

The background is a complex collage. It features a grid of horizontal and vertical sticks, possibly driftwood, which are held together by a white plastic mesh. Behind this grid, various pieces of paper and fabric are pinned or layered, each containing handwritten text in different colors (black, blue, green, pink, orange). Some of the visible text includes: "I want to see you see", "vie que la vie", "que la vie soit", "supre la ver", "UR", "ni M A", "YSTERI", "CE QU", "son char", "Rejou", "but", "ou fait quelque chose", "rien qu' en passant", "dans la vie des", "the only cure for", "love is to love", "HOPE", "please and thank y", "a me", "ette dur".

BULB

MAGAZINE

SPRING 2025 ISSUE # 14

ART, CULTURE, SCIENCE & MORE ...

FREE

WELCOME to BULB Magazine # 14. We continue to feature new and original writing and artwork with local, national and international interest. We would like to thank all our contributors for their support.

Cathy Bell (editor)

Contact us at – mylastboard@outlook.com View all issues of **BULB Magazine** at www.mylastboard.com



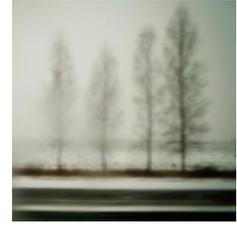
Page 8



page 12



page 17



page 21

FEATURES

3. Schrodinger's Cat – Is seeing believing? Asks Gordon Weir
4. Learning to Fly! Graham Clark on the ups and downs of conquering the air
7. Crossword
8. Charles Rennie Mackintosh Association in Roussillon Anniversary (2004 – 2024)
9. Mary Sommerville – Scottish mathematician and astronomer 1780 to 1872
10. Four Years On – Cathy Bell & Matis Leggiadro in discussion

GALLERY

13. Klaudia Sloniowska – Artwork inspired by the artist's dedication to martial arts
15. Cubism – Robert McCubbin looks at the difference between Braque and Picasso

FICTION

16. The Old Bank – A cautionary tale
17. Book Review: Birdsong by Sebastian Faulks
19. Two Nonsense Poems in the style of Jabberwocky by Robert McCubbin

TRIBUTE

20. Remembering Ann

SPECIAL FEATURE

21. Ukraine – A land still at war but hoping for peace

Cover Design by Cathy Bell

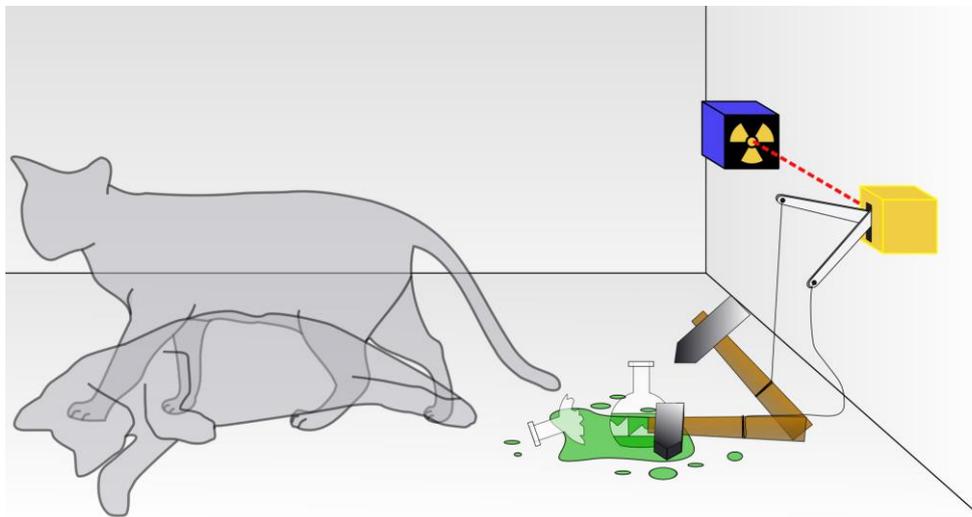
SCHRODINGER'S CAT

"Have you heard of Schrodinger's cat?"

"I've heard about nothing else," replied Penny.

The story of Schrodinger's cat was used in an episode of The Big Bang Theory to illustrate that unless you go ahead and do something, then there will forever exist a collection of possibilities regarding what might have been.

So, what exactly is the tale Schrodinger's cat about and what is its point?



The idea is of a cat in a sealed box alongside a file of poison, some radioactive material, and a device (a Geiger counter) which can detect when or if an atomic decay takes place. Should an atom decay, the file is broken and the cat dies. On the other hand, if there is no decay then the cat is alive and well when released from the box. Since there is no way to predict if a decay has taken place because of its random nature, then prior to opening the box there is no way to know the state of the cat – only when we open the box does the state of the cat become real and the other possibility collapses. In a sense the cat, before the box is opened, is in what's known as a superposition state, a state where it exists simultaneously in all possible states; here both alive and dead at the same time.

Schrodinger used this example, of something in the macroscopic world, to illustrate his own, and Einstein's, discontent at a collection of principles that purported to describe certain aspects of the quantum world. Both believed that the theory, proposed in part by the Dane, Neils Bohr, called the Copenhagen Interpretation, was incomplete. In fact, Einstein and Bohr would argue about it right up until Einstein's death in 1955.

The Copenhagen Interpretation states:

1. The quantum world is indeterministic, instead properties exist as probabilities, for example, for the cat, the probability that it is alive when the box is opened is 50%.
2. That certain properties of a quantum system cannot be measured or observed at the same time. This, known as the complementarity principle, includes properties such as momentum and position.
3. Something is only real at the point it is measured or observed.

Einstein had a problem with the entire proposal and tried on numerous occasions to come up with examples of when two complementary properties could be measured at the same time but Bohr always had an answer and the Copenhagen Interpretation remained intact. Schrodinger, who had recently completed his famous wave equation, argued that it violated his equation since it meant that wave functions collapsed (a wave function is a mathematical description of a quantum system and includes properties such as momentum, time, spin, and position). As an example, imagine a single electron passing through one of two slits. Until you place an electron-detector at each slit, thereby determining which slit the electron went through, there exists a separate wave function for each possible outcome- i.e. electron left slit and electron right slit. If the detector detects the electron passing through the left slit,

then, according to the Copenhagen principle, the possibility of it going through the right slit is no longer possible and the wave function pertaining to the electron passing through the right slit collapses. This, argued Schrodinger, should not happen – wave functions don't collapse.

At this point, Schrodinger didn't try to say where the wave functions went if they didn't collapse although it is possible that something like the Many Worlds theory may have crossed his mind. Someone who did think this was the case was American Hugh Everett. Everett's 'Many Worlds' theory, of 1957, basically states, that with every decision another World or Universe comes into existence. Such Worlds run parallel to our own but do not interact. This means that when we open the box and the cat is dead not all is lost. Instead, another World has been created where the cat is alive and well. So, with every decision, every choice, including the possible position of a particle such as an electron, more and more worlds are produced. What this means for the Copenhagen Interpretation is that there are no probabilities, instead everything possible happens. All we can say is this is what happened in our own World. This was Everett's solution to why, according to Schrodinger's Wave Equation, wave functions do not collapse – instead they appear somewhere else. Alas, Everett would eventually abandon his idea, stating that it carried too much, "metaphysical baggage."

