



## LEO DAVY: ABSTRACT SCENES 1973 – 1987

Piano Nobile Kings Place, 90 York Way, London, N1 9AG

**Dates**            7 February – 2 May 2017

**Private View**   Monday 13 February 2017, 6:30 – 8:30pm

Disregarding the conventions of his contemporary art scene, Davy's works were largely unseen in his lifetime. Following an exhibition at Piano Nobile in 2014, which focused on Davy's output from the 1950s and early 1960s, *Leo Davy: Abstract Scenes | 1973-1987* presents a collection of late paintings by Leo Davy (1924–1987), with a select group of earlier works to show his artistic development.

Born in 1924, Leo Davy (1924-1987) studied painting first at Kingston School of Art under Reginald Brill and then at the Slade School of Fine Art whilst the school was evacuated to Oxford during WWII. At the beating heart of post-war abstraction in Britain, as a young man Davy counted Kyffin Williams and John Latham amongst his close friends, and exhibited his paintings alongside William Gear, Victor Pasmore, Prunella Clough, and Alan Davie at a mixed summer show at Gimpel Fils gallery in 1950. Many of these artists were on the cusp of achieving international success and Davy, like Gear and Davie, was situating his work within artistic developments on the continent, particularly CoBrA. A fiercely independent spirit and increasing deafness contributed to Davy's withdrawal from the mainstream London art world, and his subsequent move to North Devon by the 1960s.

Davy possessed a strong philosophical bent, informing his painting with avid reading and friendships with radical intellectuals including psychiatrist R.D. Laing. The driving urge behind his art, from the 1950s until his death in 1987, was to explore what he termed "non-verbal concepts", that which existed before language. Aesthetically, this manifested in abstract

painting rooted in experience. For Davy, abstraction in paint provided a route for the viewer to reconnect with the innate and the instinctive.

From the 1970s until his death in 1987, he channelled the primordial energy of the Cornish landscape - churning waves, broad skies, starry nights, and fleeting light effects - into abstract paintings predominantly in white, blue, and pink, of intense romance. Cornwall became a stage-set, a theatre for performances of pure emotion, expressivity, and elemental forces. Feminine and enigmatic, Davy's mature works are luscious scenes of mysterious potency: an ode to the theatrical grandeur of the Cornish environment.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

Title	Leo Davy: Abstract Scenes   1973-1987
Exhibition Dates	7 February – 21 April 2017
Private View	Monday 13 February 2017, 6.30-8.30pm
Location	Piano Nobile Kings Place, 90 York Way, London, N1 9AG +44 (0) 20 7229 1099, <a href="http://www.piano-nobile.com">www.piano-nobile.com</a>
Gallery hours	Monday-Sunday, 9am-8pm. Gallery staff present by appointment only.
Admission	Free
Getting there	Piano Nobile Kings Place is part of Kings Place, located 150 metres from Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations. The main entrance is situated on York Way beneath the distinctive, undulating glass façade, visible from the York Way exit at Kings Cross Station. Piano Nobile Kings Place is on the Lower Ground Gallery Levels, and is fully accessible for wheelchair users.
Website	<a href="http://www.piano-nobile.com">www.piano-nobile.com</a>
Email	<a href="mailto:info@piano-nobile.com">info@piano-nobile.com</a>

## PIANO NOBILE

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All enquiries, high res images and further information:  
E [info@piano-nobile.com](mailto:info@piano-nobile.com) | T +44 (0)20 7229 1099 | W [www.piano-nobile.com](http://www.piano-nobile.com)

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