

Support the *Glynn Vivian 2016 Fund!*



The new Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

Annwyl Gyfeillion / Dear Friends

Excitement is rising! Though we don't know the exact date yet, we know that the Glynn Vivian will be opening its doors again to the public this autumn. If you've been lucky enough to have had a guided tour of the 'new' interior of the building, you'll already know what an impact it's going to make, on old friends and new visitors alike.

For the Friends, as for many others, the last five years have been a painful period of 'maternal deprivation', to use John Bowlby's phrase, but we can now look forward to re-encountering old favourites and making new discoveries.

The Glynn Vivian has two very special exhibitions planned for the reopening.

In October *Leonardo da Vinci: Ten Drawings from the Royal Collection* will bring to Swansea some of the greatest Renaissance improvisations on paper.

In November there will be a major retrospective by Glenys Cour, our Vice President. This exciting and eagerly-anticipated exhibition will be curated by our other Vice President, Mel Gooding. Both exhibitions are likely to prove very popular.

As you'll know, the Friends are joining in the celebrations by raising money to help the Gallery make the most of its 'new' home. Conservation, learning and publicity activities will all benefit, at a time when public money to support them is increasingly scarce but when the Gallery is more active than ever.

We started the Fundraising Campaign on March 1st and we're aiming high: to collect £50,000 by the time of the reopening. Within the first week over £1,600 had been donated. To date the Fund stands at £6,366. We'll try to keep up the momentum, and we're planning associated events to raise more funds, like an Art Auction, scheduled for July.

If you haven't already given, please consider doing so. If you've made a personal donation, perhaps you can think of friends and acquaintances, not members of the Friends, whom you could persuade to help the cause? (You may be able to go a step further, and get them to join the Friends: we'll

shortly be starting a recruitment campaign, and asking you to help.)

Glenys has agreed to one of our 'ambassadors' for the fundraising initiative. This is what she says in her message:

"When I was first on the Friends Committee, long, long ago, the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery was a very different place – it was elitist! It was a beautiful gallery full of wondrous treasures.

The Glynn Vivian has changed. It is still full of the treasures, but it now belongs to the community. It has life. Things happen there – for adults and children. The new Gallery has all the 21st century facilities and equipment essential in a city like Swansea.

But it must be paid for! Please will you be a part of this opportunity, and give generously.

Have a stake in the future!"

© Glenys Cour 2016, Vice President of the Friends

Os oes gennych syniadau newydd ar gyfer gwaith y Cyfeillion yn y dyfodol, peidiwch ag oedi: cysylltwch â mi neu unrhyw aelod arall o'r Pwyllgor. Have you a good idea for the Friends, about the *Glynn Vivian 2016 Fund* or anything else? If so, do get in touch!

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andrewmwgreen@btinternet.com



Glenys Cour November 2014
 © photo. Malcolm Hill

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Kyffin and Cricket



Highgate School Cricket Pavilion c.1910

In the summer of 2015 during a clear out of a storeroom at the rear of the ground floor of the pavilion at Highgate School in north London, a dust covered portrait in oil was discovered alongside a cricket bat, abandoned on top of deep slatted shelving designed to hold sports equipment.

The bat, which was autographed, lived in a home-made display case which bore a fragile type-written label: *THE BAT used by A.E. Knight in the 1903-04 TEST SERIES in AUSTRALIA (Leicestershire and England, Cricket Professional at Highgate School 1908-39)*. No mystery there then. Albert Ernest Knight (1873-1946) was a known quantity thanks to Valette and Obituary notices in copies of *The Cholmeleian*, the school magazine – though we were under the impression that he had joined Highgate in 1913 on his retirement from the county game. The signatures on the bat – including such evocative names as Rhodes and Trumper – were those of the English and Australian teams, probably from the Fourth Test, which England had won by 157 runs, and in which Knight made the highest score on either side: 70 not out in England's first innings. In beating Australia by three matches to two overall, the MCC team captained by Sir Pelham 'Plum' Warner, regained the Ashes.

