

Suki & Mike in London With the SAS -- 6th - 9th March 2020

Friday 6th March

Coach ride to London, stopping at Warwick services on the way. Sally counted us back on the coach



We arrived at mid day and were able to check in to the hotel straight away:



We walked to the British Museum:



and saw the print exhibition – Suki’s favourite was *Two Marquesans*, by Gauguin, which appears more sensitive and refined than his paintings. It’s a traced monotype, created by inking the plate, laying paper on it then drawing on the paper to press it into the ink.



Dinner we ate at the *Cosmoba* restaurant, round the corner from the hotel.



It was popular with SAS members:



And so to bed. View from our room:



Saturday 7th March

On Saturday we caught the bus to the Victoria & Albert. We were the only passengers so we sat up front on the top deck and had a sight-seeing tour of London. The statues on Fortnum and Mason are by Lynn Chadwick:



Harry Potter was at the Palace Theatre:



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We were early at the V&A so I looked round. Faces on a war memorial opposite



Near the war memorial is a striking building by Hugh Casson. Opened in 1985 it is the Ismaili Centre. Ismailism is a branch or sub-sect of Shia Islam.



The design is controversial and very different from the V&A but we liked it. In the V&A we saw the Kimono exhibition:



There were kimono of all periods, including contemporary:



We spent time with the sculpture. Suki found the feet on *Sampson and the Philistines* by Vincenzo Foggini a topographical challenge:



Sunday 8th March

On Sunday we went to Somerset House to see the Mushrooms exhibition. Not everyone's cup of tea, but we enjoyed it. Here's *Mushroom Suitcase* by Kirsten Höller:



Then we crossed Waterloo Bridge, where I'd never seen so many bare breasts in one place. It was an Extinction Rebellion protest on International Women's Day.

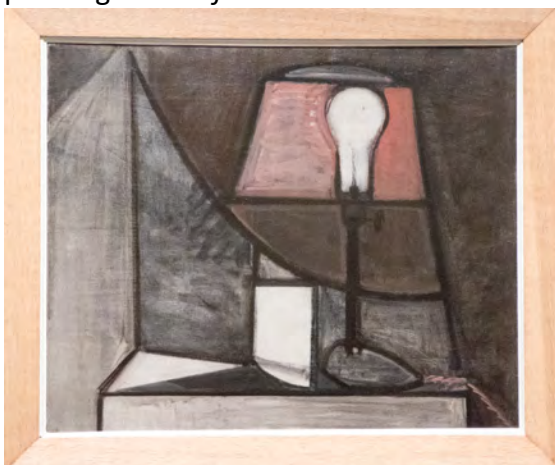
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Down in drizzle to Tate Modern for an exhibition of the work of Dora Marr. She is perhaps more famous as the model and lover of Picasso but she was a talented photographer. This is *Assia Granatouroff*:



She was a painter too. While I looked at the photographs Suki sketched one of her paintings: *Still Life*



Monday 9th March

We'd not seen the ceramics galleries when we visited the V&A on Saturday so we caught the bus down there again, sitting in front on top as usual.

The V&A ceramic collection is enormous and we were getting 'galleried-out' by the time we'd seen it all.

The contemporary studio pottery was particularly interesting:

Twisting Back Multiplying by Harumi Nakashi



Red Twisted Form by Merete Rasmussen



But my favourite is Hans Coper:



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Then back on the bus to the British Museum.



Neptune and Triton by Gianlorenzo Bernini



More ceramics, a beautiful bowl by Imaizumi ImaemonXXIII



And a horse's head *Haniwa* tomb decoration:



Then back on the coach to Shropshire. Did anyone see this telephone box opposite the hotel?



Or this cabmen's shelter outside the V&A?



Photographs and text by Mike White