

ingly mellow, be-spectacled self-portrait), and occupied his time occasionally by painting still-lives in pastel, the medium to which his long life was devoted.

Somewhat confusingly, Liotard's life is not described in chronological sequence, and the catalogue is split into separate sections. These concentrate on 'Self-portraits and the Artist's Family: The Armoury of Self-promotion' (*sic*), Duncan Bull's contribution; 'Orientalism'; 'British Royal and Society Portraits' and 'Continental Royal and Society Portraits', both by William Hauptman; and 'Still-life, Trompe l'œil and Genre Painting'. The volume is completed by an outline chronology, end-notes, bibliography, and a 30-page catalogue of the eighty-two works exhibited, together with thumb-nail images and complementary notes of varying merit.

While the contributions by Hauptman and Jeffares are most helpful, some others are less so, being tainted by art-historical idiom and twaddle. The observation that 'This was a time when international experience increasingly improved one's standing in society, which considered well-travelled individuals better equipped to achieve its political and financial goals than boring, stay-at-home altricials [*sic*]', should have been edited out, as also the idle comment that the restraint of Liotard's still-lives 'presage' those of Courbet or Morandi...

Despite such blemishes, the colourful and visually well-presented catalogue substantiates Liotard's importance as a pastel portraitist; and we must be grateful that so many of his superlative likenesses are here reproduced, some for the first time. While any listing of one's own favourites may be thought gratuitous, I cannot resist mentioning the following few ravishing examples: Liotard's daughter Marianne clasping her doll; Princess Louisa Anne aged three, ingenuously gazing at the artist; Harriet Churchill, Lady Fawkener; the Archduchess Maria Christina of Austria; and Isaac-Louis Thellusson and his wife Julie (*née* Ployard); but so many are as entrancing. Misleadingly, the following portraits are *not* on display in the exhibition: of Mme Anne Germaine Girardot de Vermenoux (*née* Larrivée) seated; both François Tronchin (admiring his Rembrandt) and his wife Anne-Marie, with her muff; the seven-year-old Maria Frederike van Reede-Athlone with her little dog; and Madame d'Epinay, book in hand; although they embellish the catalogue.

Almost Forgotten: The International Exhibition of 1862

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Andrew Sanders

Dostoevsky was not much taken with the 1862 Exhibition. For this increasingly Slavophile Russian visitor it represented everything that was wrong with Western materialism (and that meant the art objects on display as well as the array of looms, spinning machines and advanced steam engines which proclaimed the practical virtues of scientific progress). Dostoevsky was not alone in his fastidious moral distaste. A writer in Charles Dickens's journal, *All the Year Round*, described the building that housed the exhibition as a 'hardware-ecclesiastical-railway-factory-Gothic building' which was 'half way between a factory and a cathedral'. The *Art Journal* dismissed this same structure as a 'wretched shed' and a 'national disgrace'. For less prejudiced observers, however, the most significant problem with the 1862 exhibition lay not in the building or its contents but in the simple fact that it wasn't the 1851 'Great' Exhibition. As John R Davis, the first

contributor to this excellent and scholarly collection of essays, notes, there were dark shadows over the exhibition that were not present eleven years earlier. The formal opening had been delayed by the political ramifications of the war that saw the emergence of modern Italy, but the real dampener proved to be the untimely death of Prince Albert in December 1861. This had not only removed the tutelary spirit of all such celebrations of peace and progress but also precluded the patronage of Queen Victoria. The Queen, whose presence had so enhanced the ceremonies that opened the Crystal Palace in 1851, had by 1862 removed herself from public life.

