



The Sketch

The newsletter of the Cambridge Drawing Society December 2024

From the President

Susan Abbs



As we close the chapter on 2024 and look ahead to an exciting new year, it's the perfect moment to reflect on the remarkable contributions made by a few of our long-serving members. The Cambridge Drawing Society owes so much to the dedication of Brian Holley, Tracey Ashman, and Steve Ashman, each of whom has devoted so much to making the Cambridge Drawing Society what it is today.

First, a huge thank you to Brian Holley, who though not an artist has been our Treasurer for the past six years. His attention to detail, financial expertise, and tireless commitment have been invaluable, and we owe him a great debt of gratitude as he steps down.

Tracey Ashman, our wonderful Events Secretary for the last four years, has worked tirelessly to organise workshops, talks and our annual summer parties. Her warmth and ability to bring people together has fostered a sense of community within the Society, and we will miss her greatly in this role.

Now, I would like to take a moment to talk about someone truly special—Steve Ashman. While Steve may not be an artist himself, his contributions to the Cambridge Drawing Society are nothing short of extraordinary. For the past nine years, Steve has been the heart and soul of our Society, always there when we need him, going above and beyond with kindness and patience.



From organising our bi-annual exhibitions to managing membership, troubleshooting problems, and being the go-to person for anything the Society needed—Steve has done it all, and he's done it with a smile. His role has been so vast and so critical that, rather than replacing him with just one person, we've had to split his responsibilities into three separate roles: Exhibitions, Membership and Database. I simply cannot overstate how much

we owe him. Steve, we are incredibly grateful for everything you've done—you will always be a cherished part of the Cambridge Drawing Society.

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CDS NEEDS
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Looking ahead to the New Year, we have exciting things in store. I am thrilled to announce that the Society will be participating in the Cambridge Arts Festival, a fantastic opportunity to showcase our talent and connect with the wider arts community.

As part of the Festival, we'll be hosting a special SketchTogether event at the Museum of Cambridge on 10th February —mark your calendars and join us for this creative gathering.

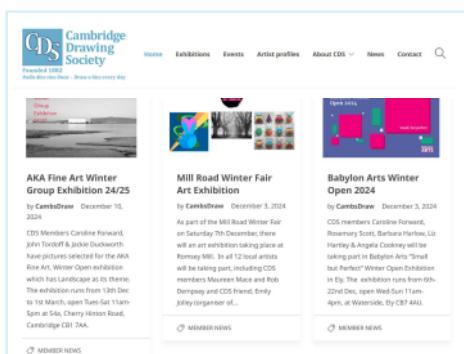
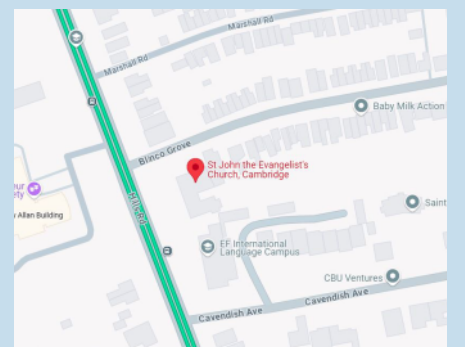
Members are also invited to take part in the Festival's 'Out of the Ordinary' art competition. The theme invites you to create an artwork inspired by an out-of-the-ordinary view of Cambridge. This is your chance to reimagine our city and share your unique perspective. As a special benefit, CDS members have already been emailed the full competition details before it is launched to the public, giving you a head start to plan and create.



I am excited to see how we will continue to grow and evolve as a Society in the coming year. Thank you again to Brian, Tracey, and Steve for everything you've done for the Cambridge Drawing Society – we are lucky to have such amazing committee members. Here's to an inspiring year ahead, full of artistic exploration, collaboration, and connection!

2025 AGM

The date has been set for next year's AGM – Friday 28th February 2025 in the Wilkinson Room, St. John's the Evangelist Church, Hills Road, Cambridge. The meeting will start at 7pm and we expect to be finished within the hour. This will be followed by a social event with snacks and refreshments. All Members and Friends of the Society are welcome.



*We love having your news items on our website, and in our regular emails, but PLEASE give us a week's notice of your event. If we send out too many emails at once, it goes into spam!
Thank you
Tim Duckworth*

Appeal

Urgent - Cambridge Drawing Society needs your help!

