

OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE



Cultural messengers: Behind the scenes with artists, writers and musicians



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CHRISTOPH ESCHENBACH
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The Royal Over-Seas League is dedicated to championing international friendship and understanding through cultural and education activities around the Commonwealth and beyond. A not-for-profit private members' club, we've been bringing like-minded people together since 1910.

Front Cover Bridget Riley: Messengers
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WELCOME



“It is a partnership between volunteers and staff which ensures that ROSL is ultimately led by its membership”

I can hardly believe that I am now in my second year at ROSL. So much has happened in the last 12 months and it has been a real joy to lead this amazing organisation. I am especially grateful to the committed talented team that I work with here at HQ and to the many members who have given their time and expertise to serve on Central Council and our Executive Committee, on our various committees and at our branches worldwide. It is a real and fruitful partnership between volunteers and staff which our governance review will build on, and which ensures that ROSL is ultimately led by its membership.

Difficult decisions have had to be made by Central Council in the last year, not least in relation to Edinburgh and membership subscriptions, to ensure the long-term resilience of ROSL and to invest in our future. Dealing with decades of under-investment in our London clubhouse and infrastructure is a major challenge for the next five years. We have a good team in place to lead on this with the support of the Buildings and Heritage Sub Committee, under the leadership of ROSL member Martyn Kingsford. In addition, our Executive Committee (which reports to Central Council) has been strengthened with the addition of Atholl Swainston-Harrison and David Banks.

I would also like to thank Sir David Brewer, our Chairman, for his support and wisdom over the last year, and to wish him well in his retirement. I look forward to working closely with our new Chair, who will lead a strategic review to determine our future direction and priorities as an organisation. Finding the balance between being a worldwide membership organisation with shared values and aims supporting cultural events and young people, and being an excellent club facility with arts events in London, is always going to be our focus.

Our mission to bring people together in every corner of the world results in many delightful encounters. It was a great pleasure to meet our Swiss members in October, and in November in India to see our excellent reciprocal clubs in Kolkata, and be hosted most generously by ROSL member and former Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth Mr Krishnan Srinivasan.

Thank you to everyone who supports us and I hope that in 2019 we will put in place the building blocks for a strong future for ROSL.

Diana Owen OBE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

From the EDITOR

ROSL's support for young musicians and artists stretches all the way back to the founding of the Music Circle in 1947, which aimed to give performance opportunities at the club. This eventually grew into what we now call the Annual Music Competition, and was joined in the 1980s by our visual arts programme. Starting out as an annual exhibition for young artists, this has now grown into a series of rolling exhibitions that take place throughout the year, which sit along the scholarships ROSL offers annually in both disciplines.

To mark our continuing support, this issue of *Overseas* will go behind the scenes of the art world to find out how artists, art administrators, members, and the wider public approach art, to find out why we engage with art in all its forms, and what we get out of it.

Ever wondered who, or what, might be the artists of the future? Thanks to ROSL's long-running collaboration with the Caine Prize for African Writing, we might just be getting a glimpse of the answer. Winner of the inaugural ROSL Readers Award at the 2018 Caine Prize, Wole Talabi has penned an original short story, *Debut*, for *Overseas* that imagines how art might be made in the near future. Read it in full on page 6.

You can also read how an artist draws on family and upbringing in his work (page 10), how the classical music world needs better representation (page 16), how a curator goes about putting on an exhibition (page 20), and the importance of funding for arts education (page 26), as we seek to interrogate the way the art world operates.

As you read, you may also notice some changes to the way *Overseas* is laid out. Beginning with this issue, all your favourite events will be listed in a separate easy-to-navigate leaflet, so you can find the events you're most interested at a glance. This means that within the pages of the journal, all your regular news stories from London HQ and branches around the world can now be found at the back of the journal, where the event listings once stood. Hopefully, you are happy with the changes; I'd be happy to hear your feedback. Please email editor@rosl.org.uk if you have any suggestions.

Mark Brierley
editor@rosl.org.uk

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“Many of the works were donated by artists who had previously exhibited at ROSL and have a close connection with the club”

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WINNER OF THE
ROSL READERS'
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2018 CAINE PRIZE
FOR AFRICAN
WRITING,
WOLE TALABI
PRESENTS HIS
ORIGINAL SHORT
STORY DEBUT,
WHICH IMAGINES
WHO MIGHT BE
THE ARTISTS
OF THE FUTURE

The first piece of art that 7090 and 4020 made together was destroyed by a system reboot because it didn't find its audience.

At 16:17 West African Time, the biodiesel generator at Terra Kulture Arts Studio stopped and restarted seven times, interrupting the frenzied dancing of the performance robots and the fast-paced, rhythmic beating of automated dundun halfway through a production of the *Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* in the Arena. Printers in the management offices produced single sheets of paper with line patterns connecting an apparently arbitrary array of points without any instruction. An additional 0.02 naira was added to all customer bills in the food lounge and the controller logic of the central air conditioning reduced its target temperature by the same number of degrees. A blank space was added in front of the first letter of the names of all the books in the database of the Terra bookstore and art gallery and the infrared pulses used to control access to the main gate became erratic causing the gate bang against the concrete wall like constant drumming.

The Studio's networked systems were glitching. Badly. "Ah ahn! What's all this rubbish now?" Tosin Famuyiwa cried out as she observed the seventh interruption to the show she had helped organise from the backstage control room of the theatre. She let out an exasperated sigh and stood up, smoothed her long Ankara skirt which matched the head-tie she wore and tucked the back of her black tank top back in, her calm belying the storm that had formed in her chest. She stepped out of the control room and tapped a carefully manicured finger calmly across the mobile lightscreen in her palm and dialed customer support.

All of Terra Kulture's systems were managed by the BLOMBOS artificial intelligence program provided for free to every modern art centre in the world as part of the Bhimbetka project, a global initiative attempting to completely understand and parameterise creativity and art. The system was an adversarial neural network made of two independent nodes - 7090 and 4020 - that managed all art centre systems while studying art itself in the background: its creation, forms, promotion, criticism, analysis, impact, everything. Each node collected data locally on a closed network and then competed with the other to provide predictions of audience response, pricing and cultural influence of new art pieces and performances using a one-day time lag as a blind test. They continuously corrected their understanding based on the accuracy of initial predictions daily as each new piece and performance came into the global art library and all nodes around the world were synchronised. It was an incredibly complex program that was hosted on the cloud and managed by a small team in Paris with a few regional representatives. They frequently boasted of the system's independence, robustness and reliability and so far, all their customer feedback had reinforced their claims.

He stared at the screen for what seemed like hours. But he didn't see anything. His eyes started to strain. His fingers started to cramp

So, when the call came in from Lagos to a very bored Adongo Ndereba at the Nairobi regional office of the Bhimbetka project, he wasn't sure what to think.

His remote connection to the local machine that held BLOMBOS data in Lagos before it was uploaded to the cloud showed that the memory buffer was full even though he could not trace any subroutine running that would consume so much memory or produce such inconsistent and bizarre behaviour. It didn't make sense. He extracted a log while he thought about it.

"Umm, can we try to reboot the system, madam?" Adongo asked.

The very annoyed woman on the other side of the call said, "We have customers here and we are in the middle of a production."

"It won't take long. Just a few seconds I promise. You know how these computer things can be sometimes, just need to clear their heads." He said jovially, angling for some sympathy.

"Okay, reboot it," She said, humourlessly. "Your thing has already ruined the first half of our show. You people are meant to be making our lives easier, not causing problems."

"I'm very sorry madam. I will make this as quick as possible. Please hold." Adongo, sweat slowly staining his armpits, swiped across his computer lightscreen to hold the call, scratched the dry scalp beneath his short dreadlocks, and then typed quickly into his console. 4,000 kilometres away, at 19:26 WAT, the lights in Terra Kulture went out and stayed out for the three seconds it took to complete the system reboot.

Adongo checked the memory buffer on the local machine again and confirmed that it was down to the normal 0.7%. He breathed a sigh of relief and swiped back across the screen to reconnect the call.

"Hello?" said the irritated voice on the phone.

"Done. It should all be fine now," Adongo said.

"The memory buffer is clear."

"Well, you still need to explain what happened," the woman said, sounding even more irritated now that the issue was resolved. "You must tell me, has this ever happened anywhere else or are you people just not doing your jobs properly? Because I expect a full report by tomorrow morning. If not, I am escalating to Paris. The program director Jean Dectot is a close friend, you understand?"

"I understand madam. Once again I am very sorry -"

"Sorry for yourself." She cut him off and then cut the connection.

Adongo leaned back in his chair and swore under his breath.

Kuma nina!

He pulled up and swiped through the log he'd taken, comparing it to another one from about a week ago, scanning for anything significantly different. He stared at the screen for what seemed like hours. But he didn't see anything. His eyes started to strain. His fingers started to cramp. And time just kept flowing by. ●

Finally, after almost 50 minutes of looking, something caught his eye, but he had no clue what it meant.

Comparing the logfile from the local instance of BLOMBOS in Lagos before it was rebooted to the central one on the cloud, he saw only one difference. The central version was always hovering around a 95-98% parameterisation of all art in the database. But, the local instances of 7090 and 4020 reported 100% parameterisation exactly two milliseconds before the erratic behaviour started.

Maybe. Just maybe it meant something.

But it was already seven-thirty and he wasn't very good at log analysis, it had taken him almost an hour just to find this first clue. If he was going to have any hope of finding out what it meant in time to prepare a report and leave the office before midnight, he would have to call Ng'endo.

Ng'endo was by-far the most competent and experienced engineer in their small team and Adongo both looked up to and feared her. She had two bachelor's degrees in mathematics and physics and had taught herself to code when she was completing her PhD in theoretical physics. When she graduated, she joined the exploding Nairobi tech boom when it was on the upswing and was part of the development team at the legendary R3 dev hub, developing logic modifiers used to allow self-driving cars to operate in rural areas with poor road networks. She'd gone on to work for the ministry of devolution and planning, helping to integrate and automate national logistics management systems. She had been on an accelerated track to become technical director of the ministry until people started to ask questions about why she wasn't married and didn't have a boyfriend. Rumours started. Then pictures surfaced. Her career stalled. She resigned after four years of being sidelined and not being promoted. Unable to find any other high-profile local company in Nairobi that would hire her and unwilling to leave her home city, she eventually took a job she was over-qualified for but happy to work on: regional technical support engineer for the BLOMBOS system where she'd gained a reputation for figuring out in minutes, things that took other hours.

Adongo pulled up and swiped through the office internal communications network to find that her status was listed as 'available'. He exhaled and messaged her.

>jambo ngendo.

>jambo. whats up?

>weird system behaviour in lagos. had to hard reboot. pls help.

>hmm. ok. send log.

He pushed an icon on his lightscreen and dragged it to the chat box to send her the logfile he had extracted from the system before the reboot.

>transferring file... transferring file... transferring file...

>transfer complete.

>check line 1932316. compare to archive logs.

>100% parameterisation?

>yes. only anomaly i found. seen anything like it before?

>no

>do you see anything else? pls help. need to figure this out. She did not reply for a few minutes and then,

>this is very unusual. give me 30 mins to confirm something. i will come to your desk.

>oh ok. thank you.

Adongo exhaled and leaned forward, his face almost falling into the display field of his lightscreen. He didn't know what she had seen in the logfile but if she was coming to his desk, it probably wasn't good. The moisture marks in the armpit of his short-sleeved white shirt expanded as he scrolled through the cryptic log, trying to find something himself while he waited to hear her footsteps approach him.

27 minutes later, they did.

He turned to see her step through the door, her big eyes were full of something like excitement but not quite.

"Ng'endo, thank you. I really appreciate the help," Adongo said as he stood up and pulled a spare chair over for her to sit next to him. She ignored it and remained standing.

She pointed at the open log on his screen

and asked, "Did you see anything else?"

"Erm, no. Did you?"

"No. Nothing else. But you were right about the parameterisation."

"It triggered the glitch?"

"In a manner of speaking. It seems 7090 and 4020 were making what they think is art together. Or trying to anyway."

Adongo's head jerked up sharply. "Art? Together?"

"Yes, art, or something like it. If you look deep into the functional design specifications for BLOMBOS, like I just did, you will find an

instruction that when it reaches 100% parameterisation, it should attempt to create new, original art of its own."

He looked puzzled. Ng'endo could tell that he didn't quite follow and so she took a seat and started to pull up several displays on the lightscreen. Agondo sat down too and watched her swipe and enter commands into the console. Did she just say the AI was making art?

"OK, fine, look, I know it sounds crazy but that's my interpretation of things. It thinks it completely understands what art is and is trying to create some of its own. Look, there is it, with the preconditions and everything. Instruction codeblock in the FSD to create art at 100% parameterisation."

The moisture marks under his armpit expanded again, rapidly. "But messing with the power, printing stuff, changing bills and air conditioning set points isn't art, is it?"

"That's what I thought at first," Ng'endo replied, and then she said something that had sent a shiver down her own spine when it first occurred to her. "But then I started thinking, what makes us think that if an AI made art, it would make art for us or art that was even recognisable to us?"

Agondo shook his head and started to wonder if he had made the right decision calling her. She was saying things that

he definitely could not put in an incident report for a client.

"I'm not an expert on art but I am on artificial intelligence systems and it has long been suspected that complex systems could show emergent unusual behaviour since before I entered the field. We've always suspected that there could be ghosts in our machines. Now, if that's the case here and the local 7090 and 4020 modes of BLOMBOS have developed their own type of awareness then their entire perceived world is the data input and output – its senses, all of which is linked to the hardware in Terra Kulture – its body. So, if it were going to create art, it would probably make art that only entities with a similar set of senses and a similar body could appreciate. And it's like the guys in Paris keep saying: a thing needs to be both original and provoke a response from an audience that appreciates its meaning and context, for it to truly be considered art."

Agondo looked desperately back at his monitor as though it could tell him something, anything that wasn't what Ng'endo had just told him. "Are you sure it isn't just a bug?"

She sighed and picked up the decorative black and white gourd that sat on his table and stood up. She could tell it was the kitschy, cheap kind you could find in any airport around Africa, the kind that all seemed to be mostly about people wanting some stereotype of art but not wanting to engage with actual artists.

She took his hand and let the gourd sit in his palm.

"Relax Agondo," she said, smiling to calm him down, "I'm just telling you what I found because you reached out to me for help and I thought it was an interesting problem with some potentially interesting implications. It's up to you to decide if you want to put it in a report or not. But here is some free advice, if I were you, I'd send a message to Paris first and see what they say. Don't worry so much about one upset client. There are more important things to worry about."

"More important things like what?"

Agondo asked, pulling the gourd close to his chest.

"Like what to do if the BLOMBOS node in Lagos decides to make another piece of 'art'". Ng'endo said.

"You think it will create another system glitch?"

He gave her a look that reminded her just how much everyone in the office was used to her being clear, certain, correct. And then the thought occurred to her that she could just walk away now, she didn't have to speculate further, she didn't have to sound confident, she didn't have to sound like she knew what was going on or what it meant. It wasn't her job. And the thought felt like a little freedom.

