

FRANCES HATCH – VISUAL ARTIST

ARTIST STATEMENT

The Fenland of East Anglia with its black earth, big skies and keen east wind is the landscape of my formative years. There I learned to relish open spaces and to respond to their subtle shifts of light and seasonal rhythms.

Over the years favourite places of mine differ by chance or design (recently the inspiration has been Scandinavia, shorelines and open moorland) as do the media chosen. The desire remains the same: to communicate not only what is visible but rather the whole range of sensations received. The medium, support, scale, method and mark are summoned according to the nature of that felt response. No assumptions are made about working methods. Each encounter is felt afresh. At its heart, the work is celebratory.

... 'how can one paint the warmth of the sun, the sound of the sea, the journey of a beetle across a rock...One absorbs all these feelings and ideas, if one is lucky they undergo an alchemistic transformation into gold and that is creative work'.

from a letter to Sven Berlin from John Wells (winter 1948-49)

WORK MADE ON LOCATION.

Direct working in the landscape using a mixture of water-based media, is messy and challenging in a corporeal way. Its discomfort and unpredictability are for me all part of the process. The weather and all the other sensations experienced become active participants in the creativity. Watercolour is particularly responsive to weather and readily leaves its trace in the work.

WORK MADE IN THE STUDIO

An intensity of feeling arises out of my being present and attentive in the landscape whenever the 'sense of place' seems pregnant with possibility.

Away from this immediate stimulus the process of sifting and honing begins. It is in the studio that I find myself beginning a different journey: the direction may be unforeseen, the way forward mysterious, but it is in the process of refining the multiplicity of sensations received on location that a new clarity emerges.

PRINTMAKING

Painting and print- making both allow for building up of images and of surface qualities over time. (which can be used in a direct and spontaneous way) injects a liveliness and quickened pace into a long and reflective process of refinement. The brushes glide over a polished metal surface freely and allow gestural and energised marks to be recorded. The results retain something of the spirit of the initial stimulus. Screen printing, lithography, etching are all ways of realising images with distinct qualities. I am not currently using these methods but may well feel them appropriate in time to come.

FOUND OBJECTS

After the birth of our daughter I began to see flotsam and jetsam anew. Street litter too. Certain objects scattered along the shorelines and road sides began to 'shine out ' their qualities of shape, colour, texture and a new medium became incorporated into my working practice. These discarded and eroded fragments are brought into new relationships and honoured.

FRANCES HATCH

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