

NEWSLETTER

The Arts Society of West Suffolk

Next Meeting: Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 10am
Blackbourne Community Centre, Elmswell

Frida Kahlo - A Life in Art **Fiona Rose**



The tumultuous life of this Mexican artist is reflected in paintings which express life as a woman for the first time in western art.

Fiona Rose is an accredited lecturer with The Arts Society and has been giving talks around the country since 2010. She has given talks to many WI and U3A groups, history, art, antiques and garden clubs, The National Trust, The William Morris Society and the Arts & Crafts Movement in Surrey association. She has a special interest in William Morris, his circle and the Arts & Crafts Movement and aims to include the human story behind the artistic endeavours of her lecture subjects.

After fifteen years working for public health charities and the NHS, in 2009 Fiona followed her long-held dream and founded a home interiors business.

Fiona is a member of the Museum Collections committee for The William Morris Society where she served as a Trustee for four years. She is a contributor to the Society's Magazine and Journal of William Morris Studies. Fiona also greatly enjoys volunteering as a House Guide with Arts & Crafts Movement gem, the David Parr House in Cambridge.

Garden design in relation to art Timothy Walker, our speaker this month, reinforced Gertrude Jekyll's statement that designing a garden border was "painting a picture" and emphasised the importance of colour. Colour can be beguiling; its effect is apparent in raw, earthy hues in early cave paintings, and later in modern Dreamtime aboriginal art. Ancient Egyptian tombs show newly discovered rich blue, also used to show status in 15C religious paintings. However, early garden design focused on line and form in monochrome green, as seen in Rousham House gardens, Oxfordshire, designed by William Kent in 1737. Colour was introduced into the flower garden at Nuneham Courtenay in 1771 by William Mason. Design was considered of greater importance than colour, but with colour choice often being influenced by art, as Gertrude Jekyll's was by



Turner's works. Colour is very difficult to describe. There have been many attempts to produce a chromatic scale ranging from Aristotle's 6 basic colours and Isaac Newton's 7 rainbow colours to Werner's 110 colours; in fact the number of colours is infinite. Penelope Hobhouse chose 6 colours for the 20C Arts and Crafts Haddesden Gardens, later redesigned by Sandra and Nori Pope using 9 colours. Andrew Lawson's *The Gardener's Book of Colour* lists 13 colours, but what is colour? Past philosophers have unanimously failed to address this question, but in more recent times Susan Hurley researched the what and where of colour. Colour encompasses chemistry in its pigment, physics in its light and reflection, and biology in its perception; all three sciences overlapping with art. Colour may be

used to attract, or to warn or mimic warning, or to camouflage. Historically, as in art, colours were carefully placed in gardens with thought and deliberation to avoid haphazard design. Garden design provides varied interest from different angles with light quality and quantity affecting how gardens appear. Buildings may also influence the garden's aspect, particularly when painted to echo colour plantings. Colourful flowers provide a living palette. Harmony of colours are favoured over contrast, although saturated contrast is sometimes pleasing. A less controlled application of colour through random sowing is nowadays considered to produce a modernistic garden design, referencing artists such as Jackson Pollack. The design of a garden may be planned, changed, and planned again. It may be influenced by male or female inception. It may contain portrait plants surrounded by family plants in a harmonious community. Above all, as with art, you should design what appeals to you.

****CAN YOU HELP?****

DO YOU HAVE IT/COMMUNICATION SKILLS?

We urgently need someone to act as our **Communications Officer** to help to increase our membership and someone who could help in providing **IT & AV Support** for speakers at our monthly lectures. If you can help with either (or both) of these roles, please contact Diana Hollins, Vice Chairman

on 01449 736930