Yet as Asa Briggs noted more than 30 years ago 'the objects on display in the [1862] exhibition were in many respects more interesting than those of 1851'. The significance of the essays in *Almost Forgotten* is that they firmly re-establish the justice of Briggs's contention. Moreover, they argue why so many aspects of the exhibition now merit the informed interest of posterity. The eleven essays in this collection variously cover the architecture of the exhibition building, the commitment to education professed by the organising committee, and significant aspects of the objects displayed (furniture, jewellery, machinery and fine art). What we may now judge to be the most radical aspects of the exhibition (this was the first public forum for the decorative arts of Japan and for the newly founded Morris and Company) tend to be discussed as accepted facts. The fresh emphasis here is on more subtle innovations and historical echoes. Charlotte Gere, for example, variously explores the influence of Holbein on the jewellery of the early 1860s and the impact of the display of Norwegian folk art. In his singularly illuminating essay on 'the progress and present condition of Art' Julius Bryant argues for the importance of the selection of fine art shown in the picture galleries. His essay, in common with many others in this volume, is illustrated by reproductions of the photographs taken for the London Stereoscopic and Photographic Company in 1862 (the company had been granted copyright). These photographs provide a unique view both of the original display and of the plethora of modern paintings and sculpture shown to an eager public. The 1862 Exhibition had twice the wall-space available compared to the celebrated Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857 and, unlike that show, excluded Old Masters from its walls. Apart from the significance of the art works themselves, Bryant points us to other innovations such as the skylights of the architect, Captain Fowke, which provided natural light without glare and potential surface damage to paintings, and the fact that electric light was tested in the galleries in July 1862.

Max Donnelly's essay 'Rapture and Ridicule' is concerned with the display on furniture in the Medieval Court and is illustrated both with revealing original photographs and with plans of how the Court was arranged. To our eyes the Court seems crammed with objects from floor to ceiling, offering little if any room to stand back and admire. Yet as Donnelly's essay and his colour illustrations demonstrate there was a great deal to admire and indeed to wonder at. The stars of the show were William Burges and JP Seddon and much of the furniture they provided for the Exhibition now graces the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Ashmolean and the National Museum of Wales. Here too were oak choir stalls for Chichester Cathedral and a plaster-cast section of a new reredos for Waltham Abbey. Donnelly is particularly intrigued by the history of Seddon's elaborately decorated chancel organ, an example of which survives in Stowlangtoft church in Suffolk and which seems to figure too in Sir Frank Dicksee's painting *Harmony* of 1877.

As this consistently stimulating collection of essays argues the 1862 Exhibition does not deserve to be overlooked let alone 'almost forgotten'. The once daringly innovative machinery may well have ceased both to fascinate and to function, the attempts to educate the general public about art and industry may now seem creaky, and the international politics which determined so many aspects of the Exhibition may now be merely the stuff of history, but what was shown in London in 1862 helped to shift the world on its axis. It also opened eyes to new visions that we still share.

Rosalind Thuillier

Graham Sutherland: Life, Work and Ideas
Lutterworth Press, pb, 290pp, 206 illus, £39.50
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Alexander Adams

The recent resurgence in interest in Graham Sutherland (1903–1980) is complemented by a welcome new monograph. The book's author Rosalind Thuillier knew Sutherland personally, interviewed him, and had written extensively about his art. Sadly, she died just before this volume was published.

The outlines of Sutherland's career are well known. He trained first as a technical draughtsman, then as a printmaker at Goldsmiths College in the 1920s. His series of pastoral etchings ended when the Great Depression sank the print market. Visits to Pembroke provided him with vital inspiration and he emerged in the mid-1930s as a watercolourist who had a traditional pastoral sensibility but a commitment to a Modernist aesthetic. By the late 1930s he was recognised as one of the most original and promising young British painters. Selected by Kenneth Clark as a war artist, Sutherland documented the war effort in the mines and foundries of Wales and Cornwall. Scenes of bomb damage (particularly in London and the bombed port of Swansea) provided him with powerful and vigorous images. He briefly travelled to newly liberated France in 1944. Commissions, exhibitions and publications established Sutherland as one of Britain's pre-eminent artists of the post-war era.

