

Coverart Neil Moore

Neil Moore is an early member of LSA and a great supporter of the visual arts in this area. His work is internationally well known and has enjoyed this reputation for a great many years. He teaches painting and drawing at Warwickshire College School of Art and Design.

LSA Website

The LSA website is now finished and is currently being tested. It will have the capabilities not only to display images and text but also play audio and video, (great for those who have had videos made of their work) QTVR virtual reality objects, (great for ceramic artists and sculptors), QTVR panoramas (great for installation artists and exhibitions). You do not need to be a member of LSA to be involved in this web portal of visual arts. It is intended to be a portal for all visual arts and artists who live or work in this region.

Obituary Notice

It is never easy when you have an organisation such as LSA to report on the death of fellow members. This year has seen the very sad loss of two very talented and committed artists, Barry Burman and Chris Sargeant. All at artspace send to their families and friends, our deep felt sympathies, especially at this time of the year.

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artspace Issue#14
December 2001

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Printed by TW Printing
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We wish all readers of artspace a Happy Christmas and New Year.

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artspace greatly appreciates the support and printing of this issue by the School of Art and Design



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Support for this issue greatly received from
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Free distribution to members

Leamington Spa Studio Artists

arts journal for warwickshire and coventry areas



coverart 'Rapt'

Neil Moore

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Letter from the Chair

It's been two years since I took on the chairmanship of LSA and, so much has happened to the group in that time, that it seems a good moment to reflection how far we've come as, in the New Year, I will be handing over to an incoming chair.

Our membership is now over 180, with members drawn from all ages,

from all visual-arts media, and from across Warwickshire. For all our increase in size, however, we have continued to maintain our identity as a close group of professional and practising artists with a clear base in Leamington Spa.

We have now occupied North Hall for two and a half years, turning the building into functioning studio space. This has put us in an excellent position for negotiating a more secure and longer-term arrangement when Spencer Yard begins, finally, to be developed into the long-awaited "Cultural Quarter". After many delays and setbacks, this development seems at last to be imminent, with a realisable scheme - which will include the improvement of the studios in North Hall - at last being planned for the not too distant future. We were able to open North Hall to the public in 2000 for the Warwickshire Arts and Heritage Week and, assuming the studios are re-built and functioning again by then, aim to participate in the next Arts Week, planned for the autumn of 2002.

Members may have noticed that LSA was one of the sponsors of the Leamington Spa Open Exhibition hosted in the Pump Rooms in October 2001. Several members were selected to exhibit in the show, and at least one of the prize-winners, Iris Bertz, has since joined. We were proud to host our own LSA Open in the Community Gallery in October 2001, an exhibition which ran concurrently with the Pump Rooms show. Over thirty members submitted work which made for an excellent exhibition that illustrated the professional standard and wide variety of media and styles that LSA has come to represent. It was wonderful to see the old gallery being put to use again as a designated fine-arts space, and we plan to make the LSA Open an annual event there.

Our arrangement with the Loft Theatre continues, providing members with further exhibition opportunities in an attractive public venue. Exhibitions by LSA members are now planned for well into 2002.

artspace is now established as the premiere local review journal for the visual arts, with exhibitions by members and others regularly being evaluated and reviewed by academics, artists, curators, and art historians alike. The editorial

board does a superb job in producing the magazine regularly, ensuring the wide coverage of exhibitions and maintaining the high quality of its published reviews.

Above all, LSA now has its own web-site. This not only gives us an international profile, but gives each member the opportunity to take out their own web-page/s containing personal information, illustrations of their work, and an e-mail address should galleries or clients wish to contact them. I would like to thank Bill Jackson, in particular, for pioneering the web-site, and indeed for designing it so well. This project would not have been possible, either, without funds from the generous donation we were given by an anonymous benefactor last year.

None of the achievements of the last two years could have happened, however, without the continuous commitment and hard work of the committee as a whole - Tim Richards, David Phillips, Hazel Shaw, Steve and Liz Phillips, Dominica Vaughan, and Bill Jackson. I would also like to thank Pete McCarthy for his work on the editorial board of *artspace*, and Brian Lamont for accepting a nomination to be the next chair. It has been a pleasure to work with you all, I look forward to the continued growth and prosperity of LSA next year and beyond.

A very happy Christmas and New Year to all the membership,

Catherine Bates



Judy Baker review on page 4

Reviews Reviews Reviews Reviews

Peter McCarthy
'The Big Picture'
The Library Gallery
University of Warwick.
19th Nov - 7th Dec 2001

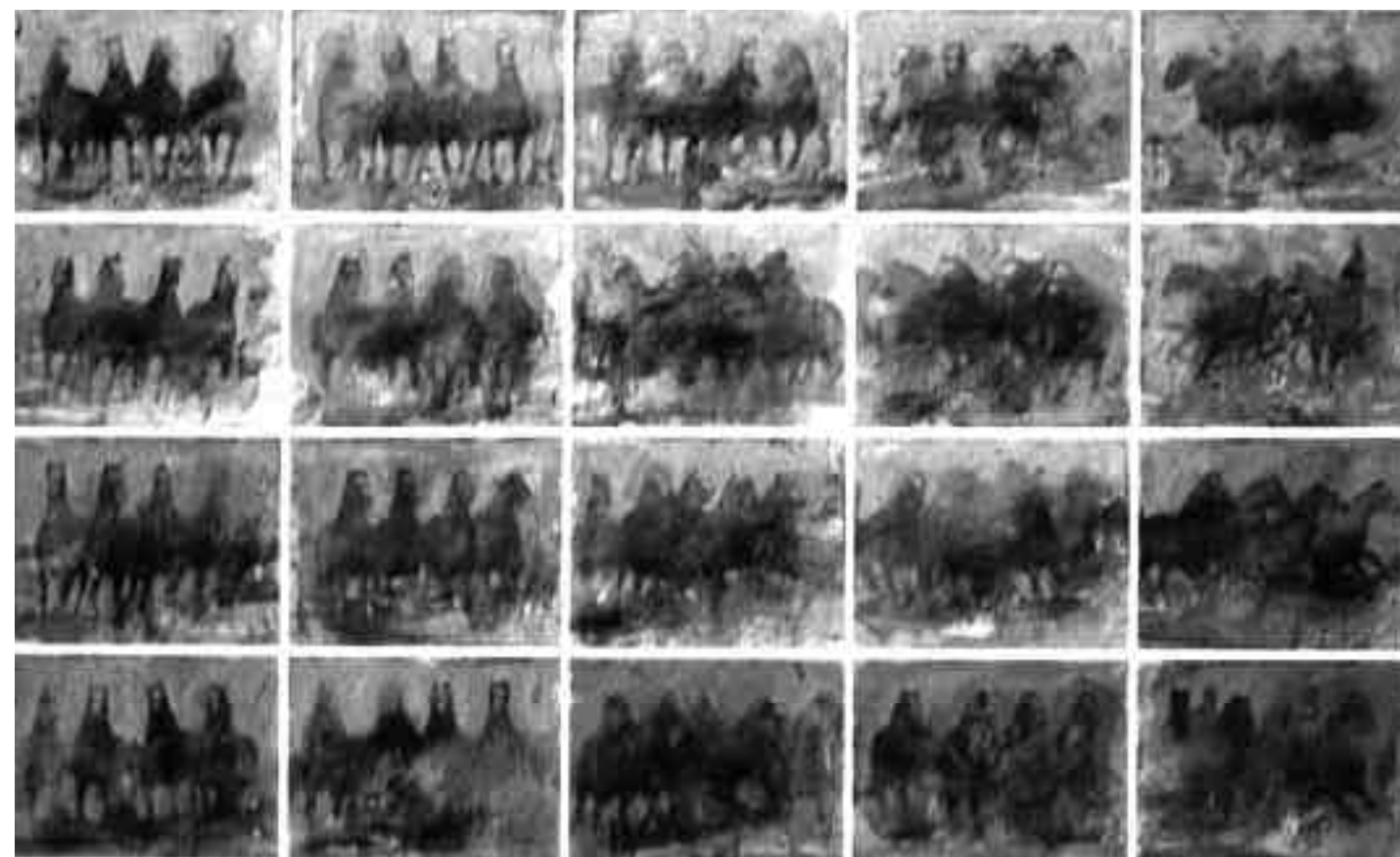
The regular arrangement of several viewpoints of a similar subject or subjects within one picture has its origins in the Victorians post Darwinian desire to catalogue by type. This, arguably, led to a greater understanding of the whole, as Muybridge's sequential photographic stills of animals in movement most certainly did.