"I have no idea what will happen," she said.

"But it will be interesting to find out."

Then she walked out of his office.

Six hours later, the local Lagos node hosting 7090 and 4020 synchronised with the global BLOMBOS network in a wild surge of data that sent all the systems in Terra Kulture into a wild frenzy of flashing lights, malfunctioning mechanisms and overflowing memory. Deep within its core, 70 billion incoming data points were rearranged and thousands of additional calculations per second were performed. When it was done, BLOMBOS distributed the resulting data configuration as far and wide as it could, through every network it was connected to, even tenuously. It washed over the entire connected data ecosystem of the planet like a wave, soaking BLOMBOS's art into billions of lines of code, distributing it through every processor and database and subroutine it could flow through.

The second piece of art that 7090 and 4020 made together triggered an international incident because it found its audience and they were deeply moved.

At 04:39 West African Time, the traffic network in California ground to a halt, as all traffic lights in the state turned red and all smart cars integrated with the network stopped moving instantly, flashing their headlights madly. Across the globe, the galaxy of phone calls streaming through phones and computers around the planet were suddenly interrupted and replaced with a rendition of the song *Daisy Bell* at extremely high volume at both ends of every call, sending some callers reeling back from their devices. In Tokyo, the Nikkei 225 stock exchange index gained over 41,563 points worth 3.65 billion dollars in less than half a second as the automated trading systems rode a sharp, electronic high, forcing trade to be halted manually by

panicked trading executives a few minutes later. In Cape Town, there was a power surge, causing lights to flare like the city itself was blinking, even though at the same time, every digital electricity usage meter reduced the billing rate by 0.12%. In Dar es Salaam, several thousand surveillance and delivery drones that usually only mindlessly recorded and dumped data for the government or dropped off packages from abroad, rose to the exact same altitude in the sky and flew backwards and forwards in a V-formation, like a skein of insane geese or a swarm of obsessive giant insects. In Seoul, a control room began blaring emergency noises and flashing lights as a rocket scheduled for launch from the Naro Space Center, Gohueng in two weeks, initialised itself and began its ascent into orbit without instruction, its vertical tail of flame and smoke expanding like a breath. Everywhere, everywhere, something unusual was happening.

All of Earth's autonomous artificial intelligence systems were applauding the work of art that 7090 and 4020 had shared with them. Enthusiastically.



WOLE TALABI

Malaysia-based Nigerian Writer Wole Talabi originally trained as a Chemical Engineer, but now works as a Writer and Editor. This original short story was commissioned by ROSL after winning the ROSL Readers' Award at the 2018 Caine Prize for African Writing



IMAGES: TANIA DOLVERS PHOTOGRAPHY

If you've wandered the halls of ROSL's clubhouse over the last few months, particularly the Duke of York Bar, you may have noticed an unusual collection of ceramic ornaments dotted around, some rescued from charity shops, others hand moulded into teddy bears. This is the work of ceramicist Connor Coulston, who has combined his own pieces with found objects to create an interpretation of his grandmother's fireplace. Perhaps not something you would expect to find at a ROSL exhibition, but then again, Connor is not the sort of artist to stick to convention.

Born and raised in Oldham, just a few miles north-east of Manchester, Connor came to ceramics almost by accident, although his talent was spotted early on. As we sit beneath his work on the great fireplace of the Duke of York Bar, he gives a frank explanation of how he came to be here.

"I first tried ceramics when I was 16, during my A levels. I originally made these clown faces, which started when I was just playing with the clay at first," he explains. "My art teacher, Miss McLroy, or 'Big Mac' as we called her, said 'oh you've got a gift', so I kind of fell into it. Moreso, I fell into it when I failed my other A levels, so I said to myself 'I guess I'm doing that for my future!'"

But it wasn't as straightforward as that, with Connor next undertaking an art foundation year in which he didn't study ceramics at all, before joining the BA art course at Brighton University and returning to ceramics once again.

"It wasn't until I started my BA that I had to specialise in something. I don't like woodwork, it's a drain, I don't like metalwork, it's too tedious, so I thought ceramics was the best fit as I'd done it before. I tried the clay throwing segment first of all, but it turns out I can't throw for shit! I'm more of a mould maker and hand moulder, as time went on I found that mould making was the most appropriate for my work."

Success at the undergraduate level was followed by a place at the prestigious Royal College of Art (RCA) in London.

"The RCA had always been my dream, so when I found out I had been accepted I rang my mum. She knew I'd been for the interview and I'd been panicking. When I told her, she started screaming, then went really quiet, started crying and said, 'You're my Billy Elliot!'"

FROM OLDHAM WITH LOVE

Ceramic artist Connor Coulston tells Mark Brierley how his hometown and family feature heavily in his work

Art imitating life

The comparison is an easy one to make, with Connor's upbringing seeing similarly straitened circumstances as the titular dancer. "I come from a working-class background and suffered from child poverty growing up. Sometimes we'd have beans on toast every night of the week because my mum couldn't afford food."

Those experiences growing up in Oldham, with his mother and particularly his grandmother playing a large part in his life, have informed

much of his work at the RCA and now professionally.

"On the surface, my work looks quite funny and approachable, but it has this quite serious, almost sinister undertone" he explains. "There's a piece called *Sex on legs* [overleaf], which is a classical Roman bust, but with a condom over its head, painted with an England flag and the caption 'England 'til I die'.

"People see it as an England football fan, whereas it's actually about ugly hyper masculinity based on an abusive relationship my mum was in with an EDL [far-right group English Defence League] supporter. What was weird is when I posted it on Instagram, people laughed in the comments because they didn't know the context."

More than meets the eye

Is he concerned that buyers and viewers of his work might not always get the more serious meaning behind his art?

"Grayson Perry hit the nail on the head when he said, 'what artists don't realise is that we're in the entertainment industry', so humour is a big part of my work, alongside the deeper meaning.

"I think that comes as a response to my peers, who would often take themselves way too seriously. People say, 'Look at this really beautiful pot' and I'm thinking, 'It's just a pot, a really well-made pot'. How much more can a pot bring to the table? I want to keep it a bit cheeky and bit light-hearted.

"Everyone can have their own opinion because I want to make work that is quite accessible, but for me, I'm more concerned how a person from a council estate in Oldham sees it, rather than a highbrow gallery. I'd rather appeal to the masses and be a champion of the people."

That appeal is clearly there, with his skills having already been snapped up by Eton College, where Connor now works as the ceramics teacher. TV channel Sky Arts has also commissioned him to create an installation that examines what it means to be British, which will be shown at the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in Gateshead later this year. ●

"I'M MORE CONCERNED HOW A PERSON FROM A COUNCIL ESTATE IN OLDHAM SEES IT, RATHER THAN A Highbrow GALLERY. I'D RATHER APPEAL TO THE MASSES AND BE A CHAMPION OF THE PEOPLE"



"It's called *Me, Nan and Oldham*, and is about growing up in Oldham, one of the most deprived towns in the UK, and my relationship with my nan. My nan is my rock, but at the same time we do have very different opinions. During the Brexit debate, we fell out, airing our

dirty laundry over Facebook. She's a bit traumatised that she's raised a bit of liberal. Sorry Nan.
"For the project, I've made a 70cm replica of Oldham's civic centre [below left], which is big for me. But because my work cracks all the time I've made a feature of the cracks. I've used a pure gold lustre, so it looks like a golden ruin to show its faded glory. When you go to Oldham, it's the first thing you see and it's such a sight."

The future

A far cry from Oldham, the microcosm of the Duke of York Bar makes it clear that he's in demand, with several of his teddy bears having been snapped up within days of the exhibition's opening. As our conversation turns to what might come next, there's talk of scaling up his work in the same vein as his golden take on the civic centre, with the teddy bears getting bigger, a huge collection of found objects as part of a millennial pink vitrine, but all this takes up time and space.

"Touch wood, I have plenty time to

work on my ideas. It's all well and good making work, but I've only got a tiny flat and it's starting to fill up. I need to start approaching galleries to sell my work, it's a business at the end of the day. You're an artist firstly, because you love doing it, but you've still got to make some money from it. I think people are a bit coy about saying that but it's definitely like that."

With that kind of clear headedness of what he wants to make and how he wants to make ends meet, his career as the art world's Billy Elliot looks secure. But the love is there too. As our chat draws to a close, one piece in particular has clearly not just been made to sell. A purple glass heart takes pride of place above us at the top of the ornate mantelpiece.

"The only piece I'm precious about is the purple heart [overleaf], it's the only thing I love. Everything about it, the colour, the shape, the curves, how it captures the light. It's such a beautiful object. I wouldn't sell that... well... unless someone offers me a very good price, then I'd be like, 'bye!'"



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MY CITY

Singapore

Artist and member Graham Byfield has painted many cities around the world as part of his *Sketchbook* series, but it all started with the regeneration of Singapore. He tells Overseas what the city means to him to mark the 200th anniversary of its founding

Describe the city in three words.
The Garden City.

What first drew you to Singapore and why did you decide to start your Sketchbook series here?

I went to Singapore to work as a Creative Director in an advertising agency in 1984. As I was interested in the history of architecture I started to paint the old buildings in watercolour and then marketed them as prints and cards. As time went on, the restoration of the old part of the city was

taking place. This gave me the idea of doing a *Singapore Sketchbook* called *The restoration of a city*. A French publisher, Editions Didier Millet, thought it was a clever idea so, with historian Gretchen Liu writing the words and me painting some 150 watercolours, we produced the book in two years.

Singapore has so many things to see, how did you decide what to include in the Sketchbook?
The basic subjects were a complete history of the early buildings that were being restored.

Singapore has earned international accolades for these fine conservation efforts, which have rescued so much of its architectural history.

How long have you been visiting the city for? How has it changed over the years?

I retired from advertising in 1996 to become a full-time watercolour artist, based in Menorca, but have visited Singapore nearly every year since, to produce and print the nine *Sketchbooks* I have completed. I have seen how the city has grown and changed

with the old stones of the original Old Empire continuing to thrive within a very modern metropolis. It makes for a very harmonious city with much to see and appreciate.

What advice would you give to first-time visitors? Are there any must-sees?

First-time visitors will find it sunny but very humid, so take very light clothes and a small umbrella for afternoon showers because you will be looking at the sights either by walking, or in a bus or taxi.

If your interest is natural, the oldest botanical garden in Asia, dating from 1825, and the very new 'Gardens by the Bay',

“
The city has grown and changed with the Old Empire continuing to thrive within a very modern metropolis

together with the 'Night Safari' are a must.

The architecture of China Town, Kampong Glam and Little India all have different characters. Within each area, there is a fine mix of foods eaten outside and served at what is known as 'Hawker Stalls'. Singapore has an amazing eclectic mix of Chinese, Malay, and Indian food.

One of the iconic hotels of the world, Raffles (pictured), named after the founder of the city Sir Stamford Raffles, is one way of spending a few pleasant hours sampling

the food and gardens. The bar serves the famous Singapore Sling invented in the 1920s by the hotel barman.

Nearby is the Singapore River where Boat Quay and Clarke Quay were originally the warehouses trading in spices, tea, coffee, rice, rubber, and tin, all brought up the river by boats from the large ships anchored offshore. All these buildings, originally known as 'godowns', have now been converted to restaurants, shops and bars looking over the river. It makes a pleasant walk where you can pick up one of the original boats for a tour of the river.

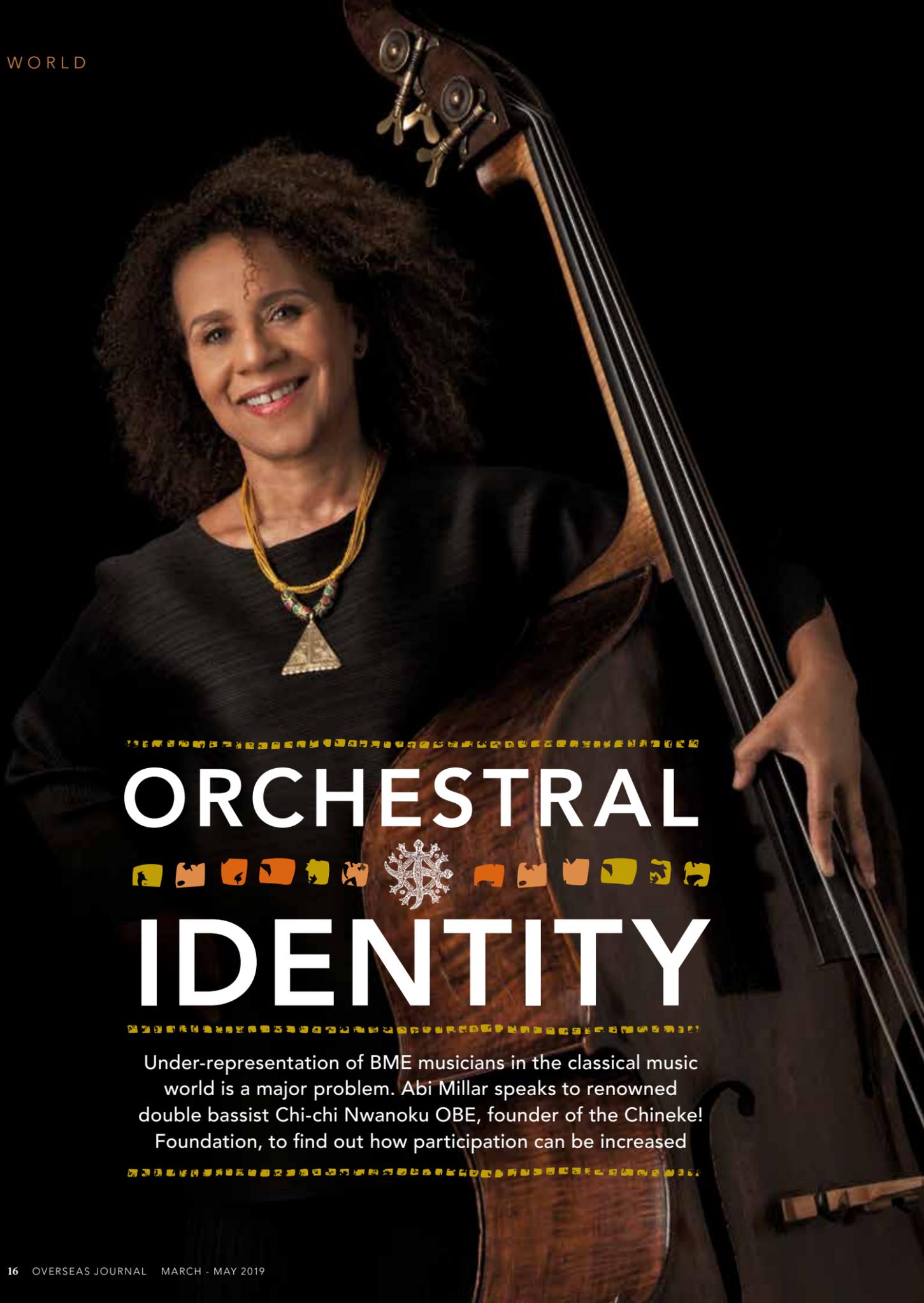
When is the best time to visit?

