

FRED SCHLEY at 60
Paintings of the Netherlands,
the Isle of Skye and Wales

MARCH 2018

johndaviesgallery
Moreton-in-Marsh



Windmills at Kinderdijk, Netherlands

Oil on canvas, 50 x 65 cm

Kinderdijk, near Dordrecht, is a World Heritage Site

Front Cover: From Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia

Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm

johndaviesgallery
Period, Modern & Contemporary Art

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March 10th - April 7th
Open 10.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Saturday

THE JOHN DAVIES GALLERY

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FRED SCHLEY AT 60, TEN YEARS ON FROM WHEN WE FIRST SHOWED HIS WORK...



Irrigation canal, Abcoude, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 40 x 35 cm

We first showed Fred Schley's paintings in a two-man show with Peter Evans here in 2008. Over the last ten years we have staged six one-man shows for this immensely industrious of artists and now mark a decade of this happy association by staging a further solo show for Fred this March 2018. The exhibition comprises some fifty new paintings – many drawn from the artist's long-standing affection for the Isle of Skye and the West Coast of Scotland, a small group from his home soil of the Netherlands, while the greater volume features the rugged terrain of Wales – the latter two locations new to us from Fred, with Wales being a new subject for the artist as well.

Apart from new subject matter, the last two years or so have also seen significant evolution in Fred's technique. While the canvasses are instantly recognizable as Fred Schley paintings, there is a greater depth of paint applied and with much looser handling, two characteristics that contribute to a picture surface featuring more noticeable mark-making.

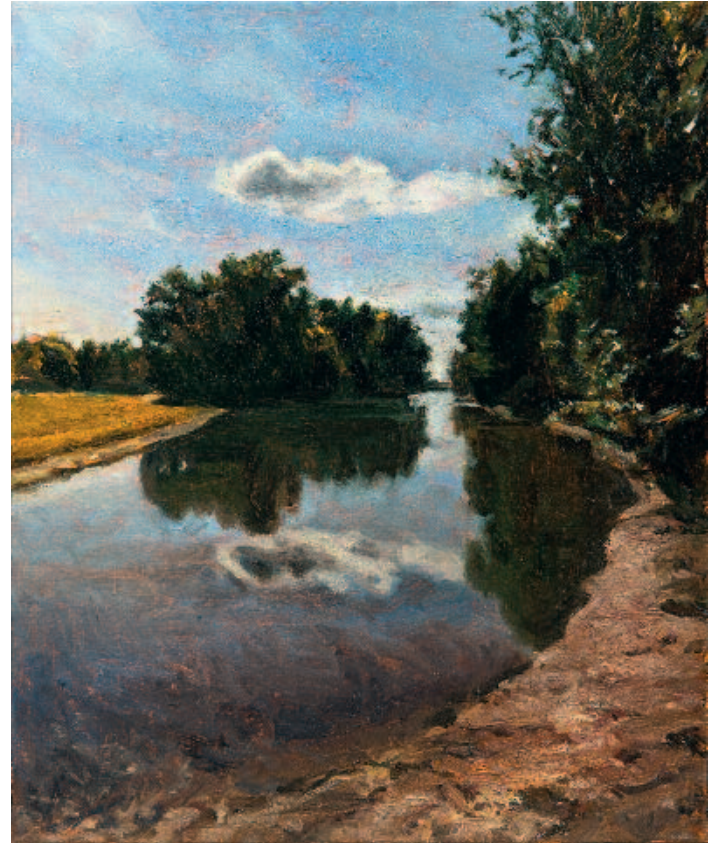
A few weeks ago, it was most enjoyable meeting up with Fred in Amsterdam and later visiting him at his studio home in Den Bosch. He kindly gave up a day to act as guide to part of the Rijksmuseum for my daughter and myself; many will remember that Fred is also an extremely accomplished and an in-demand portrait painter (exhibitor at the National Portrait Gallery,

London, BP Awards 2008/10), and as a consequence his company through the rooms showing Rembrandt, Hals and other Dutch masters was most enjoyable. A lunchtime introduction to Brasserie Keyser, a short walk away, was also most welcome; standing next to the Concertgebouw, many a distinguished musician has taken refreshment there.

