

James D. Robertson RSA

RSA Obituary, transcribed from the 2010 RSA Annual Exhibition Catalogue

Jimmy Robertson was born in Cowdenbeath in 1931. His family moved to Glasgow, where he attended Hillhead High School, and then Glasgow School of Art under David Donaldson and Joan Eardley. After graduating in 1953, he travelled in Spain for a while before taking up a teaching job at Keith Grammar school.

In 1959 he was appointed a part-time lecturer at Glasgow School of Art, becoming full-time in 1967. With the direct approach to developing the works without preparatory drawings, his style is characterised by the use of bold colour.

He loved to paint the changing light and colour on the sea and the West Renfrewshire countryside where he lived; but he was also attracted to industrial Clydeside. Rather than depicting any particular view however, his paintings evoke a more general mood or response to landscape.

Jimmy was President of the Glasgow Arts Club where he was a convivial host, regularly bringing together an assortment of acquaintances to discuss a range of topics - mostly featuring art and the careers of his many artists friends.

Jimmy was elected to the RSW in 1962 and the RGI in 1980. He became an Associate Member of the RSA in 1974 and an Academician in 1989. In 2002 he received an honorary degree from Glasgow University and was awarded the MBE in 2009.