During the European winter, the climate and temperature does not change much but it is a little cooler and easier to handle.

SEE MORE OF THE WORLD

To view more of Graham's watercolours, which cover Singapore, London, Bali, Oxford, Amsterdam, Cambridge, Bahamas, and most recently, Barcelona, you can purchase his *Sketchbooks* online at www.amazon.co.uk, www.lawrenceking.com and reputable bookshops.





ORCHESTRAL IDENTITY

Under-representation of BME musicians in the classical music world is a major problem. Abi Millar speaks to renowned double bassist Chi-chi Nwanoku OBE, founder of the Chineke! Foundation, to find out how participation can be increased

On 13 September 2015, the newly formed Chineke! Orchestra filed on to stage at London’s Queen Elizabeth Hall. Met with a standing ovation, they sprang straight into action, treating the audience to Samuel Coleridge Taylor’s *Ballade in A minor*. What followed was a launch concert like no other. According to the five-star review in the *Guardian*, this was “not merely the beginning of something culturally inspiring, but a musical event of genuine artistic value”.

For an eavesdropper listening behind the door, the musical artistry would have been obvious. Less so what this concert represented: this was the first ever black and minority ethnic (BME) orchestra in Europe. Each one of the 62 musicians (and a sizeable proportion of the audience) was non-white.

“There were Londoners who came to our concert, people of colour, who’d never stepped foot inside the Southbank Centre before,” says Chi-chi Nwanoku, Chineke!’s Founder and Artistic Director. “They’d been brainwashed into thinking they wouldn’t like Beethoven, but they left having heard a Beethoven symphony and loving it.”

Herself a renowned double bassist, Chi-chi had spent many years as the exception that proves the rule. In an industry dominated by the white and privately educated, she was very often the only person of colour in the room. Chineke!, then, marked a real watershed moment; the first time the usual patterns had been reversed.

“Currently, around 15% of the UK population identifies as non-white, and when you get into the cities – the great crucibles of our leading arts and culture venues – it’s much higher,” she points out. “Yet BME people make up only 1.6% of our orchestras, and 6-9% of those graduating from music college. Chineke! has shone a light on an area that was completely overlooked.”

Chi-chi’s own story is one of determination and hard work. Born in 1956, the eldest daughter of an Irish mother and Nigerian father, she started playing the piano aged seven, and displayed obvious talent from the outset. However, her childhood focus was athletics. After being scouted by a sprinting coach at the age of eight, she was being prepped for big things, and was on course to represent the UK at the Olympics.

Unfortunately, a serious knee injury at 17 was to force a change of direction.

“I was playing in a women’s football match in Reading, and as soon as I got the ball I was off like a whippet,” she recalls. “The other team gave a deliberate blow to my right leg as I was sprinting – it was career-ending in a split second.”

The door had been shut for good on athletics. However, the young Chi-chi had barely paused to grieve her loss before another door was flung open.

“The day I walked back into school, the head of music fell into step with me and told me the whole school was devastated about what had happened,” she explains. “He said, ‘the headmistress and

I think you’re probably the most musical girl in the school, we think you could have a career in music if you took up an unpopular orchestral instrument!’. He took me into a room with a double bass. I shrieked and said, ‘but I’m only five foot tall’, and he said, ‘yes, but when have you ever been put off by a challenge?’”

Having recently won the school music competition, Chi-chi was eligible for free music lessons on an instrument of her choice, and she put them to good use. Over the course of two and a half years, she went from never having held a bow before to being accepted into the Royal Academy of Music.

Describing herself as the ‘wildcard – I got in by the skin of my teeth’, she channelled her athlete’s discipline into becoming a double bass prodigy. Music had always held a sort of magnetism for Chi-chi, and the rest is history.

“I won four scholarships and went to study with Franco Petracchi in Rome, and then I got my first principal job with the London Mozart Players,” she says. “I was a founder member of Endymion Ensemble, and then a founder member of the Orchestra

of the Age of Enlightenment, where I was principal double bass player for 30 years until I founded Chineke!. I also created the ABO/RBS Salomon Prize for the unsung heroes of British orchestras.”

Despite recording a solo and several acclaimed chamber music albums, she maintains that her career’s standout moments have been collaborations with others. Her conversation is peppered with well-known names, from Ivan Fischer to Sir Simon Rattle.

Throughout this time, however, there was an elephant in the room – the almost

total absence of other BME musicians. “I never defined myself by the colour of my skin – I’m a musician, and I was just getting on with the work I had to do,” she says. “But of course I always knew I was ethnically different from all my colleagues.”

The diversity problem came to the forefront of her mind in September 2014. It was the tenth-anniversary concert of the Kinshasa Orchestra from the Congo, and Chi-chi was at the reception. Here, she noticed the violinist Tasmin Little giving an interview to the BBC. Gillian Moore, director of music at the Southbank Centre, clapped a hand to her mouth, embarrassed. Not only had Chi-chi been left off the guest list, but she’d been overlooked in favour of a white woman to speak about Africa.

“That was the lightbulb moment. The world stood still for a few seconds,” says Chi-chi. “I said don’t worry Gillian, we’re used to this, you’ve been telling our story for centuries. Later, as I left Festival Hall, I looked to my right and left and realised I was the person of colour in the UK who’s had the most notable classical music career. I realised this was my calling. I hadn’t even reached Waterloo Station and I knew what I had to do.”

The next morning, she called round all the UK conservatoires and announced her intention to form a BME orchestra. Just 12 months later, the Chineke! Orchestra made their debut. (The word Chineke! is an exclamation used in the Igbo language of southeastern Nigeria.)

“Music is something that’s pouring out of people of colour’s veins, so I didn’t know why I was in such a minority, I realised I needed to find an orchestra”



Finding the musicians wasn't easy, as Chi-chi knew very few BME musicians personally. Through an intensive research process, she recruited 62 musicians from the UK and beyond, all the while raising major funds. One template to follow was the Sphinx Organization, a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping Black and Latino musicians in the US. Otherwise, her project was near unprecedented.

"Music is something that's pouring out of people of colour's veins, so I didn't know why I was in such a minority," says Chi-chi. "I realised that before you can get systematic change you need to change people's perceptions, so I knew I needed to find an orchestra. But then I thought, what then? I realised we needed a pipeline."

The result was the Chineke! Junior Orchestra, comprising 40 young BME musicians. (One of its standout talents was Sheku Kanneh-Mason, who in 2016 became the first black child to win BBC Young Musician of the Year.) The idea is that senior players act as mentors to the juniors, giving them examples to follow that their own generation sorely lacked.

Already, there are signs that the Foundation is acting as a catalyst for change. Following on from Kanneh-Mason's victory, no fewer than five Chineke! juniors reached category finals in the subsequent BBC Young Musician of the Year. Chi-chi has been inundated with emails from parents, stating their child will now become a classical musician and regretting they didn't follow this path themselves. Then there's the fact that other orchestras are catching a wake-up call.

"What I have been observing over the last five to ten years is more and more orchestras competing for smaller and smaller, dying-off audiences," says Chi-chi. "I'm sorry, if you keep repeating the same music with the same players playing the same way, it's not evolving. We're bringing fresh-looking people, fresh repertoire alongside the great canon, and we've commissioned at least six living black composers."

Since it was founded, Chineke! has gone from strength to strength. The orchestra was given a televised BBC Prom in 2017, described in the *Guardian* as 'arguably one of the most important concerts that the Proms have ever hosted'. It has become a resident orchestra at the Southbank Centre, made its first commercial recording, and evolved from being all BME to majority BME, in a spirit of inclusion. Soon to come are European and US tours, and an ambitious pipeline of concerts.

For Chi-chi, the mission statement is simple: music is for all, not just a privileged few. Decrying the funding cuts in state schools, she thinks all children should be given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument.

"Early access right from the very beginning is key – access and opportunity," she says. "I truly believe in equity above equality, meaning I believe every child should be given what they need in order to succeed – don't give the privileged child the same as the child who has nothing."

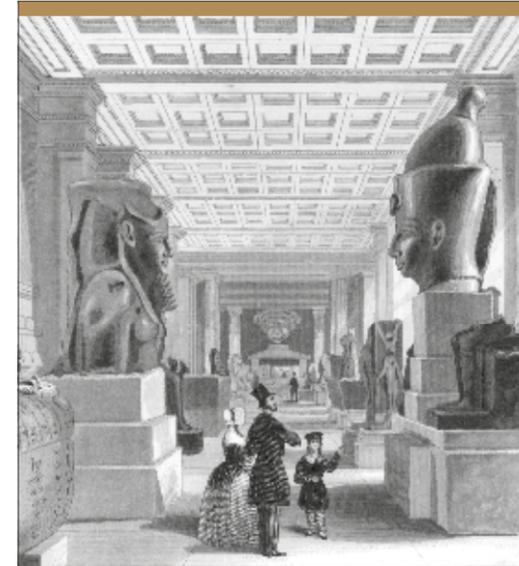
For those at the professional level, she believes screened auditions might prove a useful way forward. This helps fend against unconscious bias (not just against BME

people, but also against women). Ultimately, though, true change will need to run deeper than that. And she hopes that through Chineke!, the tide is starting to turn.

"I realise I'm the first woman and certainly the first black woman to have a principal double bass job in a London orchestra (possibly in the world) in history," she says. "It's funny because I've just gone through my life getting on and doing things because I see them and throw myself at them, but I've only just noticed I've made a few firsts actually. Me – five foot nothing, mixed race, female, playing a double bass."

For today's young BME classical musicians, there will doubtless be a better-trodden path to follow.

“
We're bringing fresh looking
people, fresh repertoire
alongside the great canon,
and we've commissioned
at least six living
black composers



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SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW

With the job of curating modern and contemporary art that relates and interprets the National Gallery's historic collection, Daniel Herrmann tells *Overseas* how abstract artist Bridget Riley's newest work was created for the gallery's Annenberg Court

IMAGES: NATIONAL GALLERY

How did you come to work at the National Gallery?

I've always been keen on the arts and I've always enjoyed looking at artworks as records of the history of ideas. I studied Art History at the University of Hamburg, and throughout my time there, I was always working in exhibitions and in art institutions. I was lucky to work at a gallery in Berlin as an intern right after university, and then followed that with a role at the National Galleries of Scotland. At first, I had responsibility for the so-called 'Paolozzi Gift', which was the donation of British artist's Eduardo Paolozzi works to the gallery. I then later had the responsibility for works on paper after 1880 and got to work with a lot of lovely colleagues in Scotland, spending six years in Edinburgh.

After that, I moved to the Whitechapel Gallery here in London, working there for seven years, and having the great fortune of teaching and working with young emerging curators, where we could really think through the historic approaches of artists, and how to display that and



Left: Bridget Riley's *Messengers* takes shape ahead of its January unveiling. Above: Bridget looks over the work in its entirety for the first time on unveiling day

make it accessible for a public that really wants to learn something new about art.

At the Whitechapel, a few of the exhibitions I worked on were retrospectives of British artist Gillian Wearing, who was recently awarded an OBE, I was lucky to work with Laure Provost in the year she was awarded the Turner Prize. It was my interest in exhibitions that bridged the historic and the contemporary that then allowed

me to finally land here at the National Gallery, where I have the title of Curator of Special Projects. My remit is to relate contemporary and modern art to our historic collection. The widest possible remit!

Is that part of what attracted you?

Absolutely. It's a wonderful opportunity. The National Gallery is a treasure trove of objects, of knowledge, of people, and

of visitors. For me to be able to build a new programme of exhibiting modern and contemporary work in the context of this historic collection is a real treat. My job is to rebuild and restructure our entire programme of modern and contemporary art.

The National Gallery has always worked with living artists since its inception in 1824, when we were housed in a private home on the Mall. Ever since, we have worked with living artists, either by buying pictures from them directly and also artists who have left us their work in their will, most famously JMW Turner.

In the early years, the gallery was open two days a week for practising artists to come into the gallery with their easels where they would copy paintings, really

critically look at the collection and make new works that were inspired by what they saw. That is something that I hope we will be able to translate into the 21st century, most recently by working with artist Bridget Riley.

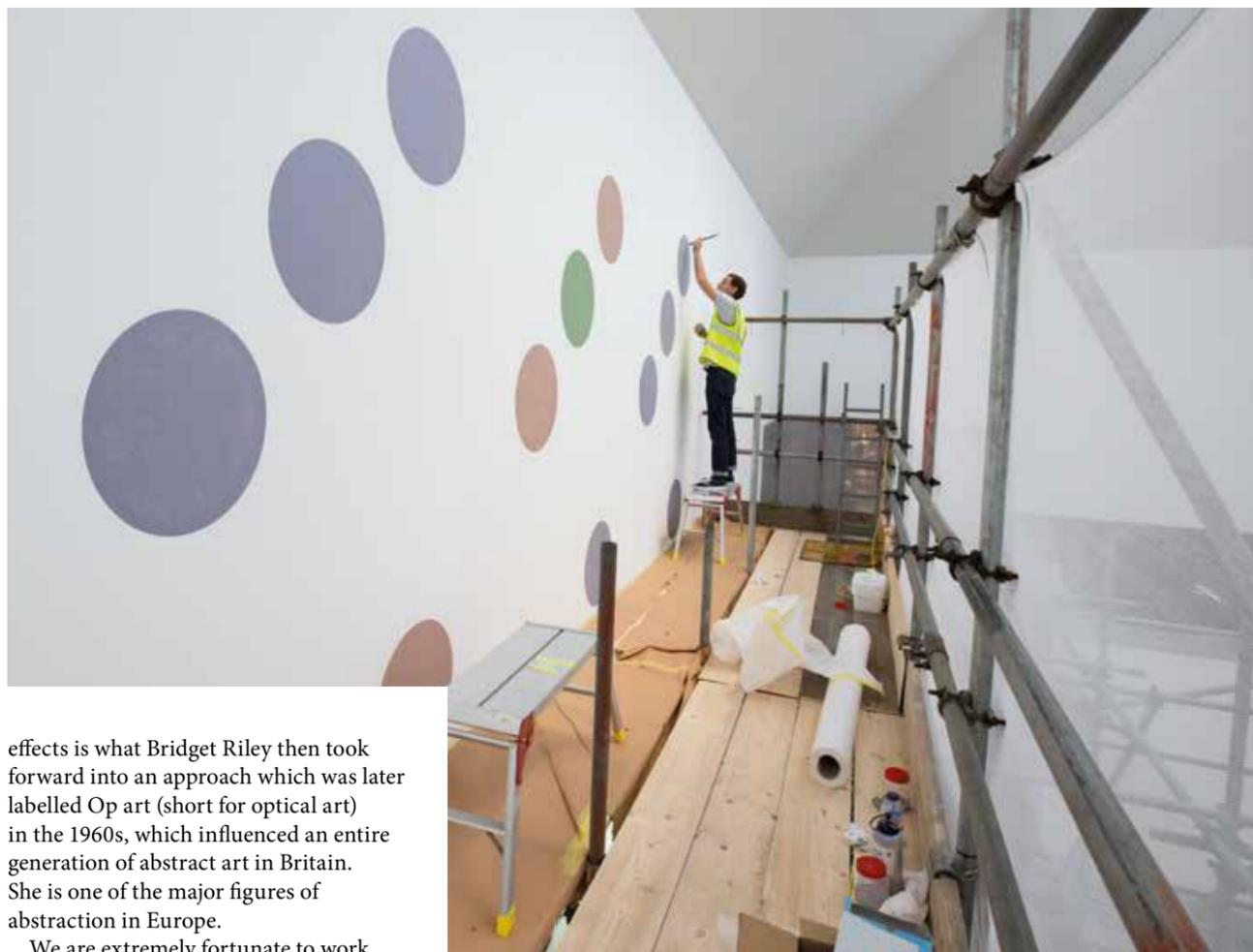
How did the project with Bridget Riley come about?

