

WINTER 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Dear Members

I am pleased to report that Society life is back on track after the recent disruptions imposed upon us. We have started up demonstrations and workshops again and many of you have taken advantage of these to get back to painting and reconnecting with your friends.



The Autumn Fair was a very lively event enjoyed by everyone, with a welcome number of new artists and crafters. This year it was held during half term to give the school time to do a deep clean afterwards: this did not adversely affect us, in fact we attracted more visitors than we have ever had. It remains to be seen whether or not we will hold the Fair at the same time next year.

I am currently preparing the Demo and Workshop programme for 2022. Some of our regular artists have moved over to Zoom and this has given me the opportunity to invite some new faces to our monthly meetings. Watch this space! Plein Air sessions and One Day Summer Workshops will be announced separately closer to the time.



As you are aware we have adjusted our year to run from January to December which means that you will soon get an invitation to renew your membership. Fees will revert to pre Covid levels now that we are able to offer a full programme of events. I am taking every opportunity to mention that the Society is moving over to email communication as much as possible; if you think you are not getting information through please check your spam file regularly.

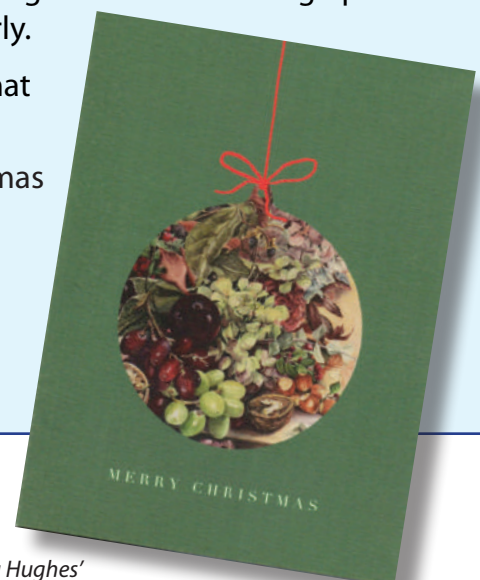
2021 has thrown just about everything at us so let's hope that next year is kinder!

On behalf of the Committee may I wish you a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

Best Wishes

Paul Potter

Chair



NORFOLK PAINTING SCHOOL - OIL PAINTING

(www.norfolkpaintingschoollive.com)

I have been a member of Studio Talk since May 2020, at a cost of £2.50 per week. It has evolved into an inspirational art club. It takes place each Tuesday utilising a private online FaceBook group. Martin Kinnear, the Principal, runs the session lasting one hour. Members can type in questions during the session. Each session can be watched On Demand for 7 days.

If you go to the Website you will discover that Norfolk Painting School offers a range of other courses that are held on Zoom. I have recently taken several "Focus on" courses that last for two and a half hours, each, and are aimed at Intermediate Level painters. I did one on "Glazing" that went into great depth on techniques and materials and showed how classical glazing effects were achieved.

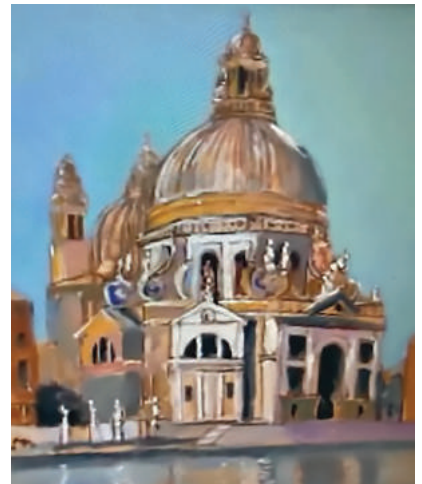
The next course was on "Impressionist Landscapes" based on Alfred Sisley's work. Lastly, I did "Nocturnes" based on Turner; Cuyt and Whistler. Each course comes with colour images of the paintings tackled, together with detailed notes as a pdf. Again each course was available on demand for 7 days. There are 12 different courses on offer, grouped into "colour" "creative techniques" and "portraiture"

There is now a new Tutor on board, in addition to Martin Kinnear, who was formerly both an art teacher and working in the film industry, called Paul Minter. He specialises in demonstrating how to simplify complicated scenes. He has started a monthly set of courses that are called "Landmark". They are in a similar format of 2.5 hrs on Zoom, with 7 days On Demand. I have now taken the first 2 titles that were "Splendour of Venice" and "Rain in the City of Light". Venice covered Canaletto; Turner; Guardi and Sickert. Paul painted "Santa Maria della Salute" and "Basilica San Marco". Paris was based on Eduard Cortes, who used the "rain" and water in the picture to reflect and amplify light. Paul added a section to the Paris course to demonstrate how he could re-work one of his paintings to give more dramatic effect. The Landscape courses are £50 each.

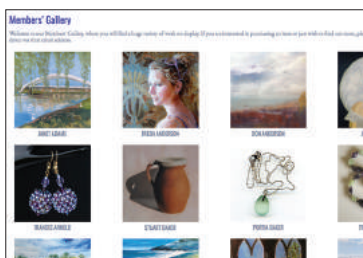
Paul is a fabulous painter and excellent raconteur, which make his sessions great fun.

Norfolk Painting School also runs "Master" classes and a Diploma course that are currently above my pay grade.

