

THE NEWSLETTER

Issue No.3 – January/February 2007

An Introduction

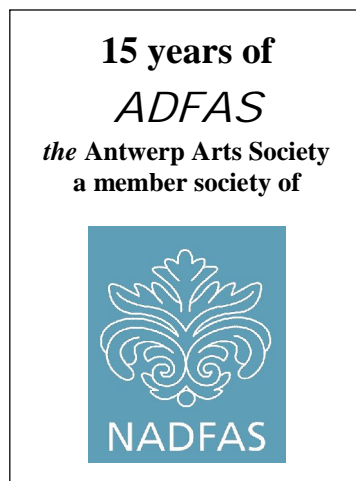
Dear Members,

On behalf of the ADFAS Committee, I would like to wish all of you the very best for 2007. 2006 was a memorable year for ADFAS with the 15th Anniversary of our society and our 4th Contemporary Art Exhibition. On a personal level, the two events of which I have the fondest memories are the Art Exhibition and the visit to the new Palace of Justice in Antwerp.

It was the first time that I have been involved in helping out at an art exhibition and it was a wonderful opportunity for me to get to know other members who gave so generously of their time to help man the exhibition. It is no mean feat for a small society such as ours to run such an event. Of course, the success of the Art Exhibition was due in no small part to all the work put into its organisation by Trudy Debec and Martine Baines. We were very lucky, also, to have such generous sponsors.

As regards our last visit of 2006, I found the tour of the Law Courts fascinating. Our guide, Key Minnebo was superb and filled us in on the history of the construction of this building and on its impressive architecture. I have always liked this building but now look at it in a different light with this new information. One could not but be impressed by the architects' use of environmentally friendly materials and their use of state of the art heating and cooling systems to make such a large structure as energy efficient as possible. Thank you, Gilberte, for organising this visit.

As you all know, we have been operating without a chairman this season. We have just had our second meeting and I must say that everything seems to be running smoothly. Of



course, Trudy is always on hand to offer any help or advice when needed.

Also, we have some very experienced members on the Committee who are able to inform and guide the newer members. Our newest member, Grishma Shah, will accompany Angela to the Mainland Europe and Directory Meeting in March.

The Committee has arranged a pre-lecture supper in February at the Rubenshof and hope that many of you will be free to attend. Last year's supper was very enjoyable and was a good opportunity for members to meet and chat.

Georgina Murphy

Latest news

Have you visited the newly re-opened Musical Museum at the Vleeshuis? I took Janet Canetty-Clarke there after her lecture the other day, and we both loved it.– why not add it to *your* list of Things to Do? – GDB

SUPPER AT THE RUBENSHOF

As our pre-lecture supper at the Rubenshof last season was such an enjoyable occasion, we are repeating it before our lecture on Wednesday 7 February. We are very lucky to be able to offer it at the same price as the pre-lecture suppers in 2005 and 2006.

Menu

Soup of the day *or* Cheese croquettes
Steak with pepper sauce *or* Fried cod fillets, served with French fries
Sweet *or* coffee

Price: €18.60 per person

Alternatives:

Starter – Carpaccio of Beef *or*
Smoked ham with Melon - €2 extra

Main – Filet of Veal *or* Filet of Lamb
- €4 extra

(This does not include drinks, which will be charged for separately.)

Time: 18.45 for 19.00 hours.

Please call Gilberte or Angela (numbers on the last page) by Friday, 2 February at the latest if you would like to join the supper party. (You can also call Gilberte on her mobile: 0477/530 501.) At the same time can you let us know your choice of menu. Payment should be made on the night direct to the Rubenshof

Our meeting place:

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

The February and March lectures

Monday 5 February 2007
DANIEL LIBESKIND: WINNER
OF THE WORLD TRADE
CENTER COMPETITION
Lecturer: Alicia Salter

In Daniel Libeskind we have an architect of great originality. His most famous work to date is the Jewish Museum in Berlin, but he has done work in Spain, Israel, and the United States, and a wonderful building for the Imperial War Museum in Manchester.

His approach to design is most unusual. For instance, in the case of the Jewish Museum, he wanted to recreate the importance of the Jewish Community of the thirties, which no longer exists thanks to Hitler's persecution. To do this, he looked up all the old Jewish addresses, plotted them on a city map and traced lines between them all. He found they formed a distorted version of the Star of David.

