

C L I F F O R D  
C H A N C E

# VITAL SIGNS

## *Work on paper*

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9 March – 24 April 2015

# Vital Signs

*Vital Signs* features twelve artists who, rather than having any particular technique or style in common, are drawn together by shared sympathies. Having long sustained a dialogue amongst themselves, they feel affinities and respect differences or, more accurately, respond to the stimulus of differences. This is a group defined by patterns of friendship, rather than any community of style. But as art historian Brendan Prendeville, writing about an early exhibition of the group, noted 'Friendships are not only grounded in affinity, but create new common ground.'

The informal group not only share galleries and exhibitions together, but also have spent time in one another's studio, as well as many animated evenings in each other's company, discussing painting and painters, past and present. While this has deepened their familiarity with each other's work, it has also helped facilitate an understanding of their own particular concerns, in each case about some essential engagement with the possibilities and problems of the act of painting.

In this their latest manifestation, *Vital Signs* focuses on works on paper. As Luke Elwes explains 'This exhibition is about the activity of mark making and the myriad thoughts and imaginings that surface on paper through this elemental act. Sometimes it is simply a beginning, a way of moving forward into as yet unknown territory – a 'voyage' as Andrzej Jackowski describes it. At other times it is a way of working things out, playing with nascent possibilities; the paper becomes a container of private thoughts, a testing ground, a dream site, a mind map. Often it is a volatile and uncertain space, in which intangible ideas are questioned and probed by hand and where the interior realm – what Tony Bevan calls 'an internal landscape' – starts to assume some imperfect external form..... All this, and more, is contained in a 'work on paper', which as well as allowing the viewer more direct and immediate access to an artist's concerns, 'by using the images to gain the conscious experience of seeing as though through the artist's own eyes' (John Berger), also reminds us how the piece of paper awaiting our impression will always be there (even in an age mediated by the screen), inviting us, as it has done from earliest childhood, to make that vital mark.'

Clifford Chance would like to thank Luke Elwes and Lino Mannocci for suggesting exhibiting *Vital Signs* here, at 10 Upper Bank Street, before the exhibition travels to Italy, and for their immense efforts in organising the exhibitors and bringing about its realisation so smoothly and efficiently. We greatly appreciate the temporary loan of these works from the exhibiting artists and look forward to spending time viewing their works, learning about them and, in Luke Elwes memorable words, enjoying images that 'are not generated in an untouchable and depthless space – digitally encoded and filtered through a screen – but remain resolutely in the realm of matter and touch, compounded of the earthy and magical.'

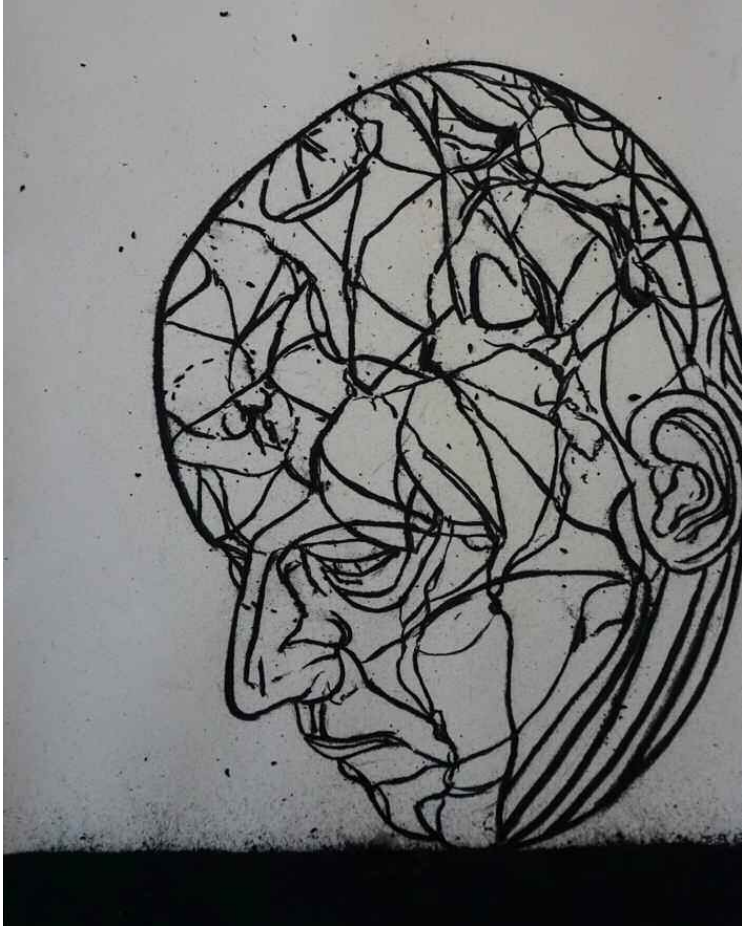
Nigel Frank  
Clifford Chance art collection

