



# DAVID JONES SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

28 November, 2016

### STARLIGHT ORDER,

11 March, 2017, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Art Worker's Guild, 6 Queen Square, London, WC1N 3AT

### Summary

The presentations are a series of commemorative tributes that acknowledges the achievements of David Jones, as well as the legacy he has left us. The occasion also celebrates 21 years of The David Jones Society, in the same venue from which the Society was launched. Appropriately, The Art Workers' Guild at Queen's Square is close to where the headquarters of the publishing house, Faber and Faber, David Jones's publisher, was situated at that time.

Jones's achievements were many and varied. He was an undisputed Modernist who left us an amazing and diverse collection of visual art: drawings, wood- and metal-engravings, paintings in both oil and watercolour, and mixed media, the content of which ranged through many themes. Once he had 'discovered' his theory of art as a sign of something other, Jones seldom deviated from investing his visual endeavours with connotations, symbols and allusions. To this end he went on to 'make a shape in words', which he made manifest in his epic *In Parenthesis*, an evocative, moving and poeticized portrayal of his experience as a foot-soldier in the trenches during World War I. This was the first of a number of literary works that further enriched his output as a 'maker'. His interest in both image and text were consolidated in his 'painted inscriptions' which are possibly the apotheosis of the concept of unity in which he delighted.

### The Speakers

**William Blissett** first met David Jones in the mid-sixties when the poet-painter kindly responded to a young writer's questions about his work. William and Jones shared a love of

all things Arthurian and William made many visits to England to see Jones over the next few years – including the year Jones died. William’s memories of Jones are collected in *The Long Conversation*, which gives an insight into Jones and his mindset. Thanks to William, many more scholars and thinkers encountered Jones’s works, and their lives and works have been enriched by knowing Jones’s, so that they too become passionate vectors of David Jones’s legacy.

**Ewan Clayton** is a calligrapher and teacher, who grew up near Ditchling, Sussex. His family worked as weavers in the Guild of craftsmen on Ditchling Common founded by Eric Gill and the printer Hilary Pepler in 1921. Ewan was also a member of the Guild before it closed in 1988. He was invited by the Folio Society to create calligraphic illustrations for a special commemorative edition of *In Parenthesis*, which was published in 2014, as a tribute to Jones and the Great War. Ewan now lives and works in Brighton and is Professor in Design at The University of Sunderland. His book on the history of writing, *The Golden Thread*, was published by Atlantic in 2013 and has since been translated into four other languages.

The **Conran Poetry Chorus** presents a selection from the newly published *Three Symphonies* (Agenda Editions, 2016), the final substantial works of their founder and inspiration, **Tony Conran**, poet, translator and cultural interpreter. Here Tony explores life, love, theology, creation, creativity and even historical themes using a wide range of poetic and imaginative techniques which are brought vividly to life in recitation, music and song. Tony was a founder member of the first David Jones Society and Jones’s poetry and art work were a continuing inspiration. He has been described as ‘...by far the finest poet in the Modernist tradition that Wales has produced since David Jones.’ (Professor Tony Brown, Bangor University).

**Hilary Davies** is an award winning poet, Royal Literary Fund Fellow and former Chairman of the Poetry Society. Her fourth collection, *Exile and the Kingdom*, was published by Enitharmon in autumn 2016. She has written on and taught David Jones’s poetry and painting at various institutions. Her talk concerns the close parallels between David Jones’s *In Parenthesis* and Stanley Spencer’s great sequence of paintings at Sandham Memorial Chapel in Burghclere.

**Tom Durham** was 11 years old when his family spent the summer of 1955 at an eccentric boarding-house on Harrow Hill - Northwick Lodge. Tom became aware of one of the residents in particular, a 60 year old artist named David Jones. It would not have occurred to either of them that 60 years later the boy would be performing, from memory, ever more mind-blowing passages from the artist’s poetic work. What does such a meditative practice, familiar to virtuoso musicians, reveal to performers and auditors of the spoken word? Tom will share his insights with us in his rendition of a three part sequence for Part 7 of *In Parenthesis* - The Battle of Mametz Wood.

**Richard Kindersley** trained with his father David, who was in turn apprenticed to Eric Gill. Richard followed in his father's footsteps specialising in architectural lettering and carving. His early training as a sculptor made him familiar and confident with handling materials that are part of the fabric of buildings including brick and concrete. David Jones has always been an inspiration to Richard because of Jones's seriousness in expressing his beliefs and fusing them uncompromisingly into his art and life.