But what of the painting? Enter a tall (very tall) and dark Italian, Simon Federigo Vincenzo Martini, otherwise known as Highgate's Capital Projects Manager, who had chanced upon the picture and sensibly decided to deny it a trip to the skip. He thought that he had spotted a 'K' through the murk at the bottom right-hand corner of the canvas, and after some of the dust of ages had been carefully blown away, a signature that looked suspiciously like 'KyffinW 45' (or possibly '43') emerged. John Kyffin Williams had been hired as Highgate's Art Master in 1944 on the school's return from wartime evacuation to Westward Ho! in Devon, so it was conceivably by his hand – but nobody that we contacted could recall ever having seen a designation of that form on a 'Kyffin'. And the picture certainly did not bear any of the hallmarks of his later palette knife impasto style. There were no other labels to be seen, so no clues as to the identity of the elderly gentleman gazing out of the picture. A teacher at Highgate perhaps? School photographs of the period suggested not. Maybe a member of staff from the Slade or from the Ruskin in Oxford, where Kyffin had trained when the School of Fine Art decamped from Bloomsbury? Again, there were no obvious candidates.

A decision was taken to have the picture professionally cleaned, and the services of Conservator of Easel Paintings Lucia Scalisi were called upon. Starting out from Sheffield, Lucia had spent eleven years at the V&A before going solo in Chelsea in London in 1995, and had previously dealt with other works (definitely) by Kyffin that the school owns. Her painstaking dabbing at the grime revealed a sombre depiction of a wise, blue-eyed old man reflecting on the vicissitudes of life as he stares steadfastly past the viewer. Shortly afterwards a grainy photograph of an elderly Albert Knight in profile came to light in the Archives, which gave rise to the suspicion that maybe he was the figure in the portrait – but no further images of him in late middle age that might have aided identification could be located.

And then one February morning Highgate Archivist, Records Keeper and museum designer Julia Hudson was editing the transcript of an interview taped in 1987 with a chap called Tommy Twidell, who had taken charge of the hundred or so boys who remained in north London during the war. She stumbled across the immortal lines: 'He (Kyffin Williams) was a very good appointment indeed, by Mr Bell ... He did a very good portrait of Albert Knight. They've got some nice paintings by him at the school.' (Geoffrey Bell was Headmaster from 1936 to 1954). Mystery – to much relief and great delight – solved! The former cricketer had been captured a year before his death, and three years before Kyffin's first public exhibition at the Colnaghi gallery on Old Bond Street in 1948. And he had been much more than a sportsman. The Cholmeleian of



Kyffin Williams *Portrait of Albert Knight* 1945 oil on canvas

March 1943 records that ‘... from the beginning of the war until May, 1940 ... Mr Albert Knight who then looked after the playing fields, and Mr Arthur Vaugh, author and publisher, graced the Sixth Form with brilliant philosophic and literary dissertations.’ The hint of resignation in the portrait perhaps derives from the fact that he had lost first his wife and then his son in the previous five years.

There is an inevitable postscript. It has since transpired that the current Groundsman, Neil Shepherd, could have saved us a lot of anguish had we approached him, as he had been told that the picture hanging in the pavilion’s entrance hall when he joined the school in 1987 was of one of his predecessors, Albert Knight – though he was unaware that Kyffin was the artist. Evidence for this lies in several sigmoidal cracks (cracks forming a concentric circular pattern which resembles a cobweb) on the paint surface, possibly caused by blows from balls that had been unkindly kicked or thrown at the portrait. Similar damage

can be seen on a large Kyffin landscape known as *Farmer on the Mountains* that hangs in the Council Chamber Corridor at Bangor University. It had once decorated the junior common room in a nearby hall of residence, and suffered at the feet of a group of young footballers housed there on a summer course.

And in fact a post-postscript too. On a visit to the National Museum Wales in Cardiff after the bulk of this article was written I spotted *Snowdon and Llyn Nantlle*, painted by Kyffin Williams c.1945. It bears the signature ‘KyffinW’.

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Friends News

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to our new members, namely: Mr and Mrs Alan and Katherine Willson from Sketty; Mr and Mrs Paul and Bridget Taylor of Manordeilo; Ms Julia Hopkins from Penarth and Vivienne Williams and Sigrd Müller of Swansea.

We also extend a warm welcome to our new student members, many of whom have been encouraged to come along by Sarah Tombs in her capacity as a Lecturer at Swansea College of Art. Ms Julia Hopkins, Neath (not Penarth, a different Julia!); Mrs Deborah Evans, Norton, Swansea; Miss Claire Annabel Francis, Glais, Swansea; Ms Anja Stenina, Swansea; Mrs Scott Mackenzie, Gowerton; Ms Rachel Williams, Briton Ferry; Ms Bjorg Bjornevik; Ms Tricia Durkin, Brynmaen and Mr John Anthony, Bridgend. We hope you enjoy our talks and events.

