

**LADFAS REPORT ON VISIT TO  
THE NEW GLASGOW BOYS EXHIBITION  
AT LYON AND TURNBULL  
Mon 24<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Just over 20 of us took the train from Helensburgh on a bright, breezy morning, in order to visit an exhibition of privately owned paintings of The New Glasgow Boys, chosen by James McNaught. This was a chance for the public to view paintings that are rarely seen outside the owners' homes. Charlotte Rostek, head of the Glasgow office of Lyon and Turnbull, introduced us to the art critic and auctioneer Ian Gale.

Ian had first-hand knowledge of the artists, some of whom he had known well, and he gave us an insight into some of the characters and the relationships between them. He explained the origins of the title "The New Glasgow Boys" (which included one woman, Alison Watt), or "The Glasgow Pups", a less complimentary title coined by the art critic Waldemar Januszczak.

Key to the success of The New Glasgow Boys was their tutor at Glasgow School of Art, Sandy Moffat, who encouraged his students to paint "what really mattered to them". The general direction of their work was towards the rejuvenation of narrative, figurative painting of a type which could loosely be called socially conscious realism, where the "big idea" could be a theme or concept, regardless of the size of the work



**PETER HOWSON (SCOTTISH B.1958)  
| *TIMELESS MARCH - (STUDY)* | 1992  
Sold for £3,250 (incl. buyer's premium),**

Ian explained how the rise of The New Glasgow Boys was dependent upon Moffat organising an exhibition in 1981, at Edinburgh's New 57 Gallery. Three years later a larger exhibition was held, at Glasgow's 3<sup>rd</sup> Eye Centre, called New Image Glasgow. It was here that the main figures in the group, Steven Campbell, Adrian Wiszniewski, Ken Currie and Peter Howson came together for the first time. Campbell, being the older painter, became the so-called leader of the pack, which by this time included both Stephen Conroy and Alison Watt. Championed by critics and powerful galleries, it was Campbell's new found success in America that gave him the confidence to encourage the others in self-promotion, suggesting to them that as he had made it big, so could they.

Ian went on to outline the rise and the effects of the international success that these artists achieved in the mid 1980s, effects for both good and ill. This success coincided with the affluent, Yuppie culture developing during the Thatcher years and the rebuilding of Glasgow from its post-industrial depression into the City of Culture.

There was time at the end of the talk, over coffee, for us to ask questions and for further general discussion. This was a thoroughly informative and enjoyable morning, which left me wanting to know more about this fascinating period in the recent history of Scottish art.