

**James Lynch (b.1956)**

*Ted's Greenhouse, Summer*

Egg tempera on gesso coated wood panel

Private collection

A greenhouse in a garden harnessing the sun. There's the reflection of the blue infinity of the sky in the glass roof and a blue plastic box on the shelf which I painted with pure lapis lazuli – a rather exotic pigment for such common-or-garden plastic. I buy my raw pigments by weight, mixing them with water and egg yolks from my chickens and the lapis makes a radiant blue glaze.

I've always loved the interplay of sun, sky and land. The visual connections as sky bounces off puddles and glass. The sun heating the earth and the heat from the land creating thermals – currents of warm air forming clouds. My parents were obsessive glider pilots and from a very young age we were always weather-watching. I fly with a paraglider, so the relationship between land and sky is central to my life, both as a painter and for my free flying using the rising air currents, which are particularly good in the summer.

James Lynch

## **Eric Ravilious (1903-1942)**

Wedgwood *Garden*, 1938 and *Garden Implements*, 1939

Ceramic

Julian Francis Collection

Ravilious's wide-ranging interests made him well suited to producing designs for Wedgwood for transfer-printing onto ceramics. In 1938 he created 10 elaborate vignettes (and smaller details from these) for *Garden*. The tableware included a coffee pot featuring a gardener pushing a laden wheelbarrow. The coffee pot lid was decorated with reduced elements from larger vignettes including a woman gardener bending down to pick up apples and a ladder resting on logs. The main vignette on one of the plates is closely related to his watercolour *Two Women in a Garden* (1932) which depicts potter Charlotte Epton (who married Edward Bawden in 1932) reading, while artist and engraver Tirzah Garwood (who married Ravilious in 1930) shells peas in their garden at Brick House, Great Bardfield. The plate portrays only the seated Epton. Other *Garden* pieces feature timeless gardening activities with a highlighted curvilinear repeating pattern on the borders.

*Garden Implements* comprised a lemonade set with 'Liverpool' jug and beakers. The jug front featured a wooden barrel surrounded by ivy leaves developed from one of the *Garden* plates. On the reverse were nine vignettes related to the garden including a cat asleep on a wall and bees buzzing around a hive.

**Charles Tunncliffe (1901-1979)**

*Wild Rose, Briar Rose and Elderflower on a stone wall*

Watercolour, 1960

Ladybird Books / University of Reading Special Collections

This illustration was chosen as the cover image for *What to Look for in Summer* as a depiction of some of the quintessential joys of the season. In the foreground elder and roses are flowering and two meadow brown butterflies flit from bloom to bloom while swallows dart overhead. Tunncliffe recalled in *My Country Book* that as a teenager he loved to climb the hills above his father's farm and 'look upon this little domain of mine', for 'within a radius of three or four miles round the farm I had an intimate knowledge of nearly every yard of ground, and with it I was well content, for it was a full and beautiful countryside'. Perhaps this painting harked back to that country where 'walls of dark, rough-hewn stone divided the fields which, in spring and summer, were favourite nesting grounds for lapwings and skylarks, and feeding places for the curlews'.

In the accompanying text E. L. Grant Watson mentions that the swathes of hay cut by the tractor will also be full of many different types of wildflower that 'all contribute to the sweet scent'.

## **Carry Akroyd (b.1953)**

### *Heathland*

Screenprint, 2020

Collection of the artist (cover art for *Heathland* by Clive Chatters)

A heath in high summer conceals its riches beneath a cloak of purple. Carry challenges the caricature of blooming heather and weaves other hues between the low bushes. Much of the wildlife gets along in cryptic modesty but even in the heat of the day there are flamboyant individuals to be found with the 'chak-chak' of the high-perched stonechat asserting its presence. This is a living heath, it is somewhere that people live and work, their homesteads and livestock are indivisible parts of the landscape.

Heaths and heathers are synonymous, but a heathland is a great deal more than is implied by the limits of language. In the New Forest we know this to be true as diverse heathland landscapes are part of our daily lives. Elsewhere in Britain our heaths are in crisis, the fine-grain of their habitats is becoming lost beneath the coarseness of heather, birch and bracken. The distracting dominance of heather is reflected in Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native* (1878). The beautifully sophisticated Eustacia Vye complains to the 'native' Clym Yeobright that 'I cannot endure the heath, except in its purple season'; Carry invites us to look with the eyes of a native and to see beyond the superficial carpet of colour.

