

FRANCIS WEST

ORION STUMBLES

A CREATIVE QUEST

ELIZABETH PERROTTE

Francis West's career was one of sustained, daily commitment to drawing and painting. He leaves an extraordinary body of work dating from the late 1970s to the close of 2015. His fluency as a draughtsman was steeped in knowledge of the great traditions of figurative art: both classical/academic and an expressive/visionary heritage, which encompass a diverse range of artists such as Bosch, Goya, Beckmann, Bacon and the bio-morphism of Surrealists such as Masson and Picasso. This knowledge and admiration of tradition underpins his experimental work, providing the most fleeting forms with intense formal conviction.

A spirit of freedom and thirst for intellectual adventure, which West described as a 'creative quest', have shaped the overall evolution of his practice, maintaining the urgency and currency of his work. From the tighter, more neo-classical work of the 70s, West's drawing and painting demonstrates an increasing tendency towards strategies of deconstruction, painterly freedom and expressive use of colour. Restraining contours of drawing, which defined and bounded the earlier figurative work of the 70s, was thrown off in following decades to achieve the most daring performative painting. Rising curatorial interest in figuration and neo-Expressionism during the 80s provided a dynamic context for the reception of West's work and he exhibited in Arts Council touring shows and at Edward Tootah Gallery in London.

Tantalisingly elusive, the late paintings scramble borders of myth, dream, memory and direct bodily experience. Multiple contours of line suggesting hybrid personae together with engulfing flows of wet-in-wet colour keep all potentialities of subject and form in play. Their surfaces pulse with energy as though fresh air is blowing through them. There is always a sensation of direct physical experience, which comes from West's deep engagement with real locations: the wild spaces of the Scottish coast where he grew up, the sun-baked earth of the Mojave Desert – influenced by two important working trips he made to America in the 90s – and, more recently, the countryside and coastal beauty of the south of France (Montagne Noire and Menton).

West maintained his creative energy to produce exploratory and euphoric late painting – work that is truly innovative yet also a profound synthesis of the experience and knowledge of all that has gone before.

IN A DARK TIME

THEODORE ROETHKE

In a dark time, the eye begins to see,
I meet my shadow in the deepening shade;
I hear my echo in the echoing wood—
A lord of nature weeping to a tree.
I live between the heron and the wren,
Beasts of the hill and serpents of the den.

What's madness but nobility of soul
At odds with circumstance? The day's on fire!
I know the purity of pure despair,
My shadow pinned against a sweating wall.
That place among the rocks—is it a cave,
Or winding path? The edge is what I have.

A steady storm of correspondences!
A night flowing with birds, a ragged moon,
And in broad day the midnight come again!
A man goes far to find out what he is—
Death of the self in a long, tearless night,
All natural shapes blazing unnatural light.

Dark, dark my light, and darker my desire.
My soul, like some heat-maddened summer fly,
Keeps buzzing at the sill. Which I is I?
A fallen man, I climb out of my fear.
The mind enters itself, and God the mind,
And one is One, free in the tearing wind.

Lines from Roethke's poem, *In a Dark Time*, are threaded through the following essay as an accompaniment to Francis West's work. The poem traces a high-risk journey, ranging across a natural wilderness to an inner world. It embodies experiences of fear and predicament as well as reverie and final immanence. Working in America between the 1940s and 60s, Roethke faced the challenge of seeing through his own 'dark times' as he struggled with bouts of manic depression.