In this exhibition McCarthy presents us with a series of small vibrant images (mostly A5) which are arranged in a grid format, making groups of several individual images. The subjects are of wild horses in movement, mostly riderless, and also a series of leaping gymnastic figure forms, together with several bird or aeroplane shapes. The juxtaposition of these images and the interval between has been thoroughly considered, to a point where we might discern that the sum of the whole is

greater than any single image. I was, however, much taken by one or two of the smaller images within the whole, (But I guess that would be like cutting an apple from a Cezanne.) Certainly the advertising industry has used the 'multiframe' to promote several images to the retina in one go, hence the use of 'multiframe' images by many Pop artists. In execution McCarthy shows that he is a very sophisticated draughtsman and an accomplished manipulator of surface. Irrespective of subject, these forms glow richly, due in part to the articulation of the space between the forms by drawing in the spaces with a neutral colour. (often the same parchment hue.) Acutely aware that a line is really the meeting of space and form, the edge where they meet is handled with a mature dexterity. Certainly he has achieved the 'animation', both of image and surface that he purports to seek. He has cleverly singled out an arresting head, (stated more clearly) to provide the static within the image that implied movement requires; the whole pulsation being held by the

dominant lines of the grid. These are very fine works. However, I do feel that McCarthy could have given us and himself more. The predominance of a very similar colour for all the backgrounds, lent a coherence to the individual pieces and unity to the whole exhibition, although because of this, the overriding impression was somewhat bland. It would have been more testing for the artist and the viewer if there had been greater variety in the background colour, within each small image and the whole. These are not colour paintings for me, but coloured paintings. In my opinion the spaces around form can be articulated with greater resonance if the challenge of a wider palette is explored, as a line is also where differing colours meet and define, not only the space, but the nature of that space. I suspect that black and white photos of these works, although less resonant, would still be engaging.

Steve Phillips



'The Big Picture'

Pete McCarthy

object, the ram the natural object - and the old master? Well, that's the Rauschenberg of course.

Rauschenberg was always careful not to work to a predetermined set of assumptions about the meaning of the different elements that he was attempting to reconcile. Dimitrijevic is less circumspect. The most visually intriguing work in the show, which pits a fifteenth century painting, a clarinet and an apple against each other, loses its enigmatic quality when you discover the reasoning behind it. Luca Signorelli's portrait is of Nicolo Vitelli, a local ruler, the clarinet is the type of instrument that people would dance to (hence dancing to the ruler's tune) and the apple represents the temptations of power to which rulers are prone. The explanation is hardly profound even though the tempting apple comes from no less a source than Genesis.

It seems remarkable that the Barber Institute was persuaded to get involved until you realise how substantial Dimitrijevic's reputation is. His impressive powers of persuasion have allowed him to raid some of the world's most important collections in the past. He was heading in this direction in the 1970s with his pairs of busts that matched portraits of historically famous figures with those of random passers-by. It's a far more telling idea with enough visual economy to focus rather than diffuse the essential concept. The arbitrary nature of fame and the poignancy of a life lived anonymously are all there. Not surprisingly, Dimitrijevic sees himself as a bit of a philosopher but of the homespun variety rather than anything that might cast doubt on Wittgenstein's credentials. There's a Casper Hauser quality about his musings on for instance divine inspirations (sic) that might have seemed relevant in an earlier age but which struggle to remain anything more than ridiculous in these complex times.

There are three further installations in the Barber Institute's galleries which are organised in a different way so that the selected paintings can

remain firmly in place on the walls. The strategy works best with Reclining Nymph by Beccafumi. Since it's not the Barber's best example of early Italian art, the rich red satin that Dimitrijevic has draped around a pedestal competes successfully with the rather badly rendered tunic that adorns the Nymph. What it doesn't do of course is engage with the spectator's imagination in anything like the same way. The painting has an unfair advantage. It can suggest content through illusion and communicate meaning through the formal organisation of its subject-matter. A utilitarian object is governed by much more pragmatic considerations, such as fitness for purpose. It might have intrinsic value as a beautiful object or a status symbol, but its functionality will always remain its raison d'être. What Dimitrijevic does demonstrate is that if the organic or manufactured object has enough presence (a pride of lions, a clutch of Harley-Davidsons) it will be able to challenge the works of art on something like a level playing field. Damien Hirst learned this lesson well with his *'Shark Infested Waters'*. But we are inevitably talking about impact, art's least important dimension. *Ars longa, vita brevis* (life is short, art goes on for ever) does not sit comfortably with notions of instant gratification.

