Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



Libby Raynham (1952)

Teeming
Watercolour.

Signed with initials and dated LR05 at the lower right.

345 x 348 mm. (13 1/2 x 13 5/8 in.) [sheet]

Drawn in 2005.

As one scholar and curator has noted of Libby Raynham's watercolours, ‘To get to know and to understand these paintings, you have to look closely at them. They are exquisite fabrications, built up slowly over time. Watercolour is applied in layers of wash to achieve deep, sonorous colour harmonies, sometimes punctuated by accents of brighter colour. At the edges, residual lines of colour are the traces of these superimposed layers. The space is often divided geometrically into blocks or bands, which establish the compositional structure and which may set up rhythms across the surface. A positive shape is answered by its negative, or one brushstroke by a counter brushstroke. With seeming inevitability a resolution is achieved, with all the elements held in a delicate balance.’

Artist description:

Born in the village of Lenham in Kent, the painter, draughtsman and printmaker Elizabeth Anne (‘Libby’) Raynham studied at the Slade School of Art in London between 1970 and 1974, winning the David Murray Prize for landscape painting at the Royal Academy in 1972. It was while she was studying at the Slade that she began to produce abstract compositions, which were studied and developed in a series of illustrated notebooks or journals; a practice she has maintained throughout her later career. Raynham has worked in France and on the Aegean island of Samothrace in Greece, but from 1977 onwards has lived and worked in Zurich, Switzerland, following her marriage the late architect René Haubensak. She had her first solo exhibition in a gallery in London in 1979 and has since regularly exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in London and Zurich, most recently in 2019 and 2022. Her work is also

included in the Deutsche Bank corporate collection in London and is on public view in the Hirslanden Clinic in Zurich.

As the artist and museum curator Michael Wilson has noted of Raynham's work, 'Some art is immediate and forceful in its impact on the viewer; some is slow, quiet and mysterious in its working. Libby Raynham's watercolours are of the second kind. As she herself has said, 'they are there to be contemplated, just as contemplation plays an important part in their making.' They are abstract and on first encounter may seem baffling – the discreet expression of a private world. While the beauty of the colour and the handling is evident, they are neither simply pretty nor effusive. This is serious art, produced with rigour and dedication, and as such it makes few concessions to the viewer. It requires a serious response, which entails concentration, openness and humility. But it amply rewards such a response, because this art is heartfelt and authentic.'