-to-date opening times and prices. At the time of going to print Aston Hall is preparing for summer and is currently only open for pre-booked facilitated groups and pre-booked school groups. Please see the website for more details and events.

Please note all events are subject to change of dates due to Aston Villa FC. Discover the splendour of a grand Jacobean mansion.



MUSEUM & ART GALLERY BIRMINGHAM

Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3DH

Please note: The main museum and art gallery building will continue to be closed following maintenance work. ONLY the Gas Hall will open from 10 February 2024 for the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition.

Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts Movement

Wednesday - Sunday, 10am-5pm. In the Gas Hall at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery. Adult: £11; Concession: £6; Child (up to 15): Free; Friends: Free. This exhibition is free to members of the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery on presentation of your valid Membership card, but you must pre-book a timed ticket before arriving. Three generations of British artists, designers and makers revolutionised the visual arts in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Pre-Raphaelites, William Morris and his circle and the men and women of the Arts and Crafts movement transformed art and design. Selected from the city of Birmingham's outstanding collection, 'Victorian Radicals' presents vibrant paintings and exquisite drawings alongside jewellery, glass, textiles and metalwork to explore their radical vision for art and society. Fresh from an award-winning tour of the US, 'Victorian Radicals' is the first comprehensive showing of the city's Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts collections in Birmingham for over five years. Discover the story of the Pre-Raphaelites themselves and their influence on artists and makers well into the twentieth century – especially in Birmingham itself. Paintings made by artists including Kate Bunce, Joseph Southall and Arthur Gaskin combined the poetry and intensity of the Pre-Raphaelites' work with a distinctive identity all their own. This exhibition is organised by Birmingham Museums Trust and

the American Federation of Arts. Supported by the Friends of Birmingham Museums.



BLAKESLEY HALL

Blakesley Road, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN

At the time of going to print Blakesley Hall is preparing for summer and is currently only open for pre-booked facilitated groups and pre-booked school groups.

Blakesley Hall is a picture-perfect timber-framed Tudor house with beautiful gardens, situated just a few miles from the centre of Birmingham. It was built in 1590 by Richard Smalbroke, a member of one of Birmingham's leading merchant families.



MUSEUM COLLECTIONS CENTRE

25 Dollman Street, Nechells, Birmingham, B7 4RQ

The Museum Collection Centre is open for the public to explore on Friday afternoons only from 12.30pm - 2.30pm. Please note: Pre-booking is essential, there are no spaces available on the day.



MUSEUM OF THE JEWELLERY QTR

75-80 Vyse Street, Hockley, Birmingham, B18 6HA

Please note: Museum of the Jewellery Quarter is currently closed except for special events.



SAREHOLE MILL

Cole Bank Road, Hall Green, B13 0BD

At the time of going to print Sarehole Mill is preparing for summer and is currently only open for pre-booked facilitated groups and pre-booked school groups. Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.

Discover the mill that has connections with Matthew Boulton and inspired famous author JRR Tolkien.



SOHO HOUSE

Soho Avenue, Handsworth, Birmingham, B18 5LB

Please note: Soho House is currently closed to the general public, except for special one-off events, room hire and school group bookings. Free entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.



WEOLEY CASTLE

Alwold Road, Birmingham, B29 5RX

Weoley Castle ruins can be seen from a viewing platform

throughout the year in daylight hours. Access to the ruins and visitor centre takes place on event days.

The ruins of an exquisite fortified manor house built 750 years ago.



thinktank
Birmingham science museum

Millennium Point, Birmingham, B4 7XG

Birmingham term time: Open Wednesday – Sunday, 10am - 5pm. Birmingham school holidays: Open Monday – Sunday, 10am - 5pm. Half price entry for Friends. Charges apply to non-members.

Thinktank offers an extraordinary, fun-packed day out for all the family. From steam engines to a talking robot, this exciting museum is home to thousands of fascinating objects, and over 200 hands-on displays on science and technology.

