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MARY FEDDEN: A Centenary Celebration of Major Works

Royal Academy Paintings, Drawings, Collages and Early Lithographs

7th November – 28th November

To celebrate Bohun Gallery's long and personal association with one of Britain's best-loved artists, the Henley on Thames gallery will be celebrating Mary Fedden's Centenary with a major show of her very finest work including Royal Academy paintings, drawings, collages and the first survey of her early lithographs. Many of the paintings have not been seen since their first appearance at Royal Academy Summer shows which presents an exciting opportunity for Modern British collectors. These reappearing works also offer the new generation of Fedden collectors the chance to get a much clearer and broader idea of Fedden's artistic development and diversity.

Mary Fedden first exhibited her work at Bohun Gallery in Henley on Thames in 1984. Patricia Jordan Evans recalls "It was Elisabeth Frink who introduced me to Mary Fedden nearly 35 years ago. From the start there was a rapport between us and we enjoyed a warm friendship until her death in 2012". Mary and her artist husband, Julian Trevelyan RA, regularly exhibited their paintings at the Henley on Thames gallery which offered collectors outside London the opportunity to discover Fedden's work. Her paintings were much sort after from the start for their unique artistry and attractiveness. Patricia recalls how she regularly discovered collectors camped out overnight on Bohun's doorstep, ensuring that they were first through the door at the Private View - "Private views for Mary were always absolutely packed with friends and admirers. It was usually a bit of a frenzied affair as collectors fought to acquire the little gems.

The Private Views were always followed by a meal together when Mary shared her rich conversation and warmth to the delight of all".

The collection includes early still lifes from the 1970s and further examples from each decade of her working life. The paintings do not invite analysis or discussion – they are intuitive and spontaneous and present a glorious array of objects. The subject matter reflects her recurring passions with superb still lifes featuring her favourite cats, the tools of her trade, overloaded table tops depicting objects within a hand's reach and all set against the exotic locations which she explored with Julian (including a large and rare painting of a garden in Gozo). The sheer size of these paintings (some are nearly four foot) illustrates the importance placed on them by Fedden, being undertaken specifically for the Royal Academy Summer exhibitions where Mary had been a full Academician since 1991.

Mary Fedden's skill as a draughtsman and illustrator is undisputed. Her drawings are striking and exquisite with superbly controlled lines. The drawings in Bohun Gallery's show are not the notations and 'jottings' of an artist using drawing as an *aide-memoire* but large, finished compositions designed to be exhibited and sold. The exhibition includes three such highly finished works, dating from the 1970s, depicting table-top scenes in Italy and France. The admiration which the early drawings received led Fedden to collaborate with Master Printmaker Stanley Jones of Curwen Press allowing for a wider audience to enjoy the work. The result was a series of lithographs, created during the 1970s, worked on personally by Fedden at Curwen Press and Bohun Gallery have managed to assemble a selection of these rare limited edition works.

One of the least conventional mediums explored by Fedden, is that of collage. Encouraged by Julian Trevelyan, she used his discarded etchings and explored her surrealist side unexpectedly juxtaposing objects, textures and styles. These witty and affectionate homages to Julian result in one particular 'jewel' in the show – a miniature collage of Julian in his studio, which will delight both Trevelyan and Fedden enthusiasts.

Mary Fedden was the first female art teacher at the Royal College of Art and taught many of the rising stars of the 1950s and 60s including David Hockney, Allen Jones and Patrick Caulfield. Subsequently, Fedden taught at the Yehudi Menuhin School and was elected Royal Academician in 1991. From 1984 to 1988 she was President of the Royal West of England Academy and she was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Bath and an O.B.E. for her work. She continued to work from the studio in Hammersmith that she shared with her husband, who died in 1988, well into her nineties.

For further information and high res images, please contact Katie Newman on 01491 576 228 or art@bohungallery.co.uk

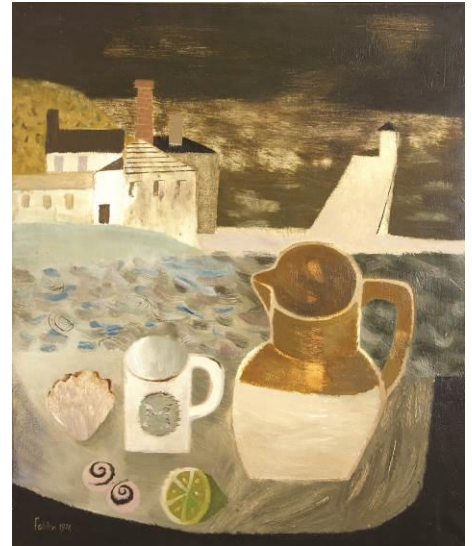


Mary Fedden and Patricia Jordan Evans at Bohun Gallery in 2002

BOHUN GALLERY



'Tabby by a Marble Table' 2002 Oil on canvas 36x50ins.



Still Life with Jug, 1974 Oil on canvas 36x30ins.



The Shell, 2000 Oil on canvas 40x50ins.



Garden at Gozo, 1963 Oil on canvas 30x36ins.



Julian in his Studio, 1996, Mixed media and collage 6x10ins.



Three Brushes, 2006 Oil on canvas 32x35ins

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