



Newsletter number 115 - December 2015

ZUCCHI'S PORTRAIT OF JAMES ADAM

James Adam (1732-1794) was the third son of William Adam (1689-1748), the leading Scottish architect of his generation. Like his elder brothers, John and Robert, he in turn became an architect. He travelled



extensively in Italy. On his return to Britain, James worked in partnership with his brother Robert and designed a number of buildings independently. That the portrait is signed by Zucchi, no other portrait by whom is apparently recorded, has rather surprisingly been overlooked until now.

James Adam met Zucchi in Venice in 1760 and planned to employ him as draftsman for a projected *Antiquities of Magna Graecia*: the artist travelled with him to Rome, where they arrived in February 1761. Adam wrote of himself that he was the only artist in Rome who 'keeps his own coach and assumes the title of Cavaliere'. Zucchi's portrait is a clear expression of this pretension.

Inspired by portraits of those on the Grand Tour by Batoni, Adam is shown both as an architect and a man of fashion, with a particular interest in classical statuary and ornament emphasizing the sitter's connoisseurship with a slightly fanciful rendition of the famous Medici vase as a suitable backdrop. Adam regarded Zucchi as 'a worthy honest lad, a most singular character in this degenerate country' but failed to persuade him to come to England and work for the Adam firm on his return in 1763. In 1766, however, he accepted an invitation from Robert Adam to work for the firm and Zucchi's abilities as a decorative painter are demonstrated in many of Adam's most celebrated houses, including Harewood, Kenwood, Kedleston, Newby, Nostell Priory, Osterley Park and Saltram. In 1781 Zucchi married Angelica Kauffmann and settled with her in Rome.

VISIT TO HEINZ ARCHIVE AT THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY. 29 June 2015

On 29th June a group of Friends gathered to visit the Heinz Archive in Orange Street, behind the National Portrait Gallery.

The Gallery has collected library materials since its foundation in 1856. The Heinz Archive & Library now holds approximately 35,000 books and exhibition catalogues, runs of 150 periodical titles (70 currently received), catalogues from sales featuring

portraits from 1866 to the present, a collection of approximately 600 rare books, and a small number of theses and dissertations. In addition, the Archive & Library holds extensive image files arranged by sitter and by artist, an index of over 1,000,000 references to portraits. We had a gem of a visit to this extraordinary archive. A diverse range of material - books, letters, diaries, sketches and photographs - was laid out for us to accompany the fascinating and spirited talks given by Robin Francis and Bryony Millan. We heard about the modest origins of the National Portrait Gallery in 1856 and the extraordinary role of the first secretary-cum-curator-

cum-everything else, Sir George Scharf, who was in post for forty years. His entire life, professional and personal, is recorded in dozens of sketchbooks covered in drawings and descriptions. The most bizarre pages on display documented his visit to Westminster Abbey to view (and draw) the exhumation of Richard II. We learnt of the peregrinations of the National Portrait Gallery from a modest house in SW1 to its current premises in 1896, the evacuations in two world wars and the battles nearer home, with mice.

Then Robin explained that although the collection is made up of people famous in Britain's history, archival material consists of documentation on all



aspects of British portraiture and thus it is the pre-eminent centre for research. We saw a range of this material; modest drawings and historic prints; bound volumes of caricatures by James Gillray; Victorian albums of photos; and even letters to previous directors, including one from an outraged visitor to Roy Strong, complaining about a 'noisy' exhibition in the 1960s. The visit ended with an opportunity for us to browse through boxes of visual material.

Angela Cox

VISIT TO HAM HOUSE 17 September 2015

We were lucky to have perfect weather for our visit to Ham House, because a considerable part of its attraction is the reconstructed seventeenth century gardens, which we enjoyed after the house tour. Ham House was constructed in 1610, and then considerably embellished in the 1630s by William Murray, Earl of Dysart, whipping boy to Prince Charles (later Charles I) and in the 1670s by the redoubtable Elizabeth Murray, later Duchess of Lauderdale. No expense was spared for this 'state of the art' country villa and much of it remains. Highlights are the resplendent suite of rooms on the first floor reached by the grand staircase with a balustrade exquisitely carved with trophies of arms, each panel different. Throughout are magnificent plasterwork ceilings and carved chimney pieces in the fashion of the 1630s. Portraits of family and political associates are showcased in the Long Gallery, a stunning survival of this architectural fashion of Elizabethan and Jacobean houses. Off it lies one of Ham's gems, a cabinet room with the original painted ceiling and a display of small pictures and portrait

miniatures including one of Elizabeth I. Overlooking the gardens is a suite of rooms designed for Queen Catherine, consort of Charles II. Although most of the furniture is 17th century, including a close-stool with carved cedar and mother-of pearl decoration, these rooms were refurbished in the 18th century. On the ground floor the Lauderdale's bedchambers and closets survive much as they were in their heyday. Sadly, the Duchess died lonely and impoverished in 1698.

