

FRIENDS  
OF THE  
GLYNN  
VIVIAN

CYMDEITHAS  
CYFEILLION  
ORIEL  
GELFYDDYD  
GLYNN VIVIAN

# Newsletter Spring 2020

## Cylchlythyr Gwanwyn 2020

# Hello!

We hope you will enjoy this Spring edition of the newsletter, despite it being online only.

All Friends' related activities are on hold at the moment but we are intending to return to print copies when life gets back to normal.

We hope that you are all ok and coping with the present situation and look forward to seeing you in the gallery.... sooner rather than later!

Louise and Kay  
(Editorial team)

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Front Cover (p1): Untitled, from the series A Thousand Fallen Blossoms (2019) © Aliko Braine

## Queer Absence A Revisionist Strategy

Dafydd Williams

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There have been many challenges for the LGBTQ+ community throughout its big gay history, from denunciation boxes used to stamp out sodomy in 15th century Italy, to the police raids of gay villages in New York City in the 1950-60's. But it is not innovative for me to say that many challenges still exist for the community. For me and my practice, it is attempting to understand why do discriminatory attitudes towards the Queer community exist and where do they originate? Queer community being a preferred activist stance as a term defining the resistance and rejection of assimilation and enforcement of normalcy. Normal being a problematic term calculated by quantity.

From an early stage during my undergrad studies at Swansea College of Art (SCA), I wanted to document my gay lifestyle (whatever I thought that was). This initially formed quite a basic document of a gay-male relationship, which in hindsight formed the foundation to my current practice. The work was quite turbulent, with a lack of direction, just fumbling through spontaneous responses to my relationship status and dating lifestyle. But a subtle reference made by a lecturer of mine at the time between one of my images and the work of Caravaggio gave focus to the work. Considering Caravaggio's strongly suggested homosexuality, and one of the ideas concluded in my dissertation that the Queer community poses a threat to tradition, I attempted to highlight the nonsensical argument that homosexuality is a 'modern phenomenon' and to reconsider its absence from the canon of Western Art history. This manifests as the project *Malum*, 'malum' being a latin dual-use term for both 'evil' and 'apple', a reference to the condemnation of the queer community throughout history by religious ideologies, the eating of the forbidden fruit in the biblical story of Adam & Eve, and the painting *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* (Caravaggio, 1593).

In my images, viewers will be confronted with the documentation of two gay males, sometimes solitary, in a domestic setting, lit with natural and one-directional lighting - a nod to the chiaroscuro lighting used by Caravaggio. The images drip-feed subtle references and symbols to specific paintings and mythologies, a coded language used in the same way as Michelangelo sent coded drawings to the young Tommaso dei Cavalieri. We can see coded



Top: *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* (1593), Caravaggio  
Above: *Rape of Ganymede* (1533), Michelangelo

language used by the Queer community more recently such as the coloured handkerchiefs used by the gay community to quietly display their relationship status and sexual preference (1960-70's, now we have Grindr), and the vocabulary devised by and for Queer people to communicate without the threat of discrimination. Accompanying the work are images of the planet Jupiter and its largest moon Ganymede. The story, in Greek mythology, is thought of as the first sanctioning of homosexual desire within a religious context, and is also one of the depictions which Michelangelo sent to Cavalieri (*The Rape of Ganymede* - Michelangelo, 1533). Once these Masters' sexualities are highlighted, it is difficult to view their work without reading a sort of homoeroticism.

Ironically, as much as I am inspired by the



Top: *David Goliath*, Dafydd Williams  
Above: *Gesture1* and *Gesture*, Dafydd Williams

paintings of the Masters in my practice, I have always felt a friction between the photographic image and painting. Two mediums which are so very closely married in their history and production through phenomena such as the camera obscura, prove difficult to display with one-another. Both are of the same calibre, and in theory and concept should/could work well together, but these two mediums attempting to represent or mis-represent reality fail to agree on a valid form of representation. They disagree with each other. I view my own portrait paintings, like their subjects, as lacking in the ability to communicate with their surroundings, condemned to solitary space. *After Coded Reverie* (self-portrait, 2018) is inspired by the idea of Caravaggio projecting his homoerotic fantasies on to the subjects that he is painting, and more specifically the work *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* (1593). It is very much part of the project *Malum* but, as previously mentioned, lacks the ability to integrate into the photographic work without demanding space and distance. I will continue to paint when concept calls for it, but its aesthetic integration into the project is still challenging.