I first visited Fred at his home in the Netherlands in 2007 and it was very pleasant returning a decade later to his simple studio home in Den Bosch ('s-Hertogenbosch) that he shares with his wife, Tiny. The entire front living room, with a pleasantly high ceiling, is given over to his studio space; living space is first floor and Tiny has the top floor for her studio. Studio and house I remember as being all white, with a few pieces of early oak here and there, with a handful of Auerbach drawings outstanding amongst other special sketches and paintings received as swops with artist friends. We spent most of that Saturday in mid January composing this exhibition and, in between, talking of Rembrandt, Hals and Van Gogh.

Fred brought over his paintings at the very beginning of February and I close this foreword the morning after a fine evening's refreshment at the excellent Red Lion in Long Compton, highly recommended.

John Davies
March 2018



Waal Nature Reserve, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm

PAINTINGS FROM THE NETHERLANDS



Het Bossche Broek (The Bossche Brook), near 's-Hertogenbosch
Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 cm

The painting illustrated on this page depicts part of the Bossche Brook just outside 's-Hertogenbosch (known colloquially as Den Bosch). Here Fred was born in a suburb just a few hundred metres out of this view to the left, 60 years ago.

He lives in Den Bosche still. Fred feels that he has turned full circle with his relationship with his home landscape. In his early years he felt compelled to get away from an environment in which man's shaping of the land was so evident. But having established that man's influence is detectable even in the most unexpected far flung and seemingly wild places, the artist has rationalised his thinking and is now discovering great beauty in scenes on his own doorstep. One such subject is the wetlands near Dordrecht. This area features 19 preserved windmills erected in the 1740s to pump water from the drainage canals; picturesque and quintessentially Dutch they make an irresistible subject.

The Netherlands does, of course, feature large skies an element of landscape composition on which man's influence is rarely detectable. Fred, as we have seen in his paintings of the Scottish Highlands and the Western Isles and which we now see in his Welsh paintings, is a very capable portrayer of weather and revels in the depiction of cloud and shifting light, as well as the clear azure of more settled days.



Tree reflections, Waal area, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 35 cm



Stadswal den Bosch Canal, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 35 cm



A Brabant canal, evening, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 35 cm



A track near Berlicum, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 cm



Evening, Kinderdijk, near Dordrecht, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 65 cm
Kinderdijk, near Dordrecht, is a World Heritage Site



Gein Mill, near Abcoude, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm



Storm over Kinderdijk, near Dordrecht, Netherlands
Oil on canvas, 55 x 70 cm
Kinderdijk, near Dordrecht, is a World Heritage Site



Entrance to Coruisk, at the foot of the Black Cuillin, Skye
Oil on canvas, 45 x 55 cm



The Cuillins from Elgol, Skye
Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm

PAINTINGS FROM THE ISLE OF SKYE AND THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND



Torridon, north west mainland
Oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm



Storr Rocks, Skye
Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm

Fred first visited Scotland with his parents as a teenager in the mid 1970's, a visit that sewed the seed in the young artist to return one day to explore the wild expanses of the highlands and later, in particular, the Isle of Skye. Studies at the Academy of Arts in Tilburg took up the early 1980's and it was in 1985, two years after his graduation, that Fred made his first trip to Skye. Since then the artist has formed an exceptionally intimate relationship with the island's landscape with its highly individual, dramatic vistas and often, fast changing weather characteristics. His approach has been to take thousands of photographs, as well walking, climbing and clambering over virtually every type of physical feature he has encountered. For the more dangerous, mountainous locations he has often been accompanied by a guide.



