

Frank Auerbach: Etchings and Drypoints 1954 - 2007

15 April - 21 June 2008

An exhibition curated by Craig Hartley, Senior Assistant Keeper of Prints at the Fitzwilliam Museum

Frank Auerbach (b.1931) is seen by many as the most important painter working in Britain today. Abbot Hall is very fortunate in having acquired in 1997 a wonderful painting entitled JYM in the Studio, 1965, and just last year the artist donated his latest etching to the gallery.

In any collection of 20th century British Art, Frank Auerbach always stands out. Distinctive, energetic and yet calm, complex, profound, human. On first acquaintance his work, to some, can seem obscure, even crude or unreadable. But it is worth getting to know. Almost subliminal, its power and strength of feeling is striking, arresting and ultimately beautiful.

Frank Auerbach is equally fluent in any medium, and his body of etchings and drypoints, shown here in its entirety, gives a deep and fascinating insight into his art. Alongside the printed work, we will also be showing a small group of drawings spanning his career, as well as a selection of works from Abbot Hall's collection to show the artist in context. Accompanying the exhibition is an illustrated catalogue with an essay by Craig Hartley, the exhibition's curator.

Auerbach has made less than 40 etchings and drypoints during his six decade long career, and this exhibition is the first to display his complete printmaking output since a show mounted by his dealer, Marlborough Graphics, in 1990. Since then, the artist has produced some of his most significant and assured works in etching, increasingly working on a larger scale on a par with painting. The exhibition begins with his early experimental drypoints, produced while still a student at the Royal College of Art in the 1950s, and reaches its climax with Auerbach's latest etching and aquatint portraying David Landau, published in September 2007. An artist's proof of this new work, fresh from the printer's press, has been given to Abbot Hall by the artist, and we are delighted that this important example of Auerbach's etching will remain permanently at the gallery as a lasting legacy of the exhibition.

For those who only know Auerbach through his paintings, it is probably difficult to imagine how he might find a visual equivalent for the tactile surface of his pictures in the linear medium of etching. But Auerbach has a strong appreciation of the magic of printmaking and in their distinct way his etchings reveal the essential quality of his art.

Lecture: Frank Auerbach by William Feaver

Thurs 15th May 6.30pm for 7.00pm £7.50 / £5.00 (includes a glass of wine)

William Feaver, critic and curator, is a regular speaker at Abbot Hall. He has sat weekly for Frank Auerbach for some years and is currently engaged on a book in which all of the paintings to date will be reproduced.

Tickets can be booked by telephone: 01539 722464

Information contact: Abbot Hall on 01539 722464 email: info@abbothall.org.uk

Images contact: Publicity Department on 015394 46191 email: je@blackwell.org.uk



"Nude seated with arms above her head"



'Lucian Freud'



'Julia'

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