

Paintings by Lorna Wishart

Self-portrait riding home from Arundel to Binsted (lent by Patricia Hope Scanlan) (1)



Horse in a Field (lent by Vicki Bryceson) (2)



Ox, Angel and Windmill (lent by Clio David) (3)



Young Prince Charles (lent by Emma Norris) (4)



‘The Art of Binsted’

A celebration of the art of the Wishart family and the postponement of the Arundel Bypass, at the Victoria Institute, Arundel, 2-9 June 2023

Lorna Wishart (1911-2000)

Lorna Wishart was the wife of Ernest Wishart, scholar, ornithologist, patron of the arts, and co-founder of the left-wing publisher Lawrence and Wishart, who also ran two farms in Binsted. After a six-year love affair with Laurie Lee, Lorna became the mistress of the painter Lucian Freud, though always returning to Binsted and her family.

Ernest accepted Lorna’s and Laurie’s child, Yasmin, as his own. Lorna’s love affairs colour the image of her in the public mind as a ‘muse’ and Bohemian, but she was also an artist in her own right.

In later life she converted to Catholicism, and her paintings show her religious sensibility. In the painting of herself riding home from Arundel, Lorna is about to round a corner and see a vision of a deer standing on a pond, with a crucifix between its antlers. Its location between Binsted’s ancient oaks and the younger trees of Tortington Common suggests it is the pond now known as the Madonna Pond. Lorna placed a statue of the Madonna there as a shrine in 1952 (below left). The shrine still exists, with a smaller replacement Madonna (right).



Photo of the original Madonna: thanks to the Gerrard Young Collection, Chichester University

Paintings by Michael Wishart

Peacocks (lent by Emma Norris) (5)



Sun Seen through Birches (lent by Vicki Bryceson) (6)



Pulborough Church (lent by Luke Wishart) (7)



Field near Meknes, 1971-2 (lent by Luke Wishart) (8)



Blackberries like Fireworks (lent by Luke Wishart) (9)



Michael Wishart (1928-1996)

The art critic David Sylvester described Michael's work as that of 'a sensibility that is at once shamelessly romantic and deeply sophisticated, and which endows the wide open spaces of the great outdoors with a sort of hothouse preciousity . . . he is one of the select band of English romantic painters who are truly painters' (*The Listener*, Redfern Gallery Exhibition 1956). The critic and explorer Nicholas Guppy praised his 'scintillating paint- and print-handling skills' and called him a 'contemporary master'.

Michael Wishart's obituary in the *Independent* pointed to the Blakean visionary quality in his work: 'His larger, more abstract canvases are his best, evoking a mystical dream-world out of Odilon Redon or André Derain, neo-romantic landscapes and hidden faces captured in bravura swathes of oil. These were Blakean visions' (1996, *Independent*, Obituary).

Below: 'Vase of Flowers' (10), lent by Luke Wishart, 'Still Life and Seascape' (11), lent by Francis Wishart



Below: 'Monkey with Fans' (13), 'Duet for Parrots' (12), lent by Francis Wishart



Paintings by Yasmin David

White Horse in a Landscape (lent by Clio David) (14)



Kneeling Lady (lent by Emma Norris) (15)



Landscape with a White Horse (print lent by Emma Tristram) (16)



- And three other prints (lent by Emma Tristram):

Landscape with Arc (17)

Molten Green Landscape (18)

Late Abstract (19)

Yasmin David (1939-2009)

Julian David, Yasmin's husband, wrote about her in *Devon Life*, 24 August 2010: 'As the daughter of writer Laurie Lee and Lorna Wishart, and sister of painter Michael Wishart, Yasmin grew up with a strong artistic background and sensibility. But she never chose to exhibit, except when very young and before she came to Devon. Perhaps by means of this intense privacy she was able to create an entirely individual voice within the English landscape tradition.'

