

FRESTONIAN GALLERY

'A HUMAN NATURE' – ADRIAN BERG (1929 – 2011)

Private View **Wednesday 25 April 6-9pm**

Exhibition **25 April - 9 June 2018**

'My Subject is what man has made of nature' Adrian Berg, 1986.

Frestonian Gallery is delighted to present our first major solo show of work by Adrian Berg RA.

Adrian Berg was one of the most brilliant landscape painters of the last half of the twentieth century. He whole-heartedly committed his life, work and huge talent to painting his favourite parks, gardens and vistas in the United Kingdom and abroad. His distinctively vibrant paintings are not only an emotional response to his surroundings, but much more than that they are intellectual ideas in paint.

Berg was a figurative painter in a time when institutional and commercial appetite for figurative painting was waning in the face of post-war abstraction, conceptualism and Pop art. But like his great friend and fellow RCA alumnus David Hockney RA, Berg believed that representational painting still had higher plains to reach and outer edges to explore. His appetite to keep pushing at these boundaries persisted until the end of his life.

...The paintings on display in this first solo exhibition of Berg's work at Frestonian Gallery are, with only two exceptions, all from a brief time span of 1998 to 2002.... The bold design and mark-making and freshness of colour in these canvases look not only surprisingly contemporary nearly two decades later, but also with a paradoxically youthful ebullience and optimism. Yet they are the products of a lifetime's devotion to the scrutiny of natural growth and form and of many decades of experience in handling oil paint and in retrieving vivid visual memories in the studio with the aid of watercolours, note-taking and sketches in situ. As with some of the greatest painters before him, including Monet and Bonnard, who had served him as touchstones since the mid-1960s, with age and long practice came the confidence to paint more loosely, with bigger gestures, and to condense and simplify his response to particular places in such a way that his paintings might lodge in the viewer's memory much as those gardens had imprinted themselves on his....'

(extract from Marco Livingstone's essay on Adrian Berg 'A Human Nature, 2018)

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NOTES ON THE ARTIST

Adrian Berg (1929-2011)

Adrian Berg was born in London in 1929. He was educated at Charterhouse and Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge. He studied art in London, first at Central St Martin's, then Chelsea College of Arts and finally at the Royal College of Art, later he would go on to teach at the RCA, becoming senior tutor in 1987.

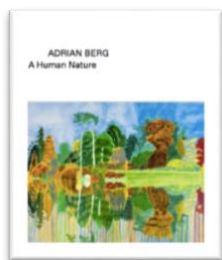
Berg's paintings have been exhibited in all major UK institutions including the Tate, Hayward Gallery, Royal Academy, Victoria & Albert Museum, Fitzwilliam and Pallant House Gallery. In 1986, The Serpentine Gallery and the Arts Council held a major retrospective of Berg's work which subsequently toured the country. He has also exhibited extensively internationally.

In 1992, he was elected as a Royal Academician, and in 1994 he became an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Art.

His work is held in many private and public collections, including the Arts Council Collection, the Tate, the Government Art Collection, the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Berg died in 2011.

For further information on the artist and exhibition please visit: www.frestoniangallery.com



The accompanying publication for the exhibition – 'Adrian Berg – A Human Nature' – with a new essay on the artist by Marco Livingstone is available from Frestonian Gallery.