This doesn't mean that simple objects can't be used in the context of art. The co-opting of ordinary objects for the purposes of making art reached something like epidemic proportions in the post-modern and post post-modern eras. British sculptors were particularly adept at transforming otherwise worthless objects into satisfyingly substantial objects. David Mach holds the record for sheer numbers with the several thousand bricks of his Tyneside Train. Bill Woodrow's conversion of domestic objects into recognisable sculptural images also comes to mind. There was a welcome degree of wit in these works as there is in Cornelia Parker's flattened musical instruments and other squashed ensembles. In each case materials are subjected to an intervention that produces another outcome. In Dimitrijevic's case it's a more po-faced cooption which stands or falls on the basis of its internal dynamics. This makes it sound more likely to succeed as a formula than seems to be the case in this show. There's an unmistakable

whiff of ad-hoc decision-making that does no justice to the chosen works of art. The tricycles from Coventry's Museum of Road Transport which lead up to Manet's Portrait of Carolus-Dur, seem as ludicrous here as they did when I last saw them being trundled around the Coventry Canal Basin for an olde worlde publicity shot.

One can't help thinking that an experienced stage designer could have done a better job - more purposeful and less pretentious. What makes all things equal in Rauschenberg's Monogram is the treatment of the material. It stretched the boundaries of painting to breaking point while at the same time offering an irreverent critique of abstract-expressionism. The post-historic aspect of Dimitrijevic's work prevents him from engaging in such encounters. If taken literally, however, his statement that 'every constituent is equal' leaves him with very little to do apart from choosing the ingredients and then setting them to work against each other. This lack of development looks unconvincing particularly in the context of the paintings.

As any practitioner will tell you there's something compelling about involvement in an artform where set designers can't compete. It's a little like the experience of climbing a mountain - you must have the skills to avoid falling off but you don't need to know beforehand exactly how you'll reach the top. In a recent TV programme about Frank Auerbach he was asked what it was that kept him going to his studio 364 days a year. His answer was very simple. It was, he said, the mystery of the activity. I think I know what he means. But for the curators of public galleries with a sharper cutting-edge than the Royal Academy, that's not what show biz is about.

Triptychos Post Historicus is at the Ikon Gallery, Birmingham & the Barber Institute, University of Birmingham till 20th January

Pete McCarthy

Obituary
Christina Sergeant

After a year's treatment for cancer Christina Sergeant died in November this year. Her death was a terrible shock to all who knew her. Chris was an especially vibrant, out going person. Her enthusiasm for her work; drawing, photography and above all, print-making was infectious. Right to the end of her life she continued to work and exhibit leaving no-one in any doubt about her seriousness towards her work which developed in leaps and bounds during her last year.

Her confident use of a widening range of print techniques, a growing control over her medium led to images of fluidity, vitality and growth. There is a richness and delicacy in her prints mixing subtle imagery with textual interest. The last two exhibitions to which Chris contributed bear witness to her increasing knowledge and confidence in her skills. This progress was backed by phenomenal dedication, enterprise and a lively intelligence.

The two exhibitions show Chris creative and full of optimism. 'Celebrating Print-Making', July 14-29 in Yarrow Gallery, Oundle was part of the Oundle International Festival. Later as a founder member of 'The Amazing Constellation Print-Makers' workshop' Chris contributed to an exhibition at Chichele College, Higham Ferrers.

In her relations with fellow students and colleagues Chris was warm and generous with her time and genuinely interested in their work. I am not alone in feeling enriched by having known her. It is cruel that Chris died when she did, leaving so much still to give.

Paul Greco, Christine Midgely and Wendy Oserby, members of staff at Nene College Northampton, wish to be associated with this tribute to Christina Sergeant as do her colleagues Yvette Bartlett and Pauline Wood of 'The Amazing Constellation Print-Makers' workshop'.

Janet Inglis



'untitled monoprint' 2001

Christina Sergeant



Christina Sergeant



'Untitled 2000' lino

Christina Sergeant

John Devane
'Good and Bad Government'
 Library Gallery Warwick University.

What the artist presents us with are images of desolation, decay and despair. In Devane's work the urban environment is not utopian, a place to make a home, to create a dream of the future. It is the stark emptiness of an almost idealist demonic of high-rise. The collapsing buildings, the wasteland, the pinpointed target waiting its destruction, the blur of place seen through some magnified lens but too far away to be distinct, or seen at speed as if approaching or passing rapidly. The monotypes reinforce the mood created by the paintings where gloom prevails.



'Study for Multi-Story'

John Devane

MA Exhibition
Coventry School of Art

Yet in spite of the subject matter the work has an aesthetic power, for we discover the mark making is not random, that the greys, the yellows, the white slashes, and the red passages, that seemingly roam across the surface are controlled by a thinking mind that wishes to startle and perplex us. Is the artist telling us that the paint handled with knowledge of its effects transcends subject matter and that even the most dismal place can be redeemed by surface lustre? In the most appalling circumstances is there always a glimmer of hope? Or is it that the disintegration seen fixes our gaze and we realise that what we thought was substantial can falter? Or is it that the painter paints with indifference to the subject matter and is simply concerned with mark making to fulfil his compulsion? I think not. There is a moral imperative to this work. You will need to find it in order to understand the paintings properly but it isn't difficult to do so. This is penetrating work on a grand scale and sadly very topical.

Dave Phillips

There were five students exhibiting: Eveson, Hughes, Mccorry, Mendelsson and Walden. The variety of production established that there was no house style and the quality of the work was high. One of the more intriguing of the group was Susie Mendelsson who was not afraid to paint in a large format that had complicated crowded compositions. These were often set in a wooded context and the figures seemed drawn towards some guru or shaman like figure. These were ambitious works for a student and the sense of compulsion that the figures had towards the epicentre extended to the viewer as he witnessed some mysterious ritual. It is expected that one will see more of this student's work as she develops rapidly towards being a fully-fledged artist.

Dave Phillips



'Birdie' monoprint

Lesley Daniels

Lesley Daniels
'From the Past to the Present'
 The Barn Gallery, Kineton.

Lesley Daniel's work has moved on and we are now confronted not only by those serious faces from the past that have that Tudor feel but full length figures that stare at us presented in a stylised fashion even without shoes. Always though the imagery seems riddled by history and the dimension of past times and cultures permeate. There is a sense of gravitas, an attempt to weld the past into the present in order to make it more meaningful. She succeeds for these artefacts make you think about the nature of time, of history, they have the quality of formalised poetry in paint.

