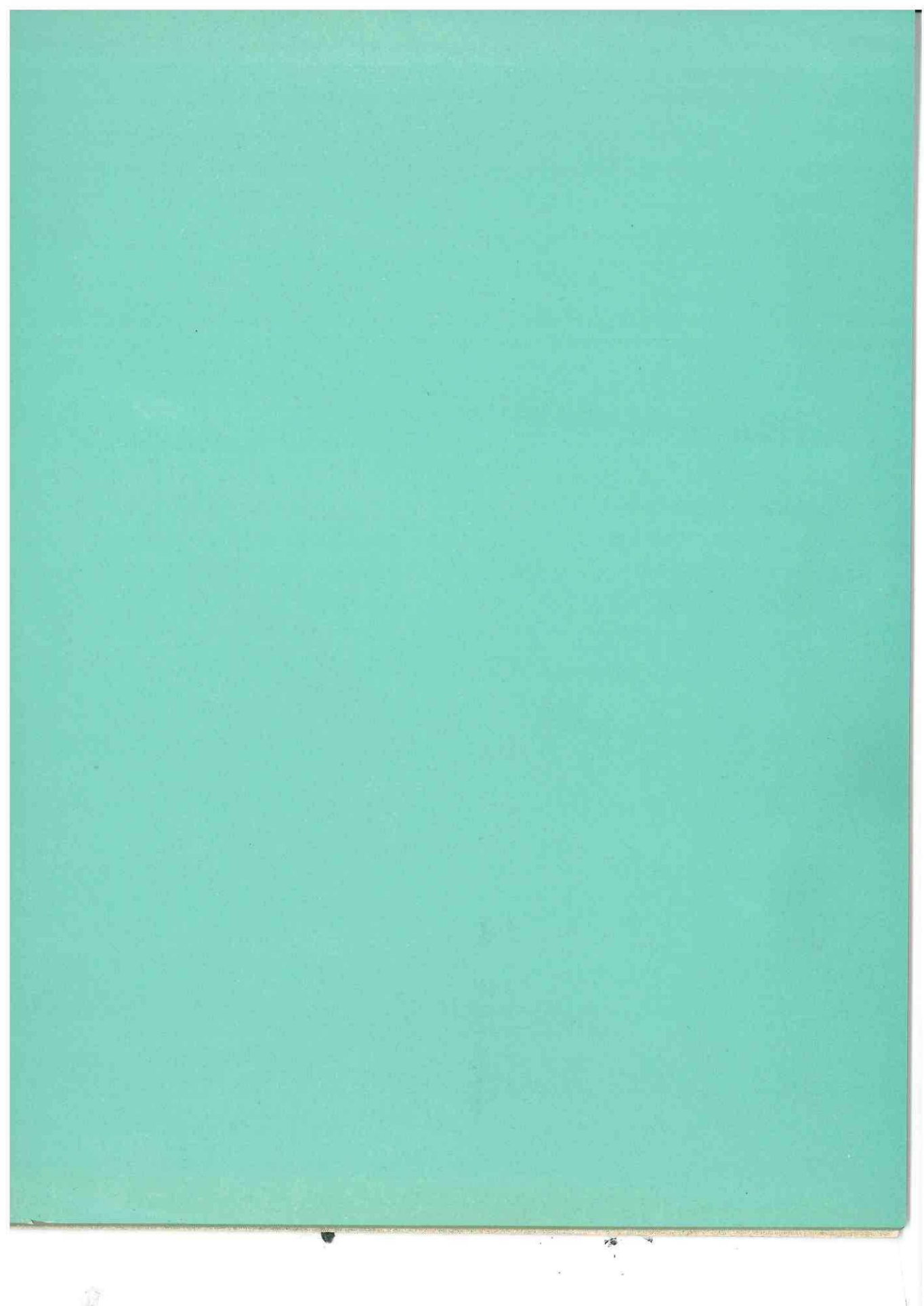


CONTEMPORARY ART SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT 1954-55



Contemporary Art Society, Tate Gallery, Millbank, S.W.1.

