

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Jessica SHEPHERD (1984)

030320161305 Cabbage Leaf (*Brassica oleracea*) 37° 10' 31.3" N / 3° 41' 28.7" W

Watercolour, over a pencil underdrawing.

Signed and inscribed Jess Shepherd / 030320161305 at the lower right.

Further inscribed, signed and dated *Brassica oleracea* var. / capitata / A leaf taken from a cabbage / which was in our fridge / on 3rd March 2016 at 13:05. / These leaves always remove my / painters block. / Jess Shepherd / 2016 on the verso.

188 x 128 mm. (7 3/8 x 5 in.) [sight]

210 x 148 mm. (8 1/4 x 5 3/4 in.) [sheet]

Painted in Granada in Spain, this study of a cabbage leaf depicts one of the artist's favourite subjects, and, as she has noted, was done as a means of overcoming a case of painter's block.

The titles of Jess Shepherd's watercolours reflect the precise circumstances of her contact with the leaf depicted. As she notes, 'Life just seems so incredibly random and yet not. Once I started questioning mankind's use of scale and measurement to record size and space, I realised that to refer to time as a measurement in the collection was an absolute must. So the titles record the exact time I found the leaf.'

Artist description:

Jessica Rosemary Shepherd is an artist and botanist. A fellow of the Linnean Society, she obtained degrees in botany and plant taxonomy at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh. After working as a Curator of Natural History at the Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, she joined the staff of the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, where she worked between 2010 and 2014.

As the artist has written, 'I am a botanical painter. When I paint plants I try to become them. There is a great deal of observation involved even before my brushes touch the paper. I believe that a good picture is made using not only sight, but also touch, sound, smell and movement. One has to be aware of all of these elements in order to portray the plant well and describe the space that the plant is growing into, both over and underground.'

I trained in botany before committing myself fully to painting so that I would understand the processes of plants more comprehensively. Equipped with this scientific knowledge, I am now testing new approaches to my artwork to push the capacity for botanical illustration to bring greater awareness of plants and our interaction with them. I hope to inspire people to think beyond their experience whilst enriching our current perceptions of botanical illustration, its applications and how it sits within the larger scope of the visual arts.'