



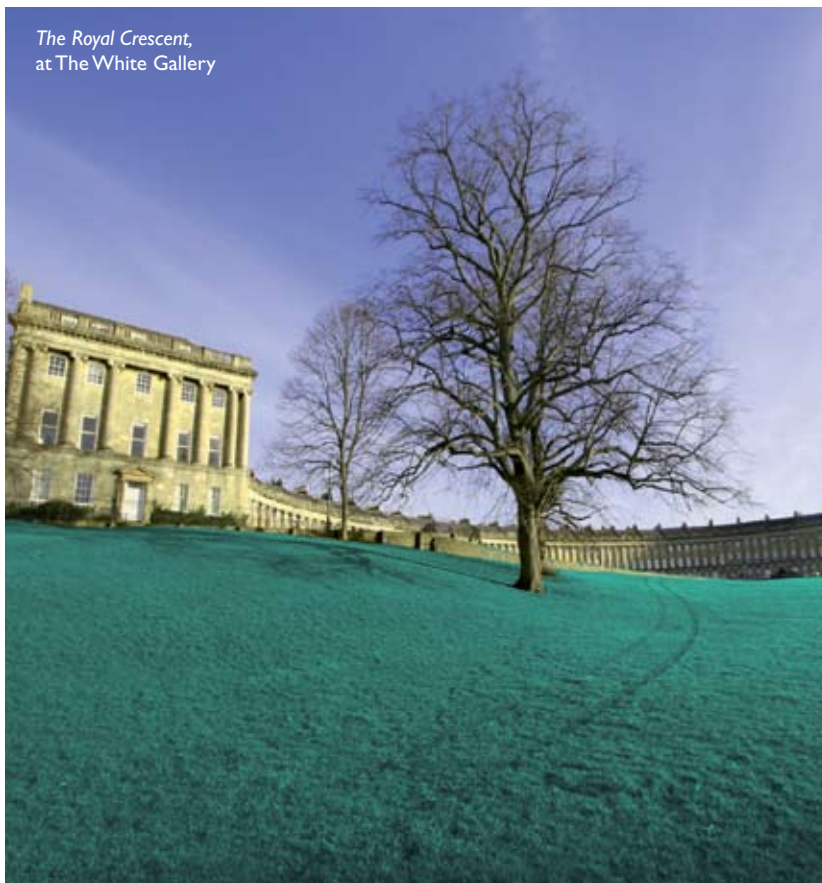
Bangles at Gallery Nine



Old Town in Rain,
Duong Ngoc Son
(at Oc-Eo)

State of the art

Artist Rachel Milne dashes round Bath to give her personal round-up of the city's best galleries



The Royal Crescent,
at The White Gallery

I arrived in Bath with a rather hazy view of the city's art scene. I imagined huge Old Masters gracing the Georgian town houses, and a smattering of touristy print shops – it turns out that I was fantastically wide of the mark. It took a brief stint of working here for me to discover its excellent range of galleries; I discovered that unlike Bristol, say, which has an urban edginess, along with creative but less salubrious areas in which to cultivate the up and coming, Bath is more monied with a rich smattering of Royal Academissions living and working in the area and a large number of galleries where you can pick up both the heavily established and the up-and-coming. The galleries here are very like the London galleries – the only differences being that they are approachable and on your doorstep.

THE ADAM GALLERY

Open for 20 years, with a sister gallery in Cork Street, the Adam Gallery is not only concerned with 20th-century artists; established and well respected as they are, they have had the opportunity to pick and choose the best of modern contemporary art, and have a stock of fabulous work. I especially love the work of Michael Hyam and Barbara Rae RA – catch-your-breath sort of stuff. Also keep your eyes peeled for Richard Cartwright's upcoming show; his dreamlike and atmospheric paintings go up on the first of December.

• 13 John Street
tel: 01225 480406
www.adamgallery.com

ATRIUM GALLERY

A print gallery with a fiercely independent streak, the Atrium gallery has been providing the good citizens of Bath with contemporary, exciting and affordable prints for just over nine years. Informed and interested in the established and the up-and-coming, they pick their images with care and expertise. So if prints are your cup of tea, this is the place to go.

- The Podium
tel: 01225 443446
www.atriumgallery.com

ANTHONY HEPWORTH FINE ART

Anthony Hepworth has been curating since 1989, building an excellent gallery reputation, with a distinctive choice and standard of exhibitions and exhibitors. Specialists in 20th-century art, the calibre of the work is met by an equal depth of knowledge and approachability. Here is where you will find the likes of Ben Nicolson and Barbara Hepworth. Also offering restoration, framing, insurance services and acting as agents for collectors, institutions and estates, as Anthony Hepworth himself says, they see themselves as a London gallery, just a little further from the tube.