Dave Phillips

Meat with Two Veg
 the art of reconciling opposites

For the second time in its history, the Ikon Gallery has had a load of hefty-looking potatoes on display. First time round they were encouraged to grow. Their struggle to gain height was, as far as I can remember, amplified through a set of speakers. On that occasion the Ikon became a nursery of sorts complete with baby alarm. This time all is quiet. At least twenty years separate the two events but nothing much has changed in the interval. The cutting edge of art can, it seems, still be incised with as blunt and barmy an instrument as the humble potato peeler.

I was sceptical about potatoes as art the first time round, but patience wears a little thin when a second load arrives almost two decades later in equally dubious circumstances. If this sounds irreverent, it's meant to. There's something disturbing about our public galleries' obsession with installation. In the case of the Ikon's original potato exhibition it was possible to sympathise with Victor Grippo's attempts to reveal that there was a hidden dimension to the humble spud. It wasn't convincing as science nor was it stimulating as art but it made you think a teeny bit about nature's wondrous ways. In their current show, 'Tryptichos Post Historicus', Braco Dimitrijevic has a more ambitious project. He wants to suggest an equality of status between valuable works of art, natural phenomena and ordinary manufactured objects. It's a tall order especially as his interventions are minimal. Dimitrijevic has been pursuing this project since the nineteen eighties but the impact of the earlier productions in which real lions prowled amongst the works of art, simply isn't there (just as well perhaps). The point of what he was doing was far more evident then. There was something dramatic and startling about these juxtapositions. In the fussy baroque interior of Vienna's Palais Lichenstein he showed rows of motorbikes in 1994 with a masterpiece instead of a hell's angel propped against each one. It worked, in a stage-set sort of way.

The scale and layout is different at the Ikon and it's all the poorer for it. Here Dimitrijevic shows greater deference to the works of art than in the previous

examples by making them the centre of each ensemble. In some of the tableaux (because this is what they are) the influence of the work of art extends to the choice of associated materials and objects, but in most of the others the links are tenuous or even deliberately obscure. The potatoes embody the most obvious aspect of the subject of the painting that's perched awkwardly in their midst. It's Van Gogh's 'A Peasant Woman Digging' and it looks a sorry sight. Well no, it doesn't, it looks wonderful if you blot out the barrow-load of potatoes that it sits on. But this is difficult as they don't just stay on the barrow, they spill all over the place, blocking your way to the next exhibit and tempting you to splat at least one of them into the gallery floor.

The permutation of category opposites can be made to work but it's a mistake to assume that this must always be in the context of conceptualism. The incorporation of ordinary objects within works of art has precedents and famous landmarks elsewhere within Modernism. Robert Rauschenberg was particularly

adept at bringing together unlikely collections of junk in a surprisingly plausible manner. Rauschenberg's 'combine' Bed caused an Emin-like stir in the 1950s. It offered a less intellectually robust alternative to Jasper Johns' more considered use of body-casts, targets and flags, but on both sides of the partnership, paint was important. Johns reinforced its physicality, Rauschenberg its fluency. When the incorporation became virtual with his screening of photographic material, we even got a Renaissance masterpiece or two. Yes, it's all been done before, but more elegantly, more inventively, more ironically and in the pursuit of a less unlikely outcome. In Rauschenberg's 'Persimmon' (1964) the Renaissance painting is neutralised by being turned into a reprographic image. Dimitrijevic wouldn't want to do this of course. Another Rauschenberg, 'Monogram' (1955-59), provides us with an instance where the type of ingredients that Dimitrijevic juggles with are also there. The tyre is the manufactured

cont overleaf



From Mark Tilley's Exhibition at Solihull Arts Library Complex. A Review of this exhibition will appear in the next issue of 'artspace'

**'Resonance'
Leamington Spa Open Exhibition
Pump Room Galleries**

Set in the opulence of the 'Pump Rooms' complex, the space is almost the opposite to the 'Community Gallery'. Small, new and painted the obligatory white, the room housing the 'Open' exhibition can be found after weaving through the rest of the gallery and museum spaces. The exhibition in comparison with the other 'Opens', for instance Rugby is small but shows a discerning choice of works. The atmosphere is of a contemporary gallery showing contemporary works, the parochial nature of many 'Open' exhibitions is not reflected here. Works by Andrew Campbell and Sol Moxhan photograph 'Central Park Sky' stood out. The exhibition showed confidence in promoting contemporary art, without the insistence of other 'Opens' in showing representational works which often do not rise above the standard of an 'A' level technical piece. Leamington Spa's 'Open' definitely proves the maxim that 'less is more' and the gallery panel and curator should be congratulated.

Peter Thornley

You can't fit a quart into a pint pot, so wall-space, floor-space and plinth-space (if there is such a thing) were at a premium in this tightly packed exhibition selected from an open submission. It's a miracle that it held together at all as a show. But apart from Andrew Campbell's installation which deserved more elbow-room than it was ever likely to get with space at such a premium, it seemed to work well. The organisers had decided to lump fine art and craft together. This was never a good idea and it was the crafts that suffered most. They needed a show of their own where more could have been selected and then shown without having to compete with the artworks. Val Hunt's witty Real Ale Ruff was one of the few that was up to the task because its message allied it more closely to sculptural concerns. But even here there was a sense of marginalisation that only served to emphasise the difficulties of curating a mixed category show.

Andrew Campbell was also trying to achieve the impossible. His installation 'Line Drawing' bravely attempted to bridge the gap between painting and

installation but landed somewhere between the two. It was a nearer miss than this implies. It had an impressive physical presence and strength that came from conviction. Where it succeeded less was in its message. Campbell was hoping that we would be able to see in this arrangement of ratchet straps and painted panels 'the lines and divisions which mark social and cultural boundaries'. What came across more clearly was his interest in pursuing a colour-field agenda. And, you can't help thinking, what's wrong with that? He should loosen the straps and do more. Graham Hughes was trying to do something similar by binding together contradictory ways of working. The irony here was that the end result of an essentially abstract process turned out to be a Hypothetical Landscape. This was a simple but appealing painting.

