

Newsletter

Issue 2 January 2010

Happy New Year!

Our very best wishes to all EAC Art Awards friends. May you enjoy happiness and good health in 2010. Also, a big thank-you to all who made the 2009 Art Awards such a resounding success.

For the first time in its long history, the Art Awards exhibition this year was held in December, and it was with some trepidation that we contemplated the possible weather scenarios; trains snowed up or cancelled, miserable artists trudging into The Bankside after a walk from the tube in pouring rain, etc etc. Not a bit of it!

The preview day, held on 1st December, dawned clear and bright, and the invited finalists and highly commended artists, along with friends and family, filled the gallery from 3pm to 8.30pm. The exhibition was then open for the following five days with free admission,

Re-live Art Awards 2009 at
www.eacartawards.org.uk



Les Child painting at The Bankside, Wednesday 2nd December



Clockwise from top left: finalists Gerald Hudson, Cesarea Santana, Sarah Maria Rhys, and Ken White

and on the Wednesday, artist Leslie Child, prize-winner in 2008 and finalist in 2009, set up his easel in the gallery and worked on one of his distinctive Northern scenes, much to the delight of visitors.

Age – Brush it Aside! 95 year old Lilian Smith from Walsall, and her daughter, 74 year-old Elizabeth Jones, were both awarded a highly commended in 2009. Congratulations to them both!



EAC Art Awards 1994 to 2009 – Facts and Figures

The first EAC Art Awards were held in 1994; a year earlier than we had once thought, but recently pinpointed by the unearthing of a 1994 EAC Annual Report. That makes the Awards 16 years old in 2009.

Over the years, entry numbers have generally been between 1600 and 2000, which makes the 2009 figure of 2150 particularly pleasing. This may have been helped by the special offer on multiple entries; something we will do our best to carry forward to 2010's Awards.



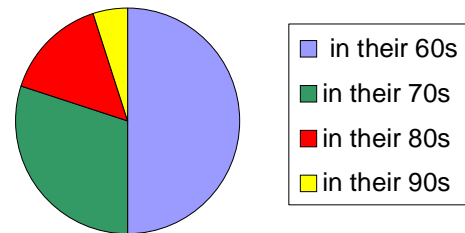
Gordon Morley's prizewinning 'Downham Village Lancashire'

Of the 2150 entries, 101 finalists were selected by the judges for exhibition, and a further 71 were awarded a Highly Commended, and images of their work displayed within the gallery during the 6-day exhibition.

In 2009, just over 25% of entries came from Birmingham and all points north, with very encouraging 1st time entries from Ireland, France, Austria and USA. We extend a warm welcome to all new entrants, thank them for taking part, and hope they will return next year.

The chart below shows the age distribution of entrants to EAC's 2009 Art Awards, and confirms once again EAC's strong belief that

Entrants to EAC Art Awards 2009



older people, given help and support as or when necessary, can be just as creative and talented as younger people, and just as eager to carry on living interesting, outward looking and fulfilling lives, well into older age.

New Developments in 2009

2009 was a significant year for EAC Art Awards. We started the year with a rather old-fashioned website which allowed visitors to browse online galleries of past entries and not much else. Over the course of 2009, the new website at www.eacartawards.org.uk was introduced, with online entry and payment, and with news updates for artists. The highlight of the year, however, just has to be the online voting for 'The People's Choice Award', which took place over three weeks in November. We had never seen the website so lively, with people from over 50 countries viewing over 100,000 website pages, and casting their votes for their favourite works of art from the 101 finalists' works on display. By the time the actual exhibition came round, at The Bankside Gallery, Gordon Morley's picture of 'Downham



Village, Lancashire', had scooped 1st position in a nail-biting finish, narrowly beating Gerald Hudson's 'Venice'.

In addition to the 3500 votes cast, 950 comments were also submitted by viewers. These comments, have, we understand, been valued by the artists themselves as much as the actual numbers of votes.