## Tony Bevan RA

(b. 1951 in Bradford, Yorkshire)

'Most of the heads that I draw and paint are self-portraits; but they are not concerned with the veneer of familiar appearance.

These heads are not faces but are internal; they are an internal landscape.'



**Tony Bevan** *Self-Portrait Head* 2013 charcoal on paper

From 1968 to 1976 **Tony Bevan** studied at Bradford School of Art, Goldsmiths and The Slade School of Art in London. He was elected to the Royal Academy of Arts in 2007. Bevan came to prominence as an artist in the 1980s, taking part in the ICA show *Before it hits the floor* in 1982, *Problems of Picturing* at the Serpentine Gallery in London in 1982-83, and *The British Art Show*, a touring exhibition of contemporary art, in 1984. This was followed by exhibitions mainly in the USA and Germany. His work is in many major art collections around the world, including Arts Council England, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, the British Museum, the Louisiana Museum in Denmark, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Tate.

In 2006 Bevan was invited to explore the printmaking technique of monoprints at the Scuola de Grafica in Venice. This resulted in over 80 images which were subsequently shown at Marlborough Fine Art in London, and marked the beginning of an interest in printmaking that Bevan retains to this day.

## Christopher Le Brun PRA

(b. 1951 in Portsmouth)

### *Three Studies for the Desert Window*

'The window takes as its theme the ancient tradition of the desert as a symbol of spiritual significance in world religions. My approach to this initially unpromising subject (think camels, cacti, palms) was given connection to the main direction of my work by thinking of it as a place characterised by extremes of light and temperature. I had some personal experience of this on a painting trip to Saudi Arabia in 2000. During the day I worked from the crest of a high and glaringly bright orange sand dune (I still have the small sand covered oil panels) and then later, wrapped in a luxurious sheep-skin lined desert cloak, I sat by the camp fire in the very intense cold of the night.

Cold, heat and light translate naturally into warm and cool colour, transparency and opacity. They form the basis of painting's language. The medium of glass is able to present these qualities in an unusually pure and vivid form.

The watercolours form part of a larger group of studies at different sizes prepared following a commission for a large stained glass window at the London School of Economics. The window forms the north wall of the new Faith Centre designed by architects O'Donnell and Tuomey as part of a new student building. The window was made in Paderborn in Germany by Glasmalerei Peters. It was formally dedicated by the Bishop of London in May 2014.'



**Christopher Le Brun** *Study for LSE stained glass window 1* 2014 mixed media on paper

The painter, sculptor and printmaker **Christopher Le Brun** was trained at The Slade School of Art and Chelsea Schools of Art in London. He appeared early on in many group exhibitions, such as the influential *Zeitgeist* exhibition at the Martin-Gropius Bau, Berlin, and from 1980 on, in many solo exhibitions in Britain, Europe and America. He was a prizewinner at the John Moores Liverpool exhibitions in 1978 and 1980 and worked in Berlin during 1987-88 as guest of the DAAD artist's programme.

Le Brun has served as a trustee of the Tate and of the National Gallery. In recent years he has been a trustee of the Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Royal (formerly Prince's) Drawing School, which he helped to establish in 2000. In the same year he was elected Professor of Drawing at the Royal Academy Schools.

He was elected President of the Royal Academy in December 2011. He is the 26th President since Sir Joshua Reynolds and the youngest to be elected since Lord Leighton in 1878.

## Luke Elwes

(b. 1961 in London)

‘Gihon’ – both the word and the sound – belongs not only to the physical flow of time through a passage of land (and the memories that once surrounded it) but also to a wider sea of stories, as one of the four rivers of Genesis issuing from the Garden of Eden.

In the first century the historian Josephus associated the mythical Gihon with the river Nile (the original Hebrew word may be interpreted as ‘bursting forth, gushing’), and my own fluid encounter with it in another time and place became a way to reconcile – through marks on paper – the river’s dark mercurial force and glittering surface with the mutating course of its submerged history.