Her daughter Clio added: 'The paintings are dramatic, emotional and often turbulent, conveying the drama in the landscape as she saw it, and perhaps resonating human dramas within them. Her preoccupation was with the huge polarities of light and dark, the sky and the land, and inner and outer states of being. She tried to capture the molten, ever-changing quality of nature. Her paintings are forceful expressions of landscape in a constant state of flux, of becoming.'

A recent exhibition at the New Art Gallery, Walsall, made Yasmin David's art public for the first time. 'David's work sits in comparison with that of Joan Eardley, Barbara Delaney, and Gillan Ayres, women following in the footsteps of those of the St Ives milieu in the 30s: Barbara Hepworth in the field of Sculpture, and Wilhelmina Barnes-Graham and Margaret Mellis. Her work offers a way in to thinking about the British landscape outside of traditional patriarchal frameworks-i.e. as a territory to be conquered, or husbanded.' *Dr Sophie Hatchwell, Art Historian, University of Birmingham*

'In dreamlike scenes laden with symbolism, bodies of water glint amid lush greenery, while blinding light breaks through ominous clouds. It will be fascinating to discover more about David, and also set aside the past to appreciate her artwork for what it is.' *Ellen Mara De Wachter, Art Quarterly*

The four framed prints of paintings by Yasmin David are for sale, at £250 each, to provide funds for continuing to fight the destruction of Binsted by the Arundel bypass.

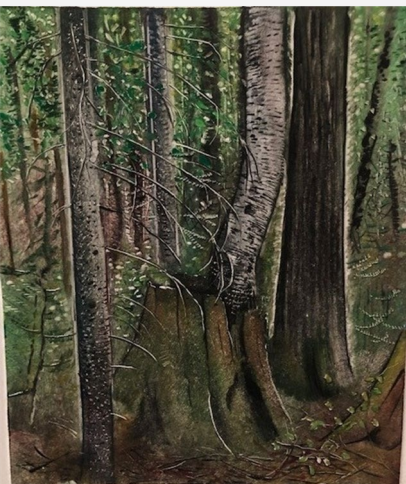
Pristine rubbish (monotype) (20)



Landscape through window (monotype) (21)



Some Trees (monotype) (22)



Francis Wishart

Born in 1951 to artists Michael Wishart and Anne Dunn, Francis Wishart studied at the Slade School of Fine Art and subsequently advanced his technique with master printers at 'Atelier Lacourière et Frélaut' in Paris. Initially, he was very drawn to etching, which led him to explore the technique of the monotype perfected by Edgar Degas. Wishart has tended to work with zinc rather than copper plates for his colour monotypes and has become a master of this technique. He said:

'There are many technical approaches to monotyping, allowing for a wide variety of results. The most common and easily recognizable ones are made by the 'dark field' method, where the artist makes a work through the gradual removal of ink and letting in the light to reveal the image. Searching to widen the scope of possibilities and wanting to create more depths, I have invented my own method. I mostly begin by working into the tiny pixels of a zinc plate an ambitious amount of printer's ink.

'Depending on the work to be done, I spread warm or cold colours in patches. With all sorts of tools, I start drawing the subject matter, waiting for that mysterious moment when the picture comes alive and decides to pursue a life of its own. The plate becomes the battleground where I put my technical skills at the disposal of my own thoughts against the will of the plate itself. With a sleight of hand, images come and go; accidental marks inevitably appear as friends or foes. Doubt and certainty hover until the plate is well and truly pressed to finally be revealed for inspection.

'I hope that, by the very fact that these works are not immediately recognizable as monotypes, they will continue to expand and renew this medium.'

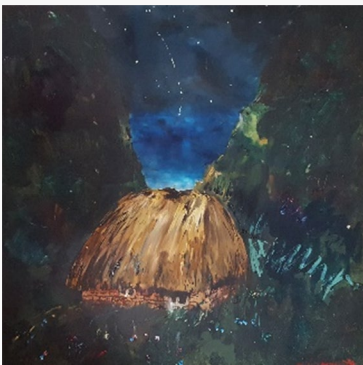
Wishart is captivated by the landscape in New Brunswick; a love born out of his summer holidays in Binsted, roaming through the fields and forest there. A testimony to Wishart's love of nature is the environmentalist film he made with David Suzuki called *Forbidden Forest* (National Film Board, Canada) fighting to protect Canadian forests.

