

With fans flocking to see the Rowland Hilder Annual Tribute Exhibition it has been a busy month or so in the Gallery, whilst collectors of Alison Griffin's miniatures created a sell-out situation, which was both heartening and exciting. Olga Simonova has made it safely home to St Petersburg after her exhibition here and an action packed few weeks where she visited exhibitions from Edinburgh to London and Canterbury every single day! She and daughter Anna had reserves of cultural stamina that we were in awe of!

It will be a similar story when Olga Oreshnikov and Hanan Milner come and stay with us for the opening of their exhibition in our Quarterly Collection 4. We know that Hanan in particular will be searching the antique shops of Kent to find examples of the finest lace and linens which will become the subject of his work. These heirlooms are given a new lease of life in telling their stories of loves and lives in his paintings. Our other featured artist, Graham Pook, brings his evocative Scottish Spirit to the opening weekend, so be prepared for visual stories that move the soul.

The last few months of the year are always very busy ones for us here at Francis Iles; as well as the inevitable swing towards Christmas and of course our famed and fabulous *Christmas Room* which opens on the **20<sup>th</sup> October**, we have a **Small Pictures** exhibition, featuring the indomitable Brian Bennett PPROI, who, now in his 91<sup>st</sup> year, wants to do something different ! Not miniature, but diminutive jewels of his larger oils and guaranteed to fill the spaces in your home that have been just aching for a Bennett. This opens on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> November, which is also Mince Pie Day** a celebration of being open every day from then until Christmas. The other important date to make sure you have in your diary is **22<sup>nd</sup> of November** for our Art on a Postcard charity event at the Gallery

You helped us raise over £5,000 for our two charities last year – The 70273 Project, a commemorative community project that has travelled from Rochester Cathedral to London and Scotland this year, and will soon make the move to America, and the Cinnamon Trust who have put the money we donated to them towards a scanning machine for use in their Hillside Sanctuary.

The charity that we have chosen this year is Horatio's Garden, and money we raise from this year's event will go towards supporting the new therapeutic garden at Stoke Mandeville Spinal Injury Unit which opens this month. We always like to have a personal link to the charities that Francis Iles supports, and one of our artists was sent to Stoke Mandeville for rehabilitation after



suffering a spinal injury. His stay was before the garden was opened, but the evidence for the benefit of garden therapy is well documented which is why Horatio's Garden does such vital work in helping a patient's recovery.

For more information about the charity see [horatiosgarden.org.uk](http://horatiosgarden.org.uk)

See you in the Gallery soon! From Alayne, Nettie & Lucy