Stephen Waxman – November 2021



A REMINDER ABOUT THE MEMBERS' GALLERY ON THE WEBSITE



To all new members or those who don't currently have a page, we thought we would take this opportunity to remind you about the Members' Gallery on the website. The gallery section is a great showcase for your work and allows you to display up to **12 images**. All picture files should be sent to Colin Kyte at: colin@ckcreative.co.uk together with a short piece about yourself and details of each work for display in this order: **Title (medium, size in mm, framed or unframed, price).**

If you have any queries or need help or guidance with imaging, please email: colin@ckcreative.co.uk or **Eric Drewery** at: admin@moleseyartsociety.org.uk

For those members who already have a page this is a gentle reminder that now might be a good time for you to review your page and make any changes, especially as Christmas is approaching...

In the previous installment of this amble along the French Riviera we were in Cassis, a pretty harbour dominated by the towering cliffs of Cap Canaille. This time we venture to the other side of this impressive feature to the intriguing town of La Ciotat. (see www.studiosofthesouth.com)

LA CIOTAT – WILD PAINTINGS IN A WILD LANDSCAPE

Upon arrival in the town you would be forgiven for thinking that this is a very unlikely setting for some of the most experimental painting of the early twentieth century. There is ribbon development dedicated to the tourist trade along the shores of the Gulf d'Amour and the commercial port at the western end dominated by the giant cranes of the shipyard. However there is a hidden secret in the landscape.



La Ciotat means 'the city' and the origins of the settlement go back to Neolithic times and the Greeks and Romans undoubtedly made use of the safe anchorage where the old town is now gathered around the busy harbour. The main work of the shipyard today is the construction and repair of super-yachts for the super-rich.

The secret alluded to earlier lies to the west of the harbour where the natural landscape soon takes over from urban development and inlets from the sea or 'calanques' have been sculpted over the millennia to form incredible rock formations. These provided inspiration for Georges Braque and Othon Friesz to create many paintings in the 'Fauve' style but they were not alone in finding the area a stimulating place to work. The Lumière brothers, Louis and Auguste, were the sons of a wealthy local family and it was in the town that they pioneered the development of motion pictures.



Members of the Provençal group of painters frequented the town in the early nineteenth century and **Johan Barthold Jongkind** (1819–91) made a visit in 1880. Originally from the Netherlands he had moved to Paris and was influenced by the new Impressionist artists such as Monet, Boudin and Sisley. The picture shown is *La Ciotat* (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam) and although the town and seafront are much more developed now, the distinctive profile of the cliffs and the offshore Ile Verte remain unchanged.



In nearby Cassis **Paul Signac** had painted some important pictures in the Neo-Impressionist style and a little later the Fauves arrived and it was two of their number, **Georges Braque** (1882–1963) and **Othon Friesz** (1879–1949), who ventured on to discover the untamed countryside around La Ciotat in 1907. They were friends and enthusiastic devotees of the Fauve movement and were on an artistic odyssey along the south coast of France. This wild and exotic landscape prompted a body of work which explored non-representational form and colour and pushed the boundaries of painting towards abstraction. The first painting shown here is by Friesz entitled *La Ciotat* (Private collection) and the second, also by Friesz is *Calanque du Mugel à La Ciotat* (Fondation Regards de Provence, Marseille). Both paintings employ a vibrant use of colour and compositions incorporating sinuous curves. This brief period in La Ciotat took Friesz as far down the road to abstraction as he was willing to go and he later returned to his home in Normandy and to a more traditional style of painting that was more relevant to his personal goals.



For Georges Braque, however, the 'South' would continue to be an inspiration and led this ever-experimental artist to push twentieth century art to new limits. In collaboration with Pablo Picasso he became a leading figure in the Cubist movement in the years before the First World War. Of their relationship Braque says: *'The things that Picasso and I said to one another during those years will never be said again, and even if they were, no one would understand them anymore. It was like being roped together on a mountain.'* The first picture shown is *Le Port de La Ciotat*, 1907 (National Gallery of Art, Washington) and depicts a harbour scene much favoured by Braque, as previously seen in his work at L'Estaque. These highly creative years exploring new possibilities via both Fauvism and Cubism was followed by the catastrophe of war. Braque enlisted in the French army, like his friend Friesz, and suffered a serious head injury which required a long period recuperation. However, painting remained his passion for the rest of his life and like his friend he spent most of his time in Normandy. Still life and figure work became his focus rather than landscape and unlike Picasso, Cubism continued to permeate his work. The second image shown is *La Calanque, temps gris*, 1907 (Neue Pinakothek, Munich).



Where Friesz and Braque led, others inevitably followed. The English painter and critic **Roger Fry** (1866–1934) was a leading member of the Bloomsbury Group and he visited La Ciotat as early as 1915 and in the years after the First World War nearby Cassis became a favoured destination. Perhaps it was on a jolly outing with Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant in 1923 that he made the spectacular journey along the Routes des Crêtes across Cap Canaille taking in the magnificent views from the highest sea cliffs in France – a memorable experience to this day. The painting shown is *La Ciotat near Marseilles* (Private collection). Unlike the works by Friesz and Braque, this powerfully dramatic painting contains features that can still be identified today.

William James Glackens (1870–1938) is often referred to as the American Renoir and he was one of the founders of the Ashcan School and the group known as The Eight, characterised by gritty, realistic depictions of urban life – a far cry from the work of the French master of Impressionism. In 1895 he travelled to Europe and spent a year in Paris immersed in the hothouse of artistic experiment and for the rest of his life he would be a committed Francophile, making frequent visits to the capital and to the South of France. It was later in his career that he adopted a brighter palette and that led to comparison with Renoir. Another claim to fame that La Ciotat has is that it was the birthplace of the game of pétanque in 1910 and this activity is celebrated in *Bowlers, La Ciotat* 1930 (Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale).

Other notable artists who have found inspiration here include **Georges Valmier**, **Jozef Pankiewicz**, **Arthur Segal** and **Nicolas de Staël**.