Ex Members

I have to report the sad news of the deaths of two Friends’ members. Firstly Dr Peter Owen-Lloyd of Langland, Swansea and secondly Mr Norman Smart, formerly of Mumbles who passed away on January 7th 2016. There is an article on Norman written by Anthony Penrose on page 9.

Mrs Pattern, Secretary of Llanelli Arts Society has recently retired after long and continuous service. We wish Mrs Pattern well and welcome Mrs S. Harries who has taken over as Secretary.

We have had a number of Friends who have, for various reasons, not renewed this year, and we thank them for the interest and support they have shown in the past.

Transport Help

One of our Friends has difficulty getting home to Gorseinon from the Friends’ talks as the buses are few and far between in the evening. If you are able to help with a lift please contact either myself or Pippa Richardson on pipparich@hotmail.com

Christmas Quiz

A number of Friends enjoyed an Art Quiz in December. Sarah Tombs did a fantastic job in compiling the questions. Russ Harris, as compere, competed very well against the chatter. The questions proved challenging and interesting and the ‘cognoscenti’ were helped along by the food and wine on offer. A jolly time was had by all. Other social events are planned.



Three members of the winning team, Daniel Trivedy, Ann Jordan and Kirstine Dunthorne
© photo. Judy and Henry Barnes

Visit to Stradey Castle

Don’t forget the visit to Stradey Castle on Wednesday, 22 June at 2.00 pm. Please contact Daniel Trivedy on Mobile 07738378839 or email trivedyd@gmail.com

Should you lose the Friends Events Leaflet you can download a copy from our website <http://www.friendsoftheglynnvivan.com/downloads/eventsprogramme.pdf>

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Valerie Ganz R.C.A. (1936-2015)



Valerie Ganz, the distinguished Swansea artist, died on 28th September 2015 after a long illness. She was born in Mumbles on 3rd February 1936 and she remained close to her birthplace for the whole of her life. She loved Mumbles and Gower.

Valerie's interest in art was apparent at an early age, as was her talent. She was determined to become an artist and nothing would deter her from achieving her ambition. She gained a place at the Swansea College of Art in 1951 at the age of sixteen and she continued her studies until 1957. Among her contemporaries were noted artists such as Howard Martin, the stained glass designer, the painter Alfred Janes and the sculptor Ronald Cour. She combined the post of part-time lecturer at Swansea and painter from 1957 to 1975 when she decided to devote herself to painting full-time.

Valerie excelled in figurative studies although she was also a considerable landscape painter. In 1985 she received a commission from the National Coal Board to spend a year in Abertillery painting studies of miners at the Six Bells Colliery. During the year she lived in Abertillery and in addition to painting the miners both underground and "on top pit" she portrayed the men and their families in the snooker halls, at choir practice and in the chapel. She enjoyed recounting stories

of her experience. She was even allowed to paint the colliers in the pit-head baths. She told me that on one occasion she was passing a man in the street when he acknowledged her. She stopped, not knowing who he was. Eventually the man spoke saying, "You don't recognise me with my clothes on, do you?" She told the story with a mischievous grin and a glint in her eye. Later Valerie returned to her work with miners when she sketched at the last deep pit in Wales, Tower Colliery, Hirwaun, immediately before its closure.

Her mining works are masterpieces of their *genre*. Two colours dominate, the orange of the miners' clothing and the black of the mine and the coal dust on the men's faces. Valerie's materials were often simply pastel or orange chalk and charcoal and the softness of the images, while totally convincing, reflects her involvement in and sympathy with the collier and his work. It was necessary, at times, to be up early in order to depict the night shift on top pit, at six in the morning, heading towards the baths, their black and orange figures with the lights on their helmets set against the pale yellow of the dawn.

One abiding element of Valerie's persona was her fascination with performance. It mattered little whether they were actors, circus artistes, jazz musicians or indeed rugby players. It is not stretching the imagination too far to suggest that her miners, in their various activities at work and leisure, also fitted into that category. In 1987 she spent two weeks attending the first professional recording of *Under Milk Wood* in London. While there she sketched the Welsh theatrical elite, performers such as Anthony Hopkins, Harry Secombe, Jonathan Pryce, Sian Phillips, even Alan Bennett (what part did he play?) and also the executive producer, George Martin. All the cast signed Valerie's copy of the script. She enjoyed the annual Swansea pantomime, producing wonderful sketches of both guest and local performers, including Ryan Davies, who was the unquestioned star for several years before his premature death.