From Marsco, Skye
Oil on canvas, 45 x 55 cm



Clouds over Storr, Skye
Oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm

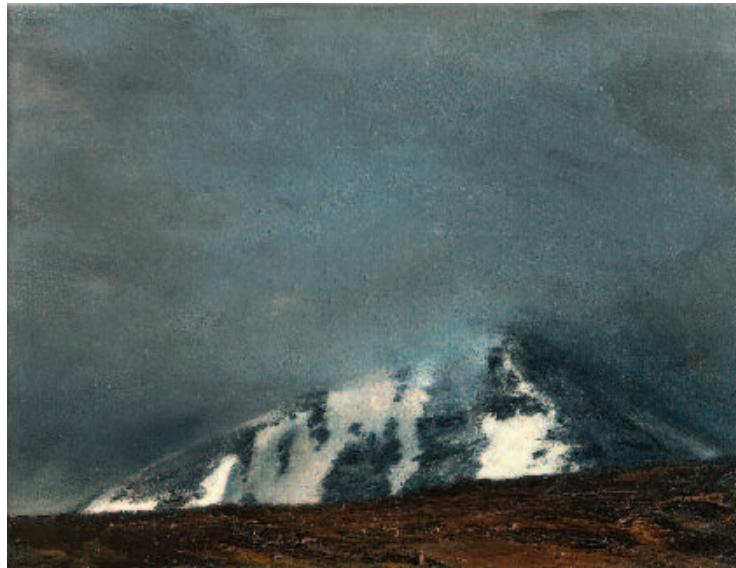
Many of both his earlier and recent paintings have been characterised by fine, close brushwork giving sharply focused, highly refined images of mountain, water and sky; hyper-realistic paintings depicting the majesty and drama of this unique landscape experienced in either threatening, inhospitable conditions or in the crystal-clear light of days still enough for the scale of this environment to become really apparent. Now Fred's technique is evolving towards a more painterly, looser style, employing more paint on the surface of the canvas allowing him an even greater degree of expression.



Skye from the mainland
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Storr from the West Coast
Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm



An Teallach, near Dundonnell, west coast mainland
Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 cm



Bealach a' Bhasteir, Skye
Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm



Ben Tianavaig, Skye
Oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm



Overlooking Scavaig, Skye
Oil on canvas, 120 x 160 cm





Red Cuillins, Skye
Oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm



Cuillins area, Skye
Oil on canvas, 35 x 50 cm



From the Diabaig road, West Coast mainland
Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm

PAINTINGS FROM WALES

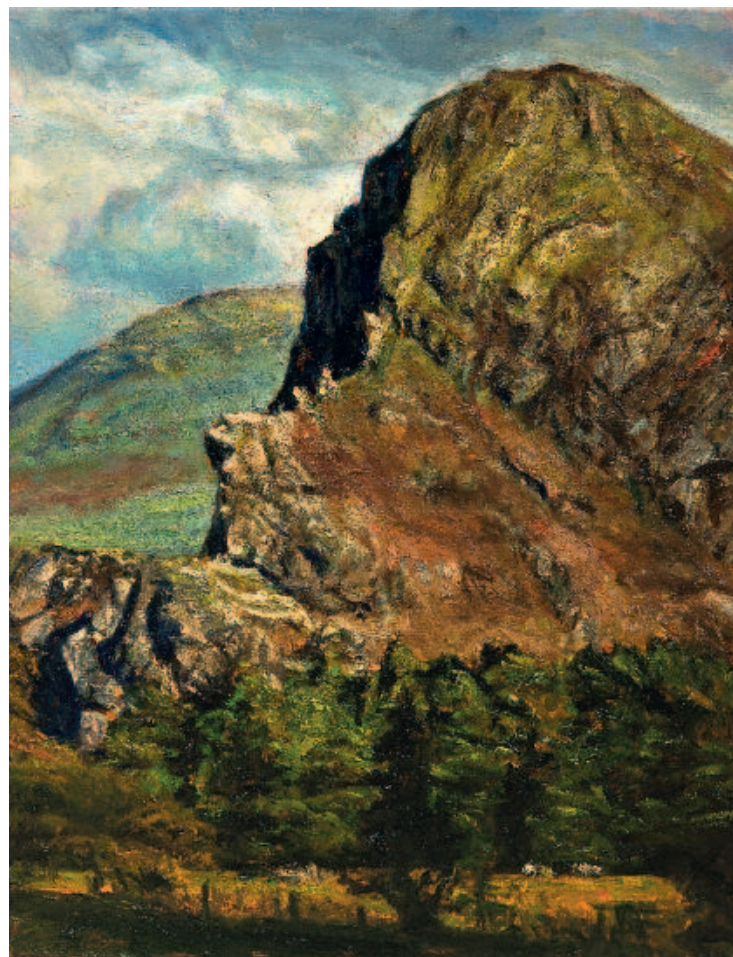
A working trip to Wales two years ago has, to a great extent, been integral with the recent evolution in Fred's technique. To put it another way, no paintings of Wales exist by Fred that he worked up in his hyper-realist style. What we have in their place is a warm and earthy group of paintings in which the artist has very capably adapted to a landscape that, although essentially similar to Scotland, is, as we all know, formed on a smaller, more intimate scale. Perhaps Wales also has a marginally softer complexion too, being treated by milder meteorology, and one can detect this in Fred's sensitive observation.

