



Contemporary & Post War Art (570)

Thu, 15th Aug 2019, Edinburgh

Viewing Times:

Sun 11th August 12 noon -4pm

Mon 12th August 10am - 5pm

Tue 13th August 10am - 5pm

Wed 14th August 10am - 5pm

Day of sale by appt only

Lot 210

Estimate: £3000 - £5000 + Fees

§ BOYLE FAMILY (SCOTTISH CONTEMPORARY) UNTITLED

Inscribed verso 'To Avril and Richard, with love from the Boyle Family', mixed media, resin and fibreglass

40.5cm x 40.5cm x 6cm (16in x 16in x 2.25in)

Provenance: The Boyle Family gifted this work directly to the present owner

Note: This work is believed to be a maquette for a larger work, a private commission for a British collector c. 2000.

Note: Their collective comprises husband, wife, son and daughter, but beyond being close family members, the Boyle Family are artistic collaborators. This began soon after Mark Boyle, a Glaswegian by birth, and Joan Hills, originally from Edinburgh, met whilst living in Yorkshire in the 1950s. Their children Sebastian and Georgia were exposed to studio life from an early age, ultimately opting to continue the collaboration into adulthood.

Though initially exhibiting under Mark's name alone, they represented themselves as 'Boyle family' as soon as the artworld expanded its narrow mindset to perceive the nature of their collaborative process, as opposed to only understanding it through the typical mythologizing of the (usually) male artist as loner/genius. From the very first, the work itself had been the primary focus and importance, and they did not divert themselves with attempts to challenge art world stereotypes or with efforts to market themselves in a calculated manner. Now, happily, the industry recognises, respects and celebrates the unique approach to their collective practise.

Their work was experimental and cross disciplinary from the start, with famous early projects including innovative visual installations in collaboration with musicians like Jimi Hendrix and the Soft Machine. Elements of film and performance continue to play a part in their practise, but it is the *Earth Series* for which they are best known.

The *Earth Series*, in their own words, 'are three dimensional casts of the surface of the earth which record and document random sites with great accuracy. These works combine real material from the site (stones, dust, twigs etc) with paint and resins, preserving the form of the ground to make unique one-off pieces that suggest and offer new interpretations of the environment.' The full details of their materials, casting technique and how they achieve such accurate representations is a well-kept family secret.

Randomness, chance and an attempt to eliminate all bias are underpinning concepts of this project. Sites were selected on the map by the throw of a dart whilst blindfolded, and the precise patch of ground to be immortalised narrowed down by the toss of a t-square over the shoulder. No subject is above or beneath capture and depiction. Their aim is to create a truthful and unadorned representation of a fleeting moment of reality, freeing us, the audience, from our typical interpretation of art via projected prejudices, cultural reference points, associations and reminiscences.

Though Mark Boyle sadly passed away in 2005, the family continue their work. Boyle Family has exhibited in galleries and museums world-wide, including representing Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1978 and the Sao Paulo Biennale in 1987. Their exhibition 'Beyond Image' at London's Hayward Gallery in 1986 attracted 176,000 visitors. Their work is represented in many private and public collections with major works in forty museum collections worldwide, including Tate Britain; Stuttgart Staatsgalerie; Los Angeles County Museum; Kunstmuseum Luzern; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum; Museum Moderna Kunst Vienna. The National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh, hosted a major retrospective of the family's work in 2003.