The cursory markings employed in these works as a loosely flowing calligraphic undercurrent to the river-saturated colour washes are by way of rhythmic inscriptions, ghosted signs that evoke a now indecipherable meaning. The resulting series of 30 images, each of which was made outside, in all weathers and in one continuous sitting on successive days over the course of a month, contain their own silent language (like the empty space between words) and what remains of the drawing process in the shadowy residue left on the paper’s surface becomes a kind of writing on water.’



**Luke Elwes** *Gihon 1* 2013 mixed media on paper

**Luke Elwes** studied at Bristol University, Camberwell School of Art, and London University. In 1987, after meeting Bruce Chatwin, he went to the central Australian desert to explore its landscape and indigenous artforms, and since then has travelled extensively, discovering and revisiting remote locations in India, Asia Minor and North Africa. Since 2000 he has worked for long periods on the East Anglian coast, and was recently awarded residency grants at the Vermont Studio Center (2013) and the Josef Albers Foundation (2015) in the USA.

Since 1990 he has had 20 solo exhibitions in London, Paris and New York, as well as group shows in Europe. Luke Elwes has also written on art for *Modern Painters*, *Royal Academy Magazine*, *Abstract Critical* and other print & online publications.

## Timothy Hyman RA

(b. 1946 in Hove, Sussex)

‘When I draw in the London street, what has to be incorporated is not just the place – the precise silhouette a building cuts against the sky – but also my account of that moment of seeing: a first-person drawing, often demanding a spatial language distinct from everyday perception. Only through tilts and curvatures – through the wide angle of dizzy astonishment – do I find some equivalent to those sudden excited apprehensions. Building a web outwards from the self, I hope to reconstruct that epiphany. But the world is in flux; you have to take many leaps in the dark. If you are lucky, everything falls into place (however unexpected its positioning on the page) and the line can take on a life of its own. In this selection, perhaps the National Gallery drawing strikes a quieter, slower note.’



**Timothy Hyman** *At the St John Street corner (Smithfield)* 2012 2B graphite on paper

**Timothy Hyman** trained as a painter at The Slade School of Art (1963-7). As well as nine London solo shows – most relevantly *The man inscribed with London* at Austin/Desmond in 2009 – he has exhibited widely, and his drawings and paintings are in many public collections. In 2007 he won the National Portrait, Gallery’s Travel Award, and in 2012 was Artist in Residence for Maggie’s Centres. In 2011 he was elected a Royal Academician.

His monographs on *Bonnard* and *Sienese Painting* are published by Thames & Hudson, and in 2016 they will bring out *Refiguring: Painting and Experience in the Twentieth Century*. In 1979 he curated the controversial touring exhibition *Narrative Paintings*. He was lead curator for the Tate’s *Stanley Spencer* retrospective in 2001, and collaborated with Robert Hoozee and John Gage on the major exhibition *British Vision* (Ghent 2007-8). In 2010 Lenz Books published *Timothy Hyman: Fifty Drawings*.

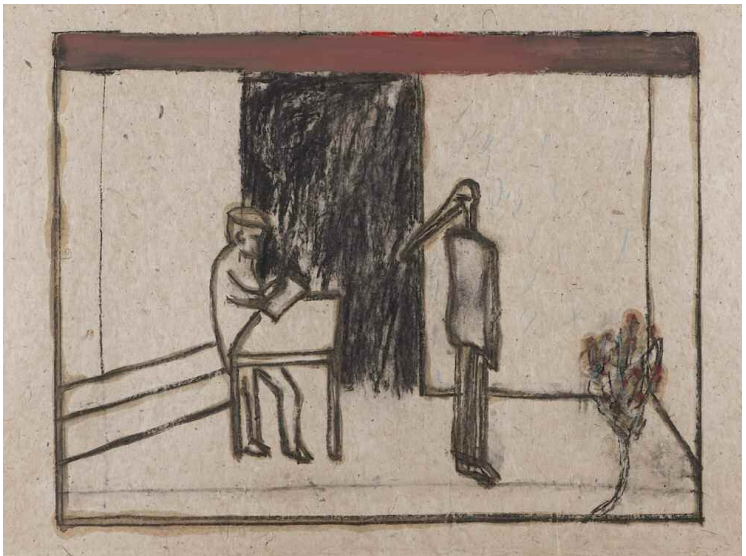
## Andrzej Jackowski RA

(b. 1947 in Penley, North Wales)

### *The Voyage Drawings*

'These four drawings are part of a larger set of drawings; sixty all together. The project of the sixty drawings was initiated by coming across a photograph of a man sitting in a boat. He was sitting on a bench; there was a wooden table in front of him and a single bed in the corner. There was a ladder going up on deck and on the floor was a bucket with a rope attached. In his hand he had a book, perhaps a diary; it looked like he was going over the log of his journey or planning the next adventure.