As I mentioned in my very first editorial, Cambridge Drawing Society relies entirely on the dedication and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Without them, there simply wouldn't be a Society. We are now looking for new volunteers to step into the vital roles of Treasurer and Events Secretary.



Treasurer

We are seeking a new Treasurer to manage the finances of the Society. This role doesn't require an accounting background - just someone who is organised and detail-oriented. You don't even need to be a member to take on this position; perhaps a partner, particularly someone who has recently retired and is looking for a new opportunity, might be a perfect fit.

Events Secretary

We are also looking for a new Events Secretary. This is a fantastic opportunity to organise workshops, talks, and the summer party. If you've ever wanted to bring a specific speaker or workshop to the Society, this is your chance to make it happen. The role is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to the creative direction of the Society, and it's also a great way to take part in the workshops you help organise for free.



Why Volunteer?

The Cambridge Drawing Society thrives because of the energy and passion of our volunteers. Without them, we wouldn't have the amazing events, exhibitions, or workshops that make the Society what it is. Volunteering is your chance to help shape the future of the Society, connect with like-minded people, and contribute your ideas to make it even better. Our committee is a welcoming, friendly group that meets a few times a year to brainstorm and plan exciting activities. Meetings are relaxed, sociable, and there are always cakes! Volunteering is a fantastic way to gain new skills, build connections, and make a lasting impact on the growth of the Society.

How to Get Involved

If you're interested in taking on either of these roles or simply want to learn more, please get in touch! We'd love to hear from you. Don't forget, the roles don't need to be filled by members alone - if you know someone who might be a great fit, perhaps a partner who has retired and is looking for a new opportunity, encourage them to reach out too.

The future of the Society depends on the involvement of committed members. Without volunteers, there is no Society. If we are to continue offering the events, support, and opportunities that make the Cambridge Drawing Society special, we need your help. Step forward, get involved, and make a difference.



Sky Portrait Artist of the Year

Giulia Quaresima

Taking part in the Sky Portrait Artist of the Year Series 11 has been an incredible experience; challenging, surreal but absolutely marvellous, a milestone in my art career, a dream come true.



Self Portrait



I loved every minute of it since the moment I received the phone call; from the proudness in my children's eyes, to the stress to get everything ready the days before; from the train journey to London, to the happiness of meeting the two dearest friends of mine who flew all the way from Italy to be by my side, cheer for me and support me; from the early waking up in order to promptly be at the Battersea Arts Centre, to being surrounded all of a sudden by camera, audience, members of the filming crew and the pressure of the 4 hours time-limit to produce my best portrait.



It was a joy and an absolute pleasure to have comedian and actor Rosie Jones as my sitter. Since she mentioned at the beginning she would have preferred not to be portrayed as a serious Mona Lisa, I was eager to create a jolly contemporary version of the Da Vinci's painting that could capture her enthusiasm and infectious positivity, including Rosie's hands for best echoing the composition. Her reaction when she saw my portrait after turning the easel was priceless. I've also felt so very lucky to have met and shared that day with a talented group of artists.

The feedback on my performance from fellow artists and members of the public has been amazing, the promotions by galleries I'm collaborating with and the Cambridge Drawing Society and the Society of Graphic Fine Art has been lovely and generous, and it definitely contributed to make it a memorable and exciting adventure.

Autumn Exhibition 2024

Steve Ashman

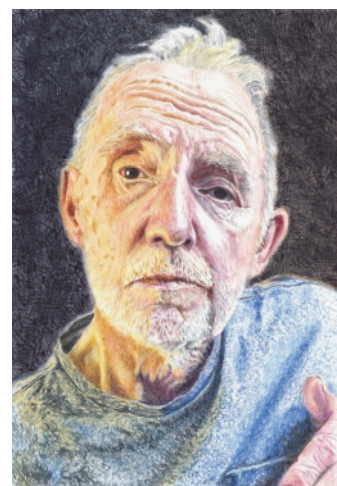


The Autumn exhibition was held during the last week of October at our usual venue in the Old Gym at the Leys School in Cambridge. 890 visitors saw the exhibition, an increase of 18% compared to 2023. 94 artists exhibited a total of 286 framed works, sculpture and ceramics. 34 artists sold work with an average price of £289, although volume of sales was down 31% compared with the previous year.

