

# Members Newsletter and Programme

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## Plans to lower paintings regularly at the National Gallery



Copyright National Gallery

Following the National Gallery Directors inclusive event with A2A, the gallery are now considering lowering paintings on a regular basis.

During the event, children, wheelchair users and visitors with no mobility requirements enjoyed seeing the paintings hung at a new height and commented that it challenged their

perceptions and made them take the time to look in a new way. The fact that the gallery lowered the paintings of the first time demonstrated that access is being addressed and valued.

The Access Officer is therefore planning to establish the lowering of selected paintings as part of the Gallery's regular offer.

## Disappointing disabled access at British Museum

Members are invited to comment to A2A about their access experience at the recent visit to the British Museum. Throughout A2A's Educational Programme in October and November, members and volunteers were hampered by unreliable access facilities. Inexperienced and worried gallery staff were unable to resolve or help the situation.

A2A Art Educator, Gill Cutbill explained "Each visit was badly held up by the problems with a three step

lift for the East Pediment of the Parthenon Galleries. Wheelchair users - up to eight per visit - had to queue for the lift in the gallery. This worked intermittently or not at all" The situation was exacerbated by one or both adapted (disabled) toilets being out of action on the Great Court Level.

.A2A will be taking this up with the British Museum and will keep members and volunteers posted. See page 2 for members response to Gills 'Fantastic' art talk!

This programme has been chosen by members attending the AGM

January to April  
Programme  
2010

Educational trip  
Dutch Painters at the National Gallery

£5 charge  
£7 transport

The Real van Gogh  
The artist and his letters at the Royal Academy of Arts

£10 (to be confirmed)  
£7 transport

Kingdom of Ife at the British Museum

£8 (to be confirmed)  
£7 transport

**Gill Cutbill's talk was "fantastic"  
says A2A members**

Members have been contacting A2A to congratulate Gill Cutbill on her "fantastic" talk on Greek Antiquities at the British Museum. Westminster member, Mr Scott, was "Over the moon" with the talk "I've been to the Parthenon Marbles many times but it was like something new I hadn't seen before." He said "She gave us the complete picture of how it must have appeared on the Acropolis when the paint was new". Southwark member, Monica Humphries agreed "She was so knowledgeable, she held your interest and you were drawn in" Monica was disappointed not more members were able to attend her group visit "We must encourage more members to come to these talks" she said. Gill Cutbill also enjoyed giving the talks "Your members are inspiring and well informed" she said "It was a real privilege to spend time with them". Gill gave talks to 56 A2A members in total .

**Wellcome Collection seek  
Camden member views**

The Wellcome Collection, based on the Euston Road, are setting up focus groups to see where they are going right/wrong with access at their museum. They are looking for Camden residents. If you are able to get to and from the Collection (with an A2A volunteer to help you) and would like further information please contact A2A.

**STAGETEXT**

STAGETEXT is a registered charity providing captioned performances and promoting the use of captioning mainly in theatres throughout the UK.

Captioning is a way of converting the spoken word into visible text that provides deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people with access to live performance.

Stage text produces a programme of performances at major London venues when captioning is available. If you are hard of hearing or deaf and would like to know more, then contact Stagetext on 020 7737 0540, textphone 020 7247 7801 or enquiries@stagetext.org or contact A2A.

**10 year award for A2A volunteers**

A2A have awarded three volunteers who had been with the charity for 10 years. Dorothy Strickland, Anita Harding and Ivor Samuels, who was also was the first Chairman. All three continue to volunteer with A2A and were awarded art books at the AGM.

**We were very saddened at the death of members Marianne Hohenberg, Dorothy Thompson, Charles Maguire, and most recently Alan Rabson and Jean Weekley**

Marianne Hohenberg 93 had been a Camden member since 2002. She had booked 72 visits with A2A and went to the galleries 54 times! At 93 years old, Marianne continued to be very open minded and into all sorts of different art - painting, theatre and opera. She made haute couture buttons in her younger days, and always enjoyed a cigarette. Her son told us that she smoked for 83 years and started when she stole her father's cigars from his (locked) desk! Marianne walked the 2.4 miles between Tate Modern and Tate Britain on our famously wet sponsored walk in 2008, this great achievement was published her local paper, the Ham and High .

