

MAJOR LEWIS SYMPOSIUM ACCOMPANIES COURTAULD SHOW

An important Symposium on Lewis's work will be held at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London on 29 January 2005. The Courtauld Gallery is exhibiting fifty drawings by Lewis, and the Symposium is timed to coincide with this exhibition, 'The Bone Beneath the Pulp'.

The conference is entitled 'Wyndham Lewis: One-man Avant-Garde?' and will be held in the Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre.

Speakers will include Paul Edwards, Laura Marcus and Michael Nath. There will be a focus on Lewis's art, with contributions from Jacky Klein, who curated the exhibition and compiled the catalogue for it, and Richard Humphreys of Tate Britain. There will also be papers on politics, culture and theory.

Tyrus Miller of the University of California at Santa Cruz is a specially invited guest speaker. He is author of the highly-regarded *Late Modernism* (1999), which discusses Lewis, and has interests in European modernism of the inter-war period. His paper is entitled 'Wyndham Lewis and Counter-Revolution'.

Tickets for the event can be bought from the Tate Britain website, or from 0207 887 8888. They cost £30 (£20 concessions), and booking is advised. The symposium begins at 1100, and ends with a reception at 1800. The price includes drinks and free admission to the exhibition, 'The Bone Beneath the Pulp'. For online tickets go to: www.tate.org.uk/britain/eventseducation/symposia/wyndhamlewis1936.htm

Visitors should note that the Courtauld Gallery is at Somerset House on the Strand.

Speakers: Paul Edwards on Vorticism and the early art, Laura Marcus on Lewis, film and Iris Barry, Richard Humphreys on Lewis's paintings 1920-1942, Jacky Klein on the drawings, Michael Nath on Lewis and Nietzsche, Alan Munton on Lewis's Spanish connections, and Tyrus Miller on 'Lewis and Counter-Revolution'.

The Symposium is organised in collaboration with the Courtauld Institute of Art and in association with Bath Spa University and the University of Plymouth Art History Department.

MICHAEL CULLIS DIES AT 89.

Death of diplomat who dined with Lewis.

With the death of Michael Cullis at his home in Buntingford, Hertfordshire, on 27 June, one of the last direct links with Wyndham Lewis has been broken. Cullis, who enjoyed a long and successful career in the Foreign Office, was long honoured in the Society as one of the few persons still living to have met Lewis. He recorded his meetings of 1938 in the *Enemy News*. See obituary on page 9.

NEW BOOKS ON LEWIS

Andrzej Gasiorek's *Wyndham Lewis and Modernism* (Northcote House/British Council, 2004) is the most important recent study of Lewis. Informed, articulate and closely argued, it is essential reading. Richard Humphreys's *Wyndham Lewis*, just published, is an attractively-produced addition to the series on British artists from Tate Publishing.

COURTAULD SETBACK

The Wyndham Lewis Trust has been informed that financial problems mean that the Courtauld Institute's planned occupation of the South building has been postponed. Should the Trust's archives be deposited at the Institute a lack of space means that there would be no guarantee that they would be made available for study in the foreseeable future. However, after discussions a solution has been proposed which involves dividing the holdings. The Trust's collection of pictures, together with a selection of key publications directly related to the collection, will be lodged in the Institute's Gallery, while negotiations are under weigh that could lead to the Trust's book and document archive being incorporated into the holdings of Tate Britain at Millbank. A report on the outcome of these important negotiations will appear in the Winter/Spring issue of the *Lewisletter*.

NEWS FROM THE TRUST

Graham Lane

Peppin appointed.

Brigid Peppin, custodian of the Helen Saunders family collection and archive, has been appointed a member of the Wyndham Lewis Memorial Trust.

The collection contains not only many fine works by Saunders, but also a number of drawings by Lewis, who was a close friend for many years. Members will recall the excellent Helen Saunders exhibition curated by Ms Peppin and held at the Ashmolean, Oxford and subsequently at the Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield, in 1996. Ms Peppin was also responsible for a catalogue that revealed much new information on Saunders. More recently, works from the Saunders collection were included in the exhibition entitled 'Blasting the Future: Vorticism in Britain 1910–1920' at the Estorick Collection.

The knowledge and dedication of Brigid Peppin will prove a great asset to the Trust, especially in its aim to promote Lewis's associates and early British Modernism generally.