Valerie also spent a year in London at the Central School of Ballet, sketching and painting. Like Degas, whose work she admired, she drew and painted members of the *corps de ballet* not only in performance



Valerie Ganz *End of Shift* 1985
© The artist's estate

but also during their preparations for, and subsequent to, their rehearsals and performances. A lovely example of her work is *Young Dancer* (1987) in which a young ballerina shown tying her shoe ribbons is portrayed with sympathy and tenderness. Another of her passions was the circus. In 1999 the Moscow State Circus visited Swansea and Valerie immediately set foot for the Big Top at the Rec, not far from her home in Brynmill. She was welcomed back as she had worked with the troupe three years earlier. Her particular favourites were the clowns and the trapeze artists. She found sketching the fleeting moves difficult which meant frequently watching rehearsals as well as performances in order to capture a moment which she described as "just hitting one between the eyes". The management was so pleased with her work that some of her images were incorporated into the company's publicity material.



Valerie Ganz *Young Dancer* 1987
© The artist's estate

Jazz was another of Valerie's interests and she was a faithful and long-term member of the Swansea Jazz Club. This interest was reflected in her becoming the Official Artist of the Brecon Jazz Festival in 1992 and 2000. She enjoyed sitting in the wings while the greats in the world of jazz, such as George Melly, Steffan Grapelli, Cleo Lane, Johnny Dankworth, and the young Amy Winehouse, performed. Even when she was not the Official Artist she still attended the Festival with her sketchbook, becoming almost a permanent fixture at the event. Her work at the Festival was shown at the Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery exhibition "And All That Jazz" in 1999.

In the late nineties, when her daughter Lisa was working at Swansea Prison in her role as a member of the Probation Service, Valerie visited the prison in order to sketch and paint the inmates and their families. Her intention was to portray the characters, some of whom had committed serious offences. As was her way, Valerie charmed the hardest of the inmates. She was totally non-judgemental as I remember

her telling me how much she had enjoyed the experience. It had provided her with a unique insight into a world cut off from the public, at the same time providing a diversion for the prisoners. I have not seen any of the work she produced during that time as, respecting the prisoners' privacy, she would certainly not have done it for commercial reasons.

During the eighties I pointed out to Valerie that, despite the huge national interest in rugby football in Wales, no artist had taken advantage of that fact. I put it to her that she should perhaps do something about it. Eventually she agreed and she sought the consent of the Swansea club to photograph the action in a mid-week, evening match between Swansea and Bristol. Permission was readily granted and I arranged to accompany her to the match. It so happened that the weather that night was foul. The mist was low and the rain so heavy that one could hardly see the floodlights. It had been agreed that Valerie would follow the touch judge on the stand side of the pitch, which she did for the whole of the eighty minutes, photographing continually. She got absolutely soaked while having to suffer the taunts of the *habitués* of the stand for whom a lady running alongside a touch judge was a novel experience. Subsequently she showed some of the paintings at an exhibition at the Attic Gallery. I felt morally obliged to buy one – a large work of a competitive line-out. Valerie captured the scene beautifully, even down to the gloom of the floodlights – appropriately in watercolour. I am fortunate in owning a work which is a constant reminder of an occasion, and an artist, I will never forget.

Aside from her art Valerie had a variety of interests. She travelled extensively often visiting her son, Marcus, whose work has taken him and his family, at different times, to disparate parts of the world. In line with her interest in performance she was a devotee of film and a regular presence at shows at Taliesin. She was an avid pub quizzier and member of a team, Al's Gals, which competed weekly at the Westbourne in Brynymor Road. Valerie was excellent company, having a sunny outlook on life and a wicked sense of humour. One thing I learned from her while on holiday on one occasion was that it is very difficult to play Scrabble having drunk half a bottle of wine.

Examples of Valerie Ganz' remarkable work are in many important public collections such as the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, the National Library of Wales, the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Carmarthenshire County Museum, the Palace of Westminster, London, the Rhondda Heritage Park, various universities and private collections world-wide. Valerie was an artist of true distinction and a wonderful friend. She will be much missed by all who knew her. As was said at her funeral, "Her work as an artist has left behind a tangible expression of her finest creative gifts to be enjoyed by future generations".

