

Seeing us – artists' biographies

Deb Catesby

Deb paints in oils from her studio on the Herefordshire/Worcestershire borders. She is mainly interested in people and their relationships. The series of portraits of women writers came from being a passionate reader throughout her life. Her background is as a writer of plays and now of poems. She used to teach creative writing and inevitably a literary influence comes into her work. In the portraits of writers, she wanted to find a way of showing something of the particular, quirky nature of the person she was painting. However, the business of paint – colour, shape, space, brush and knife marks are the way storytelling enters a painting. Her ambition is to make the visual elements work with the dramatic ones.

Website: www.debcatesby.co.uk and **Instagram** @deborahcatesby

Erin Conel

Born and raised in California and originally from a science and maths background, Erin has been painting since 2001. She became preoccupied with an archive of discovered family snapshots, fascinating in their strangeness. The whole collection became the focus for feelings about alienation, meaning, remembrance, public and private persona, longing. Erin began combining these 'characters' in scenes borrowed from other parts of her life - horror movies, vintage advertisements, familiar landscapes and paintings. Developing abstracted images from imagination and memory, often focused on women and children. Her goal is to create artwork about humanness that is "a constant source of support and encouragement for our better selves." (Alan Be Botton). Winner of the Regional Prize for the Midlands in the ING Discerning Eye Competition in 2022. **Instagram** @erin.conel

Bill Evans

Bill was inspired to take painting seriously by his art teacher at school, the painter Bruce Killeen, and for the last ten years he has been able to pursue it as a second career. His studio is in Whitbourne, where he has lived and worked all his life. About his work, Bill says, "My paintings are a response to things I see, often elements of the wonderful landscape where I live. I get immersed in issues of form, tone, space and colour, but for me the whole endeavour is given impetus and authenticity by that first response. He will be opening his studio for h.art 2023 from 2nd – 10th Sept.

Website: www.billevanspaintings.co.uk

Tony Hall

Tony has branched into innovative and complimentary areas of work including sculpture and place making at the Sidney Nolan Trust by introducing large scale 3D works into urban and rural settings. He has installed work by other artists including "Faraway Mountain" by Atsuo Akimoto. In 2014 Tony won the Portrait Sculptors prize at the Sladmore Gallery. He is an experienced workshop leader at Sidney Nolan Trust, course co-ordinator and exceptional ceramic artist. Well known as one of the UK's leading big pot throwers, Tony has created a distinctive range from exceptional large scale outdoor pots suitable for the finest country house to straightforward hand thrown tableware such as his distinctive white ware. He exhibits his work in galleries in England and Wales. Based at Castle Hills Farm, Knucklas, Powys, Wales LD7 1PS **Instagram** @tonyhallpotter

Rae Harrison

Following early retirement in 1992, Rae studied Fine Art and Art History at Ludlow College and then for an HNC at Hereford College of Art and Design. Perhaps stemming back to working in London in the late 50's, she has been intrigued by abstraction, enjoying its freedom and ambiguity. Mostly she works in a semi-abstract way often using mixed-media and collage, with an emphasis on composition. In 2004 she founded Abstract Edge, a group of like-minded artists who meet monthly to review work in progress. The linocuts in this exhibition depict a portrait of a Vietnamese woman refugee: historic in some senses but sadly still having relevance today. She has shown her work locally on the Welsh Borders and in Birmingham, London, Newtown and Telford. **Instagram @abstractedge.art**

Nick Holmes

With a background in Fine Art, Film Studies and teaching, Nick's work deals with ideas of identity and gender, memory and genre. Paintings combine art, historical references from film, popular culture and the classroom in works with various styles as a reflection of contemporary art's state of flux. His paintings and collages are underpinned by a sensitivity to a variety of cultural positions. His use of text raises questions of interpretation – clues are presented, but often add to the difficulty of reading the work. Possible meanings are playfully subverted, through a combination of homage, irreverence and humour.

Website: www.nickholmesart.co.uk and Instagram: @nickholmes1944

Andrew Kneen (1931 – 2021)

Andrew won a Scholarship and trained as a painter at the Slade School of Art, London. He was Director of Art at the Kings School, Worcester. His work is very varied in subject, showing his interests and personal ideas. He painted many Self Portraits during his life, usually in oil paint, showing different styles and moods. This one, done while we were all in "Lockdown," reflects a moment in World History.

Nathanael Lamp

Nathanael paints images that conjure up a personal sense of familiarity, in an effort to connect himself to a former life. In his research, he utilises found references from the internet or other publications as well as snapshots from movies, film stills; anything that might jog a memory or stir some nostalgic emotion. He then tries to incorporate the references into an interesting composition. For him, the goal is to create something honest, without being too literal or cliché. He is interested in the idea of archetypes and how they relate to identity and may affect the narrative of an image. Colour also plays a large part in his artistic process. He feels the subjective nature of colour can be a very powerful element, not only in expression, but also in the recollection of past experiences.

Website: www.nathanaellamp.com and Instagram @lamp_nate

Veronika Lavey

Veronika Lavey is an artist specialising in conceptual self-portraiture. She is recognised for her dark, thought-provoking work, which is exhibited and publicised to fulfil her mission of illuminating shared emotional experiences, strength and resilience. Born in Hungary, Veronika grew up in Los Angeles and Auckland, New Zealand before settling in the United Kingdom. She is now based in Herefordshire with her husband and two children.

Website: www.veronikalavey.com and Instagram @veronikalavey

Alfred Bryant Mann D.A.(Edin)

Edinburgh College of Art (1970 – 74) and postgraduate at Moray House College. He lived and worked in Greece from 1990 until 2005, exhibiting and running gallery/ workshop venues, alongside his family business as restaurateurs. He opened Bromyard Art Studios in 2010 running his studios, community gallery and gift shop. His teaching studio is where you will find him mentoring a group of artists at many different stages along their individual artistic journeys. He also tutors a small group of young people, many of whom have gone on to art college and university whilst others have benefitted from the therapeutic value of participating in the arts. His own work draws on many genres and seeks that deep personal relationship between the known and the unrealised world.

Facebook: Alfred Bryant Mann - Artist

Robert Neil

Working from his studio in Worcestershire, Robert is a largely self-taught artist whose work is focused on portraiture and figurative painting. He produces thoughtful, painterly images and strongly believes that portrait painting still has an important role in the digital age. Robert's Portrait 'Jeweller' was selected for the 2014 BP Portrait Award at the National Portrait Gallery. He has exhibited widely in the UK, including Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Royal West of England Academy and the Royal Society of Portrait Painters. He was elected member of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists ([RBSA](#)) in 2010 and became President from 2012 - 2018.

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Colin Simmonds

Colin attended the Moseley School of Art and Birmingham College of Art, where he received a thorough training in the Fine Arts. Figure drawing at the College was held three days a week with optional evening classes which students were encouraged to attend. The figures in the 'The Walkers' painting are friends that Colin knew up to forty years ago and who still meet most Fridays at various Pubs in Kidderminster and Stourport. This has helped to make sketches and observe the relationships between one another. Many single portraits have also been done of friends and relatives. Colin's Portrait work has been exhibited at the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, The Royal West of England Academy and the RBSA Birmingham.

Website: www.colinsimmonds.info