

Eve CAMPBELL (1997 -)

Cortili 05

Ink and gouache on white paper.

Signed and dated Eve Campbell 2021 at the lower right.

420 x 300 mm. (16 1/2 x 11 3/4 in.) [sheet]

As the young artist Eve Campbell has described her work, 'With an interest in creating surface pattern inspired by Scottish nature and architecture I create printed wall hangings and ceramic tiles. Through paper stencilling and screen printing my prints capture the colours, shapes and patterns of nature on Scotland's West Coast.' As she has recently added, 'I love colour and pattern…At art school you would sometimes be drawn to Pinterest for inspiration, but both my parents are artists and always pushed me to just go out and draw. You take what is in your surroundings - for me the west coast - and those are the shapes and patterns you pick up.'

This gouache drawing is part of a series of works on paper entitled Cortili ('courtyards' in Italian) that were created by Campbell during the recent pandemic. Unlike much of her work, which is based on the landscape and nature of her native Scotland, the Cortili series evoke the artist's memories of Venice, where a cortile, or inside courtyard - often with a well in the centre - is found within a number of larger buildings, notably in the Doge's Palace. Some of the Cortili drawings were developed into larger printed wall hangings.

As has been noted of the artist, ‘Under normal circumstances Eve’s work is influenced by the coast and landscape of west Scotland. During lockdown however, limited to [her] flat and missing the stimulation of nature, she started to construct imaginary scenes, or settings, within the constrictions of a cardboard box. Each day the scene changed and with it came a new drawing. As these evolved, memories of time spent in Italy, and in particular Venice and the 8000 square meters of gold mosaic that cover the walls, vaults and cupolas of St Mark’s Basilica, started to influence the constructions. The built environment shaped by restrictions of geography and the human ability to create beautiful spaces for social gathering or quiet reflection started to mirror Eve’s experience of lockdown. The Italian word ‘Cortili’ describes enclosed areas typically found within buildings. Eve’s ‘box constructions’ came to represent an escape, a playful imaginary world. Eve’s Cortili collection has the atmosphere of sanctuary in the way an Italian courtyard combines nature with architecture to create harmony.’

Artist description:

The Scottish printmaker and designer Eve Campbell studied at the Glasgow School of Art, graduating with a degree in textile design in 2018. As she has stated, ‘I grew up surrounded by art, design and making, in the house my architect grandfather built…My mum is a ceramicist, my dad is a painter and I learnt to draw by watching them. Today we work alongside each other and are always bouncing ideas and opinions around.’ Offered a place at the school of architecture in her final year of art school, she turned it down, although, according to her, ‘it did highlight my desire to create design for living in…For my final-year project, I set out to use print as a technique to transform and bring life and colour to architectural spaces. I enjoyed creating large, bold prints and often found myself hanging my prints on the wall to view in full. They were like artworks, yet versatile in size, shape and affordability. This developed into wallhangings that I saw as the perfect solution for transforming a space.’

Campbell produces screenprints, wall hangings and ceramics, as well as drawings. Much of her work is directly inspired by the scenery, natural forms, plants and rocks of her surroundings in the Argyll region of western Scotland. As the artist has noted, ‘In my work, I try to capture the transient nature of surface and form on the boundary between land and shore on Scotland’s West Coast. My designs, which are created using paper stencilling and screen-printing techniques, reflect the microcosms of colour, pattern, shape and texture to be found in this special place.’ She has won a number of awards, including the John Lewis Award for Design and Innovation at the New Designers exhibition in London in 2018. In the same year she was a finalist for the Marks & Spencer TexSelect Fashion Fabric Award, and in 2019 collaborated with the fashion retailer White Stuff on a womenswear collection which utilized her prints. In 2020 Campbell won the Emerging Artists Award at Creative Scotland’s Visual Artist and Craft Maker Awards. A first solo exhibition of her work, entitled Vestige, was mounted at the An Tobar arts centre in Tobermory, on the island of Mull, in the summer of 2021. Most recently, Campbell exhibited a series of wall-hangings, entitled Caladh and inspired by visits to the small and remote Caladh Harbour and the island of Eilean Dubh in western Scotland, at the Collect fair for contemporary craft and design at Somerset House in London in March 2023.

Since her graduation from art school, Campbell has worked from a small print studio, situated above the workshop of her parents, in the village of Tighnabruaich, on the western shores of the Kyles of Bute on the west coast of Scotland. (She also exhibits her work at the family’s Hayshed Gallery nearby.) In many ways an extension of her drawings, her large-scale prints and wall hangings are unique creations, produced in single editions utilizing a complex method of layers of paper stencilling, masking and screenprinting.