

Peter Joyce New Paintings
Portrait of the Marais
19th May - 23rd June



Samuel Robson Fine Art Gallery is in the pretty market town of Oakham, Rutland, and this is the destination for the exhibition of new paintings by Peter Joyce. This exhibition titled '**Portrait of the Marais**', presents a complete survey, a portrait of the Marais Breton Vendéen. For those who have followed Joyce's work, his landscapes paintings of this part of France will have begun to feel familiar. However after eight years of looking, researching, drawing and recording, Joyce now feels that he is closer to his subject. One could certainly remark that these new paintings appear more abstract than the earlier works. Joyce certainly wouldn't describe them in this way, as every mark, every brush stroke and every colour is made with the place firmly in mind. However they are painted in the way that Joyce 'sees' using his own unique visual language, and perhaps, as he is now more familiar with his subject, the paintings are a more accurate portrait, as experienced by Joyce, rather than more representational. This is because he responds to the Marais in all its guises rather than just from a single viewpoint. This vision and approach could not be better demonstrated than through these paintings. They are confident, assured and immensely beautiful.

Joyce's interest in the history of the land is not immediately apparent on looking at his paintings. He clearly enjoys all the natural drawing; the posts, creeks, paths, cables, wooden remnants, rope and wire that one can see and find in this extraordinary place and it is these less obvious elements that help to compose the landscape for Joyce. He is quite clear however, that it is not drawing for drawings sake, it is these things that create the landscape, marking and punctuating the terrain, giving evidence of previous times, history revealing itself, if one looks and thinks.

Joyce has explored all corners of this land and shore, in all seasons and all times of day, a practice necessary he explains in order to paint a complete portrait. Titles are often directly linked to a place name, a season or time of day something was first observed. Joyce has planned this exhibition with precision, this will be apparent as one moves from painting to painting and from room to room, and as one would expect, a variety of sizes and media of paintings are on show. He has worked on different painting surfaces and one will also see new styles in terms of framing and presentation. This exhibition of new paintings feels immediately different, exciting, beautiful and even more accomplished.

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