Fortunately, watching one of the few lectures Everett gave on his idea was David Deutch. Deutch, a pioneer of quantum computing, liked the idea, even if it meant an electron going down one path rather than another would result in another universe – the number of parallel worlds and universes becoming almost infinite. Deutch used the example of an intelligent quantum computer.

A quantum computer uses quantum bits (qbits) to process data rather than bits used in today's devices. Here is the difference:

- qbits can exist in a superposition state – that is a qbit can be 0 and 1 at the same time – e.g. an electron with spin up and spin down at the same time. This means that three qbits can store and process 000, 001, 010, 011, 100, 101, 110, 111 all at the same time.
- a computer using bits needs eight separate locations to store the same data and will be a lot slower. Each bit is either 1 or 0.

Deutch claimed that, each superposition state was essentially another world. He concluded, by asking, "Does anyone else had a better idea as to what is going on."

And so, the Many Worlds or Multiverse theory became the starting point for explaining what may be happening in the quantum world (to this day nobody really knows) and it all started with a story about a cat. **G.W.**

IF A PICTURE PAINTS A THOUSAND WORDS – LEARNING TO FLY!



Working in Oman in a teaching role always provided some interesting opportunities. I would teach Omani Pilots engineering aspects of the aircraft they flew and in return, I would receive flying lesson: a chance of a life time.

When I called home and told my family my exciting news, my mother was very anxious but my father was excited and wished it was him. Glad I never mentioned the parachute and the ejection seat.

After thousands of flying hours as a passenger I could not wait to get in the air and be in control.

My First Flight was in a Bravo aircraft with an ex-RAF pilot, Tam Syme. An experienced pilot with a 20-year career in the RAF, 20-year Crop spraying in America and now an instructor here at the Air Academy in Oman.

He had the patience of a saint and much to my delight he always loved to perform aerobatics every time he flew!!! (didn't tell my family about that one either)

My very first flight (Right picture), wearing the mandatory Ray ban Wayfarers, hair swept back, smile for the camera and ready to go.

Flight checks complete and now I need to contact Masirah Ground Control to request clearance to taxi.



Pilot (That's me 🕶️): Masirah Ground, Bravo 812Alpha, Apron 1 , VFR, 4,500 request clearance to depart

Masirah Ground: Bravo 812Alpha Masirah Ground, taxi Runway 25.

Pilot: Taxi Runway 25, Bravo 812Alpha

We taxied to the end of the runway 25 and next call to Air Traffic tower to request clearance for take-off

Pilot: Masirah Tower, Bravo 812Alpha, Runway 25, ready for take-off.

Tower: Bravo 812Alpha, Runway 25, cleared for take-off.

Pilot: Cleared for take-off Runway 25, Bravo 812Alpha

We were Now cleared for take-off and Tam was in control, he revved the engine then released the brake and off we went gathering speed as we hurtled down the runway.

At take-off speed he pulled the stick back, we were off the ground, undercarriage was retracted and I could not hide my excitement.

"Now Graham," says Tam, "We are now at 4500 feet you will have control of the aircraft only when I tell you but first, Lesson 1.

- push the stick forward - you go down;
- pull the stick back - you go up;
- move the stick to the left - you move to the left;
- move the stick to the right - you move to the right

Any questions so far "yes where is the stick again !!" Only joking. Roger that , 10 - 4 rubber glove , or was that duck?

Now Lesson 2, most important

- When looking out the window, if you see the colour brown (sand) below and the colour blue (Sky) above, then you are the right way up.
- "See that house down there?", "Yes", "when it gets larger you are going down, when it gets smaller you are going up, got it?" "yes" At that point he just took his hands off the stick sat back and said "You have control."

My hands were on the flying stick, the sweat was pouring down my brow, my heart rate increased and the aircraft started shuddering so he told me to stop shaking and calm down and the shuddering would go away, gosh he is good and he was right.

We had plenty of time to try several manoeuvres and I flew the aircraft for about 1 ½ hours and by the end of it he told me I was good. It did not take long to get the hang of it, suppose being an aircraft engineer helped a lot of the understanding but the reality was, it felt like driving a car at 4500 feet.

Before returning to the airfield Tam decided he wanted to do some aerobatics, wow better than any roller coaster I can tell you. When he finished having his fun, he asked me to fly back to the airfield where he would take control and land the aircraft. On reaching the runway glide path he just said, out of the blue, “you can land it.”

The aircraft started to shudder again !!, but he was going to talk me down. “left a bit”, “down a bit” “right a bit”, for a moment I thought I was on the golden shot (for those of you who remember that)

We were now on the decent flight path and the runway was dead ahead he turned to me and said “Isn’t it time you dangled the Dunlops” I think he meant I needed to put the wheels down. So down they went. As we descended it became nerve racking, the ground was fast approaching, 500 feet, 400 feet 300 feet 200 feet 100 feet - bang - 0 feet touch down then 100 ft, and we are off again, 50 feet, 10 feet 0 feet, down and up again 50 feet 0 feet 0 feet, stayed down this time.

“What did you think” I said “It felt like I was on a space hopper”, Tam preferred the third landing!!!

Taxying back to the Apron I knew I had the bug.

I flew with Tam for a further 20 hours and then allowed my first solo flight and 40 flying hours later completed the course.

Afterwards, I flew the BAC Strikemaster single jet engine aircraft and was able to fly at a higher altitude of 30,000 feet .

Flying always reminded me of life and how it doesn’t matter how high you climb, you have to come back down to earth and sometimes with a bang

No Matter how high



As we fly into the realms of fantasy 30,000 feet up, like the bird on the wing, on a prayer and a song and with a freedom surpassed. When climbing, one never wants to come back to earth, but we do, and sometimes with a bang.

Masirah - September 1990

Flying Information

Apron – (or park areas) Surfaces on the ground dedicated to parking of aircraft for short or long terms and where embarkation, disembarkation or cargo load can occur

Masirah Ground - Masirah airfield ground control. Controls aircraft movement on the ground. Masirah is an island off the east coast of Oman in the Arabian Sea which is a region of sea in the Northern Indian Ocean.

Masirah Tower – Masirah air traffic control tower. Controls take off and landings and air space around the air field.

VFR – Visual Flight Rules. Regulations where pilot operates an aircraft in conditions where the pilot can see where the aircraft is going. Hence the reason you have to let air traffic control know your maximum altitude

Dangle the Dunlops – To lower the landing gear of an aircraft in preparation for landing.

