

FRESTONIAN GALLERY

OPENING THURSDAY 18TH APRIL – PRIVATE VIEW 6-8PM

LUKE ELWES CONSTELLATION



EXHIBITION DATES – 19TH APRIL – 18TH MAY 2024

Scan to view exhibition works

Frestonian Gallery is delighted to present 'Constellation' – a solo exhibition of work by Luke Elwes, spanning the body of work produced at and following his 2022 residency at Ballinglen Arts Foundation in Mayo, Ireland, as well as the most recent major works from Elwes' extraordinary fifteen-year-plus engagement with the landscape at Landermere, Essex. These bodies of work converge much like two rivers, bringing different rates of flow and divergent temperaments, but each representing the universal themes and concerns of Elwes' practice – the essential distillation and translation of a sense of place. The interactions and intermingling of sea and sky are evoked, with equal care and focus, from the slow and rhythmic rising and lowering of the estuary tides at Landermere, to the full force of the North Atlantic ocean that sweeps and shapes the jagged, island-flecked coastline of Mayo.

Concluding his recent essay on Elwes' work, the writer and critic Andrew Lambirth writes:

"Initially, Elwes thought of titling this group of paintings 'Drift', but he realised that they had more to do with 'constellations'; in his own words, 'as in a group or cluster of similar things (forms and places), as well as a cluster of circling and returning thoughts and memories'. The notion of 'constellations' is borrowed from a series of 23 gouaches made by Joan Miró in 1940-41, through which he refreshed the poetic and calligraphic language of his art. Since they are all to do with the power of the imagination, with transparency, layering and intersecting forms, it's easy to see why Elwes should be drawn to them.

Here is the distinguished French poet and art critic Jacques Dupin writing about Miró's Constellations in his 1993 monograph on the artist: 'Linear invention and rhythmic imagination are realised with miraculous purity. The interpenetration of graphism and chromaticism produces a counterpoint whose precision and spellbinding power irresistibly evoke music.' Much the same could be said of Elwes's fluent new paintings: through a radical and resourceful use of layering he by turns conceals and reveals his subject, in a kind of inspired calligraphic archaeology of painting. His researches offer us intriguing new prospects and perspectives loaded with meaning."

Notes on the Artist

Luke Elwes was born in 1961 and now lives in London. His early years were spent in Iran, where the light and space of the mountains and desert were a formative influence. He studied at Camberwell school of Art (UAL) and holds undergraduate and research degrees from Bristol University and Birkbeck, University of London.

His work has been exhibited worldwide, with recent institutional exhibitions including the Museo della Grafica, Palazzo Lanfranchi (Italy) + Fondazione Bottari Lattes (Italy), Young Museum and Estorick Collection (UK), the Albers Foundation (USA) and the Myung-Won Museum (Seoul, Korea). His work is held in numerous public, private and corporate collections including: The Bayer Collection; Christie's Contemporary Art Collection; National Trust Foundation for Art; Imperial College, University of London; Merrill Lynch Collection; Coopers & Lybrand; N M Rothschild; Deutsche Hypo Bank London; Hoares Bank Collection; Societe Generale, London; Electra Collection; Europa Collection, London & the Freshfields Collection.