So, if you haven't yet seen the website, please make a special trip to the library, or to a friend or relation's house, and have a look. The comments are still there, attached to each



Alan Bowering's "Tranquillity – Mevagissey"

individual artist's page, and a 2009 video and album of photos have been added to the site, with links to the Home page. Some of the photos are still uncaptioned, and we would like to hear from you if you can help with names.

2009 Prizewinners

The following prizes were awarded at the preview event on 1st December 2009:



Carol Allen's "The Point"

The Girlings Prize for Landscape / Seascape

to Alan Bowering for "Tranquillity – Mevagissey"

The Caring Homes Prize for Still Life to Judy

Dames, for "A Beane not Open, a Beane Open"

The Peverel Prize for Watercolour to Barbara

Hughes for "Dubrovnik, Pearl of the Adriatic"

The EAC Prize for Drawing to Nancy Howie

for "Ex Libris"

The EAC Prize for Oil Painting to Sarah Maria

Rhys for "Last Dance"

The EAC Prize for Portraiture to Sandra

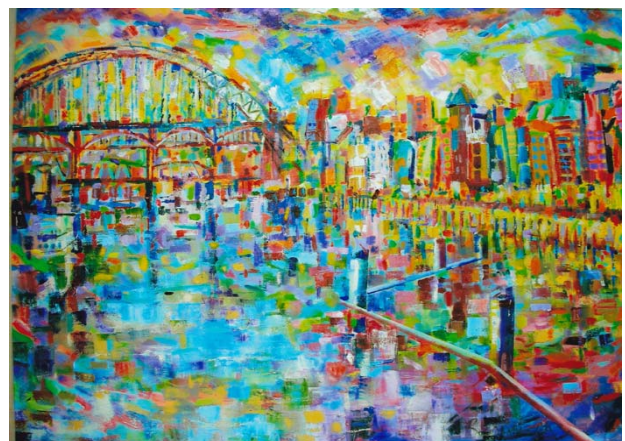
Smith Gordon for "Self Portrait at 70"

The EAC Prize for 3D Work to Jeff Perks for

"Chicken in a Basket"

The EAC Prize for Photography to Carol Allen

for "The Point"



Richard Benjamin's "Big Market Newcastle"



The Leisure Painter Subscription Prize to Gillian Flack for "Onions and Blue Vase"

The Artist Subscription Prize to Brian Collins for "A Shady Spot, Luxor",

The Earnley Concourse Prize to William Belshaw for "Making Sandcastles"

The EAC People's Choice Award to Gordon Morley for "Downham Village, Lancashire",

The Angela Farnell Memorial Prize to Richard Benjamin for "Big Market, Newcastle".

Our congratulations to all the prizewinners and once again, our thanks to all those who entered EAC Art Awards 2009. Each year the high quality of the work submitted, the sheer energy and enthusiasm of entrants aged 60 to 99, and their appreciation of the recognition and opportunity which the competition offers them, make the considerable investment of many people's time and money worthwhile.

Art Awards Sponsors

We would like to thank, at this point, our sponsors: Caring Homes, Peverel Retirement, The Artist and Leisure Painter magazines, Earnley Concourse, and Girlings Retirement Options, whose generous prizes were much appreciated by the winners. Special thanks go to Abbeyfield, who, in addition to sponsoring the Angela Farnell Memorial Prize, also funded the preview event at The Bankside Gallery.

Thanks also to artist Tom Coates, and to Sally Bulgin, editor of The Artist magazine, who freely gave of their time to carry out the initial judging and then to present prizes at the preview event.



*Barry the Saxophonist
from the Jazz Trio*



*Marianne Downing,
prizewinner 2008,
and finalist 2009*



Nan Leifer and Tue Tan, finalists, behind

Friends of Coldean exhibit, 'Tea & Memories'.

Two Special Mentions

The Caring Homes group, whose support and encouragement resulted in 14 entries from artists resident within their care homes. Congratulations to Anne Chaudhri whose work was exhibited.

Highly commended artist Frank Hester, whose birth date of 1st March 1910 makes him the oldest entrant to the EAC Art Awards in 2009. Congratulations, and a very happy birthday in March, Mr Hester!