The Royal Academy at Wolfson

31 January to 19 December 2015
Saturdays and Sundays 2 to 4pm

A rotating exhibition of exceptional works by 15 Royal Academicians, including the Royal Academy’s President, Christopher Le Brun, organised by Wolfson Fine Arts and curated by Anthony Green RA

The Lee Hall and Combination Room
Wolfson College
Barton Road
Cambridge
CB3 9BB

www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/fine-arts
The Royal Academy of Arts was founded in 1768 by King George III in response to a petition signed by thirty-six artists seeking to establish a society for promoting the Arts of Design. The founding members of the Academy include some of the most important artists in the Western canon: Thomas Gainsborough, Benjamin West, Angelica Kauffmann, William Chambers and the RA’s first president, Sir Joshua Reynolds. The new Royal Academy was initially housed in Pall Mall and in 1775 Chambers designed its first official residence at Somerset House. The Exhibition Room was described by literary critic Joseph Baretti as ‘the finest gallery for displaying pictures so far built’. In addition to exhibiting the works of Royal Academicians, the RA was founded in order to establish a programme for the training of artists. The Royal Academy Schools were founded alongside the Academy in 1769 and many of the artists whose works appear in this exhibition have contributed substantially to its curriculum. Today the Royal Academy is housed in Burlington House. It is still an artist-led organisation and describes its current role as ‘promot[ing] not just the appreciation and understanding of art, but also its practice’.

‘The Royal Academy at Wolfson’ is a rotating exhibition of 38 exceptional works by 15 Royal Academicians, among them the Royal Academy’s President, Christopher Le Brun. This exhibition, curated by Anthony Green RA, a Senior Member of Wolfson, includes paintings, prints, drawings and small sculptures, all of which have been lent to the College by the artists. The works exhibited reflect some of the most important strains in British art of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, primary among them the relationship between figuration and abstraction and the innovative use of materials.

Please note that all of the works in the exhibition are for sale by direct application to the artist, whose contact details may be obtained from the Porters’ Lodge.

* indicates the pictured works in this leaflet
Ivor Abrahams RA

Ivor Abrahams was born in Wigan, Lancashire in 1935. He studied at St Martin’s School of Art from 1952 to 1953 and at Camberwell School of Art from 1954 to 1957. He has served as a visiting lecturer in Sculpture at the Royal College of Art and the Slade School of Art among other institutions, and from 2007 to 2010 he was Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy Schools. His works are largely figurative and themes include figures in movement, architecture, gardens, cityscapes, landscapes, totems and owls. His sculptures are the result of a complex process involving photographs that are cut, altered, painted and transformed into three-dimensions. Ivor Abrahams died in January 2015.

Works exhibited:
*Small Gate*, 1989, bronze
*Family Group*, 2012, painted bronze

Eileen Cooper RA

Eileen Cooper was born in 1953 in Glossop, Derbyshire. She studied at Goldsmiths College University of London from 1971 to 1974 and the Royal College of Art from 1974 to 1977. She is a Fellow of the Royal College of Art, is Head of Printmaking at the Royal Academy Schools, and was the first woman to be elected Keeper at the Royal Academy in 2011. Cooper is well known as a printmaker and a painter and her work, which is rooted in a figurative tradition, is characterised by bold linearity and strong formal composition. Her subjects often include dream-like scenes and imagined worlds with people interacting in fantasy architectural settings. Cooper has said of her work, ‘Lots of people’s lives are thrown together in my pictures, but there is also a strong sense of separateness’.

Works exhibited:
*Refuge*, 2008, gouache on paper
*Dwelling*, 2009, oil on canvas
Anthony Eyton RA

Anthony Eyton was born in Teddington, Middlesex, in 1923 and studied Fine Art at Reading University before serving in the Army from 1942 to 1947. After the war he studied at Camberwell School of Art. In 1969 he was Head of Painting at St Lawrence College, Kingston, Ontario, and he also taught at the Royal Academy Schools from 1964 to 1999. In 1982 he was commissioned by the Artistic Records Committee to observe and paint the Gurkha regiment in Hong Kong and the New Territories, the paintings of which were exhibited at the Imperial War Museum. In 1985 he was Resident Artist at Leicester Royal Infirmary and in 1996 the Government Art Collection commissioned him to record the centenary of the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Since 1999 he has been Resident Artist at the Eden Project in Cornwall. He lives and works in London.