Dorothy Thompson,89 joined A2A in 2006 and was a regular member on the Merton minibus had been on 26 visits to the galleries with A2A. She had been a PA to the Director of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Charles Maguire,76 was a Wandsworth member since 2007 and had been on seven A2A trips. Marilyn, his wife and carer said how he had got a great deal from his visits to the galleries. Charles had a long term, rare brain disease and Marilyn had cared for him for some years.

Alan Rabson,90, joined A2A in 2003 and was cared for by his wife. In his younger days, Alan was a solicitor and worked with Thames Water. He loved the arts and visiting galleries but had a lot of medical problems.

Jean Weekley,74 had been a member and volunteer with A2A since the beginning - over 10 years ago. She was always helpful, caring and friendly and was a wonderful needlewoman. In 2008 she became a trustee and at the AGM in 2008 sold her beautiful hand made crafts in aid of A2A. She was always a positive, cheerful person who will be missed by many members .

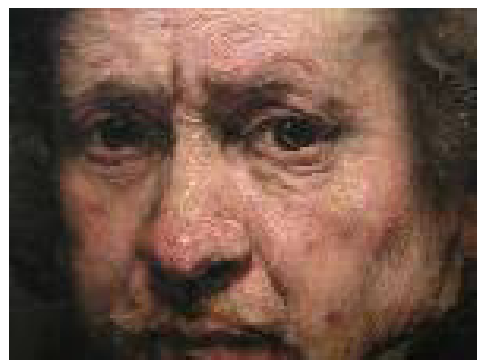
Please note that the best time to contact Access to Art is a Monday or Tuesday. The office is closed on Fridays.

## January to April 2010 Programme

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### **Dutch Paintings at the National Gallery**

### **A2A Educational Visit**



#### **January/February**

Enjoy a National gallery Art Tak for one hour on beautiful Dutch paintings!

You will then have two hours to enjoy lunch and the gallery!

*'Meet You There' and Group members welcome*

The emergence of the Dutch school of painting in the early seventeenth century is one of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of the visual arts. The Dutch republic a small country that had only become a political entity in 1579 and was still suffering from the effects of a long and arduous war with Spain, would hardly seem to have had the resources to nourish and sustain its artistic traditions. The Dutch seem to have drawn strength from adversity; they profited in terms of trade, political awareness, religious tolerance, wealth and above all, self esteem. They were proud of their achievements and were determined to provide for themselves a broad and lasting foundation that would define their unique social and cultural heritage.

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## February/March at the Royal Academy of Arts



### THE REAL **VAN GOGH** THE ARTIST AND HIS LETTERS

The Royal Academy of Arts will stage a landmark exhibition of the work of Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). The focus of the exhibition will be the artist's remarkable correspondence. Over 35 original letters, rarely exhibited to the public due to their fragility, will be on display, together with around 65 paintings and 30 drawings that express the principal themes to be found within the correspondence.

The first major Van Gogh exhibition in London for over 40 years, this will be a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the complex mind of Vincent van Gogh

# March/April

## British Museum



The Kingdom of Ife (pronounced ee-fay) was a powerful, cosmopolitan and wealthy city-state in West Africa (in what is now modern southern Nigeria). It flourished as a political, spiritual, cultural and economic centre in the 12th–15th centuries AD, and was an influential hub of local and long-distance trade networks.

The exhibition features superb pieces of Ife sculpture, drawn almost entirely from the magnificent collections of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria.

The artists of Ife developed a refined and highly naturalistic sculptural tradition in stone, terracotta, brass and copper to create a style unlike anything in Africa at the time. The technical sophistication of the casting process is matched by the artworks' enduring beauty. The human figures portray a wide cross-section of Ife society and include images of youth and old age, health and disease, suffering and serenity.

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## We can 'Meet You There'

A2A individual members and group members can also arrange to meet A2A volunteers at the gallery of their own choice.

### How do I organise this?

1. Find an exhibition or gallery you want to visit (up to 3 hours) and contact Isobel at A2A to let her know when you want to go.
2. A2A will send you a list of galleries, addresses and details to help drivers.
3. A2A can reserve parking and borrow wheelchairs.
4. An A2A volunteer will telephone you a few days beforehand to finalise arrangements. If you are arranging a group, then tell us how many volunteers you need.

## A few ideas for 2010

**Imperial War Museum Outbreak : free admission** This special exhibition explores how being a nation at war shaped the lives of ordinary men and women as well as those who were actively involved in the political

negotiations and their aftermath. Also: *Breakthrough* is a major re-hang of the Imperial War Museum's collection of British art incorporating outstanding artworks from the official art schemes of both world wars and significant non-official and contemporary works.

