Stephen Ongpin Fine Art



HUGH Buchanan (1958 -)

Dusty Sunlight at Syon House

Pencil and watercolour.
Signed and dated Buchanan 2004 at the lower right.
287 x 380 mm. (11 1/4 x 15 in.)

This large sheet depicts a view of the interior of Syon House in west London, the residence of the Dukes of Northumberland, designed by Robert Adam in the 1760's. It is part of a series of watercolours, executed by Buchanan between 2003 and 2004, of the interiors of five country houses; Syon House and Osterley Park in London, Boughton House in Northamptonshire, Harewood House in Yorkshire and Blairquhan Castle in Ayrsehire.

As the catalogue of an exhibition of Buchanan's watercolours noted, 'At Syon House the interiors created by Robert Adam for the first Duke of Northumberland have a superlative finish which tests all Buchanan's most developed skills in his chosen medium. He evidently reveled here in extravagant detail such as the ivory inlay on doorframes, indulging his passion for the fall of light on rich fabric, exploring areas where different textures meet, sometimes resulting in almost abstract patterns. Oak floorboards are set against intricate mouldings framing tattered stretches of brocade damask wallpaper and flaking gold leaf, illuminated by a hesitant, milky sunlight.'

Provenance:

Francis Kyle Gallery, London, in 2004.

Artist description:

Born in Edinburgh, Hugh Buchanan studied at the Edinburgh College of Art, from which he graduated in 1980. He has made a particular specialty of watercolour views of the interiors of stately homes and historic buildings in England, Scotland, France and throughout Europe, some of which can be quite large in scale. Buchanan has received commissions from the National Trust, the Houses of Parliament and the Prince of Wales, for whom he painted a series of views of the interiors of Balmoral in 1987 and Highgrove House in 1994.

Buchanan's watercolours are drawn on heavy paper which can hold the many successive washes he

applies to the surface of the sheet to achieve a sense of depth. His work is characterized by a strong sense of atmosphere, allied to an abiding interest in the forms of classical domestic architecture as seen in diffused light. As A. N. Wilson has written of the artist, ‘Hugh Buchanan’s paintings do not merely depict, they inhabit an architecture. You feel yourself in these rooms and houses which he has, over thirty years, so incomparably evoked. You feel yourself inside, not merely particular spaces, but in those spaces as first conceived by the great architects who designed them.’