Makers and Machines: Creativity in the Computer Age

Thinktank's exhibition explores the surprising long history of coding and tells the incredible stories of local people, past and present, who use coding in their work. The exhibition looks at how local weavers and knitters, mathematicians and scientists, and artists and gamers all use coding in their work. And it also explores the implications of new technology such as AI for human creativity. Can you find the three object labels that have been written by an AI chatbot rather than a human curator? You'll also have the opportunity to see rare and important objects such as the HEC computer, one of the oldest surviving electronic computers in the world. There will be a range of digital and analogue devices on display, plus the chance to see some classic game designs, learn how punched cards worked, and design your own weaving pattern. The exhibition is open during Thinktank opening hours and is included the admission price.

For all events visit www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/whats-on for further information and to book.



'Wall Tile - Sprig of Flowers', 1880-1890, designed by William De Morgan, manufactured by Craven Dunhill & Co Ltd; Purchased with the assistance of the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Purchase Grant fund, 1981; Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CCO



The Birmingham & Midland Institute

IN THE AREA

BIRMINGHAM BACH CHOIR

For tickets and more information visit: www.birminghambachchoir.com or Eventbrite.

Summer Concert

Saturday 29 June 2024, 7pm at St Mary's Church, Warwick, CV34 4RA and Saturday 6 July 2024, 7pm at St Alban the Martyr Church, Birmingham, B12 0YH. Paul Spicer: conductor; Callum Allger: organist.

A concert of four wonderful but very different works sung in the beautiful acoustics of St Mary's in Warwick and St Alban the Martyr in Birmingham by Birmingham Bach Choir: "Glorious... A superlative performance by Birmingham Bach Choir ... distinguished in every way... the kind of performance one dreams of. I wouldn't have missed it for anything" (R.Dunnett, March 2024).

Bernstein: 'Chichester Psalms'; Bednall: 'The Dear Bargain'; Elgar: 'Give unto the Lord'; Spicer: 'Sound the invisible Trumps'. For details and tickets: www.birminghambachchoir.com

BIRMINGHAM AND MIDLAND INSTITUTE

9 Margaret Street, Birmingham B3 3BS.

For tickets and more information please visit the BMI's website: www.bmi.org.uk

Brendan Handley Exhibition

Mon 8 April - Saturday 18 May 2024, 10am-4pm. Brendan's paintings are a stunning exploration of non-representational abstraction; some conveying a sense of vibrancy, depth and intensity, while others elicit a calmer, more contemplative

response. His expressive use of colours and textures evoke different emotions, moods and memories, personal to each viewer.

Study Day - A.S. Byatt, 'Possession' (1990) & David Lodge, 'Nice Work' (1988)

Friday 10 May 2024, 10.15am-4pm. These novels resemble and contrast each other whilst exploring academia. One looks back historically; the other reaches into industry. 'Possession' was filmed (2002) and 'Nice Work' was serialised on television (1989). Please book by emailing: studydays@deliveringshakespeare.com or calling 01827 712132.

In Celebration of Sir Arthur Sullivan's Birthday

Monday 13 May 2024, 1-2pm. To celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Sir Arthur Sullivan, Elaine Richardson, Chairman of the Sir Arthur Sullivan Society, will be giving a talk on Sir Arthur, including some facts you might not know. Jacob Plumtree at the piano.

Study Day - J.B. Priestley, 'Dangerous Corner' (1932) & Terence Rattigan, 'The Winslow Boy' (1946)

Friday 24 May 2024, 10.15am-4pm. Priestley's play sounds a warning about disturbing sleeping dogs while Rattigan explores how fighting tenaciously for what is right has deep personal cost. Please book by emailing: studydays@deliveringshakespeare.com or calling 01827 712132.

