



Press Release: December 2017

Cedric Morris: Beyond the Garden Wall
An Exhibition of the Travel Paintings of Sir Cedric Lockwood Morris
18 April – 22 July 2018

A rare glimpse into the fascinating life and exotic travels of one of Britain's most influential and enduring painters of the natural world at Philip Mould & Company



Italian Hill Town (1922, previously in the collection of David Bowie)

Philip Mould & Company are pleased to announce ‘Cedric Morris: Beyond the Garden Wall’, running 18 April – 15 July 2018. The exhibition will showcase over twenty of the finest examples of Morris’ landscape paintings from 1908-1971. Mentor of Lucian Freud, friends with social and artistic tastemakers such as Peggy Guggenheim and Elizabeth David, and – according to those closest to him – an artist who could rival Matisse, Cedric Morris was one of the most influential and assured British painters of the 20th century.

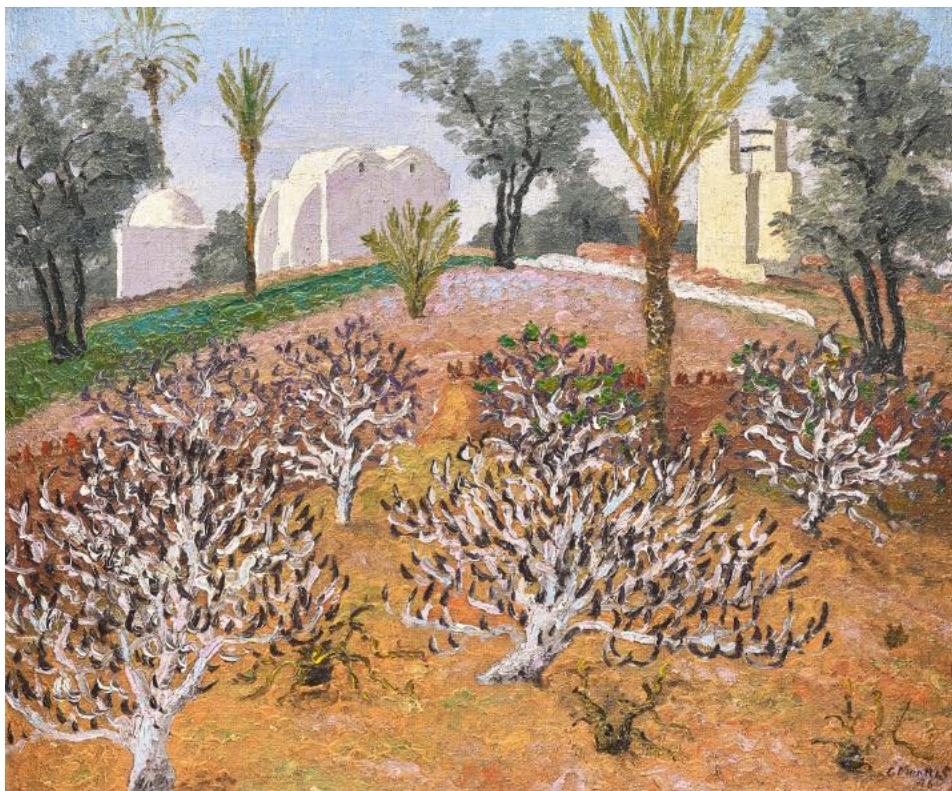
In conjunction with the exhibition to be held at the Garden Museum, ‘Cedric Morris: Beyond the Garden Wall’ at Philip Mould & Company will highlight some of Morris’ most significant pieces from his travels abroad. The travel works of Cedric Morris are a body of paintings hitherto unexplored and yet they represent an extensive aspect of his output as an artist.

Travel was an integral part of Morris' artistic life and as a collector and breeder of exotic species of plants and flowers. Morris was the only person of his generation to achieve national stature both as a painter and a plantsman. It was his release from teaching and planting at his Suffolk home for over forty years, Benton End and it enabled him to paint passionately and independently all the while absorbing the vistas and landscapes of foreign lands.