**John Matthews** remembers: 'I first met David Jones in the mid-sixties when he kindly responded to a young writer's questions about his work. We shared a love of all things Arthurian and I made several visits over the next few years - to within a few days of his death. His passion for the legends of Arthur and the Grail, his shy but profound spirituality and his personal struggles with health were a background to our conversations. We talked for long hours about the mysteries - and difficulties - of writing, drank copious amounts of tea, and poured over the pictures he has stored in his "dugout". In my talk I will remember those meetings and the things we discussed and try to understand this remarkable man I was lucky enough to know.'

I appeal to everyone who is interested in attending 'Starlight Order', to contact me as soon as possible. We need to know that this event will be supported – it would be most disappointing if the DJS has to cancel this day of performative appearances.

## EXHIBITION



### **The Book Beautiful: William Morris, Hilary Pepler and the Private Press Story**

Currently on show at the **Ditchling Museum** until 16 April 2017.

As most are aware, William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, were a group interested in creating beautiful objects that were both artistic and useful, and who were instrumental in influencing Eric Gill and the Ditchling Community, and their aspirations.

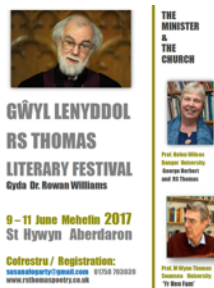
<http://www.ditchlingmuseumartcraft.org.uk/event/thebookbeautiful/>

## **R.S. THOMAS**

There are also several items of interest concerning our erstwhile Honorary President, the poet-priest, R.S. Thomas.

## R.S. Thomas Literary Festival

Aberdaron, 9-11 June, 2017



Contributors include our Honorary President, Dr. Rowan Williams, Prof M. Wynn Thomas and Prof Helen Wilcox. Poster attached in original email.

More information is available on [www.rstthomaspoetry.co.uk](http://www.rstthomaspoetry.co.uk)

## Bardsely Island Retreat . . . R.S. Thomas and More

23 June – 1 July, 2017



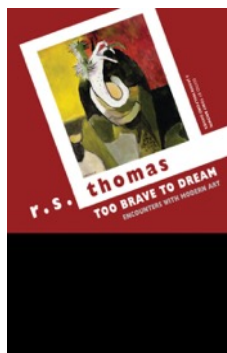
A week-long Island Retreat & Holiday on Enlli/Bardsey Island (Aberdaron, Wales), captured in R.S. Thomas's collection, *Pilgrimages*. Home of St. Cadfan (c. 516) and a historic community of prayer.



Cost: £600 for shared double/twin room; £720 for single room  
Contact: Susan Fogarty, tel. 01758 703039

<http://www.journeying.co.uk/bardsey-island-retreat.html>

## Book Launch:



*R.S. Thomas, Too Brave to Dream: Encounters with Modern Art* (Bloodaxe, 2016), £12.00 (newly discovered poem by R.S. Thomas)

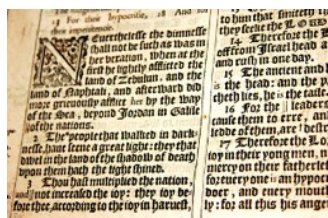
30 November, 2016, 7:30 pm, R.S. Thomas Centre (First Floor of Bangor University)

in the company of Tony Brown, Jason Walford Davies and Will Rowlands

<http://www.bloodaxebooks.com/ecs/product/too-brave-to-dream-1122>

# FROM THE 'ASK' BULLETIN ('ARTS AND THE SACRED AT KINGS')

**Course:** *Text, Interpretation and Imagination*



Mon. 5 Dec. (2 pm) - Thurs. 8 Dec. (5 pm),

Sarum College, Salisbury

Tutor: Colin Greene

Cost: £300 non-residential; £460 residential

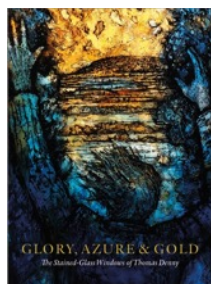
Contact: Rosemary Nicklen, [rnicklen@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:rnicklen@sarum.ac.uk) | 01722

424827 | 01722 424800 (main reception)

The images, stories, myths and teachings of the Bible have served as a foundation for the Western cultural imagination. Students on this course will engage in critical and creative hermeneutics as well as a deeper and closer reading of the Biblical texts themselves.

<http://www.sarum.ac.uk/event/2016-text-interpretation-and-imagination>

## Publications



*Glory, Azure and Gold: The Stained Glass Windows of Thomas Denny*, ed. Antonia Johnson (Lund Humphries, 2017), £40

The second edition of *Glory, Azure and Gold* has been updated with photographs of the Finzi windows in Gloucester Cathedral and is a fraction of the price of the original, art-book, edition. The book contains superb photographs and essays by Mark Cazalet, Emma Crichton-Miller, Christopher Gibbs, John Julius Norwich, William Packer, Chloë Reddaway,

Jane Ridley, Chris de Souza, Pamela Tudor-Craig, Roger Wagner, and Ann Wroe, and a poem by Rowan Williams.

