



Nocturnal Edinburgh - Detail  
Richard Demarco HRSA

# SCOTTISH ART SCENE 34

FEATURING

Ann Oram RSW

Richard Demarco HRSA

Dawson Murray RGI RSW

We are featuring three very fine artists who will be exhibiting at the new Tatha Gallery in Newport-on-Tay, from 2nd August. With its unrivalled views of the River Tay, Tatha is an exciting addition to Scotland's eastern network of fine art exhibitors.

Helen Glassford, founder of Tatha, comes from a family of artists and art collectors. Her "... love for art is infectious when she leads you into any canvas" and her profound knowledge of Scottish art today is reflected in the exhibitions she is presenting.

*Stewart*

*"Some painters transform the sun into a yellow spot, others transform a yellow spot into the sun...."*

*Pablo Picasso*



Hint of Dusk  
Acrylic on canvas  
72" x 72"  
£12000

## Dawson Murray

*Where is your studio, why do you enjoy working there and what's special about it?*

My studio is an extension of our house and was built in 1997. It overlooks our garden and as most of my work is based on the changing aspects of the garden it couldn't be better. As I am a wheelchair user, there is plenty of space and it is easy to get out into the garden.

*How would you describe the light there and do you have a preference for a particular light and how does it affect your approach?*

There is light from the large double patio doors and from the two Velux windows above. The studio is always flooded with light.

*How does the light hit your work surface? Do you like to have sunlight in your studio and what artificial light do you prefer? Do you ever work outside?*

Answer: As I am mainly working on my etching plates on the table I have no particular preference for a particular source of light. In the evening the studio is lit by eight colour corrected fluorescent tubes which are flicker free. As I am no longer painting, only printmaking, I have no qualms about the studio lighting. I haven't been able to draw for some time now as I am quadriplegic so working out of doors is a distant memory! But I have a highly developed visual memory!



Silent Garden Edge  
Etching  
21.5" x 29.5"  
£600 (£485 unframed)

*Is there a particular subject or emotion which draws you?*

I have always been drawn to the changing light and movement in the garden and the way in which it can create ambiguous shapes and forms. Late afternoon and evening always seem to yield the most interesting possibilities.

*Do you have a preference for particular colours? If yes, is it driven by subject, mood, light or an emotional response?*

Most of my work in recent years, seems to be based around blues and greens. I don't set out with these colours in mind, but rather these colours seem to find me! I suppose at all times I am trying to create original forms within an envelope of atmosphere.

*Have your colour/technique/composition preferences changed over time?*

Away back in the 60s and 70s, I tended to prefer a square canvas, but from the late 70s onwards I have much preferred an elongated horizontal canvas. From the mid 80s I moved away from impasto acrylic to more intense washes of acrylic on canvas. In a way you could say that my work on canvas was heavily influenced by my approach to watercolours. The biggest piece of work I have completed is a vertical piece over 50 feet high (although it is only eight or 9 feet wide) consisting of six large canvases treated like a giant water colour. This work now hangs in the Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow.



Drawing In The Bois d'Amour  
Etching  
27" x 41"  
£900 (£750 unframed)

*Do you have a "secret weapon" and would you like to tell us about it?*

Ah well it wouldn't be a secret any longer then would it? When I am out in the garden, stalking subject matter, I suppose I do like to take in nature in "glimpses" rather than continued looking at the subject. It's like catching nature "unawares". Also trying to make use of peripheral vision yields slightly different forms and often intriguing surprises.

*What type of equipment do you prefer to use?  
Do you have a favourite brush/knife?*

In the 60s and 70s like most young painters, I had my sign writer's brushes (à la de Kooning) but latterly I preferred using large round bristle brushes, between two and 5 inches in diameter, which I used to purchase in France---the kind of brush that excluded, by its nature, any fancy brushwork! Fancy brushwork is something I hate! To me it just gets in the way of the message.

*What do you prefer to paint on and why? Eg: canvas, board or paper*

Due to my disability I don't paint any longer but when I did I loved working on canvas or paper, because they had a grain or texture that I could exploit. I had no sympathy with board at all! In my current etching I have developed methods that replicate the bleeding edges of areas of colour that I so enjoyed in water colour painting.



Fennel Zig-Zag  
Etching  
25.5" x 39.5"  
£800 (£650 unframed)

*Picture base/location when painting & why?*

From the mid 80s I always worked on the floor which lent itself to flooding paper or canvas with washes of colour. If the support was particularly large it meant that the physical action of moving over the painting became an important and satisfying part of the rhythm of mark making.