Lewis exhibition.

To celebrate the forthcoming agreement with the Trust the Courtauld Institute Gallery has mounted an exhibition of the Trust's drawings together with drawings from the private collections of Trustees.

Entitled 'The Bone beneath the Pulp', the exhibition runs until 13 February 2005 and contains around fifty works, some of which have not been shown for decades. Jacky Klein, a former curator at the Gallery and a Lewis enthusiast, curated the exhibition and compiled the catalogue, which includes colour illustrations and essays from Paul Edwards and Ms Klein herself. Also on display during the run of the exhibition is 'Young Woman Seated', a preliminary study for Lewis's *Red Portrait* of 1937 (Michel P76), from the collection of T. G. Rosenthal (see *Lewisletter* 21, p.3), and another drawing of Froanna from the collection of a Trustee.

To coincide with the exhibition a number of events are taking place at the Institute. These include: a series of free lunchtime talks, courses for A level and GCSE students organised by the Learning Centre, a Study Day with seminars, for which a modest fee will be charged, and possibly one or more evening lectures. On 18 November at 1800 in the Kenneth Clark lecture theatre Paul Edwards spoke on 'The Pulp beneath the Bone: Drawings by Wyndham Lewis'. There were also lunchtime talks at 1315 in December by Jacky Klein and Lucy Askew. Information on these events can be obtained from the Courtauld's Public Affairs Office on 0207 848 2549.

Free entry for Lewisians.

Normal admission to the exhibition is £5 (concessions £4) but fully paid-up members of the Wyndham Lewis Society can obtain one free entry by showing a certificate of membership at the Gallery entrance desk. To obtain a certificate, which includes provision for a guest, members should send a clearly addressed sae to: Graham Lane, 2 Langton Way, Blackheath, London SE3 7TL. Copies of the exhibition catalogue (at around £10) can be obtained only from the Gallery. Opening hours are daily 10.00 to 1800, including Sundays, with last admissions at 1715. There is a cafeteria in the basement and lift access to all levels.

Overseas members visiting London for the first time should note that the Courtauld Institute Gallery is in Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 0RN (phone 0207 848 2585). Nearest Underground stations are Covent Garden, Embankment and Temple. The latter is not open on Sundays.

GRIGSON CENTENARY SYMPOSIUM

To mark the centenary of the birth of Geoffrey Grigson, Lewis's most fervent champion, a one-day symposium will be held on 5 March 2005 at St Edmund Hall, Oxford, where the writer was a student from 1924 to 1927.

Co-ordinated by C. C. Barfoot and R.M. Healey, the event will feature at least ten speakers, including Seamus Perry and Stuart Sillars, and topics will range from Grigson's influence as an art critic to his relationship with others of the 'Auden Generation'. R.M. Healey will speak on 'Grigson and Wyndham Lewis'.

Further details are available from R.M. Healey at robin@pitmaston.freeserve.co.uk (or on 01763-837058) after 30 January 2005. Those wishing to present a paper should send a synopsis to the above address as soon as possible. It is hoped that some manuscripts by Grigson, including a poetry notebook, will be exhibited at the British Library in 2005.

NEW COURTAULD DIRECTOR

Deborah Swallow is the new Director of the Courtauld Institute, where she took up her duties in October 2004. Currently Director of Collections and Keeper of the Asian department at the V & A, Ms Swallow succeeds James Cuno, who has been appointed President and Director of the Art Institute of Chicago.

BEQUESTS, GIFTS AND ITEMS RECEIVED FOR THE ARCHIVES.

William Roberts 1895–1980 by Andrew Heard (Hatton Gallery, University of Newcastle 2004). This fully-illustrated catalogue, published to accompany the exhibition at the Hatton Gallery, contains a number of interesting references to Lewis and his relationship with Roberts. Unfortunately, the quality of the colour reproductions varies from only fair to extremely poor, which is a great pity. This copy was donated by Graham Lane.

Gaudier-Brzeska: an Absolute Case of Genius by Paul O'Keeffe (Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 2004). This long-awaited biography of the artist contains many references to Lewis. A fascinating read, it is slightly marred by some disappointing illustrations. Those by David Finn in Evelyn Silber's *Gaudier-Brzeska: Life and Art* (Thames and Hudson, 1996) do much greater justice to Gaudier's sculpture. Copy donated by Graham Lane. A review of O'Keeffe's book by Christopher Martin appears on page 13 of this *Lewisletter*.