Patron

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother

Contemporary Art Society Executive Committee

Raymond Mortimer (Chairman)

Sir Colin Anderson (Hon. Treasurer)

E. C. Gregory (Hon. Secretary)

Edward Le Bas, R.A. Hugo Pitman

Sir John Rothenstein, C.B.E.

Sir Philip Hendy Howard Bliss

Eric Newton

W. A. Evill

Mrs. Cazalet-Keir

Peter Meyer

Eardley Knollys Loraine Conran

Assistant Secretary Denis Mathews *Hon. Assistant Secretary* Pauline Vogelpoel

Contents of Annual Report

The Chairman's Report at the Ordinary General Meeting, 20 December, 1955

Acquisitions, Loans and Presentations

The Hon. Treasurer's Report at the Ordinary General Meeting, 20 December, 1955

Auditors' Accounts

Future Occasions

The Chairman's Report

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have only one piece of bad news for you; let me get it over at once. Our Honorary Treasurer, Sir Colin Anderson, has felt obliged to resign. As Treasurer, he has served your interests for eleven years with prudence

tempered by justified optimism. The wonder is that a colossus of the shipping world should have been able and willing for so long to take so much trouble over not only the accounts but all the other concerns of the Society. On your behalf I wish to express deep gratitude for all his past services—and also a lively sense of favours to come; he remains a member of the Committee. When faced with his resignation, the Committee unanimously elected in his place Mr. Peter Meyer. We felt ourselves very fortunate in persuading him to undertake the duties of Honorary Treasurer, which are highly important but not highly enjoyable.

The Society continues to progress with the unostentatious tenacity of a fearless tortoise (I should prefer the leaps and bounds of a frightened hare). During the last two years we have gained 415 new members—rather more, that is to say, than our total membership in 1946. On the other hand we always lose some members; last year there were sixty resignations; this year there have been only twenty-seven. Some of us, I am bound to say cease to subscribe without bothering to resign, perhaps without even intending to do so; and the size of our membership cannot therefore be stated with absolute exactitude. It is round about 1950.

Last year we spent £1,591 on acquisitions, and presented works to ninety museums. For 1956 we have an ambitious project. The Committee decided in the spring to organize, if possible, another exhibition of its own. This could not be achieved, unless the Director and Trustees of the Tate were ready to house it. They generously consented; and we then decided to invite sculptors as well as painters to send us exhibits. At the suggestion of a sub-committee deputed to choose a subject for the painters and sculptors, we agreed upon 'The Seasons', which can be represented realistically, symbolically or abstractly. Sixty-two artists have accepted our invitation. We decided to allocate £1,000 for purchases from this exhibition, and furthermore to offer any museums wishing to buy one of the works 20 per cent of the cost. We hope that the exhibition will deserve and receive the attention of a large public, and attract many new members. None of us must expect to enjoy all the exhibits; some will doubtless protest that the exhibition is too conservative, others that it is not conservative enough. The Committee, in its invitation to artists has sought to maintain the traditional policy of the Society, which is to encourage the best contemporary art without any prejudice for or against any particular style or theory. The Exhibition is due to open on the 2nd March. The allocation of our recent purchases to museums will be made at about that time.

This year we have held loan exhibitions of works belonging to the Society at Plymouth, Cheltenham and Norwich. We have lent works also to exhibitions in the United States, Canada and Holland and to four in this country. We have lent works to hospitals, training colleges and the Architectural Association.

