

# THE NEWSLETTER

Issue No.3 – January/February 2005

## **Trudy's Chairwords**

Firstly, good wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful 2005!

Relatively good attendance numbers at lectures continue to encourage the committee to keep an optimistic outlook on the survival of our Society and we have begun to confirm contracts with lecturers for next season. Membership, currently standing at 48 compared with only 40 full year members last season, is of course the core strength of ADFAS. Guests help to swell our funds a little and over the years the Society has benefited from the generosity of sponsors. Members' subscriptions finance the basic elements – lecturers' fees and travel costs, the Society's annual Affiliation Fee to NADFAS and the rent of the venue – but there are other costs. For instance, we no longer benefit from sponsored printing of the Newsletter and we have postage and stationery costs to cover. These are not huge expenses but they are significant. If any of you feel that you are unable to offer your time and experience to help ADFAS by joining the committee but would like to help in another way, then any small (or large!) sponsorship towards expenses could also be a way of supporting ADFAS and our efforts to secure its future - €50 or €100 would go a very long way. An additional way of helping would be by providing accommodation for one of our lecturers; in return for providing bed and breakfast, you would have the pleasure of the company of a very interesting guest.

ADFAS cannot survive on finance alone, it is also dependent on a small team of volunteers, committee members AND other willing helpers, who work together to ensure that everything is in place for events to go ahead. A big thank you to everyone

who has given time, energy and enthusiasm, ADFAS could not exist without you.

*Trudy Debrice*

## **The Floris Jespers exhibition, PMMK Oostende**

Once again, Maureen Smith has been busy and this is what she has been arranging for us (some of you may have heard about it at the last lecture):

### **Saturday 19 February 2005**

Visit (by train, as a group) to Oostende to visit the Floris Jespers exhibition at the PMMK (Provincial Museum of Modern Art). We would have an English-speaking guide, and lunch would be arranged, with a set menu, at the Museum's Art Café.

Cost and times of trains, museum visit etc. will be available at the February lecture. PLEASE NOTE that the February lecture (Monday 7th) is the deadline for booking for this guided visit. If you want more information about the exhibition, or to put your name down on the list, please call Maureen on GSM 0478 344 094

[*Floris Jespers, 1889-1965*, belonged to the group of artists and writers around the Flemish poet Paul Van Ostaïen; he was one of the Flemish impressionists together with Constant Permeke, Gust De Smet en Frits Van den Berghe. He was a master of several media: he painted in oils, but also produced

drawings, etchings, and glass plate pictures. He painted still lifes, portraits and landscapes as well as circus scenes, and is particularly well known for his Africa period. His work was at the time very controversial, and the present exhibition attempts to put him firmly back where he belongs, in the forefront of 20th century Flemish artists.]

## **Our lecturers for February and March**

### **HELEN CLIFFORD**

Helen Clifford is a freelance researcher, writer and curator. She specialises in 17th and 18th century decorative art and contemporary silver. She is a Freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company, one of the City of London's old livery companies dating back to medieval times. She has also been chairman of the Silver Society and Editor of the *Journal of Design History*.

### **DONALD EASTON**

The Reverend Dr Donald Easton is a freelance archaeologist and a member of the Troy Excavation Team. He has a BA in theology, and an MA and PhD in Western Asiatic Archaeology; he has held research fellowships at Liverpool university and Clare Hall, Cambridge, and in 1990 was awarded the Schliemann Medal by the Berlin Academy of Sciences.

Both Helen Clifford and Donald Easton are new speakers for ADFAS.

## **Our meeting place:**

**Café/Restaurant Rubenshof (first floor), Groenplaats 9, 2000  
Antwerpen (tel: 03/231 59 52)**

**Monday 7 February 2005**  
**HOW IS IT MADE? A CLOSER**  
**LOOK AT SILVER**  
**Lecturer: Helen Clifford**

Dr Helen Clifford will talk about goldsmiths and their workshops, methods of construction and decorative techniques. She will use slides of Medieval to Contemporary silver, concentrating on English work.

As an introduction to this lecture it is perhaps interesting to know that in the Middle Ages, jewels were created by goldsmiths who manufactured a great variety of other objects as well, such as crosses, reliquaries, shrines, liturgical and secular vessels. Many goldsmiths worked in silver and other metals as well. There were both monastic and secular goldsmiths working in the Middle Ages. Urban goldsmiths worked in independent workshops but were organised in guilds, medieval associations of craftsmen in the same trade that controlled and regulated the activities of their members.

As far as the social standing of the late medieval goldsmith is concerned, contemporary portraits confirm the written sources by showing secular goldsmiths as prosperous men in luxurious clothing.