Richard Eurich (1903–1992): Visionary artist. This fully illustrated catalogue in colour was published to accompany the exhibition curated by Edward Chaney at the Southampton Institute in 2003. Among the essays, Edward Chaney's introduction, 'Richard Eurich: the Complexity of Influence', contains much on Lewis plus a good colour plate of Lewis's *Portrait of the Artist as the Painter Raphael* 1921 (Michel P28). Edward Chaney donated this item, together with a copy of the *London Magazine* for June/July 2003 which contains his essay in a different form.

Blasting the Future: Vorticism in Britain 1910–1920 (London: Philip Wilson 2004). This fully-illustrated catalogue was published to accompany the exhibition at the Estorick Collection, shown subsequently at the Whitworth, Manchester. It is edited by Jonathan Black, who also curated the exhibition. There are essays by Christopher Adams, Jonathan Black, Michael J.K. Walsh and Jonathan Wood. Eight drawings by Lewis are featured, of which two, plus a full page detail, are in somewhat sub-standard colour. This item was donated by Jonathan Black. The exhibition is reviewed in the current *Lewisletter*.

Twentieth Century Painting and Sculpture in the International Collections of the National Gallery of Victoria (Trustees of the National Gallery of Victoria, 2003). This large, well-produced and fully-illustrated publication in card covers includes a small colour reproduction of Lewis's *Inferno* of 1937 (Michel P72), together with a full-page, almost full-sized detail of the work, also in colour. Ted Gott wrote the text notes.

'*Make it new*': *the Rise of Modernism* (University of Texas at Austin 2003). A large publication in card covers and well illustrated, published to accompany an exhibition at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center from 21 October 2003 to 7 March 2004. The exhibition essay is by Daniel

Albright and the text illustrations include Lewis's drawing of T.S. Eliot inscribed 'rough note for Eliot painting in Durban, 1938' (not in Michel), a page from *Blast* 1, and the cover from *Blast* 2. There are five references to Lewis in the text.

Making Faces: Teachers' Pack (2004). This relates to the National Gallery's touring exhibition in association with the Bristol Museums & Art Gallery and the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne. The pack features Lewis's *Mr Wyndham Lewis as a Tyro*, 1920–1921 (Michel P27). There are notes and a good colour reproduction of the work in A4 format on clear film with a white paper backing. Also received was a quality poster of the Tyro painting in good colour and full-sized, 29 ? x 17 ? inches, protected by a transparent film coating (poster size 33 x 23 ? inches).

Remaking (London: ING Bank 2004). In this catalogue of an exhibition at ING Bank, London Wall, of works from the ING Collection in collaboration with the Wimbledon School of Art and others, can be found Lewis's oil painting, *Sheikh's Wife*, 1935 (Michel P57).

The Folio Society Book of the Hundred Greatest Portraits. General Editor, Martin Bailey. (London: Folio Society, 2004). This is a large, lavishly-produced coffee-table book. It includes Lewis's oil of Edith Sitwell, 1923–1935, in good colour with a full page informative introduction by Richard Cork.

Tate Women Artists by Alicia Foster (London: Tate Publishing, 2004). A large paperback in card covers dealing with the work of over 250 female artists in the Tate collection. Included are references to Lewis and Vorticism, with short texts on Jessie Dismorr and Helen Saunders. Colour reproductions include Dismorr's *Abstract Composition* c.1915 and Saunders's *Abstract Composition* c.1915 with her *Abstract Multicoloured Design* c.1915.

Quarterly: the National Art Collections Fund, Spring 2004. Page 19 reports the purchase by the Scottish National Portrait Gallery of Lewis's oil of Naomi Mitchison, 1938–1939 (Michel P96) for £100,000. There are short notes on Mitchison and Lewis, plus a good colour reproduction of the painting.

2003 Review: the National Art Collections Fund. On page 124 is a report of the purchase of the same painting, but with different text notes by Julie Lawson. These place more emphasis on Lewis, and the colour reproduction of the painting is smaller.