Works exhibited:
*Rain Forest Eden Project, 2002, pastel
*Bridge over a Pond, undated, oil on board*

Gus Cummins RA

Gus Cummins was born in 1943 and lives and works in Hastings. He studied at Sutton School of Art from 1958 to 1961, Wimbledon School of Art from 1961 to 1964 and the Royal College of Art from 1964 to 1967. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1992 and is a member of The London Group, a democratic co-operative of artists in various disciplines from painting and sculpture to moving image and performance. Cummins is primarily a painter but he also works in mixed media, often combining painting and sculpture. His themes include abstract and mechanised imagery and its engagement with the natural world.

Works exhibited:
*Toy Box, 2002, gouache/collage*
*To Be Continued, 2003, acrylic*
Peter Freeth RA

Peter Freeth was born in 1938. He studied at the Slade School of Fine Art from 1956 to 1960, when he won the Prix de Rome in Engraving. He was elected a member of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers and a Royal Academician in 1991 and was a tutor in etching at the Royal Academy Schools from 1966 to 2007. Freeth's unconventional approach to printmaking, which encompasses etching, engraving and aquatint, was the subject of an exhibition at the Royal Academy in 2009 entitled 'My Affair with Resin.'

Themes that recur in his work include, in the artist's own words: 'the city and its people, the richness of the natural world, the resonance of words, Italy, images of past masters, the drama of light and shade.' Peter Freeth lives and works in London and Italy.

Works exhibited:
Lines by Lorenzo il Magnifico, undated, aquatint on zinc plates*
That Big Black Bird Again, 1998, aquatint on zinc plates*

Anthony Green RA

Anthony Green was born in Luton in 1939. He studied at the Slade School of Art from 1956 to 1960 and then lived in France for two years on a French government scholarship. Green taught drawing at the Slade intermittently between 1962 and 1964 and in 1967 moved to the United States on a Harkness Fellowship for two years. On his return to the UK he became a member of the Royal Academy in 1971. Green's work is largely biographical, chronicling his family and surroundings. He works in the media of both paint and print, using compound perspectives and polygonal forms, often on large irregularly shaped board. His use of unconventionally designed supports reflects the fact that, as the artist says, the pictures in his mind have no edges and do not, therefore, have to be contained within a rectangular form. Green has been a Trustee of the Royal Academy and is a Senior Member of Wolfson College. He lives and works in Cambridgeshire.

Works exhibited:
The Greenhouse – Mary's garden, 1966/2007/2010, oil on board*
Early Spring – looking round the garden, 1994, oil on MDF*
The Creator, 2000, screenprint, no. 61 in an edition of 70*
Le Touriste et la Luxure/Moissac, L'Eglise Abbatiale, 1965, pencil on paper
Working drawing for the portrait of Irene Bradbury, 1993, pencil and gouache on paper
Paul Huxley RA

Paul Huxley studied at Harrow School of Art from 1951 to 1956 and the Royal Academy Schools from 1956 to 1960. He taught at the Royal College of Art from 1976 and became Professor of Painting from 1986 until 1998, after which he was elected Honorary Fellow and Professor Emeritus. In the mid 1960s Huxley emerged as one of the most important proponents of new abstract painting. His 'fluid series', exhibited as part of 'The New Generation' exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1964, won him first prize in the Stuyvesant Travel Awards. This award took him to the United States where he met leading American abstract artists of the period. Throughout his career he has engaged with some of the most important developments in modernism: his 1965 'key series' deconstructed the traditional monocentric format of abstract painting; paintings from his grey 'studio series' of 1977 applied a new analysis of cubist and surrealist sources; and in works of the 1980s and 90s he presented the concept of interactions between differing hypothetical renderings of image, flat colour field, line, chiaroscuro and collage. He lives and works in London.

Works exhibited:
*Modus Operandi V*, 1988, acrylic on Canson paper*
*Hysteron Proteron VII*, 1997, acrylic on Canson paper*

Timothy Hyman RA

Timothy Hyman was born in Hove, Sussex in 1946, and studied at the Slade School of Fine Art from 1963 to 1967. He is a figurative painter best known for his portraits and narrative renditions of London, which explore his personal relationship with the city in which he lives and works. His interest in the question of belonging is reflected in painterly works that explore his own place within the city, vivid colours and shifting scale and perspectives lending them a visionary quality. In addition to painting, Hyman is also a writer, curator and lecturer. He has published monographs on Sienese painting and the work of Pierre Bonnard and has written extensively on art and film. He is a regular contributor to the *Times Literary Supplement* and has curated a range of exhibitions, among them the Stanley Spencer retrospective in 2001 at Tate Britain.