Jan van Eyck's *Portrait of John de Leeuw, Dean of the Goldsmiths' Guild in Bruges*, dated 1436, portrays a dignified, intelligent man dressed in an elegant dark robe with a fur collar and holding a gold ring set with a large ruby in his right hand as a sign of his profession (*Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna*).

GDB

**Monday 7 March 2005**  
**SPOILS OF WAR – THE**  
**DISPLACED ART OF WWII**  
**Lecturer: Donald Easton**

On the internet I found the principles for the resolution of disputes concerning the Spoils of War in a summary of a lecture held at the International Conference on that subject (New York, January 1995). I thought these principles an interesting introduction to the March lecture.

*Principle 1:*

Cultural objects which have been taken from territory occupied during World War II by any belligerent will be returned to the country from which they have been taken. (Declaration of London, Hague Protocol, analogy to UNESCO Convention 1970)

*Principle 2*

Where there have been successive displacements, the objects will be returned to the territory where they were located at the outbreak of hostilities in 1939. (Analogy to UNIDROIT draft)

*Principle 3:*

Principle 1 will apply even where transfers of the cultural objects concerned have taken the form of open looting or plunder, or of transactions apparently legal in form, even when they purport to have been voluntarily effected. (Declaration of London)

*Principle 4:*

Cultural property taken from an occupied territory during armed conflict shall never be detained as war reparations. (Hague Protocol Art. 3)

*Principle 5:*

Where the cultural objects have passed into the hands of third parties, the State which has the responsibility for their removal from the country where they were located in 1939 shall reacquire them for return to the State from which they were taken by repurchase, indemnity or other appropriate means. (Hague Protocol Art. 4)

*Principle 6:*

No time limits can be set. (Precedents: such as the Congress of Vienna 1815 and post-World War I settlements)

*Principle 7:*

Cultural objects being repatriated are to be accompanied by the relevant scientific documentation where available. (The importance of the sharing of scientific information has been asserted in a number of UNESCO and ICOM documents)

*Principle 8:*

Restitution by replacement is an available remedy where unique cultural objects have been destroyed. (Precedent: Treaty of Versailles)

GDB

**Study Day:**  
**Saturday 19 March**  
**Photography Museum, Antwerp**

We meet at 10.15 am in the entrance hall of the Museum, Waalse Kaai 47, for a 10.30 start, ending at around 4.30 pm, with a 2 hour break for lunch. Price (exclusive of lunch): +/- €25 pp.

**BOOKING:** by 4 March lecture.

Kate Mayne (BA Hons) graduated in painting at Bath Spa University College. Subsequently she worked in the New York and Belgian art worlds, coming into contact with a number of prominent contemporary artists and photographers. She is a freelance translator, does PR and conceives educational activities for a children's theatre company while pursuing her own activities of painting, singing and the spoken word, which she also teaches.

For the ADFAS Study Day Kate plans to handpick a number of contemporary, visual artists in whose work the intersection between painting and photography is inherent. She will touch on the history of both these media and their 'interesting/intersecting' relationships. Ways of seeing and discovering meaning in an image, will form the main focus of this richly illustrated exercise.

In the afternoon : visit to the exhibition of Anton Corbijn, the press photography exhibition in the old wing of the museum, the gallery exhibition of Nick Hannes and a demonstration and hands-on experience of making a group portrait with a travelling camera, and developing it in the darkroom.

## Comments on lectures and visits by ADFAS members

Please send us your comments and we will publish them. Thank you.

### *Frances Feldman on Angels, Cherubs and the Hosts of Heaven (December 2004)*

After a very nice pre-lecture dinner at the Rubenshof restaurant, Frances Feldman brought us further in heavenly spheres!

Angels, what are they? Who are they? Mystical hopes and expectations? Man in spirit form?

And what about the orders of the Celestial Hierarchy? Well, Frances Feldman was our guide in this difficult subject as she explained to us the differences between Seraphims, Cherubims, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Archangels and Angels. She described their respective characteristics and symbols, illustrating them with masterpieces by Giotto, Piero della Francesca, Raphael, Tiepolo, Jan Van Eyck, Rembrandt, Fragonard, Turner, Max Ernst, William Blake and many others. The lecturer was not only expert in Angel matters but also had a very good sense of humour. I appreciated her comments on some angels' faces or her words "and just an angel passing by", while showing us an angel on a bike waving at us. A most enjoyable evening!

GDB

### *Alexandra Drysdale on Red Vibrations (January 2005)*

The first ADFAS lecture of 2005 was totally different from the previous ones. Indeed, who on earth would have thought of comparing colour, red in this case, with fire, energy, blood, pain, suffering and death ?