Kate Hince from Nuneaton won one of the main prizes with something a bit more complicated. Her painting's title, 'Cityscape' from the 'Hello can I help you' series merited an award in its own right, but the painting too was a clear winner. It was a witty interpretation of inner city chaos, Melbourne in this case. It was rendered in a quirky, squiggly, frantic style that was more Tintin than Titian. The crow's nest vantage point gave her the opportunity to flatten and bend the space to create a rubbery, unreal look for what might otherwise have been a standard townscape. Kokoschka did some very solemn-looking versions of the same sort of thing that often seemed to be about to melt. There's a youthfulness here that makes this traditional subject-matter seem equally appropriate for another generation. The graphic quality pulls it very firmly into the age of the computer game. For earlier generations the jigsaw puzzle used to be the game of choice. Ian Skoles also likes them. So much so that he has merged several versions of scenes of Venice to create a cunningly scrambled image. The example on show, Carnival, nicely mixed high art and low art aspirations. Its conceptual clarity made the information clash all the more disconcerting. It could have been scrambled more radically without this in any way spoiling the fun. Gwen McQuay did this successfully with a camera and Myfanwy Johns with a computer. McQuay's image, Inner City, exploited the opportunities for cropping that the camera allows. Her image of the top of some railings with a peeling bill-board in the background

sounds like unpromising material but its compositional economy and tonal clarity raised it way beyond its humble origins. Johns' digital print also worked with minimal material to produce, in her own words, infinite possibilities. The one we saw here Repeat did not work as well as the larger versions that she showed in Birmingham not so long ago. These seemed to be nearer to the sort of scale that was needed to accommodate the ambition behind the work.

Neil Moore continued to show that he is content to stay well within the low-tech high-skill world of painting where hard slog rather than hardware is likely to determine the outcome. 'Trichotomy' was a perceptual conundrum which was all done with mirrors. Its coolly rendered collection of visual clues were intended as in Magritte's work, to lead you astray into an area of ambivalent contradiction.

Bill Jackson also attempted to turn the tables on the unwary by setting his fiendish device to record our reactions through a web-cam while using a tiny image of fish as bait. This was shown on the view-finder of a video camera that would have been easy to pinch if it wasn't for the fact that it was being monitored remotely by some tough guys at Group 4 (or at least that's what it claimed). It was a clever set of linkages that carried a serious message. It asked us to consider the nature of recorded imagery. How reliable is the information being transmitted and received?

Not very seems to be the answer.

Peter McCarthy



'RTF' Bill Jackson

**'Real Time Steaming'
Elizabeth Antin
The Mead Gallery**

Antin was born in 1935 so she is far from being a young artist. Her debut was many years ago in the 50s and 60s in New York and she became associated with a movement known as Fluxus, that made no distinction 'between art and life'. This exhibition is all about Antin in a variety of contexts and she seems to fit into the category of those artists who achieve fame through self-promotion such as Tracey Emin, Gillian Wearing and Gilbert and George. The curator Rachel Thomas has searched high and low and come up with an amazing number of artefacts in a variety of forms and whether they be videos, photographs, cut-outs and so on they are Antin doing her thing. It is as if she is an artist in search of an identity and the identity lies in the search. So there is no end to it, for it becomes the chronicle of her life. She seeks experience in a number of guises and then once established examines the nature of that experience as if she is looking at herself from the outside as well as the inside. She has made of herself a work of art and there is as much a social dimension to her activities as aesthetic. Some of the tableaux have appeal and one thinks of artists such as Keinholz, other exhibits astonishing with their audacity such as her naked portrayal of her body from four viewpoints over a period of days and weeks. There is wit and satire here and theatre and she is the forerunner of many a self-promoting conceptual contemporary artist. There is no doubt this was a refreshing exhibition, for it showed what an artist totally self-absorbed and committed could achieve even if the subject is self-referential.

Dave Phillips

**The Tantalus Project
Rugby Art Gallery**

This is the fourth exhibition of this enterprising group of about twenty artists formed in 1999 which 'would cater in a non-judgmental way for projects involving a range of media, including collaborations between media'. The first three exhibitions took place in unusual places: a town hall, a



from the Tantalus Project

David Broadfield

church, and a public house and this is the first in a gallery. The overall impression is that this is an ideas led exhibition and these artists are very knowing about the developments of twentieth century art. David Broadfield's work is a case in point, which although representational, uses unusual surfaces, involving textures and media to create images which seem like distressed formal experiments. They intrigue and hold attention bristling as they do with the energy of confrontation as the protagonists face up to each other. In sharp contrast Peter Thornley's photographic image, made possible by the use of a 1904 7x5 field camera, of urinals reflected in dark marble, offers repose coloured by knowledge of Duchamps' artefact. It is a work that holds attention as it possesses a historical reference and an aesthetic presence of solemnity with its subtle dark tonality. These two artists exemplify the general approach of the other artists of the group as they search for meaning in the complex labyrinth of the visual arts.

Dave Phillips

**'Leaving Spaces'
Deirdre Dawson
The Southtown Gallery Gaia**

Perhaps Leamington has the most advanced conceptualist in the country in its midst. Having arrived to see 'Leaving Spaces' we were confronted by such. The sheer courage and heroism in a world of aggressive commissions should be recognised.

This is the concept beyond a concept, the theory beyond a theory. Perhaps Dawson has a notion of exhibiting nationally and even internationally with this concept of 'Leaving Spaces'. While most artists are struggling with their demons she seems to have outwitted all.

Dave Phillips.

**Michael Takeo Magruder
The Roadmender Gallery,
Northampton**

Magruder's work at this exhibition was his well-known light panels. These were displayed to good effect in this gallery. The quality of their colour and the deportment of their parts gave a brilliance to the space. They have an intensity which would herald an entrance to a hotel or a hospital or even a night club. These are works you ignore at your peril and because they are static they need constant movement around them to enrich their presence. These light sculptures have enormous potential in the right setting and further developments will see them recognised in a variety of roles.

Dave Phillips.

Sarah Walford & Soulla Psomas
The Community Art Gallery
Leamington Spa

It was a hard act to follow on the very successful LSA exhibition at the above gallery. Yet these two fledgling young artists have shown their work to good effect. Walford's work is based on observation, intellect and art-historical knowledge and she doffs her hat at Chardin and Uglow among others. There is a steadfastness of purpose that is impressive for someone just beginning an artistic career and she has reached a crossroads, for she will now have to decide which road to take. It will be interesting to see her progress over the next few years. Psomas is almost the opposite for she revels in flowers and colour. There is exuberance and abandonment which is quite infectious and all the time she presents us with a myriad way of looking at leaves and flowers. She has taken hold of nature and brought it even into her paintings, spraying the leaves and encasing them. This is the way she has chosen and this is what she will wrestle with for many years to come.

Dave Phillips.