Modernism and Cultural Conflict by Anne L. Ardis (Cambridge: CUP, 2002). This anti-Modernist book was reviewed by Paul Edwards in the *Wyndham Lewis Annual 2003–2004*. Its handsome jacket features a detail of Lewis's *The Dancers* 1912 (Michel 48, pl. 13).

AROUND THE GALLERIES

Public

BLASTING AND BOMBERGDIERING

By Christopher Martin

Blasting the Future: Vorticism in Britain 1910–1920
(Estorick, 4 February–18 April 2004; Whitworth,
Manchester, 7 May–25 July 2004)

This show of fifty works (of which 32 are by Vorticists, 8 by Vorticist allies, and 10 by Futurists) illustrates the swift development of Vorticism before the First World War, its flowering and diffusion, with some Italian Futurist and Futurist-influenced works displayed to show its relationship to modern European art.

Wyndham Lewis, Edward Wadsworth, William Roberts, Frederick Etchells, Lawrence Atkinson, Jessica Dismorr, Alvin Langdon Coburn and the underrated Helen Saunders represent the Vorticist core. Bomberg and Kramer link the movement to Expressionism.

Lewis's figure in *The Vorticist* has the intense diagrammatic force of much of the movement's work. His *Two Vorticist Figures*, by contrast, are sculptural and monumental. His *Vorticist Figure Composition* could equally be the basis of an abstract design, and shares the angular dynamism of Epstein's sketch for *The Rock Drill*. The experience of war turned Lewis further from abstraction, but his men in *Officers and Signallers* remain metallic, apparently battle-hardened. By this time Lewis was on his way to an Ingres-like style of figure drawing. William Roberts takes on subjects similar to those of Lewis, but his touch is more humane, as can be seen in the weariness depicted in *The Wiring Party*. Wadsworth uses the same Vorticist sense of form in both his representational and abstract works, such as the woodcuts *Liverpool Shipping* and *Mytholmroyd*, which are both dynamic and sculptural, and evoke an urban and industrial environment. Wadsworth also, along with Cuthbert Hamilton and Helen Saunders, created explosive and richly coloured zig-zagging linear abstractions. Indeed, his postwar drawings and woodcuts of blast furnaces seem to mirror battlefield devastation.

Southwark, a mezzotint by Nevinson, weds Futurist subject matter in the shape of factories to romantic and traditional Thames barges. Soffici, now a footnote to Futurism, reduces landscape to the residual curves and angles of shallow space, its shapes recalling his own Futurist typographical arrangements, which *Blast* would follow, but with less excitement. Gaudier-Brzeska makes a brass doorknocker an amalgam of bird head and human limbs. Balla's arcs of simultaneity prefigure the rhythms of works by the only two British Futurists—Nevinson's *Dance Hall Scene* and Cursiter's *Rain on Princes Street*.

Bomberg's *Ju-Jitsu*, with its wrestling figures emerging from a counterchanging ground akin to a game board, echoes Wadsworth's woodcut effects, while prefiguring his dazzleship patternings.

The partially abstract quality of Nevinson's lithograph *The Bomber* contrasts with the purer abstraction of *Dancer* (Ballerina + Sea) by Severini, his Futurist mentor. Nevinson's *Taube Pursued by Commander Samson*, a Futurist subject, boasts a prism effect similar to the divisionism of Balla, Boccioni and Carrà. Futurist lighting effects are evident in a Nevinson mezzotint, *The Roof Garden*, and a Coburn Vortograph, both of which exploit the mirrored facets of crystals. Gaudier and Frank Dobson (the latter exhibited with Group X) share, in their figures, a primitive simplification of forms. McKnight Kauffer's woodcut *Flight* has something of the patterning of Nevinson's *Taube*, but remains resolutely Vorticist in its sharpness.

This is a worthwhile exhibition, but more colour and sculpture, and more references in the catalogue to the pieces on show would have improved it. The catalogue is useful for positioning Vorticism in the British *avant-garde*, defining it in relationship to Futurism, and providing a chronology of events for the period.

Other exhibitions:-

William Roberts

Making Faces

Remaking

These are noticed under Bequests, gifts and items received for the archives (p. 3).

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Olympia Fine Art & Antiques Fair, 1 March–6 March 2005.
An exhibition of some 100 paintings and drawings by Lewis, curated by Angus Stewart. Catalogue available at exhibition.