Under the title "Red Vibrations" Alexandra Drysdale, for the occasion dressed in red, vibrantly introduced to us this new approach of looking at a colour.

During an hour and a half the audience was guided swiftly and enthusiastically through an array of various paintings spanning nearly over 500 years. Stunning details not always obvious for the casual museum visitor were revealed.

Summing up all the pictures, the explanations and views given by Alexandra would lead us too far, bearing in mind that after all, you were there !

The slides were presented one after the other, bringing each time a different red colour varying from very light pink to a nearly black red. So was pure red connected to love, orange represented the sun, pink the maternal quality and crimson was translated as death, or nearly so !

Alexandra Drysdale pointed out another interesting fact. The Aztecs produced a red dye called cochineal which they made from a species of scale insect, still used today in products such as lipstick and known to us as E 120 !

Also fascinating was the almost magic use of different tones of red on portraits. Sometimes it was so sparingly but skilfully applied that the face seemed drained of all energy. On another one the master was able by using deeper tones of red to produce a radiant and alert face.

The lecture went on with more slides of classic, modern and abstract painters like Matisse, Gainsborough, Chagall, Watts, Sargent, Constable etc.

Alexandra Drysdale, a very able painter, presented a painting of her own called "Love's Offering" and she explained in detail the use of the different colours and what the painting stood for.

From the slides three paintings caught my attention for various reasons, namely :

- "Coronation Lilly, Lilly" by John Singer Sargent which gave an almost photographic impression.
- "Vesuvius in eruption" by Joseph Wright of Derby which was breathtaking. The effects of light fascinated Wright and apparently he made 30 variations of this painting.
- And finally a painting by Constable which represented a Suffolk landscape. It is a sublime painting beyond words. In the whole picture there is only one tiny spot of red paint but it catches the eye

immediately and makes all the difference.

With less than a mediocre interest for colour I nevertheless left the Rubens café that evening with a better view on colour and in the future I will be looking at paintings in a different way.

RC

### *The Rijksmuseum on the Scheldt*

On 20 November, 17 members of ADFAS visited the *Rijksmuseum on the Scheldt*, an exhibition of some 40 masterpieces from Holland's most famous art museum; Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum is closed for renovation for the next two years, and a large part of its collection has been loaned out to other museums including the KMSKA.

The Rijksmuseum works are displayed together with paintings from the KMSKA's own collection, giving the viewer an opportunity to compare works from the two museums. Our guide, Ann, took us through the exhibition's three galleries. The first was "Mannerism", a term used for the period following the Renaissance when artists tried to emulate the work of Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. Here, the outstanding picture was *Lot and His Daughters* (1616) by Hendrick Goltzius. The next gallery was called "Portraits"; portraiture was a new development that had grown from the custom of depicting prominent people in religious paintings. For me, the most interesting was *Three Regentesses of the Amsterdam Leper House* (1668) by Ferdinand Bol.

The third gallery was "Caravaggism"; there were many followers of the expressive style of the Italian painter Caravaggio in The Netherlands, particularly in Utrecht, and they are well represented here. My favourite here was *Democritus*, painted by Hendrick ter Brugghen in 1628.

We enjoyed our tour, but were disappointed at the few paintings we saw; we had thought there were going to be more. The exhibition is still worth visiting though, and you have enough time as it is here until December 2006.

AMD

## ***DATES TO REMEMBER***

7 February 2005	ADFAS Lecture <i>How is it Made? A Closer Look at Silver</i> Lecturer: Dr Helen Clifford	Rubenshof, 1st floor	7.30 pm
15 February 2005	ADFAS Committee Meeting (if you have anything you would like brought up at the Committee meeting, please get in touch with Trudy Debice or Gilberte Du Bois)		
19 February 2005	ADFAS Study Day: Floris Jespers - Retrospective (This is an all-day event)	PMMK, Oostende	tba
7 March 2005	ADFAS Lecture <i>Spoils of War – The Displaced Art of WWII</i> Lecturer: Rev. Donald Easton	Rubenshof, 1st floor	7.30 pm
19 March 2005	ADFAS Study Day At the renewed Photography Museum -	Waalse Kaai 47	10.15 am
4 April 2005	ADFAS Lecture <i>Cities of Vesuvius: Art and Everyday life in Ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum</i> Lecturer: Dr Neil Faulkner	Rubenshof, 1st floor	7.30 pm
9 May 2005	ADFAS lecture <i>Velasquez, the Great Magician</i> Lecturer: Douglas Skeggs	Rubenshof, 1st floor	7.30 pm
17 June 2005	Evening Tour (with guide) and dinner: Katoen Natie Art Collection (Further information in the next Newsletter)	Van Aerdtstraat	7.30 pm

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With thanks to this month's contributors:  
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