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Some Impressions of Sicily



(fig.1) *The Fallen Icarus* by Igor Mitoraj in front of the Concordia Temple, Agrigento

In October 2015 I spent a week in Sicily on a cultural tour organised by Riviera Travel – and what a fascinating experience it turned out to be! Sicily is roughly the same size as Wales. It was occupied over the centuries by a succession of invaders and settlers – Greeks, Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Aragonese and Spanish Bourbons, all of whom made their mark on the culture and identity of the island and its inhabitants. Consequently, there was a lot to see and absorb!

Our tour focussed primarily on Sicily's Greco-Roman and Norman heritage, starting with the amazing 5th Century B.C. Valley of the Temples at Agrigento: seven impressive structures along the ridge below the town and overlooking the sea. This is a World Heritage Site and therefore a very popular tourist attraction. Even though our party of 48 set off early in the morning (Riviera Travel aims to be ahead of the crowds whenever possible), we were not the only group on the Site. Wearing headphones, we were led along the Valley for almost two hours by a local guide, a distinguished-looking gentleman whose erudition and charm, coupled with his perfect English, made a great impression on all of us – especially the ladies!

Of all the Temples, I thought the Concordia was the most striking, largely because of the restoration work that has been done to it. It also provides the perfect backdrop to a powerful bronze sculpture of *The Fallen Icarus* by the Polish sculptor Igor Mitoraj. (fig.1). By the time our tour ended the sun was high in the sky, making lunch in Agrigento a most welcome prospect. After lunch we were taken to the Archaeological Museum on the outskirts of the town – a haven of cool tranquillity with a magnificent collection of artefacts, mostly excavated in the surrounding area. The 3rd Century B.C. vases and gold jewellery were especially impressive.

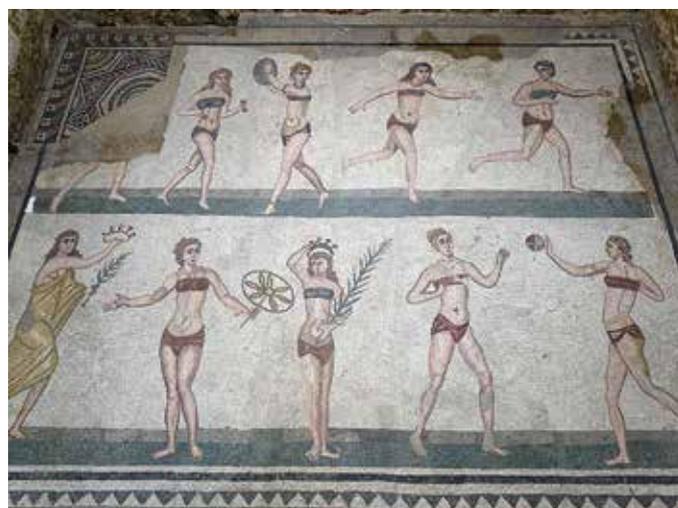
Agrigento itself is centuries old. It was the birthplace of the philosopher/poet Empedocles (490-430 B.C.) and in recent times has become known world-wide for its links with the writer Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936), who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1934. His literary output was prolific, encompassing poetry, novels, essays and drama. His best-known play, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, was what sparked my interest in him. He was born in Kaos, (a

suburb of Agrigento,) where we happened to be staying at the start of our tour. To my great delight, and with the help of our Tour Manager, I was able to fit in a visit to his Birthplace, now open to the public as a Museum, and less than ten minutes away by taxi from the hotel. The Museum contained a fascinating range of exhibits that vividly evoked his Sicilian upbringing, his family life, his friendships, his involvement in the theatre, and his literary achievements. His ashes are buried in an imposing monument some distance away from the house at the end of a long paved pathway overlooking the sea. For me this unexpected addition to my itinerary was a thrilling and poignant experience, certainly one of the highlights of my stay in Sicily.

Another highlight was the Villa Romana del Casale at Piazza Armerina. Built in the early 4th Century A.D., probably for a high-ranking Roman official, it covers a vast site that was obscured by a mudslide in the 12th Century and remained undiscovered until excavations began in the 1950s. The excavations revealed a number of beautifully-coloured mosaic floors portraying scenes that suggested an opulent lifestyle where hunting, high living and fleshly pleasures were paramount. It was a demonstration of Roman power and wealth, and its impact today is equally impressive. The mosaics are remarkable for the wealth of detail contained in them, not least in the hunting scenes, the images of exotic African animals, and, most interesting of all, the bikini-clad female athletes! (fig.2).

