

Timothy Taylor Gallery

Craigie Aitchison: Paintings

11 November – 19 December 1998

Waddington Galleries and Timothy Taylor Gallery present an exhibition of recent paintings by Craigie Aitchison, the first since the announcement of their joint representation of the artists. Well known for his landscapes, portraits, nudes, still lifes and crucifixions, Aitchison's new paintings develop the abiding motifs of his work.

The late Helen Lessore said "Color is his starting point" and in his essay, which is included in the catalogue for the forthcoming exhibition, John McEwen writes, "Aitchison is original - not incomparable, but certainly a natural. His combination of colour and clarity, his freedom with form... sets him physically, and spiritually, apart. He paints with the freshness of a beginner; or an artist who has returned to first principles."

The recent paintings demonstrate his mastery of both strong, bright colours, as in the searing pink backgrounds of the portraits of Chris Ogidih, and also the darker tones evident in Holy Island 1997/98 and Calvary 1998. Equally apparent is his skill in the reduction of form. Sometimes using unorthodox methods, such as depicting Christ with red hair and blue eyes is part of Aitchison's unpremeditated approach to his work: beginning each canvas without a preliminary sketch or photograph, he relies on memory and instinct to guide the creative process which results in a highly individualistic style.

Craigie Aitchison was born in Edinburgh in 1926 the younger son of a leading Scottish lawyer and a mother who from an early age encouraged Craigie's artistic interest. After initially following in his father's footsteps and spending time training to become a lawyer he abandoned this career and entered the Slade School of Art in 1952; fellow students included Myles Murphy and Euan Uglow.

Aitchison's work was first shown in a group show at Gimpel Fils in 1954, and his first one man show was at the Beaux Arts Gallery in 1959. Since then he has exhibited widely in the United Kingdom, and overseas in locations as diverse as Tokyo, Delhi and Jerusalem. In 1953, during his second year at the Slade, he won the prize for the best still life and two years later he was awarded a British Council Italian Government Scholarship to Rome. In the intervening years he has received many awards, mostly recently the Jerwood Prize in 1994.

He has recently completed major ecclesiastical commissions for Truro Cathedral and Liverpool Anglican Cathedral where his painting Calvary 1998 was dedicated in July of this year: the Dean of Liverpool, the very Reverend Derrick Walters remarked that "Craigie has a deep understanding of the crucifixion. He captures the desolation, the horror and the pain, but at the same time he manages to signal the crucifixion as the gateway to hope and resurrection"

A fully illustrated catalogue including a text by John McEwen and a conversation between the artist and Andrew Lambirth accompanies the exhibition.

For further information please contact Kathy Battista or Sophie Symons at Waddington Galleries: tel. 0171 437 86 11/439 6262 fax 0171 734 41 46

Or Marissa Fortescue at Timothy Taylor Gallery: tel 0171 409 33 44 fax 0171 409 1316

15 Carlos Place London W1K 2EX Telephone 020 7409 3344 Facsimile 020 7409 1316
Open Mon-Fri 10-6pm Sat 10-2pm

For further information please contact Carla Borel
Tel: 020 7409 3344 or Email: carla@timothytaylorgallery.com