The drawings were made quite fast (for me), two a week over about nine months: charcoal on handmade Indian paper (the texture and colour of the paper were a ready-made evocative space) gone over with a painting medium and some colour. I let the unconscious guide me; initially the images were familiar and then after a few weeks the bucket dropped to new depths and new images emerged, new creatures, new relationships. A space of breaking up and being put together again. A space carved out of darkness in which we encounter ourselves; evoking the past and remembering the present.'



**Andrzej Jackowski** *Drawing 21* 2011 mixed media on paper

**Andrzej Jackowski** was born to Polish parents living in North Wales, and his first eleven years were spent in a resettlement camp. After moving to London he attended Holland Park School and Camberwell School of Art. He subsequently studied at Falmouth School of Art and the Royal College of Art in London (1967-77).

In 1979 he was chosen by Timothy Hyman for inclusion in the seminal touring exhibition *Narrative Paintings*. In 1992 he won first prize in the John Moore's exhibition, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. Since 1982 he has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally, and has been showing with Purdy Hicks Gallery in London since 1992. Paupers Press will publish a book of fifty-two lithographs in 2015 Entitled *The Time of The Dream*.

## Merlin James

(b. 1960 in Cardiff)

'I'll go for years not making prints, then do a bunch of them. I've done etchings, and colour woodcuts. (No screenprints since I was a student, and hardly any litho.) The same with drawing – I do it in bouts, then not at all for a long time. In printmaking I probably seem pretty casual. I do small editions of odd sizes; lots of unique states and trial proofs. I'm not into fancy papers or very refined materials or techniques. But I'm conversant (in a slightly love-hate way) with fine art print culture, and typography, and *livres d'artiste* etc. I was into that a bit as a student, and I worked in print studios after I left college. Woodcut, and relief print in general, are the most neglected techniques in UK print studios, which usually neglect their platen presses and think one can print relief prints on cylinder presses (which one can, but only with great limitations). Anyway for etchings I favour simplicity – probably just one or two bites in the acid; a single inking and pull through the press.

My prints and drawings tend to be small, and have similar motifs or structures to my paintings. Generally I'd say I have a traditional attitude to drawing and printmaking as being sub-media of painting. I'm very involved with the idea of art forms as technically and typologically defined, as against a kind of 'post medium' attitude.'



**Merlin James** *Bridge* 2004 etching

**Merlin James's** recent solo exhibitions include: 2015: Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York; 2014 Kunstverein, Freiburg; Raucci e Santamaria, Naples; Aanant & Zoo, Berlin; 2013 Kunst-Werke Institut, Berlin; 2013 Parasol Unit, London. Merlin James has written extensively on art in the *Burlington Magazine* and other journals and publications.



## Glenys Johnson

(b. 1951 in Lancashire)

'Studio is in flux, (constant in-pourings); layers searching for a story.

The forest reduced to 'trees'; the negative an abstract.

Ground whiteness; 'water falls after the snow'

Gold Green: what is this colour? It has in the name: money, value, another abstraction.

The trees have no 'periphery'.'



**Glenys Johnson** *After the Snow 1* 2015 oil on Japanese paper

**Glenys Johnson** studied at Gloucestershire College of Art & Design and The Slade School of Art in London (1970-76). In 1989 her painting was the subject of a solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London and since then she has exhibited widely. She has frequently addressed life in the modern metropolis, as in recent paintings that universalise the cityscape of London and present the city as a place in flux, either on the point of growth or collapse.

Solo exhibitions include 2007 James Hyman Gallery, London; 2001 Purdy Hicks Gallery, London; 2000 Galleria Ceribelli Albin, Milan, Italy; 1998-99 Wigmore Fine Art Gallery, London; 1996 Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst, Munich, Germany and 1993 Frith Street Gallery, London.