I don't know if Francis ever read the poem. My inclusion of it here is a personal tribute to his visionary work and a way of celebrating the poem with him. Francis was an avid reader of poetry and loved to share new poems with friends. He also wrote poetry extensively across many notebooks, drawing analogies between poetry and painting. The title of this exhibition, *Orion Stumbles*, is a line taken from one of his poetry notebooks. EP

ORION STUMBLES

ELIZABETH PERROTTE

In a dark time, the eye begins to see,

Theodore Roethke

Teetering on tiptoes, a giant figure stumbles, thin strands of hair blown back from his gaunt white face, ragged holes for eyes and gash of a mouth agape. He urges forwards from a night-black cave, towards the radiance of a rosy light on red earth, rimmed by oceanic blue. The sun above becomes egg, cracking open to spill its rich yolk over the wings of a yellow vulture. The bird leans curiously towards the seeking figure, held mesmerised by flame-like brushstrokes in his outstretched fingers. Hooked beak and a fragment of some hopeful hand reach around to frame a large golden flower, which grows sunwards out of the fleshy earth at the heart of the painting.

Orion (2014, p.15) is pivotal for the exhibition as a whole and determines its title. It was a work Francis West particularly liked for the fluent correspondences between paint, process and poetic subject matter. Based on a tale of a brutal blinding and heroic quest for vision, the work leads between wild night forests and the dawn of a wind-blown seashore. These sites, united in the Orion painting, open out into two series of dreamscapes selected for exhibition, late works by West which draw both on his imaginative visions and experiential memories of living and working in the south of France. There are journeys to be taken through blue-drenched, Mediterranean coastal spaces inhabited by sailors and their whores, sea-witches and aquatic creatures. Or, far distant voyages through Nocturnes, onwards and inwards to the heart of darkness. Passing here through luxuriant and exotic forests teeming with birds, wild beasts, undiscovered species and buried body parts, reaching the very depths of unconscious night terror.

A visionary Nocturne, titled *Searching Hieronymus* (2011, p.18), is presided over by a headless angel accompanied on earth by a freakish, crawling head, both monstrous and pathetic. Such chimerical work provides a contemporary equivalent for the dark humour, mystical and moral practice of Hieronymus Bosch, whose work is currently



Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (right hand panel), 1490-1500. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

in the public eye with major exhibitions in 2016 marking the 500-year anniversary of his death. West remembered enjoying Bosch's medieval irony, in particular his painting *The Ship of Fools* which he considered to have remained valid as a metaphor for the human condition. He also took inspiration from Bosch's creative use of 'the grotesque'.

*'In a caricature, the artist may take someone's nose; make it larger until the face of the sitter is distorted but still recognisable. By contrast, with 'the grotesque', the artist's acts of distortion and deconstruction take on their own momentum and break from any link to an original or act of mimesis. Monsters are born with a new formal life force of their own...'*¹

West characterised himself as a hunter, committed to discovering new visual forms to embody the human condition with its enduring themes of love and desire, fear and foolishness, madness and freedom. These excessive drives and states of being are familiar, ever-present in daily lives and dreams, but they are experienced blindly as predicament remaining raw and inchoate. There is a sense of moral energy to West's visionary practice, albeit free-spirited. Like Bosch, he seeks to see for us in the darkest places, to bring back convincing form for the formless.

That place among the rocks—is it a cave,
Or winding path? The edge is what I have

Theodore Roethke

Orion (p.15) stumbles... The very materiality of the paint is performative, telling of the urgent quest that drives this drama. Stormy gusts of wet-in-wet paint both engulf and spew fragmented forms to duck, dive and dissemble across the surface in ecstatic play.

*'Painting is hard-won and continually challenging and risky... The figurative forms often come as a surprise to me. They emerge in an act of confrontation with my materials. One mark on the surface of canvas or paper demands another. Then I get involved in a process of erasure which generates new formations which then demand other forms to encounter and play with.'*²

The given title – *Orion* – provides orientation, guiding discoveries within the fluctuating pictorial field. Various told by sources in classical antiquity, Orion was the Titan son of the sea god, Poseidon, who could walk on water and became associated with winter storms. Although conceived from his father's urine, secreted within the surrogate womb

of a buried animal skin, Orion became regarded as the most handsome earthborn. He was a wild, strong and sensual character who became the greatest hunter but his downfall was also driven by these primal strengths and instincts. On the island of Khios he got drunk and raped Merope, the king's daughter, and for this sin king Oenopion blinded him.