# Friends Prize at the Swansea Open



The Friends' Prize at the Swansea Open (2019-20) was won by Dafydd Williams for his self-portrait *After Coded Reverie* (left), a nod to Caravaggio and the coded language used amongst the LGBTQ+ community. Oil on canvas. The £200 prize was presented by Angela Maddock, President of the Friends (right).

## A Thousand Fallen Blossoms and Ten Thousand Fallen Petals

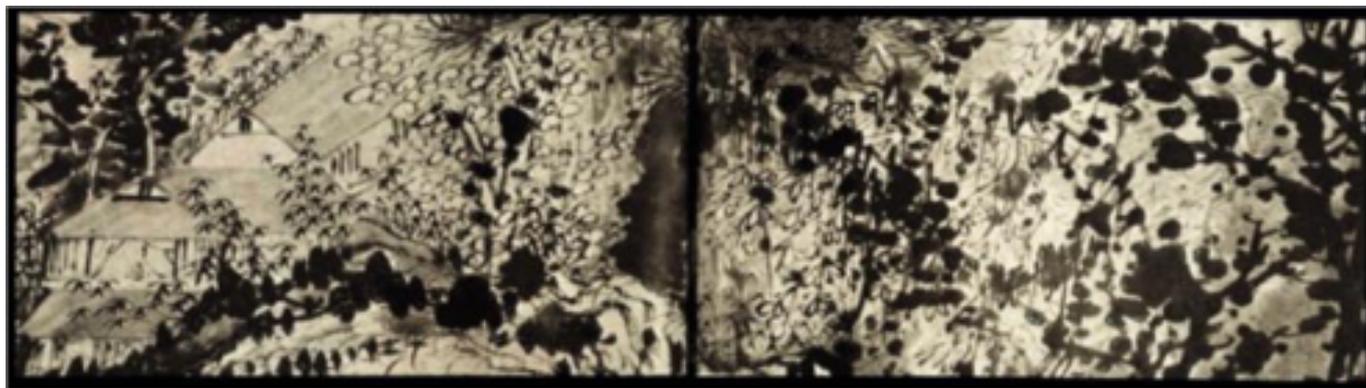
Aliki Braine

This new body of work began with a trip to Japan; a couple of years ago I was fortunate enough to travel there for the first time during the blossom - or Sakura - season. I had it in my mind that I wanted to photograph this temporal event, to record the blossom that was blooming in the trees. Instead, I ended up turning my camera not so much to the blossom that everyone was staring at and admiring, but to the floor, looking at the fallen petals that were covering the paving stones and the different surfaces of the street.

I've been making two bodies of work as a result of this trip to Japan; the first one, looking at the blossom that have fallen from the tree, I've called *10,000 Fallen Blossoms*. For this work, I decided to sticker the fallen blossom that my negative had captured, individually blocking each one that had fallen onto the pavement. For each blossom, a sticker; 10,000 in all.

I like the idea that photography has this wonderful and magical capacity for exactitude, for verisimilitude, for looking like the world it represents; as in

the very simple, possibly quite bland, images of pavement with the little white blossoms. But I also like the abstract quality produced by mechanising that image, by covering up every single blossom with a little white sticker on the negative, evoking the kind of negative quality of any photographic print, the grain of the negative itself. The spaces covered by the stickers, which read as white in the printing process, become both an abstraction and a kind of memory of the shape that the petal made on the floor.