Works exhibited:
*Dinas Bran from the Window of the Hand Hotel*, 2009, oil on wood*
*Spaghetti at Golders Hill*, 2000, oil on canvas*
Neil Jeffries RA

Neil Jeffries was born in 1959. He studied at St Martin’s School of Art between 1978 and 1982 and the Slade School of Art between 1982 and 1984. He taught at the Slade in the 1990s. Jeffries makes painted metal reliefs and sculptures that combine seemingly incongruous subjects and concepts that are of particular concern or interest to him. Such subjects include shapes, stories, points of view, dreamed experience, bumps, holes, corners and edges, a list that reflects the position of his works somewhere between abstraction and figuration. Fragments feature prominently, both those joined together to suggest a narrative and those remaining separate, and the awkward figures in his works reflect his profound interest in medieval art. Jeffries describes his works as exploring issues of memory, corporality, embarrassment and euphoria. He lives and works in London.

Works exhibited:
Cheese Tunnel, 2012, oil on metal*
Monkey Sink, 2007, oil on metal*
Duck Jolly, undated*
Bedroom, undated*

Sonia Lawson RA

Sonia Lawson was born in 1934 and studied at Doncaster School of Art and then the Royal College of Art from 1956 to 1960. She taught at Central St Martin’s School of Art in the 1960s and the Royal College of Art in the 1980s, and has been a Visiting Lecturer at the Royal Academy Schools since 1985. In the mid 1960s and 70s Lawson described herself as ‘an artist of conscience and accountability’ and her paintings from this period addressed themes such as incarceration and execution in the social realist tradition. Her works from the 1980s and 90s, the period to which Hart Leap belongs, are characterised by a greater fluidity with paint and a move towards abstraction. On the relationship between representation and abstraction in her work, Lawson has said: ‘My interest is to solve the difficulty of using recognisable imagery, yet having the freedom of abstraction, evading the strictures of narrative, yet still using, say, a boat, a tree, a figure… and if I use them it is important to simultaneously try and break the bounds of familiarity’. A monograph on the artist by Nicholas Usherwood, Sonia Lawson: Passions and Alarms, was published in 2014. She lives and works in Bedfordshire and North Yorkshire.

Work exhibited:
Hart Leap, 1986, oil on canvas*
**Ben Levene RA**

Ben Levene was born in London in 1938. He taught at Camberwell School of Art from 1963 to 1998, at the Royal Academy Schools from 1970 to 1975, and also served as a tutor for the City & Guilds of London Art School from 1990 to 1995. Levene was a master of still life, which he described as 'an art form within an art form', the recreation within a painted composition of a selection and arrangement of 'real objects combined with abstract design'. From 1981, when he saw the Great Japan Exhibition, he fell under the spell of the rich, opulent gold ground screens and started to use brass leaf as a background to his still life paintings, gradually mastering the technique and using gold and silver in his still lifes and landscapes. Most of Levene's work was painted in his South London studio apart from his landscape paintings which were done in a small cottage in Herefordshire on the Welsh borders. Ben Levene died in 2010.

Work exhibited:

- **White Azalea**, 2005, oil on canvas*
- **Looking across the gardens**, 2007, oil on canvas*
- **Boathouses on the Thames**, c. 1996, watercolour, pencil and ink
- **Low-lying cloud – Herefordshire**, c. 1990, watercolour
- **Snow/back garden**, c. 1990, ink and wash
- **Ernie’s Sheep**, 1998, ink and watercolour on coloured paper
- **Looking towards Leominster**, 2001, pencil

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**Christopher Le Brun PRA**

Christopher Le Brun was born in 1951 in Portsmouth. He trained at the Slade School of Art from 1970 to 1974 and Chelsea School of Art from 1974 to 1975. Le Brun was elected to the Royal Academy in 1996 and works in the media of print, paint and sculpture. His works have been included in many surveys of international art, including *Nuova immagine*, Milan (1981), *Zeitgeist*, Berlin (1982), *Avant-garde in the Eighties*, Los Angeles (1987), and, more recently, *Contemporary Voices*, at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2005). The repertoire of motifs that appears in Le Brun's work, among them wings and horses, reflects his attachment to the imagery and emotional address of Romanticism and Symbolism. Christopher Le Brun was elected President of the Royal Academy in December 2011. He is the twenty-sixth President since Sir Joshua Reynolds and the youngest to be elected since Lord Leighton in 1878.

Work exhibited:

- **Motif Group**, 1989-91, oil on canvas*
Chris Orr RA MBE

Chris Orr was born in 1943 in London. He studied at Ravensbourne College of Art from 1959 to 1963, Hornsey College of Art from 1963 to 1964 and the Royal College of Art from 1964 to 1967. He has taught at Central St Martins and the Royal College of Art, where he was Professor of Printmaking from 1998 to 2008, when he was awarded an MBE and made Professor Emeritus. Orr works in the media of both paint and print. His subjects are wide-ranging, from culturally engrained narratives such as biblical stories and nursery rhymes and speculations about the myths and lives of famous artists and theorists such as Albrecht Dürer, to the physical and social nature of the modern city. He has been Treasurer of the Royal Academy since 2014 and lives and works in London.