*Do you listen to music when working? If so, what are your preferences and why?*

When I worked on my own I used to listen to music all the time, usually opera. Now that I need to work with an assistant I find it a bit of a distraction.

*Do you enjoy working in company or prefer to be alone?*

Again because of my disability I have to work in the company of others otherwise I wouldn't be able to achieve anything! I have to say that I really enjoy working with others --- it is good to get immediate feedback from someone with an art background. I first started etching in 1963 (with Philip Reeves) so I have over 50 years experience of working in the medium and it is nice to be able to pass on some of my experience to others.

*Describe your normal working day.*

From the time that my assistant, Mary-Beth Quigley arrives (usually about 11 am) we either work in the studio or in the print workshop in Dundee until it is time for her to finish (usually between 5 and 6 pm).



Tilt  
Etching  
25.5" x 39.5"  
£800 (£650 unframed)

*Who is your greatest influence?*

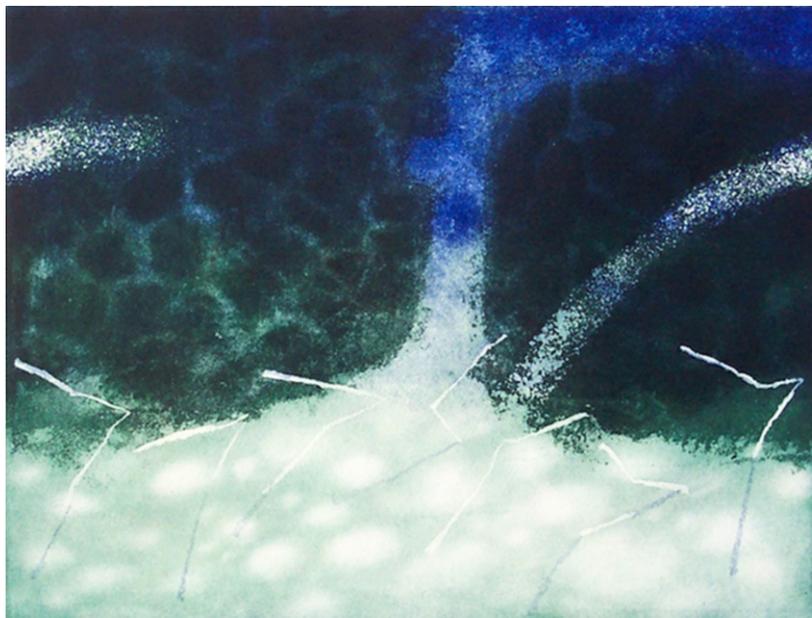
In my postgraduate year at art school I won both the RSA student competition (the Carnegie travel award) and the inaugural David Cargill scholarship from Glasgow School of Art. These awards allowed me to study in Italy for two years. In winter of 1966 when I studied in Venice my tutor was the painter Giuseppe Santomaso and occasionally we would meet when I was out drawing and he would say, "Ah Scottishman, here you can dream!" And it was this idea of being able to 'dream into the landscape' that I think was the single biggest influence from any other artist.

*Which work of art would you most like to own and see everyday?*

A big dreamy piece by Mark Rothko!

*Which contemporary artist do you most admire and why?*

That is a very difficult question to answer, and I can't pin it down to just one. On the Scottish scene I most admire the works of Jimmy Howie, Neil Dallas Brown and Ian Mackenzie Smith because of their qualities of lyrical abstraction. (Sadly, the two first mentioned have passed away.) On a European scale I love the work of Giorgio Morandi and Victor Pasmore, Patrick Heron and Zoran Anton Music's dappled paintings of horses. I love the juicy, painterly quality of everything done by Howard Hodgkin, whether in painting or in print.



Drifting  
Etching  
14.5" x 19"  
£475 (£380 unframed)

*If you could go anywhere to paint, where would it be and why?*

It would have to be Sicily! We lived there (my wife and I were married in Palermo) from March 1967 to June 1968, through earthquakes and drought! The contrast between the fertile coastal areas and the scorched interior is dramatic as is the Greco-Romano architecture and the towering form of Mount Etna. And everywhere there is the most brilliant light. You do feel really close to the elemental forces of nature!

*What do you like to do to relax?*

Sit in the garden.

