



NICHOLAS VERRALL



Mist over the Seine, Oil on Panel, 35 x 50cm

Nicholas Verrall

26th September - 14th October 2020

CATTO GALLERY

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When the impressionists burst onto the French art scene in the 1870s, they were met with incomprehension. Monet, Renoir, Sisley and others rejected the painting orthodoxy of the day. They applied paint loosely and ignored conventional colouring. They wanted to reflect the way we perceive the world, rather than reproduce it dispassionately.

Well, the art establishment hated this. But the public saw things differently. Within a decade or so, impressionist exhibitions were sell-outs. The great art historian Ernst Gombrich explained why. He said: "It took some time before the public learned that to appreciate an impressionist painting one has to step back a few yards, and enjoy the miracle of seeing these puzzling patches suddenly fall into one place and come to life before our eyes."

Today, the public still loves impressionism – while contemporary impressionist painters still love the challenge of bringing those 'puzzling patches' to life. None more so than Nick Verrall, who returns to the Catto for his 12th solo show.

Nick is one of the world's most in-demand impressionist painters. In the course of a celebrated career, he has dedicated himself to the tradition. And the secret of his success lies in his treatment of light. The original impressionist artists were obsessed with it. Nick shares this obsession. In fact, there's a passage in his 2008 book 'Colour In Light And Oils' that reveals his thinking.

"I like to explore the sort of abstract effects that are created within a subject by the influence of light," he says. "It's interesting to see how the play of light and shadows can fragment an image and thus make something that is normally very easy to understand seem quite abstract."

Magical things happen in this hinterland between the comprehensible and the abstract. There's an excellent example of this in Nick's new collection. 'Mist Rising over Monastero delle Certosa, Tuscany' shows a pretty hillside village bathed in soft light. As the terrain recedes, the image blurs. Concrete reality disintegrates into something intangible.

It's a standout piece – one of many in which Nick explores a scene at that golden time of day when the sun is just about to disappear, and the light is diffused. 'Chapel in the Woods' is another fine example.

Needless to say, the beauty of Nick's painting is complemented by the loveliness of the locations he chooses to paint: Provence, Tuscany, Venice etc. The artist clearly loves painting these destinations as much as we love to visit them.

So this show is another masterclass by one of the UK's great landscape painters. And it proves that, 50 years after turning professional, Nick is still full of enthusiasm for his craft. Nick studied Fine Art & Printmaking at Northampton School of Art. He worked in picture conservation and restoration before his first one man show at the Upper Grosvenor Gallery in 1971.

Since then, Nick has sold his work consistently. He has collectors all over the world, and prints of his work have been reproduced by Ikea, Curwin Graphics and Royal Academy Graphics. This commercial success has been accompanied by recognition from his contemporaries. Nick has won numerous awards including The City of London Annual Exhibition Prize, the Abbot and Holder Prize and in 2015 the de Laszlo Medal. The latter was voted on by members of The Royal Society of British Artists, of which Nick has been member since 2010.



