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ROYAL SCOTTISH ACADEMY

Many District Art Exhibits

ON VIEW AT EDINBURGH

By Our Art Critic.

A cursory inspection made in a press view of the works of art brought together by the Council of the Royal Scottish Academy for their 98th annual exhibition, which opens to-day in the Galleries on the Mound, Edinburgh, will, it may be safe to say, prove a most attractive one. Those who have had the responsibility of choosing from the works sent in, the selection which has received their approval have set up a high standard of merit, and the paintings, sculptures, and examples of architecture which adorn the walls of the Galleries will meet with popular approval, and give much interest and satisfaction to patrons of art in general.

There are in all 680 exhibits, of which 240 are oil paintings, and 132 water-colour paintings, and the architecture, sculpture, and black and white drawings make up the remainder. Variety of subject and vivid treatment enter into the work of the artists as a whole, and portraiture has attracted them to a great extent. The work of Continental artists is conspicuous this year by its absence, and there are few examples of English artists on loan, so that the exhibition may be said, to a very large extent, to be confined to Scottish painters.

The Corporation of Liverpool have lent four pictures—one by Sir E. Burne-Jones, "Sponsa de Liband," a large canvas of the pre-Raphaelite school; another by A. Fridenson, "Richmond Castle, Yorkshire;" a third by Prof. Alphonse Legros, H.R.S.A., depicting a group of women clad in the garb of sister of the Roman Catholic Church, and a crippled workman standing before a Calvary; while the Corporation of Manchester has lent the picture by John S. Sargent, R.A., H.R.S.A., "Albanian Olive Gatherers," a large landscape, with female figures in the midst of trees, greenery, and sunshine. To the Corporation of Glasgow also the exhibition is indebted for a picture painted by the late W. Y. Macgregor, R.S.A., the Cathedral at "Durham," and next to it hangs another example of Mr Macgregor's work, "Near Ganavan, Oban," which is the property of the Royal Scottish Academy. Professor R. Anning Bell, R.A., is represented by "Pont Valentre, Cahors," and "The Mermaid in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'"; Sir John Lavery, R.A., R.S.A., by his figure of "Pavlova," and Sir David Murray, R.A., H.R.S.A.

From Past Presidents.

The two more recent past Presidents of the Academy are represented—Sir James Guthrie by "The Stonebreaker," a massive piece of work, representing the figure of a man pausing in his work under the umbrageous foliage of a tall tree. He stands erect, and his figure, with his hammer in his hand, betokens manly strength and determination.

Sir J. Lawton Wingate has contributed three pictures—"A Swan's Nest Among the Reeds," "The Sun Amid Shifting Clouds," in which clouds and sunshine are deftly managed; and "Drummond Loch."

Dr W. D. M'Kay, R.S.A., has chosen a favourite subject, in "A Spring Idyll—East Lothian," depicting a country lane with a solitary figure, hedges, budding trees, and fields on either side; and "Spate on the Dochart," a typical Highland scene, with the river in flood rushing forward over a stony course. D. Y. Cameron, R.A., R.S.A., gives a representation of "The Temple of Venus, Rome."

Famous Picture Recalled.

Robert Gibb, R.S.A., the artist who will be always remembered for his impressive picture, "The Thin Red Line," has emerged from his recent seclusion with a large historical work, "Napoleon's Farewell." The Emperor has been conveyed in H.M.S. Bellerophon to the island of his exile, and is standing on the pinnacle which is to take him ashore. He occupies the central position in the pinnacle, with his officers at one end, while the bluejackets who are to take him ashore are at the other holding their oars at the salute awaiting the order to proceed. The Emperor is raising his hat in salute to the seamen and soldiers who have accompanied him thus far, who are crowding the portholes of the big ship to witness his departure.

The incident is vividly depicted and the circumstances powerfully brought out by the absence of action or movement. Mr Gibb has sent in another contribution, the subject contrasting strongly with that just described. "The Wounded Dove" shows the figure of a young lady holding a dove in which tenderness and sympathy, which the bird evidently appreciates, is well brought out.

Glyn W. Philpot, R.A., is represented by a portrait of Sir Ludovic Grant, Emeritus Professor of Public Law, University of Edinburgh. The likeness to the Professor is a good one, but there is an entire absence of that fullness of life and grand bearing which those who had been accustomed to witness in Sir Ludovic when he delivered his neat and concise commendatories on the occasions of his presenting eminent men for honorary degrees.

Some Portraits.

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Fiddes Watt, one of the recently-elected Academicians, has sent in two portraits, that of Lord Ashmore being a fine piece of work. His Lordship has been taken in his judicial robes sitting behind the bench in a familiar attitude in thoughtful mood. An improvement might have been made if the artist had been fortunate enough to have caught the expression of the countenance of his subject on one of these occasions when it is lightened up with a pleasing remark with which he sometimes interrupts a dry legal debate or the evidence of a witness to relieve the tedium of the proceedings.

