

Reference code(s): GB 0214 DCASW

Title: Contemporary Art Society for Wales records

Creation date(s): 1937-1991

Level of description: Fonds

Extent: 0.036 cubic metres (3 boxes)

Name of creator(s): Contemporary Art Society for Wales

CONTEXT

Administrative/Biographical history: The Contemporary Art Society for Wales grew out of an attempt, in the 1930s, to 'link up the Welsh art movement with any cultural movement in the distressed areas in Wales.' After a series of successful exhibitions of contemporary art selected by Augustus John (1878-1961), the inaugural meeting of the society took place in Paddington, London, in April 1937. The main aims of the society were to purchase works of art by contemporary artists, to hold exhibitions, and to place the works in institutions where they would be on public view. The method of purchasing was defined at the outset. Half of the Purchasing Fund was placed at the disposal of the Purchaser (elected by the committee, serving for one year) and the other half was retained as a Reserve Fund. Because the minimum annual subscription had been set at one guinea (£1 1s, = £1.05), post-War inflation severely affected the society's purchasing power. The society received a measure of financial assistance from the Welsh Committee of the Arts Council. Later, the society ceased to organise touring exhibitions, and concentrated on displays of its recent purchases. Lord Snowdon acted as President of the Society, 1962-1991; purchasers have included Kyffin Williams (1986-1987) and Diana Armfield (1990-1991). The society celebrated its jubilee year in 1987.

CONTENT

Scope and content/abstract: Records of the Contemporary Art Society for Wales, 1937-1991, including: executive committee minutes, 1937-1987; annual reports, 1959-1990 (printed); annual general meeting agendas, 1981-1987; correspondence with purchasers, especially with Kyffin Williams, 1986-1987, and Diana Armfield, 1990-1991, 1962-1983, 1983-1991; correspondence with Lord Snowdon, President of the Society, 1962-[c. 1991]; catalogues for exhibitions of recent purchases, [purchases, 1938-1988] 1968-1990; commission of a medallion from David Bisson, Wrexham, to be awarded to international artists exhibiting in Wales, 1982-1984; donation by Jan Bauch of his painting 'Two Clowns (1976)' to CASW, 1988-1990; Welsh

Arts Council and Industrial Subscriptions, 1971-1985; commission of a painting by David Tinker for 50th Anniversary of Coleg Harlech, 1976-1978; correspondence with Kyffin Williams concerning his intention to resign from the society as a result of the Tinker commission, 1976-1977, 1983; removal and consolidation of mural by Ceri Richards in British Council premises, Caroline Street, Cardiff, 1981-1983; deeds of covenant, [c. 1942]-1985; correspondence (mostly trivial) from notable figures including Ceri Richards, R. S. Thomas, Arthur Giardelli, Augustus John, Megan Lloyd George, Huw Weldon and Iorwerth C. Peate.

ACCESS AND USE

Language/scripts of material: English

System of arrangement: Arranged into the following: executive committee minutes; annual reports; annual general meeting; and correspondence files.

Conditions governing access: No restrictions

Conditions governing reproduction: Normal Glamorgan Record Office conditions apply.

Finding aids: A hard copy of the catalogue is available at the Glamorgan Record Office.

ARCHIVAL INFORMATION

Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information: All records which meet the collection policy of the Glamorgan Record Office have been retained.

Accruals: Accruals are possible.

Archival history:

Immediate source of acquisition: Deposited by the Contemporary Art Society for Wales on 12 September 1991.

ALLIED MATERIALS

DESCRIPTION NOTES

Note: Title supplied from contents of fonds.

Archivist's note: Compiled by Hayden Burns for the ANW project. The following sources were used in the compilation of this description: Glamorgan Record Office, Catalogue of records for the Contemporary Art Society for Wales; National Museum of Wales, *Contemporary Art Society for Wales, 50th*

Anniversary Exhibition, (Cardiff, 1987). The Society is not connected with the (UK) Contemporary Art Society, founded in 1910 to purchase works for public galleries.

Rules or conventions: This description follows ANW guidelines based on ISAD(G) second edition, AACR2, and LCSH.

Date(s) of descriptions: December 2003