Previously Mr Stewart has curated exhibitions at Olympia on Keith Vaughan (2002), Graham Sutherland (2003) and Prunella Clough (2004).

Private Galleries

Piccadilly Gallery. Currently only has one Lewis drawing in stock. This is *Bird forms* c.1924, reported in *Lewisletter 21* and still for sale at £5000.

Austen/Desmond. Has no Lewis works in stock.

AUCTIONS

Christies, South Kensington: Twentieth Century British Art, 1 July 2004. Lot 235, *Portrait of a Lady* 1922, purported to be Lewis's *Head of a Girl* 1922 (Michel 535, pl 61) was withdrawn prior to the auction on the advice of Paul Edwards. The original drawing in the Worcester Art Museum, Mass. (Dial Collection) was reproduced in the portfolio *Living Art* in 1923. Michel has pronounced that 'this reproduction is so good that, particularly when framed, it is sometimes taken for the original!'

Lot 236, *Portrait of Edith Evans* 1932 (Michel 753) is a good drawing but less dramatic than Michel 752, pl.104. It was estimated at £3000-£5000 but withdrawn when bidding stopped at £2200. The Piccadilly Gallery offered this drawing at £4000 back in 2001 (see *Lewisletter* 19, p.10).

Bloomsbury Book Auctions, May 2004. A fine copy of Lewis's *Thirty Personalities and a Self-Portrait* was sold for £580, two hundred pounds above its estimate.

SYMPOSIA, LECTURES AND TALKS

Making it New: Modernism in the Early 20th Century. This was one of the Courtauld Institute's Study Programmes for the 2004 Spring and Summer Schools. The Course Lecturer was Richard Cork and the courses ran from 29 March until 2 April and from 5–9 July. There were visits to the Courtauld Gallery, the Tate, the Estorick Collection and the Imperial War Museum. The importance of Lewis and the advent of Vorticism and *Blast* were covered in some detail. By all accounts, the courses were well-attended and successful.

Blasting the Future: Vorticism in Britain 1910–1920 at the Estorick Collection. Five informal gallery talks were given on aspects of the display. Two were by Trustees of the Lewis Memorial Trust –

28 February *Vorticism, Wyndham Lewis-style* by Richard Humphreys

27 March *Helen Saunders and Vorticism* by Brigid Peppin.

Other talks were:

14 February *Sensational Futurism and London 1910–1920* by Jonathan Black

13 March *War as Hygiene? Futurists and Vorticists in the Great War* by James Hayward

20 March *Literary Vorticism*, by Rebecca Beasley

Modernist Cultures: the Modernist Studies Association Fifth Annual Conference at Birmingham, 25 – 28 September 2003.

There was active and positive participation by the following Society members:-

Session one: 26 September, seminar.

1. *Vorticism: the First English Avant- Garde*

Chair: Alan Munton. Attending: Rebecca Beasley, Christina Hauck, Melania Terrazas, David Peters Corbett, Paul Edwards.

Session Four: 26 September, seminar.

33. *Varieties of Modernist Consciousness*

Organiser: Paul Edwards, Chair: Peter Brooker. *Relativity of Consciousness in Virginia Woolf and Wyndham Lewis*, Paul Edwards.

Egotism and Relation: a Structure for Modernism, Alan Munton.

Towards a 'Pathos of Distance'? Wyndham Lewis's Tarr and Nietzsche's Theory of Pity, Michael Nath.

NEW EDITIONS OF LEWIS

Collected Poems and Plays, edited by Alan Munton, introduction by C. H. Sisson (Manchester: Fyfield Books; New York: Routledge 2003) £9.95.

A second reissue by Carcanet of the 1981 paperback, first published in hardback in 1979. Cover illustration is a well-reproduced detail from Lewis's *The Lascar* 1919 (Michel 336, pl. 40).

The Wild Body, introduction by Paul O'Keeffe (Penguin Modern Classics 2004) £8.99.

The Revenge for Love, introduction by Paul Edwards (Penguin Modern Classics 2004) £9.99.

Both paperbacks are superior productions, featuring on their respective covers colour reproductions of *A Reading of Ovid* 1920–1921 (detail), and *Mr Wyndham Lewis as a Tyro* c.1920-1921.