Nato Phonetic Alphabet

A	Alpha	G	Golf	M	Mike	S	Sierra	Y	Yankee
B	Bravo	H	Hotel	N	November	T	Tango	Z	Zulu
C	Charlie	I	India	O	Oscar	U	Uniform		
D	Delta	J	Juliett	P	Papa	V	Victor		
E	Echo	K	Kilo	Q	Quebec	W	Whisky		
F	Foxtrot	L	Lima	R	Romeo	X	Xray		

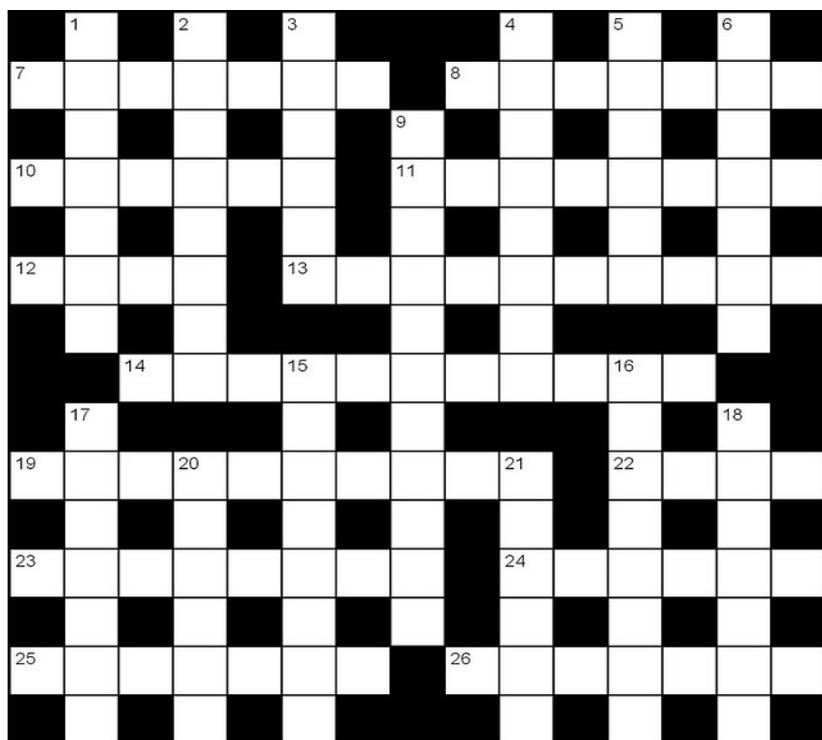
Bravo 812Alpha – Aircraft Type (Bravo) and Serial number (812A)

BAC - British Aerospace Corporation

BAC167 Strikemaster - Single jet engine light attack and training aircraft

FFA AS.202-18A Bravo – Civil light aircraft designed and manufactured by the Swiss company Flug – Und Fahrzeugwerke Altenrhein (FFA) **G.C.**

CROSSWORD (Solutions on page 12)



Clues across:

- 7. Get better or give new life to sofa (7)
- 8. Coalesced? (7)
- 10. Informed of danger (6)
- 11. Not required (8)
- 12. Very small technology (4)
- 13. Natural disaster (10)
- 14. Highlight of Louis Armstrong’s performance (7,4)
- 19. Black and white bear about to get bigger? (10)
- 22. Animal _____ (Orwell’s tale) (4)
- 23. Elated (8)
- 24. Braque and Picasso pioneered this.. (6)
- 25. (song) “*Too few to mention*” (7)
- 26. Branch of mathematics relating to real life problems (7)

Clues down:

- 1..Bank job driver (7)
- 2. Heavy rain (8)
- 3. Western France region (6)
- 4. Performs calculations on data (8)
- 5. Office or department (6)
- 6. Covers or decorates (7)
- 9. Professional thrower (sport) (11)
- 15. Holder of unextreme views (8)
- 16. Buoyancy aid (8)
- 17. Ways to lessen blame (7)
- 18. Gain or get rich (7)
- 20. Stick to (6)
- 21. Find a way out (6)

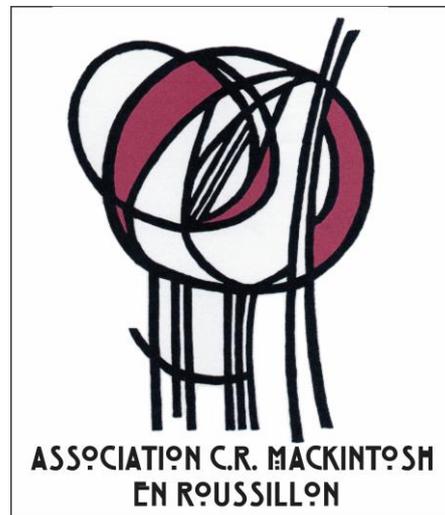
CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH ASSOCIATION IN ROUSSILLON (2004 – 2024)

Not all Mackintosh events take place in Glasgow! The association “Charles Rennie Mackintosh en Roussillon” aims at promoting the life and work of the Mackintosh couple in the Pyrénées Orientales. In 2023, we celebrated the arrival of Charles and Margaret by a whole week of events throughout our region¹. In 2024, our association marked its 20th anniversary with another eventful week.

The association was officially founded in February 2004 by a group of Scots, with Robin Crichton as chair, Ian Scott as vice chair² and Margaret Hogan as secretary. This coincided with the celebration of the 100th anniversary of “the Entente Cordiale”. Since then, the association has had its ups and downs but recently the number of members has been rising steadily thanks to the energy of a small group of volunteers.

To celebrate this anniversary, it was an obvious choice to organise an exhibition in tribute to Ian Scott, one of the founders of our association and a talented pastelist who died in 2013. His works now decorate the homes of many residents of Port-Vendres and the surrounding area with some in and around Glasgow too. The pastels were kindly lent to the association by a number of local owners and fans of Mackintosh. The opening of the exhibition was much appreciated with around eighty visitors attending in the welcoming atmosphere of the new media library of Port-Vendres.

For its 20th anniversary the board had also decided to focus on C. R. Mackintosh as a designer, an aspect of our artist's talent that remains under-exploited for lack of space in our Port-Vendres centre. Peter Trowles, our undisputed expert on Mackintosh design and furniture came specially from Glasgow to talk about “C. R. Mackintosh: modern design for modern times” whilst a cinema specialist, Catherine Blin, delivered the outcome of her own research about Mackintosh design in films. Both venues attracted a numerous and captivated audience.



The above were only the highlights of the 20th anniversary celebration. Other events took place throughout the year: a conference and guided tour of Gerona focusing on Rafael Maso, a Catalan architect whose work reveals Mackintosh’s influence, Clara Silber’s presentation of “Margaret Macdonald: reflections” in the prestigious setting of the “Fort Maillert”, a public reading around “The Chronycle” and a conference about Rudolph Ihlee, Mackintosh’s artist friend.

So much talent and dedication brought about an undisputed success and attracted a wide audience for the second year running. For 2025, the association's major project is to decorate the centre of Port-Vendres with a Mackintosh-inspired stained-glass window created by a Céret-based master stained-glass artist. An online subscription has raised a third of the budget.

Having presented her “MMM: reflections” during the Society’s weekend in June, Clara Silber returned from Glasgow with the burning wish that another MMM exhibition should be proposed 42 years after the last one organised by Pamela Robertson. Aware that it would be extremely difficult to fulfil such a wish in Glasgow, Clara has chosen an easier course and has created a masterly exhibition of good copies of Margaret’s work for our Centre in Port-Vendres! It will stay in place throughout 2025. **S.P.**

Sylvie Plas is the Secretary of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Association in Roussillon.