**Transport museum:** (tickets £8 includes admission to the museum Exhibition): Suburbia Suburbia explores how public transport helped to create the myths and identity of suburbia and how it has featured in the cultural fabric of London and Britain over the last 100 years .

**Museum of Childhood** The V&A Museum of Childhood houses the UK's national collection of childhood-related objects, one of the finest in the world.

**Henry Moore Tate Britain** (tickets £11.50) Radical, experimental and avant-garde, Henry Moore is one of the greatest sculptors that Britain has ever produced. This major exhibition will bring together the most comprehensive



# Members and Volunteers Fundraising news

## URGENT APPEAL £10,000 by 1st April 2010

A2A need to raise £10,000 by 1st April in order to meet the 'match' funding requirements by City Bridge Trust.

The Trust awarded A2A £20,000 a year for three years on condition we raised at least the same amount ourselves - through fundraising etc - every year. This is our second year of the

grant. "In 2008/9 we raised over £20,000 ourselves but despite efforts again this year, we are needing to raise £10,000 over the next 5 months" said Jane Turner, A2A Director "Members and volunteers have been very supportive so far but we still have a way to go to meet our target".

### **Make a regular gift to Access to Art**

**If you would like to support A2A on a regular basis, you can do this through a standing order with your bank. Enclosed with this mailing is a standing order form. Simply fill it in and return it with your booking.**

**Making a regular donation is particularly helpful to A2A. It helps to plan for a more secure and future for the charity. We hope you can help.**

### **How you can help A2A**

- ✓ If you are thinking of carol singing for charity this year, why not nominate A2A
- ✓ Meeting up with friends or colleagues this Christmas? Why not have a collection for A2A!
- ✓ Can you sell A2A Christmas cards at your local Christmas Fayre
- ✓ Coffee morning for A2A

### **Last chance to buy your Christmas Cards from A2A,**

**You can buy 'Kensington and Chelsea Street Scene' pack of 10 cards for £4.99. We still have some Picasso's 'Dove' (3.99 for 8 cards) and 'Fun in Trafalgar Square' (£4.99 for 10 cards)**

**You may also buy cards on the minibus (except Merton) or telephone A2A and we will send them out to you.**

### **A2A Goods**



'Meet You There' members will easily be noticed at the gallery if wearing A2A's new orange cotton scarves. Only £5

A2A 'T' Shirts Medium or Large £8

A2A cotton bags. Very handy and washable! £8

Available from the A2A office, send your cheque with your next booking.

**Thank you all for buying and selling raffle tickets which was drawn at our AGM. We raised £860.**

## **Katie's memorable bike ride raises £932**



A2A volunteer Katie took up the challenge to do the London to Paris cycle ride in aid of A2A. She wrote to all her supporters about about her 5 day adventure which culminated in a glorious cycle in Paris:

**The whole experience was more of a challenge than I could possibly have imagined but a real triumph, not only to have made it, but to have got so much more out of it than I ever expected, and to have done it all in the name of Access to Art!**

“The ride around the Arc de Triomphe and along the Champs Elysee was quite magical as passers-by lined the streets, took photos and cheered us on. I don't think one person wanted it to end.

We finally reached the Eiffel Tower to be greeted by friends and family and have a big group photo before being herded away and on to the hotel where there was Champagne all round and finally time to relax, bathe in our glory and soak our muscles! “

*If you know someone who would like a real adventure - from cycling to Paris, jumping form a parachute or even walking up Kilimanjaro, contact A2A for details or visit our website. [www.access2art.org.uk](http://www.access2art.org.uk)*

### **Kew Musical Museum hosts classical recital and raises £1,000 for Access to Art**

The Kew Museum hosted a recital by the award winning Salamon Ensemble with pieces by Schumann, Schubert and Beethoven in aid of Access to Art. The musicians played to a packed audience.

There was also a demonstration of musical instruments at the museum during the interval.

A2A member Ann Credland said “I enjoyed it all very much. The place was ideal and one highlight was a demonstration of the whirlitzer organ. It was all brilliant”

We are particularly grateful to Ginette Kentish and the Kew Musical Museum for their support, and to the Salamon Quartet and the sponsors for making it all possible. The event raised £1,098 - a great success!

## **Thank you**

Emily, Jeaneatte and Rita and everyone who donated raffle prizes.

Thanks to trusts  
Concertina Charity  
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