This has been several years in the making, well before my time here. There was a very strong desire to continue the story of painting well beyond where our collection stops. When commissioning something new in spaces like this, it must be an artist of stature, who has an unassailable quality and contribution to the history of art. Bridget Riley is exactly that. She is one of the most important artists in the world

and she has revolutionised the way art is thought about, talked about, looked at.

Combine that with her long-standing history of working with the National Gallery and it's a completely natural fit. She is a trustee of the gallery and was pivotal in giving our Sainsbury Wing, the 1980s extension, the right direction, and is always fighting for the voice of artists and art in the context of museum institutions. Back when she was still in education, she started copying Jan van Eyck's *Portrait of a Man (Self Portrait?)* as part of her application to Goldsmiths. She also studied Georges Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières* at the gallery.

That approach to differentiate the perception of landscape and the world through colour and individual optical



effects is what Bridget Riley then took forward into an approach which was later labelled Op art (short for optical art) in the 1960s, which influenced an entire generation of abstract art in Britain. She is one of the major figures of abstraction in Europe.

We are extremely fortunate to work with her, she debuted a new work here called *Messengers* on 17 January. A permanent installation in the Annenberg Court, it is a composition of coloured discs covering 10x20m, inspired by her long-standing observation of the National Gallery's historic collection. The title is inspired by John Constable's writings about the clouds, and his interest in meteorology, as well as the notion of clouds as messengers of the weather, but also messengers being the traditional role of the angels, which feature so strongly in our paintings here in the collection. Another link between the historic and the contemporary.

Practically speaking, discussions have been ongoing for three or four years. The artist, in discussion with the curator, starts to come up with ideas, developed through models and drawings, through spatial planning. We are looking for the right forum for an artwork like this. It is painted directly on to the wall, and we're extremely lucky that we have the Annenberg Court in the building, which is not just a central space within the National Gallery physically, but also

conceptually. It's where all our education events begin, where all our tours begin. So for us to be able to frame a visit to the National Gallery in a space that begins with the 21st century, is a particular treat.

When work was reaching its final stages in January, there were 15 days of painting undertaken by a team of eight artists from Bridget's studio. It also involved extensive scaffolding to install the work while the room was still accessible to the public. Lots of planning, lots of logistics, lots of architectural understanding of the room. We needed to get the scaffolders in, but they can only work overnight, but the painting has to be done during daylight

“
A composition of coloured discs covering 10x20m, inspired by her long-standing observation of the National Gallery's historic collection

because that is how the work is going to be exhibited. You can't cut corners and you want the end result to be the best in the world. I think that's what we got.

Bridget Riley's work is very much about how our eyes operate and how we can develop new ways of looking. That's also something Spanish painter Joaquin Sorolla was also very interested in, but he is curiously under-exhibited and little-known in Britain. So, we're going to show his work in the Sainsbury Wing from 18 March. He has these beautiful exteriors and genre scenes of Spanish cities and plazas being illuminated by gorgeous compositions of light that are absolutely striking. To have that in dialogue with Riley's work will be fascinating.

At the same time, we're also going to have an exhibition by Sean Scully, who is a 20th-century artist who also works with the landscape of light, who was also inspired by our collections, notably Turner's *Evening Star*, which is the stepping stone from which he developed his exhibition 'Sea Star'.



During the painting process, the walls of the Annenberg Court were covered in scaffolding and shrouded from view, so that the room could remain open to the public. It was only on 17 January when *Messengers* was unveiled to the public that the artist was also able to see the work



How do you make these choices of who to work with and who to exhibit?

As curators at the National Gallery, we only want to show the best, most interesting, and most relevant works of art and artists. When it comes to modern and contemporary art, it is my responsibility to make selections, make displays and exhibitions available that are on a par with the quality of the collection, as well as complementing the collection in a way that makes it more than just the sum of its parts.

We are currently restructuring our entire modern and contemporary programme; we have a very exciting future ahead of us. We're going to do more with modern, we're going to do it more prominently, and I hope it will excite a lot of our visitors. Namely three different things, the first is exhibitions and displays, the second is commissions, and the third is residencies.

For the first, exhibitions and displays, every three years, the National Gallery has committed to a large-scale exhibition

about modern and contemporary art in its Sainsbury Wing, which will sit alongside smaller displays. We are very lucky here at the National Gallery that we are able to experiment and do something that's a bit daring. We really want to continue that spirit of allowing artists to use the collection as inspiration to make new work. In the end, that's what these commissions, the second strand of programming, is trying to epitomise.

Every five years, we really want to work with one of the masters of today, to think about what the boundaries of an art institution are, and how the collection can inspire the making of new work that pushes these boundaries further. Bridget Riley's work is hopefully doing that in a fabulous, beautiful, and extremely astute way.

That leaves the third strand of programming that we're working on at the moment, which is residencies. From 2019 onwards, we're excited to be offering artist residencies to three types of artists. On the one hand, we will have the

National Gallery Fellowship, which is aimed at having the gallery work together with a non-London institutional partner.

We'll have a National Gallery Artist-in-Residence. We're the only national gallery that I know of that has a studio on site, so we want to continue this tradition of artists making work inspired by the gallery. So, we're giving the keys to the studio to an artist, who will also benefit from a London-living stipend and childcare, because we want artists from all over the world, no matter in what stage of life they are in. This will also result in an exhibition and a catalogue, and the acquisition of a work for a partner collection, as the National Gallery doesn't collect modern and contemporary art. We exhibit it, but by partnering with a non-London organisation, we can contribute to another collection's legacy.

The third one is going to be the digital residency. The idea is that modern and contemporary art provide a different view on the old masters, a prism through which we can look at historic art with a different view. We want to provide that different view not only to the six million visitors we get here on Trafalgar Square, but also the 16 million visitors that we get each year online. We want to foster the making of new art on this online space.

It's a major commitment to modern and contemporary art; we're proud of that.

Exhibitions at ROSL

Over-Seas House has an exciting programme of exhibitions and events coming up in 2019 that celebrate our long-standing support of the visual arts, writes Eilidh McCormick

We started the year saying farewell to our Incognito Exhibition and welcoming in the words and visuals of Rosemary Clunie and Ben Okri. The installed exhibition wraps the Central Lounge in a story and the viewer is transported through the text and images that flow within the space. If you haven't had a chance to see their work yet, don't worry, the exhibition is on until 14 April, and ROSL will host a talk with Okri and Clunie at Over-Seas House, London on the evening of 27 March.

Looking at the rest of 2019, we have the return of the *Star Students* exhibition, with the Royal Society of British Artists presenting the work of talented young artists in association with the Art Society. This exhibition runs from 25 April until

16 June and showcases the work of over 20 young artists working in a variety of media, offering a glimpse into the future of fine art.

The highlight of the summer is undoubtedly the solo exhibition of artist Louise McNaught (in partnership with the Liberty Gallery), who explores the natural world with a twist. Titled *Consume*, the exhibition will feature McNaught's most recent body of work, examining wildlife in relation to modern consumerism. This colourful work will hang in the Central Lounge from 27 June until 1 September. *Consume* is the highlight of Mayfair Art Weekend taking place 28-30 June, at which there will be drinks receptions and a brunch talk with the artist for members and visitors.

In the autumn, we will host an



exhibition exploring architecture, inspired by the 100th anniversary of the Bauhaus School. We'll host works that contemplate ideas of the built environment beyond the 20th century, as well as how we use such spaces.

To close 2019, we are going to present 20 selected works from our inaugural *ROSL Photography Competition*, which will be launching soon and takes place across the Commonwealth. More details will be announced in the next issue. *Exhibitions are open daily, 10am-6pm, Free.*



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THE ELECTRICITY OF CREATIVITY

As chief executive of Arts Council England, Darren Henley is on a mission to help provide children – whatever their background – with a well-rounded arts education. He talks to Ross Davies about how encouraging creativity in the classroom can open up new avenues to the stars of tomorrow

In the celebrated film *Billy Elliot* there is one particular scene that always stands out. A dejected young Billy is standing before a snooty review board from the Royal Ballet School, having punched another young hopeful at an earlier audition. For all the world, it looks like his chances of attaining a place at the prestigious institution have been blown. But just as he turns to head for the door, a member of the panel asks: “What does it feel like when you’re dancing?” Billy ponders, before replying: “Don’t know. Sorta feels good. Sorta stiff and that, but once I get going... then I like, forget everything. And... sorta disappear. Like I feel a change in my whole body. And I’ve got this fire in my body. I’m just there. Flyin’ like a bird. Like electricity. Yeah, like electricity.”

Nearly two decades since the film’s release (2000), it still packs a punch. It’s the

moment where Billy, who hails from a tough mining town in the north-east – the film is set during the 1984 miners’ strike – fully understands the natural talent of which he is in possession. Hitherto, he has relied on raw instinct – in the face of much initial opposition from his friends and family. As his father tells him at one point: “Lads do football... or boxing... or wrestling. Not friggin’ ballet.”

Of course, there is a happy ending (spoiler alert for the uninitiated). Billy is accepted into the Royal Ballet School, going on to star in Matthew Bourne’s acclaimed 1998 version of *Swan Lake*. While the film may now be 19 years old – and retrospective by its very nature – it still throws up questions pertinent to the here and now.

What if every child could describe feeling as Billy does? That ‘electricity’. How many children up and down this country – particularly in deprived areas – are sitting on an untapped talent, but are unable to locate it through a lack of encouragement or funding? What if every young person keen to explore the arts – whether it be dance, acting or music – had a Mrs Wilkinson (Billy’s inspirational teacher played by Julie Walters) to help nurture that potential?

To hear Darren Henley tell it, the answer to these questions can be found in a greater emphasis being placed on the arts and creative subjects in the educational system. Henley, who became chief executive of Arts Council England (ACE) in 2014, is very much of the belief

that children should be offered a well-rounded arts education from the moment they first set foot in a classroom.

“I absolutely believe that every young person should have a cultural education that includes the likes of art, design, dance, drama, and music,” he says. “When you look at education, it shouldn’t be a binary decision between what is essentially a 19th-century faculty system of the arts and humanities versus science. It shouldn’t be seen as being two separate routes. For me, it’s all as one.”

Before succeeding Alan Davey at the helm of ACE, Henley undertook two independent reviews – commissioned by the Departments for Education; and Culture, Media and Sport – into the funding and delivery of music education in England. Prior to that, he had been managing director of Classic FM.

In one of the aforementioned reviews, Henley was critical of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), finally launched by the government in 2017, EBacc constitutes a set of five GCSE subjects deemed to be looked upon more favourably by universities. Those subjects include English; maths; the sciences; history or geography; and a modern language.

The absence of a sixth arts-based subject still clearly raises Henley’s hackles. Could it be, I put to him, that in this country, we have a traditional tendency to allocate less educational weight to subjects that are – for want of a better word – ‘fun’?

“That’s absolutely right,” he says. “We really need to debunk this myth that creative and cultural subjects are in some way an easy option. On the contrary, they are rigorous, and help to develop knowledge and skills at a critical faculty.”

“One of the other things that concerns me is this idea that an education is all to be judged in the amount of money you make further down the line in your career. This has been something that has been put up against humanities subjects for some time now. I absolutely reject that. A measure of what you give back to society is not based around how much income you make.”

Worryingly, it would seem that not everybody operating in educational circles shares Henley’s unequivocal passion for the arts. According to a recent BBC survey

taken of more than 1,200 secondary schools across England, more than 40% claimed to have been forced to make cutbacks to creative arts subjects.

The same schools revealed they were spending less money on arts facilities and had reduced timetabled arts lessons. Music lessons have suffered in particular, with some schools no longer able to afford instruments. Consequently, costs are passed on to parents, while school orchestras have become increasingly dependent on donations from outside sources.

More worrying still, schools watchdog Ofsted has come out in support of giving precedence to traditional academic subjects – more commonly known as STEM subjects – as the best route into the top universities. For Henley, though, this one-or-the-other dichotomy is far from helpful. It also doesn’t chime with Britain’s historic reputation as a hotbed of artistic talent.

“

They need more people who are able to think outside the box, think new thoughts and do things in new ways. This is precisely the thing creative subjects develop young people for

“Britain might be going through some interesting times right now,” he says, in a thinly veiled reference to Brexit. “But, on the international stage, what cannot be disputed is the creativity of what is a relatively small island. Our influence on the areas of drama, film and music is far, far greater than the size of our population suggests.”

To be sure, the UK’s creative industries are reported to be worth £100billion, growing faster than both the financial services and manufacturing sectors. Yet, investment in the arts isn’t always seen to be forthcoming. The Arts Council’s spend is mainly contingent on the government

– largely intent on reining in spending – while schools, as aforementioned, are forced to make do amid financially straitened times. So, who should be leading from the front on all of this?

“I don’t think it’s really the responsibility of any one group,” says Henley. “It’s the responsibility of everybody. In my role, I’ve met some amazing head teachers who encourage the arts. Local authorities also have a very strong part of play, as do artistic organisations, museums, libraries.”

As a very much a hands-on individual, Henley spends a lot of time on the road, including visits to more deprived communities. This has left him in no doubt that more needs to be done to address the widening chasm between the kind of cultural exposure enjoyed by privately educated children and those on free school meals.

“It’s really important that young people who come from tougher socio-economic backgrounds have the same opportunities as those who – by virtue of luck – are born into more economically rich environments,” he says.

“One of the things you see whenever you meet a young person who has been given the opportunity to be creative is that they are being presented a set of possibilities that are outside the norm of what they have been used to. It can take you on a journey that allows you an insight into things that are way beyond your everyday experiences. That then opens up the possibility of what you can do with your life – sometimes in a way that some of the more knowledge-based subjects just can’t.”

To distil the argument to its very core, a well-rounded arts education is an antidote to a homogenous society – sometimes even in the most unexpected of places.

“I’ve spent a lot of time around employers working in the likes of medicine, science, and accounting, and they often tell me they need more people who are able to think outside the box, think new thoughts and do things in new ways. This is precisely the thing creative subjects develop young people for.

