



LEAMINGTON  
STUDIO Artists

## LSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018 SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT

### **2017 – 2018 in review: Personnel Changes**

This past year started out with many important initiatives having been put in place under Kate Livingston's leadership. Kate very regrettably resigned as Chair in January of this year for business reasons after over two and a half years in harness, during which time she chaired the move to East Lodge and the introduction of ArtsFairs and Loft Theatre exhibitions (amongst many other things). The Trustees were all sorry to see Kate leave her position after having contributed so much to LSA and, indeed, we have missed her.

Thank you, Kate, for all your efforts on our behalf. We wish you the very best for the future.

After consideration of Kate's resignation, the Trustees filled the Chair position on a meeting-by-meeting basis from January to this month and a sharing of officer responsibilities amongst Tony, Alison and me.

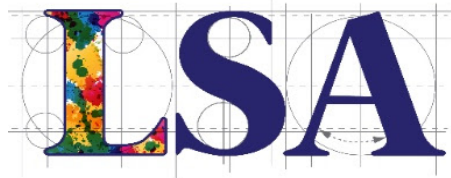
We also saw the resignation of Chris Freegard-Elmes at the end of April as East Lodge Manager. Chris got exhibitions in East Lodge going on a monthly basis and otherwise ensured stability in East Lodge operations. Thanks to a suggestion from Hilary Roberts and quick follow-ups by Soolie Burke, James Callaghan, Tony Cartwright and Alison Chantrey, we are very fortunate to have Cathy Black as the new Manager for East Lodge. In spite of only a short time in the position, Cathy has already made a substantial contribution in East Lodge, as well as to our new Public Relations subcommittee and in the Trustee meetings. We encourage all members to share their thoughts with Cathy as to possible improvements at East Lodge.

And, finally, we will lose Morgan Forth as a Trustee this year due to his relocation to London. Morgan was the first East Lodge Manager and helped greatly in making East Lodge habitable for our purposes and initiating many of the exhibitions and volunteer efforts now in regular place at East Lodge. A big thank you to Morgan for all his support for LSA.

### **2017 – 2018 in review: Stability at East Lodge**

East Lodge has become as important to LSA as Gallery 150 was, both as a focal point for the LSA member community and as an exhibition space for members and other arts organisations. Soolie Burke has been really effective this year in recruiting new volunteers and stewards that help keep the doors of East Lodge open. There is always a need for more stewards, so be sure to see either Soolie or Cathy if you are interested.

The Trustees agreed that a nice redecoration of the interior of East Lodge in anticipation of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of LSA would be entirely appropriate. David



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Troughton completed the redecoration of the main rooms and the stairs and kitchen in June and we've received many compliments on his work. (Is David here?) At the same time, Warwick District Council undertook various outside tasks to secure East Lodge from the weather and to correct other problems on the exterior. As a result, the Lodge is much more presentable inside and out although there are always going to be new projects that will make it even nicer.

### **2017 – 2018 in review: Visibility in the community**

The Trustees have had a continuing interest in gaining additional visibility for LSA as an important contributor to the arts in the Leamington community. The successful exhibitions with Warwickshire Open Studios and Coventry and Warwickshire Society of Artists helped with this. So has our continuing Board-level involvement with Art In The Park and our participation in AITP's August events in 2017 and now 2018. With this year's Celebration marquee at AITP marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *ArtSpace* and LSA, along with another marquee and a Celebration pre-party sponsored by both LSA and AITP on the Thursday evening before the AITP weekend, our visibility with AITP and those attending the events will be greater than ever.

Thanks to contacts developed by Alison and her diligence in following up, we also have 12 members whose work is in the process of decorating the bandstand hoardings in the Pump Room Gardens while the bandstand is being refurbished. This artwork will be a substantial opportunity for both the artists' and LSA's visibility in the community.