Works exhibited:
Times Square No 1, 2010, paper relief and mono print*
Hooray for the Nagasaki Tramcar, 2007, lithograph*
Car, 2013, pencil and watercolour*

Mick Rooney RA

Mick Rooney was born in Surrey in 1944. He studied at Sutton School of Art from 1959 to 1962, Wimbledon School of Art from 1962 to 1964 and the Royal College of Art from 1964 to 1967. He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1991 and to the Royal Society of Painters and Printmakers in 2001. Rooney works in the media of print and paint and his subjects range from intimate family studies to witty musings upon everyday life. His works have a poetic imaginative quality and his suggestion of suspended movement, heightened by a muted palette, reflects the dream-like nature of his scenes. The artist’s commissions include a painting to celebrate the centenary of the Financial Times (1988), a poster for London Underground (1990) and a tapestry commissioned by TSB for their Birmingham Headquarters (woven by Edinburgh Tapestry Company). Rooney lives and works in Charlbury, Oxfordshire.

Works exhibited:
On the Belvedere, 2011, oil on canvas*
Brothers in Arms, 2008, oil on canvas*
Anthony Whishaw RA

Anthony Whishaw was born in London in 1930. He studied at Chelsea School of Art from 1948 to 1952 and the Royal College of Art from 1952 to 1955. He was elected a member of the London Group in 1979, a Royal Academician in 1989 and a member of the Royal West of England Academy in 1992. His paintings vary in scale from 20cm to nearly 7m in length and he works on different series of subjects concurrently which, in the artist’s words ‘can overlap to produce unexpected hybrids, with some paintings being worked on over many years’. Whishaw’s materials vary equally broadly and include oil, acrylic, collage on canvas, board or paper, often with sand, soil, ash, and metal. Whishaw has described his art as ‘seek[ing] to reconcile illusion and allusion, the abstract and the figurative, past and present pictorial languages to create unforeseen visual experiences.’ He lives and works in London.

Works exhibited:
Pueblo II, undated, oil on canvas

The Bradshaw-Bubier Collection: Pottery in the Leach Tradition

The ceramics exhibited in two cases in the Combination Room and in one case in the foyer of the Lee Seng Tee Hall are part of a collection generously donated to Wolfson College by Dr Harry Bradshaw and Dr Norma Bubier. All but one of the potters represented worked for a time at the Leach Pottery at St Ives, Cornwall, or with Bernard Leach’s first pupil, Michael Cardew, at either Winchcombe in Somerset, or Wenford Bridge in Gloucestershire. The exception is Joe Finch, who was trained at Winchcombe by his father, Ray Finch. Their work embodies Leach’s vision of pots that are handmade, functional, and aesthetically satisfying, while illustrating their individual interpretations of Oriental and English potting traditions. Apart from vases, the pottery and porcelain on view is mainly functional, including teapots, dishes, unomi (Japanese tea cups), bowls, jugs and storage jars.

In the Combination Room, one case is devoted to the work of Richard Batterham*, who is widely regarded as one of Britain’s finest living potters. The other displays pots by David Leach (1911-2005), John Leach (b. 1939), William Marshall (1923-2007), Ray Finch (1914-2012) and Joe Finch (b. 1947). In the foyer of the Lee Seng Tee Hall, the case contains pots by Derek Emms (1929-2004), Alan Brough (1924-2012), Jeff Oestreicher (b. 1947), Trevor Corser (b. 1938), Joanna Wason (b. 1952), Nic Harrison (b. 1949) and Amanda Brier (b. 1978).
Sound Recordings of Potters who worked at the Leach Pottery

A collection of sound recordings of twenty-four potters, who had worked at the Leach Pottery, discussing their work was organised by the donors between 2007 and 2010, with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. These have been deposited in the Sound Archive of the British Library. Interviews conducted by the Canadian filmmaker Marty Gross in the 1970s with Bernard Leach, William Marshall and Sybil Hanson were also deposited.

The collection, titled Potters of the Bernard Leach Legacy, has the British Library Sound Recording number C1330, with individual recordings numbered C1330/1-28; it can be accessed from the British Library Sound Archive at: http://tinyurl.com/ooknz2n

* indicates the pictured works

Meredith McNeill Hale, Speelman Fellow in Netherlandish Art, Wolfson College

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