

The London Group March Newsletter 2017

Forthcoming dates for the Diary

2017

Personal Relations – an international touring miniature-portrait exhibition:
three artists' collectives, 150 artists showing works a similar size to mobile phones

25 February - 29 March

Opening times: Tuesday - Sunday 12.00 - 5.00, closed Monday

Pulchri Studio, The Hague, Holland

29 April - 4 June, PV 29 April, 6.00 - 8.00

Opening times: Tuesday - Saturday 10.00 - 12.30, 4.00 - 7.30

Closed Sunday and Monday, except 1 May

Mirror Gallery, Vincenza, Italy

The Mesh – LG Small Group Exhibition

17 March - 21 May

Open daily 10.00 - 6.00

Bryan Benge, Angela Eames, James Faure Walker, Eric Fong, Cadi Froehlich, Judith Jones, Amanda Loomes, Peter Lowe, Genetic Moo, Ian Parker, Victoria Rance, Paul Tecklenberg, David Theobald and Erika Winstone

Watermans Arts Centre

40 High Street

Brentford

TW8 ODS

The London Group Film Night 2

26 May at 6.30

Participating members: Slavomir Blatton, Eric Fong, Susan Haire, Amanda Loomes, Genetic Moo, Charlotte C Mortensson, Victoria Rance, Tom Scase, David Theobald, Paul Tecklenberg, Erika Winstone

Admission £5 on the door to include drinks

Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution
11 South Grove
Highgate
London N6 6BS

The London Group and Friends' Sculpture Trail

17 and 18 June
Open daily 11.00 - 5.00
Shoreham Village
Kent

Victor Kuell Memorial Exhibition

5 - 11 July
Open daily 2.00 - 6.00
The Cello Factory
33 - 34 Cornwall Road
London SE1 8TJ

The London Group Open Part 1:

8 - 17 November
Open daily 2.00 - 6.00
Artists' Talks 13 November, 6.00

Part 2:

22 November - 1 December
Open daily 2.00 - 6.00
Prize Giving 27 November, 6.00 - 8.00
Artists' Talks 1 December, 6.00
The Cello Factory

2018

The London Group at St Ives

September
Penwith Gallery and Belgrave Gallery

From the President

Congratulations to our new members Darren Nisbett, Claire Parrish and Almuth Tebbenhoff and welcome to The London Group.

In a unique opportunity to demonstrate the diversity of work that The London Group is so proud to celebrate we have two Small Group Exhibitions (SGEs) a month apart showing two different approaches to contemporary art practice. At a new gallery in Ealing Felix & Spear recently featured an impressive exhibition of 16 figurative artists, thanks to Peter Clossick and David Wiseman. Director Cameron Amiri is hugely supportive and delighted to forge a fruitful relationship with the Group with future SGEs.



Installation shot of *Viewpoints* at Felix and Spear

14 digital artists make up the next SGE which has just opened at Watermans Art Centre in Brentford, London's only gallery dedicated to digital art and co-curated by Genetic Moo and Irini Papadimitriou. A very strong exhibition, showing in a beautiful dark space with sensitive lighting, it should enhance and broaden The London Group's reputation considerably. On until 21 May and I urge you not to miss it – review in next newsletter. Very many thanks to Genetic Moo who have worked extremely hard producing the exhibition.

Genetic Moo also organised a Social Media Salon in January with David Wiseman, Charlotte C. Mortensson, Judith Jones and Nicola Schauerma talking about Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms. All superbly presented, we were given a mine of information and a very enjoyable evening.

Looking back to last year, congratulations to members for two highly rewarding Cello Factory exhibitions, our Members Annual in October and the miniature-portrait exhibition *Personal Relations* in December. Anyone visiting the Annual would have had a very clear idea of the riches the Group has to offer. The show was opened by Morgan Quaintance with much approbation. Thank you to LG member Tisna Westerhof and Cristiana Bottigella for curating *Personal Relations*. The London Group was proud to welcome artists' groups Pulchri from The Hague and This Is Not Art from Vicenza and to host the launch before touring to The Hague in February/(currently) and to Vicenza in April. 150 gems, immaculately hung, made for an eye-catching exhibition. I am struck by how rewarding Artists' Talks are proving to be and I'm not alone in feeling immensely privileged to hear the speakers' openness and generosity in sharing

insights into their work and the talks in these shows certainly demonstrated this.