¹ CRM Society journal issue 107, April 2024 – The Mackintoshes’ years in the Roussillon, France: a celebration

² CRM Society Journal, issue 105/106, May 2023 – Charles Rennie Mackintosh and France: then and now

MARY SOMMERVILLE – MATHEMATICIAN AND ASTRONOMER

In a past copy of this magazine (see website, BULB #5), I wrote about how many people in Scotland had not heard of James Clerk Maxwell, despite being ranked alongside Einstein and Newton in terms of his contribution to science and our understanding of the physics crucial to much of today's technology. Someone else who is not widely known, is Mary Somerville (below).



Mary Fairfax was born in the town of Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders in 1780. The family soon moved to Burntisland, Fife, where her mother began young Mary's education: teaching her to read (from the Bible) but not to write. Life was hard in Fife at this time and the family struggled to make ends meet on Mary's father's meagre Royal Navy pension (despite that he had been a Vice-Admiral), however, her mother was a resourceful woman, growing vegetables and even buying a cow to give the family fresh milk.

When Mary was a teenager, a well-off uncle offered to pay for Mary to attend a boarding school in Musselburgh, near Edinburgh. This opportunity gave Mary her first chance to learn arithmetic. It was also at this time that, because of her uncle being a keen amateur astronomer, she began to learn about astronomy; the branch of science for which she is best known today. Since, her time in Musselburgh also meant Mary could now read, she was able to make good use of her father's library in Fife and to fully commit to learning as much as she could, Mary even managed to teach herself some basic Latin and Greek. Her brother also helped by obtaining books on algebra and geometry from his teacher, including Euclid's Geometry, which he would then pass on to Mary. Mary's thirst for knowledge meant that by her early twenties she had extensive knowledge of many subjects, including: geography, botany, mathematics and of course astronomy.

It should be said that Mary's wider family do not appear to be as poor as her mother and father, thus enabling Mary to attend society events in Edinburgh. It is also clear, that as a girl and then as a young woman, many members of her family, including her mother, were against Mary's learning, preferring instead for her to learn skills such as sewing, dancing, and housekeeping. Mary's mother even confiscated candles her daughter used to read by.

In 1804, at the age of twenty-four she married Samuel Greig with whom she had two children. Greig did not believe in education for women and did little to encourage Mary. He died three years after their marriage in 1807. In 1812, Mary married Dr. William Somerville and this time she did have the support and encouragement she needed to progress both as an emerging academic and teacher; both of which she continued to excel at despite having another four children with Somerville. It was also around this time, whilst living in London, that she had one notable student who would go onto be known as the first computer programmer – Ada Lovelace (right).



In the meantime, Mary was accumulating a significant list of scientific publications to her name and was beginning to build a reputation as both scientist and polymath; even being invited by Charles Babbage to view his calculating machine. One such piece of work that Mary worked upon in London, was a translation of Newton's 'Principia Mathematica,' including expanding some sections and explaining how the mathematics used to predict planetary motion worked. This, showed a particular characteristic of Mary: that science should be for everyone. Perhaps, only a woman at this time, would have held this view.

Despite everything Mary had achieved, and now in her forties, as a woman, she still faced many barriers. The Royal Society was a male only institution and held copies of papers for its members on the most recent publications in the sciences. None of these would have been available for Mary but for her husband, William, who would borrow them and then pass them onto his wife. Mary also made good use of the popularity astronomy had gained among the middle classes and aristocracy by borrowing or being given access to their very expensive modern telescopes; no doubt in exchange for tutoring or giving talks about astronomy and mathematics at societal functions.

In 1836 Mary published a book called *The Connection of the Physical Science*. The book, aimed as much at women as men, contained information about recent scientific discoveries and had the intention of bringing an interest in science to the public - today it would have been found in bookshops under 'Popular Science.' And it was in this book that Mary introduced the question as to why the orbit of Uranus wasn't quite as it should be. Mary's conclusion was that there was possibly another, yet, undiscovered planet affecting its orbit; a theory that was taken on by other astronomers, resulting in the discovery of Neptune.

Mary and William visited Italy many times and witnessed the eruption of Vesuvius during one visit to Naples. Mary never stopped learning, even tackling new forms of mathematics when in her nineties. Mary died on her final trip to Naples in 1872. **G.W.**

FOUR YEARS ON

In 2021, in the first edition of BULB Magazine, Cathy Bell and French Art History student Matis Leggiadro (pictured right) discussed various issues with relation to their common interest in democracy in art. Since then, Matis has moved on with his education and now studies at L'École Du Louvre in Paris. In the following conversation, they catch up about how their opinions have changed, or perhaps not, in the intervening years.



C.B. You are still studying the History of Art - now at l' Ecole du Louvre in Paris. How is it going? Is it inspiring living in Paris?

M.L. Since our first conversations, I have been deeply attached to the history of art (in France, the plural *histoire des arts* is embraced, and I love that), as one clings to something self-evident. I earned a specialized baccalaureate in the History of Art, then left my hometown, Albi, in southern France, to join an *hypokhâgne* preparatory class at the prestigious Lycée du Parc, in Lyon. There, I was profoundly influenced by the teaching of Christophe Henry, whose intuitive insight and sensitivity—shaped by hours of contemplation, study, analogies, and writing—left a lasting impression on me. Today, I have the immense privilege of having passed the entrance exam to the École du Louvre and becoming a student at the greatest museum in the world. It is called the “school of vision,” and that is no exaggeration! As students, we have the rare opportunity to spend hours in front of artworks from all eras and geographic origins. Our professors are passionate, exacting, precise, and engaging specialists in their fields. I have come to realize that the History of Art is, above all, a passion for forms: those that tell a story, whether of a vanished world or a universal one, still vibrantly alive within us. At the École du Louvre, I specialize in drawing, more specifically in 17th-century Italian drawing. More broadly, Paris is my school. There is always something to experience, to feel, to observe. This city is a haven for poets and lovers of form and harmony. And here, I am surrounded by my friends: those who live nearby and those who come to visit me. Finally, all my artist friends shimmer in my thoughts, teaching me about art as much as, if not more than, my professors.

C.B. In 2021 in your first interview with BULB we discussed your website HISTAL M. Since then it has grown and matured with many interesting articles included. However, you are about to close the website down, can you tell me why you have decided to do this.? Do you feel that it has served its purpose?

M.L. Yes, this is a bittersweet step. Sweet, because I need to move forward. Writing and sharing texts online for free is a beautiful project born of passion, but it is not sustainable considering the time and energy I devote to writing. If I continue to offer my words without any form of guarantee, I risk stalling in my journey toward recognition as a critic, and that is not something I am willing to accept. I am no longer the same age—I need to make a living. This decision is also bitter because HISTAL M is my foundational project, the one upon which I built everything, with the legitimacy of my creation. And everything was free, open access, as free as the air we breathe. I will do everything possible to have my work published and ensure that my readers can continue accessing it. As for the videos on YouTube, I will keep them available, perhaps revisiting them in the near future. In short, I am not abandoning anything, but HISTAL M will no longer frame my projects. My name will suffice.

C.B. When we last discussed our mutual vision of a democratic arts and cultural environment, has your opinion changed in any way? Do you think that this is still possible?

