

GLYNDEBOURNE

Gallery 94

Tom Homewood: The Unseen Everything

21 February – 31 March 2022

In Tom Homewood's recent paintings you find a liberated artist. There is a notable change of palette, acid greens seeping into mossy tones, swathes of golden brushstrokes anchored by dark prussian blues and flashes of orange, coral and chartreuse. Skittish trees emerge, their delicate architecture lifted by the light, and lengthening shadows give structure to the pictorial space. Everything is fresh and glowing - spring has just arrived. One is reminded of William Carlos Williams' words about the visual spectacle of watching the season unfold: 'One by one objects are defined - It quickens: clarity, outline of leaf. But now the stark dignity of entrance - Still, the profound change has come upon them: rooted, they grip down and begin to awaken.'¹

Homewood has been deeply connected to the landscape around Glyndebourne since childhood. He grew up in Hamsey on the riverbank of the Ouse, a mosaic of old houses, farm buildings, grassland and sedge, where wet fields meet the chalky downland. An ancient and quiet place. Spurred on by long walks with his father, Homewood began to draw the nature that surrounded him, rapidly filling sketchbooks with animals and plants. In his late teens, Homewood spent a summer working backstage at Glyndebourne Festival. After an Art



Foundation at the University of Brighton, Homewood went on to study Illustration at Kent Institute of Art & Design with Llewellyn Thomas RCA, a master printmaker. It was at the Institute, which counts Tracey Emin, Peter Blake and Humphrey Ocean amongst its alumni, that Homewood, a 'frustrated printmaker', discovered '...how to construct an image with a single beautiful line, how to use depth and carve out space to show just the essentials. The rest - the colour, the detail - is just about expression'.

Drawing is still the starting point for Homewood and this is the first exhibition to include two of his finished drawings made at Glyndebourne. Every painting begins with a skeleton of charcoal or graphite. Working directly onto panels, whitened in preparation, Homewood marks the surface with gritty arcs, scratches and grooves. These trailing lines appear loose and spontaneous, sometimes fading into nothing on the bone-coloured ground, punctuations that are urgent and tender.

¹ 'Spring and All' from *Collected Poems 1909-1939: Volume I*, William Carlos Williams, Robert McAlmon Contact Publishing Co, 1923.

Homewood works from a small glass fronted studio in central Lewes but has spent much of the last decade returning to draw and paint at Glyndebourne. The gardeners know him well. Familiar subjects appear in this exhibition - the lake, the shimmering profile of the opera house - but there are also new vantage points. In a part of the grounds that he affectionately calls 'a sanctuary', Homewood returns again and again to this cloistered space, reconfiguring the long hedges into oblong blocks of colour, opaque and deliberate. Homewood talks about his work as 'catching the elusive before it changes again - it could be the weather, or light, or even the season.' Working on a small scale for the first time, Homewood distills these glimpses into something palpable, an inventory of sensation.



In his rose paintings, Homewood captures that impermanent moment of full bloom, where the petals are open and flushed with colour. With their velvety black-blue backgrounds, they mimic the still-lives of Zurbarán, intensely lit to avoid the nebulous space behind them. Given titles like *Completed* and *Remembered*, they mark specific moments in time, of memory and of loss. Homewood describes how the flowers are often wilted before he's finished painting. In this way, these works are like love tokens for life and markers of death. But they never slip into the sentimental. They remain rigorous and poetic.

The Unseen Everything is an exhibition about longing for what is yet to come, the promise of change, the start of spring. Yet Homewood has proven in these startling and lyrical works that it is worth waiting for.

Nerissa Taysom – Curator, Exhibitions & Collections, February 2022

Tom Homewood

Tom Homewood (b.1972) is an established Sussex painter with a studio in central Lewes. He trained at Brighton University and Kent Institute of Art & Design, where he studied under Llewellyn Thomas RCA. After his first exhibition in 1995, Homewood was offered a position at a UK Top 100 advertising agency and spent the next decade illustrating and art directing for many international beauty and fashion brands, including Dior, Ralph Lauren, Armani and L'Oreal. Returning to art full time in 2005, Homewood has undertaken residencies at the National Opera Studio and since 2014, exhibited in many group shows at Glyndebourne. He has been represented by Northcote Gallery in London since 2007. Homewood's works are widely collected in the UK and internationally.

Art & Collections at Glyndebourne

The visual arts have been an integral part of the Glyndebourne experience since the inception of its annual summer opera festival in 1934. The company curates regular exhibitions of objects from its collections alongside contemporary art and sculpture. Many of these exhibitions take place in Gallery 94, a purpose-built exhibition gallery located inside the opera house. For more information, please visit glyndebourne.com/art.