



MACCONNAL - MASON

ESTABLISHED 1893



Ivon Hitchens, CBE (1893 - 1979)

Figure, Courtyard – Greenleaves

Signed, lower centre right: *Hitchens*;

Estate stamp verso

Painted circa 1941

Oil on canvas

17½ x 39 in – 44.5 x 99 cm

Frame size

26 x 47¼ in – 66 x 120 cm

Artist description:

Ivon Hitchens was born in London, the son of Alfred Hitchens (b.1861) a portrait, figurative and landscape painter, and a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy. Ivon Hitchens was educated at the progressive school Bedales and in 1910 studied at the St. John's Wood School of Art followed by the Royal Academy Schools. A figurative, still life and landscape painter, Hitchens was influenced by Matisse and Cezanne; he explored abstraction, and the use of form and colour in landscape.

Hitchens was close friends with Ben (1894-1982) and Winifred Nicholson (1893-1981), visiting them and exhibiting with the Nicholsons, Christopher Wood and other young artists, as the Seven and Five Society, founded in 1922, Hitchens exhibiting each year until its demise in 1935. In 1925 Hitchens had his first show at the Mayor Gallery and in 1931 was elected a member of the London Group where he exhibited with his friend John Tunnard (1900-1971). In 1940 following the bombing of London, Hitchens moved to Greenleaves near Petworth in West Sussex, initially to a caravan and six acres of land where he built a studio and subsequently a house. The surrounding wooded landscape provided a rich source of subject matter.

He was to spend the rest of his life portraying these immediate surroundings at all the seasons of the year. Be it a dank November woodland scene pervaded with dark hued browns and mauves or a summer scene with vivid colours inspired by brightly coloured flowers, fruit and foliage invested with a rare clarity of light. Hitchens response to the landscape was very much that of a pragmatic English landscape painter, albeit one inspired by Henri Matisse (1869-1954) and Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), as distinct from certain of his contemporaries who invested the English landscape with an ethereal spiritual quality.

A hugely significant painter in 20th century British art, Hitchens was represented in the International

Exhibition of Modern Art organised by UNESCO in Paris in 1946 and in the Exhibition of British Paintings from the Tate, also held in 1946, at the Jeu de Paume in Paris.

Hitchens was elected CBE in 1958 and in 1965 his 'Coronation 1937' exhibited at the Royal Academy was purchased by the Chantrey Bequest.

His works can be found in museums in: Aberdeen; Bath; Belfast; Birmingham; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum; Cardiff, National Museum; Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland; Leeds; Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery; London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Tate Gallery and Victoria and Albert Museum; Newcastle; Oxford, Ashmolean Museum; Sheffield; Southampton; Gothenburg; Oslo; Montreal; Ottawa; Toronto; Vancouver; Adelaide; Melbourne; Perth; Sydney and Wellington.