*Is there something you would like to say that we haven't asked about?*

Coping with severe disability! Strangely enough, because of the support I have always had from my wife and the support I have had from an assistant over the past 10 years, in many ways I don't feel disabled at all! I am still able to go places, have adventures and make art! I think the thing you realise more and more is that your paintings or prints are created in your head. Ideas might develop the minute you make a mark on the paper, but I don't get my ideas by working directly from nature. Recently I have been using a new technology that tracks my eye movement and allows me to 'draw'. Linked up to a computer these 'eye drawings' can be printed out and transferred to the etching plate. So I am really back in charge of all of the shapes on my etching plates.

## Richard Demarco



Nocturnal Edinburgh

Having just celebrated my 84th birthday, I am contemplating my career as an artist who has made water colours, drawings and prints and I ask myself – is there an interface between my work as an artist, my work as a teacher and art patron, and my work as a collaborator with other artists? I have now come to realise that my art works make manifest the reality of a journey, and therefore a road, that I have personally taken throughout my life. This has involved me in a physical journey over land and sea which annually begins and ends in Edinburgh inspired by the city's annual festival of all the arts – The Edinburgh International Festival. I realise now, looking back over all the years since my student days at Edinburgh College of Art when I was director of the exhibitions promoted by the Art College Sketch Club, that I have always felt a responsibility to lead artists into the physical reality of Scotland's landscape.



Edinburgh Old Town from Arthur's Seat

In 1952, I led the College Sketch Club members to Loch Lomond on a journey westwards from Edinburgh towards the unique and entrancing landscape of the Scottish Highlands around Loch Lomond. Since then, I have chosen to portray the reality of that road westwards from Edinburgh, from cityscape to landscape with images of mankind's relationship to landscape, in the form of farm-tracks, pathways and roads made by the human presence, preferably defining the work of farmers, crofters, fishermen, Celtic saints, medieval scholars, explorers, students, bardic poets and all those who wish to live at one with the forces of nature, found in wind and rain, clouds, tidal forces and the daily ebb and flow of light and shadow. Thus through the years, I have had my eyes fixed upon the complexity and variety to be found in the stuff and substance of nature in relation to the human presence.



The Road to Meikle Seggie towards Sulven and its neighbouring mountains

I find inspiration in the art of many artists such as Joseph Beuys and John Ruskin, and those 20th century British modernists who were bewitched by landscape and townscape. I am thinking in particular of Edward Bawden and Eric Ravillious, John Piper, and Kenneth Rowntree, as well as those as my contemporaries at Edinburgh College of Art, both teachers and fellow students, in particular William Gillies, Leonard Rosoman, George Mackie, Barbara Balmer, Frances Walker, Robert Henderson Blyth and Elizabeth Blackadder.



Edinburgh from Corstorphine Hill at Sunrise

I have taken the trouble to draw a map, depicting the journeys made by some of the artists I have persuaded to explore the reality of Scotland. It depicts the worlds of Ian Hamilton Finlay, James Howie, Margot Sandeman, Gunter Uecker, Henning Christiansen and Paul Neagu.



The Eildons from Sir Walter Scott's View

In 1980, I led an expedition on board a sailing ship replica of Darwin's HMS Beagle. It involved a voyage of seventy-eight days. I defined it as 'the long way round to the Edinburgh Festival'. It seemed inevitable that I should do this after my journeys through Scotland with Joseph Beuys, particularly that journey which took Joseph Beuys into the world of Ossian and his father, Fingal. This is the world where history and mythology are intertwined in Scotland's bardic cultural tradition of storytelling.



The Bridge over The Leader Water near Melrose

This year I have found inspiration from the fact that, 200 years ago, Mikhail Lermontov was born. In his short life, he dreamed of travelling to the Ossianic world of Scotland, the land of his Learmonth forebears. In reality, he never managed to experience the mysterious and entrancing world of Dalriada, the world of Tir N'an Og, the land of the 'ever young' where time stands still. My exhibition at the Tatha Gallery makes reference to the Scottish landscapes I associate with Mikhail Lermontov and therefore with Thomas The Rhymer and with the Hebridean midsummer sunsets where sky, land and sea are conjoined in an heavenly light where sunrise and sunset occur in a simultaneous moment of time.