The purchaser this year has been Mr. Howard Bliss, and the works that he has chosen include paintings by Christoforou, D. Hamilton Fraser, Lawrence Gowing, Louis le Brocquy, Victor Pasmore and David Tindle, watercolours or drawings by Peter King, Edward Middleditch, Denis Mathews, Paul Nash, Alan Reynolds and Sickert. The purchaser for 1954 Mr. Eardley Knollys, completed his duties since the last Annual meeting by acquiring paintings by Henry Lamb, Mary Potter and Anne Estelle Rice. It has sometimes been suggested that the acquisitions of the Society reflect a narrow and prejudiced taste. Any such notion is surely refuted by the list of names I have just given. None of the purchases, I regret to say, are likely to satisfy the taste of Sir Alfred Munnings.

The privileges offered this year to members of the Society have been such, I hope, as to satisfy all of you. By the kindness of the Tate authorities we gave two evening parties, one for the Ben Nicholson show, and one for the Gauguin show. The collections we have been most generously invited to visit include those of Mr. Michael Astor, Mrs. Cartwright, Miss Watt and Miss Dolbey, and Mr. W. Evill. We were invited by Messrs. Bentall to see a mural painting by Stefan Knapp. The Directors of Marlborough Fine Art Ltd. gave us a sherry party and preview of their Desnoyer exhibition; Messrs. Roland, Browse and Delbanco treated us to two parties, one for their Guido Pajetta and Modigliani show, one for their Hayden and Ruskowski show. Such lavish hospitality leaves me fearing an ugly rush of new members interested in drinks rather than in contemporary art.

The admirable report recently published by the Trustees of the National Gallery emphasizes the appalling inadequacy of the funds provided by the Government for the purchase of works of art. Our Society does all within its power to make up for the meanness of Parliament, but our resources are miserably limited. May I conclude therefore with an appeal I have made before. If we had twice as many members, we could buy three times as many pictures. Will each member cajole or bully a relation or friend to join the Society?

The Treasurer's Report

The longest Treasurer's reports are usually those which go with hard times and a sad-looking Bank Account. This year I am happy to tell you that the Treasurer's Report is to be a very short one.

The Auditors themselves went so far as to express satisfaction and nobody would ask for more than that. As I have said before, it has always been our aim (or perhaps it could be put even more strongly than that—our determination) not to spend money that comes from subscriptions on parties that are for the entertainment of members. Again this year we have succeeded in this very proper aim. As a result, our purchasing power has not been encroached upon by our party-going expenses and it will interest you to know that we have been able to make purchases amounting to £11,500 during the last six years, all from our Members' Subscriptions.

Our expenses for the year to 31st September, 1954, are down against the corresponding period the year before by £396—on which Mr. Mathews must, I feel, be congratulated. We gained by not having to buy, as we did the year before, photographic equipment and a typewriter, but the main saving under this heading was a reduction of £216 in the cost of our Annual Report.

We have this year separated the costs of our exhibitions from those of our parties and you will observe that the surplus from parties goes a long way towards meeting expenses of our exhibitions also. You will agree that this is as it should be, so that our subscriptions, after paying for general expenses, are wholly available for purchases of pictures.

The net cost of purchases by the Society for the year amounted to £1,591, of which the biggest single item of expenditure was our contribution of £500 for 'The Portrait of Derain' by Matisse.

It is most encouraging to note that our subscriptions are again higher and we hope these will continue to rise and that new members will complete the standard covenant so that income tax may be recovered on such subscriptions.

In conclusion, I am very glad to be able to report that we have virtually balanced our Revenue Account this year, whereas our commitments for the two preceding years produced on each Revenue Account a considerable deficit.

The Contemporary Art Society/Revenue Account for the year ended 31 December, 1954

1953		£	s	d	£	s	d	1953		£	s	d
2073	Purchases	2029	7	0				2815	Subscriptions (Including Estimated Refund of Income Tax on Deeds of Covenant)	2931	16	10
—	Less Pictures purchased on behalf of and chargeable to Art Galleries	438	0	0	1591	7	0	190	Interest on Investments (Gross)	182	8	0
1924	Expenses of Exhibitions	148	3	0	1528	17	10	—	Insurance Recovery for damage to Sculpture	55	0	0
	Less Sale of Tickets for Parties less expenses	94	1	2				33	Surplus on Redemption of Defence Bonds	2	0	0
								13	Interest on Deposit	3	1	10
104 (Profit)					54	1	10	842	Deficit for year			
£3983					£3174	6	8	£3893		£3174	6	8

Note: (1) Auditors' Fee £42 (2) The Members of the Committee receive no emolument.