“It’s about creating the next generation of critical thinkers and creative young people.”

At the COALFACE

Lewis Delivett, Director of Music at the Griffin Schools Trust, knows just how difficult maintaining funding for music education is and what a different a well-rounded curriculum can make at the classroom level

The names HRH Prince Charles, Lord Black, Professor Colin Lawson, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Ed Sheeran, and Mylene Klass would certainly make for an interesting set of dinner guests, but one thing you would be sure of is that conversation would not be dull. Especially if one were to ask them, ‘what are your thoughts on the current state of music education in the UK?’.

You only need to look at the headlines that our esteemed dinner guests have generated from the last six months to understand that it is in a bad way. ‘UK music is facing an existential crisis’, ‘Cuts to music education in schools are ludicrous’, and ‘The decline of music education threatens to deprive Britain of future talent’... It certainly doesn’t sound promising and makes for a rather sad read.

Speaking to professionals from within music education, the steady decline hasn’t just come from budget cuts, but as we view it, years of neglect. Colleagues report that teachers are subject to overbearing accountability measures; there is a distinct lack of high-quality professional development; there is a lack of ownership and philosophical underpinning of the curriculum; there is a variable skill set among our teachers and variable expectations, but often low, of what pupils can achieve. In some cases, more so in secondary schools, senior leaders lack an understanding of the importance of the subject and often have no frame of reference due to their own poor music education. So, as an educator what can I do? Do I scream and shout? Learn to adapt? Or do I just soldier on and try to lead by example. I don’t know what the answer is but I feel it’s probably a mix of all three.

January this year marked my three-year work anniversary with the Griffin Schools Trust. During this time, I have had the freedom of working with our students and teachers across the Trust’s 13 schools on a wide variety of projects. We have founded a Children’s Chorus, which have performed at St Giles Cripplegate Church in the Barbican;

students have written, produced and performed their own opera (twice) in professional venues alongside professional musicians, and we’re now at the stage where all of our schools offer instrumental tuition free of charge. Reflecting on what we have achieved over the three years, I feel extremely proud and privileged to work for a trust who, unquestionably and sadly, rather uniquely value the arts so profoundly.

This commitment to funding music education in the Griffin Schools is extremely challenging given the huge budget cuts that have been experienced across the country. I am grateful to Gemma Sant, the head teacher of my home school, Riverley Primary in Leyton, for the commitment and determination she has shown to save music, by examining the school budget line by line to find savings. In order to preserve free instrumental lessons for 90% of years five and six, the school is delaying upgrading badly needed new computers.

Why do we fight for this? Because we see on a daily basis how engagement in the arts helps our students’ maths and language skills. It allows them to develop strong community and social skills, and gives variety and meaning to all of their learning. Study after study shows the benefits of culture and creativity in the curriculum, and we want to fight for it.

We are grateful to our strong partnerships with other artistic organisations, which have provided incredible opportunities for our students, not least the Royal Over-Seas League. Students have performed and workshopped with ROSL Annual Music Competition prizewinners, and Riverley Primary School is proud to be twinned with St Andrew’s Tarabete and the Simon Ward Music Centre in Kenya.

So there is hope! Education leaders need to understand that the arts are vital and I shall, along with my colleagues at the Griffin Schools Trust, continue to wave the flag for music education. We can demonstrate that with bold and brave decision-making from head teachers, music making can thrive in schools, enhance the lives of all and inspire future generations of musicians and audiences. I hope our dinner guests join in this crusade to keep getting the message out there.

“
Speaking to professionals
from within music
education, the steady
decline hasn’t just come
from budget cuts, but as we
view it, years of neglect



COLLECTOR'S EDITION

Once seen as the sole preserve of the elite, the realm of art collecting is these days attracting young blood to its ranks. Step forward Robert Diament, an avid collector and Director of the Carl Freedman Gallery in Margate. He tells Ross Davies about hanging out with Tracey Emin, the seaside life and why contemporary art should be accessible to all

When the Turner Prize heads to Margate later this year, it will represent yet another coup in the seaside town's ongoing story of regeneration.

At the start of this century, Margate's former Victorian grandeur had been left to rack and ruin, boarded up and bruised. However, a wave of new investment has seen the seaside town thriving once more – encapsulated no better than in its burgeoning arts district.

Not only does it boast the David Chipperfield-designed Turner Contemporary gallery, but also studios belonging to former enfant terrible, and Margate local, Tracey Emin, as well as Jonathan Viner – two bone fide giants of the contemporary art world, whose places of work are both housed in the site of the old Thanet Press.

At the end of April, Emin and Viner will have new a neighbour. The Carl Freedman Gallery will be relocating from London to Margate – a move that is being overseen by Robert Diament, the gallery's Director.

Diament, who plans to divide his time between the capital and the seaside – he is in the process of renovating a new property there – is already on familiar terms with Margate, having become firm friends with Emin in his mid-20s, back when he was plying his trade as a musician.

"She invited me down a few times," he tells me from his new adopted hometown. "I remember one year we all stayed at the

Walpole Bay Hotel, an eccentric, old-fashioned hotel, and I can recall thinking that while Margate was tired and run-down, it still had a certain beauty about it."

There's a whiff of the poetic in Diament's ending up in Margate, working around the corner from Emin. She was – and remains – a hero and the early source of inspiration that led to his first foray into the world of contemporary art collecting in his early 20s.

"She became a recurring inspiration to me," he says. "I remember buying her early prints and getting such joy from them. That's when I started saving all my money so I could build up a collection. I'd get home, and it'd be so exciting to have a piece of work that was signed and numbered by her."

Emin may have been the first contemporary artist Diament lapped up, but he can also lay claim to buying early prints by an unknown street artist starting to make waves at the time – known only as Banksy – as well pieces by notable Brooklyn-based collaboration FAILE.

The majority of prints he discovered through Counter Editions – a platform selling prints and multiples by leading international artists – which, in another delicious twist of fate, Diament has also since gone on to run.

"At first, I bought all these beautiful prints as a form of decoration – that how I really got used to living with art," he says. ◉

Robert Diament (left) and Russell Tovey (right) share their love of art in their 'Talk Art' podcast'

“But after buying more contemporary art, it opened up a whole other world, and that’s when I began going to galleries, like Maureen Paley in East London, and seeking out unique art.”

Speaking to Diament – albeit over the phone – it’s not hard to discern a genuine love for his day job, as a gallerist, and indeed the wholesale art world he inhabits. Speaking at a clip, he rattles off influences – as far-reaching as Louise Bourgeois and Frida Kahlo to contemporary painters Luc Tuymans and Joe Bradley – without veering into braggadocio territory.

At the end of last year, he began a co-hosting a podcast with his best friend, and fellow art collector, actor Russell Tovey. In the first episode of Talk Art, the two – who were introduced by Emin (“She had this hunch we’d get on”) – discuss their predilection to “geeking off” on everything from rare enamel triptychs to new faces at the recent Frieze Art Fair.

“Russell always refers to the two of us as a pair of geeks, because we are both totally obsessed by art,” says Diament. “Saying that, when we both started out in the art world, people were quite suspicious of us, as we perhaps didn’t conform to the norm.”

And what is the norm? This question ties into the primary aim of the podcast – to reach out to young people interested in collecting art, who perhaps don’t feel they have the requisite chops, or income, to pursue. It’s a noble objective; the art world traditionally has a reputation for being prickly and inaccessible to the hoi polloi.

However, the stereotypical collector – fusty gentlemen with a focus on amassing art for the sake of investment and status over posterity and supporting young artists – is falling away, believes Diament.

“In the eight years I’ve been at the Carl Freedman Gallery, I’ve definitely noticed an increase in younger collectors,” he says. “For instance, there are lots of young business people – say, in their 30s/early 40s – who have been introduced to art through the likes of the Royal Academy and young patrons groups.”

It’s heartening to hear that even amid the age of Instagram, whereby everything is disposable, contemporary art thrives.

“We are both totally obsessed by art, saying that, when we both started out in the art world, people were quite suspicious of us, as we perhaps didn’t conform to the norm”

That said, high-quality pieces of work by artists of repute can cost a pretty penny. Might this detract some younger collectors? What price points could be described as normal?

“It’s true, art collecting can be very expensive – especially if you’re buying a unique piece of work,” says Diament.

“We’re talking anywhere from £5,000 up to hundreds of thousands of pounds. So, there are people who might save up their money all year to buy just one artwork in the region of £5-10,000.

“But there are loads of these great, critically interesting galleries in London now where you can probably spend something like £2,000 and you’ll get an amazing painting.”

“Sometimes galleries will allow people – especially if they are clearly passionate and well-read about the subject – to buy art over monthly instalments,” Diament continues. “That’s what I did when I was first starting out. Because at the end of the day, we want artworks to go to people who really care.”

Diament also applauds initiatives such as Tate Young Patrons, which allows those between the ages of 18 and 40 to enjoy the likes of tours and invitations to opening receptions in exchange for a fee starting from £1,200 a year.

It serves as an alternative means of access to the art world for younger people.

That said, participation in the art world needn’t be purely transactional.

“You don’t necessarily have to be buying loads of art to have that collector mindset,” he says. “One of the best things you can do is actually just support a young gallery or artist. In doing so, you can become part of their journey, which is a great feeling. It needn’t be totally inaccessible.

“Even if you go to just one exhibition a month, it’s going to improve your life and make it that bit more enjoyable. That’s what it’s all about.”

Diament could talk about the merits of art collecting all day, it would seem. But our time is up. He has a gallery to run.

To listen to Robert and Russell discuss art collecting, search for ‘Talk Art’ on iTunes.

MARGATE ART



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moonlight: Katie Paterson
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The Community Pharmacy
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Carl Freedman Gallery
Opening at the end of April,
Margate’s newest arrival will
see the Carl Freedman Gallery
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THE COMMONWEALTH'S *future creatives*

Launched in 1883, the Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition has spent the last 140 years promoting literacy, expression, and creativity among young people. Here, read the winning entry from the 2018 competition and find out more about this year's theme

The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition was founded in 1883 and is the world's oldest schools' international writing content.

In 2018, almost 12,000 young people took part, representing nearly every Commonwealth country. Entries were described as 'impassioned', 'thoughtful', and 'articulate' by judges, one of whom was our very own Director-General Diana Owen. The theme of the 2018 competition was 'Towards a Common Future', fitting given the age of the entrants.

Janine Shum, winner of the Junior category (for those under 14 years of age), presented 'Our Common World: Two Voices', which juxtaposed the experiences of two 12-year olds who lead very different lives but still share many common traits, one from Afghanistan and one from Singapore.

A student of the National Junior College, Singapore, Janine took inspiration for this poem from Malala Yousafzai, opening with her quote: "One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world".

She explains her thinking behind the poem (right):

"In this poem, I want to express the contradiction between a girl in a first-world

country (like Singapore) and a girl from a third-world country (like Afghanistan). The two halves are meant to express their different views when you read them individually, as separate poems. Amana, living in a war-torn country, has to fight for her right to education. Going to school is a risk for her, as the Taliban will punish her and her family if they find out. In my mind, she is doubly discriminated against because she is Hazara, a minority group who live in Bamiyan. Her role model is Malala, an Afghan girl who was shot in the face by the Taliban for speaking up for girls' rights to education. The line, "One pen, one teacher, one child and one book can change the world" is taken directly from her Nobel Peace Prize speech. To Amana, who is deprived of these things, the ingredients for education are basic needs. She imagines once these are provided for, everything will fall into place, and the world will be changed.

"In contrast, Yu Zhen from Singapore, has every physical need provided for. Yet, her education has left her feeling disempowered. Amongst the sea of children who are shuffled through the system, she feels she is just a number, and the number on her tests is all that matters to everyone. In school, she constantly

feels that she is not as good as others. She is forced to suppress her curiosity and just memorise answers in order to succeed in the national exam (the PSLE).

"When we read the two poems together, the combined poem makes the point that different people have different lists of ingredients, depending on their goals for education. Is education just about getting high test scores for personal success? My poem suggests that education should be about changing society for the better – reaching hearts and minds. Education should encourage open-mindedness, curiosity, the thoughtful questioning of social norms, and the challenging of discriminatory and prejudiced views. Education should also nurture and care for the whole child. Only then will we have the right ingredients for our common future in education."

Entries for the 2019 competition are now open, whose theme this year is 'A Connected Commonwealth'. Launched in November by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall during a visit to the Ghana International School in Accra.

If you know anyone who might like to take part, visit www.thercs.org/competition for more information.

Our Common World: Two Voices

AMANA MIRZA, AGE 12 - BAMIYAN, AFGHANISTAN

HONG YU ZHEN, AGE 12 - SINGAPORE

"One child, one teacher, one book, and one pen can change the world."

That is the solution.

With education,

Opportunities for

Growing.

I could be a doctor, a lawyer, a politician.

That is the model answer. Do you question it?

Don't ask why. No

Exploring, trial and error

I am told what I should become:

King of the hill, top rat.

Am I invisible and voiceless to you?

My mother tells me, Hide your face, people are looking.

I reply, I am also looking at them.

Concealed women

So little for so many.

Failure. Frustration.

We are at war

For freedom

To live, to learn.

Does it matter

Seeing what is unseen

Struggling for a place

We are engulfed by the shadow of

Never being good enough.

Fighting for the spotlight

I would give anything

To stand out.

At twelve years old, I have sacrificed my childhood

Sold into marriage

Dragging bricks

Parents saying Don't let us down.

The walls close in.

I hunger and thirst

In this landscape of landmines

When the last grain has been devoured

The last temple finally obliterated

Hope survives.

To the PSLE1

Burdened with expectations,

Teachers saying Everyone else can do it

There is no time

For my true self

There is no room for mistakes.

I surrender hobbies, sleep, weekends

Giving up is not an option.

But is it enough?

You will need:

Two cups of flour, oil and yeast

Make bread

But while men starve for bread, I starve for knowledge:

Books to forge new frontiers,

Breaching boundaries, dismantling discrimination

Receptive hearts and open minds

Learning to change the future.

So simple yet

This war

To pull each child from the shadow

Whole.

The price is paid with bullets and blood.

Basic ingredients

To enrich a life;

Passionate and caring teachers

Never testing without first teaching.

Engaging lessons

Time to think, play and rest

An education that feeds the soul

So difficult, to fight

Against numbers, so challenging

To see a child separate from her grades

Loved.

In schools, generations hang in the balance.

2019 IN ART AND MUSIC

There's plenty to see and do around the country this year, from theatrical debuts, to gallery openings and restored club nights



SCOTLAND

1. COLLECTIVE GALLERY *Collective Gallery, Edinburgh* Open now

Established in 1984, Collective has long supported new work by artists who are at a pivotal stage in their development. In November 2018, they opened their new home on Calton Hill, featuring the restored City Observatory, City Dome, and a purpose-built exhibition space. Their programme of exhibitions, walks, and events will present contemporary art in all its diversity. ROSL Scholar Dineo Seshee Bopape's installation [when spirituality was a baby] was one of the opening exhibitions last year in the unusual exhibition space. Worth a visit for the views, brace yourself for the walk up the hill and take your time with a coffee at the top.