This distorted Star of David became the ground plan of his museum and through this ground plan he slashed a straight corridor – an empty space to symbolise the void which the deaths of these Jews have left in the life of the city. This void is constantly hitting us as we move around the museum; we cannot forget it, it is always blocking our path and we have to either go over it or under it.



Daniel Libeskind's design for the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan

It is this depth of search which distinguishes Libeskind from mainstream architects. He is a poet, a musician and an historian – the silhouette of his buildings may be confusing, but they work and to discover the logic behind the confusion

is not only challenging but fun, and I hope we'll be able to enjoy that adventure together.

Alicia Salter

Monday 5 March 2007
HOW IS IT MADE? A CLOSER
LOOK AT SILVER
Lecturer: Helen Clifford

Helen Clifford was due to lecture to us in February 2005, but due to a sudden medical emergency, she had to cancel her visit. She has now agreed to come back and talk to us on the same subject, so we repeat the introduction to the lecture which appeared in the Newsletter of February 2005.

Helen Clifford's lecture will cover three main points:

1. Goldsmiths and their workshops from 1200 to the present.
2. Methods of construction including Raising, Spinning, Flat Sheet and Casting.
3. Methods of decorating including Embossing, Chasing and Engraving.

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 also worked in silver and other metals. There were both monastic and secular goldsmiths 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 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*).



Recommended reading:

The Thames and Hudson Manual of Silversmithing by Frances Loyen, London 1980

Silversmithing and Jewellery by Henry Wilson, 1902, Paperback 1978

The Collector's Dictionary of Gold and Silverware by Michael Clayton, 1971, Antique Collectors' Club 1985.

GDB

Our February lecturer

ALICIA SALTER

Alicia Salter is an architectural historian, and lectures widely not only in the UK but also the USA and Australia, and for the National Art Collections Fund and The National Trust in addition to NADFAS. She is a tour leader and cruise lecturer, a co-founder of 'Art Circle', and has contributed to the *Dictionary of London*.

Our March lecturer

HELEN CLIFFORD

Helen Clifford completed her doctorate at the Royal College of Art, and while studying a partnership of 18th century silversmiths learnt the basics of the craft in the College studios. She has curated many exhibitions connected with silver both historic and contemporary, including *Twentieth Century Silver* at the Crafts Council in 1995 and *A Treasured Inheritance: 600 Years of Oxford College Silver* at the Ashmolean in 2004. She is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Warwick, and owner and curator of the Swaledale Museum in Reeth, North Yorkshire. In 2005 she was a member of the first Jerwood Prize panel for British Metalworking.

Other items of interest

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

Dinah Reynolds on The Cup that Cheered (December 2006)

The big question for the committee was: would we have as many people present at the December lecture as in other years when we used the Hilton facilities? The answer was no. The free drink and the Christmas cake did not compensate for the awful weather and the unknown venue!

A very cheerful subject indeed, given by a speaker with a good sense of humor. But perhaps that was not enough to make it an unforgettable evening. Dinah Reynolds is specialized in ceramics, she has written about Worcester porcelain and she even brought some of her personal pieces of old tea, coffee and chocolate cups. But when she announces her lecture with “the introduction of tea, coffee and chocolate...”, then I expect to hear something about those new beverages. The lecturer did tell us where these drinks came from (tea from China and Japan, coffee from Ethiopia and Arabia, chocolate from India and later from Brazil and Mexico), but did every one drink it in these countries? How expensive were the newly introduced products in Europe? Who could afford them? When did they become everyday family drinks? If we used to drink beer and ale before, did we never have warm drinks? etc.

But having said that, Dinah Reynolds is a great expert in ceramics. She showed us on one screen paintings from the 17th and 18th century in which people were drinking tea, coffee or chocolate and on the second screen she showed details of these kinds of cups, bowls, saucers, teapots, teaspoons, round tea tables and special tea boxes. Some were made in ceramics (Meissen, Delft, Limoges, etc), others in silver, some in more or less sophisticated forms (I liked the one with the handle at a 90° angle!), some plain and others extremely decorated (with Chinoiserie). It was all brilliantly explained.

GDB

Janet Canetty-Clarke on The Rake's Progress (January 2007)

The lecturer was a real character. She knows her subject in every detail (no papers to read from!), only the pleasure to capture her audience ... and she did!

