

panorama



Official Newsletter of Brighton Art Society Inc.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Issue
344
April



Dear BAS members,

I hope receiving Panorama offers a sense of continuity and connection with the group in these strange times we are going through. I know that many of us feel a gap in our week as a result of not being able to attend classes or sessions at the studio. Being left solely to our own self discipline to pick up a brush or pencil, can be a challenge. However, no excuses! The extra spare time offers a great chance to focus on our art and I'm sure many are doing just that.

The Committee continues to beaver away on the necessary tasks, even though we are unable to meet in person. Work continues on preparation of a new BAS website which we hope to launch soon and planning for the annual exhibition, which of necessity starts early in the year, is well underway.

Several members have expressed concern about our tutors and the difficult situation they may find themselves in with the sudden unexpected lack of work. I would encourage any of us who are interested and in a position to do so, to consider purchasing something from their artistic output. All our tutors are skilled practicing artists and I'm sure would be happy to receive any inquiries from prospective customers. Several have websites or a web presence and all have phones, so give it some thought.

In the interim, stay well.

LYNTON DAEHLI

DOCUMENTING OUR TRAVELS IN WORDS & PICTURES



Brian Pleasants was a long time member of Brighton Art Society. He was editor of *Panorama* for many years and President of the Society from 2006 - 2007. He has for many years kept illustrated travel diaries and recently asked if he might share some entries from his most recent diary with us. His hope is that by doing so, he may encourage some of us to take up a practice, which he himself sees as most rewarding.

Unfortunately, as for Brian himself, who has had to put his travel plans for 2020 on hold and remain where he is at present in the UK, we will also have to put this art-form on hold for the future. It is however, enjoyable to see some examples of his work in this genre. For this edition, he has added the following background to his practice.

A long time ago my wife and I used to fly to the Mediterranean, pick up a ferry at the nearest port and embark upon another episode of island hopping. In those post war years there was no need to pre book accommodation as we were always able, with the aid of a friendly taxi driver, to find somewhere to stay for one, two or more nights. Every day was an adventure with lots to see and do, or if we

felt so inclined, do nothing. For me as the artist, there was a never-ending opportunity to capture the magic of the landscape in my sketchbooks while my wife liked to enjoy reading and writing.

She took to the habit of capturing the events and happenings of the day with words in some well worn notebooks. One time she was having a problem describing a particular scene and I inserted a small drawing into the text for illustration. We both liked the combination and agreed on a collaboration for future entries, she the words and I the pictures. This partnership continued for a while until I began to add my own words and eventually, I took over the whole project.

I still possess that original production in a smaller A5 sketches and words by Antoinette. Since then I have produced more than a dozen volumes, every one very precious and conveying impressions and feelings collected over the last thirty years. No amount of video or volumes of photo files can create the same level of interest, or indeed, information. With one exception I am not aware of any other artist in my local societies who approaches the challenges of illustrated travel logs with the same enthusiasm as myself (no doubt publication in *Panorama* will prove me wrong).

To promote this art form I will make available in the next edition of *Panorama* details of my approach and methods used to create such manuals that will stand the test of time and possibly provide a legacy for future generations. I must add that these offerings to *Panorama* are being made from the other side of the world. So, I am unable to add examples of the many entries in volumes past, only from the new one that began its life last year.

These include my experiences in Japan, New Zealand, France and Singapore. Sadly it would seem that the Corona crisis will put paid to plans to visit Amsterdam and the Norwegian fjords. Thankfully, at the time of writing I have just returned from Paris and recorded my trip there in half a dozen pages in my current journal. I am sure that I will find plenty to record in the old country before returning to the new country at the end of the year.



format with my

BRIAN PLEASANTS

CONSTANTINE BRANCUSI & THE POWER OF CONTRAST



The sculptor Constantin Brancusi, was born in the small Romanian farming village of Hobita in 1876. In 1904 at the age of 28, he moved permanently to France and lived and worked there for the remainder of his life, becoming one of the most revered sculptors of the C20th. He established a studio in the Montparnasse district of Paris and although he moved premises a number of times he remained in that artistically and intellectually lively neighbourhood until his death in 1957.