## Alex Lowery

(b. 1957 in London)

'These four works on paper reflect an ongoing series of paintings in which I have taken a couple of places on the south coast of England as a theme. More precisely both are located in Dorset and they possess certain singular qualities that have long provided me with material for making pictures.

Working in gouache makes a refreshing contrast to my more habitual use of oil paint. I always find it a little reminiscent of early days, discovering a means to evade the oppressions of school in an art-room where the supplied poster colour had a similar feel to that of gouache. There is a freedom to the 'just add water' simplicity of the medium – the physical feel as it quickly brushes out, along with its potential for an alluring fresco-like opacity and precision which I find hugely attractive. In comparison with oil it demands, I think, a more purely chromatic approach and the fact that when strongly diluted the colour dries in an unpredictable manner lends a certain spontaneity to the proceedings.

I have included also one charcoal drawing, similarly a medium of rich potential, that has a fluidity unexpectedly akin to that of paint, certainly when set against the more linear dictates of pencil. It can be swiftly applied and equally swiftly removed, or built into rich darks that allow for luminous highlights and an ability to evoke texture and even colour. In this particular drawing I wanted to articulate such contrasts as they are found in the seen world – the dialogue of buildings and trees, of hillside and sky – with charcoal, as so often, seeming the best way to translate such phenomena.

For me it is this element of translation that is key. Working as I do from a relatively limited subject matter really entails creating variety and interest through exploration with an inner eye, bringing the artists materials imaginatively to bear on the observable world.'



**Alex Lowery** *Black Hut at West Bay* 2014 gouache on paper

From 1978 to 1982 **Alex Lowery** studied art at Sir John Cass School of Art, London, and Central School of Art, London. Recent solo exhibitions include: *Recent Paintings*, Sladers Yard, West Bay, Dorset (2013); *Light Industrial*, Art First, Eastcastle St, London (2012); *Channel View*, Campden Gallery, Chipping Campden, Glos (2011); *New Landscapes*, Slader's Yard, West Bay, Dorset (2009); *Alex Lowery*, Art First, Cork Street, London (2007).

## Lino Mannocci

(b. 1945 in Viareggio, Italy)

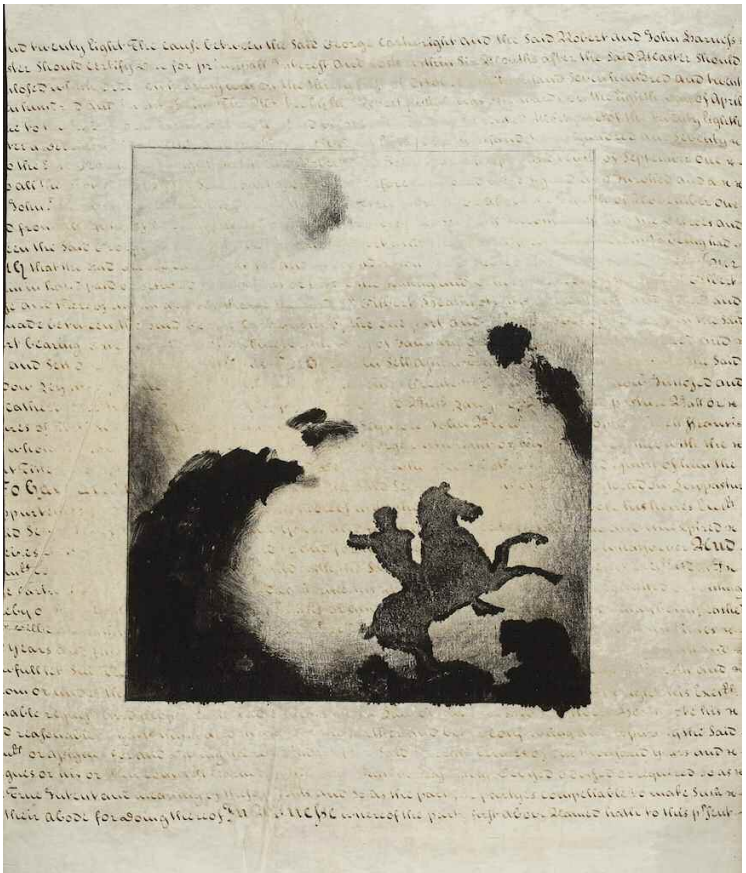
### *Monotypes on parchment*

'I started working on parchment in the last couple of months, in an attempt to produce new work for an exhibition to be held at Temple Church, in June 2015, relating to the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Magna Carta.