Shitao, *10,000 Ugly Inkblots*, 1685

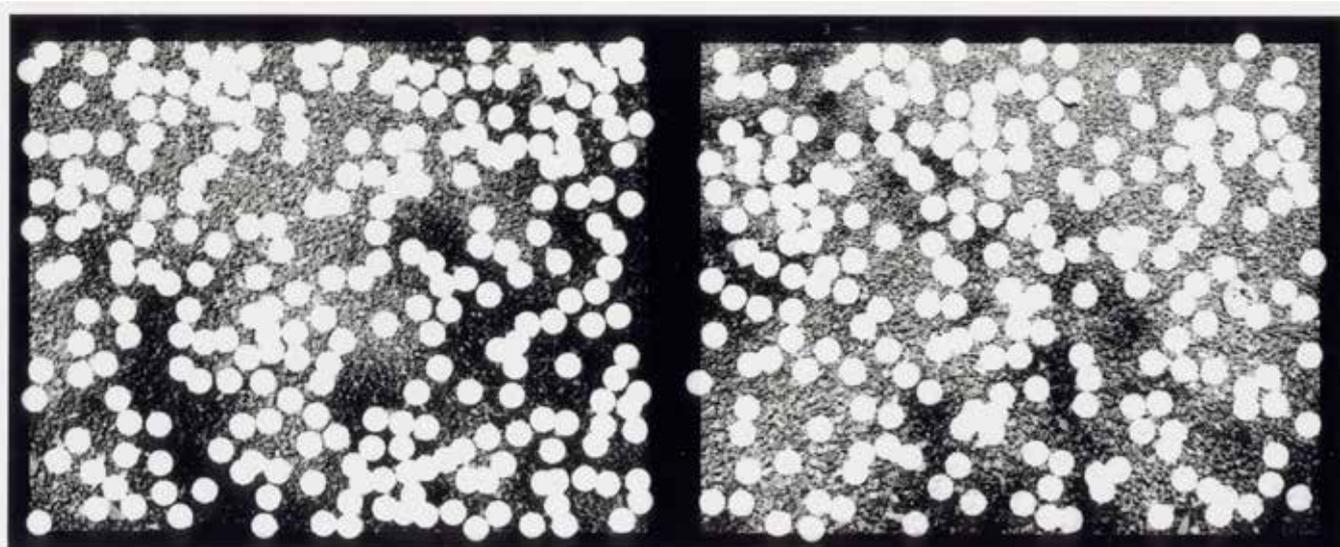
My work usually revolves around three premises, the first being that I'm interested in the photograph as an object. In order to point to the 'object-ness' of my image I manipulate the negative in some way. For these two bodies of work that were made from negatives shot in Japan, I either used a hole-puncher and made little tiny negative confetti, which I then printed in the darkroom or I used very straightforward little circular stickers that I stuck on the negative. I always manipulate the negative in the hope that by doing so I point to the physical nature, the physical qualities, of the print.

Two other recurring premises of my practice are to make works which are concerned with landscape and which are in conversation with historical painting. The stickered black and white negatives of fallen petals have become both a small set of large prints and a book: *10,000 Fallen Petals*. This title is in reference to a work that I've frustratingly never seen in the flesh, a 17th century landscape diptych called *10,000*

*Ugly Inkblots*, an ink painting by Chinese artist/monk Shitao (above). The left part is a perfectly recognisable landscape image which dissolves into abstraction towards the edge of the right-hand part. This painting is being quoted visually in the work.

The book itself also replicates, structurally, the triptych of Shitao's *10,000 Ugly Inkblots*. The form of the book is in single images, and in double or triple pages which have, in effect, become little diptychs and triptychs. One of the reasons that I wanted to think of these images as strips of negatives (to include the negative's structure in the work) is because of the narrative element, replicating a walk through the city (Tokyo, Kyoto) while looking down at the fallen petals.

Having made this body of work - prints and book - looking at the fallen petals, I then finally turned to the main event of the trip, a set of colour negatives of the pink blossom up in the



Untitled, from the series *10,000 Fallen Petals* (2019) © Alik Braine

trees. I felt sort of reticent; I wasn't sure how to use something that seemed so familiar and so typical of the way this event was usually documented. I wanted, somehow, to reinvest a sense of awe in looking into these blossoms that had transformed from being beautiful and colourful to becoming the residue of a fleeting event.

This second body of images *A Thousand Falling Blossoms*, initially arose out of a moment of frustration. Engaging with the more conventional images of Sakura, uncomfortable with leaving them as they were, I decided to use a hole

punch to create little discs of negative, which I then dropped onto the glass negative holder in the enlarger. This simple process produced a body of prints made from an act that replicates the fall of the petals themselves. Because these works are made with tiny confetti that are dropped in a random, serendipitous way, they're unique prints, each can only happen once. There's something very satisfying about the temporal nature of the subject, which is a mere two-week window of time in Japanese culture; the act of scattering these confetti negatives reflects its essential ephemerality.

## Swansea Stories: Gwen John

### Kay Renfrew

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The Swansea Stories exhibition provides a magnificent opportunity for visitors to the Gallery to find or rediscover a favourite work from the collection. In what we hope will become a regular piece in the Newsletter a Friend of the Glynn Vivian writes about one of their personal favourites. In this edition, Kay Renfrew writes about her personal favourite, Gwen John's *Woman with a Coral Necklace*.