Clive Chatters (*Heathland* is published by Bloomsbury)

**Kurt Jackson (b.1961)**

*Three of heather and two of gorse*

Mixed media on museum board, 2019

Collection of the Artist

A plain of sloping gorse and heather moorland almost psychedelic under its coat of mauve, purple, and golden yellow. All sensations are catered for here with the blinding spread of brightness, the bee buzz under soaring skylark song, the prickly almost natural acupuncture and the intoxicating honeyed heather perfume. I cushion myself tentatively into the three species of heather and two of gorse to join in with the celebration, this spectacle of summer - intense colour-saturated gouache and oil pastel smears and dabs on my lap, my pad, on me.

Kurt Jackson

## **Graham Sutherland (1903-1980)**

### *Cray Fields*

Etching, 1925

Stuart Southall Collection

The River Cray is the largest tributary of the River Darent; the villages through which it flows are collectively known as 'The Crays'. It rises at St Mary Cray approximately seven miles from Farningham in Kent where Sutherland moved in 1927.

Sutherland's focus is on the hop-poles and the rich agriculture of *Cray Fields*. The romantic idealised vision was executed when he was a student in London at Goldsmiths College where he learned the skill of etching from Malcom Osborne and Stanley Anderson. This impression of *Cray Fields* was printed by visionary printmaker Frederick Griggs whom Sutherland greatly admired and learned much from about the printing of plates; it bears the stamp of Griggs' Dover House Press.

*Cray Fields* is densely worked and celebrates the changing seasons and the centuries-old practice of labourers cutting the ripe corn. The setting sun behind the hop-poles and the solitary evening star creates a feeling of religious intensity and time stood still as these two heavenly bodies draw the viewer into the carefully constructed pastoral scene just as in the ethereal Kentish landscapes detailed by Samuel Palmer over 100 years earlier.

## **George Tute (b.1933)**

### *Sunflower Field*

Wood engraving, 1971

Stuart Southall Collection

Fields of sunflowers were once experienced only on holidays in warmer parts of Europe but they are an increasingly common sight here as climate change makes them a viable crop across greater areas of Britain. George Tute explains the unlikely origins of this print:

This engraving had rather a strange beginning in that it was due to a letter I received in 1956 from an art student called Marie who lived in Budapest at the time when the Russians were suppressing the Hungarian uprising and she was desperate to obtain medicine for her father who suffered from a heart problem. Marie had the novel idea to write to 'William Hogarth' care of the Royal Academy Schools and the Curator passed the letter on to me to deal with as he knew I was interested in print making and Hogarth. The long and the short of this story is that later in the 70s my wife and I met Marie and her family in Budapest and one memorable event was driving around the Puszta and fields of sunflowers that were growing, stretching to the horizon and it was there that the 'seeds' of the engraving you might say took root!

George Tute

## **Laura Knight (1877-1970)**

### *Summer's Joy*

Poster, 1921

London Transport Museum

Laura Knight's first poster design for London Underground was *Rugby at Twickenham* in 1921, she had by then left the warmth and light of Cornwall for London which gave her access to other subject matter, although she kept a studio in the west country for many years. Knight was one of a number of women artists, designers and illustrators commissioned by Frank Pick to design posters in the 1920s and 30s.

In *Summer's Joy* Knight depicted a young family enjoying a day's bathing outdoors. The poster was published in the summer of 1922 to promote travel to London's green spaces by bus. The quote at the bottom of the poster '*... The cool shock of the plunge in a pool's living water ...*' reinforces the joy of summer and came from the popular poem *David Singing before Saul* by Robert Browning. Knight continued intermittently to design posters for the Underground Group and London Transport until 1957 when she produced *Winter Walks* which encouraged Londoners to venture out and brave the frost and snow on a country stroll.

## **James Bateman (1893-1959)**

### *Haytime in the Cotswolds*

Oil on canvas, 1939

Southampton City Art Gallery

Pastoral landscapes and farmyard scenes of horses and cattle auctions in the 1930s were the subject matter on which James Bateman made his reputation. He came from a Westmorland farming family and was well versed in farming practices but he was also familiar with the rural landscape of the Cotswolds where on many occasions he had observed haytime. Bateman taught in Cheltenham at the School of Art and Crafts from 1922-28 and regularly cycled into the countryside in search of material to work up for exhibiting.

*Haytime in the Cotswolds* was exhibited at the Royal Academy summer exhibition in 1939. Bateman uses an elevated viewpoint to advantage to show a timeless scene of haymaking, a vital summer harvest. It is both a celebration of English country life and a testament to his careful planning and skill as a colourist. He shows reapers at work with their scythes, while beyond hay is being gathered from the fields and built into stacks in the farmyard. The rural scene seems far removed from the ominous war clouds gathering over Europe and the declaration of war on Germany just a few months later on 3 September 1939.