I spent several days hunting for old vellum and parchment in book fairs and antique markets until eventually I gathered a sizeable quantity of documents written on animal membrane. These documents, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly record commercial transactions of varying nature and are generally known as 'Indentures'. When the contents of these documents related to unknown people or ordinary transactions, they seemed to have no cultural or great commercial value and lay abandoned in remote corners of antiquarian booksellers.

Mostly dusty, stained and creased, I took these parchments to my studio and begun to clean them, as done traditionally in the past, when animal skins were valuable and in great demand for writing purposes. In other words I started the process that leads to the creation of a palimpsest.

I have found the actual cleaning process both exciting and moving. As I washed off the original writing (never completely – ghostly lines survive any amount of rubbing), the stiff, almost hostile surface of the document was reversed into the soft, malleable surface of a rawhide. This included ample traces of its original condition, wounds suffered by



Lino Mannocci *Horseman* 2014 monotype on parchment

the animal during its life, or errors by the person who in the first instance treated, stretched and scraped the original hide. Humbled and seduced by this metamorphosis, I have spent wonderful hours “resuscitating” this waxen old skin.

These rejuvenated hides, with many layers of memories imprinted on them, at times, appear as a complete work of art. To add anything to it feels like interfering with an already complete world that only requires silent contemplation.

The ‘Palimpsests’ in this exhibition are technically monotypes. The images that I have superimposed on these evocative surfaces have added a new lease of life and another layer of memory onto an already rich and organic reservoir of biological and human endeavours.’

**Lino Mannocci** came to London in 1968 and studied at Camberwell School of Art and The Slade School of Art from 1971 to 1976 and as a postgraduate student developed a keen interest in the practice and theory of printmaking. He was a founder member of the Italian group “La Metacosa” in the early 1980s and in 1988 Yale University Press published his Catalogue Raisonné of Claude Lorrain’s graphic work. In 2008 SKIRA published a small volume of photographs with his account of a journey through India on the occasion of his exhibitions in New Delhi and Mumbai.

## Thomas Newbolt

(b. 1951 in London)

### *Not Entitled?*

'She stands away from us perhaps aware, perhaps not, of being seen, certainly not of being created or at least not in the sense of being based on a model. So the extent of her self awareness depends on how the original idea of human being in a setting is being adapted. For example in paintings of women by Corot the figure was created to look as if our interest in her is just about tolerated and this sense of our staring at her stems from her indifference, the convincing creation by Corot of her independent-minded interior life. In his paintings the illusion was sustained by the scowl on her face, despite the alluring pose, or by her involvement in reading or music, and more subtly the thoughts brought on by reading or playing which prevent her from noticing us. There is also the consideration that such an independent lifestyle would attract, as well as repel, attention.

She stands at a distance, everything we can see nearer to her than to us; what she hears or thinks about can only appear in the painting as part of the respect we give to her independence. Does the artist have the ability to confer freedom? Is our staring a confining or liberating act? Does seeing others create freedom for them or merely pass on our own sense of confinement? At least then, you could say, we have



**Thomas Newbolt** *Figure 1* 2014 pencil and watercolour on paper

acknowledged how little, how hopeless our gift and therefore how necessary to find beauty or vitality and ask the painting to strike out from the wall unashamed.'

**Thomas Newbolt** studied at Camberwell School of Art from 1970 to 1974. He exhibited at Roland Browse and Delbanco from 1974-77, at Browse and Darby from 1977-2007 and now at Piano Mobile Fine Art in London. Thomas Newbolt was Artist in Residence (Fellow Commoner in the Creative Arts) at Trinity College, Cambridge from 1979-81 and Harkness Fellow at the University of Virginia from 1981-83. He has taught at Camberwell School of Art, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee 1983, Anglia Ruskin University (Cambridge School of Art) and the Royal Drawing School, London.

## Arturo Di Stefano

(b. 1955 in Huddersfield)

'Of the various printmaking techniques, excluding the monotype which, as the term implies yields a single image, the woodcut is the most accessible form of creating an edition of prints. A printed image is seen in reverse, this reversal not a setback but a throwing into relief the unique experience of the sense of life. What is shown in this mirrored state is the world at one remove, whose familiar aspect is made new and unfamiliar again.'