A postcard of a Gwen John portrait remained with me throughout my years at university, moving between the bedroom walls of Halls and shared houses before finally disappearing as I made my way to more permanent accommodation and my first job in London. Buying that first postcard was no doubt prompted by a visit to the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery by my teenage self and seeing a Gwen John painting for the first time. A new postcard has now appeared in the room where I sew, back once more in



*Woman with a Coral Necklace*, Gwen John (c.late 1910s - early 1920s). Oil on canvas. City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

Swansea. So having the opportunity to see John's work, particularly *Woman with a Coral Necklace*, displayed as part of the Swansea Stories exhibition is a delight.

It is hard to put on paper why I love her paintings so much; the colour palette and the simplicity of course appeals, but so too does something about the characters in the works. There is the idea of their solitude but also of being observed by them; that they seem self contained and with a quiet authority.

They exist to me as much more than figures in a painting, I can imagine the anonymous woman with the coral necklace striding off to participate once more in her life elsewhere beyond

the frame; or Mere Marie Poussepin resuming the running of her convent after this brief respite in front of the artist's easel (despite the nun having died 200 years earlier, and the painting being largely based on a prayer card).

Beyond the paintings themselves, something about the artist too appeals. Many depictions of Gwen John's life describe her as a shy recluse, although little about her life seems to suggest this to me – studying at the Slade, living in a squat, walking to(wards) Rome with Dorelia McNeill, travelling to Paris and studying with Whistler there, re-locating to Meudon, modelling for Rodin, forging a close friendship with Rainer Maria Rilke, participating in joint and solo

exhibitions, supported by a rich American patron... Even from the 21st century this seems a full life well spent. Perhaps the better portrayal of her is as an outsider, a woman and artist operating outside expectations of a woman's role and life, and so being outside the sphere of attention not shunning it.

So when my Euromillions boat comes in I'll selfishly buy my own Gwen John painting to marvel at, but until then she sits amongst other female artists I admire, among them Jean Rhys, Charlotte Bronte, Emily Dickinson, whose work is influential and innovative and who refused to accept the conventional template of how to live their lives.

If you would like to contribute and write about your favourite art work from the collection, please get in touch [glynn.vivian.gallery@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:glynn.vivian.gallery@swansea.gov.uk)

## Lucie Rie at the Glynn Vivian

### Gill Bramley

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I have just been lucky enough to have a private visit to the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery arranged by a gallery Friend and conducted by gallery staff. I cannot thank them enough, it was a pleasure and a privilege to meet with Ellie Dawkins, documentation officer and Jenny Williamson, conservator.

I had a rare opportunity to see and handle the Lucie Rie ceramics held by the gallery. I make pots myself and am influenced mainly by shape and form, very strong characteristics of Lucie Rie's work. There are two pieces in the gallery's collection (acquired for the collection in 1961 by the then Curator, Kathleen Armistead) although they have not been on display for a number of years. We have such a treasure trove of art objects in our city it is not possible to display everything all the time.

What I did not expect to discover on this visit is that we have a talented conservator, Jenny Williamson, working on some very old



Right: Bottle, porcelain, Lucie Rie. Decorated with a brown metallic glaze. City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

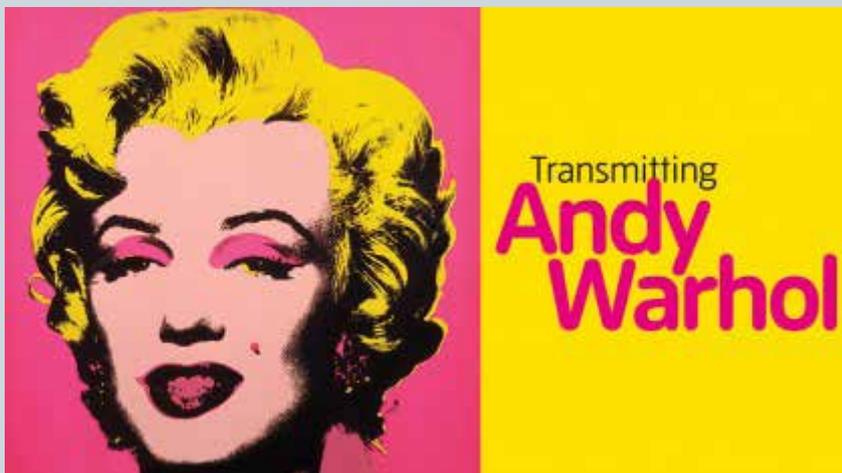


Bottle, porcelain, Lucie Rie. Decorated with a blue metallic glaze. City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

oil paintings from the collection. This was fascinating to see, such painstaking and intricate processes to reveal the glories underneath the dirt and varnish of generations. Thank you to Jenny for sharing her enthusiasm and knowledge. She also is a potter so there was plenty to discuss.