The *Northampton Crucifixion* (1946) is a distillation of Sutherland's response to the destruction of the war and the images of suffering of death camp inmates. Sutherland was not a natural painter of the figure and was afflicted by caution when dealing with the human form. Unable to employ his gift for metaphor and metamorphosis in a way that his friend (and later rival) Francis Bacon managed with apparent effortless ease, Sutherland always played it safe with figures. The *Crucifixion* was no exception. With the subsequent Coventry Cathedral tapestry (his *Christ in Glory in the Tetramorph* (1951–8)), hemmed in by theological stipulations from the commissioning committee and subject to extensive revision, Sutherland was even more conventional. With a sacred subject, Sutherland – as a Catholic convert, and working for an Anglican cathedral – may have felt inhibited from taking his normal liberties.

Long periods in Antibes and Menton in France and visits to Venice led to new motifs making an appearance. Many writers also attribute a new, warmer range of colours to exposure to Mediterranean light. Thuillier argues that brightness and palette visible in the post-war paintings comes not from Sutherland's time in Antibes but is an elaboration on innovations in pre-war visits to Wales and his wartime work. Her argument has merit but it is disappointing that it is not devel-

oped more extensively with illustrated examples.

In the late 1940s, standing forms come to dominate Sutherland's art. They are combinations of animal, vegetable, mineral and machine set against increasingly simple invented backdrops. These standing forms suffer precisely because they are standing; Sutherland never depicted movement satisfactorily. After diverse and dynamic studies from life (especially in the early years), the older Sutherland had a proclivity to position objects squarely frontally or in profile in a schematic manner. One cannot help thinking of the diagrammatic approach that he had learnt as an engineering draughtsman. The paradox is that Sutherland was so adept at portraying living and mechanical forms in the process of change and yet his later paintings are often crushingly static. The trembling, jagged lines and overlapping washes of the early Welsh landscapes contain the vastness of places and systems in flux; all of this was missing from the French paintings.

In 1949 a chance commission changed Sutherland's career. *Somerset Maugham* (1949) shows Sutherland's psychological shrewdness and his abilities as a draughtsman but the devotion to portraiture in the following years did damage to his art and career. The verisimilitude of the portraits that followed was antithetical to Sutherland's greatest strength – his ability to draw out the metaphor. Likewise, he could not apply his pungent palette to the figure itself, only the background – and Sutherland never integrated sitters into inhabited spaces. While the best portraits – such as the drawings and preliminary studies of Somerset Maugham and Winston Churchill – are fine likenesses, they do not advance Sutherland's or feed-back into the main body. The best portraits come early and later ones tend to lack ambition, innovation and memorability. It is easy to see why these portraits, which provided the artist with funds and publicity, contributed to a decline in Sutherland's reputation, as Thuillier acknowledges.

Sutherland's decision to loan (and later donate) a substantial body of work to Picton Castle in Pembrokeshire in 1976 for the foundation of the Graham Sutherland Gallery is covered in this volume. Owing to various conflicts and strategic decisions – exacerbated by a dearth of visitors to a relatively remote rural venue – the project foundered and the art is now in the possession of the National Museum of Wales. Thuillier quotes Sutherland's notes, which demonstrate how frustrated and disillusioned by the project the painter became. (Research into the workings of the gallery by curator Sally Moss greatly aided this chapter.)

Changes in fashion, negative responses to Sutherland's portraiture and a series of personality conflicts with tastemakers contributed to a decline in the painter's reputation during the 1960s and 1970s. In France and Italy he was (and still is) held in high esteem and backing from Italian collectors provided him with moral and financial support in his last years. The best of Sutherland is as good anything done by a British artist during the mid-century and increasingly there seems a willingness to examine Sutherland with fresh eyes. Sutherland must surely be considered British art's most original and distinctive colourist.

The author includes many quotes from correspondents who knew Sutherland well and this helps to flesh out the man and his work. Extracts from contemporaneous reviews show us how the art was received at the time. She includes descriptions of her time spent with Sutherland on Pembrokeshire coastal walks, the pair photographed by her husband Gilbert Adams. Extracts from letters, journals and public statements demonstrate how eloquent Sutherland was and bolsters the case for a substantial volume of collected writings by the artist.