- 3 Margarets Buildings, Brock Street
tel: 01225 447480
www.anthonypepworth.com

CASTLE GALLERY

One of 28 Galleries owned by Washington Green Art Publishers this is a very accessible, friendly gallery. The work here is direct, emotional and uplifting and a fantastic place to start if you are a bit of a novice to the art world. John Myatt, the infamous and convicted forger, is an exhibitor with Castle Galleries as is the Newcastle-based painter Alexander Millar who is just about to embark on an *X-Factor* style programme on the BBC to find an apprentice.

- 5 Burton Street
tel: 01225 789298
www.castlegalleries.com



“The galleries are like London’s – but more approachable”

GALLERY NINE

In her Margaret’s Buildings premises, Sarah Denholm opened Gallery Nine two years ago and with its eclectic mix of jewellery, ceramics, textiles and sculpture, as well as some gorgeous paintings, it’s not surprisingly doing very well. Specialising in affordable, contemporary work, the gallery has an approachable, colourful feel. With the gorgeous textiles and fantastic range of contemporary jewellery, this could be a very painless place to do some Christmas browsing.

- 9B Margaret’s Buildings
tel: 01225 319197
www.gallerynine.co.uk ➤

Above; distinctive jewellery at Gallery Nine; below: Shunxue Liu’s *Peony Flower*, Oc-Eo Gallery; right: Out of the Blue gallery, in its distinctive vaults



“A gallery of fantastic quality, run by passionate and knowledgeable owners”

Right: *Man of Bath* (Reynolds) at the Victoria Art Gallery; below, prints by Matisse at the White Room Gallery; inset, ceramic bowl at Gallery Nine



LARKHALL FINE ART

Larkhall Fine Art specialise in original 19th- and 20th-century prints and etchings. What a shame the brilliant William Blake’s take on Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* in no longer going to be in the window when this goes to print, since I could encourage you to go and spot the *Wife of Bath*, the lady in question having all her finery on display. Again, this is a gallery of fantastic quality run by passionate and knowledgeable owners. To more than make up for the lack of a flashing *Wife of Bath* they are currently exhibiting the etchings of Water Sickert; apprentice of Whistler and contemporary of Degas he is one of Britain’s finest painters (few are convinced by those Jack the Ripper rumours!). This isn’t to be missed.

• 10 Margaret’s Buildings
tel: 01225 444480
www.larkhall.com

MAUGER MODERN ART

A very new exciting addition to the Bath scene, all eyes peeled on Bartlett Street as the Mauger (pronounced ‘Major’ – thank you the kind woman in the White Room Gallery for

sparing my blushes as I tried to get my mouth round that one) – will be open by the time this hits your doormat. Part commercial gallery, part exhibition space, hosting corporate events to help finance some exciting modern art, this gallery has a few cutting-edge shows on the cards.

• 6 Bartlett Street
tel: 01225 315110
www.maugermodern.com

NICK CUDWORTH AT THE GALLERY

Nick Cudworth is a super-realist style painter who not only has had his portrait of Ken Loach purchased by the Royal Portrait Gallery, but has exhibited internationally and even recorded three albums on John Peel’s record label! His paintings employ the use of trompe l’oeil, playing with time and



light, they are both accessible and fascinating, as if you are peering into his strangely familiar world. This is one of the most exciting things about the Bath art scene – fabulous international art is so accessible. Nick’s studio is based at the rear of his gallery on London Street, so not only can you see his work locally, you can wander in and have a good nose at it being done.

• The Gallery
5 London Street
tel: 01225 445221

OC-EO

Four Seasons is the upcoming exhibition of Vietnamese and Chinese art at the Chapel Row Gallery. Curated by Peter and Carole Quintana who developed a love of Eastern art through living and travelling around Asia they are bringing this hugely popular exhibition to Bath from the Mall Galleries in London. Increasingly sought-after, these ➤



Kevin Safe exhibits at the Out of the Blue gallery

delicate, sweeping images are beautiful, authoritative and controlled. The exhibition opens on the 29th of November and continues up until 12 December.

- 6 Chapel Row
tel: 01225 480114
www.oc-co.co.uk

OUT OF THE BLUE

Holding the work of some of the best Cornish painters, as well as pottery by Lucie Rie and Bernard Leach, the next most exciting development is the transformation by night of the gallery into a wine and cocktail bar. The over-25's rule should result in this being a calm, easy place for a late night tittle. This is a fantastic take on the traditional gallery atmosphere, making an accessible and relaxing environment where you can soak up the work by soaking up a large bottle of wine.