Maimed and enraged, Orion stumbled eastwards across the sea to the furthest ocean, guided through his 'dark time' by Hephaestus's servant, Cedalion, riding on his shoulder. The goddess of dawn, Eos, fell in love with him so her brother Helios, the sun god renewed his sight. Orion was later killed by a scorpion sent by Artemis but was raised up by Zeus to be immortalised as a starry constellation rising through the winter skies; a guide for sailors across time. West's association with this astrological myth is also personal in terms of sea voyaging. He spoke often of his upbringing in an isolated fishing community on the Moray Firth in Scotland.

*'The vast spaces and dynamics of the North Sea and experiences of working my father's fishing boats, have shaped my mental landscape.'*³

Once accustomed to the painting, forms begin to resolve and emerge from the turbulent surface. Strokes of white paint may take shape within the night cave to suggest the character of Cedalion, just visible as an uplifted classical profile sitting high above the giant's shoulder spurring him sunwards. Cedalion's urgency is expressed poetically: allusively and metonymically, by the blue bird above him, its wings tightly folded for torpedo speed.

Rarely visualised in the history of art except for one known work by Poussin, this ancient myth has resurfaced in postmodern thinking about creativity. French intellectuals such as the Provencal poet, Rene Char, novelist Claude Simon and philosopher Maurice Blanchot, publishing in the 1960s and 70s, hailed the blind hunter as a symbol of a visionary poet who undertakes deconstruction to speak from the darkest places.⁴

West's notebooks reflect similarly on deconstruction: *'with a simple theme I can turn the sky to blood... my symbol is the timber wolf, laced with caprice... metamorphosis becomes praxis... This takes the form of erasing or destroying. And reconstructing...'*

Like Turner, West must be counted among the few artists in the history of art to create a potent visual poetic for the sea, a painterly language equivalent to its constant flux of becoming. Daring wet-in-wet painting swells and breaks over the surfaces of



Nicolas Poussin, *Blind Orion Searching for the Rising Sun*, 1658. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Flotsam (2013, p.32) and *Le Nez* (2014, p.35) engulfing boats, bodies and birds. There is an almost giddy feeling of motion and a painterly suggestion of being buffeted by a sea breeze. The flotsam and jetsam of previous states of figuration surface here and there within the deluge of paint. In the foreground of *Le Nez*, for instance, a head is left over, half submerged to become the remains of a drowned man sinking into oblivion. Above him, pitched and tossed on the waves, touches of yellow and green, trace petals on the water – a last glimpse of Orion's sunflower, perhaps.

Secret dramas unfold through the Mediterranean paintings. These are variously inflected by the vision of other artists and writers who have played out an ancient, classical heritage underlying the French Riviera's chic holiday veneer. Trembling light on milky turquoise water produces an atmosphere of hedonistic reverie and intoxication found in Pierre Bonnard's painting or Andre Gide's hypnotic writing. West also invokes a cast of erotic characters: lusty matelots/sailors, hefty sirens and goddesses, buxom bathing belles – many of which were familiar to Picasso's beach scenes of the inter-war period. In epic paintings such as *Flotsam*, a classical enchantress rules over the beach games to initiate erotic encounters which threaten to entrap or delay a roving hero/artist.

