

1. Catching the Light – the Sunshine Paintings of Henry Scott Tuke

- 1.1 This exhibition is currently proving very popular. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Bonhams, it celebrates the 150th year anniversary of Henry Scott Tuke's birth and the gallery is linking in partnership with the Royal Cornwall Museum and The Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society's shows in Truro. Tuke is Falmouth's most distinguished painter, and recognised as arguably the finest of the British Impressionists. Over 130 important loans have been secured for the exhibitions from private and national collections including major national museums such as the Tate, the Royal Academy and from the private collection of Sir Elton John. The multiple Grammy-winning musician has been an avid collector of Tuke's works since the late 1970s. As a result many of Tuke's most important pieces - like *Midsummer Morning* – have remained in the UK and, thanks to the loans, eleven of his paintings have been put on public display for the first time. Due to a tour of Australia Sir Elton was not able to attend the exhibitions, but he sent his personal secretary with a letter. Sir Elton wrote:

"I understand that this is the biggest show of Tuke's work for fifty years, here in the UK, and the largest ever collection of his work in one county. This year, we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of his birth and I am delighted to be able to share some of my collection with an appreciative public and one that holds this artist dear; the most famous artist of Cornwall. I regard Henry Scott Tuke as one of the great British Impressionists and on a par with our friends across the Channel! Whilst his paintings of Cornish youth are, in some ways, the most famous of his works, his narrative paintings of life on board ship are a force to be reckoned with; they capture a way of life which is now, on the whole, lost. Tuke's paintings of boys boating and bathing, by the sun-drenched beaches of Falmouth, evoke a lost era of innocence and a lack of self-consciousness."

- 1.2 Catherine Wallace, former Curator and author of two new books on Henry Scott Tuke, has been giving a programme of Saturday talks on the artist. These have been very well attended and received. Guided tours, illustrated lectures, walks around Tuke's Falmouth, life drawing classes and family-focused workshops are among the many activities included as part of the show, thanks to the funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

- 1.3 Visitor figures have greatly increased, with numbers for May rising by over a thousand visits.

2. Media Recognition

- 2.1 Estimated readership since the beginning of the Tuke shows is over 5 million, with articles in *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and the BBC Web News amongst many others. *Packet Newspapers* and the *West Briton* have also been very supportive in their coverage of this show.
- 2.2.1 Falmouth Art Gallery was featured on *ITV Westcountry* on Tuesday 6th May at 11am and 6pm, as well as on local radio stations, including *BBC Radio Cornwall*. Both the *Packet Newspapers* and *The West Briton* have kindly covered the exhibitions.

3. Visit Britain awards Quality Assured Status to Gallery

- 3.1 The gallery now has been awarded Visitor Attraction Quality Assured status after receiving a glowing report from the *Visit Britain* inspector, who considered it to be one of the best maintained galleries he had ever visited.
- 3.2 The inspection was very thorough with anonymous site visits and a series of telephone enquiries. The Inspector also provided valuable access advice, with particular reference to website access that we are acting upon.

4. Honouring Innocent Victims

- 4.1 A moving and powerful installation by St Ives artist Roy Ray honouring the millions of innocent victims who were in the wrong place or from the wrong country or race is currently on display at Falmouth Art Gallery. Entitled '*Where their Footsteps Left No Trace*', this poignant exhibition is based on his childhood experiences of war and his reaction to the death of innocent victims.
- 4.2 The exhibition has already received a very positive response from visitors who have shown a great interest in the work and commented on its power and beauty. Roy has also given a series of lunchtime talks and poetry readings that proved extremely popular.
- 4.3 The exhibition was officially launched in the permanent gallery on Wednesday 14th May. All events were well attended and received. Roy Ray also visited the gallery on Friday 16th May for a 'drop-in' day, where visitors could ask the artist questions about his work.