Having selected the prize-winners, Cadi Froehlich, Martin Heron and Darren Nisbett, for the Open Prize Exhibition in The Cello Factory in November 2016, the resounding success of the show means a great deal to me. And even more so because their fruitful collaborative approach, from the beginning, is a kind of practice very close to my heart. The strong links in their work made for a galvanising exhibition and again the eloquence of the Artists' Talks was marked.

The panel discussion in July with Eric Moody, Nicola Schauerman, Tim Craven and Cadi Froehlich, chaired by Peter Clossick was equally eloquent. The discussion focused on points put forward by Mike Phillipson including the (mal)function of arts institutions. In December, members met Ben Quash, Professor of Art and Christianity and Head of the Centre for Arts and the Sacred at King's College, London, for a salon on belief. There was much enthusiastic discussion and the evening's success is expressed in these words by Ben: *What an engaged audience; one couldn't wish for more.*

Belief	Ritual	God - all that there is	Apophatic
Trust	Can't say only luck	Omneity	Endeavouring
Doubt	Drive	Mumbo-jumbo	The particular
Hope	Clarity	Fear	Experience
Faith	Rationality	Questioning	Wisdom
God	Interconnectedness	Knowable	Risking
Wonder	Oneness	Unknowable	Mystery
Awe	Daring	Ungraspable	The leap
Nihilism	Effulgence	Be vulnerable	Feeling
Other	Lifting the veil	Service	Celebration

Words that came up in the Belief Salon in December

In May we have our second London Group film night, this time at Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution on the 26th, again organised by Charlotte C. Mortensson with the show-reel by Nicola Schauerman. In June we have The London Group and Friends' Sculpture Trail in Shoreham, Kent, a completely new departure for the Group. In July we are holding the Victor Kuell Memorial Exhibition in The Cello Factory where the work will be for sale to raise London Group funds. This is Vic's generous legacy to the Group and the occasion will mean a great deal to a lot of people. And we look forward to ending the year with The London Group Open in November, always the highpoint of our calendar!

83rd OPEN 2017

**ONLINE
SUBMISSION GOES
LIVE ON 24 APRIL**

OPEN TO ARTISTS working in any medium

PART 1: 8 - 17 November

PART 2: 22 November - 1 December

THE CELLO FACTORY
33-34 Cornwall Road
London SE1 8TJ

VALUABLE PRIZES

including £1000 Jeff Lowe Sculpture Prize
and a 3-person show at The Cello Factory

24 JULY

Members submission deadline

28 AUGUST

Non-members submission deadline

CHELSEA
ARTS CLUB
TRUST

The
Cello
Factory



PERSONAL RELATIONS

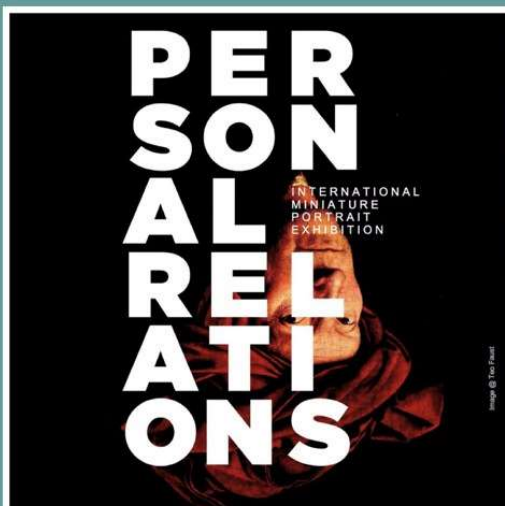
An international touring exhibition of miniature-portraits by members of different international artists' groups curated by hARTslane. Participating artist associations: The London Group – London, UK; Pulchri Studio – The Hague, The Netherlands; This is Not Art – Vicenza, Italy.

PERSONAL RELATIONS

at Pulchri Studio, The Hague

26th February – 29th March, 2017

Vernissage Saturday, 25th February 2017, 5-7pm





After the succesful inauguration at The Cello Factory in London, 'Personal Relations' now continues its journey to The Hague, in Holland, where the show of 150 miniatures will be exhibited in the Garden Room of Pulchri Studio.

The exhibition will be opened on Saturday the 25th of February at 5pm, by Marieta Reijkerkerk, Chairman of the Exhibition Committee.