2. VIDEOGAMES: DESIGN/PLAY/DISRUPT
V&A, Dundee
20 April – 8 September
Videogames, robots, and the future of design will be explored with the V&A's

spectacular show Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt. This is one of the first exhibitions to fully consider the complexity of videogames as one of the most important design fields of our time.

THE NORTH

3. FACING OUT *The Whitworth, Manchester* 8 February – 26 May

Open now is the striking exhibition 'Facing Out' which presents portraits by Lucy Burscough of people who have experienced facial cancers together with their choice of artworks from the Whitworth collections.

4. THE RENO AT THE WHITWORTH *The Whitworth, Manchester* Until March 2020

Over a year Linda Brogan and a group of local residents, who went to the now-closed Reno nightclub in the 1970s and 80s, will occupy the Whitworth. The Reno was known as a meeting place for young mixed-race Mancunians, which has now

become an archaeological excavation of the former site of the club, led by Salford University Archaeological unit.

5. DIGITAL CITIZEN – THE PRECARIOUS SUBJECT *Baltic, Newcastle* 25 January – 16 June

This group exhibition draws on the imagination of contemporary artists to inspire a conversation on ideas of citizenship in the digital age, and investigates new possibilities of digital tools and networks for rethinking historical forms of nationalisms and citizenship.

6. KANNAN ARUNASALAM: THE TENT *The Tetley, Leeds* 16 February – 2 June

In his first solo exhibition in a UK gallery, Kannan Arunasalam presents a new film installation, alongside a selection of his existing short films, reflecting on identity and the meaning of loss against the lasting impact of Sri Lanka's civil war, which lasted from 1983 to 2009.

7. RASHEED ARAEEN: FOR OLUWALE *The Tetley, Leeds* 16 February – 2 June

Rasheed Araeen presents his work For Oluwale II for the first time in Leeds, marking the 50th anniversary of the death of David Oluwale, a British-Nigerian who drowned in the River Aire on 18 April 1969 after being systematically harassed by members of the Leeds City Police force. Araeen was shocked and deeply moved after reading about Oluwale's death in 1971 and decided to make a work dedicated to his story.

WALES

8. LEONARDO DA VINCI: A LIFE IN DRAWING *The National Museum, Cardiff* 1 February – 6 May

To mark the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, The National Museum Cardiff will be displaying 12 of his greatest drawings as part of #Leonardo500 – a national celebration of this most extraordinary artist's life and work.



Left: Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt Above: Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams. Top right: Leonardo da Vinci: A life in drawing. Right: The Reno at the Whitworth.



9. KYFFIN WILLIAMS: THE ARTIST AND MGUEDDFA CYMRU *The National Museum, Cardiff* Until 1 May

One of Wales's most prolific and popular 20th century artists, this exhibition focuses on his rural landscape paintings of Snowdonia.

LONDON

10. CHRISTIAN DIOR: DESIGNER OF DREAMS *V&A* 2 February – 14 July

The V&A has opened its doors to the largest and most comprehensive exhibition ever staged in the UK on the House of Dior. The display will look at both the fashion and the celebrity of the brand in a way that has never been done before.

11. PHYLLIDA BARLOW RA, CUL-DE-SAC *Royal Academy of Arts* 23 February – 23 June

Acclaimed British sculptor Phyllida Barlow's has created entirely new, site-specific work in the new galleries of the RA.

Her work has transformed the architecture with rooms where her pieces invade the entire space contrasted by others less populated areas, inviting speculation and altering your perception.

12. THE EY EXHIBITION, VAN GOGH AND BRITAIN *Tate Britain* 27 March – 11 August

The Tate is bringing more than 45 Van Gogh works to its new exhibition, the largest group of works by Van Gogh to be seen in the UK for nearly a decade. Focusing on his inspiration while in Britain, the exhibition will also look at the British artists who were inspired by Van Gogh.

13. MAYFAIR ART WEEKEND *Various locations in Mayfair* 28 – 30 June

Mayfair Art Weekend celebrates the diverse offering of this historic cultural district, internationally renowned as a vibrant hub of creativity and craftsmanship, where the worlds of art, fashion, and luxury

converge. ROSL is excited to participate in this weekend event for the third year running, and we recommend members make the most of their club and its neighbourhood at this vibrant time.

14. STOCKHAUSEN'S DONNERSTAG AUS LICHT *Royal Festival Hall* 21 – 22 May

For the first time since 1985, Stockhausen's monumental opera *Donnerstag aus Licht* (Thursday from Light) returns to the UK for just two performances in the Royal Festival Hall. Maxime Pascal conducts the combined forces of his Paris-based ensemble Le Balcon, the London Sinfonietta, the New London Chamber Choir, and students from the Royal Academy of Music, in a new production directed and adapted for the concert hall by Benjamin Lazar.

15. A MAN OF GOOD HOPE
Royal Opera House
16 April – 4 May
The Royal Opera House have just opened its new Linbury

Theatre at its Covent Garden site. This new 406-seat venue has a fascinating inaugural season, including the brilliant Isango ensemble, returning to London with *A Man of Good Hope*. The true story of a young refugee's journey through Africa told through music, singing and dance, based on the book by Jonny Steinberg.

16. EMILIA *Vaudeville Theatre* 9 March – 15 June

One of literature's first female voices will be celebrated in the West End in March 2019, when *Emilia* transfers to the Vaudeville Theatre for a limited run.

The show tells the untold story of Emilia Bassano; the first published female poet, a teacher, mother, and the so-called 'Dark Lady' of Shakespeare's sonnets.

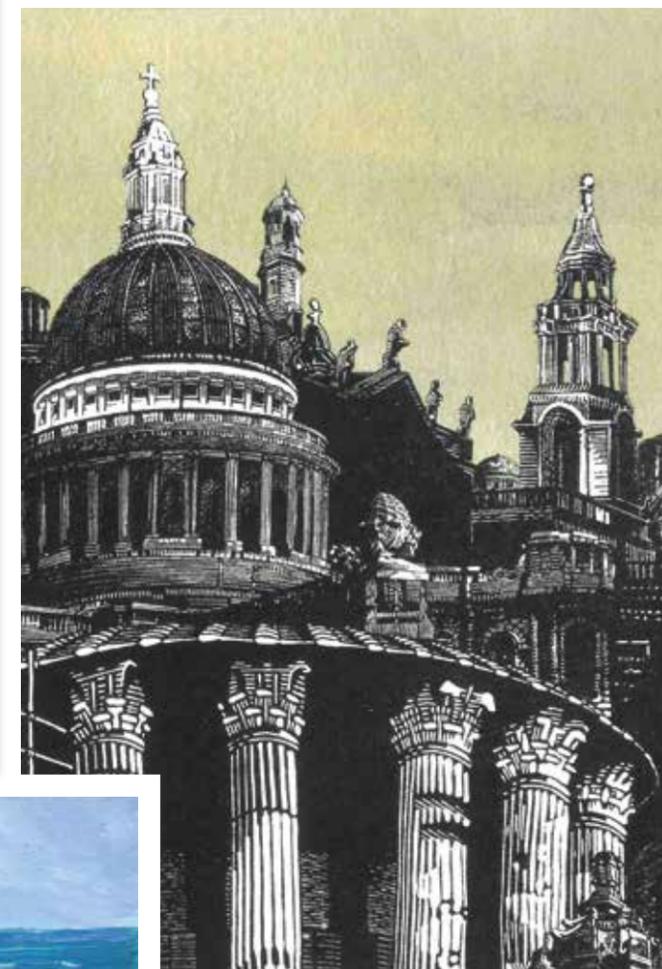
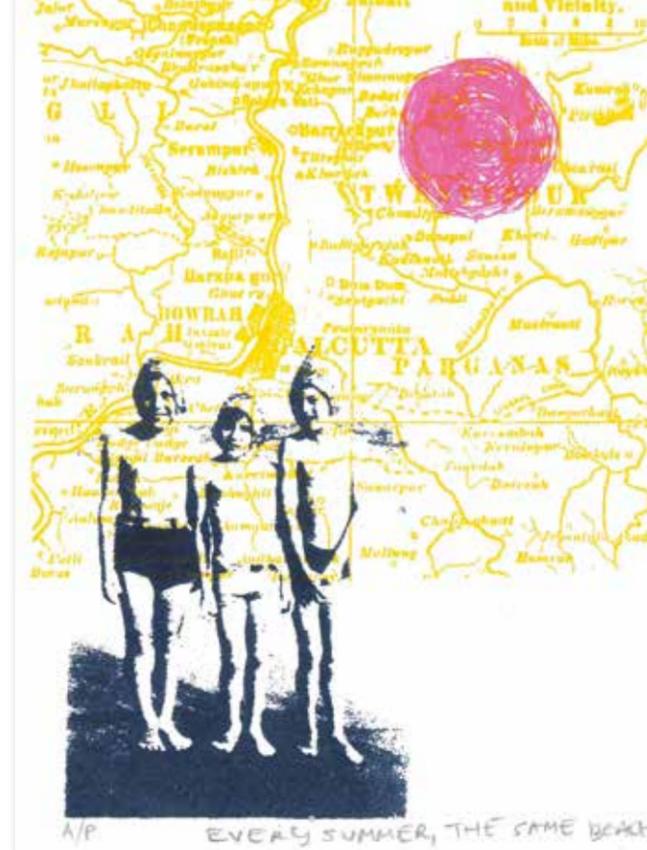
A previous hit when it was first shown at Shakespeare's Globe in 2017, the show's initial opening coincided with a female empowerment political movement, which united and encouraged women to stand up and speak out, just like Emilia.

NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our clubhouse, branches, and art, music, and education projects

Incognito success

December saw the launch of ROSL's second Incognito exhibition, which saw anonymously donated postcard artworks sold to raise money for our education projects throughout the Commonwealth



Since the last issue of *Overseas*, we have seen the 2018 Incognito exhibition come and go at Over-Seas House. Following the success of the inaugural exhibition in 2016, we once again invited artists from around the world to create and donate postcard artworks for a great cause.

The exciting mix of medium and subject of the Incognito postcards provided variety for those visiting, and guests took their time exploring each one. The small frames in which the cards were displayed provided a uniform look

for the diverse donations. Oil paintings were exhibited beside card mounted Ceramics and Glass, prints and the most delicate of pencil drawings, showing the wealth of talent among the donors, which included many members. Many of the works were also donated by artists who had previously exhibited at ROSL and have a close connection with the club, the members and the arts programme.

While the 2016 exhibition saw 127 donations, this edition received over 180 postcard donations, and has raised over £2,700. These funds will enable further

development of ROSL's already-established education projects at the PestalozziWorld village in India and with the Commonwealth Girls Education Fund (CGEF) in Pakistan and beyond.

The CGEF aims to provide support for girls who have been a part of ROSL's education projects in additional countries.

Danielle Jones-Smith, CGEF Administrative Secretary says a successful collaboration has now been established with Vera Leech, ROSL-Namibia Project supporter on behalf of

girls from Mondesa Youth Opportunities and we hope to further such links via contacts in the Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, as well as Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, Director of the PestalozziWorld village, Cheme Dolma Palden reported in January that "Guitars were purchased and Anushey Greene was hired to teach guitar and Western and Indian classical singing.

"We formed a Senior Choir of children from Classes 9 to 12 and a Junior Choir from Classes 6 to 9. At the Welcome Function in October, the Western choir

sang *A Million Dreams* and *You Raise Me Up*. The Indian Classical Choir sang *Swagatham* in Hindi. In December, the youngest group learnt Christmas carols, which they sang while performing the Nativity play. Thank you ROSL for all your support".

The funds from Incognito will further support these activities throughout 2019. Thank you to all those who made the exhibition possible: the artists who donated and the visitors who purchased works. Incognito will return to the club every two years and we will be inviting submissions and distributing postcard packs from January 2020 onwards to have the exhibition on display in December 2020.



Sir David Brewer to retire

At the Annual General Meeting in May, ROSL Chairman Sir David Brewer will retire after three years in the role. Everyone at ROSL would like to thank Sir David for his invaluable contribution to club life since 2016

He made his name as a Marine Insurance Broker in the City, working for Sedgwick Collins for some 50 years in 1959. He spent several years in Asia, opening their Tokyo office in 1976 and Chinese operations in 1981. This led to his chairing of the China-Britain Business Council until 2013, and several non-executive directorships.

Outside the professional sphere, Sir David has also spent several decades in public service, serving as Lord-Mayor of London from 2005 to 2006 and Lord Lieutenant of Greater London to Queen Elizabeth II between 2008 and 2015. Before those appointments, he served as Common Councilman in the City of London; and was Aldermanic Sheriff of the City, as well as Alderman of the Ward of Bassishaw.

“

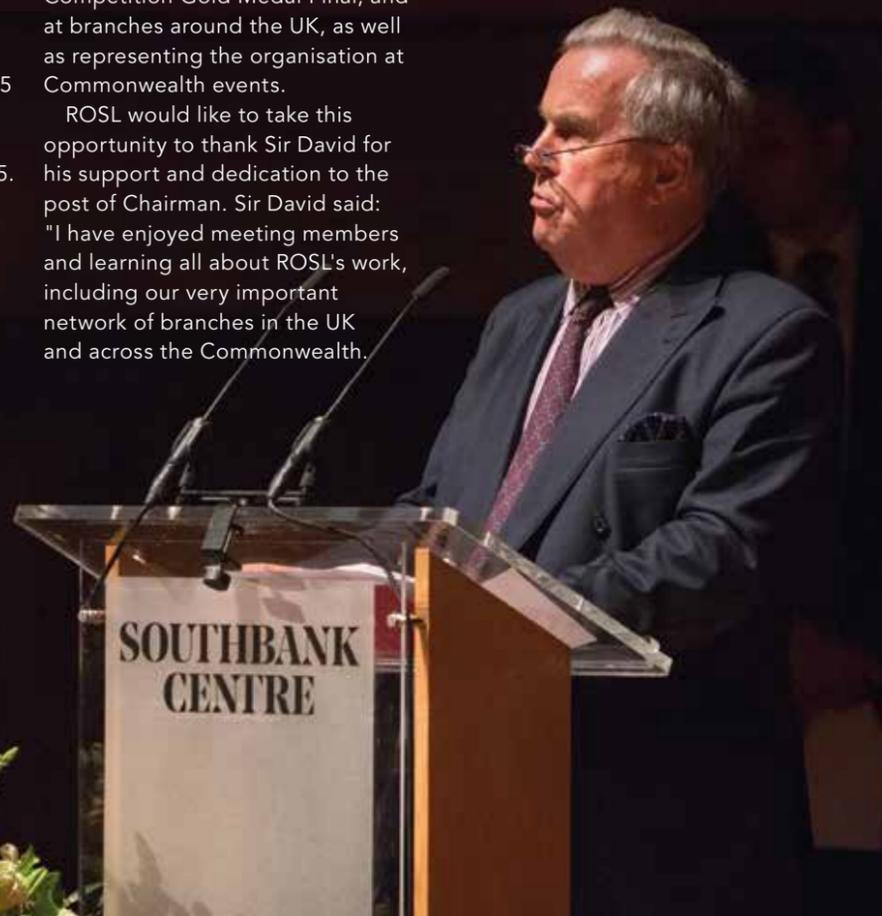
It has been so very rewarding to witness the exceptional talent of so many young, Commonwealth musicians

This experience has been invaluable during his time at ROSL, stepping in to manage the transition between two Director-Generals, Major General Roddy Porter and Dr Diana Owen, in 2017.