## **Alan Reynolds (1926-2014)**

*Summer: Young September's Cornfield*

Oil on hardboard, 1954

Tate: Presented by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest 1956

Alan Reynolds' work in the early stages of his career was influenced by his love of nature and specifically the forms of leaves and flower heads together with an interest in the shapes and forms of the landscape. While a student at the Royal College of Art his talent was recognised with shows at the prestigious Redfern Gallery in London. *The Times'* critic praised his graceful and elegant handling and his feeling for space and recession. These qualities are apparent in *Summer: Young September's Cornfield*, one of his quartet of large seasonal works in oil shown alongside some hundred paintings and drawings at the critically and commercially successful exhibition *'The Four Seasons'* in 1956.

Painted between the end of August and last week of September 1954 the harsh, dark shapes of teasel heads and ears of corn dominate the foreground under a broad expanse of deep blue sky which increases in density and is in sharp contrast to the rich golden cornfield behind. These 'elements' combine to create an eerie intensity to the unpeopled landscape.

## **Charles Tunnicliffe (1901-1979)**

### *The Wheat Field*

Etching, 1927

Stuart Southall Collection

Tunnicliffe's father William had taken on the running of Lane Ends Farm, Sutton in 1903 and it was very much a family enterprise from that point on. Tunnicliffe notes that by the time he was ten he was 'up in the morning with the earliest, milking the cows'. William died in 1925 leaving his wife Margaret to run the farm until 1927 when she gave it up and moved to a house in Macclesfield paid for by the proceeds of her son's etching sales. Although Tunnicliffe felt that his mother was due a long-earned rest, he was somewhat lost on returning from London to find the centre of his early life gone and much of his subject matter with it.

This etching looked back on memories of life on the family farm during the critical summer work of gathering the corn harvest. In the foreground the farmhands are arranging the cut wheat into stooks in such a way that the wind can pass through and finish the drying process before threshing can begin. In the background four horses are drawing the reaper-binder which cuts the corn and binds it into sheaves, a far quicker process than the old method of cutting by hand with scythes.

## **Gwen Raverat (1885-1957)**

### *The Threshing Machine*

Wood engraving, 1930

Stuart Southall Collection

Raverat studied painting at the Slade School of Art but as a wood engraver she was largely self-taught. She was much in demand as a book illustrator, one of her finest achievements being the engravings for A. G. Street's *Farmer's Glory* (1932), a memoir of farming practices in England and Canada. Although *The Threshing Machine* was engraved earlier it would have been a perfect fit with the book's nostalgic scenes of harvesting and haymaking.

Traditionally threshing had been a job to occupy farm workers through the lean winter months but mechanisation meant it could be done straight after the harvest in the warmth of late summer or early autumn. Raverat's engraving shows a steam engine powering the threshing machine, beyond which is a conveyor carrying straw up to the top of the stack where men with forks are organising it into a regular and stable structure. Down below another worker is carrying a sack of grain which has been separated and bagged by the labour-saving thresher. Even with machinery this task still brought together all available hands to get the corn threshed and ricked before the weather could turn.

## **Charles Tunnicliffe (1901-1979)**

*The New Rick*

Etching, 1927

Stuart Southall Collection

This etching shows Tunnicliffe and his father William at work thatching a new rick next to the remains of an old one, which has been neatly sliced by a hay knife over the preceding year. Since William had died two years earlier this subject must have been prepared from memory or previous drawings. If the rick was for hay it would be loaded on to carts with pitchforks and then moved close to the farmyard where the feed would be needed during the winter. Once it was finished a thatched roof would be added to protect it from the rain.

Hay would have been built into ricks immediately after the harvest in June so that it was safely stored against the weather. The straw from corn could also be stored in this way and if corn was not threshed immediately it could be kept whole in a rick during the winter. In his diary for 21 October 1920 Tunnicliffe recorded that he came 'home at 4 o'clock and helped father to thatch the corn stack which we finished'. The finished ricks were a symbol of readiness and supplies for the winter to come.

## **Allen William Seaby (1867-1953)**

*Head to Tail*

Gouache on linen

St Barbe Museum Collection

New Forest pony stallions are released in May and June, so after an 11 month gestation period the foals are born in April and May when the warmer weather and new grass growth should give them a good start in life. Standing in this way the ponies can keep flies off each other by swishing their tails.

Summer camping holidays in the New Forest kindled Seaby's fascination with Britain's pony breeds, resulting in a wealth of drawings, watercolours and books. In *British Ponies: Running Wild and Ridden* (1936) he wrote:

At dawn, I might be awakened by the sound of their munching close by my sleeping-place. My open tent door faced the east, and early one morning, as the level rays of the rising sun fell on my face, I opened my eyes to see a little way off a mare and her foal, haloed in rosy light.