All but a handful of the Welsh paintings feature locations in Snowdonia. In catalogue order the first of these *Craig yr Aderyn or Bird's Rock* (pages 20 & 21). This hill is located near Cardigan Bay well to the south western end of Snowdonia National Park is a famed nesting place for cormorants and choughs; centuries ago the waters of the Irish sea lapped at the foot of this hill but have since receded, leaving the cormorants to commute the few miles to their fishing grounds.

Many of the other locations that feature in the exhibition lie closer to Snowdon itself. Llyn Gwynant in the Nant Gwynant Valley is but two miles from Wales's largest mountain. Llyn Idwal is close to the A5 in the Glyderau mountains which also feature Lyn Ogwen and Tryfan to the north, with the famous Swallow Falls also lying near the A5 further to the east near Betwys-y-Coed. Many artists travelled this way in the 18th and 19th centuries. The peaceful Cregennen lakes lie at the foot of Cadair Idris further to the south in the Snowdonia National Park and close to the Afon Mawddach.

As many artists will have discovered, this area is so rich in contrasting features - hills, mountains, lakes and rivers – and in a relatively small area - it must be difficult to know which way to turn and which features to concentrate upon. What is clear is that Fred has taken to this inviting region – a landscape that combines great beauty, history and challenge for an artist – with his heart.

John Davies
March 2018



Close by Craig yr Aderyn (Bird's Rock) near Cardigan Bay
Oil on canvas, 55 x 40 cm



Craig yr Aderyn (Bird's Rock) near Cardigan Bay
Oil on canvas, 50 x 80 cm



At the foot of Snowdon
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Snowdon from the village of Nantlle
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Llanberis Pass, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm



Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm



Looking down to Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Falls from Llyn Idwal, Glyderau Mountains, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Rocks at Swallow Falls, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm



Swallow Falls, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm



St Brides Bay, South Wales
Oil on canvas, 45 x 55 cm



Rock at Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 35 x 40 cm



Towards the Brecon Beacons, South Wales
Oil on canvas, 40 x 55 cm



Llyn Gwynant sunset, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 cm



Llyn Cregennen – at the foot of Cadair Idris, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm



From Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm



Above Llyn Gwynant, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 60 x 85 cm



Cloud over Tryfan, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm



Cloudy day, Tryfan, Snowdonia
Oil on canvas, 70 x 85 cm



Cloud over the Mawddach Estuary
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm

FRED SCHLEY

- 1957 Born 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands
1983 Graduated at Academie Voor Beeldende Vorming, Tilburg
1983-95 Teacher of Art and Art History

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1994-98 Portraits of composers in theatres and concert halls in the Netherlands and the Britten Theatre in London
2003 Galerie Bastiaans, Boxmeer
2005 Artfair Realisme 2005, Amsterdam
NBKS, Breda, De Salon
Galerie Peninsula, Eindhoven
Holland Art Fair, The Hague
2006-07/09 Atticsalt Gallery, Edinburgh
2007 VAS Annual Exhibition, Edinburgh
Society of Scottish Artists Open Exhibition, Edinburgh
RA Summer Exhibition, London, shortlisted for
Insight Investment Newcomer's Prize
The Mall Galleries, London,
Discerning Eye
The John Davies Gallery, Moreton-in-Marsh



- 2007-09 RSA Annual Exhibition, Edinburgh
2008 RA Summer Exhibition, London
NPG, London, BP Portrait Award touring to Wolverhampton and Aberdeen Art Galleries
The John Davies Gallery, Moreton-in-Marsh
200910/14 Mystery Portraits, National Portrait Gallery, London
2010 BP Portrait Award Touring
400 Women Exhibition, Shoreditch Hall, London
2011 Uinneag dhan Aird am Iar, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Skye
400 Women Exhibition, Edinburgh
2011/14 Achter de Kan, 's-Hertogenbosch
2012/14 The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh
2013 Zomerexpo, Gemeete Museum, The Hague
Threadneedle Prize Exhibition, London
2015 Galerie van Dusseldorp, Tilburg
2016 Kunsthal Den Bosch