5. Stained Glass windows under way!

- 5.1 The gallery's 'Celebrating Cornwall's Stained Glass Heritage' project has finally been granted planning permission, along with plans to restore the Municipal buildings original symmetry and remove the 1970s disused rate's office windows.
- 5.2 The project has been organized in partnership with Carrick District Council, with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The aim of this exciting project is to install two community designed stained glass windows into the Municipal Buildings and to restore the building's original symmetry. This includes replacing missing tiles and dado rails that were destroyed during modifications in the 1970s and reinstating the large painting *The Bob Newbon Lifeboat* by Charles Napier Hemy RA to its original position in the foyer. The painting is currently being conserved as part of the project. It will also create interest in the work of John Passmore Edwards and his contribution to the local community, as well as highlighting the community work provided by the gallery, council and library services.
- 5.3 The stained glass work is very specialized, but the gallery was keen that it should be undertaken by Cornish based craftspeople. After a lengthy tendering process the contract has now been awarded to Mike Welch of Wadebridge, who has considerable experience of making glass for public buildings. He will make and fit the windows using designs created by MENCAP and children excluded from school.
- 5.4 Michael Swift is helping the gallery list all important stained glass windows that can be seen in Cornwall.

6. Baby and Toddler Tiles

- 6.1 Workshops have started for the replacement of the destroyed ceramic tiles in the 'old rates office' side of the foyer to the Municipal Buildings. Local babies and toddlers have been invited to the gallery to make marks in a pliable clay, which will then be cut, fired and glazed by Falmouth ceramicist Linda Styles, using complimentary colours to the existing 18th century tiles in the foyer. Linda will then insert these designs into a template she has created in partnership with Phil Whitfield of Cornwall College. This is part of the Stained glass project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The idea is that when the toddlers have become pensioners

they will still be able to identify their own personal contribution to the restoration of the building.

7. Website

- 7.1 Work is near to completion on the gallery's online collection catalogue with plans for the website 'going live' looming. Volunteers John and Joan Argyle and Richard Harold have been integral to the project, with assistance from Melissa Turnbull, Sarah Medway, Jane Whitrem and Suzanne Crook.

8. Loans

- 8.1 Arthur Melville's *The Faggot Collector* is to be loaned to the National Gallery of Scotland for their *Impressionism and Scotland* exhibition between 19 July- 12 October 2008.
- 8.2 The gallery has loaned two of its display cases to the Philip Mould gallery, London for their *Secret Faces* exhibition of historical miniatures.
- 8.3 Penlee House Gallery & Museum have borrowed *Smeaton's Pier, St Ives* by William Osborne for an exhibition called *Lyrical Light* which will be on show from 14 June – 13 September 2008.

9. *Smell the Sea, Feel the Breeze* exhibition

- 9.1 This exhibition proved extremely popular attracting 7,187 visitors and 809 educational visits (191 school visits 618 community group visits). The show was sponsored by TMS Financial Solutions with a contribution from Arts & Business, South West.
- 9.2 As part of the exhibition and to celebrate Aberfest, the gallery held workshops to participate in the event. Local families attended workshops to make mackerels and windmills for the procession through Falmouth and in another workshop made rainmakers whilst Cornish and Breton folk singers performed in the gallery.

10. Schools visits

- 10.1 Education visits have been particularly successful over the last financial year and are consistently improving. This is partly with thanks to freelance workshop facilitator Jo Lumber who has been running Heritage Lottery Fund workshops for visiting school groups.

11. Finance

- 11.1 For the Financial Year 2007-2008 the gallery expenditure was under budget, despite requiring unpredicted match funding for significant Heritage Lottery Fund, Esmee Fairbairn, and Art Fund projects. The curator would like to thank the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Geoffrey Evans and Deputy Town Clerk and Finance Officer, Simon Polglase for their hard work.

12. Arts and Business

- 12.1 The gallery hosted a special evening event and viewing of the Tuke exhibition for Arts and Business, South West. The evening was well attended by a guest list of delegates from a wide range of local businesses and organisations.