Depictions of Binsted

'The Deserted House', by Ralph Ellis, 1946 (lent by Emma Tristram) (23)



'Kent's Cottage, Binsted Park', by Michael Wishart (reproduction from a phone photo, lent by Emma Tristram) (24)



'Marsh Farm' by Cilla Ritchie (lent by Luke Wishart) (25)



'Great oak tree in Spinningwheel Copse' by Richard G. Evans (lent by Emma Tristram) (26)



Depictions of Binsted

Ralph Ellis's watercolour shows Binsted House, abandoned by the Read family in favour of a smaller house they built within Binsted Park. The ruin was a fascinating playground for a generation of Binsted children. A new house has been built on the site.

Ralph Ellis (1885-1963) was a successful inn sign painter who lived in Arundel and wrote an illustrated memoir of WW1.

The original painting by Michael Wishart of Kent's Cottage in Binsted Park was not available for loan, but a 'canvas print' from a phone photo is included here as it is an important Binsted image – the ancient thatched cottage surrounded by encroaching woodland, with a falling star and giant insects suggesting an apocalyptic scene. A modern house, also called Kent's Cottage, has been built on the site.

Richard G. Evans, a contemporary tree artist, has drawn several individual trees in the Binsted landscape. David Barber, an artist who lived in Worthing, drew two immense oaks in Binsted Park, the 'pocket park' created for Binsted House (29):



The left-hand oak has now fallen.

Contemporary artist Daniel Shadbolt painted a collapsing Dutch Barn on Church Farm, Binsted, that has now gone:



Artists who live and work in Binsted

The artist Christopher Baker has a studio in Binsted, and regularly takes part in the Arundel Gallery Trail. His series '64 days' celebrated his experiences of painting in the same spot at the Trundle near Goodwood on the South Downs for 64 consecutive days in 2012. Each of the studies was completed in one day, reacting to changes in light, mood and the patterns of the landscape.

Included in the exhibition are his print of the sea at Climping (27), and a print of cow parsley (28) by Gilly McCadden, an artist who lives in Binsted. Gilly makes screen-prints and also works as a garden designer.

Binsted and the Arundel Bypass

The apocalypse nearly came to Binsted in 2023 – the threat of destruction by the Arundel Bypass 'Grey route'. The route would cut the village in two and pass 100m from the 12th-century, Grade II* listed church. Four houses in the village have already been bought by National Highways (two in the path of a previous 'Preferred Route' through Binsted Park).

After two recent 'public consultations', in 2017 and 2019, the planning application for the road was about to go ahead, but in March 2023 the Secretary of State for Transport announced that the bypass would be postponed for at least two years. He said 'The A27 Arundel ... faces a range of challenges including environmental considerations and ongoing scope and design changes to ensure stakeholders' views are fully considered.' Exactly what this means is not clear – the return of the Grey route, or a total rethink?

In his memoir, 'High Diver', published in 1977, Michael Wishart described his childhood in Binsted: 'As a child there were no terrors, no quarrels, no rages nor humiliations that could not be forgotten by running into the meadows with a box of colours. ...As far back as I can remember, certainly before I could speak, I loved to draw and paint, in all their seasonal change, our fields, our parks, our hedges; brooks; barns; trees; and our skies.'

Michael's words capture the unity of Binsted and its uniqueness as a place. I hope this exhibition, by making Binsted's art better known, will help it survive – not just its community, and the village with its 9 listed buildings and its ancient church, but the whole of it.

Emma Tristram

Photographs of Binsted church in snow and the Madonna Pond by Sandra Cooke