Participating art collectives: The London Group, Pulchri Studio and This Is Not Art
'Personal Relations' is a project curated by hARTslane
www.personal-relations.org

Pulchri Studio, Lange Voorhout 15, 2514 EA Den Haag, Netherlands
 Tuingalerie, 26th February - 29th March 2017
 Opening times: Tuesday - Sunday 12-5pm. Closed on Mondays



London Group member Suzan Swale wrote the following review of Personal Relations whilst it was on show at The Cello Factory.

This exhibition is totally unique in its conception, idea and presentation. We can recall many other collaborative artists' shows, from small postcards at the RCA and small works at the Angela Flowers' Gallery to the 2010 travelling project by Tamsyn Challenger, *400 Women*, where the works of 200 artists travelled the world, starting at Shoreditch Town Hall, London, each work depicting a portrait of one of the Mexican women who disappeared, to a much earlier feminist exhibition in Strasbourg where artists worked on handkerchiefs and posted them to the exhibition organisers.

Personal Relations is an incredibly powerful exhibition. All works are the approximate size of an i-phone. The project can fit into a suitcase as it travels to its venues and can eventually be contained in a suite of suitcases when more artists are added from other participating countries.

Miniature-portraits were originally made and often given as a political gift to a king or

ambassador. The project aims to strengthen international bonds between artists in these unsettled times. It cuts through the difficulties with showing work abroad, avoiding the considerable expense of transport, and promotes artists' collectives working together under an inspiring conceptual framework where artists are part of and control the process. It fosters new work, collaborations and diverse interpretations of what a portrait is, to reach a larger audience. Portraits travelling from country to country, leaving messages. We live in a time of fast digital images, the selfies on our i-phones, the false security that we are all OK providing we are constantly digitally informed, that we are more important than we are.

The work on show at The Cello Factory, London, is captivating in its simplicity, diversity and directness. Each work on the walls is a small shining gem, to be admired and studied. They are an example of what it means to be human and an artist in the 21st century.



Spirit Paul Tecklenberg

At the very well-attended private view, I was fortunate to be able to interview some of

the artists about their portraits. Victoria Bartlett's *Absent Friends* is hauntingly beautiful, three images of modelled heads cast in paper. Paul Tecklenberg's *Spirit*, a silver gelatine photogram print on wood, with glass and water. Genetic Moo's *The Fall (of the Rebel Angels)*, a mobile phone sized picture of moving multi-images. Brian Benge's *Impropriety* showing our powerlessness, but also our lack of innocence. Oscar Tornincasa's *Digital Age*, one original image on a polaroid frame, of a girl taking a selfie, Jacobien de Korte's *Hotel room 6*, casts a lonely figure, introvert, still and mysterious. Alessio Ciani's *The burden of appearance in the social media era – bodysnap* speaks for itself. Giorgia Zampese's *The Mask*, a bandaged face, concerned with identity, dress and society's expectations. Dana La Monda's *Nude woman*, photograph on a burnt frame. Jose Krijnen's *Boerenbont*, oil on wood. Susan de Kruiff's *Vrouw (woman)*, faded graveyard photo printed on a handkerchief and framed in a circular tapestry/embroidery frame.

All the works are precious, beautiful thoughts and ideas. There is even a reference to Brexit. Tisna Westerhof's *Europe Running through my veins*. Embroidery thread on cheese cloth. These images burn in my brain. Every single work is like a thread binding the exhibition together. There are so many. It is impossible to mention everyone.

Many thanks to Susan Haire at The Cello Factory for making this show possible and to the Curators Tisna Westerhof and Cristiana Bottigella at hARTslane, who have worked so hard to bring all this to fruition.

Suzan Swale

The exhibition is currently on show in The Netherlands and will then travel to Italy.

Pulchri Studio

Lange Voorhout 15
2514 EA The Hague, The Netherlands
25th February 2017 – 29 March 2017

Mirror Gallery

Contrada Porta Santa Lucia 18
36100 Vicenza, Italy
29 April 2017 – 4 June 2017

Social Media Salon



On 30 January London Group members enjoyed an evening of instruction, explanation and demonstration of the main social media platforms currently available. David Wiseman spoke about Facebook, Judith Jones about Instagram, and Charlotte Mortensson about Twitter. Nicola Schauerman and Tim Pickup (Genetic Moo) had set up an impressive visual display with several live workstations, and used these to give hands-on demonstrations of the various media platforms, offering hints and tips on their use in practice and explaining how the media could interface with existing websites. Other social media, such as Vimeo and YouTube, were also discussed. Those present, whether novices or existing users, gained valuable knowledge from the presentations and went away with enhanced awareness of how social media could assist in the promotion of artistic practices.

