

CONNAUGHT BROWN

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Paul Richards

The Oxford Drawings

15th January – 21st February, 2015



Paul Richards, *Emma* (2013) pen and ink on paper, 11 3/8 x 11 3/8 in, 29 x 29 cm

Connaught Brown is delighted to announce its twelfth solo exhibition of work by acclaimed British artist Paul Richards. The show will present a substantial body of ink drawings Richards has created in his new studio in Oxford; through psychologically charged images of human figures, animals and birds, Richards delves into the essential nature of being.

As a tutor at the Slade School of Fine Art, Richards belongs to a long list of distinguished artists who have taught there, including Frank Auerbach, Lucian Freud and Stanley Spencer, and like whom he has developed an expressionist style with which to explore the human form. Bordering on abstraction, Richards captures the very essence of his sitters through nuances of line and seemingly spontaneous, gestural marks.

Moved by a book of Rembrandt's ink drawings which he received as a gift, Richards recognised in the portraits 'images of thought, more powerful than Freudian analysis'. Inspired by these works, as well as the collection of Old Master drawings in Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, he has begun to use just pen, ink and water in order to get 'as close to the subject as possible'. Working increasingly from memory, Richards's searching drawings reveal the emotional connection which exists between himself and his subjects.

Following on from his collaborative project with London Zoo between 2009 and 2011, Richards has also been drawing animals and birds. Attracted to their 'tremendous drama', he describes the changing movements of their skin, hair, paws, beaks and eyes in works that are equally dynamic and reflective. These works have also begun to possess a textural quality akin to the densely painted and scraped away early drawings of Auerbach and Kossoff. Forcefully working into the paper, he captures with power and poignancy the vulnerability of both Animal and Man.

For more information and images please contact Ruth Millington at art@connaughtbrown.co.uk