Study Day - William Shakespeare, 'Coriolanus' (1607) & 'Cymbeline' (1609)

Friday 7 June 2024, 10.15am-4pm. Please book by

CONTINUED OVER THE PAGE

Saturday 29 June, 7pm
(St Mary's, Warwick)

Saturday 6 July, 7pm
(St Alban's, Birmingham)

BIRMINGHAM
BACH
Choir
Inspiring Performances

Summer Concert

Paul Spicer conducts Birmingham Bach Choir

Organ: Callum Alger

Bednall - The Dear Bargain

Bernstein - Chichester Psalms

Elgar - Give unto the Lord

Spicer - Sound the Invisible Trumps



"Outstanding"
(David Barton, June '22)

All details & tickets: www.birmingham.bachchoir.com

Opera

IN THE
afternoon

Birmingham Festival Choral Society
presents a selection of Opera Choruses and Arias
Conductor David Wynne



Sunday July 14 2024 4.00pm



Tickets £18 from www.bfcs.org.uk or on the door

The Ruddock Performing Arts Centre King Edward's School, Edgbaston, B15 2UA

Wheelchair accessible



Dion Kitson: 'Rue Britannia' at Ikon Gallery, 10 May – 8 September

Dion Kitson, 'Ode to Brierley Hill's Rubbish Mountain' (2023). 1160 Scale model of waste management site. Image courtesy the artist.

emailing: studydays@deliveringshakespeare.com or calling 01827 712132.

Monday Lecture – Naush Sabah

Monday 10 June 2024, 1-2pm. We welcome Birmingham & Midland Institute Poet in Residence & Birmingham poet Naush Sabah.

Study Day - Discoveries: Clio Barnard, Barbara Pym

Friday 21 June 2024, 10.15am-4pm. Clio Barnard, Barbara Pym, and more films, novels and poetry provide stimulus for a wide-ranging day in which we share works that have proved exciting, pleasurable and thought-provoking. The beauty and tensions of Bradford life are exposed in Clio Barnard's 'Ali and Ava' (2021). Barbara Pym's works seem gentle but novels such as 'Excellent Women' (1952) are full of sharp insight, humour and compassion. Please book by emailing: studydays@deliveringshakespeare.com or calling 01827 712132.

Monday Lecture –

Standing Stones with Dr Serena Trowbridge

Monday 24 June 2024, 1-2pm

Monday Lecture –

Neville Chamberlain with Andrew Reekes

Monday 8 July 2024, 1-2pm

IKON

1 Oozells Square, Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HS.

www.ikon-gallery.org

Free entry. Open Wednesday until Sunday, 11am-5pm

Dion Kitson: Rue Britannia

10 May – 8 September 2024. Ikon presents the first major solo exhibition and an ambitious off-site commission by British artist Dion Kitson in partnership with English Heritage.

Incisive, enterprising and laced with sharp wit, Kitson's artistic practice dissects class and identity from the depths of

the British psyche, reshaping its visual hallmarks and traditions across a range of media: sculpture, painting, film and found objects. Kitson's work is both playful and pertinent, providing a candid account of the everyday. Among the new works presented at Ikon Gallery is 'Council House of Kitson', a new installation by the artist complete with a pebble-dashed façade, containing footage collated over 15 years that documents the eccentricities of his father.

Coinciding with his exhibition at Ikon, as part of English Heritage's Creative Programme Kitson's artworks will be on display at JW Evans from 11 May until 6 September. In 2008, English Heritage acquired the J.W. Evans Silver Factory, located in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, which began as a cottage industry in 1881. The workshops are preserved in situ, containing thousands of dies for the manufacture of silverware; the entire factory's working equipment; and the ephemera, magazines and posters of the workers. Kitson honours a lost industrial past, utilising new technologies to create sculptural interventions in the factory, celebrating the history and popular culture of Birmingham and the Black Country. These special tours are ticketed as 'Silver Lining: Dion Kitson at JW Evans'.