Lucie Rie was born Lucie Gomperz in 1902 in Vienna, the youngest daughter of a Jewish doctor. The Austrian born British studio potter is notable for her Modernist forms and bright colours, complex glaze surface treatments and inventive kiln processes. Initially studying at the Vienna Kunstgewerberschule (School of Applied Arts) she fled with her husband to London in 1938 where she set up her studio at Albion Mews. Initially producing ceramic buttons to support herself financially she was later joined by another Viennese émigré Hans Coper who eventually became her partner in the studio. Commercially successful and creatively recognised throughout her 60 year career (she won a silver medal at the Paris International Exhibition in 1937) Lucie Rie helped establish studio pottery as an art form. She was made a Dame Commander (DCE) in 1991 and died in 1995 aged 93. Details of her life and art can be found in the biography *Lucie Rie: Modernist Potter*, Emmanuel Cooper (Yale University Press, 2012).

## Letter From the Tate



### In my lock-down I travel through John Cale the Welsh musician, to Andy Warhol

John Cale, the classically trained musician and founder member of the Velvet Underground, was born in Ammanford, South Wales. Interestingly it was originally known as Cross Inn, named after an inn that was located where a number of roads converged. John Cale left Wales, initially going to Goldsmiths College, London then winning a scholarship to the Tanglewood Summer School in Boston, USA before moving on to New York City where La Monte Young, the avant-garde composer inspired Cales' amplified viola drone.

Lou Reed and John Cale were both twenty-two when their paths converged at Andy Warhol's Silver Factory on East 47th Street. My favourite album as a youth was 'Andy Warhol's Velvet Underground featuring Nico'. Warhol illustrated both the cover and inside gatefold with lips and the democratic Coca-Cola bottle.

I listen on my iPhone to Cale and Reed honouring Warhol in their musical collaboration: 'Songs for Drella'. Cale and Warhol shared coal dust coated memories from Pittsburg PA and the South Wales valleys to the glitter sparkling Studio 54.

Letter From the Tate is a regular feature written by a member of Tate staff about a Welsh-related work in the Tate collection.

Gerry King, Visitor Assistant, writes about the Welsh musician John Cale and his relationship with Andy Warhol.

The first two Friends of Glynn Vivian to email: [gerardking@gmail.com](mailto:gerardking@gmail.com) will each receive 2 complimentary tickets for the Andy Warhol exhibition at Tate Modern, Bankside, London until 6 September.

# Tomos and Owain Sparnon

## Canolfan Arad Goch, Aberystwyth

### Tomos Sparnon

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From 16 January to 31 March 2020, an exhibition of the work of my brother, Owain, and myself, was held at Canolfan Arad Goch, Aberystwyth. Part of the mission of Cwmni Theatr Arad Goch is to promote the work of young Welsh artists from all creative fields and we were both delighted to be invited to exhibit there.

This was the first time Owain (who is in his second year studying Fine Art at Swansea College of Art) and I had shared an exhibition. At the moment, my work explores the human form and the fragility of man through painting, drawing and sculpture. Owain's current work responds to light and transience, through a variety of media including oil paint, wax and collage. It was decided the exhibition would include paintings, photographs, print, collage and digital images to illustrate the wide range of our works.

The process of curating and setting up the exhibition with Jeremy Turner, Director of Canolfan Arad Goch, was invaluable. Owain and I learnt a lot from listening to him talk about aspects such as the importance of hanging works at the right height with enough space around them, which pieces the public would see first and the importance of lighting the work correctly.

Canolfan Arad Goch was full to the brim on the opening of the exhibition. We were thrilled that art historian Peter Lord was able to open it. Owain and I had the opportunity to talk about our work, which we hope was of interest and benefit to the audience. The cameras of S4C's television program Heno were also there, and the opening was broadcast live. Owain and I are very grateful to Heno for their support.