The Norman occupation of Sicily began around 1060 and lasted until the Sicilian Vespers massacre of 1282. Prior to that the island had been ruled by the Saracens, who invaded from Tunisia in 827 A.D. Palermo, their capital and a focal point for Arab culture, continued as capital under the Normans, who transformed it into a Christian stronghold. Nevertheless, Arab influences were hard to shake off and one has only to look at Palermo Cathedral for evidence of this. (fig.3).

The magnificent Cathedral at Monreale, commissioned by King William II ("William the Good") between 1174 and 1185, reflects a similar fusion of cultures. The immense Byzantine interior is covered in gold mosaics depicting scenes from the Bible, the whole dominated by a majestic portrayal of Christ. It is absolutely breathtaking. (fig.4). Wearing headphones again (essential), we



(fig.2) Mosaic in Villa Romana del Casale at Piazza Armerina



(fig.3) Palermo Cathedral

were led by a guide who really knew her stuff, transporting us back effortlessly to 12th-century Sicily and its links with Norman England. William II's wife Joan was the daughter of our King Henry II (1133-89). The architect in charge of the building was also English and was known as Walter of the Mill (Gualtiero Offamiglio). Finally – and this was a great surprise - Thomas à Becket is commemorated there, probably at the instigation of some of his relatives, who fled to Sicily in fear for their lives around the time of his murder.

In the 13th Century Palermo was the conduit by which Greek and Arab learning passed to Western Europe. Since then it has changed hands many times, and is still the capital. Our morning visit was very brief, as we were due in Monreale that afternoon. My impression was of a sprawling, bustling city whose main streets and once-glorious buildings still retained a certain faded charm. The Opera House was a typical example of this. A few members of our party managed to fit in a guided tour. Although we were not allowed backstage we were invited to sit in the Royal Box – where the last Royals to use it were possibly the Spanish Bourbons. The red plush needed a bit of attention. The steps leading up to the massive main entrance of the Opera House were the setting for one of the scenes in *The Godfather* - an appropriate choice of location!

For the final part of the tour we were based at centuries-old Taormina, on Sicily's eastern coast. Its Greco-Roman Theatre is made even more impressive by having Mount Etna as a natural backdrop. I opted out of a trip to Mount Etna, preferring instead to spend another day in Taormina, which is delightful, but probably very crowded in summer. D. H. Lawrence lived there for three years in the 1920s. There is a plaque on his house, which is where he wrote *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. (Did his proximity to the volcano have anything to do with the end product, I wonder?)

Ortigia, an island connected to Syracuse by three bridges, was one of the last places we visited before flying home from Catania. I was captivated by its compactness and by the wealth of legend and history contained in it. The baroque Duomo we see today was built, (following an earthquake in 1693 that destroyed its Norman façade) on the site of an earlier Greek temple that itself

was built on an even earlier sacred site as a thanksgiving for victory over the Carthaginians! On the roof of the Temple, as recorded by Cicero in the 1st Century B.C., there was a tall statue of the goddess Athena carrying a golden shield, which served as a beacon for sailors. There is a freshwater fountain on the seafront named after the nymph Arethusa (*Fonte Aretusa*). According to the legend, Arethusa, after swimming from the Peloponnese to escape the attentions of the river-god Alpheus, was metamorphosed into a spring by the goddess Artemis. This freshwater spring was mentioned in the Delphic directions that brought the first Greek settlers to the island. Archimedes (287-212 B.C.) was born in Ortigia and has a square named after him. One could go on for ever about this place. It is enchanting.

I would love to return to Sicily. A week's tour, however well-run (and it was!) is nowhere near long enough to appreciate it properly. I haven't mentioned the food, for instance: it was excellent in both hotels. Our Tour Manager, Frances, was wonderful. (With a degree in Drama from Hull, an Italian husband, and 16 years of living in Italy, she was a perfect guide whose knowledge, good humour and vital personality added an extra measure of enjoyment to the holiday, making it especially memorable.)

This summer there will be an exhibition at the British Museum entitled *Sicily: Culture and Conquest*. Don't miss it!