A day in the life of Victoria Rance - in the studio



What I do in my studio has become more and more varied. It is a big high space on the ground floor of APT Studios right on Deptford Creek and I have been there for twenty years. Although I value very highly and carefully my privacy in my studio, we do have open studios; and I also use it for exhibiting in during Deptford X and ArtLicks.

Deptford Creek is tidal with a 19 feet variation at the highest tides, so always changing. I often sit on the Creek wall by my studio with a sketchbook, binoculars and camera, or just eating lunch while watching the wildlife which can include kingfishers, little egrets, a heron and even the occasional seal.

In the studio making by hand is an important part of my process, and I am surrounded by tools and equipment. As part of my *I Wish* project I make small talismanic objects as I have been doing since 2013. These are made especially for people after a private conversation. I am currently working on this project with children from Lewisham and Greenwich hospitals. The materials I use can be anything from felt to twigs to pewter, depending on the person and their wish.



I also make wearable sculptures which are then used in photographs and animations. I am working on one at the moment in which I contemplate our relationship with ourselves as primates and how we are perceived ambivalently when growing old. I made an ape mask, then a cloak, and took a series of photographs of myself in the studio which I manipulated digitally. I made the animation combined with photographs of geese on Blackheath and a willow tree on a local common. I often wonder 'what on earth am I up to now?' as from the outside my activities must surely seem crazy. I can only hope the results make sense in the end.

I had a shoulder injury for ten months which meant hammering was painful and led me to drawing and painting much more intensively and as an end in itself rather than just for research or working out an idea.



The ideas migrate across media too. A series of paintings of monkeys became a pewter cast which became a mask which became an animation. I have to remind myself that there are narrative threads holding the different aspects of the work together: the main one being a reflection on the relationship between our imaginative life, and the outer world, and how human beings act towards each other, other species and the planet. Also, what is the nature of our internal space, or sense of self? And how can we as artists promote humanity and tenderness?

Memories of Art College - Suzan Swale



Taken at the Royal College of Art Students' Hostel, Evelyn Gardens, 1970

Derby College of Art

1965-1966 pre-diploma Foundation

Practically homeless, estranged from family. Working till late at night. Living in a squat. Kennedy gets shot. Dyed my hair black. Best friend Stuart Welch (Squelch). Notorious boyfriends.

West of England College of Art/Bristol Polytechnic 1966-1969

Working late in Acker Bilk's restaurant in Clifton. Late night discussions and visits to the cinema with Carl Plackman and Daisy, my adopted Mum. Trips down to Cornwall with Paul Feiler, Karl Weschke and other tutors. Penzance, Mousehole, Cape Cornwall and St. Just. Hornsey College activists staying in my flat. Bristol sit-in. We occupied the principal's office. Notorious boyfriends. Pregnant. Travelled to London. Abortion. Invited to the Piccadilly Gallery, Cork St by its owner Mr Pilkington. Turned down a show, because he said my work should not change. My hair is now blonde. Tutors Ralph Brown, David Inshaw and Tom Frame. Best friend Glyn quits art to become a monk. LSD, Pink Floyd. Determined to get into Royal College of Art. Wear painted teardrops on my face, and dress in lace nighties and torn jeans. Burn myself welding and, after being patched up in hospital, Jock the Sculpture technician forces me to immediately relight the torch. Decide to concentrate on painting. Favourite tutor is American artist Hassell Smith, friend of Frank Stella. Introduced to Jim Dine. First one-woman show at Bristol Arts Centre.



Performance with Tim Jones - *Proposition Containers, Containment* at the Young Contemporaries exhibition, The Royal Academy, 1970. The first performance at the RA.