This year is the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for *ArtSpace*. As a notable arts journal with distribution in both the Leamington community and to major arts venues throughout the UK, *ArtSpace* continues to be an important source of visibility for LSA. Thanks to the efforts of David Phillips, Karen Parker and the other hard-working members of the subcommittee for *ArtSpace*, there are now three issues of *ArtSpace* each year. This year, that included the special and spectacular Anniversary issue which showcased the art of over 100 LSA members. The editor for *ArtSpace*, Lucy Ovanesyan, is a History of Art student at the University of Warwick and continues the tradition of such outreach to students and student volunteers at Warwick and Coventry along with Warwickshire College of Art and other entities.

We now have a new Press Officer for LSA—Elliot Minor—and an official photographer in James Callaghan. Elliot and James will ensure press coverage of exhibitions and other events undertaken by LSA. In addition, we have started a Public Relations subcommittee involving Karen Parker, Cherry Williams, Cristina Galalae, Cathy Black and Elliot Minor along with me, Tony and Meurig Hughes as Trustees. The subcommittee is currently focusing its efforts on increasing social media awareness of LSA events and on creative ways of attracting students and young professionals to LSA events and as prospective LSA members.



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### **2017 – 2018 in review: Member opportunities**

The Trustees have continued their interest in identifying venues for showcasing member's art outside of East Lodge.

Monthly ArtsFairs at the Farmers' Market and at Royal Priors Mall were initiated in 2016 as an opportunity for members to display and hopefully sell their artwork. While ArtsFairs have now been superseded by the opportunity to display at the Regents Court Makers Market on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, Alison is to be congratulated on the original initiative and working with CJ Events to make it a reality in the last two years.

Similarly, beginning this year, members can now exhibit their work in the lobby of the Loft Theatre when plays at the theatre are in performance.

The bandstand hoardings at the Pump Room Gardens and *ArtSpace 48*, both of which I mentioned earlier, have also provided opportunities for members to showcase their work in very public venues.

### **2017 – 2018 in review: Community involvement**

As a charity, LSA has an obligation to make art accessible to the Leamington community in ways that go beyond exhibitions by members or organizations.

This year, the Trustees undertook a special free exhibition by students at Whitnash Primary School at East Lodge as a means of meeting this objective of community involvement. The exhibition was very successful for the students, their teachers, the school and LSA and included opening comments from the mayors of both Leamington Spa and Whitnash.

### **2018 – 2019: Looking forward**

The Trustees are intent on maintaining all the momentum established this past year and building on it to make LSA a leader in the arts community in Leamington Spa.

The most immediate step in that direction is the upcoming celebration at Art In The Park, with exhibitions at two marquees and East Lodge along with what we hope is a well-attended joint celebration party on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, preceding AITP. Members are encouraged to attend as we expect the attendance to include a number of VIPs from Warwick District Council and Leamington Town Council and possibly our MP, Matt Western.

The LSA/AITP celebration party will highlight LSA's role in promoting the arts in our community and will be a first step in re-negotiating our lease of East Lodge with Warwick District Council for the next three years. A new lease will need to be in



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place by mid-January 2019, and negotiating the terms of the lease—should there be significant changes from our current lease—will be one of the most important tasks for the Trustees in the Autumn.

In November, East Lodge will host the exhibition entitled *Response To The Waste Land*. Inspired by *Journeys with "The Waste Land"*, an exhibition at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, 15 September – 18 November 2018, this special exhibition involves no exhibition fee for LSA members and follows on from projects celebrating T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* at the Mead Gallery (University of Warwick), the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry and the Turner Contemporary Art Gallery in Margate.

Continuing the outreach initiated with Whitnash Primary School this year, a special exhibition will be held at East Lodge for the Clapham Terrace Primary School in the Spring, 2019.

The Trustees are also hoping to arrange the schedule for exhibitions and shows at East Lodge for all of 2019 by early Autumn of this year, enabling better planning and PR opportunities for the events than is currently the case. The Trustees are also exploring the opportunity to go back to an Annual Summer Show at either Warwickshire College of Art or another suitable venue, thus freeing up exhibition space at East Lodge for other shows. In addition, the Trustees will continue to seek out opportunities to work with other arts organisations and with Warwick District Council in furthering its charitable purposes with special populations and the general population.