The Contemporary Art Society/Balance Sheet 31 December, 1954

Accumulated Funds (General and Foreign)				Current Assets			
1953		£	s	d	£	s	d
7527	Balance at 1 January 1954	6684	17	4	400	0	0
842	Less Deficit for year	3	1	10	2882	1	6
6685					991	0	0
					1800	0	0
887	Creditors				6073		
					1076		
	Members of the Committee				327		
					96		
					423		
£7572		£6996	6	4	£7572		

1953		£	s	d	£	s	d
400	Investments at Cost	400	0	0	5973	9	6
2882	500 National Savings Certificates	2881	17	6	688	9	11
991	£2884 1 6 3½% War Stock	891	12	0			
1800	£900 3% Defence Bonds	1800	0	0			
	£1800 3½% Defence Bonds						
6073	(Market value £5916)						
1076	Cash at Bank						
	Current Account						
327	Debtors						
96	Outstanding subscriptions and Estimated Income Tax recoverable on subscriptions	250	14	11			
	Payments in advance	83	12	0			
					334	6	11
					£6996	6	4

Note: No value has been included in the Balance Sheet for Pictures, etc., purchased by or presented to the Society and temporarily retained pending presentation to Art Galleries, etc.

Report of the Auditors to the Members of the Contemporary Art Society.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Society so far as appears from our examination of those books. We have examined the above Balance Sheet and the annexed Revenue Account which are in agreement with the books of account. In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanations given us the said Accounts give the information required by the Companies Act, 1948, in the manner so required and the Balance Sheet gives a true and fair view of the state of the Society's affairs as at 31 December, 1954, and the Revenue Account gives a true and fair view of the deficit for the year ended on that date.

Purchases by the Society

Paintings

Buyer: Howard Bliss

Phyllis Bray Still Life
John Christoforou Head of Woman
D. Hamilton Fraser Beach with Cloudbanks and Cliffs
D. Hamilton Fraser Red Landscape
D. Hamilton Fraser Still Life
Lawrence Gowing Window at Roquebrune
Ivon Hitchens Red Spring 1955
Morris Kestelman Mending Mullet nets
Louis le Brocquy Ageing man Washing
Victor Pasmore Motif in Indian Red and Mustard
Peter Potworowski Window in Spain
David Tindle Teazle

Buyer: Eardley Knollys

Henry Lamb The Mourners
Mary Potter Still Life with Roses
Anne Estelle Rice The Bouquet

Watercolours and Drawings

Buyer: Howard Bliss

S. W. Hayter Wizard (Engraving)
Peter King Series of fourteen Figure Studies (Drawings)
Edward Middleditch Bull (Drawing)
Denis Mathews Gathering Groundnuts (Drawing)
Paul Nash Clearing in the Wood (Watercolour)
Paul Nash A path through the Woods (Drawing)
Alan Reynolds Winter Saga (Watercolour)
W. R. Sickert Portrait of the Artist (Drawing)

Buyer: E. C. Gregory

Reg Butler Studies for an Alternative Scheme 1952 (Coloured Drawing)

Reg Butler Studies for three Heads of Watchers (Coloured Drawing)

Loans made by the Society

Art Organizations and galleries have arranged exhibitions in which they have included works from the Society's acquisitions as follows:

To the British Council

'Young British Sculptors 1955-1956'. United States and Canada
Eduardo Paolozzi, Bernard Meadows