'Fast Forward'
Lanchester Gallery School of Art
Coventry University

This was a rather unusual exhibition for it was essentially a celebration of the fact that the University has in its midst an extraordinary collection of talented artists and designers. Among them is Professor Glynn Bowsher who is the chief mechanical designer of the Thrust supersonic car which holds the world land speed record. On the other end of the spectrum is Professor Jochen Gerz who is placed 41st in the list of 100 greatest living artists published by 'Capital' magazine. Thrust in between these two high fliers are others of equal merit such as John Yeadon whose paintings are well known in the area for their daring and handling, Mandy Havers's sculptural work, which has a national reputation, fascinating a generation with its exploration of the frontiers of the bizarre, Jonathan Waller whose latest works of childbirth and lovers are as ever adroit

and frontal, as has been remarked on in previous issues of 'ArtSpace', John Devane's work that has such dreadful topicality which is reviewed in this issue of 'artspace', Karen Trusselle who has used photography with such a perceptive eye and John Jostins whose imaginative mind could tackle virtually any subject.. A clutch of Professors such as Michael Tovey and Clive Richards reveal their professional ware and at the same time are seen to be instrumental in the plans for the Advanced Digitising and Modelling Laboratory for which a new building will commence in 2002. This occasion unveiled plans for this extraordinary new facility which will extend the range of research undertaken by the University's 'Design Institute', especially in the field of automotive design. Michael Goldstein, the Vice-Chancellor of the University opened the exhibition praising the creative endeavour in so many areas. He made the significant point that such an exhibition points to the fact that the barriers between the creative fields are no longer so impenetrable and that one discipline flows into another with so much greater ease now than previously. The crucial factor is the creative and imaginative energy of the individual. This exhibition that covered interventionist art, information design, public art commissions, sculpture, fine art printmaking and drawing, painting, digital art and design, communication and media, craft, collaborative design, and automotive design is a pointer to the form of many future exhibitions.

Dave Phillips.

Margaret Godwin and Judy Baker
Warwick University Library

In her usual fashion Godwin's paintings in this exhibition make you feel you are out there in nature, alone and isolated, with not a person in sight. There is the sweep of the bay, the scudding clouds, the reflective water, nature seems magically to be there. Think of a landscape with intense blue permeating and it is there. Her work seems to have reached a plateau and this exhibition is one of consolidation. Baker's imagery in part has the feel of humanity caught in the raw, caught unaware in blissful ignorance, uninhibited, guard down, not always so tasteful but redeemed by the sheer virtuosity of the painting itself. Are these the bathing beauties of a lost generation one asks in one instance? Or are these your fellow travellers on some round the world cruise which in some nightmare

you have met, letting their hair down, fags on the ready, booze to be guzzled. Altogether a show that has a strength in contrast. Thank goodness Baker's figures don't inhabit Godwin's landscapes for all would be lost otherwise.

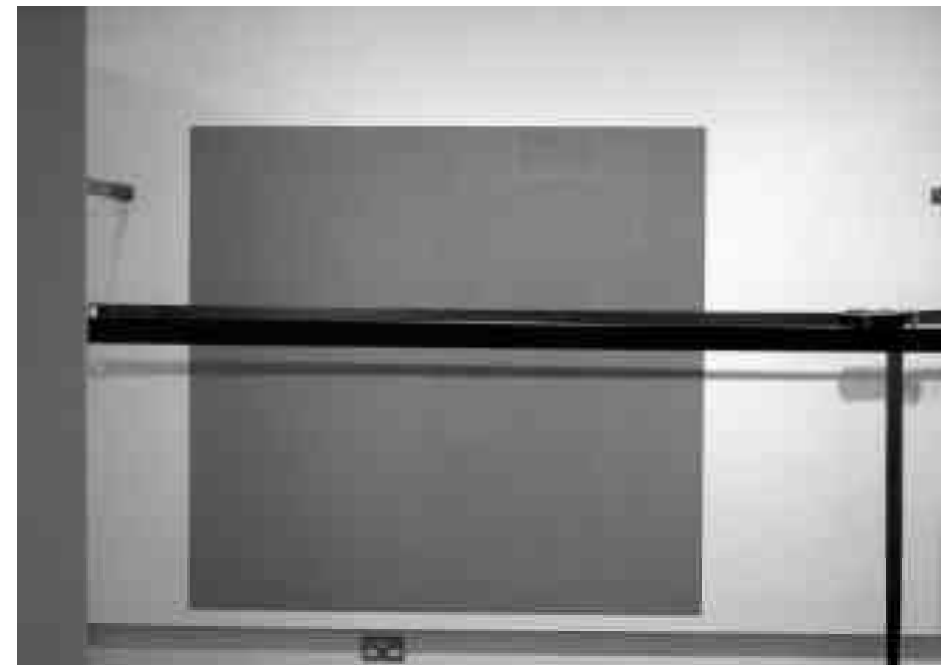
Dave Phillips

Jean Parker
Nuneaton Art Gallery

This is not really an exhibition for the faint-hearted, for it is based on the artist's fight against cancer and its vanquishing. She lists her responses to the discovery of being a sufferer and attempts to find sculptural equivalents to certain states of mind and feeling, first in small terracotta heads and then in large alabaster ones. The eight works flow from these sequences of reactions: 1. *I'm alright (shock, masked, denial)*; 2. *No, No (Pain, protest, disbelief)*; 3. *Why (searching, perplexed, the need to make sense of)*; 4. *Anger (Realisation of grim reality, torment, rage, anguish)*; 5. *Depression (desolation, despair, deep sadness)*; 6. *Acceptance - Awareness (Facing the reality of loss)*; 7. *Healing (Moving on to a peaceful place)*; 8. *Abiding - Trusting (Life no longer defined by loss)*.

This is a formidable agenda and the small terracotta heads have a tenderness and the quality of intimacy. As Mandy Havers says in her introduction to the exhibition ' This work has an accessibility that Jean hopes can be developed and used in the future as an aid to people in similar circumstances'. The larger heads have been carved from pink and white alabaster and as Havers says ' The reds and pinks are all too reminiscent of flesh and wounds whilst the beautiful translucence of the white has an almost spiritual uplifting quality'. A serious exhibition about a condition that afflicts about one in three of the population and one admires the courage of the artist to catalogue her emotional reactions and find in the form of heads alone the horror and the truth of it all. It is an art born out of personal anguish and by sheer determination resolved.

Dave Phillips



'Line Drawing Ratchet Straps Acrylic paint Acrylic Sheet'
 review on page 4

Andrew Campbell

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free for all. The problem with selection as a principle is the quality of the selection panel and the problem of taste and subjectivity and the possibility of corruption. Mind you rejection as history teaches us can be beneficial for some artists. No, this exhibition highlights what was said in the last issue of 'artSpace' that the gallery needs a new location. It is pleasing to hear that a campaign has been launched to move the gallery eventually to a more suitable site and LSA supports the endeavour to do so.