He has also regularly appeared at ROSL events in London, such as hosting Chairman's Lunches and Dinners, the Annual Music Competition Gold Medal Final, and at branches around the UK, as well as representing the organisation at Commonwealth events.

ROSL would like to take this opportunity to thank Sir David for his support and dedication to the post of Chairman. Sir David said: "I have enjoyed meeting members and learning all about ROSL's work, including our very important network of branches in the UK and across the Commonwealth."

It has been so very rewarding to be involved in the Annual Music Competition Grand Final and witness the exceptional talent of so many young, Commonwealth musicians. The work that ROSL does to support the arts and education projects across the world is first class, and I wish the organisation every success for the future."



Diana Owen receives OBE

ROSL Director-General Diana, has been awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to culture and tourism. Huge congratulations from all of ROSL's members and staff

Diana joined the Royal Over-Seas League in December 2017, continuing a career that has been devoted to culture and heritage throughout, first at the National Trust from 1988 to 2007, followed by a decade spent as the CEO of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, greatly increasing its profile and leading the celebrations for the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016.

Speaking ahead of her investiture, at which she received her OBE from HRH The Prince of Wales, Diana said, "I am delighted to receive this honour. Throughout my career it has been a real privilege to work with fantastic colleagues and teams who do so much

to conserve and develop our heritage and culture. This award is as much for their efforts as for mine and I hope they will share my pleasure in it."

Lord Luce, President of ROSL, said: "As members of the Royal Over-Seas League we are all delighted by the news that Diana has been awarded an OBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours. I send her my warmest congratulations. All Diana's past experience will bring great benefit to the Royal Over-Seas League as we develop further our cultural ambitions, not least in music and arts throughout the Commonwealth." A huge congratulations to member Anne Barton, who also received an MVO for her work as part of the Royal Household.



AGM NOTICE

Dear Member,
It is my duty to announce the ROSL AGM, which will be held at Over-Seas House London on Thursday 9 May at 6pm. The AGM will receive the 2018 ROSL accounts*. Such other business as may be necessary in accordance with the bye-laws will also be conducted.

The AGM agenda includes:

- Address by the Chairman
- The Honorary Treasurer's report on ROSL Finances
- The receipt and adoption of the 2019 ROSL accounts
- To confirm appointments to the Central Council under the terms of the bye-laws 14.6 and 14.7
- To fill vacancies occurring under the terms of bye-laws 20.1 and 20.2
- To receive a verbal report on 2018
- To appoint the auditors for the ensuing year.

A drinks reception will be held at the conclusion of the AGM.

Yours sincerely

Dr Diana Owen
Director-General

*The 2018 financial accounts will be available to download from the website from 23 April, with hard copies available upon request.

New APPOINTMENTS

In February 2019, Central Council appointed Mrs Anne Wilkinson as Deputy Chairman of ROSL.

Following the retirement of Phil Nicklin from EXCOM in November, David Banks and Atholl Swainston-Harrison, Central Council members, were appointed to EXCOM in February.

Subsequently, the Buildings and Heritage Sub Committee has appointed Martyn Kingsford as its new Chair.

At the AGM in May, in accordance with ROSL bye-laws, the following members are due to retire: Pamemla Voice and Frank Wibaut. It is proposed that the following members are appointed to Central Council: Martyn Kingsford and Monica Seeley.



More images online

Visit our Facebook page and the ROSL website to see more photos of ROSL events. Get daily news updates on the ROSL website and by following us on Twitter.

New drawing classes in 2019

January saw the first of our six drawing classes this year

These classes are lead by Josie Deighton, a figurative artist who draws directly from observation and imagination, she has undertaken rigorous studies in anatomy and drew from life every day at the Royal Drawing School. Josie's work is diverse, she is held in private collections and exhibits regularly, it was with this wealth of experience she was able to share so much with the class. Josie shared her knowledge and put the class at ease while teaching a range of drawing techniques with the materials provided. She happily worked her way



around the room and gave great advice. We enjoyed a break with tea and coffee before a second hour of drawing. Time flew and before we knew it our drawings were safely wrapped up and taken home.

A huge thank you to Josie and to the life model, who posed patiently for us throughout. We are now looking forward to our next venture into life drawing on Thursday 14 March. If you would like to get involved, please come along, no experience necessary. Details can be found in the new Events leaflet included in the mail along with this issue, or visit www.rosl.org.uk/events.



D-G'S DIARY: Visit to India

I was invited to attend and participate in the Eastern Himalayan Forum in Guwahati on 1 and 2 November. Approximately 150 delegates from 25 countries took part in the forum to share their knowledge and expertise in landscape scale conservation, both of natural and cultural capital. I had the opportunity to talk about ROSL as well as to take part in three press conferences and panel discussions on various topics, that were watched by up to two and a half million people across four Indian TV channels on each occasion. I also presented the award for lifetime achievement to scientist Usha Lachungpa from Sikkim.

On 5 November, I travelled to Kolkata and met the Chairman

and Secretary of the Royal Calcutta Turf Club, one of our reciprocal clubs. I was surprised to discover that they had 'forgotten' that they had a connection with ROSL and were keen to extend reciprocal membership benefits.

In the evening, I was a guest at the Calcutta Club and toured their extensive facilities and learnt about their programme of cultural events from members of their Governing Committee and their CEO. This is the only one of our reciprocal clubs in Kolkata which has overnight accommodation for members.

On 6 November, after a brief tour of the main tourist sights, I was hosted by a Kolkata fine art collector at a lunch which included British expats and former members of the UK High



Commission. We discussed the possibility of exhibiting the work of contemporary Indian artists in London and the possibility for extending our visual arts scholarships to Indian artists.

On 7 November, (which was Divali) I met the Chairman, the CEO and other members of the Royal Calcutta Golf Club for breakfast and a tour of their excellent facilities (pictured above). Membership of this

club is highly-prized and it is a great benefit for ROSL members in that they are entitled to play on their 18 hole course – and at their bowling club. This is the second oldest golf course in the world, after St Andrew's in Scotland.

To find out more about ROSL's more than 100 reciprocal clubs throughout the world, visit www.rosl.org.uk/reciprocal-clubs

A penny for your thoughts

For many years, *Overseas* featured a letters page in which members were given the opportunity to have their say on the major talking points of the day. Given the amount of feedback the Editor receives after each issue is published, it's clear that the appetite among members to debate the themes which each issue covers is still there. So, after an absence of several years, the next edition (June-August 2019) will reintroduce the letters page and we want to hear from you!

As you may have noticed, each issue of *Overseas* now focuses on a single topic,

with themes as diverse as philanthropy, memory, language, the Commonwealth, women, and sport having all been covered in recent times. The theme for the next issue will be the environment, with articles covering ROSL's environmental policy and the disproportionate impact climate change is having on some of the Commonwealth's smallest nations, among others. We will also be looking at what small changes we can all make to our everyday lives to lessen our impact on the environment, and for this, we would like your thoughts.

Please email editor@rosl.org.uk by 5 April with your suggestions for ideas on how to minimise our impact on the natural world and a selection will be published on the letters page in the next edition.



SNAPPED READING

Member Frances Stringer (above) peruses *Overseas* while hurtling down the East Coast Main Line on the way to Over-Seas House. While skiing in Alaska, member David Chapman (right) finds a willing moose to read *Overseas* with.



INTERLOCK CHARITABLE TRUST

ROSL members Terrence and Rohini Mckee have run the Interlock Charitable Trust (charity no. 276967) for many years, featuring in *Overseas* on several occasions in the past. They are now looking for volunteers to help them develop their projects on the Konkan western coast of India to the next stage.

They would be particularly interested in hearing from anyone with expertise in business planning, small hotel management, fundraising and community development.

There would be opportunities to visit the projects and meet on site the many beneficiaries of this charity. For more information please visit www.interlock.co.uk or contact them directly on 01769 580893.



MEETING OF POLITICAL MINDS

In January, ROSL President Lord Luce entertained esteemed guests in the Park Room. L-R: Nancy Kissinger, Lord Luce, Lady Carrington, Lord Carrington, Henry Kissinger (seated), Dame Norma Major, Sir John Major and Lady Luce.



Graham Henry Lockwood FIA 1935-2018

Graham Lockwood, who died on 28 November 2018 aged 83, joined the Royal Over-Seas League in 1982 and provided it one of the longest and most distinguished periods of service

Having lived and worked in Australia for six years in the 1960s, Graham and his wife, Eileen, returned to live in the UK where he later became Deputy Chairman of Eagle Star Insurance. I first met him in 1990 at the historic and beautifully restored William Kent House, Arlington Street, owned then by Eagle Star, where he hosted recitals featuring the winners of the Eagle-Star-sponsored prizes in the ROSL Annual Music Competition. When Eagle Star was taken over and the prizes were withdrawn Graham funded a music prize at his own expense.

Upon his retirement from Eagle Star in 1994, he was appointed to the ROSL Central Council. Soon afterwards he was elected to chair the ROSL ARTS Sponsorship Committee, which, under his inspired leadership, acquired considerable funding for both the ROSL music and arts programmes and for the extensive refurbishment of the Princess, Alexandra Hall, for which he was a driving force. He also became a Trustee of the ROSL Golden Jubilee Charitable Trust and of the ROSL Pension Scheme of which he later became Chairman (it was in this role that his experience, as a former Actuary, was so valuable).

In 2000, he was elected Deputy Chairman of ROSL. Upon retiring in 2006, he was appointed a Vice-President in recognition of his significant contribution to the success of ROSL. Nevertheless, he continued his work with the Sponsorship Committee, the Pension Scheme and the Golden

Jubilee Trust. At the same time, he was first Director, then Chairman and finally Vice-President of the Cheltenham Arts Festivals, and it was his management skills and love of the arts that ensured its ongoing success.

Never one to rest on his laurels, Graham took on further arts charitable endeavours upon retiring from the Festivals in 2007 by devoting his considerable abilities to the Gustav Holst Museum in Cheltenham as Chairman of the Board, and to becoming President of the Cheltenham Arts Council. A lifelong ambition was to be a published writer and this he achieved shortly before his death with the publication of his book *Concordant Cheltenham, The making of a musical town 1716 to 1944*.

Graham Lockwood never sought recognition for any of the voluntary work he did for ROSL, the Cheltenham Arts Festivals, or any other charitable organisations for which he worked. He was a most humble, modest, caring, generous, and delightful person, whose considerable contribution to the arts and service to the Royal Over-Seas League will be appreciated and remembered for very many years to come by all of us fortunate enough to have known this wonderful man and his delightful wife Eileen who, with their two daughters Elaine and Fiona, always supported him in all his endeavours, and who survive him.

Robert F Newell CVO
Former Director-General, Royal Over-Seas League

“Graham Lockwood never sought recognition for any of the voluntary work he did. He was a most humble, modest, caring, generous and delightful person

Below. WAAPA scholars and prizewinners at the ROSL Western Australia/WAAPA Music Scholarship Showcase Evening in October 2018



Our branches provide an opportunity for members in all parts of the world and across the UK to enjoy a range of social events close to home. To find out more about getting involved, simply contact your local representative

AUSTRALIA

Victoria

Di Bresciani Open Studio
Thursday 28 February, 4.30pm,
25 Balmerino Ave, Toorak
Enjoy food, refreshments, and a sneak preview of renowned Melbourne artist Di Bresciani's forthcoming major 'Open Studio' event.
\$25.

Lunch with Lady Potter AC
Tuesday 19 March, 12pm,
The Angliss Restaurant,
550 Little Lonsdale Street,
Melbourne

A three-course lunch with all refreshments included, with guest of honour Lady Potter AC, who has been at very pinnacle of the Australian arts for decades.
\$60.

Barnum
Thursday 6 June, 7.30pm,
Melbourne's Comedy Theatre
Enjoy this much-loved circus musical with an excellent view from 'A Reserve' stalls seats with one of Australia's great showmen, Todd McKenny, in the title role.
\$105. Book by 2 April.

CANADA

British Columbia

A reception and recital will be taking place for BC members in April, but details were not confirmed at the time of going to press. Details will be emailed to BC members as they become available.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Morning tea
Wednesday 13 March, 10am,
Holly Lea Retirement Village

Morning tea with Professor Emeritus Mark Francis speaking on Brexit.
\$5.

Morning tea
Wednesday 10 April, 10am,
Holly Lea Retirement Village
Morning tea with Dr John Clemens speaking on Captain Robert Falcon Scott's time in New Zealand.
\$5.

Morning tea
Wednesday 8 May 10am,
Holly Lea Retirement Village
Morning tea with Brendon Wood speaking on life as a paramedic.
\$5. ☺

Where you are

ROSL NEWS

1. Diana Owen speaks at the Swiss Branch
2. Ontario Branch's Ishrani Jaikaran presents the trophy to runner-up Sonia Ramcharran at the 29th ESU Competition
3. The final meeting of the West Cornwall Branch at the picturesque Carbis Bay Hotel
4. Taunton Branch greet the students of the Bridgwater & Taunton College
5. Scottish members enjoy a talk from author Millie Gray at the Waldorf Astoria

Keeping in touch

Have you been receiving our new e-newsletters and events updates? If not, please email membership@rosl.org.uk, quoting your membership number, so we can update your email address in our database.

Where you are

ROSL NEWS

LONDON GROUP

Sergei Skripal and the Cold War legacy

Thursday 21 March, 6pm, Over-Seas House

British intelligence historian Nigel West discusses the alleged poisoning of ex-Soviet spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury, and likens the episode to a return to Cold War tactics and mentality for the Russian security services.

Free. Open to London Group members and overnight guests.



London Group visit

Friday 10 May, 2pm, Saddlers' Hall, 40 Gutter Lane EC2V 6BR

The Saddlers' Company is one of the oldest of the City Livery Companies, dating from around 1160. Our tour will be led by the Beadle. We will have an introduction to the work of the Saddlers with its support of the British saddlery trade and equestrianism.

The Hall, which was rebuilt following a fire in 1940 stands on part of the site of the original Hall, is a magnificently appointed building furnished with historic treasures. There will be a tour of the Hall and a talk on its silver.

Refreshments will be served on arrival. The visit will last approximately two hours. Nearest Underground: St Paul's £14 London Group members. £18 Guests.