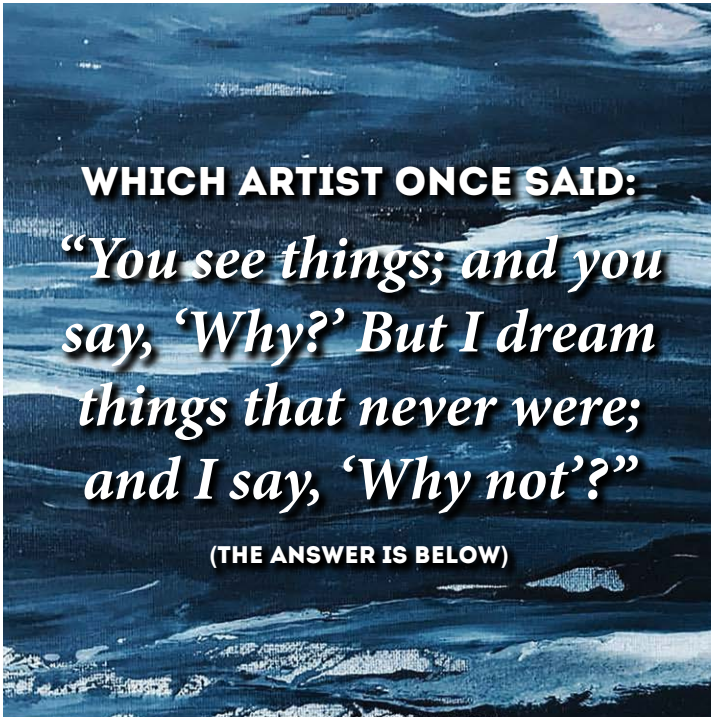
This exhibition is supported by English Heritage, The Foundation Foundation and Ikon Investment Fund. This exhibition is presented as part of Ikon's 60th anniversary year.

National Treasures: Artemisia in Birmingham

Jesse Jones: Mirror Martyr Mirror Moon

10 May – 8 September 2024. Ikon is a partner in 'National Treasures', a key strand of the programme celebrating the National Gallery's Bicentenary, NG200. Twelve partner venues, one in each region of the UK, receive a masterpiece from the Gallery's collection and curate around it, with all displays opening simultaneously on 10 May 2024, the 200th anniversary of the National Gallery opening in London.



CONTINUED OVER THE PAGE



WHICH ARTIST ONCE SAID:
“You see things; and you say, ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were; and I say, ‘Why not?’”
 (THE ANSWER IS BELOW)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE IN ARTEFACTS PLEASE CONTACT JESS RONAN
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A: GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

DAME LAURA KNIGHT
 I Paint Today
 13 Jan – 30 June 2024
 Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum

Celebrating the wonderful work of Dame Laura Knight, focussing on key events, characters and achievements which helped to shape her life and career. Includes sumptuous landscapes inspired by Laura Knight's love of the Worcestershire countryside.

For more information on opening times and admission prices please visit www.museumsworcestershire.org.uk Now open on Sundays