In his will, he bequeathed his studio and all its contents to the French state and eventually, a recreation of the studio was established on the plaza in front of the arts and culture complex, known as the Centre Pompidou in central Paris. Some of us may have visited it on trips to that part of the world

There is a strong tradition of ornate wood carving in regions of Romania and Brancusi would have known of this. Similarities with the carved funerary columns and the lively, rustic style of other carving, can be seen later in his work. He was also apprenticed in his early life, first as a “cooper”, or wooden barrel maker and later as a cabinet maker, so his skills in wood working were well developed. This too, is evidenced in his artistic output.



A
TRADITIONAL
ROMANIAN
ENTRY GATE



A COLLECTION OF ROMANIAN FUNERARY COLUMNS

A unique aspect of many of Brancusi's mature works, is the equal importance given to the pedestal or base on which the work sits. It is not uncommon for pieces of sculpture to be placed on a plinth or pedestal. This may serve to raise the work in height and presence, or to articulate it from the surrounding environment. For Brancusi however, his pedestals and bases, become an integral part of the sculptural concept. They are often elaborate, highly worked and made from an assembly of components. Perhaps their most conspicuous quality however, is one of **contrast** to what we would see as the primary sculptural element. In the best examples, he makes a powerful expressive statement by the bringing together of these contrasting components.

Madame Pogany from 1931, begins with a highly stylised, though elegant portrait carved in white marble. The head is tilted, bowed and enfolded in the upward sweep of her arm. It could have been complete, mounted on the crisp limestone cube immediately beneath it. However, Brancusi has pushed on and added another three elements in oak wood. The increasing rustication of finish as we descend from the elegant marble head, produces a powerful ensemble. The tension between coarse and refined elements, adds much that the head by itself, graceful though it may be, would not have achieved.



MADEMOISELLE POGANY -
1931

Leda, from 1926, lures us in with a stylised bird motif, drawn from the Ancient Greek legend of Leda and the Swan. The bird form is made from polished bronze. It is poised and graceful. However, it is only in combination with the other components, that its full expressive beauty is achieved. Immediately beneath the bird form, is a polished steel disc, broad, but wafer-thin as this material can be. Beneath these is a slender black marble cylinder atop a crucifix form, also carved from black marble. The ensemble is of conspicuously contrasting forms, but brought together with moving elegance.



LEDA - 1926

BIRD 1



BIRD 2.



Many of Brancusi's sculptures were made in multiple versions, utilising different materials. Marble of differing colours, cast and polished bronze and carved timber. I will conclude with a look at two versions of his sculpture entitled 'Bird'.

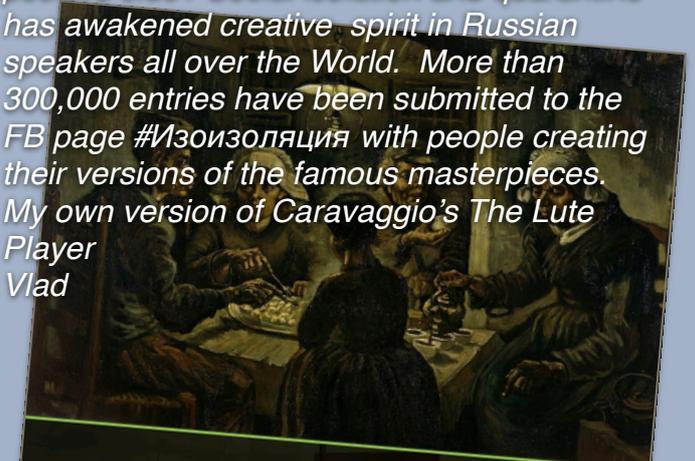
The upper element of each of these examples, the 'Bird' of the title, is made from a precious highly finished material. One is polished bronze, the other polished yellow marble. Beneath each of these, is firstly, a somewhat awkward small trapezoidal column. The bronze version then descends to a pair of wooden elements, the upper one rectilinear and the lower one a further narrower trapezoidal column. The yellow marble 'Bird', has a rough hewn wooden cylindrical form, with a circular disc of limestone above and below it. This latter form is more balanced and stable in appearance. What I would draw attention to however, is the very different expression achieved by each.

The National Gallery in Canberra has two examples of work by Brancusi. However, images of his sculptures are easily found online and I would encourage all to seek them out and enjoy them.

