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PRESS RELEASE

FROM HELICOPTERS TO HORIZONS: A NEW EXHIBITION AT BRADFORD CATHEDRAL MANY YEARS IN THE MAKING.



The upcoming Artspace exhibition 'Fresh Horizons', by local fine artist Martin Cosgrove, will showcase a series of newly painted abstract landscapes. The main focus of these oil paintings is the Yorkshire Dales particularly around Malham.

Bradford-born Martin Cosgrove went to Carlton Bolling School and has been involved with Bradford Cathedral since the early 1970s. His love of art, particularly landscapes, started in childhood and was reinforced by his lifelong passion for walking in the

Dales. Once he moved to secondary school, fine art printing really sparked his passion for making art: "Looking back, I realise that I made some fantastic progress at school, and by the time I was fourteen was producing some really impressive screen-prints. Like all school children however, I had to make a choice as to whether or not I continued at the age of 14 and had to drop formal art study to undertake more academic subjects".

Martin decided to pursue a career in medicine and trained at Sheffield University and then the Leeds Teaching Hospitals. During his medical training he continued to draw and paint whenever there was time. "People think that doctors just practice medicine but actually, a lot are very

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HOSPITALITY. FAITHFULNESS. WHOLENESS.

creative people: there are some very talented musicians in medicine, and a lot that enjoy creative writing and art. The problem is time: you can't do everything at once and you have to make choices."

Martin, who has now retired from medicine, enjoyed a very varied medical career including as a Senior Medical Officer in the Royal Air Force when he provided medical support to the Helicopter Force, as a GP in Cambridge and more recently as a consultant in occupational medicine based in East Anglia. Working with the RAF gave him many opportunities to be inspired by the landscape as seen from an aircraft. "I have spent enough time in the back of a helicopter to know what a landscape looks like from the air but I also know from my time supporting the search and rescue teams what it's like to get very close to cliffs in the dark!"

Martin has a tried-and-tested technique developed over many years to create a great painting but has to be in the right frame of mind to be able to achieve this: "I sit in front of the canvas and gently drop all thoughts of what is going on outside my studio. I also drop all use of words. Then, in a very meditative, non-verbal way, explore the painting that is already inside the canvas just waiting for me to discover it. After an hour or two of painting, I'll go away, make myself a cup of tea and then once refreshed, come back to sit and think and perhaps do some further painting or more probably, leave it to dry and move onto another one if I still have the energy and focus.

"After about five days, once the oils are dry, I repeat the process and add another layer of paint, building up layer upon layer until there may be twenty layers in total; this can take many months and sometimes years to complete. Even when potentially finished they're all essentially a work in progress.

"I don't paint 'things'. I make marks with the paint using a traditional compositional structure on the canvas to indicate that it's a landscape but it's the observer's brain that does all the hard work to tell them what is in the painting. I use the psychology of visual perception which is something I became really interested in during my aviation medicine training in the RAF".

He goes on to say: “It’s useful to have a vague goal when I am painting but once you put the pressure on, the creativity goes, so I have to go at my own pace. The secret of doing a painting for me is not worrying about the end result, as once I become precious about it, I start worrying about making mistakes and my creativity goes.”

The name for the exhibition, ‘Fresh Horizons’ came about from some time away in North Norfolk last year, where Martin began thinking about lines and how the illusion of a painted landscape can be created with as few of them as possible. “I came to the conclusion, that all you needed for your brain to think ‘this is a landscape’, is just one line that goes, somehow, from one side to the other. That’s sufficient to tell your brain you’re dealing with a landscape. The horizon nevertheless is so interesting as it’s always changing and is therefore forever fresh.”

Martin is excited to unveil the new series of paintings to the visitors to Bradford Cathedral. “I hope people visiting the exhibition will find at least one painting that they can connect with and enjoy: that people can rest for a moment in front of the painting and then go into the landscape in their mind’s eye and explore it themselves. In my paintings I strip out everything but the land: there are no buildings, walls, people or sheep - they’re all very abstract. You as the observer can put in what you want in there, but the whole ethos behind how these are created and are to be viewed is very meditative, reflective and peaceful.”

As well as the opportunity to view the paintings, all of which are for sale, there is also a chance to meet Martin Cosgrove at an informal event over a glass of wine. You will be able to see a few extra paintings that are not in the exhibition and have a chance to find out more about the artistic process that he uses.

‘Fresh Horizons’ begins on 27th April at Bradford Cathedral and runs until the 3rd June. You can also meet the artist Dr Martin Cosgrove on Wednesday 8th May at 7pm. Refreshments will be served from 6:30pm. You can find out more and express your interest at bradfordcathedral.eventbrite.com

ENDS

Notes for Editors

About Bradford Cathedral

Bradford Cathedral has been a place of worship in Bradford since the first millennium. It is the oldest building in the city and, alongside being a place of worship, hosts events, arts projects and much more. Bradford Cathedral celebrates its centenary in 2019.

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