Owain and I were privileged to exhibit our work at Canolfan Arad Goch and we are very grateful to Jeremy Turner for the opportunity we were given. We are also grateful to Peter Lord. This was certainly a memorable experience for both of us.

Although the exhibition is now over, my work can be viewed at [www.tomossparbon.com](http://www.tomossparbon.com) and Owain's work on Instagram via [owainsparbon](https://www.instagram.com/owainsparbon).



Top: Ble?/Where?, Tomos Sparnon, 2019  
Mixed media on paper

Above: Pen I/Head I, Owain Sparnon, 2020  
Digital image

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# Ymweliad â Straeon Abertawe

## Caleb Young

Yn ddiweddar rhwng Medi 2019 – Mawrth 2020, cynhaliwyd, yn Oriel Glynn Vivian, arddangosfa i ddathlu hanner canmlwyddiant Abertawe fel Dinas. Cyflwynodd yr oriel Straeon Abertawe mewn arddangosfa mwyaf erioed o waith o'i archif.

Wrth gamu mewn i'r arddangosfa, roeddwn yn cael cyffro y gallaf ond eu cymharu i'r teimlad rwyf yn cael wrth wylio Cymru neu'r Swans yn chwarae gem pêl droed! Roedd y darluniau gyntaf gwelais syth o'm blaen yn rhan o'r adran o dan y teitl Ffefrynnau, gyda darn David L. Carpanini (b.1946) (1979) *Wayward Wind*, yn un o'r rhai oedd yn sefyll allan i mi.

Dengys y darn yma tri gŵr yn sefyll yng nghanol stryd o dai, yn mwynhau cwmni ei gilydd, gyda gŵr ar ben ei hun yn y cefndir, yn edrych yn chwilfrydig. Edrychai fel bod y dyn mewn siwt du ar y chwith yn arwain y sgwrs, dyna'r person cyntaf sylwais arno, mae ef wedi ei fframio gyda'r pyst trydanol, ac wedyn sylwais ar y dyn yn y cefndir yn olaf, roedd hyn yn gwneud i mi dychmygu beth oedd pwnc y sgwrs yr oeddent yn ei chael. Meddyliais fod lliwiau'r ffenestri, a gwisgoedd y dynion, yn cyd-daro gyda'r awyr, a'r bryn yn y pellter, ac roedd hyn yn gwneud i'r darlun cydio fy sylw.

Cefais ysfa i dynnu lluniau o'r gwaith, gyda chaniatâd, fel fy mod yn gallu ail ymweld â'r gwaith yn fy amser fy hun.

*In [Wayward Wind](#) Carpanini portrays a scene familiar to those of life in the South Wales valleys where close-knit communities still exist and friendly conversation is a commonplace in the street. (Swansea Stories 27.09.19 – 15.03.20 2020. PDF)*

Mae adeg y ddau ryfel byd, y ganrif ddiwethaf, yn fy niddori yn fawr. Ar ddechrau fy mlwyd-

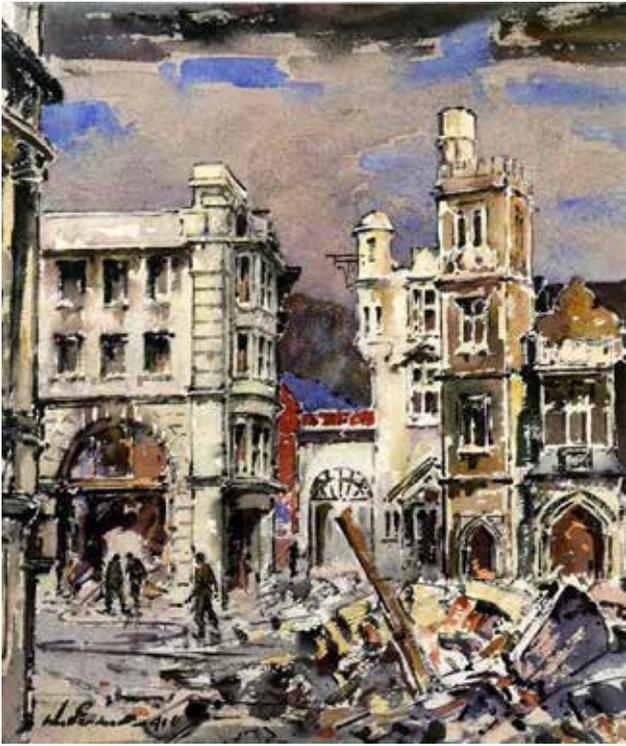


*Wayward Wind*, David Carpanini 1979, © the artist. City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

dyn olaf, ar gyfer fy nhreithawd hir, yn y brifysgol, edrychais ar ymatebion celfyddydol i'r ddau ryfel byd, ac mae gennyf ddiddordeb yn gweld ymateb artistiaid i effaith a chanlyniad rhyfel.