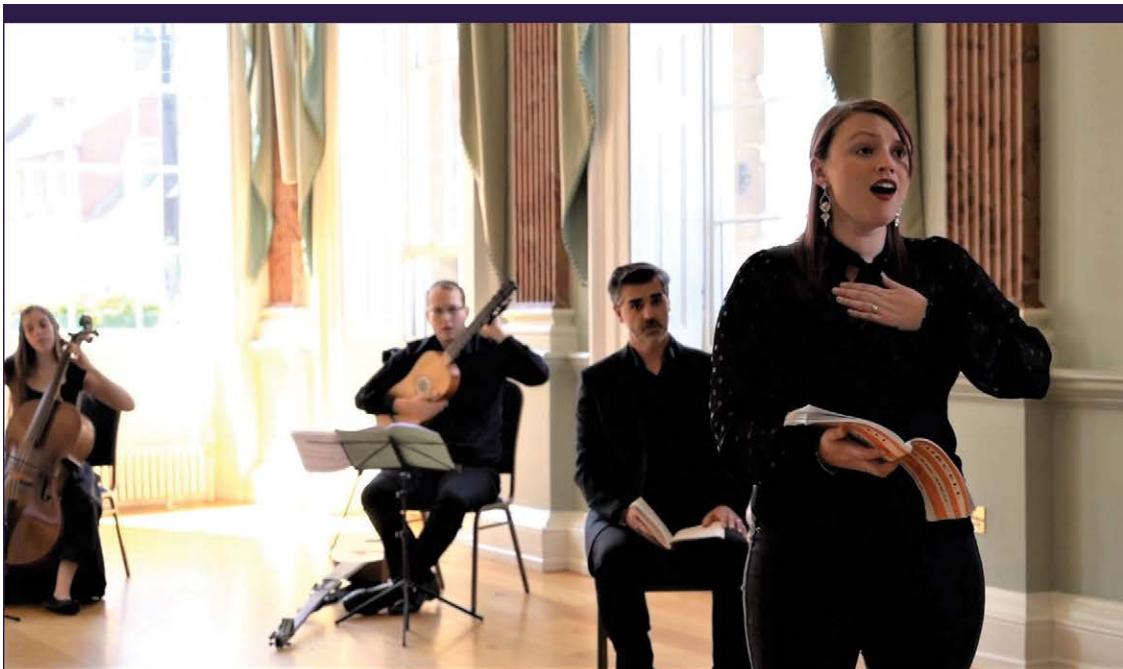


Image: Sunbeam, c.1905 (oil on canvas, Knight, Laura (1877-1970) / Worcester Art Gallery, West Midlands, UK / © Worcester Art Gallery / © Estate of Dame Laura Knight. All rights reserved 2023 / Bridgeman Images



ARMONICO CONSORT

TICKETS
www.armonico.org.uk
 Registered Charity No. 1103159

- “Pure Pleasure”
THE GUARDIAN
- ☆☆☆☆☆
THE TIMES
- ☆☆☆☆☆
THE INDEPENDENT
- ☆☆☆☆☆
BBC MUSIC MAGAZINE
- ☆☆☆☆☆
THE TELEGRAPH

THE FAIRY QUEEN – HENRY PURCELL

27th June 2024, 7.30pm - Royal Pump Rooms, Leamington Spa
 29th June 2024, 7.30pm - Malvern Theatres, Worcestershire

For 15 years, Armonico Consort has been in demand by festivals in the UK and Europe to perform its inimitable version of Purcell's Dido & Aeneas. The singers and actors of the company now turn their attention to Purcell's greatest semi-opera in a brand new semi-staged version with a specially adapted script from Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' to create for the first time a modern-day retelling of both of these incredible works in one joyous evening!

Armonico Consort will conjure up Purcell's world of dreams and darkness, love and laughter in a not-to-be-missed evening!

The Leamington Spa performance is generously supported by Hilary Eldridge, member of the Conductor's Circle.





Faces & Figures, Portraits from the RBSA Collection at RBSA Gallery, 25 July – 24 August
Anthony Sawbridge, 'Skateboarder' (1991)

Ikon presents 'Self Portrait as Saint Catherine of Alexandria' (about 1615-17) by Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1654 or later).

Simultaneously, Ikon shows 'Mirror Martyr Mirror Moon', a solo exhibition by Dublin-based contemporary artist Jesse Jones whose practice crosses film, performance and installation. Informed by her research into the iconography of Gentileschi's self-portrait, Jones' installation presents Gentileschi, Hypatia of Alexandria and Saint Catherine the Martyr as interconnected archetypes of feminist resistance. This new commission includes sound elements and moving images to create a cinematic space, while Jones also collaborates with Dublin-based dance company Junk Ensemble on performance tableaux that mirror Gentileschi's compositions.

Jesse Jones' exhibition is supported by The Ampersand Foundation, Culture Ireland and Arts Council of Ireland. This exhibition is presented as part of Ikon's 60th anniversary year.

MIDLANDS ARTS CENTRE – MAC

Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham B12 9QH
macbirmingham.co.uk

Tereza Buskova: 'Hidden Mothers'

Saturday 1 June – Sunday 29 September 2024, open daily, 9am – late. This exhibition features a video and objects created as part of Tereza Buskova's project 'Hidden Mothers', conducted in Birmingham and London from 2019 to 2021. The project aimed to empower women, especially migrant mothers facing isolation, drawing inspiration from Victorian photography where mothers hid behind cloths while their infants were photographed.

In contemporary society motherhood's complexities often remain hidden. Buskova aimed to bring mothers out of the margins, celebrating them through rituals and folklore from various cultures. Her project fostered new connections between the women through participatory workshops like bread and

insignia making. It provided a platform for empowerment and solidarity, encouraging mothers to step out from the shadows and reclaim their importance in society.

