

The Friends of Dame Laura Knight Society, Malvern & Colwall Branch

23rd March 2018: Guest Speaker - Harry Fletcher
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TRIALS and TRIBULATIONS:

'Laura Knight deserves better recognition', was the message broadcast by Harry Fletcher, DFAS Lecturer, in his presentation to our Society at Elmslie House on 23rd March.

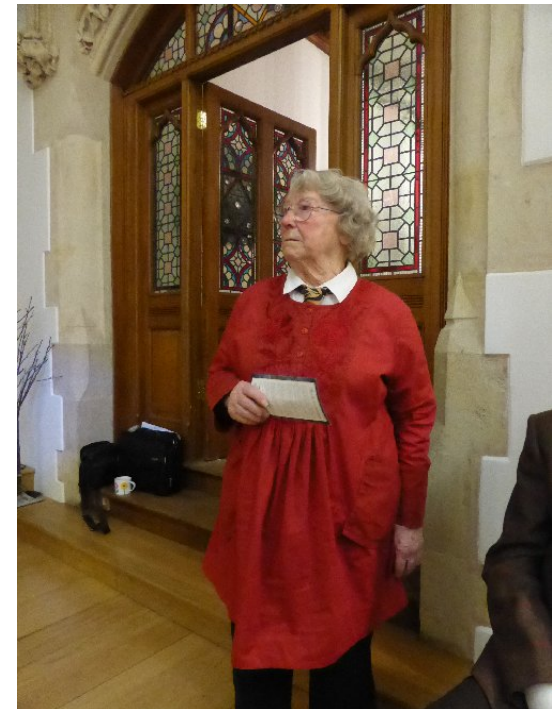


With his artist's eye he fully explored the achievements of another artist Laura Knight over a career that lasted more than 80 years.

Particularly he gave praise to her as a woman painter who succeeded, not without trials and tribulations, in a then male dominated world. His talk traced her development in relation to other artists, the social climate and developments in art technology and media.

He set this against a chronological record of her many exhibitions, submissions to the RA and growth in international acclaim.

With illustrations he described her creative journey from Nottingham to

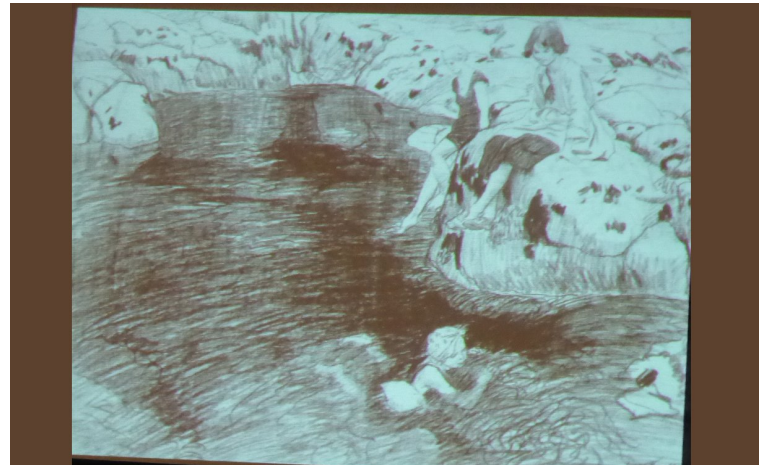




Staithe, Cornwall and London, and later, of course, Malvern. His examples showed her remarkable use of light and shade with contrasting colours of the spectrum and her remarkable skill of composition. He gave an interesting demonstration of how the invention of oil paint in tubes and longer paintbrushes with oblique shaped bristles assisted her in painting 'en pleine air', with photography as an aid to her sharp visual memory.

Exhibitions by fellow artists (such as Munnings, Procter, Naper, Roger Fry) earlier Dutch painters, French impressionists and Japanese graphic artists had over time made clear impact on her work. Ernest Brown of Leicester Galleries who from 1906 promoted the work of the Knights played a significant part in their success.

The speaker devoted a part of his talk to Laura's etchings, an important part of her work from the 20's and a medium at which she excelled. The circus and the ballet were subjects that lent themselves to this graphic medium (etching, aquatints, mezzotints, woodcuts, pencil





and charcoal drawings), echoing the title of her autobiography 'Magic of a Line'.

In conclusion Harry Fletcher reaffirmed his opinion that DLK was one of the most talented artists of her generation and her reappraisal was long overdue.

(Since his talk Mr Fletcher has volunteered as our 'Friend in the North' to promote our cause in those parts and keep us in touch with any local developments concerning the Knights.)

Heather w April 2018