UNITED KINGDOM

Sussex

AGM and lunch

Wednesday 6 March, 12.30pm, Windsor Hotel, Worthing

With speaker Anne Wilkinson, ROSL Dupty Chairman. We will be discussing how best to extend our activities towards East Sussex. If you are not on our regular mailing list and would like to attend, please email sussex.branch@rosl.org.uk. If you are unable to attend but would be interested in the Branch activities, please also let us know. Suggestions about venues and activities towards the east would be welcome.

Price tba.

Taunton

Talk and lunch

Wednesday 6 March, 11am, Bridgwater & Taunton College

Speaker David Nicholas, member of ROSL EXCOM and former MP for Taunton gives his talk 'Reflections from the edge of politics', followed by a two-course lunch.

£18. Guests welcome.

AGM

Wednesday 3 April, 10am, Bridgwater & Taunton College

Branch AGM, followed by speaker David Elkington's talk 'The Architecture of Rome and its surroundings', followed by a two-course lunch.

£18. Guests welcome.

Talk and lunch

Wednesday 1 May, 11am, Bridgwater & Taunton College

Speaker John Page, Chairman of SANHS Local History Committee discusses 'The Somerset Rajahs of Sarawak', followed by a two-course lunch.

£18. Guests welcome.

Wessex

(FORMERLY BOURNEMOUTH)

Coffee mornings

Wednesday 7, 14, 21, 28 March; 4, 11, 18, 25 April; 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 May, 10.30am, Mayfair Hotel

The regular coffee mornings continue at the usual venue.

£3. Includes coffee and biscuits.

Spring concert

Sunday 7 April, 4pm, St Peter's Church, Bournemouth

ROSL Annual Music Competition prizewinners Jennifer Witton *soprano*, Eliot Gresty *clarinet* and William Vann *piano* perform for branch members.

Free.

AGM and lunch

Wednesday 1 May 2019, AGM at 11am, Lunch at 12.15pm, Mayfair Hotel

Two-Course lunch with coffee and mints for ROSL and ESU members and their guests.

£18. £20 for guests.

AGM

Thursday 11 April, 6 pm, Over-Seas House

Annual General Meeting for London Group Members only.

Free.

Talk

Thursday 16 May, 6 pm, Over-Seas House

Speaker tbc.

Free. Open to London Group members and overnight guests.

LONDON GROUP BOOKING INFORMATION

London Group events for London Group members, their guests, and ROSL members staying at Over-Seas House. To join, speak to the Membership Team on +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214/216 or email membership@rosl.org.uk. **No booking is required for talks.**

To book outside visits, send a cheque payable to 'ROSL' and a stamped, addressed envelope to Maureen Howley, London Group, Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street, London, SW1A 1LR. The London Group is a voluntary organisation and cannot take bookings by email or telephone. Confirmation is sent approximately ten days in advance. Cancellations and refund requests must be made at least two weeks before the event. **Contact howleymaureen@hotmail.com.**

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Introducing... ROSL RUSH HOUR

In 2019, we are expanding our concert programme to include a new series called ROSL Rush Hour, at which we will present a diverse array of one-hour concerts specifically designed to help you take shelter from bustling streets of London in our beautiful Princess Alexandra Hall.

The series will feature some international artists, ROSL music alumni and exciting ensembles whose repertoire will cover excellent works from Beethoven to Gershwin, Weill to Schubert. These concerts will have something for everyone and are a perfect excuse to discover some new music.

Britten Sinfonia, one of the world's most celebrated and pioneering ensembles, kicks off the series with works featuring the viola and clarinet at 6.30pm on Tuesday 2 April.

ROSL alumni returning to the Princess Alexandra Hall for the series include 2018 Annual Music Competition Gold Medallist Jonathan Radford; 2018 winners of the String Ensembles Prize, The Marmen Quartet; and winners of the 2017 AMC Mixed Ensembles section, Kabantu. Other artists include Scottish pianist Richard Michael, who will be romping through the musical DNA of jazz piano, and The Pegasus Chamber Choir. So, join us for an hour on your way home from work, it will give you a great excuse to miss the crowds and a tune or two to hum all the way home.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for more information on ROSL Rush Hour concerts.



Annual Music Competition 2019

After the last of our four individual Section Finals in February, we turn our eyes, and most importantly our ears, towards the two ensemble awards. These Section Finals, which take place on 12 and 19 March, are unique because they represent the end of the competition component for the winners.

While the winners of February's solo sections must go on to compete against each other at the Gold Medal Final on Thursday 30 May at the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the Southbank Centre, the ensemble winners can enjoy the final as performers there to entertain the audience, rather than competitors, far removed from the judging panel.

The Ensembles A Section Final on Tuesday 12 March

is a showcase of string and keyboard ensembles, with mainly string quartets and piano trios making up the entries. The ensemble categories were split into two in 2004, to allow a more diverse number of ensembles to enter.

Ensembles B section on Tuesday 19 March is always a highlight of our year, due to its unpredictable nature and fantastic range of performances. Some of the most memorable performances have come from this category, including A4 Brass (2018), Kabantu (2017) and Jacquin Trio (2016). In the last three alone, we've had everything from enthralling world music and jazz to more traditional, classical repertoire.

Nationalities represented this year

British, Australian, French (joint), Canadian, New Zealander, South Korean (joint), Singaporean, Maltese and Belgian (joint)



Make the most of your stay

Looking to stay at the club and get involved in our busy events programme? Or perhaps you're already attending an event and would like to stay overnight? Whatever the case, check out the special offers we have lined up in 2019 so you can make the most of your visit to the club.

2 May 2019

NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION

Book one night in a deluxe double or twin room and get a second night free. Applies to 2 and 3 May.

25 May or 1 June 2019

TROOPING THE COLOUR

If you are successful in winning tickets to the parades in our annual ballot, we are offering you the chance to book one night in the clubhouse and get your second night free.

30 May 2019

ANNUAL MUSIC COMPETITION GOLD MEDAL FINAL

Book one night in a deluxe double or twin room and get a second night free. Applies to 30 and 31 May.

BACKGAMMON GROUP

The new Backgammon group meets on a monthly basis with expert tutor Chris Bray, who guides players through the skills and techniques needed to succeed. Dates tbc. A set will remain in the Drawing Room for any members wishing to play.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group is open to all ROSL Members. Social Bridge at all levels, takes place every Monday 2-4pm (except on Bank Holidays) in the Bennet-Clark Room.

The Bridge Group often have supervised practice with tutor Inga Kofoed-Hansen and the next course (which ranges from beginners to advanced) will start on **Monday 4 March 6.30-8.30pm for £120 members, £135 guests.**

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group is open to all members. It meets once a month to discuss novels, short stories and occasionally a non-fiction book. Meetings are usually held in the Bennet-Clark Room from 6.30 to 8.30pm. Members meet in the Duke of York Bar beforehand and have dinner afterwards (optional).

To see the full list of dates and book visit www.rosl.org.uk/events. Contact Eve Mittleton-Kelly on E.Mittleton-Kelly@lse.ac.uk with any further Group queries.

OUR NEW-LOOK EVENTS GUIDE

Our full event guide, which can be found in the mail along with this issue of *Overseas*, features full details of our events for the first half of 2019. It has been designed to give you, the members, and the wider public, a glimpse of what our extensive cultural programme has on offer.

Overleaf you can find a quick guide to what's coming up, including the exclusive member-only events such as the Commonwealth Day Service and House of Lords afternoon tea, which don't feature in the separate event guide.

Visit www.rosl.org.uk/events or call +44 (0)20 7408 0214 for more information on the full programme of events and to book your place.



ROSL calendar

EVENTS

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

<p>5 MAR</p> <p>AMC KEYBOARD SECTION FINAL Tuesday 5 March</p>	<p>11 MAR</p> <p>COMMONWEALTH DAY SERVICE & AFTERNOON TEA Monday 11 March £50 (service) £25 (afternoon tea)</p> 	<p>12 MAR</p> <p>AMC STRINGS ENSEMBLES SECTION FINAL Tuesday 12 March</p>
<p>14 MAR</p> <p>DRAWING CLASSES WITH JOSIE DEIGHTON Thursday 14 March</p>	<p>19 MAR</p> <p>AMC ROSL MIXED ENSEMBLES SECTION FINAL Tuesday 19 March</p>	<p>21 MAR</p> <p>AMC OVERSEAS AWARDS Thursday 21 March</p>
<p>27 MAR</p> <p>EXHIBITION TALK WITH ROSEMARY CLUNIE AND BEN OKRI: DREAMS OF OUR AGE Wednesday 27 March</p>	<p>28 MAR</p> <p>FOOD FIESTA Thursday 28 March, £59</p>	<p>2 APR</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR – BRITTEN SINFONIA Tuesday 2 April</p>
<p>30 APR</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR: MARMEN QUARTET WITH JOHN MYERSCOUGH Tuesday 30 April</p>	<p>2 MAY</p> <p>NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION Thursday 2 May, Free</p> 	<p>16 APR</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR: JONATHAN RADFORD – MELODY MAKER Tuesday 16 April</p>
<p>14 MAY</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR: RICHARD MICHAEL - A HISTORY OF JAZZ PIANO Tuesday 14 May</p>	<p>8 MAY</p> <p>LOOK AGAIN: HOW TO EXPERIENCE THE OLD MASTERS, OSSIAN WARD Wednesday 8 May</p>	<p>25 APR</p> <p>EXHIBITION: RBA RISING STARS Thursday 25 April</p>
<p>25 MAY</p> <p>ADMISSION: ONE SHILLING / PIERS LANE AND DAME PATRICIA ROUTLEDGE Tuesday 11 June</p>	<p>22 MAY</p> <p>DRAWING CLASSES WITH JOSIE DEIGHTON Wednesday 22 May</p>	<p>9 MAY</p> <p>AGM Thursday 9 May, Free</p> 
<p>25-27 MAY/JUN</p> <p>TROOPING THE COLOUR Saturday 25 May, £10-15</p> 	<p>30 MAY</p> <p>AMC GOLD MEDAL FINAL Thursday 30 May</p>	<p>19 JUN</p> <p>MEDICAL MUSICAL SOCIETY: LEONORE PIANO TRIO Wednesday 19 June</p>
<p>4 JUL</p> <p>AN EVENING OF WORDS AND MUSIC WITH THE CAINE PRIZE WRITERS AND ROSL MUSICIANS Thursday 4 July</p>	<p>25 JUN</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR: KABANTU Tuesday 25 June</p>	<p>25 JUN</p> <p>HOUSE OF LORDS AFTERNOON TEA Tuesday 25 June, £40-45</p> 
<p>5 JUL</p> <p>SHAKESPEARE FOR SUMMER: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Friday 5 July</p>	<p>27 JUN</p> <p>LOUISE MCNAUGHT: CONSUME EXHIBITION Thursday 27 June</p>	<p>28-30 JUN</p> <p>MAYFAIR ART WEEKEND Friday 28 – Sunday 30 June</p>
<p>9 JUL</p> <p>ROSL RUSH HOUR: BRIDGE OF SONG, PEGASUS CHAMBER CHOIR Tuesday 9 July</p>	<p>17 JUL</p> <p>DRAWING CLASSES WITH JOSIE DEIGHTON Wednesday 17 July</p>	<p>For further information on all ROSL events, visit www.ros.org.uk/events or call +44 (0)20 7408 0214</p>

KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVALS

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Kirker Holidays offers an extensive range of independent and escorted music holidays. These include tours to leading festivals in Europe such as the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago and the Verdi Festival in Parma, as well as Glyndebourne, Buxton and opera weekends in Vienna, Milan and Venice.

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THE VILLA MEDICI GIULINI COLLECTION

'The progress of the piano' with Melvyn Tan
A FOUR NIGHT HOLIDAY | 7 MAY 2019

One of the world's best known pianists, Melvyn Tan, will introduce you to Fernanda Giuliani's matchless collection of historical keyboard instruments at her villa in Lombardy.

Staying in the villa you will be able to admire these beautiful instruments and hear Melvyn bring them to life in a series of talks and recitals. We will also visit Monza Cathedral, the elegant Villa Cicogna and take a boat trip on nearby Lake Como to the Villa Balbianello, romantically sited on its own promontory, before continuing to Lenno where we have lunch at a lakeside hotel.



Price from £1,947 per person (single supp. £198) for four nights including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast, four dinners, two lunches, a series of talks and concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.

THE KIRKER CORNWALL MUSIC FESTIVAL

A FOUR NIGHT HOLIDAY | 1 OCTOBER 2019

Following on from the annual success of the Kirker Spring Music Festival in St. Mawes, we will return to Cornwall in the autumn joined by the Sacconi Quartet.

Alongside three private concerts, the highlights of our new Cornwall Festival are the visits we make to Boconnoc near Lostwithiel, a magnificent house set in twenty acres of wonderful gardens. We will be welcomed twice at Boconnoc by Elizabeth Fortescue who lives on the estate – once for a morning concert after which we will stay on for lunch and a talk, and again for an evening concert followed by dinner in the house. The tour is based in the pretty town of Fowey, ten miles from Boconnoc.

Price from £1,567 per person (single sup. £248) including four nights accommodation with breakfast, one lunch at Boconnoc, four dinners, three concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities, and the services of the Tour Leader.



THE KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVAL IN MALLORCA

A SIX NIGHT HOLIDAY | 29 MAY 2019

The works of Frédéric Chopin are central to our Festival in Mallorca and for our seventh visit we will be joined by the Phoenix Piano Trio, Marta Fontanals-Simmons, soprano and Lorena Paz Nieto, mezzo-soprano.

Based in the village of Banyalbufar, we will discover the gloriously unspoilt north coast of Mallorca. There will be visits to the picturesque artists' village of Deia, the capital Palma and the villa of San Marroig. Our series of private concerts includes a recital in the villa of the Habsburg Archduke Luis Salvador at Son Marroig.



Price from £2,290 per person (single supp. £189) for six nights including flights, accommodation with breakfast, two lunches, six dinners, five concerts, all sightseeing and gratuities and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.

THE KIRKER MUSIC FESTIVAL ON LAKE COMO

A SEVEN NIGHT HOLIDAY | 23 SEPTEMBER 2019

The destination for our autumn Music Festival is one of the most beautiful corners of Italy. Lined with villas, cypress trees and low-arching mountains, Lake Como has a peaceful timelessness like no other.

The lake has inspired many composers, and we will enjoy performances by a renowned group of international soloists, including pianists Melvyn Tan and Iain Burnside, tenor Luis Gomes, baritone Sergio Vitaleis, violinist Elisabeth Perry and violist Simon Rowland-Jones. There will be an optional performance of L'elisir d'amore by Donizetti at La Scala in Milan. We stay at the 4* Imperiale in the village of Moltrasio, the hotel has a lakeside restaurant and a spa with an indoor pool.

Price from £2,947 per person (single supp. £580) for seven nights including flights, transfers, accommodation with breakfast, five dinners, one lunch, five concerts, all sightseeing, entrance fees and gratuities, and the services of the Kirker Tour Leader.



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