Cafodd yr arddangosfa Straeon Abertawe ei rhannu i nifer o adrannau a pob un â gwahanol ffocws a theitl. Gwnes fwynhau edrych o gwmpas pob adran. Yr hyn a ddalodd fy llygaid a'n ddiddordeb yn fwyaf, oedd y darluniau a dengys canol dinas Abertawe ar ôl cael ei fomio gan awyrennau'r Almaenwyr yn yr Ail Ryfel Byd. Mae fy mamgu yn cofio gweld golau o ganlyniad i'r 'Blitz', 40 milltir i ffwrdd ym mhentref Llanboidy, ac mae'r digwyddiad wedi mynd lawr mewn hanes nid yn unig yn lleol ond yn genedlaethol ac efallai yn ehangach. Digwyddiad erchyll i Abertawe.

Wrth edrych ar y lluniau, cewch gip olwg mewn i'r adeg. Mae'n anodd dychmygu beth fyddai



Swansea Corporation Electric Showrooms and the Daily Post Press Building, Will Evans (1941). Watercolour on paper © Anne Sandifer and Jennifer Cockle. City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection.

wedi bod fel i fyw yn Abertawe ar y pryd, ac ar ôl ymadael a'r arddangosfa, ceisiais wneud hyn wrth gerdded yn ôl trwy'r ddinas, gyda'r darluniau yn fy meddwl.

Roedd darluniau Will Evans yn rhai arbennig. Cyn hyn, dim ond rhai ffotograffau du a gwyn gwelais o'r Blitz, ac mae'r darlun gan Will Evans (1941) *Swansea Corporation Electricity Showrooms and the Daily Post Press Building*, yn dangos yr adeiladau wedi cael ei ddinistrio, a rhai pobl allan yn edrych ar olion y bomiau, efallai yn meddwl am ddechrau ail-adeiladu. Mae'r darn yma wedi ei beintio ar bapur â dyfrlliwiau, sy'n awgrymu, yn fy marn i, bod ymateb yr -artist yn un cyflym i'r trychineb.

We are perched just above the ruins of Ben Evans store. Another landmark is in the centre - the square tower of the offices of the Evening Post (known today as Castle Square). Notice the poor state of the right hand end of the newspaper building. This lower frontage was rebuilt

in modern style, and the Post was composed and printed on this site, until it moved to the building in Adelaide Street in the sixties. The original, rather grand building was demolished. It started life as Swansea Post Office, completed 1856. (Swansea Stories 27.09.19 - 15.03.20 2020. PDF)

Yn dilyn hyn, mewn adran arall o'r arddangosfa Straeon Abertawe, mae sawl darlun arall ar themâu gwahanol gan Will Evans yn benodol, o arfordir Abertawe. Cyferbyniad cwbl wahanol i 'hafoc' a 'ffradoch' ei ddarluniau yn dilyn y Blitz. Mae'r lluniau o'r arfordir yn ysgafn ac yn olau a lliwgar, ac yn cyfleu'r teimlad o ymweld â lan y môr gyda ffrindiau a theulu. Gyda'r darn Caswell Bay, (Will Evans dim dyddiad) yn esiampl o hyn.

Dengys yr arddangosfa holl nodweddion y ddinas. Gwelwn hanes diwydiannol, yr arfordir hardd, a gwahanol ddarluniau o ganol y ddinas hefyd. Gadawais yr arddangosfa gan ddysgu mwy am ddinas Abertawe a'i holl amrywiaethau. ac roedd yn hynod o ddiddorol i weld yr holl waith yma allan o archif y Glynn Vivian.

#### Llyfryddiaeth

Evans, W. (Dim Dyddiad) Caswell Bay. [dyfrlliw ar bapur] Abertawe: Oriel Gelf Glynn Vivian.