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2003/06/14 Galerie Achter de Kan, 's-Hertogenbosch
2005 Galerie Molenaars, Breda
2006 An Tuireann Art Centre, Portree
Atticsalt Gallery, Edinburgh
Galerie Peninsula, Eindhoven
2008/13 Museum Slager, 's-Hertogenbosch
2009 Taigh Chearsabhagh, North Uist
2013 An Tobar, Isle of Mull
2014 Aros Centre, Skye
2010-16 The John Davies Gallery, Moreton in Marsh

SELECTED PORTRAITS

- George Mackay Brown, poet
Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, composer
M. Tabaksblat, Chairman Unilever
A. Burgmans, Chairman Unilever
J. Franssen, Mayor of Zwolle
J. Stekelenburg, Mayor of Tilburg
Y. van Rooy, Chairman University Tilburg
Prof. J. Leune, Chairman Dutch Education Council
Prof. P. Nieuwenhuis, University Groningen

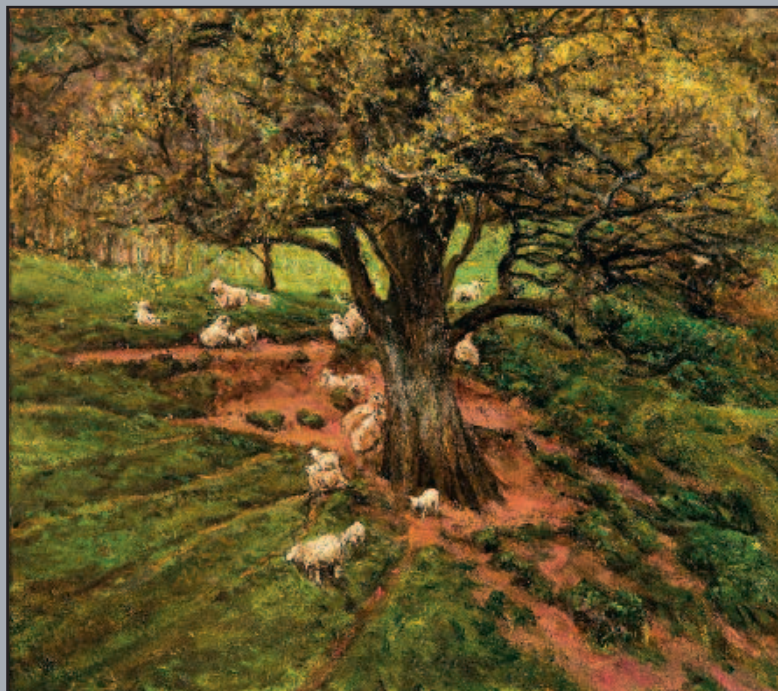
- Prof. A. W. T. Konings, University Groningen
Sorley Maclean, poet
Mary MacPherson, known as Màiri Mhór nan Oran, poet
Dr. Marcus Miele and Dr. Reinhard Zinkann, Directors Miele
Dr Peter Zinkann, former Director of Miele
Prof. Uniken Venema, University of Groningen
J Oosterhof, Mayor of Kampen
Professor Dr.A.M.L. v.Wieringen, Chair Education Council of The Netherlands
Prof. Donald R.A. Uges, University Groningen
Prof. Ed van den Heuvel, University Amsterdam
Prof. Dr. G.T.M. ten Dam, Chair Educational Council of The Netherlands
R. van Gijssel, Mayor of Eindhoven

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

- Accenture, London
Chalmers Lawyers, Edinburgh
Highland Council, Scotland
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh
An Tuireann Art Centre, Portree, Isle of Skye
Unilever Rotterdam
Orkney Museum, Kirkwall
Royal College of Music, London
Royal Bank of Scotland, Stockholm
University Tilburg
Rijksuniversiteitsmuseum Groningen
Dutch Education Council, The Hague
Municipalities of Tilburg, Zwolle, Kampen
Miele, The Netherlands
Turcan Connell, Edinburgh & London
Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums
Stadsschouwburg, Amsterdam
University of Amsterdam
Stadhuis, Eindhoven

Back Cover: Sheep, South Wales

Oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm



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