**Arturo de Stefano** *Atelier 7 (balcony)* 2000 colour woodcut

**Arturo Di Stefano** studied Fine Art at Liverpool Polytechnic (1973-4), Goldsmiths' College University of London (1974-77) and the Royal College of Art, London (1978-81). In 1985 he was awarded an Italian Government Scholarship to study at the *Accademia Albertina*, Turin. Since 1987 he has exhibited regularly in London at the Purdy Hicks Gallery and has held exhibitions in Italy, Germany and the USA. His work is included in many collections including: Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Portrait Gallery, London; Museum of London; Government Art Collection; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; Contemporary Art Society; Arts Council Collection; and the Fogg Art Museum, USA.

Arturo Di Stefano was commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in 1996 and 2004 to paint the portraits of Sir Richard Doll and Jan Morris respectively. He has written articles and essays on Cezanne, Sickert, Picasso, and recently contributed two essays included in publications on the writer Jan Morris and the sculptor Carl Plackman. A monograph on his work was published in 2001 with essays by John Berger, the poet Michael Hofmann, and Christopher Lloyd, the former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures.

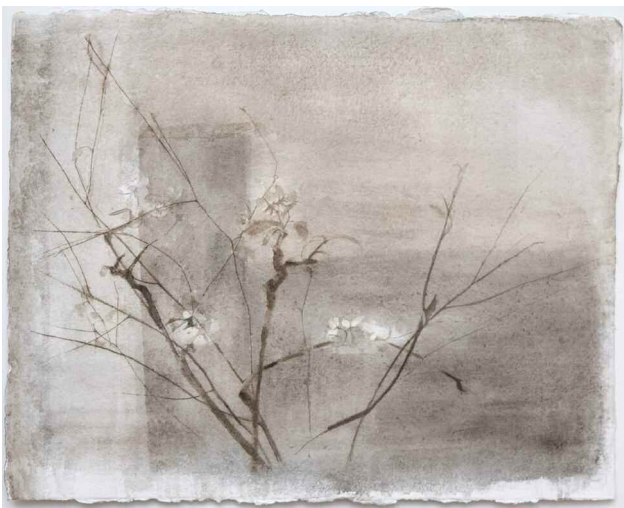
## Charlotte Verity

(b. 1954 in Germany, RAF Wegburg)

“Petals hold light like snow’ as a poet from the north wrote\*; the light is so precious there, so fleeting. I suppose this is the subject of these paintings. I feel an urgency about drawing a particular stem, petal or patch of leaf as it is, and as I look, I rediscover their unfathomable value.

I came to paint on this handmade paper finding that the sable brush on it responds to what I see in a direct way. Drawing the forms with light and shade in sepia and grey, gets close to my subjects; black and white is too harsh and cold for the subtlety of growing things, and the “flutter of colours” as Richard Wilson (the painter) put it, unnecessary here.’

\*Eeva-Liisa Manner



**Charlotte Verity** *April Blossom*, April 2013 sepia watercolour

**Charlotte Verity** studied at The Slade School of Art from 1973-77. She has had several solo shows with Anne Berthoud and more recently with Browse and Darby. She has been included in many group exhibitions including The Whitechapel Open, The Hayward Annual, John Moores, The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition and at the LA Louver Gallery in California. She was Artist in Residence at the Garden Museum throughout 2010 and had an exhibition of the work made there in 2011. Her work is in many private and corporate collections. She has been teaching at the Royal (formerly Prince's) Drawing School since 2001.

In her practise as a painter over the past thirty years, Charlotte Verity has produced a remarkable and concise body of pictures which convey her intense focus on the subjects she has covered. Paintings and drawings of plants, objects and outdoor scenes reflect the chronology of her studios, residencies and homes. Working from life, both in the studio and outdoors, she has a painstaking ability to perfectly capture delicate nuances of colour and tone, and each composition is carefully controlled even when working from nature where she will choose an angle unique to her perspective. Having studied at the Slade under many great artists she has easily taken her place among them. Exhibiting widely, despite her restricted output, Charlotte's work can be found in some of the more important private and public collections.

**The exhibition is open by appointment,  
contact Nigel Frank 020 7006 5183 or  
nigel.frank@cliffordchance.com**

The exhibition was conceived and organised by Luke Elwes and  
Lino Mannocei and delivered for Clifford Chance by  
Frank/Hindley Art Consultants fhac@globalnet.co.uk

Works are for sale

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