Starting with a general introduction on the fascination that his engravings and painting have always had, she subsequently sketched the life and work of William Hogarth (London 1697-1764) and went on to describe the eight paintings that make up *The Rake's Progress*. The libretto of Stravinsky's opera *The Rake's Progress* was written by W.H. Auden and Chester Kallman and is based loosely on these eight paintings and engravings, which Stravinsky had seen on May 2, 1947 in a Chicago exhibition. Commenting on the paintings she pointed out details that Hockney would take over in his setting and costumes for Stravinsky's opera production for Glyndebourne. In this way we also meet the principal characters.

Our speaker continued with Stravinsky's life and work. How, after having composed his best known music for Diaghilev's Russian Ballet and his encounter with Picasso and Cocteau, he came much later to compose his only full length opera. The lecturer then showed us slides of the Hockney opera production. While we listened to Stravinsky's music and to the singing, she pointed out details of the crosshatches that Hockney used in the costume and setting designs to refer to Hogarth's etching technique.

The story concerns the decline and fall of one Tom Rakewell, who deserts Anne Trulove for the delights of London in the company of Nick Shadow, who turns out to be the Devil. After several misadventures, all initiated by the devious Shadow, Tom ends up in Bedlam. The moral of the tale is: “For idle hearts and hands and minds the Devil finds a work to do”.

What a delightful evening!

GDB

Visit: Exhibition at the KMSKA Vlaamse Primitieven

Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych
Saturday 31 March 2007 at 10 am
(9.45 am on the steps of the museum)

Price per person: 12 € (4 € + group entry to the exhibition 8 €/pp, free for Friends of the Museum but bring your card).

It will NOT be a guided tour but a powerpoint presentation in English in the auditorium of the KMSKA, followed by an individual visit to the exhibited works.

If interested, put your name down on the list at the February or March Lecture, or call Gilberte (03/230 98 72) until 20 February. After that date call Angela Dodds (03/230 39 360). Payment can be made to Gilberte or Grishma at the February & March lectures.

ATTENTION: maximum 20 in group!

This exhibition will bring together nearly 36 pairs of Netherlandish panel paintings from the 15th and 16th centuries, including works from public and private collections in Europe and the United States. Unfortunately, the diptych format—essentially two hinged panels that can be opened and closed like a book—was vulnerable to alteration, even the separation and dispersal of the panels. The exhibition will reunite several paintings now owned by different institutions, such as Rogier van der Weyden's *Virgin and Child* from California with his portrait of *Philippe de Croy* from Antwerp (c. 1460). This is an example of a popular theme that showed a donor portrayed on one panel praying to holy personages depicted on the other panel. Such diptychs, often small in size, were used for private devotion. Many of the works in the exhibition have been given extensive technical examinations that shed light on painting techniques, workshop practice, and the way the diptychs were constructed and displayed—including some that were not originally diptychs at all but were probably meant to hang side by side as pendants.

DATES TO REMEMBER

<p><u>7 February 2007</u> (Note: this meeting is unusually on a Wednesday and not a Monday)</p>	<p>Daniel Libeskind, Winner of the World Trade Center Competition Lecturer: Alicia Salter Preceded by dinner (Further information, menu and booking details in the January Newsletter)</p>	<p>Rubenshof, 1st floor Lecture at 8.30 pm</p> <p>Rubenshof</p>	<p>as from 8.15 pm</p> <p>6.30 pm</p>
<p>14 February 2007</p>	<p>ADFAS Committee Meeting (if you have anything you would like to be discussed at the Committee meeting, please get in touch with Georgina Murphy)</p>		
<p>5 March 2007</p>	<p>How is it Made? A Closer Look at Silver Lecturer: Helen Clifford</p>	<p>Rubenshof, 1st floor Lecture at 8 pm</p>	<p>as from 7 pm</p>
<p>31 March 2007</p>	<p>ADFAS Outing: Visit to the exhibition Flemish Primitives: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych</p>	<p>KMSKA Meet at 9.45 am for 10 am tour</p>	
<p>2 April 2007</p>	<p>How to Look after your Furniture Lecturer: Christopher Chanter</p>	<p>Rubenshof, 1st floor Lecture at 8 pm</p>	<p>as from 7 pm</p>
<p>7 May 2007</p>	<p>The Mughals of India Lecturer: Ann Peerless</p>	<p>Rubenshof, 1st floor Lecture at 8 pm</p>	<p>as from 7 pm</p>

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With thanks to this month's contributors:
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