'Third International of Sculpture in the Open Air'. Zandspeke, Holland
Reg Butler

Finsbury Art Group

Robert Adams, Jankel Adler, William Gear, Charles Murray, William Scott

Oxford University Art Club, Ashmolean Museum

Alan Reynolds, D. Hamilton Fraser

Wakefeld City Art Gallery

Josef Herman, L. S. Lowry

The Beaux Arts Gallery

Martin Bloch (Memorial Exhibition)

The Leicester Galleries

André Masson (Retrospective Exhibition)

Loans to Colleges and Hospitals

Pictures have been lent to the following colleges and hospitals.
This succession of smaller exhibitions has been changed every few months
and has been greatly appreciated by students, medical staff and patients.

Architectural Association
Bishop Otter College
British Electricity Training Centres
National Hospital for Nervous Diseases
Royal Marsden Hospital
St. Osyth's Training College

C.A.S. Loan Exhibitions

A number of complete exhibitions selected from
the Society's stock have been arranged.

Plymouth Art Gallery February-March

Cheltenham Art Gallery July-August Festival

Eric Atkinson, Jacob Bornfriend, John Bratby, Bernard Dunstan,
Martin Froy, Duncan Grant, Roger de Grey, Josef Herman,
Henry Moore, Bateson Mason, William Nessler, Eduardo Paolozzi,

R. V. Pitchforth, Will Roberts, Leonard Rosoman, Adrian Ryan,
Michael Rothenstein, Stella Steyn, Victor Willing.

Castle Museum, Norwich

Keith Vaughan, William Scott, Henry Lamb, Fred Uhlman,
Prunella Clough, Mary Potter.

Grants In Aid to Galleries

Certain galleries asked for the Society's help in acquiring particular pictures for which their gallery funds were insufficient. The majority of these were bought from the 'Figures in their Setting' Exhibition organized by the C.A.S. at the Tate Gallery.

John Armstrong	A Vision of St. Theresa	Preston
Bateson Mason	Sleeping Fisherman	Nottingham
Henri Matisse	Portrait of Derain	Tate Gallery
John Minton	Painter and Model	Bournemouth
Ben Nicholson	Painting 1937	Tate Gallery
Ben Nicholson	White Relief 1935	Tate Gallery
Julian Trevelyan	The Garage	Huddersfield

Further Allocations from the Sir Edward Marsh Bequest

Mark Gertler	Nude (drawing)	South African National Gallery, Cape Town
Stanley Spencer	Head of Girl (drawing)	South African National Gallery, Cape Town
Sir Oswald Birley	Portrait of Sir Edward Marsh	National Portrait Gallery, London

Gifts from the Society

Wyndham Lewis	Three Studies of Women (drawing)	Tate Gallery
Wyndham Lewis	Crouching nude (drawing)	Tate Gallery
George Grosz	Married Couple (drawing)	Tate Gallery
George Grosz	Illustration for 'Der Spiesser-Spiegel' (drawing)	Tate Gallery
Andre Masson	Mont St. Victoire (oil)	Tate Gallery

Gifts to the Society

Donor: S. K. Ratcliffe, Esq.

William Ratcliffe	Hampstead High Street (watercolour drawing)
William Ratcliffe	House on Hampstead Heath (watercolour drawing)
William Ratcliffe	Farmyard (watercolour drawing)

Contemporary Art Society Occasions

C.A.S. Exhibition at the Tate Gallery

"The Seasons" Exhibition has been organised by the C.A.S.
Fifty-eight painters and sculptors have each been invited
to prepare a special work for it.
The Exhibition remains open until April 15th.
Entrance Fee 1/-, but free to members showing their card.

Arrangements to view two Private Collections are being made
and will take place in the early Spring.



Left

W. R. Sickert. Self Portrait. Drawing 21" x 17".

Inside Back Cover

Edward Middleditch. The Bull. Drawing 12" x 26".