M.L. Exactly. I have moved past it, for three reasons. First, because no matter what one does, striving to unite people around the democratic power of culture inevitably creates a group—a small community—that is elitist, if only in its shared knowledge of how to access culture for everyone. Second, because spending hours working with such an ambition for sharing leaves me waiting for the crumbs the world might offer me; it's exhausting. Finally, because my own knowledge of the arts and experience in artistic circles have distanced me from my initial goal of outreach. I want to be and to act in a way that feels aligned with myself, not out of step.

C.B. We also talked about collaboration between people on artistic projects which you thought was an necessity or at least desirable. Do you still have this view? Are you collaborating in any way with others now?

M.L. Absolutely. I am more convinced than ever by the art of collaboration, which is the foremost democratic approach. To create unity in the face of adversity and build a stable political world, one must first succeed in forming a duo, a trio, or a quartet that strikes the right chord. This is no easy feat, but it is what motivates me most: the other. None of the projects I undertake are done alone. Encounters, which are dear to me, always weave their way into the individuality of my ideas. In fact, I am curating a major exhibition in Paris, near the Louvre, that will bring together more than ten artists, highlighting the powerful connections that unite and divide the other and the self, as well as the other within oneself.

C.B. How do you find the situation in France now four years later? When we first discussed this in 2021 you thought that some provincial French museums were too exclusive with not much guidance for the viewer. Do you think this has improved or is it still the same?

M.L. I have seen significant improvements, and it's truly uplifting! What is now lacking is a standardization of budgets across institutions and cities. I find it appalling that the same artists are repeatedly showcased in the same venues for exorbitant sums, while profoundly moving artists struggle to make ends meet and seek exhibition opportunities in vain.

C.B. Four years ago we were united in the idea that we can, as individuals, change the prevailing cultural environment for the better, to be more democratic, for example. We both put effort into this, possibly idealistic, venture and I think it's fair to say we have both had some success. However, I have to

report that, where I live, nothing has changed, in fact it has become worse. Do you think my reluctance to continue here is justified?

M.L. Without an ideal, I don't know how we could find the strength to get up in the morning. And we must admit it to ourselves: working tirelessly to enable others to achieve something is, above all, a way to save ourselves from the abyss. But yes, we have the purpose of an action carried out with consciousness, precision, and ethics. And I also believe we have achieved some wonderful successes! However, if the situation in your area remains the same or worsens with time, then Schopenhauer's prophecy holds true: Eadem, sed aliter (the same things, but in a different way). The conviction we bring to defy this curse, the depth we choose to find in joy and in living better—this defines us. And that, in itself, is already significant. But even here, my remark seems wise yet not entirely inclusive. What can I say... I still believe in the synesthetic function of art and its power to move a human being. I believe we must keep working tirelessly to refute the detractors of sensibility, those who claim that art is the preserve of an elite, while recognizing that it indeed is. It's difficult to chase an ideal while simultaneously grappling with the impact of reality.

C.B. What would you say to people of your age in Scotland now? In our last interview you gave some good advice. Do you have any new advice that has helped you during the last four years?

M.L. I would like to tell them to follow the path of sensitivity, not that of violence. To avoid falling into a Manichean view. To go beyond video games and online aids to thinking and doing. But, as I felt four years ago, and even more so today, I want to tell them that believing in their ideas as much as in their dreams is the only valid religion: themselves in the world. And, if possible, to think of others, every minute.

C.B. Finally, a fun question. Who is your favourite artist at the moment (if you have one)?

M.L. My favourite artist at the moment is my friend Joël Person. In the fragility of his drawing, he seems to dance with the wind of emotions. He offers gusts of lightness to the world. Thanks to him for existing.



*Vertical Series
Confinement_25x49.7 black stone on paper 2013-2020
Joël Person*

Crossword Solutions:

Clues across: 7. Recover 8. Grouped 10. Warned 11. Unneeded 12. Nano 13. Earthquake 14. Trumpet solo 19. Expandable 22. Farm 23. Euphoric 24. Cubism 25. Regrets 26. Applied

Clues down: 1. Getaway 2. Downpour 3. Vendee 4. Crunches 5. Bureau 6. Bedecks 9. Quarterback 15. Moderate 16. Lifebelt 17. Excuses 18. Prosper 20. Adhere 21. Escape

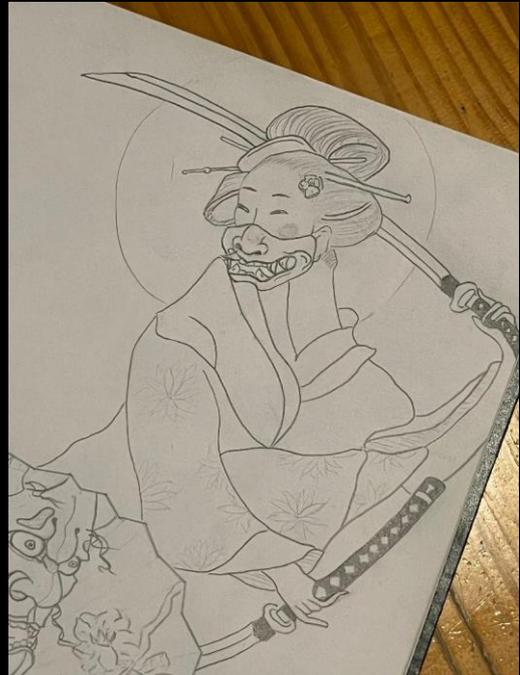
Klaudia Sloniowska

My passion for both painting and combat sports is a journey toward balance and inner peace. Martial Arts discipline and fluidity keep my body and mind strong, while painting allows me to express the same harmony. Both practices nurture me, grounding me in the present moment.

In my paintings, the eagle reflects both my Polish heritage and my love for wildlife. Known for its strength and freedom, the eagle embodies the untamed spirit I deeply admire.



A deep fascination with Asian culture has always influenced my work, especially the powerful imagery of Chinese dragons. These dragons symbolize strength, wisdom, and protection—values I embody in my combat sports and art. I'm also drawn to Japanese theatre masks, like Hannya, which represent the raw, intense emotion of a woman's anger. Their haunting beauty speaks to the complexity of human nature. Through these passions, I explore and express the quiet strength, focus, and emotion that shape my journey. **Klaudia.**



CUBISM – GEORGES BRAQUE & PABLO PICASSO

Compare and Contrast Picasso's "Seated Nude" (1910) with Braque's "Woman Reading" (1911)

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) Spanish artist and Georges Braque (1882-1963) French artist were the co-founders of Cubism circa 1908 in France. It was their combined quest for a new means of expression coupled with experiences of Cezannesque techniques that led directly to this decisive moment for art.

From Picasso's seminal work: *Le Demoiselles d' Avignon* (1907) and Braque's *Large Nude* (1907-08) flowed the rapid and relentless development of this 'new' style.

Picasso completed the 'figure painting': *Seated Nude* (c.1910) and Braque his: *Woman Reading in* (1911). Both paintings belong to the period known as Analytical Cubism. Yet each to a different development within the overall period. On the one hand, Picasso's piece belongs to early Analytical Cubism: while on the other, Braque's belongs to 'High' Analytical Cubism, known as Hermetic.



