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David O'Connor



REF:

Description

Acrylic on canvas board Signed and dated 2022 verso Certificate of Authenticity verso 61 x 61 cm (24 x 24 ins)

David O'Connor was born in 1959 in Birkenhead, Cheshire. From 1977 – 1980 David attended Sunderland Polytechnic to study for a Fine Art degree which he came away from with a First. From 1980 until 1982 he took a 2 year Higher Diploma in Fine Art at the Slade School of Fine Art at UCL. In 1992 David turned to teaching in further and higher education. He became an external examiner in further education in 2005 for the next ten years. During this time, he became a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors and in 2022 became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. From 1993 to the present day, David O'Connor has had numerous solo and group art exhibitions, (too extensive to list here), plus installations and residences, in some cases several in the same year. He has received many commissions ranging from a Millennium Sculpture and Garden at Salisbury Hospital to public sculpture commissions at Bournemouth University and Reading University. David's studio is in the Wylde Valley village of Heytesbury, Wiltshire, where he has lived for 30 years. His major inspiration for his beloved Wiltshire, upon which most of his work is based, stems back to when he was in the 6th form at school in the Wirral. His visit to the library one day changed his life, when he came across the photographs and paintings by Paul Nash which he fell in love with "the rolling chalk Downland and ridges topped with Bronze Age Barrows and Beech wood clumps". David says, "Historically I am very much in the influence of the Slade painters William Coldstream, Euan Euglow & Paul Nash, also the 19th Century watercolour painter John Sell Cotman". His work is both bold and striking in colour and geometrics. It has an aerial quality illustrating a grid map of fields, mystical landscapes and antiquity. Although his work is inspired by his walks, it never captures the exact landmarks; it is taken from memories of things he experiences whilst walking and is then put together not literally but to convey the spirit of the place which the Romans called Genius loci. He says, "As I walk I collect Neolithic flint tools and I am struck by the awareness that I am walking the same soil as the people who built Stonehenge". His work is captivating and vibrant, from sunny sojourns to the changing seasons within this ancient landscape. The paintings are built up of many layers of paint almost like the archaeology of the plain, with fine lines running through to illustrate pathways or mapping based on "emotional memories" rather than "planned compositions". However, for David, Wiltshire is "a visual heaven on earth". He captures and conveys this beautifully in his work, which invites each and every one of us to share with him the delights of his balance between abstract and observed landscape painting, in an ancient dwelling place revered by tribal peoples, Roman empires and many others including Paul Nash and now by David O'Connor.