P. A. de Laszlo, M.V.O., has been very successful in his portrait of "Mrs Blackie," in which the figure of the lady is prominently brought out sitting against a dark background in an easy pose, with the sunlight lighting up her face.

Three portraits by Henry W. Kerr, R.S.A., cannot escape notice among those on the walls. There are three of them, including one of J. A. H. Millar, F.S.A. (Scot.), librarian of Dundee Public Library. In this portrait the artist has succeeded in obtaining the true, happy expression of the features and the familiar bearing of his subject. Malcolm Gavin, one of the recently-elected Academicians, contributes three portraits.

Of genre pictures there is a large and varied collection. John Duncan, R.S.A., in two pictures, "Duty and Inclination" and "The Children of Lir," treats in imaginative subjects conveying their own interest. The figures in both pictures are finely drawn.

The scheme of colour in "The Silken Gown," by Robert Hope, A.R.S.A., in which a female figure clad in golden robes is reclining on a couch, is arresting for its harmonious treatment, and his "Glints of Gold" carries out the same idea.

W. M. Fraser, one of the last elected Academicians, contributes three pictures, his "By Sylvan Stream" showing a pleasing rural scene with meadow, overhanging trees, and meandering stream. R. B. Nisbet, Crieff, a very regular exhibitor, has this year sent in three works—"A Winter Evening, Crieff," "Blue Sea, Findhorn," and "Flowers"; Gemmell Hutchison, R.S.A., reverts to his favourite subject of incidents in child life. His "Young Toilers" shows a group of children digging in the shingle on the shore; and W. S. MacGeorge, R.S.A., also depicts a group of children enjoying life "On the Beach."

David Foggie, lately of Dundee, is represented by portraits of Mr Wm. Mackenzie, historian; Mrs Norma Sturrock, "A Resident Physician," a lady doctor; and a portrait in black and white. R. Peyton Reid, A.R.S.A., has scenes from Venice and Amsterdam and "A Summer in Sussex."

Patrick W. Adam, R.S.A., contributes several tastefully arranged interiors, with artistic furniture and flowers; James Paterson, P.R.S.W., R.S.A., has sent in scenes from Corsica and the Maritime Alps, and "Caerlavrock," Dumfriesshire. There is a strong, vivid painting by Macaulan Milne, "Paysage—Lavardin"; and David Alison, R.S.A., John M. Aiken, John Bowie, A.R.S.A., Henry Lintoll, R.S.A., Dr A. Marshall Mackenzie, R.S.A.,

G. Ogilvy Reid, R.S.A., and William Walls, R.S.A., are all represented.

The Water Colours.

The water-colour gallery shows a carefully selected collection of a high standard of work. There are two sent in by Andrew Gamley, Pittenweem, a constant contributor to the annual exhibition. Both of them—"Under the Wintry Sun," "Summer Skies"—convey a good conception of seasonal appearances which one might expect. Ewan Geddes Blairgowrie, has three water-colours—"Knowe Head," "January," and "Winter." Miss Banks, Kirkcaldy, sends "Tea in a Studio"; Robert Home, "Autumn Afternoon, Ceres," with the church steeple the most prominent feature. Miss Agnes Sim, Montrose, is represented by two small pictures—"Loch Morar" and "Winter"; Peter Mackie, Culross, by an Eastern scene, "Karnak"; and James Watson, Broughty Ferry, by a scene at Pitscottie, Fife. James Gray, Burntisland, has sent in three pictures of flowers, and Joseph Gray, Broughty Ferry, a drypoint drawing representing a group of fishweighers at Volendam.

Drawings, &c.

The room containing the drawings and plans and photographs of architecture is especially attractive, in honour of the recently-elected President, who is an architect. Among the exhibits are photographs of the corridor and principal staircase of Blair Drummond; Perthshire, the residence of Sir A. K. Muir, Bart.; a design in colour, one-inch scale, for war memorial windows in Carnoustie Parish Church, carried out by Margaret Chilton and Marjorie Kemp; a war memorial at Monifeth by Charles G. Soutar, Dundee; photographs of St. Mary's, Kirriemuir; and St. Margaret's, Breemar, by J. N. Couper.

The drawings and prints, which are on view downstairs, reveal interesting work, and there is much to attract attention in the sculpture hall, which includes examples by Sir Pittendrieh Macgillivray, R.S.A., including a bust in bronze of the late Sir Rowand Anderson, H.R.S.A., and the original model of the statue of Lord Byron erected in Aberdeen in 1923 (in bronze); a portrait bust of Miss Jean Armour Burns Brown, Dumfries, a great-granddaughter of Robert Burns, by H. S. Gamley, R.S.A., and a model for a bronze of Sir James Caird, Bart., Dundee.