

LOUISE BALAAM

The Colour of Light

25th March - 12th April 2019

Private View
Tuesday 26th March
6-8pm



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Louise Balaam: The Colour of Light

"The human being himself, to the extent that he makes sound use of his senses, is the most exact physical apparatus that can exist." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Although she has always painted in a wide variety of landscapes - the Kent Marshes, Constable Country, North West Scotland, North Wales and West Cornwall among them - Louise Balaam is not, by any measure, a painter of places nor, for that matter, perhaps, a landscape painter. What really obsesses her are skies and the particularities of light they cast on the landscape beneath them: at the back of her mind you always feel that impassioned injunction of her great artistic hero, John Constable, that it would be "difficult to name any class of landscape in which the sky is not the keynote, the standard of scale and the chief organ of sentiment." In many of the cloud studies that followed, Constable either abandoned the landscape beneath altogether or included just the merest smudge of hill- or tree-tops as reference-points, and it is this last motif which Balaam picks up on as point of departure for her own and, it should be said, very distinctly 21st century take on the subject, the pursuit of the colour of light; the landscapes, one feels, are there simply to bounce us back towards the piercing luminosity and mutability of her skies.

And what immediately strikes you when you start to look at her skies more closely is the extraordinary and dynamic balancing act she achieves between the expressive intensity of the brush-strokes – here is a painter who has been looking closely at artists as varied as Peter Lanyon and Joan Eardley, Willem de Kooning and Joan Mitchell – and the inescapable feeling that here, as Goethe was suggesting, is someone who is indeed "making sound use of their senses," the "exact physical apparatus" of her acute vision showing us exactly what it looked, and felt like, to be looking up at the sky in that place at that particular moment in time. For, as Goethe also understood so well, very much against the same scientific orthodoxies of his age as ours, looking is both an objective and an impassioned activity – or as Balaam herself puts it, from another angle, "I love the way paint is simultaneously itself, essentially coloured mud while also evoking the space and light of the landscape. Light is the crucial aspect of the emotional impact of the painting." Or again, in that astonishingly protean English Romantic vision of the great 17th century divine, Thomas Traherne, "Your enjoyment of the world is never right, til every morning you awake in Heaven; see yourself in your Father's Palace; and look upon the skies, the earth, and the air as Celestial Joys... and perceive yourself to be sole heir of the whole world."

Nicholas Usherwood February 2019



Bay of light, Applecross oil on canvas 130cmx130cm



From Mull, cloud shadow oil on canvas 150cmx160cm



Still air, River Stour (Constable's walk) oil on canvas 110cmx120cm



Winter surf, Cape Cornwall from Carn Brea oil on canvas 110cmx130cm



White cloud leap, Norfolk coast oil on canvas 110cmx120cm



Ancient fields, Cape Cornwall oil on canvas 120cmx120cm

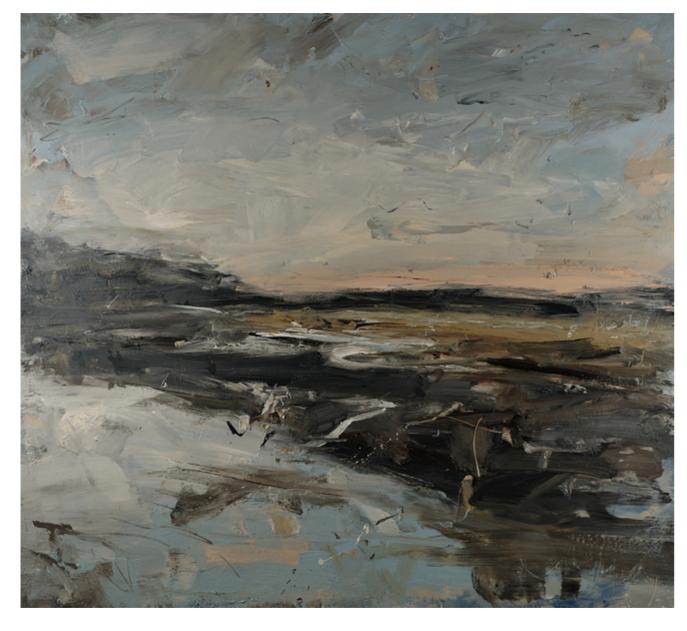


Slanting light at Zennor oil on canvas 110cmx110cm



North Kent Marshes, October afternoon oil on canvas 110cmx110cm





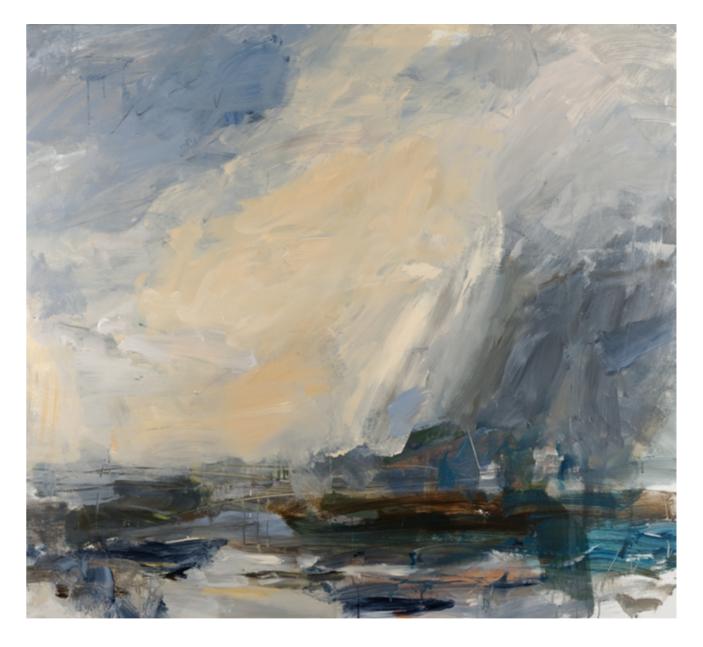
Sky clearing over the estuary, herons (Pembrokeshire) oil on canvas 100cmx110cm