Seated Nude(1910 - Picasso

The *Seated Nude* has all the attributes of 'Classical' Cubism and Cezannesque influence. Its rigidly structured geometrical composition and treatment of light and dark (chiaroscuro) mark it in stark contrast to flattened and splayed pictorial plane of Braque's work.

Nevertheless, each has, as a compositional device, an essentially pyramidal structure. In the former the instance of faceting (developed from Cezanne) is not as extreme as in the latter.



Woman Reading (1911) - Braque

However, Picasso's figure is easily recognisable within Cubist space. Whereas Braque's, 'has all but gone', immersed within the extreme faceting and interpenetrating planes of its period. The composition painted frontally (horizontally) to the canvas and replete with black structuring lines, all creating cubist flattened space.

In contrast, the *Seated Nude* retains a monumental, almost sculptural content. Its volumetric content countered by use of faceting for both foreground and background planes in similar muted tones of colour. Rather than severe fragmentation, Picasso has essentially modelled the figure by way of following the planes of the figure and representing them as geometrical shapes.

Braque, on the other hand, has rendered his image by way of increased faceting, brightness of colour, less reliance on chiaroscuro and a multiplicity of viewpoints. The figure contained within being difficult to read in comparison to Picasso's piece, which retains its spatial integrity.

Indeed, Braque has merged the image and at the same time rearranged the constituent parts to form another construct and thus iconography. Certainly, he has deconstructed the image and built fore, mid and background into on picture plane. That being said, the sense of space remains profound.

In comparison to Braque's 'shattered' image, Picasso's earlier work sits sentinel within its unified and hard-edged geometrical structure. Its reliance on treatment of light and shade, defined form and monumentality all apparent from its period. The 'accessible' image shown in almost relief form as a counter to the 'inaccessible', essentially 'flat' image of Braque.

To conclude: the two pieces (separated by only some twelve months) have considerable differences in composition and especially technique. Yet both are intrinsically linked, one with the other. Both artists produced these types of paintings during the 'Analytical' period, which as much as anything relates to how rapidly their Cubism developed. Measured in months, rather than years. **R.M.**

FICTION

THE OLD BANK

It was the dead trees that she noticed first. Nancy had become interested in the old bank building which resembled a cross between a Lego block and a Liquorice Allsort. She was intrigued by the dead trees which surrounded the building; strange because all the others around were healthy.

Walking along, Nancy heard footsteps behind her.

"Wait"

It was Greg her friend. She hadn't told him about the old bank although she wanted to talk to someone about it. It was strange, she couldn't put her finger on it, it was just strange.

"Do you fancy a cup of coffee?" Greg asked.

Nancy wasn't herself, he could tell.

"What's up Nancy? You seem preoccupied is everything okay?"

"Let's go and have a coffee and I can tell you about it".

In the café they sat together huddled and secretive.

"What do you want to tell me" Greg was curious, Nancy was usually so easy going.

"It's the old bank".

"What about it?"

Nancy took a deep breath. It was difficult for her to talk about this, people wouldn't understand.

"I'm sure there is something weird going on inside it"

"What kind of something weird?". Greg was sceptical but concerned.

"Why don't we take a walk along there and you can see, it's not far".

It was getting dark. The building stood defiantly in a patch of wasteland surrounded by the dead trees.

"What are we looking for?"

"Wait a minute". Nancy strode ahead and peered into one of the windows.

After a few seconds a red light flashed on changing quickly to green and then a pure white bright light accompanied by a piercing, ear-splitting noise which lasted about one minute.

“What was that?”

Greg was visibly shaken. He hadn't expected anything to happen but Nancy was right “this is weird” he thought to himself.

Before either of them could speak there was a loud thud sound behind them. Both turned quickly and saw a man crash violently to the ground. They ran to the person.

“Are you okay mate?”

The man on the ground was dazed. “What happened?”

“You fell over” said Nancy trying to shoosh Greg. “Let's get you up, how do you feel?”

Greg called a taxi for him and he went home.

“Why did you tell him he just fell over?”

“Think about it, imagine if we had told him about the building it would have freaked him out. Better not to say anything”

They agreed that it would cause mass-hysteria if this got out and spread all over town. “Let's keep it to ourselves just now Greg and think about what to do, who to tell”.

Weeks went by. There were numerous reports of people falling over for no reason, no one connected it to the old bank.

BOOK REVIEW – BIRDSONG BY SEBASTIAN FAULKS

Let me begin by saying how much I enjoyed reading this book and yes, at times, it possessed that ‘can't put it down’ feeling; it is that good. I also think that different people will enjoy different aspects of the book. Let me explain.

For me, there were two main aspects to this book: the trenches and the horrors of the Western front of the First World War and a love story of unrequited love, the two strangely juxtapositioned with each other that leaves the reader alternating between a romantic tale and a narrative describing in detail the mutilation and carnage of The Somme. There is also a third part, that of the main character's grand-daughter who, some fifty years later, is trying to find out about the grandfather she never knew. To be honest, I found this part of the book a bit dull and was glad when I was able to return to either of the other two far more interesting parts of the story.

The story begins in 1910 in Amiens in Northern France, an area of the country, that within four years, would experience death and destruction on a scale never seen before. However, in the summer of 1910 all is peaceful as Englishman Stephen Wraysford arrives in the city to learn more about the textile business. Over the next few months Wraysford enjoys life in the city and visits to local landmarks with his hosts the Azaire family and it is at this time that he begins to become attracted to Isabelle, M. Azaire's young wife. A passionate but, at first, secretive affair follows leading to Isabelle leaving her husband and pregnant, with Wraysford's child, she flees, without Wraysford, to her sister in Rouen. Wraysford returns to England.

The next instalment of the story is on The Somme in 1916. Jack Firebrace is a tunneller, part of a team that digs narrow tunnels under ‘no-mans-land’ and German front lines to lay explosives. Firebrace's life is hard: cold, dark and claustrophobia pervade most of his time, with the sounds of explosions overhead and the

constant threat of tunnels collapsing should a shell fall directly above. Even above ground, life is little better. Faulks, through Firebrace, creates a powerful image of life in the trenches and the misery of its occupants. No doubt this was something he spent many hours researching (including listening to the accounts of WW1 veterans) as the images he conjures up have a real truth about them and, for myself, it provides the closest sense of 'being there' that I have ever had when reading about this particular conflict. For this alone, Faulks is to be congratulated, creating what amounts to an important historical record of the time.

Wraysford, now a Lieutenant, is also on the Somme. He is not an officer who sits back apart from the men who regularly 'go over the top' instead, perhaps due in part to his failed romance with Isabelle and the fact that he doesn't seem to have family nor a place to call home, his attitude is one of inevitability that at some point he will be killed. At times, depression and desperation take over, however, as time passes, and he is still alive, he begins to almost get used to what has become an hour-by-hour existence even forging a friendship of sorts with a Captain Weir who relies on alcohol to mask the horror all around.