The Mediterranean mise-en-scene shifts to an interior for *Halcyon Days* (2014, p.33) – what might be a seedy portside café with an exotic pet parrot, where sailor-types on shore leave are slumming it to celebrate their machismo with manly food, sea-faring songs and the company of promiscuous blondes ready for some passionate tango dancing. Since the 1920s and 30s, a sexualised stereotype of the French sailor/marin was widely represented through popular cultural songs and novels, as lewd jokes shared through 'smutty postcards' or pornographic movies. The sexy sailor style also permeated high fashion and art from Cocteau and the Ballet Russes to Chanel and Gaultier. It contributed to the popularity of Mediterranean travel and tourism in the Cote d'Azur, which boomed from the inter-war period.⁵

The whores in West's painting are blond 'beauties' offered up for visual delight. The curvaceous nude in the foreground wearing an exotic bird hat is bathed in golden light. She stands up to be looked at, gazing out at the viewer whilst serving refreshment to a mystery visitor behind. Unnoticed by her, this client, an ungainly giant of a creature, removes his refined classical mask to reveal his ugly self, deeply red-faced with embarrassment. By contrast, the other blond, happily and flexibly, tucks her naked body under a swarthy-bearded sailor who appears to be sitting at a café table and she presses her painted red lips against his back. Flesh is certainly

on the menu as pig and cow heads have been served up on plates to the café tables. A very small sailor who looks on at the sexual games from the far side of a table has taken on a distinctly piggy-look, maybe in anticipation of being the whore's next course.

A man goes far to find out what he is—
Death of the self in a long, tearless night,
All natural shapes blazing unnatural light

Theodore Roethke

The fate of *Halcyon Days* can be found by descending through West's Nocturnes to *The Abyss* (2011, p.20). Here, in what appears to be a weightless, unhuman world, primordial and monstrous, the blonde's dismembered body parts float alongside other mutable forms. Fragments of skull, phallic plant forms and weird hybrid creatures all participate in a mysterious life cycle. Further collapse and full metamorphosis to new organic life forms are suggested in *Death and the Maiden* (2013, p.19). Deep in the darkest jungle, at the furthest reaches of the world, a blond becomes a pink-pendulous-breast-plant crowned by two golden blooms. The fleshy plant secretes rich juices downwards to water a limb-like organism below. Death, also transfigured, dances away elegantly under a blue moon watched by an exotic orange bird. Death has no dominion in this uncharted place of excessive fertility. When the eye begins to see... What first appears as a night terror, can be re-envisioned as paradise, macabre yet bountiful.

I meet my shadow in the deepening shade;
I hear my echo in the echoing wood—
A lord of nature weeping to a tree.
I live between the heron and the wren,
Beasts of the hill and serpents of the den.

Theodore Roethke

Several Nocturnes such as *Montagne Noire* (2010, p.23), *The Offering* (2012, p.16) and *Circe's Island* (2012, p.17), represent more idyllic visions of a natural paradise, places of wild enchantment where one can lose oneself to feelings of reverie and intoxication.

West's small painting *Montagne Noire* (2010, p.23) represents a night scene of dense forest foliage teeming with birds and insects all irradiated in blue moonlight. The painting directly represents West's personal reverie in nature, drawing on his experiences of a mountain forest. For a number of years, he and his wife stayed with friends in an isolated house on Montagne Noire, in the midst of forestry commission land. He recalls how the sun could smile on ground level but the mountain would remain in darkness, shrouded with mist, cloud or rain. Vision would fade leaving the song of cicadas and birds punctuated by the sound of wild boar crashing in the undergrowth nearby. Blinding sunlight with exotic colour could suddenly erupt if a pathway broke through the tree line on the Provencal, southern side of the mountain.

In 1907 Henri Rousseau painted *The Snake Charmer*, a nocturnal work designed to induce enchantment. He laboriously crafted, leaf by leaf, a hypnotic scene of dense, exotic jungle, silvered by a full moon. Here, a mysterious man-beast plays a magical flute to drown all reason and suspend time, transfixing the nearby flamingo and python.