LYNTON DAEHLI

Virus Smiles

Maybe the dreadful Corona virus has a positive side? Social isolation and quarantine has awakened creative spirit in Russian speakers all over the World. More than 300,000 entries have been submitted to the FB page #Изоляция with people creating their versions of the famous masterpieces. My own version of Caravaggio's The Lute Player Vlad



1K comments 308 shares



Мария Шилова 11 hrs · @Изоляция

Диего Веласкес. Венера с зеркалом. 1647. Я безумно люблю эту картину. А все имеющиеся дома модели отказались мне позировать, поэтому пришлось самой. Не судите строго. Я набралась смелости у моих друзей в этой замечательной группе.

Младенца в доме нет, все уже выросли, поэтому роль Амура исполняет "ждун", а роль зеркала - планшет.... See more — with Veronica Shilovskaya.



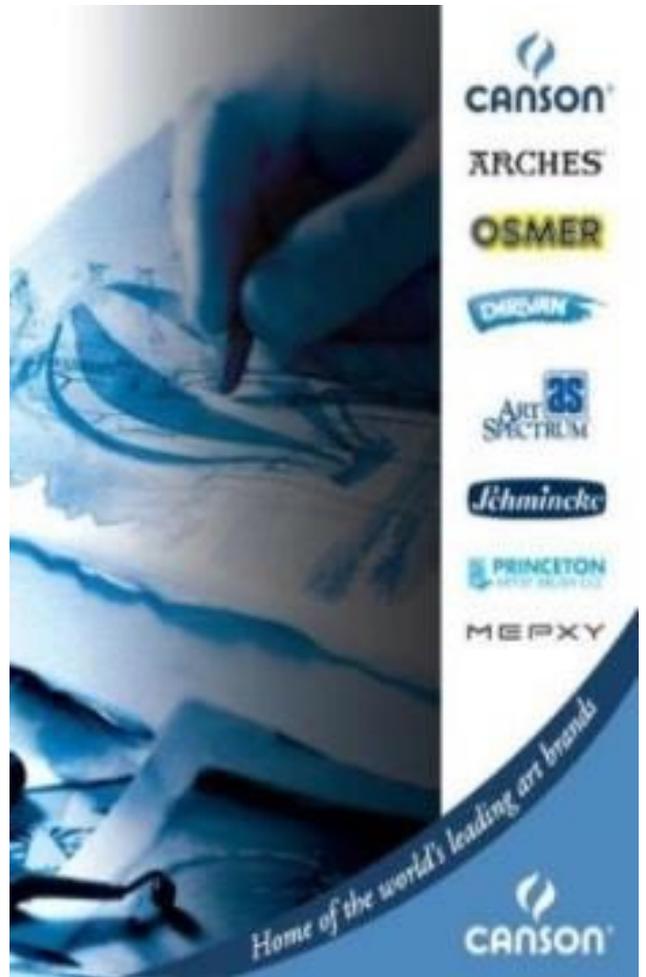


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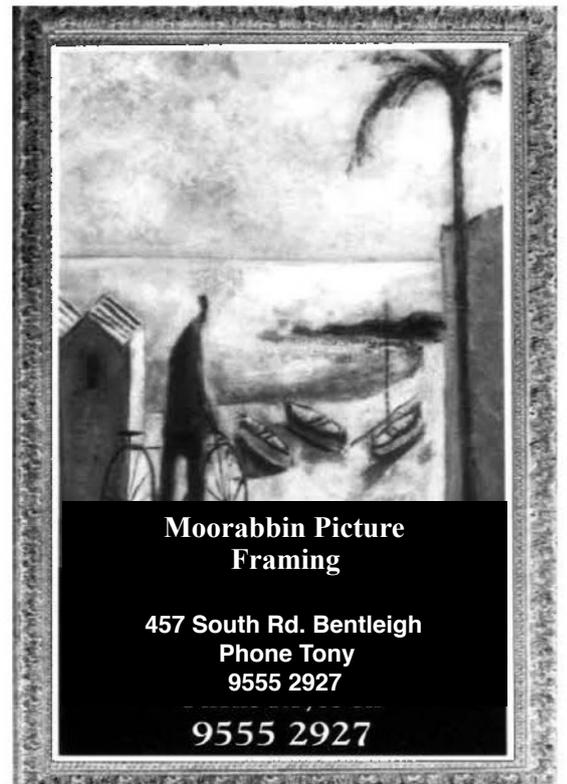
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April
2019 EDITION

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