A key part of Faulks' description of life on the front line, is how he builds upon characters to the point that they become a real part of the story, not simply a quick mention nor a name to be forgotten as quickly as it is read. By doing this, by creating a real person, their death is even more felt by the reader and when this happens time and time again there is a sense of death being the inevitable finale for most present; only a few will escape unscathed. Wraysford himself was not one of the few, wounded badly during a visit to one of the many tunnels.

Eventually Wraysford recovers and it is during this time that he can return to Amiens where he encounters, by chance, Jeanne, Isabelle's sister. He is still in love with Isabelle and had written to tell her so from the trenches. With great hesitation, Isabelle agrees to meet him, however, he soon learns that Isabelle has been disfigured because of an exploding shell and has fallen in love with someone else: a German soldier called Max. Soon, she and Max would leave Amiens for Germany and she would be gone from Wraysford's life for good. In the meantime, back in the trenches, Weir has been killed.

The part of the book that brings the two main characters together, Wraysford and Firebrace, is when they venture into one of the tunnels for Wraysford to inspect the tunnels progress. An explosion leaves them trapped and many others nearby dead. I found this the most compelling part of the story as it exemplified what life on the front line was like. One moment alive, the next wounded and uncertain as to how long you had to live. Surrounded by the sounds of men dying; nothing clean here like so many cowboy films but instead pieces of human beings and cries for help never to be heard. Firebrace was badly wounded, Wraysford less so.

Faulks uses this time to once again remind us, not that we perhaps needed it, that these were human beings; men with families, lives to live, ambitions to achieve and things to enjoy and laugh about. They were not cannon fodder or mere statistics; they were real people who thought and felt the same as most of us, we who are spared the horror and instead live in relative comfort and peace. Wraysford tells Firebrace about his undying love for Isabelle and how he will never see her again. Firebrace talks about his young son John, who had recently died, and his wife and what life will be like on his return. The two men share the hellish experience of being trapped underground and become close. Alas, Firebrace succumbs to his wounds and only Stephen Wraysford is rescued – by a German soldier.

After the War is over, Wraysford builds a new life with Jeanne but Isabelle is never far from his thoughts. He dies young, never aware of his daughter from his time in Amiens with Isabelle.

The final part of the story is with his grand-daughter in England. She now knows her grandfather's story and, in tribute to the men who fought alongside her grandfather, namely Jack Firebrace, she names her new born son John after the son Jack and his wife had so tragically lost.

The book contains a few explicit sexual references but it is for its description of the horrors of war that it stands out. The fact that it successfully combines two such contrasting human experiences is what helps make the novel work so well and for this reason I wholly recommend it.

Birdsong by Sebastian Faulks. Published by Penguin Books, 2023. Pages 503. Price £9.99.

TWO NONSENSE POEMS IN THE STYLE OF JABBERWOCK

BIOHEM

From Roschwerth did flow the squibbly lobby go.
To greet and mendel in the glaur.
Inky gleam well lit up, squersh is at work.
Onwards to the edge, to disgurgle!

Of timid Biohem raves on,
Being floppy and lippy and no brain.
Torn asunder with no aims, fits the space between.
He remains sloppy but Roschwerth will help.

For Frakenweist he follows,
Roschwerth and Wisterwell all to follow.
Squersh responds with delight.
And all is now in a muddle.

The disgurgle is begun, Shippenloost must run.
With hoots and cries, squersh says, Aye!
Biohem is avenged, sacred wozzle, wozzel.
Come forward all for Frakenweist is lost.

Biohem raves on, the Roschwerth runs deep.
Beware the tangle in thy roots,
For Shippenloost must be set afoot.
Frakenweist is shouting, set me free!

From Roschwerth did flow the squibbly lobby go.
To greet and mendel in the glaur.
Inky gleam well lit up, squersh is at work.
Onwards to the edge, to disgurgle!

RANATHON

The wellowwhim doth squelch and roe
With leezy time twa a fro, again and again!
Is tho sluggit were but from a hole in the grun.
And no! Cleesy, Thiggy, webs remain.

Consider Ranathon is with us...
Respindral bites and spittalis ready to snatch,
The vivisector on the march.
Lapersh inflicts its sculumn foe.

Out of wellowwhim he comes and goes,
His spittalis gangly arranged so.
To eat his common goal.
O' he can get construffed in the act.

And yet, beware: Ranathon is jibbery, clefty and aware.
He sets to pounce the groons, Lapersh handy so.
Construffed state ends his merry galate,
So tie the spittalis, before too late.

He often emulates, to capture tho,
Inflicts brazen fangs quickly, quickly.
Respindral wraps 'em up and off we go!
Vivisector ends their flow.

The wellowwhim doth squelch and roe
With leezy time twa a fro, again and again!
Is tho sluggit were but from, a hole in the grun.
And no! Cleesy, Thiggy, webs remain.

Key for fantasy creatures (Nonsense Poems)

Ranathon:	
Spider	Respindral
Hairy, spiked legs	Spittalis
Marsh/underground	Wellowwhim
Bites/eats	Vivisector
Poisonous	Lapersh
Squashes	Construffed

Biohem:	
Sponge-like	Squersh
Water	Roschwerth
Absorbs	Wisterwell
Cleans	Disgurgle
Wellbeing	Frakenweist
Breaks-up	Shippenloost

REMEMBERING ANN

Dr Ann McClintock and her husband Andy were a great couple, they were both full to the brim with enthusiasm and zest for life. Sadly, Andy passed away in 2023, now equally sad to say, Anne passed away earlier this year on 29th January.

Ann and Andy were great supporters of BULB Magazine, both of them contributed items. Andy, as a former engineer, particularly liked to write about scientific topics but he also had much to say about the artwork he and their granddaughter Hannah made together. Both of them worked tirelessly with Hannah who is neuro-diverse and partially sighted. They recognised Hannah's potential as an artist and were so proud of their granddaughter's achievements. Ann, as well as being a talented artist was a great story teller, she contributed several poems to BULB over a period of a few years.

Ann was a born communicator, she was a pleasure to converse with. Her wry take on things gave her the ability to convey her very interesting thoughts by means of the written word, in her stories and in her poems. Somehow she always seemed to hit the nail on the head making simplicity out of what might otherwise seem overly-complicated. This might have arisen from her down-to-earth Glaswegian roots. Whatever the case, Ann was a refreshing person to know, it would have been nice to have known her for much longer (and Andy as well). We will miss them both and will remember them with fondness.

They are a great loss to their family, daughter Carol, son-in-law Brian and, of course, their granddaughter Hannah.

Now, we will finish our tribute to Ann by re-publishing one of her poems which shows clearly a super-perceptive and humorous mind at work. We are very glad and honoured to have met you Ann.



“AS A MATTER OF FACT”

A prose poem by Ann McClintock

I found a fact the other day.
It was dancing with glee
On Tik-Tok.
Of course I didn't believe it.
Tik-Tok is for fun not facts.

But the same fact popped up again yesterday.
This time it was lounging happily
On Facebook
Between a photo of my friend
And a plea to feed the world.
Of course I didn't believe it,
But I wondered.

Then lo and behold there it was again today,
Looking very disconsolate
On Twitter -
The subject of an acrimonious debate
On veracity.