The exhibition itself as an illustration of the artistic activity in one small area is commendable although it would have been helpful to have name of artist, title of work, date of work, medium and price put clearly by its side. Those artists who have struggled to find meaning and go beyond technicalities are clearly evident but one does not want to spurn the others for they are the soil out of which the flowers grow. So there are artists there who court established figures as does Howard Watson and whose imagery is well known by the cognoscenti. Such derivation allows the message of the original and innovating artists to seep through the consciousness of those less well informed. At the same time there are those artists who strive to find their own voice as is the case with Muriel Mason whose work always shows sincerity. The distinctive images of Ilona Pike that have an eye catching

quality using as she puts gloss paint on aluminium. Simon English always has an amusing twist to his work and 'You are what you eat' is no exception. Julia Prior's drawings of horses are distinctive for they are always dramatic and accurate. There is such understanding and empathy, with as in this case, that little extra which turns a potentially mundane subject 'Horse' into something exciting and questionable. Is this a horse rising or stumbling but whatever, the form, the mass, the proportion make it alive and palpable and aesthetically right. 'From the Balcony' by Wendy Freeman contain

her telltale yellow and crosses with subtle references to lived experiences and longings for the mysteries of future ones. Pat Noble a well known abstract artist again confounds us with her 'Untitled' piece and we respond to her vocabulary wonderingly driven by the mark making qualities of someone who is leading us to an enchanted place. Ray Spence's 'Puffer Fish' which is a digital print makes us wonder at sheer brilliance of the technique involved and that such aesthetics more allied to painting or printmaking could emerge so powerfully. Is this what the future holds for artists where Tony Prior's 'Day in Day Out' is an inkjet print which contains a myriad of allusions and conceits that give it the potency of literature? If this exhibition is typical then it seems not, although experimental work is now part of the landscape of art and these two artists, Spence and Prior are pioneering the way in this locality. Those selected for comment are the more outstanding artists in this panoply but of course there is the other end of the scale but one has to remember that even Van Gogh had to start somewhere. This exhibition signals the need for a new gallery at Stratford, for justice even with the Salon concept was not done to the work. But the opening night showed the potential of a cultural event of this nature, for the space was bursting at the seams with people.

Dave Phillips



'Bald Statements'
 review on page 4

Jean Parker

LSA is a pro-active organisation seeking to promote the Visual Arts in Leamington Spa and the surrounding area. We are a constituted association currently applying for charitable status. Our membership consists of both artists and supporters of the Visual Arts. LSA does not patronise any particular style or form of Visual Art, but seeks to support any Visual Art of quality and merit. Our activities include: representing the Visual Arts in the upcoming bid for Leamington's "Cultural Quarter", promoting Visual Arts exhibitions and events for the public, establishing local studio and exhibition space, and producing a quarterly newsletter containing all the essential local art news and information.

The Current Membership of LSA

David Phillips	Saskia Sutton	Anthony Parsons
Michael Takeo Magruder	Nick Bond	Joy Foy
Stephen Phillips	Vivian Gallaher	Russell Sankey
Phyllis Davies	Pat Noble	Steff Hutchinson
Dr. Isabelle Carre	Jean-Pierre Kunzler	James Butler
Geoff Underwood	Mary Carmenta	Andrew Flint
Hazel Shaw	Richard Inwood	Jeremy Foster
Keith Anker	Kathy Webster	Roger du Pille
Lesley Daniels	Ray Spence	Sam Midgley
Yvonne Boyle	Sue Wilkins	Steve Dawson
Sheila Millward	Ruth Bennion	Judith Hickling
David Troughton	Phillip Sims	Lisa Webb
Paul Crook	Zoe Jelley	Steve Upton
Neil Moore	Anne Stansfield	Nancy Upshall
Jane Moore	Philip Goddard	Patricia Mallett
Dominica Vaughan	Mo Finessey	Neil Phillips
Gillian Irving	Luise Ellis	Jane Powell
Janet Inglis	Muriel Mason	Rachel White
John Inglis	County Arts Service	Stephen Smith
Rachel Hall	Kevin Parrish	Marigold MacGregor
Lucy Bergonzi	Yvette Bartlett	Brian Lamont
Marvene Baxter	Ann Power	Prue Row-Evans
Malcolm Baxter	Margeret Stapley	Annie Ward
Peter Woof	Mick Rafferty	David Ellis
David Jones	Pamela Korn	Taiko Threadgold
Rosie Burman	Donald Thompson	Paul Lockwood
Mark Bullock	Janet Alty	Mo Enright
Margaret Godwin	Caroline Griffin	Rodney Philcox
Val Evans	Rosie Bastock	Charles Appleby
Jackie Knight	Sarah Plumb	Karl Townsend
Kartik Bhatt	Jan Hunt	Lynsey Cleaver
Linda Henry	Dr Jane Plumb	David Broadfield
John Myers	Alisha Miller	Alvar Hadland
Fran Donnelly	Sue Johnson	Ilona Pike
Colin Dick	Mark Rafter	Barbara Gekowski
Peter Scale	Hilary Buckland	Anne Cole
David R Matthews	Susanne Perry	Dianne Greenaway
Bill Jackson	Pete McCarthy	Barbara Shakley
Mark Tilley	Julius Thurgood	C.J. Duppa-Miller
David Lewis	Tracey Wells	Lindsey Davies
Dr Catherine Bates	Julie Wright	Joni Smith
Miranda Matthews	David Broadhead	Wendy Bicknell
James C.F. Seow	Simon English	Iris Bertz
Liz Wright	Wendy Freeman	Satty Sira
Caroline Griffin	Sue Jack	Alex Parsonage
Sarah Huddleston	Val Mitchell	Julia Hayes
Chris Couch	Martin Garrett	Margaret Castelow
Tim Richards	Shona Beard	Laura Merlin
Josephine Saxton	Martin Beresford	Jon Bowles (Art Legacy)
Jane Wylid	Chris Browne	Dr Sukhbir Hothi
Pat Carpenter	Ian Phillips	Jenny Hankin
John Moore	Karen Ford	Edith Mohler-Kloss
James Plaskitt MP	Christine O'Sullivan	Tessa Beaver
Dr Richard Yeomans	David Ward	Susie Mendelsson
Rebekah Sutton	Helen Bone	Grace Newman
	Tracey Potts	James Ryan
	Caius Dutton	Nan Smith
	Helena Godwin	

LSA Membership Form

I wish to become an Artist / Associate (delete accordingly) Member of LSA

Name..... male/female

Address..... Telephone.....

..... e-mail.....

Postcode.....

I am enclosing an amount of £.....to cover my subscription (£10.00 / £5.00 Cons)

Signed..... Date.....