Royal College of Art 1969-1972

The Painting School was part of the V&A. We walked through a mirror at the end of a corridor into the V&A to go to the café and back again. Carel Weight sometimes gave me money and food. Lord Queensberry paid my fees. Lived in the students' hostel at Evelyn Gardens, South Kensington. In order to pay my way through college did various part-time jobs, such as working as a hotel chambermaid and as a model, including wearing a bikini made of orange peel, to advertise Maroc oranges at the Ideal Homes Show. If I were a student now I would probably be a pole-dancer. Notorious boyfriends. Clive Goodwin, Martin Frishman. I drank and partied with Eduardo Paolozzi at his Dover Street studio. Showed at the Grabowski Gallery, South Kensington. Mr Grabowski collected my work, which eventually ended up in the Stzuki Museum in Poland. Won the John Minton Award, the Royal Institute Award in Painting, the Burston Award and the French Government Scholarship. Modelled for the RCA Fashion show. Was taught by Ruskin Spear, who would play the saxophone during classes and would take off his wooden leg if he was drunk. Jean Bratby used to leave her kid screaming its head off, strapped in its pram in the corridor. My best friend, Diane Hills, had an affair with her husband, John Bratby. We told David Hockney to fuck off when he kept photographing our paintings in the studio. In the first year I was scared stiff of Francis Bacon who worked in the Mural Room. Peter Blake was my second year tutor but I never saw him. Sandra Blow used to sit down beside me to tell me about her skiing holiday and her boyfriends and then fucked off without mentioning my work. Fred Samson told me I was a frustrated writer/poet who painted. Dickie Chopping used to cry on my shoulder in the bar when his boyfriend left him. Peter de Francia said I was frigid. I was run over by a car just before my degree, so I attended the private view in a Biba evening dress on crutches. Reconciled with my father, who would drive down

from Derbyshire to drink with my tutors in the Common Room. They loved him but I was so embarrassed.

The London Group and Friends' Sculpture Trail in Shoreham, Kent
Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 June, 11am-5pm



Trefoil Almuth Tebbenhoff

A first for The London Group, with about half the exhibitors being members, around 60 sculptors are taking part in the Sculpture Trail. Works will be exhibited in over 30 gardens throughout Shoreham village which is situated in the idyllic Darenth Valley. There will be an impressive variety of work ranging from sculpture using traditional methods of carving and casting to an intriguing assortment of ephemeral work and the Trail will be particularly unusual in the significant number of works that will be site-specific with artists making work in response to visiting Shoreham and researching ideas around the village.

Tickets on arrival in the village: £10 per person a day or £15 for both days, with one catalogue included per couple. 20% off Groups of 8 adults or more. Under 16s free. Packed lunches and refreshments available. Only one hour from central London by car or train. 5 minutes' walk from station. Ample parking.

The Sculpture Trail is in aid of The Shoreham Church Extension Fund. The church is a medieval Grade 1 listed building with no disabled access, no toilets or other modern facilities.

‘Listen to me and I will tell you the story of The London Group, as it was told in the days of old in the dark night that is very long, the Men and Women of the Northlands sat by their great log fires and they tell a tale’. (With apologies to Noggin the Nog). Tales of a mystical grail whispered to be incarnated as a tin trunk.



Let me tell you now Sisters and Brothers that these tales are not exaggerated and that such a mythical object does exist, rescued from the depths of Burnt Ash Hill where ex-president Philippa Beale had given it protection since a date lost in the mists of time. Ancient rumour had it that this trunk held important documents telling the story of our tribe's early years, but, on prizing open the squeaky tin lid, my eyes fell upon a few sheaves of dog-eared papers mainly complaining about members of the tribe who had not paid their dues. And yet this battered, rusty trunk still held a few surprises.

A peeling label on the back declared, 'Andrew Forge, 105 Lee Road'. Forge was a past president of The London Group from 1965 to 1971. His may be a name known to certain elders of our tribe as a writer, critic and artist who departed these shores for lands in the West. But before he went (I hope he didn't need this trunk to pack his things in) he found time to save the group from insolvency by lending it a thousand pounds and to put it on a more solid course, it was, indeed, a close run thing. Lee Road is only a few streets to the east of my home, the trunk has returned to its place of birth. Coincidentally, my house number is also 105; ignore a coincidence, my friend, at your peril. The tin trunk has been given a new life. It has been dusted and washed in warm soapy water but not yet anointed with oil, and now the archive of London Group exhibition catalogues has been gently laid within its dark belly.



Tate Archive has a copy of every London Group exhibition catalogue up until about Forge's time, but my archive takes over from there and is deliberately more accessible than Tate's. The next time a visitor calls at 105 to research into recent London Group history, they will be confronted by a beat up old object full of interesting stories. The tin trunk, I mean.

David Redfern



Particular thanks to Annie Johns who has been editor of the newsletter ever since it went online in 2015. This is Annie's last newsletter and I'm extremely grateful to her for providing something so immensely valuable to The London Group. Its unfailingly high calibre and range of informative and absorbing articles and interviews has been much enjoyed and appreciated by members and London Group followers alike. It's going to be a hard act to follow. And thank you very much to both Annie and Nicola Schauermaier for producing this newsletter.

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