Kaye Winwood: Who Cares?

Thursday 6 June – Sunday 22 September 2024. Balsall Heath CATS was created to support families with disabled children and young people. MAC collaborated with artist Kaye Winwood to create a project with the caregivers, primarily mothers, of these children. Over four months, Kaye and invited experts provided a safe, creative environment to help these women integrate self-care into their daily routines. This offered them essential breaks from their demanding caregiving responsibilities, which are both non-stop and fulfilling. This exhibition will present some of their creative journey in objects, words and images.

Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood

Saturday 22 June – Sunday 29 September 2024, open Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 5pm. Hayward Gallery Touring's major group exhibition 'Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood' will plunge into the joys and heartaches, mess, myths and mishaps of motherhood through over 100 artworks, from the feminist avant-garde to the present day.

While the Madonna and Child is one of the great subjects of European art, we rarely see art about motherhood as a lived experience, in all its complexity. 'Acts of Creation: On Art and Motherhood' will address this blind spot in art history, asserting the artist mother as an important – if rarely visible – cultural figure.

Featuring the work of more than sixty modern and contemporary artists, this exhibition will approach motherhood as a creative enterprise, albeit one at times tempered by ambivalence, exhaustion or grief. 'Acts of Creation' will explore lived experience of motherhood, offering a complex account that engages with contemporary concerns about gender, caregiving and reproductive rights.

The exhibition will address diverse experiences of motherhood across three themes: Creation, which looks at conception, pregnancy, birth and nursing; Maintenance, which explores motherhood and caregiving in the day-to-day; and Loss, which touches on miscarriage and involuntary childlessness, as well as reproductive rights. The heart of the exhibition is a series of revelatory self-portraits – a celebration of the artist as mother.

Featuring painting, photography, sculpture, sound and film, by a wide range of artists. 'Acts of Creation' will be accompanied by a lively programme of public events and an illustrated book published by Thames and Hudson.

Pauline Farrar: Talking Points

Until Monday 26 August, open daily, 9am - late. Following the success of her previous work, 'Throne of Succulents', which featured in Grayson's Art Club, artist Pauline Farrar is making a return to MAC with a new art installation co-created with members of MAC's Women's Group – 'Making It Together'.

Their shared work touches on issues of isolation and disability and the power of gardening as a creative and a rejuvenating tool for wellbeing.

RBSA GALLERY

4 Brook Street, St. Paul's Square, Birmingham, B3 1SA
www.rbsa.org.uk

RBSA Portrait Prize 2024

7 May - 8 June 2024. An exhibition of contemporary portraiture from artists across the UK and further afield.

RBSA Summer Show 2024

13 June - 20 July 2024. The Society's largest open call of the year spread over all three floors of the Gallery.

Faces & Figures, Portraits from the RBSA Collection 1785 - 2023

25 July - 24 August 2024. Works selected from the RBSA permanent collection spanning 200+ history of the Society.

RBSA Summer Workshops

23 July - 10 August 2024. A programme of 15 sessions covering a variety of subjects and techniques available to adults of all skill and experience levels.

SELLY MANOR MUSEUM

Maple Road, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 2AE
www.sellymanormuseum.org.uk

The History of Selly Manor Exhibition

Tuesday 23 July – Saturday 3 August 2024, Open daily 10am – 5pm Discover the rich history of one of Birmingham's oldest buildings as we delve into the fascinating story of Selly Manor. Based on the museum's archival collection, learn about how this modest yeoman's house was first built in the 1470s, and became home to many over its 500 year old history. The exhibition will highlight some of the key characters from the building's past, and show what life was like for the residents.

Find out about the remarkable story of how this near derelict building was rescued from demolition by George Cadbury, then moved and rebuilt in his beautiful garden village of Bournville. See the detailed records of architect William Alexander Harvey who undertook this huge project.

The exhibition will also help to uncover the tale of how Laurence Cadbury collected period furniture and objects to bring the house to life and focus on some of the more quirky artefacts on display at the museum.

