

David Jones: Dialogues with the Past

An International, Interdisciplinary Conference at the University of York, U.K.
21-23 July, 2016

In 'Past and Present' (1953), David Jones claimed: 'The entire past is at the poet's disposal'. The interweaving of this 'entire past' with the present moment fundamentally characterises Jones's art and thought, from his visual reimagining of historical figures, to the etymologically rich allusions of his poetry, to the unusual philosophy of history manifested in his essays and letters. The analysis of Jones's visual or poetic works often reflects the act of excavation: the unique layering of images, words and ideas, the resonant symbolism and shades of meaning, the blending of cultural traditions and dynamic interweaving of whole civilisations.

As 2016 marks the centenary of the Battle of the Somme which profoundly shaped Jones's imagination and thought, it provides an ideal moment to reconsider the entirety of Jones's engagement with the many, various, elusive and intertwined 'pasts' through which he conceived history and culture. It will be an opportunity to explore Jones's own style, subject matter, allusive practice and intellectual questions including the role of 'memory', 'inheritance' and 'history' in art and life, while also reflecting upon Jones's own past and contemporary moment.



David Jones, *Mother of the West* (1942)
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne.
(Courtesy of Tyne & Wear
Archives & Museum)

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

Tom Dilworth (English), **Adam Schwartz** (History) and **Paul Hills** (History of Art)

Evening Events:

Screening (21 July) - *An Artist's Retrospect: Selections from Lost Jones Interviews and Programmes*

Performance (22 July) - *Echoing Sacredness and Sound: Sources of Jones's Audio-Visual Imagination*

We welcome papers from scholars and postgraduates of multiple disciplines, including but not limited to: English, History of Art, History, Philosophy, Theology and any others that may offer relevant perspectives to the study of David Jones. Papers might include but are not limited to any of the following topics in relation to the thought and works of Jones and his contemporaries:

- The Historical Moment of *In Parenthesis* (cf. Blunden, Graves, Sassoon)
- The WWI Tommy in Visual Art
- Dialogues with Cyclical Theories of History
- Modern Responses to Tradition of War Poetry
- The Poet as 'Rememberer'
- Concepts of 'Tradition' or 'Contemporaneity' (cf. T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden)
- The Classical Tradition
- Historical Resonance of Jones's Painted Inscriptions
- *The Anathemata* and Archaeology
- Medievalism and the Welsh Arthurian Tradition (cf. Robert Graves, J.R.R. Tolkien)
- Historical or Mythic landscapes and Figures in Visual Art
- Biography and Retrospect
- Catholicism and Cultural History (cf. Christopher Dawson)
- Linguistic Interaction and Etymology: Welsh, Latin, Greek and English
- A Jonesian 'Theology of History?'

Abstracts of around 250 words for 20-minute papers should be sent to: davidjonesdialogues@gmail.com

The deadline for paper proposals is 31 January, 2016.

Also, see our website at: www.davidjonesdialogues.com