Please send to : Dominica Vaughan, Membership Secretary,
30 Plymouth Place, Leamington Spa CV31 1HN
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R e v i e w s R e v i e w s R e v i e w s R e v i e w s

**'In Situ'
Iris Bertz
Southtown Gallery, Gaia.**

This exhibition was sparse in that the work exhibited was essentially the same object repeated in various sizes. It was an installation that was site specific made up of a number (twenty-nine in all) of willow boats. It was a weaving of craft and art into a conceptual statement that had various ramifications. *'After the Flood'* had fifteen boat like shapes on the floor of the gallery where the carpet had been removed to reveal a concrete base and one willow boat like artefact suspended above level with the flood waters of 1998. It was quite a telling message that suggested the fickleness of fate. Not that any of these artefacts were really boats in that they were not sealed but had open weave that would be unfloatable with any occupant. The other major display called *'Waiting'* conveyed the tactile and aromatic qualities of the material and consisted of nine such boat like shapes propped up against the wall of the gallery in a concave position. There was one though that was displayed separately in a convex fashion between two verticals and separated from the others. It is not too far fetched to see the male and female principle exemplified and various contexts immediately presented themselves to the more vivid imagination: a dance hall, a harem, a bordello, a fashion show, beauty contest and so on. It was on the one hand an exhibition where you were aware of physicality and on the other 'evocations from collective and personal memory. This makes her work widely accessible on a sensory, intuitive level' as the curator Lucy Tanner has written. A thought provoking exhibition and one that explains more fully why she was one of the prize winners in the recent Leamington 'Open' Exhibition.

Dave Phillips



'Protected Willow' shown at the *'Resonance'* Exhibition at the Pump Rooms

Iris Bertz

**Colin Dick
The Spon End Gallery
Coventry**

Dick's show reveals no diminution of his powers as an artist. The nomadic nature of his subject-matter, being gypsies and their lives whether it be funerals, weddings or caravans on the move, is caught with the evocative nostalgia that has always characterised his work in this respect. It is also an interesting social documentation of a minority that has been with us a long time as the work of Augustus John testifies. Dick is in good company and his future development might well be a useful compilation of father aspects of this world before it too becomes a historic relic although this work suggests otherwise. As usual as in most of his shows he demonstrates his ability to draw with accuracy based on observation as seen in his architectural interiors. Dick has now entered his last phase as an artist, one which kept Picasso busy for twenty years or more. One looks forward to yet further exhibitions and one that examines perhaps one subject with in-depth coherence.

Dave Phillips

**'Stratford Salon'
The Gallery Leisure Centre
Stratford upon Avon**

This exhibition has the highest of motives and a sound historical precedent. The notion of piling them high as was the custom in the Salons in the 19th Century is most worthy. In fact this exhibition is paralleled by one currently at the Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery in London where works from the Royal Academy from its inception that could be found are exhibited. *'Above the Line'* reflects the custom of getting as many works to fit into the exhibiting space as possible. The difference between the two exhibitions is that the Stratford Salon because of the low ceiling is unable to pile them high and the cramped space makes the show appear like a bazaar. Both exhibitions go against recent curatorial theory where a work is hung with no others near so that it can breathe and the viewer can concentrate without distraction. Unfortunately this appears to some as to precious an approach. There are so many artists clamouring to have their work exhibited. Either they have to face up the rigours of selection or it has to be a

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LSA Annual
Community Gallery Avenue Rd.
Leamington Spa

Leamington is bursting at the seams with artists. They don't wear smocks and berets any more so it's hard to pick them out. But if you visit CAW in Avenue Rd you'll be able to see a representative selection of work from one major group, the Leamington Studio Artists.

Some of the work is excellent, most of the show is interesting and the rest doesn't quite get there. Two works stand out for me. Martin Beresford's '36 Views' (snapped up by an astute collector) is a lesson in how to develop meaning through abstract paint-handling. It's as elegant as it is daring.

Also outstanding is Ray Spence's 'Somewhere I have Never Travelled'. This clever piece uses digital photography to raid the art historical larder. It's both witty and poetic and it looks absolutely luscious.

Neil Moore's crisp, clean, compelling image of a baby is as much a space odyssey as Kubrick's famous film. Moore's baby hangs in pictorial rather than outer space surrounded by slings and arrows, probably of outrageous fortune. 'In What you see is what I want you to see IV,' Bill Jackson also reminds us of the hazards of life as a single strand of barbed wire cuts across an otherwise romantic scene.

Sheila Millward's 'War' is equally uncompromising. It's a gravity-defying assemblage that manages to be both beautiful and disturbing. The same is true of Dominica Vaughans 'Head 1'. This modern Ophelia dispenses with the fancy trimmings of its cloying Victorian counterpart to make a more powerful point.

If all this sounds too serious, take a look at Steve Phillips' witty 'Overtaking:floods'. It's an amusing, cartoony take on a serious subject that's rendered in a knowing abstract style. It's another example of a good piece of work in a good show that someone just had to have.



'36 Views'

Martin Beresford

Peter McCarthy

'Thriving' is obviously a term which can be used to describe Leamington Studio Artists (LSA). A healthy membership is reflected in the equally healthy exhibition which has just been on view at the Community Art Gallery in their home town between 3rd November to the 23rd Nov. A great diversity of work was on display ranging from the enthusiastic to the highly accomplished. The gallery is obviously in the throes of an upgrade, this rather 'careworn' appearance did not do the exhibits the justice that they deserve, and occasionally the rather cluttered nature of the space led to confusion for the viewer. Powerful pieces by Ray Spence, Pat Noble, Neil Moore, Martin Beresford and Bill Jackson push this exhibition beyond the parochial and show that Leamington Studio Artists are becoming a force to be reckoned with in the West Midlands, I look forward to their next show.

Peter Thornley



'Overtaking:floods'

Steve Phillips



Leamington Spa Studio Artists Open Exhibition Community Arts Gallery

The LSA Annual was well attended and it was especially good to see a large turnout for the Private View as well as steady numbers during the following weeks. Our thanks to members who submitted the work, that almost without exception, was professionally mounted and of some merit, so that in general the exhibition was well received with over £ 4000 worth of the artwork sold. Members and others were able to appreciate what an excellent space the Community Gallery can be and could become with a little TLC. The Community Gallery has been booked for the same period next year for your Open Exhibition, when we hope that more members will submit their work to enable next year to be an even better

Steve Phillips



Leamington Spa Studio Artists Open Exhibition Community Arts Gallery



'Black Diamond'

Joni Smith



'War'

Sheila Millward



'Somewhere I have Never Travelled' Ray Spence