Exhibition included in museum entry ticket. No pre-booking required. Why not also enjoy a tour of Selly Manor. Tours take place on 2 June, 7 July and 4 August. Tickets are £7 per person. Call 0121 472 0199 to book.

Past Future: Youth Programme

5-9 August 2024. Are you aged 16-18 and looking to do something different this summer? Then join our 'Past-Future' heritage programme. Join us for a week long heritage experience where you will: Learn new skills; Visit heritage sites; Create change in our museum; Try out new jobs; Enhance your CV; Design and host your own event. The programme takes place from Monday 5 - Friday 9 August 2024, 10am-4pm. All participants will receive a bursary for taking part in the programme. 'Past-Future' is free and you don't need to know anything about museums to take part! So what are you waiting for? Deadline to apply is July 2024. Call to speak to a member of our team about applying: 0121 472 1092.

THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY

www.victoriansociety.org.uk/west-midlands

Email enquiries to events@victorian-society-bham.org.uk or check website for online booking. Prior Bookings essential.

Members' Afternoon at the BMI

Saturday 27 April 2024, 2pm – 4.30pm in the Sir Arthur Sullivan Hall. Members will share images of places, buildings, arts, or anything relating to life in Victorian or Edwardian times. Potential members are also welcome. Prior booking £15 with light refreshments, including cakes.

Day Visit to Stourbridge

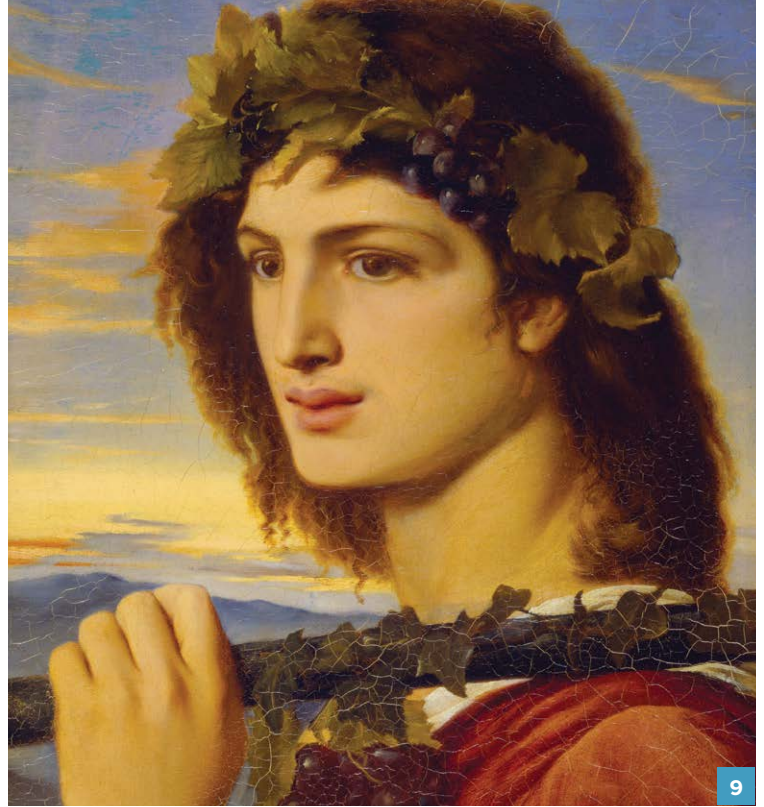
Thursday 6 June 2024. On a single decker former Birmingham Corporation bus, with a visit to the Glass Museum and a guided walk around the town. Maximum of 30 places. £30 includes bus, morning refreshments, lunch, entry to Glass Museum and donations. Bus starts at St Augustine's Church, Edgbaston where there is plenty of free on-street parking.

Coach trip to Shropshire

Saturday 13 July 2024. £56 including coach, lunch and donations. Non-members are welcome. 9am: Coach leaves Church Street, city centre; 9.20am: Second pick up at St Augustine's, Edgbaston. Coffee stop at Burford Garden Centre then visiting St Mary's Burford (Grade I Aston Webb work) & All Saints, Richards Castle. Lunch, then guided tour at Stokesay Court, near Craven Arms. Time to look at the gardens with coach leaving at 4.30pm.