West's painting *Circe's Island* (2012, p.17) shares an affinity with the enchantment and magical agency of Rousseau's work. He conjured a shadowy sea cave, surrounded by jungle forest, glimpsed in the last light of a fiery tropical sunset fading over a black sea. Within the velvety blackness of the cave is the shape-shifting sea-witch Circe who sits in a state of reverie with her head tilted back and eyes closed sharing her intimate trance with a blue gorilla. She is not all that she seems. Within the shadows, spectral white lines trace her 'beautiful' body and serene face but this mesmerising form has been superimposed on other states of being. Her bare witch's leg grows a grotesque foot like a plant, crowned by a monstrous toenail, which rises up in erection suggesting her intoxicated state of arousal. Buried deep in the darkest shadows at her side is the suggestion of another animal's head, perhaps a secret allusion to the spell she cast over Odysseus's men when she turned them to swine to entrap him.

Death of A Poet (2015, p.38) is West's last painting, worked on from his deathbed in late 2015, with his wife's support. To see this large-scale ambitious work within the context of the exhibition is extraordinary and unforgettable. It is rare to experience an artist's last work that consciously addresses the theme and onset of death. There is nothing overtly depressive or fearful here. An expansive field of lavender and blue vibrates like a heat haze establishing an unbounded liminal space for the spirit. There are suggestions of an interior and exterior landscape simultaneously. A squared area of thinly washed blue creates transparency at the centre of the painting, acting like



Henri Rousseau, *La Charmeuse de Serpents* (*The Snake Charmer*), 1907.
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

an abstracted window opening to the structure of a distant building or tree, edged with forked lightening. Outlined in white, to one side of this, there is a table with a sculptural bust suggesting West's home and studio space. To the other side, mysterious visitors arrive, holding back slightly as the first ghostly figure rushes in, bearing the ubiquitous bunch of flowers. The visitors may represent West's family or friends or a cast of imaginary versions of them as formed and reformed through numerous paintings of the past. There is a blond beauty accompanied by a lamb and, what looks to be, a flayed horse which is staring over her shoulder to bare its teeth at her partner, a suited man who twists around to grimace back.

Francis West continued to push forward with strength and full commitment to his creative quest to see for us 'in the darkest places'. He worked to find form for the very moment of the artist/poet's death. He shaped a shadowy figure of collapse, just visible in the half-light in the bottom corner, but then opened up the work to a new becoming with the addition of the hawk-like bird readying itself to fly.

A fallen man, I climb out of my fear.
The mind enters itself, and God the mind,
And one is One, free in the tearing wind

Theodore Roethke

End Notes

1. 'Francis West in Conversation'. Interview with Elizabeth Perrotte, 2011, published on www.franciswest.org
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Rene Char gave new life to Orion through his poems *Aromates Chasseurs*, Editions Gallimard, 1976, his imagination steeped in the natural landscapes of Provence and the prehistoric hunting scenes of the Caves of Lascaux. Inspired by these poems, Maurice Blanchot celebrated the work of Char in his essay, *The Beast of Lascaux*, 1956, as a poet who would re-invigorate philosophy by de-stabilising its fixed positions of judgement and teach us to think in a language of discontinuity and becoming. Blanchot identified blind Orion with Orpheus in the underworld. Creativity demanded a descent to a dark place of collapse in order to return with a 'truth', an experience of possibility, which could give depth to life.
5. Andrew Stephenson, 'Our jolly marin wear': the queer fashionability of the sailor uniform in interwar France and Britain, *Fashion, Style and Popular Culture*, Vol. 3, Number 2, 1 March 2016

FRAGMENTS FROM THE POETRY NOTEBOOKS OF FRANCIS WEST

The black beyond the candlelight
The dark where the candle cannot reach
The end of logic
Where the candle cannot reach

The forest asks you
to be still
to still
the breath
to hear it breathe
Suns splash bark and
solid ground
The shadows yield
Insects are now
well defined
scarab
flying ant
or moth
death's heads circle round
Somewhere further off, a rustling sound
wild boar or perhaps deer
The forest asks you to be still

Look I'm here again
I've traced you
Found you out
Don't flee

I wish I was Francesco Guardi
in residence by the sea
not counting waves, but
enjoying the transparency

Such a curious liquid
filled with things that
slip and slide
crawl away, or better glide

