

DARKENING POOL, 1961

Ivon Hitchens



REF: 11925

Height: 83 cm (32.7")

Width: 117 cm (46.1")

Depth: 10 cm (3.9")

Description

' My pictures are painted to be listened to 'Ivon Hitchens

One of the foremost Modernists of his age, Hitchens was known as ' the painter in the woods '.

This picture is an exceptional example from a group of pictures which were international in spirit despite being rooted in the English countryside. They are regarded as the most lyrical sequences of landscapes and garden paintings in British art.

Darkening Pool was painted in the six acres of wooded gardens at Greenleaves, the artist's home where as Andrew Lambirth observes, he became a 'curator of woodland.'

Darkening Pool marks a transition for Hitchens echoing his earlier oeuvre while injecting a more vibrant palette. He combines different points of focus to produce a masterful, complex, sensual and colourful abstract composition, full of life and vitality.

Darkening Pool masterfully orchestrates different views of the pool held together in sequence with the lines of perspective meeting and forming the whole. This is what Hitchens is best known for.

Hitchens' fluency in, and commitment to, expressing how he responds to nature, capturing his sensations on the canvas are demonstrated in this masterpiece

Darkening Pool illustrates how much Hitchens appreciated the nature surrounding his home and studio at Lavington Common, Sussex . It was the woods and streams that posed the questions he most wanted to answer, or suggested the visual music he most wanted to compose.

The immersive composition of Darkening Pool shows how Hitchens has included the landscape all around the pond. In one direction through the trees, and then another, and ahead of him while including of what was behind. He drew together the mixed experiences of being in the landscape beside the Darkening Pool giving the view a sensual and felt experience of this.

He has attuned to the landscape, 'listened' to, and conveyed the conversation between the openness of the pond and the enclosed screening and undergrowth around it.

He also plays successfully with colour juxtaposing the dark palette of tones of black, purple, blue and green with vibrant orange, yellow and white. This captures the different qualities of light and shadow and reflection in the pond and landscape surrounding it.

All these conversations establish relationship between the pond and the canvas, the different elements of the composition, the painting and the viewer creating an experience of a felt sense of place.

' His spacial grammar - the fact that he conceives of forms in space in terms of a system of flat screens of colour lying one behind another - this is purely Cubist in origin. ' Patrick Heron

Oil on canvas
Canvas length 117cm, height 51cm.
Cream Mount.
Silvered frame length 148cm, height 83cm, depth 7.5cm

" What I see and feel, I try to reduce to patches and lines of pigment which have an effect upon our aesthetic consciousness, independent of (though interpreting) the facts of nature in terms of a relationship of all the parts." Ivon Hitchens

VERSO :

Artist's handwritten label " Darkening Pool" 1961 by Ivon Hitchens, Greenleaves, Petworth, Sussex. This picture...