Day School at the BMI

Saturday 26 October 2024. Public Utilities and Facilities in the Victorian and Edwardian era in the West Midlands Buildings for the essentials of life in growing communities – Gas, Water, Sewage etc. Then how these buildings can be renovated and repurposed for 21st century use.



FRIENDS' QUIZ

BY JIM WELLS

1. Who donated the land for Small Heath Park, later renamed Victoria Park, as illustrated in this postcard?
2. Bhangra music, the subject of a recent production at the Rep, originates in which region of the Indian subcontinent?
3. The venue of a planned Friends' visit in June 2024 is the Moor Pool Estate, but who was the guiding spirit behind the project?
4. What is the name of the poet, born in Handsworth and a keen Aston Villa supporter, who sadly died recently?
5. This painting is featured in the publicity for the current 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition at BMAG and was the cover image on the Spring 2024 edition of 'Artefacts'. But who is the painting by?
6. Who was the illustrator for the Kelmscott Chaucer?
7. This painting, with a powerful social message, was first shown in 1858 and can be seen in the Gas Hall as part of the 'Victorian Radicals' exhibition. Who is the artist?


8. Which Solihull-based building, with a strong custard connection, recently received an award from the Birmingham & West Midlands Group of the Victorian Society for its restoration?
9. The artist who produced this painting sadly ended his life impoverished and in a workhouse, largely as a result of persecution for his sexuality. Who is he?
10. Who was the architect of the Birmingham Municipal School of Art in Margaret Street, a Grade 1 listed building?

1. Postcard - 'Birmingham Parks': Topographical Views - Kesterton Collection, 1913; 1995V632.344; Purchased from Roger Kesterton 5. 'Musica (Melody)', 1895-97, Oil on canvas; 1897P17; Presented by Sir John Holder, Bt, 1897. 6. 'The Kelmscott Chaucer - The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer Now Newly Imprinted', 1896; Published by Kelmscott Press; Designed by William Morris; 1934P675; Presented by Colonel Harold Wilkinson, 1934. 7. 'The Stone Breaker', 1857; 1936P506; Presented by Charles Aitken, 1936. 9. 'Bacchus', 1867; 1961P52; Bequeathed by Miss Katherine Elizabeth Lewis, 1961.


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1) Louisa Ryland 2) The Punjab 3) John Nettleford 4) Benjamin Zephaniah 5) Kate Bunce 6) Edward Burne-Jones 7) Henry Wallace 8) Tudor Grange House 10) John Henry Chamberlain

MAY


 Monday 20 # 'Victorian Radicals' – Jane Howell at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery


JUNE

 Friday 7 * Ikon Gallery National Treasures


 Friday 21 ** Walking tour around the Moor Pool Estate

JULY

 Saturday 13 # Visit to the West Midlands Police Museum – Talk on Forensic Procedures


 Wednesday 24 * Behind the Scenes at the Museum Collection Centre

AUGUST


 Friday 16 * Anxious Apples: why do artists paint still life? – Henrietta Lockhart

SEPTEMBER


 Tuesday 10 * Friends Annual General Meeting


 Tuesday 10 * 'Victorian Radicals: A Journey to America' – Martin Ellis

OCTOBER

 Monday 21 * 'Victorian Radicals' – Jane Howell at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery

NOVEMBER

 Tuesday 12 * Friends Lunch at Chapter Restaurant, Edgbaston

 Friday 22 * Visit Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick and statue

- * Details are enclosed with this mailing (see pages 6-7)
- # Included in the previous mailing, but places are still available.
Please contact us to book a place (see page 6)
- ** Included in the previous mailing and fully booked – sorry!
- + Date for your Diary – information will be included in a future edition of 'Artefacts'

EVENT KEY

ANNUAL EVENT



DAYTIME TALK



LUNCH



GUIDED TOUR



OUTING

THE NEXT ISSUE OF ARTEFACTS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JULY 2024