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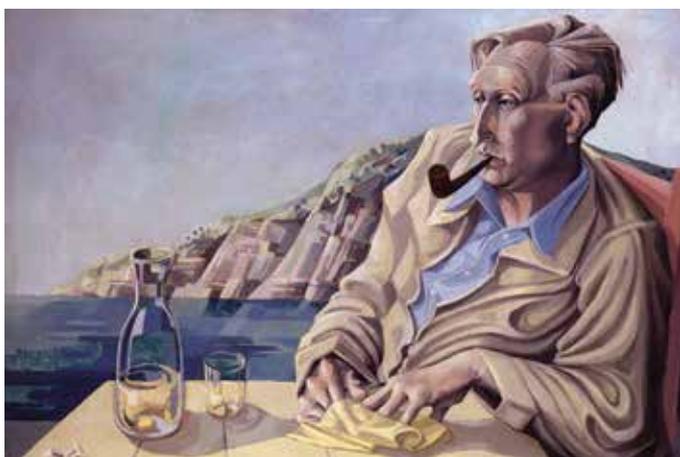


(fig.4) Monreale Cathedral

Two Digits to the Digital

"PRETTY IS, BEAUTY DOES" proclaimed the motto on the front of a young woman's T-shirt. I pondered the motto for longer than I did the woman. I began to think of the differences between making and watching – between the physical and the digital.

Michael Ayrton was a painter, sculptor and maze-maker. He lived from 1921 to 1975. I wanted to visit the National Portrait Gallery in Trafalgar Square to see the portrait by Ayrton of Sir William Walton some years ago. I found the gallery filled with photographs of celebrities. No painting or drawings were in sight! Now I would be one of the first to welcome photography into the creative pantheon, but it is not a natural successor to painting. They are entirely different media as are painting and activating a shutter.



Michael Ayrton *Portrait of Sir William Turner Walton* 1948
© estate of Michael Ayrton / National Portrait Gallery, London

A couple of decades ago the distinguished conductor Sergiu Celibidache explained his long-standing refusal to enter the recording studio: "Listening to a performance on record is like trying to make love to a photograph of Brigitte Bardot". Celibidache's choice of 'celeb' dates his reply, but one gets his meaning! Do we really experience the arts now? Do we really see paintings? Do we really hear music? Is a photograph of a painting or a digital image of a bronze sculpture an effective way of getting its message across? Who has not missed the rumpus onstage of a live performance of an opera or a play?

Even the art of conversation is suspect. It is murdered by texting and email. What is endangered though? Not painting, not drawing nor writing but thinking: clarity of thought and of communication.

The composer Joseph Holbrooke wrote to me in 1958, a few months before his death, complaining "people are only interested in (what he described as) mechanical music. They don't want to learn music".

In a painting class I was once interrupted by a pupil who was impatient because I outlined the method of preparing a canvas prior to starting work. "I want to learn how to paint" he said "not all this stuff". I observed that I was going to teach him how to make a permanent picture. Similarly people who claim they know the pictures of John Constable have too often seen them only in illustrated books. They would never have seen the superb paint handling of the dog in the foreground of *The Haywain* for instance. A brushstroke can have the tenderness of a caress, or the violence of a sabre slash. These are only communicated by the medium itself. I have long regretted the necessary prevention of gallery visitors touching sculptures for example.

It is my purpose in this essay to promote the arts, and not to relegate them to history. The digital medium is the art of commerce, not the art of vision. Andy Warhol and Marilyn Monroe are better served by it. Much of today's so-called painting is leading the way into limbo in which much contemporary image-making is being flung.

© Michael Freeman 2015



Friends Help Required

The Glynn Vivian 2016 Fund

**Summer Exhibition
and Art Auction**

As part of the 2016 Fundraising Campaign, the Friends will be holding a Summer Exhibition in Swansea Grand Theatre from July 18th to July 29th. At the end of the show on the evening of July 29th all the works kindly donated by artists as their contribution to the Campaign, will be auctioned and the proceeds added to the Fund.

The organisation of the exhibition and auction will result in a considerable amount of work. We are therefore asking for volunteers from the Friends to assist in helping us carry out this successfully.

If you are able to help at any time during these dates please contact:

Daniel Trivedy

Tel. 01792 426115 or 07738378839
or email. trivedyd@gmail.com

Russ Harris

Tel. 01792 421670
or email. russcharles.harris@ntlworld.com

Norman Smart (1927 - 2016)

Norman Smart, formerly of Mumbles, was a long standing member of the Friends, who sadly passed away in January 2016. In 2013 Norman kindly donated a picture by Roland Penrose, which he owned, to the Glynn Vivian permanent collection. Antony Penrose takes up the story.