The show will provide a unique opportunity to see travel through the lens of an artist whose intuitive understanding of flowers and their forms perfectly translated into the realm of the landscape genre. The two exhibitions will present the first reassessment of Morris' work in over thirty years and 'Beyond the Garden Wall' will demonstrate just how multifaceted the artist was in his approach to subject matter.

Highlights will include a work previously in the collection of musical and cultural icon David Bowie, a painting executed on the Mediterranean island of Djerba off the coast of Tunisia, a fine example of Morris' travel paintings in Connemara, Ireland and a work executed in Céret, a stomping ground for painters and poets alike from Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque and Chaïm Soutine.

Extensive research carried out by Philip Mould & Company has now made it possible to track Morris' movements from 1908 to the last years before his death in 1982. Archival sources have revealed just how prolific a traveller Morris really was, having journeyed extensively throughout Algeria, Canada, the Canary Islands, France, Italy, Ireland, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Portugal Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. During these trips abroad Morris documented the places he went in paint and botanise, the result of which is a body of work that is a testament to the importance that travel had upon the artist's creative output.



Olive Trees (1926, Djerba, North Africa)

Notes to Editors

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Cedric Morris: Beyond the Garden Wall

An exhibition of the Travel Paintings of Sir Cedric Lockwood Morris

18 April – 15 July

The exhibition will be open to the public from 10am – 6pm Monday – Friday

Philip Mould & Company

18 – 19 Pall Mall

London

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The exhibition will run concurrently with ‘Cedric Morris: Artist Plantsman’ at the Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7LB, 18 April – 22 July 2017.

The catalogue will be available from April 2018

About Cedric Morris

Having risen to a level of international acclaim in the 1920s, Morris steadily withdrew from the London art world the following decade despite being hailed as a ‘painter to rejoice in’ by critics in 1932. During this transition he retreated to the English countryside in Essex and later Suffolk with his lifelong partner and fellow artist Arthur Lett-Haines with whom he would establish the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing at Dedham in 1937. Here they would nurture the next generation of talented young artists including among them, Glyn Morgan, Maggi Hambling CBE and most notable of all, the young Lucian Freud. It was Morris’ painterly example that clearly permeates throughout Freud’s early work. This artistic relationship is perhaps the most significant of its kind to be found within the context of 20th century British art and is one that significantly contributes to our understanding of Modern British painting.

Morris was the painter *par excellence* and one to whom many other aspiring artists gathered. And yet, today, his reputation, in-part, is justifiably indebted to his expertise and success as a renowned breeder of rare Irises. By extension of this it is his exquisite paintings of flowers that Morris has become most commonly associated with.

Throughout his life Morris was, in many respects, as avid a gardener as he was an artist. His flower paintings are, in essence, extensions of his lifelong affinity with plants. Naturally inquisitive and exploratory in nature, Morris obtained an extensive knowledge of propagation through his

gardening activities, first at *Pound Farm* in Higham (1929-39) then at Benton End in neighbouring Hadleigh where he and Lett would remain for the rest of their life together.

His garden at Benton End was arranged in a formal, yet aesthetically intuitive manner. Rows of flowers and plants were arranged in tiers within an old orchard and were enclosed by an encircling and modestly sized brick wall. It was Morris' intuition for colour and formal harmony that ultimately informed his painting of flowers and his achievements as a colourist. His garden, much like his painting was primarily motivated by a desire to capture the beauty inherent in naturally contrasting forms and tones dominated by an overriding sense of order and balance.

The garden was Morris' natural habitat and it is where we have come to know and understand him. However, there is another aspect of his life and oeuvre that demands to be reassessed. Morris and Lett were prolific travellers and each winter season from October to March, during which the school was closed, Morris would take off away from the garden in search of subject matter to paint and new species of plants, fruits and vegetables to plant upon his return.

The resultant expeditions have left us with a collection of stunning works by one of Britain's most individualistic and recognisable painters.