Unreachable the surface
gleams when the sun bursts
upon the tides

I wish I were the crest
when the wave breaks
and a green wind lifts
the spume into another
element

I wish for some secret
place, where there are
rocks and Eucalyptus trees
and love's breath on my cheek
under a temperate sun
I'd die for love of these



Orion, 2014



The Offering, 2012



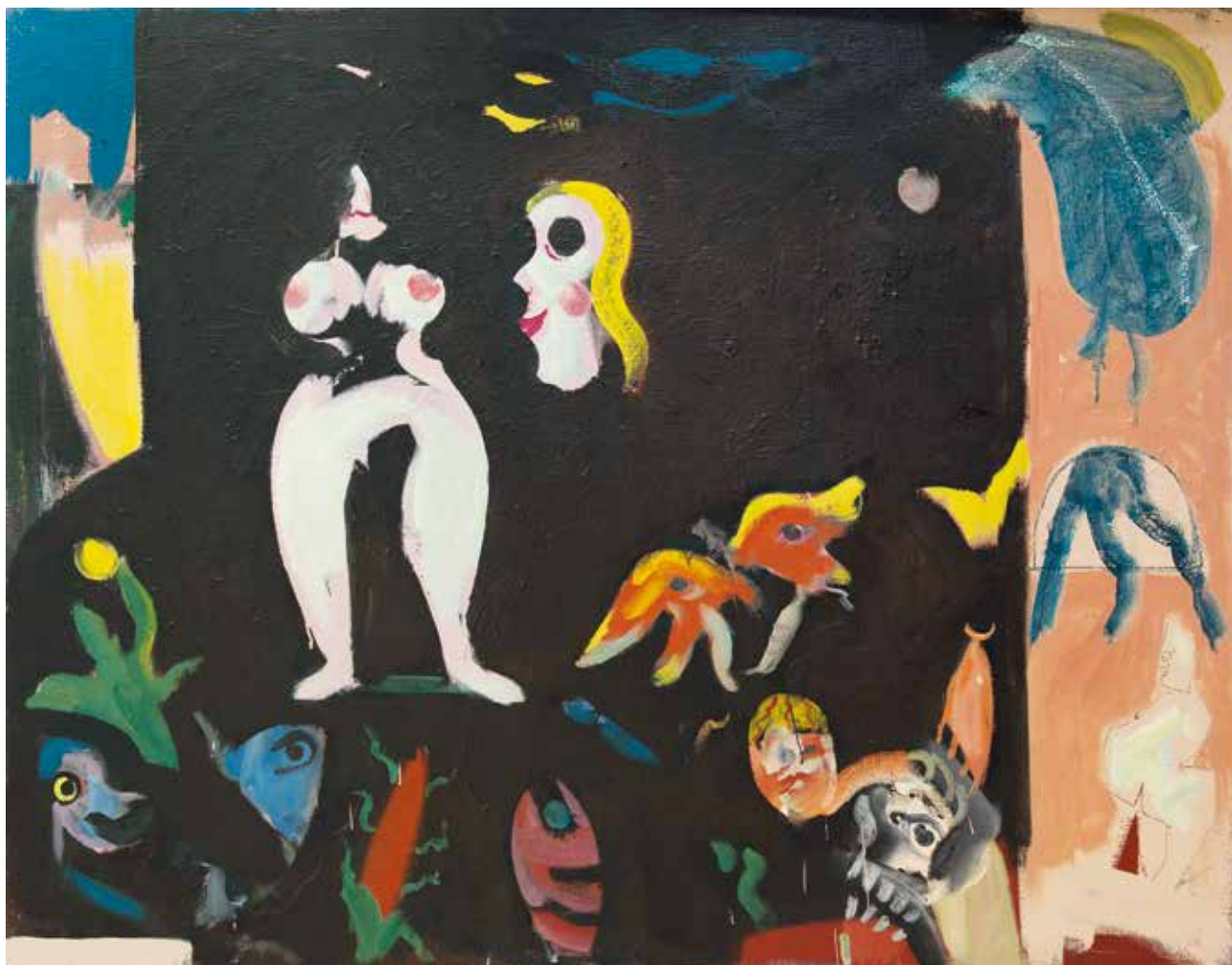
Circe's Island, 2012



Searching Hieronymus, 2011



Death and the Maiden, 2013



The Abyss, 2011



Inside Outside, 2012



Le Scarabée, 2010



La Montagne Noire / Blue Moon, 2010



Nocturne with Bird, 2009-11



La Forêt, 2010



A Dream, 2014



Pandora, 2014



The Inspection, 2013



Live and Let Live, 2013



Washed Up, 2012



L'Ange Bleu, 2013



Flotsam, 2013



Halcyon Days, 2014



La Mer, 2012



Le Nez, 2014



Le Chat et le Bouquet de Fleurs, 2014



Jetsam, 2013



Death of a Poet, 2015

LIST OF WORKS

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Orion, 2014
Oil on canvas, 115 x 146 cm

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The Offering, 2012
Oil on canvas, 124 x 150 cm

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Circe's Island, 2012
Oil on canvas, 123 x 157 cm

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Searching Hieronymus, 2011
Oil on canvas, 100.5 x 141 cm

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Death and the Maiden, 2013
Oil on canvas, 131 x 97 cm

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The Abyss, 2011
Oil on canvas, 115 x 146 cm

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Inside Outside, 2012
Oil on canvas, 131 x 97 cm

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Le Scarabée, 2010
Oil on canvas, 82 x 65 cm

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La Montagne Noire / Blue Moon, 2010
Oil on canvas, 82 x 65 cm

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Nocturne with Bird, 2009-2011
Oil on canvas, 92 x 122 cm

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La Forêt, 2010
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A Dream, 2014
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The Inspection, 2013
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Live and Let Live, 2013
Oil on canvas, 82 x 102 cm

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L'Ange Bleu, 2013
Oil on canvas, 82 x 100 cm