Lobster pots, Perros Guirec, France 1966

I am pleased to exhibit in the Tatha Gallery, positioned as it is in Newport-on-Tay on the shores of The Firth of Tay. It is an inspiring location which defines a new nodal point on my life-long artistic journey on what I have come to define as 'The Road to Meikle Seggie'. Nowadays Meikle Seggie is known as a farm on an ancient Kinross-shire drovers' road. At one time, it was known as a settlement, one of the villages which have fallen off the map of Scotland, indeed one of the villages that have fallen off the map of Europe. The inhabitants of Meikle Seggie were members of a small, hard-working community with an important story to tell based on their race memory. We cannot plan a future without honouring such a race memory. I hope in some way my drawings, paintings and prints help us to use that memory to guide me towards what Joseph Beuys defined as 'The Offing', that is a future reality beyond the horizon to a space of risk-taking adventure.

Richard Demarco

## Ann Oram



Lochore  
Oil on card.  
23 x 30 cms

*Where is your studio, why do you enjoy working there and what's special about it?*

My studio is in the house. The studio is a south west facing room, overlooking a beautiful and unique walled garden. It's special as it largely glazed at one end and it is a light airy room. The garden is very beautiful, and in the summer I paint there and occasionally teach too.

*How would you describe the light there and do you have a preference for a particular light and how does it affect your approach?*

The light is mainly good. However in the summer I sometimes have to draw the curtains, as the light and dark shadows create a problem for the work! I prefer natural light every time, but in winter that isn't possible.

*How does the light hit your work surface? Do you like to have sunlight in your studio and what artificial light do you prefer? Do you ever work outside?*

Well the description above mainly covers that. I don't like direct sunlight hitting the work, and prefer to keep out of the brightest patches. In winter I have a great big Daylight lamp that keeps the room really bright. I do work outside and would definitely like to do more of that. I'm looking



Field Edge, Summer  
Oil on card.  
23 x 30 cms

into getting a fisherman's tent, so that I can work and be protected from the elements. One of my ambitions is to work on a show completely out of doors! In Scotland....could be challenging!

Is there a particular subject or emotion which draws you?

It changes. I've never been the kind of painter who can stick to one subject or media for that matter. Colour and texture have to be up there, as well as love for the subject matter. Unless you really love and get excited by what you are seeing, then all is lost. Landscape and Still Life are my top favourites now. And Flowers and Architecture. Quite a broad range!

*Do you have a preference for particular colours? If yes, is it driven by subject, mood, light or an emotional response?*

All colours! I can often have a colour flooding my head, and it can be the starting point for a series of paintings. The colour can change according to the seasons, and of course, where you are painting. Southern Spain will give you a different palette from Scotland. I do like vibrant colour.

*Have your colour/technique/composition preferences changed over time?*

Yes. I am always trying new ways to express myself and what I am seeing. Your



Road in Fife, after the rain  
Oil on card.  
23 x 30 cms

approach changes according to how you want to describe something. It's good to keep developing. I'd hate to be painting the same picture that I painted 10 years ago. Compositionally things are the same or not. Just depends!!

*Do you have a "secret weapon" and would you like to tell us about it?*

Oil pastels! I love oil and wax resist. If a painting on paper is getting a bit too dull, get going with some really opposing oil pastel colour and the watercolours.

*What type of equipment do you prefer to use? Do you have a favourite brush/knife?*

I love big bristle brushes for watercolour or inks, as well as Swordliners for detail and responsive lines. Also love to draw with the 'dropper' from the ink bottle! That sorts the lines out.

*What do you prefer to paint on and why?*

I love good watercolour paper and mounting board to paint on. Gessoed paper is good too.

*Picture base/location when painting & why?*

Easel for oils, and tables and the floor for water based work. The floor is great as I often set up a still life there, and paint the big pieces in front of it. Good for paintings over three feet. Sometimes I work on



Trees by water.  
Oil on card.  
23 x 30 cms

pieces up to 50 inches on the floor. Not great for knees!

*Do you listen to music when working? If so, what are your preferences and why?*

I certainly do. My jukebox, otherwise known as Spotify, provides me with all the music I need. Recently It's been loads of jazz as my husband and I have been to concerts by Martin Taylor and Courtney Pine. But then there's Nick Drake and the Isley Brothers. Jonas Kauffman singing a little opera too.

*Do you enjoy working in company or prefer to be alone?*

Alone. I like to be alone with my thoughts. In the main.

*Describe your normal working day.*

Get up. Go for a walk along the country lanes around our house. How good is that? Then it's coffee and into the studio. I tend to work straight through the day, with a quick lunch, and check emails as and when. If the work ain't going well, then you can always put on a pot of soup for later! If the sun is shining then I will take advantage of that too, and have a break.