Angela Cox

THE GEORGE LEVY PLAQUE



George Levy was the founder of the London Historic House Museums Trust (which was folded into English Heritage in 2012) and also of the Friends of Kenwood in 1977. The original brass memorial plaque went missing in 2012, a replacement plaque weathered poorly after a few months. This was replaced by a new, non-metal memorial plaque in an attempt to make it less tempting to remove it for its scrap metal value. This too was stolen. We now have a more solid memorial, which we hope will be left in peace, to mark the enormous contribution George Levy made to the enduring preservation of Kenwood House and its grounds for all to enjoy.

SPRING TOUR OF THE KENWOOD ESTATE 14 May 2015

A group of Friends of Kenwood went on a fascinating tour of the estate led by Dave Gibbons, a senior member of the garden staff. Despite rain and cold blustery wind 12 members joined the walk, and most stayed the full course such was the interest in the new projects to improve the grounds.

We admired the woodland views around the two drives to the house. The East drive has been opened up by reducing the over growth of invasive holly which formerly hemmed in the drives.

We then visited the walled garden where an improvement has been to reduce the height of the western hedge to allow the architecturally interesting

Bothy to be seen. There are exciting long term plans to bring back more formality to the planting of the walled garden, and to reflect its former use as a kitchen garden. In the 1950s this was eroded by the demolition of the south wall and the introduction of the inappropriate kidney-shaped bed.

We also inspected the planting of a new crescent of lime trees on the brow of the hill by the stables. This reflects the planting apparent from the 1st Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map in 1873. In addition to seeing how the planting has matured around the Dairy, now so much part of the Kenwood experience since the opening up of the vista, we were shown how the rhododendrons are being husbanded to encourage new growth. Note that the beds near the Old Kitchen have an annually changing display; this year sweet pea wigwams are a prominent feature.

Paul Huggins, Friend of Kenwood

CONCERT OF WORLD JAZZ 13 October

The evening was a great success and the Orangery packed. Nicolas Meier, Richard Jones, Nick Kacal and Demi Garcia played an exciting, vibrant variety of innovative music using acoustic guitar, glissentar, violin, bass, percussion and drums. Nicolas' music reflects his wide interest in Flamenco, Latin American and Middle Eastern genres. Your Events Committee's decision to arrange an evening of Jazz had been taken with some trepidation. Many have attended celebrity lectures, curatorial tours, an organ recital and a Jacobean evening but not Jazz!

CURATOR'S REPORT

Collection displays:

Antonio Zucchi's **Portrait of James Adam** is on display in the Entrance Hall until January 2016 (see inset page 1). Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski, Curator of the Iveagh Bequest, gave a paper at the Georgian Group's two-day symposium at the RIBA on the Adam Brothers entitled: 'Antonio Zucchi's Portrait of James Adam: Context and Attribution'.

The heraldic hatchment, painted following the death of the 2nd Earl of Mansfield, is on display on the ground floor of the Great Stair as is David Martin's reduced version of the **Portrait of William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, 1775**.

Flamme

Work on moving the statue of **Flamme** by Eugène Dodeigne has been delayed due to planning requirements. However, Natural England and Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service have given the go-ahead for the work to be undertaken. The **Deal Carpet** staircase has been re-laid with a new underlay.

Dairy

Further items of china have been acquired for the displays in the Dairy including a new tea service for the Tea Room, a display of 1815-1820 platters for the churning room and a rare Spode jug and pail and cover for the Settling Room. In addition, the displays in the Settling Room also include a rare 1820s milk jug showing the House and Grounds at Kenwood along with the Spaniards' Inn. English Heritage is extremely grateful to the Friends of the Dairy for these acquisitions.

Structural problems close some of First Floor rooms

Unfortunately, due to unexpected structural problems; the rooms of the first floor (bar the Upper Hall) have been temporarily closed to the public.

