

Welcome to our second monthly newsletter. With the days getting shorter and the nights drawing in, we wanted to let you know that we're still thinking of you. In last month's newsletter we told you about the Art on a Postcard competition (A5), scheduled for Jan -Feb 2021 on the theme of 'Winter'. More details next month but keep painting in the meantime and to help you do that there are some more art challenges at the end of this newsletter. Plus a quiz to keep the grey matter moving!

Our main article this month is written by Chair of the Society, Colin Robins.

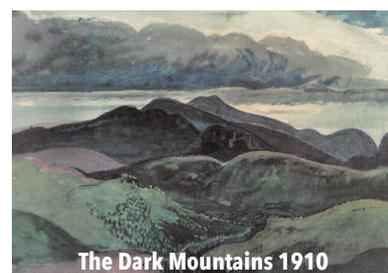
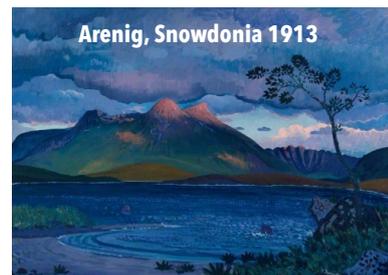
**James
 Dickinson Innes
 (1886-1914)**



I first came across the work of Innes in the library of my school in the Cynon Valley. I was 16 and a compulsive drawer and painter, revelling in the unlimited access I now had to hefty tomes on artists and the history of art. Although my A-level choices were all languages, Art was an abiding passion. I had fallen hopelessly for the work of German Expressionists, and here was work by someone from Wales whose use of colour and disregard for the rules of form echoed what I had found so enticing in expressionist art. It was ironic that I should end up settling in Innes's home town, and it was wonderful to get to know people who also shared my love of Innes's paintings.

James Innes's legacy to Wales, Llanelli and the world, was a body of work that continues to this day to fascinate us, and at its most accomplished to mesmerise us. Through his time at Carmarthen Art School (1904-1905), then the Slade School of Fine Art in London (1905-1908), via visits to Paris, or to Collioure in the south west of France, and his friendships with people like Augustus John, he produced work that reflected the experiments and innovations in form and colour that characterised the art world at the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth centuries.

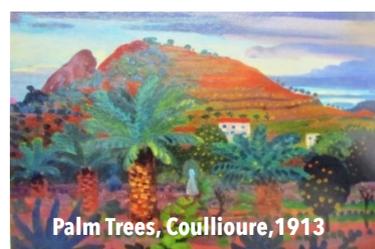
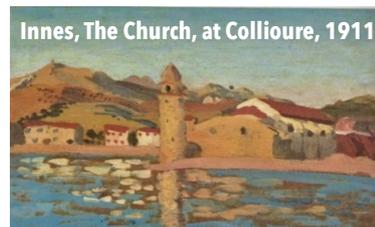
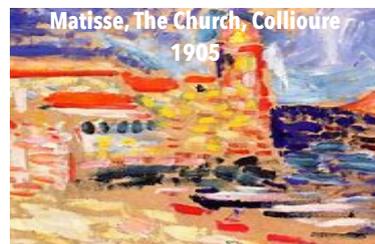
He was a young artist, still developing his skills and experimenting, when he died in 1914, at the age of 28, after developing tuberculosis. Not all his work is perfect. There are obvious flaws in his figure drawing, and there are some compositional weaknesses in his work. As a colourist, however, he is in a league of his own. Innes's paintings can zing with colour- expressing a vibrancy, an intoxication with the landscape, light and life. At other times, his palette creates a deeper, achingly reflective mood akin to the twilight meditations of Casper David Friedrich, the German romantic painter, or Turner's experiments with light and colour to express his own mystic view of the world.



James Dickinson Innes gave us in Wales a new way of visualising our country and its landscape. Despite his premature death, he was able to develop a distinctive style that used intense colour combinations, vigorous brushwork and energetic lines to capture not just the geography of an area but to convey his own emotional response to what he saw around him.

James Dickinson Innes's first visit to Collioure, South West France, was in 1908. The small fishing village had become a regular haunt of artists Matisse, Derain, and Picasso. Just like Matisse and Derain, Innes would be totally struck by the light and colour qualities there. Like Matisse and Derain, this would have profound effects on the work he would produce later. Unfortunately, there is as yet, no proof that Innes ever met Matisse or Derain. But all three artists' work was to change as a result of their encounter with the light, colours and geography of the maritime Pyrenees.

In recent years, Innes's work has been reassessed and is now regarded as important and influential by the British art establishment. Wouldn't it be marvellous if every school in Llanelli had a print of one of his works to celebrate this pioneering artist with his roots in Llanelli?



And here are Colin's challenges for members

1. Try and produce a landscape in the manner of James Dickinson Innes and send it to us.
2. Ever tried to draw a bottle? Check out Youtube for a tutorial.
3. Try drawing a hand clasping a bottle.
4. Ever tried using graphite powder? Checkout a Youtube tutorial and see what it can be used to do.

ART QUIZ

Which artist is associated with:

1. A missing ear?
2. Posters of dancers in Paris nightclubs?
3. A face with a famous, mysterious smile?
4. A can of soup?
5. Spending 4 hours tied to a ship's mast to study a snowstorm?
6. A statue of David in Florence?
7. Paintings of lilies in his garden pond?
8. A figure screaming on an Oslo bridge?
9. Bronze figurines and paintings of Paris ballet-dancers?
10. A Blue Phase?
11. The natives and landscapes of Fiji and Brittany?
12. A giant angel statue on an English hill?
13. A notorious man's urinal, entitled "Fountain"?
14. North Wales' mountains and shepherds?
15. A painting of a Los Angeles swimming pool?
16. Dream paintings with melted watches?
17. Panoramic paintings of C18 London, Dresden and Venice?
18. Putting her bed in an exhibition?
19. A nude Venus arriving to shore on a seashell?
20. Energetic paintings of splashes drips and squiggles?
21. A sculpture of two nude lovers embracing?
22. A shark in a water tank?
23. A painting of a nun. Her brother painted gypsies.
24. Geometric apples and landscapes?
25. Vases and cross-dressing?

Answers in the next newsletter