<http://www.reedcontemporarybooks.com/reedcontemporary.html>

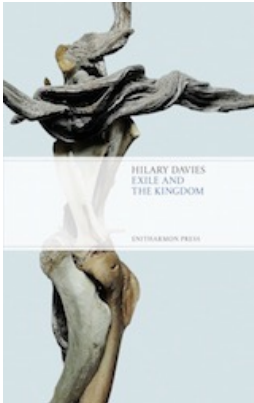


*Revealed: A Storybook Bible for Grownups*, ed. Ned Bustard (Square Halo Books, 2015), £30-£50 on Amazon.co.uk

Instead of cute cartoons of sweet stories, this "storybook Bible" offers gripping artwork—from medieval woodcuts to contemporary linocuts—depicting well-known passages along with those shocking stories that are often hidden from view.

<http://www.squarehalobooks.com/#/revealed/>

## A few titles from members of the DJS:



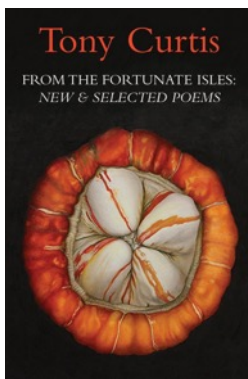
Hilary Davies, *Exile and the Kingdom*  
(London: Enitharmon Press, 2016)

111pp., £9.99.

This is Hilary's fourth collection of poems, and is described as a poetic, religious and psychological pilgrimage, whereby the poet travels through real and imagined territory in search of answers to the great questions which preoccupy us as human beings. The magnitude of Hilary's poetry is demonstrated in the three long poems which start and finish the collection of lyric poems which comprise her ruminations on

the Lea Valley, and the Valley of the Lot.

[http://www.enitharmon.co.uk/pages/store/products/ec\\_view.asp?PID=781](http://www.enitharmon.co.uk/pages/store/products/ec_view.asp?PID=781)

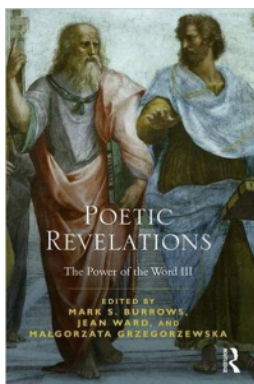


Tony Curtis, *From the Fortunate Isles: new and selected poems*  
(Bridgend: Seren, 2016), 240pp., £12.99.

This is a landmark book for Tony which marks his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, and his fiftieth year of writing poetry. Much of this collection has been published previously, and there are also new, hitherto unpublished works for us to discover. Tony's keen powers of observation resonate throughout his poetry, whereby his attention to detail, together with his enthusiasm for the visual arts and artists, permeate this book. Most obviously perhaps, are his six responses to the reproductions of John Digby's collages, while his poem entitled *Dai Greatcoat Visits Waterloo*

will certainly attract David Jones devotees.

<https://www.serenbooks.com/productdisplay/fortunate-isles-new-and-selected-poems>



Mark S. Burrows, Jean Ward, and Malgorzata Grzegorzewska (eds.),  
*Poetic Revelations: The Power of the Word III* (London: Routledge,  
2016),  
262pp., £85.00.

This handsome book of critical studies deserves to be read by all DJ readers, concerning, as it does, the word and the flesh, or spirit and matter, duo themes that Jones so often pondered in his own making.

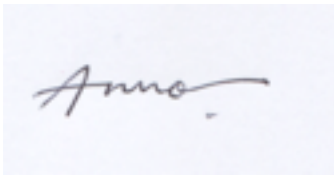
This publication will grace everyone's library, and would also benefit every public library in the country, so it's worth ordering for your local

library if its price is a bit steep. Much of the text deals with exploring the poetics of language and its revelatory character, and the function of poetry in society, with the concurrent argument focusing largely on 'the phenomenology of the flesh'. Fascinating!

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poetic-Revelations-Word-Flesh-Power/dp/1472468309/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1480173346&sr=8-1&keywords=poetic+revelations+word+made+flesh+made+word](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Poetic-Revelations-Word-Flesh-Power/dp/1472468309/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1480173346&sr=8-1&keywords=poetic+revelations+word+made+flesh+made+word)

Finally, I attach the Autumn/Winter newsletter for the **Alliance of Literary Societies**, which gives information concerning the literary societies that operate in the UK, and you will discover more about them and their members. You are welcome to join meetings of many of these groups; the contact details are within.

With all good wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Anne", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.