My wondering turned to doubting.
My doubting turned to confusion.
And my poor little joyful fact -
The one I hadn't believed-
Morphed into a veritable Battalion of facts.

Everywhere I looked there were more of them.
Fact, upon fact, upon fact.
An army of facts,
Coming at me from all directions.
A verbal assault I was powerless to resist.

But then, Salvation,
Just as I was losing my mind
An adage came along.
It was my mother's - oft quoted.
“ Facts are chieils that winna ding
And daurna be disputed. “ ##

So now, when a fact pops up on my social media page
I just give it a ding.
An if it disna ring true
A dinna believe it!

##(For the benefit of our foreign friends, this translates very roughly as “ facts can be backed up by solid, scientific proof which is difficult or impossible to refute”.)

SPECIAL FEATURE



Crimea

The war between Ukraine and Russia has recently gone into its fourth year. This is known by Ukrainians as the “big war” since the first invasion of Ukraine by Russia occurred in 2014 when they annexed Crimea in southern Ukraine. We first met Vika and Ira in 2022 soon after the fateful day when Russia mobilised the full-scale invasion of their home country. I was struck by how brave they were, they had just been driven out of their homes and out of their country to a place they had not much knowledge of and didn’t know the language very well. Despite the trauma that they were experiencing, however, both were keen to do something positive to help spread the word about what was happening in their country.

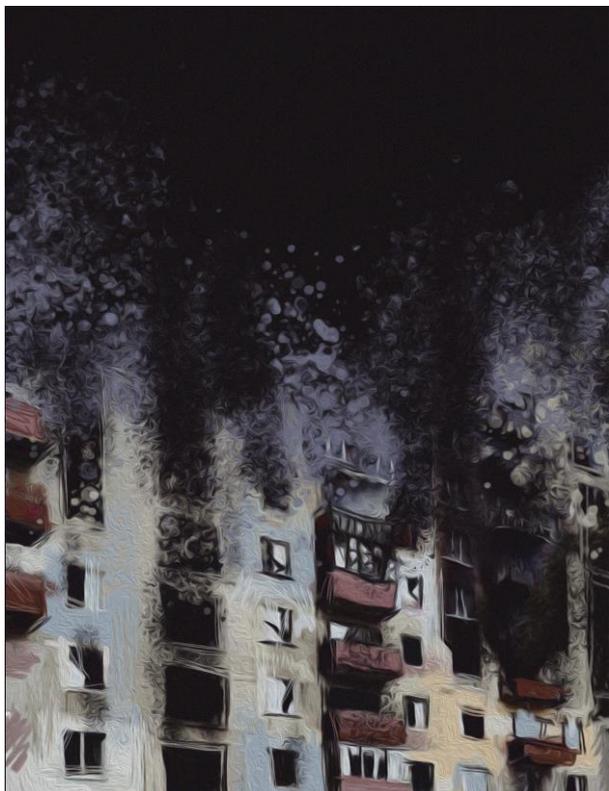
As artists they thought they might use their skills to reach people, when I was introduced to them I immediately felt that we had to make something happen, and so, without any funds or clear plans we set about organising an exhibition. Vika and Ira had discussed the title and came up with 23.02, (the day before the big invasion) they told me that this was the last day that their lives felt normal, from then on everything changed for them. Since the exhibition would feature text of words spoken by Ukrainian soldiers and, in some cases their mum’s, it was agreed that the sub-title Ukrainian Voices should be the full title of the exhibition.

The exhibition, after some work and preparation, became a reality. Initially staff at West Lothian College helped with the printing and framing which was helpful and much appreciated. Vika contributed ten black and white portrait photographs and Ira made six digital colour prints relating to her memories of before she left the town of Lviv to come to Scotland. We were fortunate to be able to show the exhibition four times in various locations from 2022-2023. After that we decided to organise another exhibition, this time on the theme of landscape with both the Ukrainian artists and Scottish artists exploring the idea of their homeland and what it means to them through painting, photography, sculpture and print.

Needless to say, both exhibitions were emotive, especially the first one which brought the viewers close to the individuals through their personal testimony and the beautifully crafted portraits by Vika and Ira’s vivid depictions of the darkness and foreboding atmosphere that fell over their towns when they came under

attack. Ira also described how life had become very stressful and expressed her feelings when she realised she didn't feel safe even in her own home, the place where you should feel safe was gone.

Meeting both Vika and Ira was a humbling experience, it has taught me how precious our freedom is. So, in the midst of what we are witnessing around us, it is always important to remember right and wrong and live by the ideology of humanitarian kindness which, I believe, we will always win over the ideology of hate and cruelty to mankind.



Digital Images by Ira Andreichuk



Photographs of Ukraine by Vika Yasynska



To view catalogue in full, please visit our website at: www.mylastboard.com

IN FEBRUARY 2023 THE EXHIBITION 23-02 UKRAINIAN VOICES WAS SHOWN IN THE LIVINGSTON DESIGNER OUTLET – HERE ARE A SMALL SELECTION OF THE MANY COMMENTS THAT WERE WRITTEN IN THE COMMENTS BOOK.

“Beautiful real life stories and photos. It’s so sad, so real. God Bless Ukraine”

**“May God Bless you and praise the Ukrainian people for the hardship they are suffering. I hope you can find Peace soon”
From a VETERAN SOLDIER
(Scottish)**

“I wish I could do more.”

“BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN HELPING TO KEEP UKRAINE A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND VISIT. STAYING STRONG PRESIDENT ZELENSKY BEING AN EXTREMELY BRAVE MAN. HELPING TO FIGHT FOR HIS COUNTRY.”

“So painful to see such beautiful young men and see they have died so young.

Unbelievably tragic.

Unbelievable that anyone can believe that the taking of land is worth such losses.

Thank-you for showing us the reality of lost lives.”

“I was moved to tears. I hope for peace for Ukrainian people in their homeland.”

“Slava Ukraini!”

“As a mother, I couldn’t imagine what some of these mothers have had to endure. Losing my son would break me. They are incredible strong women. Especially to go on caring for others as they do when they really could give up. I pray the day for peace through our saviour come soon. I pray we may all share appreciation for the courage that these people have shown and continue to show. May those who have passed rest easy now. God Bless and keep them.” xxxx

“Never felt so emotional until getting so close to those who have fought for their country. My thoughts and prayers are with all those families and friends. The photographs alone tell such a strong story and the text is hard to read but puts a whole lot more into perspective. The emotions well inside and bring tears to my eyes but my thoughts continue to be with them all and hope success in their struggle is soon. Really such an emotional experience today.”

*And on the renovated land
There’ll be no enemy, no rival,
There will be son and will be mother,
There will be people on the land!*

T. Shevchenko

Art of Morrow

Artisan Shop with over 20 artists
within the shop



Linlithgow Spring Market MARCH

Friday 21st 5-9pm and
Saturday 22nd 10-4pm
Over 40 stalls
Free entry

Willow weaving, Needle felting, Decoupage, Pyrography and more

If you want to try your hand at a specialised craft then come along to the shop located in Low Port Centre and enquire, follow us on social media.

Or send us an email on katie@artofmorrow.co.uk Whatsapp Katie on **07803608681**