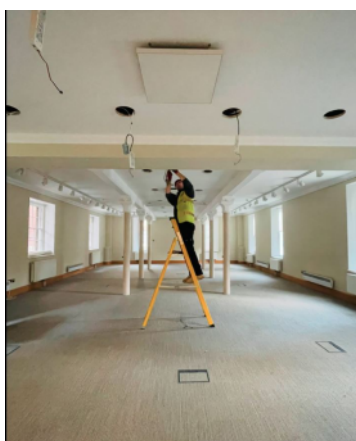
One possible explanation could be the budget looming during the week following the exhibition. Despite this, the exhibition made a profit of £2,267 after commission payments to artists and costs, which offsets the loss made by the Spring exhibition.

Congratulations to John Glover whose work, Colin's Shed, (see below) was voted the public's favourite work, pipping by just one vote Rob Ellis's work, Man in a Jumper (right).

The Friends of the Society draw was won by Derek Holley. Derek wins a £50 voucher to put towards buying a framed work in any of the Society's exhibitions.



Spring Exhibition 2025



As soon as the Autumn exhibition finishes we are busy planning the Spring 2025 exhibition. I am pleased to say that we will be reopening our call for entries for new candidates, after suspending this for 2024 due to exhibition capacity constraints. It is always a fascinating time to see the new talent the Society attracts.

Another exciting development for the Spring exhibition; the Pitt building will have completed a refurbishment of the ground floor, creating an open plan reception area, including removing the wall from the back corridor. We are hoping this will create a fine space to display greetings cards, and maybe even more space to hang artworks. In addition, the Newton room will have the cosmetic pillars removed, providing a totally clear floor space. This work is planned to be completed by 31st March.

Because of this building work, and allowing a few weeks just in case the work overruns, the Spring exhibition will take place later than usual. Here are the key dates for your diaries:

Call for entries opens:	Monday 6th January
Call for entries close (Members):	Friday 21st March
Digital Selection Results (Members):	Wednesday 26th March
Call for entries close (New Candidates.):	Friday 28th March
Hand-in (Pitt and Cottenham):	Wednesday 23rd April
Private View:	Friday 25th April
Public Exhibition:	Saturday 26th April – Saturday 3rd May
Collection unsold works (Pitt):	Saturday 3rd May
Collection unsold works (Cottenham):	Tuesday 6th May

Autumn exhibition 2025

The Old Gym at the Leys School has been booked for next year's Autumn exhibition. The Private View will be on Saturday 25th October, with the public exhibition running from Sunday 26th October through to Saturday 1st November 2025.

Colin's Shed

John Glover

I first discovered Colin's shed when I was teaching a painting holiday in Kirkcudbright in South West Scotland. It is a town and area I know well. My father grew up on a farm close by and I spent many years researching other ancestors (all farmers) who lived in the area.

Colin is a retired businessman living in Kirkcudbright, and he happily showed me his shed, about which I had heard. Originally an old wash house, the shed is now a fascinating treasure trove of articles collected over the years, so it is also a trip down memory lane, a warm and cosy place for quiet contemplation.



It appealed to my love of detail, born of years spent as a book and magazine illustrator. Pen ink and wash was for me the obvious medium to do justice to this amazing display, but in certain areas like the rugs on the hearth, I also employed acrylics and printing techniques.

When children look at the painting, I challenge them to find the penguin. Perhaps CDS members would also like to have a go? No prizes offered!



Scintilla

Emily Jolley

A solo and curated show at the Keate Family Arts Trust by Emily Jolley (CDS Friend)

During September I had the joy of exhibiting my work alongside that of some of my artworld heroes, including Barbara Hepworth, Georges Braque, and John Piper, thanks to an exciting collaboration with the Keate Family Arts Trust, Cambridge. This show was their second featuring a local artist/curator since re-opening the doors to their collection this summer.

Bringing the show together

I first visited the house in early 2024 and was instantly struck by the ambiance of the townhouse (think pint-sized Kettle's Yard). Then I was shown the treasure trove lurking upstairs, where I was treated to beautiful original artworks literally landing in my lap (as we were huddled on the floor and there was no-where else to put them!) A lot of tidying up has taken place since then...