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Flotsam, 2013
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Halcyon Days, 2014
Oil on canvas, 201 x 208.5 cm

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La Mer, 2012
Oil on canvas, 143.5 x 147 cm

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Le Nez, 2014
Oil on canvas, 122 x 204 cm

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Le Chat et le Bouquet de Fleurs, 2014
Oil on canvas, 74 x 91 cm

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Jetsam, 2013
Oil on canvas, 97 x 103.5 cm

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Death of a Poet, 2015
Oil on canvas, 204 x 234 cm

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

JENNY WEST

Francis was born in Fraserburgh, a fishing community on the Moray Firth in Scotland, where he spent his formative years. His National Service was mostly in Malaysia, where he met his lifelong friend Seth Cardew. On his return he spent a term at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen, before moving to London to study at Chelsea School of Art (1957-1959). Francis' grandfather, a fisherman and a Sunday painter, thought that art as a profession was not a man's work but his father had no choice but to agree to Francis' demand.

I first met Francis in 1958 at Chelsea, when he was also teaching fencing and painting pastoral scenes on panels for an antique furniture restorer. His father would send him boxes of fish to keep him going. We met again in 1965 and married in 1966. In the early 60s, Francis forged an important friendship with the painter Harry Jonas (1893-1990) who was in his late 70s. He soaked up Harry's knowledge about the methods of the Old Masters, particularly composition. They frequently met to eat and talk at the Quality Inn Tea Rooms in Tottenham Court Road. Around this time Francis' work was included in a number of group shows: at Helen Lessore's Beaux Arts Gallery, New Art Centre (then on Sloane Street) and The London Group.

My mother, Jocelyn Herbert, helped Francis secure work on Tony Richardson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. We drove all the way to Ankara in our old van, where Francis taught the Turkish Cavalry how to fence. During filming Francis became unwell with pleurisy. We found a doctor in Istanbul and stayed for six more months wishing to make the most of being on the edge of Europe.