Keep a look out for the Oliver Bedeman exhibition on from 8 December, and hot on its heels, the opening of the bar.

- Spring Gardens Road
tel: 01225 314242
www.outofthebluebath.co.uk

VICTORIA ART GALLERY

No round-up of Bath's galleries would be complete without a mention of the VAG. It's been open since 1900 and gets over 90,000 visitors a year, attracted by B&NES's collection of paintings, sculpture and decorative arts that include oils dating from the 15th through to the 20th century; among them are works by painters who were active in the Bath area, including Thomas Gainsborough, Walter Sickert and JMW Turner. The decorative art collection ranges from delicate 18th-century wine glasses to

a wonderful array of over 150 china dogs; there's also a continually changing diary of talks, special exhibitions and tours.

- Bridge Street
tel: 01225 477233
www.victoriagal.org.uk

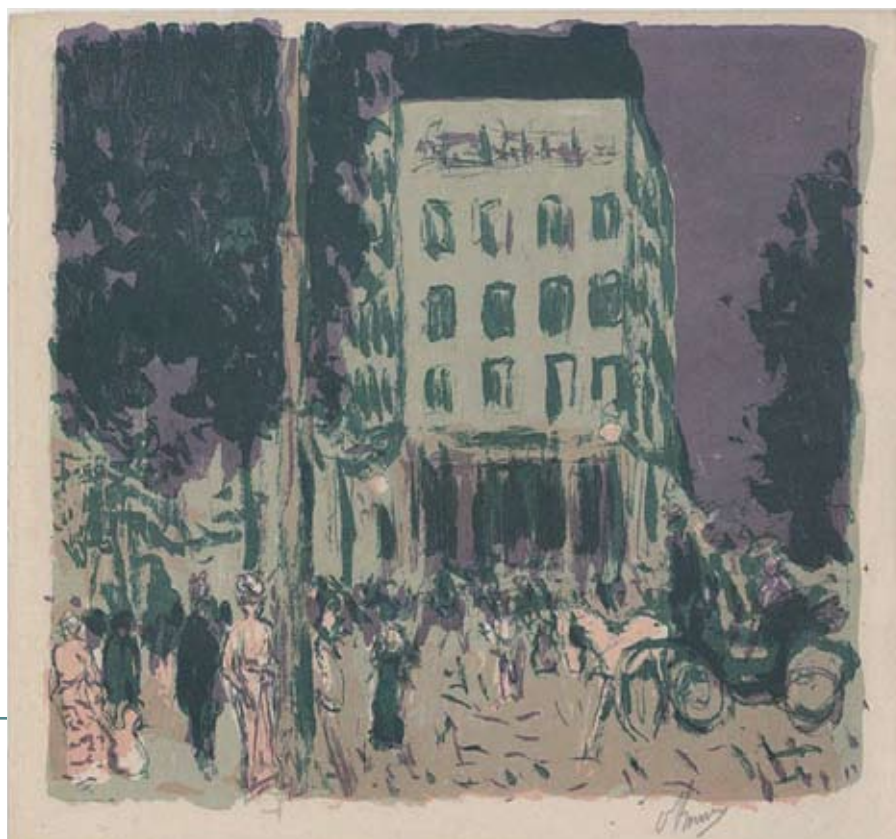
THE WHITE ROOM GALLERY

Fresh, modern and in no way intimidating, the White Room is a bright space with contemporary feel. Currently showing a brilliant collaborative exhibition by John Eaves and Katherine Williams, heralded by Derek Balmer P.R.W.A as revealing "an authority that does both artists great credit" the abstracts' colour and control look fabulous. Their aim at the White Room is to bring good quality contemporary art with a reasonable price and with a fantastic range of 21st century art including Victor Pasmore, Patrick Caulfield (one of my favourite artists – his work makes me want to weep with envy and admiration) and Bill Jackson, this is a well worth a look.

- 31 Brock Street
tel: 01225 331500
www.thewhiteroomgallery.com

Finally, a quick mention for two of the best galleries in Bath for anyone looking out for up-and-coming contemporary painters. Both the Edgar Modern and Beaux Arts have a brilliant and exciting collection of contemporary art and if you're looking for the next big thing it's well worth having a good peer round both. □

- www.edgarmodern.com
www.beauxartsbath.co.uk



Left: *Les Boulevards*, Bonnard (Larkhall Fine Art)