From that first encounter the bones of an exhibition formed in my mind, based around key pieces I'd seen which particularly appealed to me and which happen to relate strongly to influences which have shaped my own work. The title for the show, Scintilla, meaning a spark or a fragment, evokes themes that guided the curation including inspirations for abstraction; pieces/coming together; and choice of artworks that highlight something of the nature of the house and collection, of which only a small part could be included.

After much rumination, and a further visit to measure up, I spent a day working with Aggie Forster (KFAT Chair) to hang the show – me positioning the work on the walls and she taking the lead on framing works from the collection as needed. I had a wonderful time! The end result received lovely feedback from visitors who complimented the coherence of the space. Special thanks go to the two groups of CDS members and friends who so enthusiastically attended.



Quince, by Emily Jolley



*The Seasons: Winter,
by John Piper*



*Lithograph by Barbara
Hepworth*

A swift walk through

Curation of the entrance hall introduced the exhibition themes through artworks by John Piper, Mark Van Heygen, Emily Jolley, and a Barbara Hepworth quote penned on the mirror: *'I am not interested in creating an exact replica of nature, but rather capturing its essence.'*

This guided visitors through to the sitting room where key works included *'Quince'* - a seminal work for my practice, inspired by looking up through branches during daily walks to the studio while studying my BA – which speaks directly to the quince which generously swathes the front of the house, dappling the light to the interior.



Blackbird on Orange, by P Sutton



Oracular, WIP by Emily Jolley

Smaller works included lino monotypes, linking with the KFAT interest in print editions. Prints by Barbara Hepworth, Georges Braque, and Paul Sutton punctuated the walls alongside some of my more recent paintings. This included *'Oracular'*, a large painting on board in shades of black and white which speaks to a dilemma I have as an artist – while feeling driven to communicate through art I wish the work to resonate with the viewer (or not) on their own terms, and not to give too much away.

The garden room focused on inviting the outside in and changing states/seasons. A John Piper etching *'The Seasons: Winter'* and my own *'Outgoing Summer'* in gouache and emulsion paint, sat alongside a touching sculptural wall-piece by Victoria Smith which poetically rescues the evidence of a (now passed) lifetime of gardening – rows of hand-written seed labels shivering against scrap timber and nails.

A full list of the featured artworks can be found on the News section of my website: emilyjolley.co.uk



Growing Reflections, by Emily Jolley

Discover, love, give back

A real joy of the Keate Family Arts Trust and its collection, from my point of view, is the value it places on art for arts' sake. The range of works demonstrates the confidence to accumulate artworks by art world heavy-hitters and lesser/unknown artists alike. It exemplifies a realistic approach to collecting and displaying art according to the tastes and budget of individuals. The founder, David Keate, was himself an artist creating collages and sculptures from giant hogweed, several of which are on permanent display at the house. The Trust was established so that his collected artworks could be made available to the general public to view and enjoy, with the particular hope that other artists would be encouraged and inspired. The collection has continued to be added to by later generations, and with Aggie as Chair is having new life breathed into it with ambitions for a series of exhibitions in 2025, and resident artist opportunities in future.

It's a real delight to be continuing to work with the Trust – currently as a co-opted Trustee – and to know that a piece of my artwork has a permanent home as part of the collection. The impact of the exhibition has also followed me into the studio where a large painting in progress has shades of KFAT's Barbara Hepworth print glimmering through.

The Keates Family Arts Trust

Jackie Duckworth & Aggie Forster

The Keate Family Arts Trust has a fascinating collection of mid to late Twentieth Century prints, ceramics, textiles and private press books, and some more recent works. The collection includes works by artists as well known as Hepworth, Frink and Bawden.

Our aspiration is to follow in the footsteps of Kettles Yard and the David Parr house, and to collaborate with contemporary artists like Emily. However, the first stage is to get everything on the online archive, and to organise the storage of the art books and artworks in a way that keeps them safe but makes them accessible.

So, we plan volunteering weekends over the winter: 14/15 Dec. 11/12 Jan. 8/9th Feb. 8/9 March & 12/13 April. Everyone will be welcome from 10.00 onwards on each Saturday and Sunday and there will be tasks for those who want to move things about and those who'd rather work at a computer making entries and collating information. Lunch will be provided each day. All are welcome.

This is a unique opportunity to share in the rediscovery of our many treasures. You might even find our missing Hepworth!

For more information contact Aggie Forster
keatefamilyartstrust@gmail.com