I don't like to work nights, but in the run up to a big exhibition, then it is inevitable.



Section of the Duomo, Florence  
Mixed media on paper  
28 x 33 cms

*Who is your greatest influence?*

Everyone! From living painters to the dead variety, there is always something to be learned. As I am interested in landscape more, Sheila Fell and Ivon Hitchens can give me a really emotional response when I see their paintings. I think they painted from the heart.

*Which work of art would you most like to own and see everyday?*

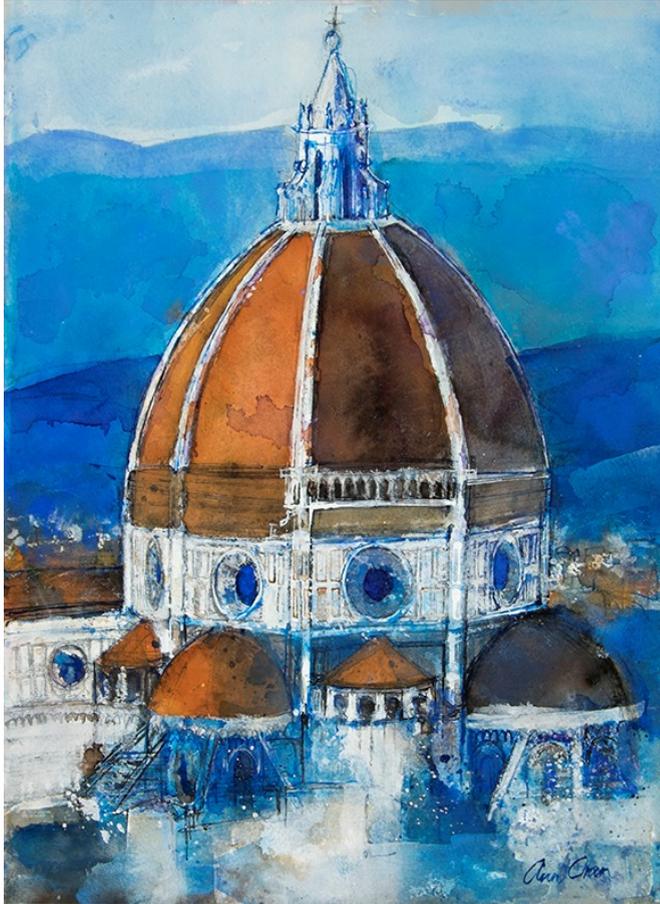
An Ivon Hitchens Landscape.

*Which contemporary artist do you most admire and why?*

Too difficult to answer, that one. I love so many. I like Kurt Jackson and have recently discovered Zao Wou-Ki. Peter Doig is really interesting. In all three, I enjoy the surfaces they make. Peter Doig has an amazing take on pattern and shapes, as well as surface. Zao Wou- Ki has a very free approach to landscape, which is very understated.

*If you could go anywhere to paint, where would it be and why?*

A lake in Austria. We lived in Vienna for while, and on weekends you could take the train down to the Neuseedler See, hire a bike and cycle round the lake into Hungary. Great painting material along the way. And vineyards!



Duomo  
Mixed media on paper  
38 x 28 cms

*What do you like to do to relax?*

I enjoy a summer garden with a glass of wine. Eating outdoors.

*Is there something you would like to say that we haven't asked about?*

I am showing with Duncan Miller Fine Arts in October. Paintings from Scotland, and recent travels to Italy.

## WEBSITE NEWS

### TOUCH SCREEN MENUS:

Our new tablet "Touch Screen Menu" is now live. You can also use our traditional "computer" menus too.

**New** COMPETITIONS' PAGES

### VIRTUAL GALLERY OUR NEW VIRTUAL GALLERY

TAKE A TOUR

### OUR TWITTER FEED

"Live" Tweets"

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The next quarterly issue is due in September

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## PROMOTING SCOTTISH ART

It is Frigyes Karinty's theory that we are all only six steps away from being introduced to any other person in the world. So please continue to promote Scottish Art by "introducing" this magazine to your friends and colleagues.

You have been so successful at this that in our website's brief life we have rushed past 2,000,000 hits .

This is not robots, worms, web-crawlers, or replies with special HTTP status codes. It's 2,000,000 hits by real people looking around our website and following our links to Scottish artists and galleries.

And we've only just started!

## OUR THANKS

We'd like to give a special thank you to the artists for working with us to produce this very fine issue of our magazine.

*Stewart*

See what's going on..