Quiet pink evening, Ashdown Forest oil on canvas 100cmx110cm



Sky gleam, Zennor oil on canvas 90cmx100cm



Sweeping cloud, bright edge (Porthledden) mixed media on canvas 90cmx100cm



Naples yellow, dazzle (St Ives) oil on canvas 90cmx120cm



Flying pieces (North Kent Marshes) oil on canvas 90cmx100cm



Colonsay, sudden brightness oil on canvas 80cmx80cm



Turner's yellow, East coast oil on canvas 55cmx60cm





Higher Bojewyan, peachy sky oil on canvas 70cmx70cm



Deep turquoise (Bojewyan) oil on canvas 70cmx70cm



Last light, Wheal Bal Farm oil on canvas 55cmx60cm



Grey-green light, Hebrides oil on canvas 55cmx60cm



Pearly light at Carn Brea oil on canvas 40cmx75cm



Louise Balaam NEAC, RWA

Member of the New English Art Club Academician of the Royal West of England Academy Head of Painting, The New School of Art

EDUCATION

2007 MA Fine Art, Christchurch University College, Canterbury 2002 BA (Hons) Fine Art, Kent Institute of Art and Design, Canterbury

AWARDS

Odin Trust Prize, Royal West of England Academy, Bristol, 2010 Highly Commended, Chichester Open Art Exhibition, 2007

SOLO EXIBITIONS

017	"In the Marsh Country", Cadogan Contemporary, London
015	"Painting a Space", Cadogan Contemporary, London
014	John Davies Gallery, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos
013	"Cornish Light, Cadogan Contemporary, London
012	John Davies Gallery, Moreton-in-Marsh, Glos
011	Cadogan Contemporary, London
010	Cadogan Contemporary, London
800	Trinity Gallery, Tunbridge Wells
007	"Response", Ashford Library Gallery
005	"A Sense of Place", Portico Gallery, Sevenoaks

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2018	NEAC Annual Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London Royal West of England Academy Annual Exhibition, Queen Street, Bristo Geedon Gallery, Fingringhoe, Essex
2017 2016	New English Artists, Linden Hall Gallery, Deal, Kent RWA Exhibition, Bristol New English Arts Club, London Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon

2015	20/21 Art Fair, Royal College of Art, London Summer Show, Belgrave Gallery, St Ives New English Arts Club, London Fairfax Gallery, Tunbridge Wells, Kent Josephine Harpur, Bury St Edmunds and Aldeburgh Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London
2014	RWA Exhibition, Bristol "Quintet", White Space Gallery, Totnes, Devon "Little Gems", Mall Galleries, London Hilton Fine Art, Bath Fairfax Gallery, Tunbridge Wells, Kent Josephine Harpur, Bury St Edmunds and Aldeburgh Summer Show, Belgrave Gallery, St Ives White Space Art, Totnes, Devon New English Arts Club, London
2013	Royal Academy Summer Show, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol New English Arts Club, London Fairfax Gallery, Tunbridge Wells, Kent Russell Gallery, Putney, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Josephine Harpur, Bury St Edmunds and Aldeburgh Royal Academy Summer Show, London
2012	RWA Exhibition, Bristol New English Arts Club, London 30th Anniversary Exhibition, Cadogan Contemporary Fairfax Gallery, Tunbridge Wells, Kent Russell Gallery, Putney, London Hilton Fine Art, Bath Josephine Harpur, Bury St Edmunds and Aldeburgh RWA Exhibition, Bristol
2011	White Space Art, Totnes, Devon New English Arts Club, London Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Threadneedle Prize Exhibition, London Porthminster Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall
2010	RWA Exhibition, Bristol New English Arts Club, London Royal Society of British Artists, London Royal Academy Summer Show, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol

2010 Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale Porthminster Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall 2009 New English Arts Club, London Royal Society of British Artists, London Royal Academy Summer Show, London Threadneedle Prize Exhibition, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London Two-person show, Ruthven Gallery, Scotland White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale Porthminster Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall 2008 Royal Academy Summer Show, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale Porthminster Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall 2007 Contemporary Work on Paper Fair, Royal Academy, London Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale Chichester Open Art Exhibition, Sussex White Space Art, Totnes, Devon New English Arts Club, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London Porthminster Gallery, St Ives, Cornwall Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale 2006 New English Arts Club, London RWA Exhibition, Bristol Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Contemporary Work on Paper Fair, Royal Academy, London 2005 Alan Kluckow Fine Art, Sunningdale Hunting Art Prize Exhibition, London Discerning Eye, Mall Galleries, London White Space Art, Totnes, Devon Contemporary Work on Paper Fair, Royal Academy, London Chichester Open Art Exhibition, Sussex New English Arts Club, London



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