Evans, W. (1941) Swansea Corporation Electricity Showrooms and the Daily Post Press Building. [dyfrll ar bapur] Abertawe: Oriel Gelf Glynn Vivian.

Carpanini, D.L (1979) Wayward Wind. [ole war gynfas]. Abertawe: Oriel Gelf Glynn Vivian Ar gael ar <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/wayward-wind-226915> (Cyrchwyd ar 30:3:2020)

Swansea Stories (27.09.19 - 15.03.20 (2019) Glynn Vivian Exhibition downloaded PDF, Swansea Glynn Vivian Art Gallery

#### BEEP PAINTING PRIZE 2020

All being well the Beep Painting Prize at Elysium Gallery will take place in October as part of the Swansea Fringe. Related painting shows will be happening at different times, but we will keep you posted by mail chimp as and when we receive any information.

# Letter from the Curator

Karen MacKinnon

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It is lovely to be asked to say a few words about the Friends of the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery. As you will be aware, the Friends of the Glynn Vivian have been in existence since 1958, over 60 years! They were formed, like many such friends organisations in Wales, to support the work of the gallery. They are part of a national and global network of such organisations across the world, who love and support their local arts organisations.

The friends are a network of local people from all over Swansea and whilst Glynn Vivian is at the core of that network we are also part of other networks – for example we are one of Swansea City Councils Cultural Venues, alongside The Grand Theatre, Swansea Museum and The Dylan Thomas Centre. We are also one of Arts Council of Wales' (15) regionally funded arts organisations. We are part of Plus Tate which includes 35 arts organisations across the UK. Glynn Vivian is also part of a national and UK wide network of stakeholders, funders and supporters such as British Council, Art fund, British Art Network, CASW etc. All of these networks are interconnected and support the gallery in many ways.

Whilst the above provide governance, funding, peer support etc the friends offer something subtler, more fluid and locally connected – friendship and support yes of course, but they also have a deeper understanding of the gallery from the inside out and are part of our local community. They know this place, it is part of their everyday life. From this unique perspective they are able to offer a wide range of talks by artists, historians and curators in response to the broad range of interests of their members. They also offer bespoke tours and visits to art galleries across Wales and beyond. They are advocates, critical friends, fans and volunteers they bring knowledge thoughts, suggestions other ways of seeing which we openly discuss during their meetings or informally.

Whilst fundraising is not their core aim, following a successful auction for the gallery in 2016, they have been able to offer match finding for the vital work of our Learning and Engagement team – more specifically for urgent work around equality, diversity and deeper engagement with those who are disadvantaged across our city. They also recently provided foldaway chairs for visitors who may need this and

they also support publications alongside our exhibitions programme and acquisitions that enhance the galleries collections.

The Friends of the Glynn Vivian also support artists through a number of awards – The Wakelin Award founded by Art Historian/Curator Peter Wakelin in memory of Richard and Rosemary Wakelin, and the Sir Leslie Joseph Award which offers an emerging Wales based artist their first show in a public gallery in Wales, the Friends also present an award as part of the annual Swansea Open exhibition.

I wrote this brief text shortly before lock down, before the coronavirus made it vital that we all stay at home. The gallery has, for the time being, closed its doors and we will be presenting programmes online. But you can guarantee that during these difficult months and certainly when the doors of the gallery re-open, the friends will be continuing to offer support in many forms.

As we look towards the future I am excited about developing this supportive relationship further. We all know that these are difficult times, the gallery's relatively small team are under a great deal of pressure and it often feels like there are simply not enough hours in the day to achieve all we want to achieve. We need help to ensure that we provide for our visitors and audiences. With this in mind the friends are developing a series of events entitled *Social Sundays* to reach out and engage with broader audiences across Swansea. We are also working together on how the friends can support our acquisitions policy moving forward.

However, as you are all too aware the gallery is now closed as this pandemic rages around us, it is vital we remember how important creativity is for the health and wellbeing of the people of Swansea, who are doing their utmost to adhere to social distancing. We are working on on-line programmes – learning opportunities, artist talks, conferences to entertain and support our audiences through this, and will continue to work with the Friends of the Glynn Vivian during this period of uncertainty and when we all return to the beautiful gallery which belongs to the people of Swansea.

Karen MacKinnon 7.4.2020

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This edition of the Newsletter was produced by Louise Burston and Kay Renfrew, and designed by Louise Burston.

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