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David Jones letters to Robin Ironside

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Gwybodaeth grynodeb | Summary information

Lleoliad Repository:	Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru = The National Library of Wales
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Hanes gweinyddol / Braslun bywgraffyddol | Administrative history | Biographical sketch

Nodyn | Note

David Jones (1895-1974) was an accomplished artist who produced watercolours, illustrations and inscriptions, and who also gained acclaim as a poet, especially as the author of *In Parenthesis* in 1937, and the long prose poem *The Anathemata* in 1952.

David Walter Jones was born in Brockley, Kent, on 1 November 1895. His mother, Alice Ann née Bradshaw, was from London, and his father, James Jones, was originally from Holywell, Flintshire.

He attended the Camberwell School of Art from 1910-1914, and the Westminster School of Art from 1919-1921.

He joined the London Welsh Battalion of the Royal Welsh Fuseliers in 1915 and served as a private with them until 1918. This experience had a profound effect on him, and his first book, *In Parenthesis* (1937), is an epic war poem which deals with the period he spent in France.

In 1921 he was received into the Roman Catholic Church, adopting Michael as a middle name. This was a defining moment in his life and work. In the same year he met Eric Gill and joined Gill's community at Ditchling, Sussex, where he learnt wood-engraving. In 1924 he became engaged to Petra Gill and often visited the family at Capel y ffin, near Abergavenny. His engagement with Petra was broken off in 1927 and subsequently he never married.

Between 1928 and 1932 he moved around a great deal, producing watercolours and also writing. In 1933 he suffered a breakdown in health and endured repeated periods of ill-health from then onwards. He virtually stopped painting until 1937. In 1937 Faber published *In Parenthesis*, which T. S. Eliot regarded as 'a work of genius'. He was awarded the Hawthornden prize for it in 1938.

He was based at the parental home at Brockley until his mother's death in 1937. He then lived in Notting Hill, and from about 1946 lived in Harrow on the Hill. In 1970 he fell ill after breaking a bone in his hip and resided at Calvary Nursing Home, Harrow until his death in 1974.

A volume of essays *Epoch and Artist* was published by Faber in 1959, followed by *The Fatigue* (1965), *The Tribune's Visitations* (1969) and *The Introduction to The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1972). *The Sleeping Lord* (1974) and *The Roman Quarry* (1981) were published posthumously.

In 1955 he was awarded the CBE, and also the Harriet Monroe memorial prize. In 1960 he was awarded the degree of D. Litt from The University of Wales and became both Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and a member of the Royal Watercolour Society in 1961. He was awarded the Royal National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold medal in 1964 and the Welsh Arts Council Literature Prize in 1969.

Natur a chynnwys | Scope and content

Five letters, 1942-1943, from the artist and writer David Jones to the art historian and critic Robin Ironside, relating to the preparation of Ironside's illustrated booklet *David Jones* (Harmondsworth, 1949). Jones discusses painting from nature and the selection of paintings for the volume. A sketch of a balcony view is on f. 4.

Nodiadau | Notes

Nodiadau teitl | Title notes

Ffynhonnell | Immediate source of acquisition

Wolseley Fine Arts; London; Purchase; November 1997; B1997/47.

Trefniant | Arrangement

Arranged chronologically at NLW.

Cyfyngiadau ar fynediad | Restrictions on access

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Amodau rheoli defnydd | Conditions governing use

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Nodiadau eraill | Other notes

- **Statws cyhoeddiad | Publication status:** Published
- **Dynodwr sefydliad | Institution identifier:** Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru = The National Library of Wales

Pwyntiau mynediad | Access points

- Ironside, Robin -- Correspondence. (pwnc) | (subject)
- Jones, David, 1895-1974 -- Correspondence (pwnc) | (subject)
- Art -- Philosophy -- 20th century. (pwnc) | (subject)
- Art publishing -- England. (pwnc) | (subject)