Exotic Garden, Eze, Oil on Canvas, 99 x 107cm



St Tropez High Summer, Oil on Panel, 22 x 24cm



Café Montmartre, Oil on Panel, 25 x 31cm



Market Day, Aix-en-Provence, Oil on Panel, 29 x 50cm



Path by the Vineyard, Provence, Oil on Panel, 28 x 49cm



Hollyhocks on the Brittany Coast, Oil on Canvas, 74 x 83cm



Cows in the Apple Orchard, Normandy, Oil on Panel, 47 x 60cm



Willow Reflections, Oil on Canvas, 121 x 93cm



Santa Maria della Salute emerging from the mist, Oil on Canvas, 92 x 104cm



The Water Garden, Provence, Oil on Canvas, 82 x 98cm



Venice Backwater, Oil on Panel, 30 x 24cm



The Little Gift Shop, Oil on Panel, 42 x 30cm



View to the Sea, Oil on Panel, 26 x 25cm



Sunlight in the Country Kitchen, Oil on Panel, 30 x 26cm



Chapel in the Woods, Oil on Canvas, 77 x 107cm



Sunrise on the Seine, Oil on Panel, 62 x 89cm



Tropea, Italy, Oil on Canvas, 90 x 98cm



Autumn in the Provence Hills, Oil on Canvas, 80 x 90cm



Village by the Vineyard, Oil on Canvas, 64 x 67cm



San Biagio, Evening Light, Oil on Panel, 38 x 49cm



Autumn Light, Tuscany, Oil on Canvas, 128 x 97cm



Saint-Michel, Winter, Oil on Panel, 35 x 49cm



Sea of Wheat, Normandy, Oil on Canvas, 75 x 82cm



Cascades in Franche-Comté, Oil on Canvas, 79 x 109cm



Spring in the Orchard, Oil on Panel, 28 x 30cm



Spring in Wisley, Oil on Panel, 21 x 30cm



Autumn in the Alpilles, Oil on Canvas, 110 x 125cm



Venice after the Rain, Oil on Panel, 28 x 23cm



Little Venice, London, Oil on Panel, 35 x 39cm



Vivaldi's Church, Venice (Chiesa della Pietà), Oil on Canvas, 112 x 104cm



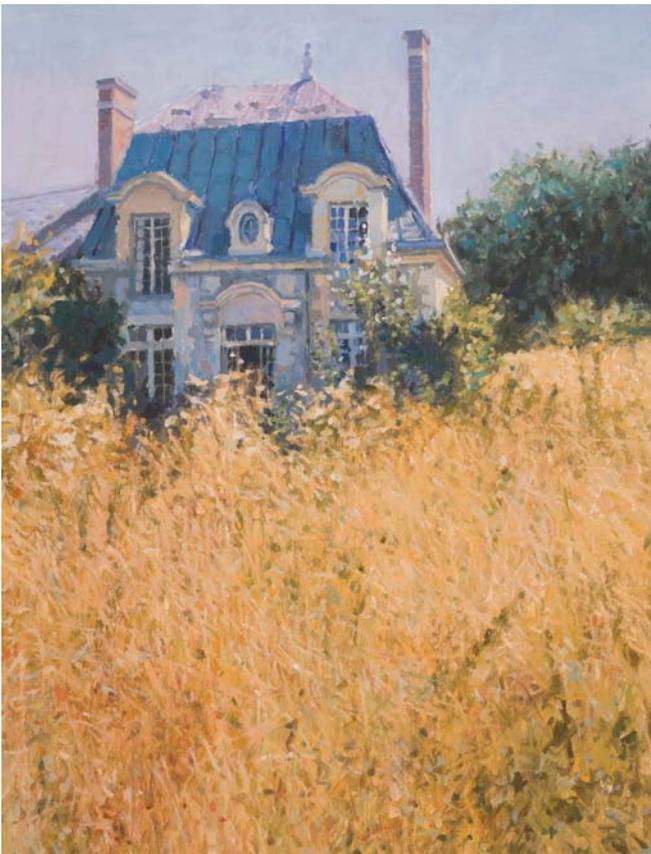
Ice on the Boating Pool, Oil on Canvas, 92 x 109cm



Skiffs on the Cam, Oil on Canvas, 95 x 110cm



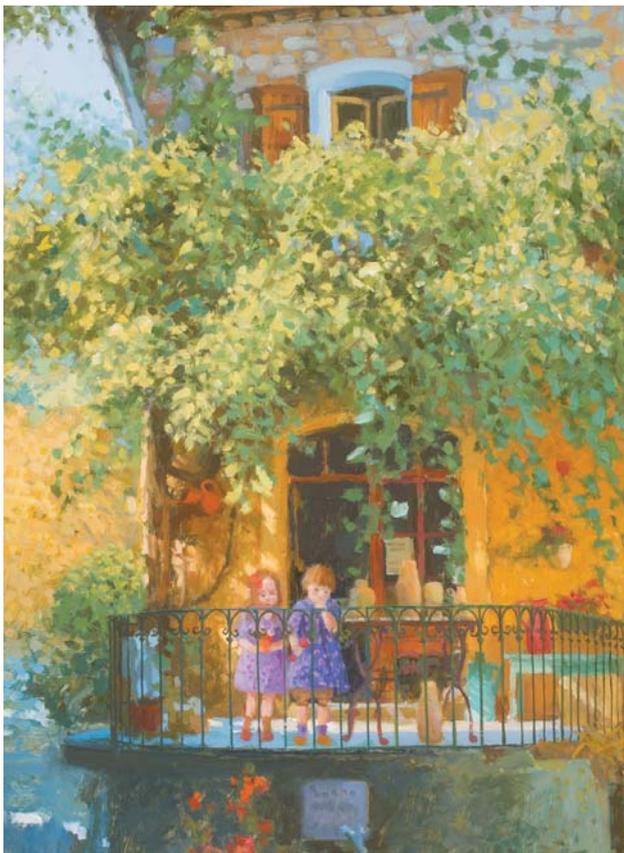
Pont-en-Royans, France, Oil on Canvas, 92 x 98cm



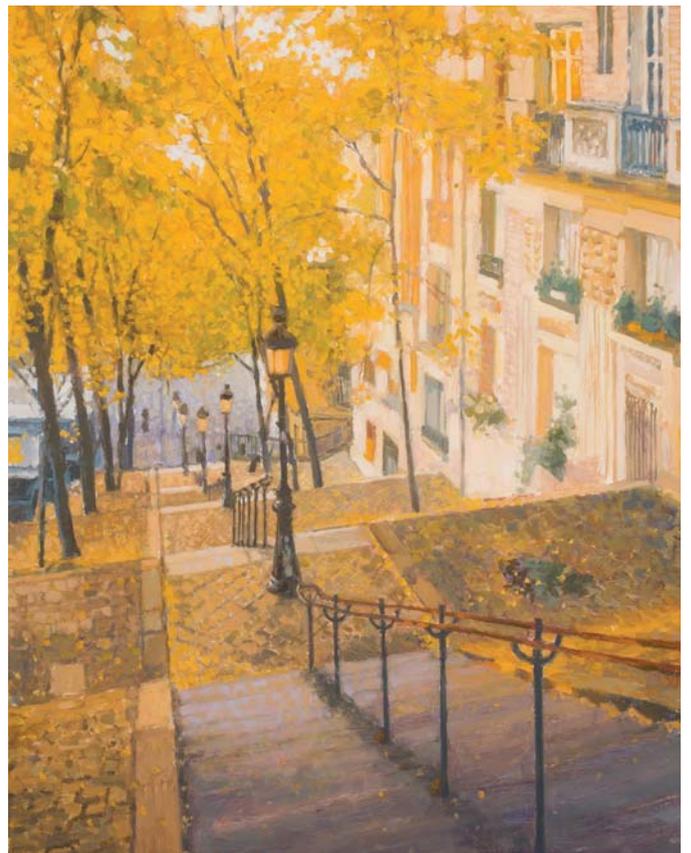
The Chateau in the Meadow, Oil on Panel, 50 x 40cm



Lavender Fields, Provence, Oil on Panel, 41 x 35cm



The Potter's Balcony, Oil on Panel, 49 x 34cm



Autumn Montmartre Steps, Oil on Panel, 50 x 40cm



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Opening times: 10am - 6pm Mon - Sat • 12.30pm - 6pm Sunday • and by appointment

Exhibition dates: 26th September – 14th October