Norman Smart was a good friend of my father's and also well-known and much respected by me. He was our family solicitor for many years, and we were all very fond of him. He went way beyond being a family solicitor, taking a kindly and personal interest in us all. He was quiet, impeccably mannered and his 'old world' exterior hid a very sharp mind. He was a very good strategist, which may have had something to do with his passion for playing bridge.



Sir Roland Penrose *The Judgment* 1982 collage
© The Roland Penrose Estate (2016)
City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

Norman was the first solicitor for the Elephant Trust www.elephanttrust.org.uk for which he drew up the trust deeds when the charity was created in 1975 by Roland Penrose and Lee Miller. Its objective remains to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the fine arts in the United Kingdom. Norman worked pro bono until his retirement, attending the trustees meetings and helping solve many administrative and legal difficulties. The trustees present always appreciated his clear sighted opinions, often delivered with wry humour.

Roland Penrose's collage *The Judgment* was the result of a bequest made to Norman in my father's will. In the 1980's, in the last years of his life, my father revitalized his collage making and had two shows of new work, one in London at the Mayor Gallery and one in Paris at the Gallerie Henriette Gomis. His next exhibition was to be at The Gardner Centre in Brighton, but he died three days before the exhibition opened. In his will, (which Norman administrated) he expressed a wish that Norman, if he wanted, could choose a collage from Roland's estate. Norman came to Brighton and chose *The Judgment* which we sent to him at the end of the show. Perhaps the title appealed to Norman's dedication to the law.

The work is very typical of Roland's last period. It contains postcard images of places he had visited in Europe and includes an image of Beachy Head lighthouse which was close to Roland's home at Farley Farm, Chiddingfold, East Sussex and was a frequently recurring motif in his work. Also to be found are fragments of decalcomania and other art works from earlier dates. The coloured paper shapes and ruled lines are to be found recurring from his earliest work, but this and other works from the period show the wonderful vitality present in his final years.

I am delighted that you have the collage and it is an attestation of Norman's support for The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery and of his friendship with my family.

© Antony Penrose 2016

100 Club News

I have received four subscriptions for the forthcoming 100 Club year which begins in April. I hope that many more will start rolling in so that we reach 100 members, as we did last year.

You can join by contacting me via the details below or by using the application forms included in the AGM mailing.

Please consider joining, as the odds of winning are very good.

Winners since the last Newsletter are:-

January	number	88	Judy Nettleship	£25	March	number	61	M.E. Kenna	£25
		73	Pamela Davies	£10			62	G. Grainger	£10
February		69	Margaret B. Jones	£25					
		44	Marilyn Caruana	£10					

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16 Kilfield Road, Bishopston, Swansea, SA3 3DL. Tel. (01792) 232808

**Friends of the Glynn Vivian Event:
Trip to Stradey Castle on 22nd June 2016**



© photo. Claire Mansel Lewis

Stradey Castle is one of the finest Mid Victorian houses in South Wales and home to the Mansel Lewis family. The house is built of Pennant stone and was designed by Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury. The Stradey estate runs to some 1800 acres and consists of farms, cottages, town houses and commercial properties that are let to tenants. The estate has been within the family for the last 200 years and the house has remained virtually unchanged since it was built in 1850, and extended in the 1870's.

During our guided tour by the current owners, Patrick and Claire Mansel Lewis, there will be the opportunity to discover the architecture of Stradey Castle and explore the interior of its formal rooms; including the Hall, Main



© photo. Kevin John

Drawing Room, Old Drawing Room among others. The house has been increasingly used as a location for film and television shows including the *Dr. Who Christmas Special* featuring Matt Smith.

Stradey Castle hosts an engaging collection of Victorian art, consisting of paintings by the current owners' great grandfather, Charles William Mansel Lewis in addition to works by Sir Hubert von Herkomer; William and Briton Rivière; and Sir Edwin Landseer.

As well as exploring the house, there will also be the opportunity to discover and enjoy the woodland gardens which host a number of unusual trees and shrubs; especially rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias and magnolias.

For further details and to reserve a place please contact:

Daniel Trivedy, tel. 07738378839 or email trivedyd@gmail.com

The cost is £8 per person. Please make cheques payable to "Friends of the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery", enclose a stamped addressed envelope and send to:-

Daniel Trivedy, 81 Old Road, Skewen, Neath, SA10 6LR

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Contact

If you have any comments on this issue, or any contributions for future issues please contact the editor, Malcolm Hill on Tel. **(01639) 794480** or email **m.hill23@ntlworld.com**