Conservation:

The **Portrait of Charles I**, after Van Dyck has been taken to the conservation studios at Ranger's House for cleaning

Publications:

Vermeer's **The Guitar Player**, is included in Karl Schütz's 'Vermeer: The Complete Works', 2016, Taschen

Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski

Curator

SUPPORTING THE FRIENDS OF KENWOOD

The Friends of Kenwood rely entirely on your membership to keep our current high profile at Kenwood House. Your donations are always extremely welcome. Since April 2015, English Heritage has been split into two organisations. Kenwood comes under the care of The English Heritage Trust, along with more than 400 historic properties, and has to become self-funding by 2023. If you would like to make an additional financial contribution to the Friends of Kenwood, please contact our Treasurer, Ken Solomons by writing to him c/o Kenwood House, NW3 7JR.

Legacy Gift

There is another way to support us, namely remembering the Friends of Kenwood in your Will. Giving even a modest gift as a legacy is an important way to help protect the future of Kenwood House, its outstanding art collection, and the Kenwood Estate. We understand that this is always a personal matter and that you may not regard the Friends of Kenwood as a priority; however, if you enjoy the magnificence of Kenwood, we hope you will not mind us raising the possibility of leaving a bequest. It is not complicated and is very tax efficient. If you choose to include the Friends in your Will, you will need to direct your gift to our registered charity number: 273258.

Online shopping

Nominate the Friends of Kenwood as your favourite charity for your online shopping! You can support us really easily by going to <http://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/kenwoodfriends> When you buy online from participating retailers a percentage of your purchase will be donated to the Friends of Kenwood.

Membership

It's never too late to **renew your membership**, so if you forgot to do so, please renew now!

You can pay in several different ways: by cheque (made payable to "The Friends of Kenwood"), by standing order, or by PayPal. If you would like to pay by standing order, please contact info@friendsofkenwood.org.uk and we will send you details; if you would like to pay by PayPal, please go to www.friendsofkenwood.org.uk and follow the simple instructions to pay online.

Please include your email address on the renewal forms so we can keep in touch with you and send you the newsletter electronically to save postage!

You can support us even more generously by becoming a Rembrandt Friend for £300 p.a. or a Vermeer Friend for £750 p.a. For information, please write to info@friendsofkenwood.org.uk

Christmas gift

Please encourage your friends to become Friends. Why not buy a subscription as a Christmas present?

LECTURES AND VISITS DECEMBER 2015 TO JUNE 2016

All lectures begin at 11.00 am and are held in the Kenwood Lecture Room

Seating is limited in the Lecture Room due to fire regulations. Once the Lecture Room is full, we have to refuse admittance and apologise for any disappointment this may cause. The Lecture Room is open from 10.30 am. For full details of lectures see the Events sheet and website.

Sunday 6 December 2015, 'Dürer's Walk' Dr Joachim Strupp

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY will be held after the Lecture.



17 January 2016, **Cornelius Johnson: Charles P's Forgotten Painter** Karen Hearn

Sunday 14 February, **The Ionides Family: Greek Patrons of Avant-Garde Art and Design** Barbara Bryant

Sunday 20 March, **J M W Turner, RA: The Artist and his House in Twickenham** Catherine Parry-Wingfield

Sunday 17 April, **Alma-Tadema: Houses of Life, Art, and the Imagination** Dr Elizabeth Prettejohn
This lecture starts at 11.30, and follows the AGM.

Sunday 22 May, **Ruskin's Venice: City of Hope and Despair** Christopher Newall

Sunday 19 June, **Goya: The Portraits** Dr Xavier Bray

GARDEN TOUR

Thursday 12 May 2016 10.30 am

KENWOOD SPRING TOUR

Join a tour of the Estate as the Head Gardener reveals secret love tokens to share with someone special!

Meet at the main entrance on the north side of the House and wear stout shoes.

This tour does not need a booking form.

VISITS 2016

Thursday 14 January, **Visit to the Foundling Museum**

Wednesday 20 April, **Visit to Leighton House**

For full details of Events and Booking forms see the website. Not all events are arranged before the publication of the newsletter but you will be notified about additional ones by email and on the website.

VERMEER AND REMBRANDT FRIENDS

The Friends would like to thank the following for supporting us as Vermeer and Rembrandt Friends: Chris Carter; Elizabeth Meek

CORPORATE BENEFACTORS

The Friends thank the following for supporting us as Corporate Benefactors:

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