On returning to Britain, we spent time on the Harlech Estuary in Wales, in Richard Hughes' cottage, so Francis could convalesce. Our eldest daughter, Imogen, was born there in 1969 and Jocelyn, our second daughter, was born in London in 1970. We then bought a village hall in Somerset, which Francis converted. He painted in the skittle alley alongside the hall and to his delight obtained a full-size billiard table from a farmer's barn for £30. Once set up he played daily, after or even during painting. However Francis found the West Coast air enervating and not good for his chest, so in 1973 we decided to return to London and landed in Primrose Hill. I taught in Hackney and Francis looked after the children, discovering he could cook – his kipper and caper pie was especially tasty. When

he could, he worked in a Space studio across the Hill for a while. It was in an old piano factory and the walls were very thin between the studios. He eventually gave it up, unable to cope with the incessant sound of radios.

In the 80s we moved to Belsize Park and Francis lectured at Hornsey College of Art and later taught at Byam Shaw School of Art. It was an interesting time for him with some of his work in Arts Council shows and a solo exhibition at Edward Tootal Gallery. During the 90s, Francis established a studio in Paris and over the following decades worked on many paintings there. He often visited the South of France and rented a friend's flat in Menton – up 91 steps – paying for it with drawings. He loved the light and colour of the Mediterranean and often sat gazing out on the edge of the sea. This influence is evident in many of his subsequent paintings. Throughout his life Francis came and went from our home and studio in London but shortly before his death we bought a second home in Arles, in Provence. Sadly, he wasn't well enough to work there although he was full of ideas for what he thought of as his final theme, which he'd already called 'Pastoral'.

FRANCIS WEST (1936 – 2015)

1936 Born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland

1955 – 57 National Service, Malaysia

EDUCATION

1957 Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen

1957 – 59 Chelsea School of Art, London

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2013 Joint exhibition with Markéta Luskáčová,
The Piper Gallery, London

2012 Solo exhibition, The Piper Gallery, London

2002 – 09 Works regularly exhibited at Original
Gallery, Nice

2000 Retrospective, Orleans House Gallery, London

1992 Group exhibition, Flowers Gallery, London
Collection of drawings, Graves Museum,
Sheffield

1990 Group exhibition, Austin Desmond Fine
Art, London

1987 Joint exhibition with Ken Kiff, Fischer
Fine Art, London

1985 Solo exhibition, Edward Totah Gallery, London

1981 – 84 Contributed to various travelling shows
sponsored by the Arts Council:

In their Circumstances

The Animal in Art

Westfield College

Hayward Annual

1980 Works on paper, Blond Fine Art, London

1975 Solo exhibition, Parkin Gallery, London

1973 First solo exhibition, Hamet Gallery, London

1960 – 70 Group exhibitions:
Beaux Arts Gallery, London
New Art Centre, London
Young Contemporaries, London
The London Group, London

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Arts Council Collection, London

British Museum, London

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester

FRANCIS WEST ORION STUMBLES

15th September – 11th November 2016

MEGAN PIPER

67 Jermyn Street [Harris Lindsay]
London
SW1Y 6NY

www.meganpiper.co.uk

Catalogue published by Megan Piper © 2016

Works of art by Francis West © The Estate of Francis West

Texts © Elizabeth Perrotte

Photography: Sam Roberts

Catalogue design: Ave Design Studio

Illustrations:

Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* © Museo Nacional del Prado

Nicolas Poussin, *Blind Orion Searching for the Rising Sun* © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource/Scala, Florence

Henri Rousseau, *La Charmeuse de Serpents* © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée d'Orsay)/Hervé Lewandowski

Theodore Roethke, *In a Dark Time*, from *Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke* (Doubleday, 1961)

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ISBN: 978-1-5272-0051-7