

The Prints of Michael Rothenstein

Tessa Sidey, Assistant Keeper, Fine Art at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery



September 1993

208 pages

Hardback

978-0-85967-901-5

£110.00

Includes 62 colour and 438 b&w illustrations

Michael Rothenstein was born into a celebrated artistic family in 1908. His father William Rothenstein was a painter, draughtsman and lithographer, and celebrated Principal of the Royal College of Art. In 1946, after an early career as a landscape watercolourist, Michael Rothenstein embarked on his career as a printmaker, and his obsession with printmaking in all its many forms - lithographs, monotypes, etchings, linocuts, woodcuts, screen prints, mixed media - began.

This volume charts and records the output of the artist over a period of almost half a century, during which time his vision and restless energy have enabled him to extend the boundaries of his chosen realm of activity and have earned him a worldwide reputation as one of the most exciting printmakers of the twentieth century.

Tessa Sidey of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery has compiled and edited the volume, working closely with the artist. Her catalogue contains 455 entries spanning the period from 1946 to 1992. These entries demonstrate the range of multiple forms and variations that the images have taken, and all are illustrated, most in catalogue illustrations alongside the entries. There are also over 100 large reproductions, including 62 in colour; altogether there are over 500 illustrations.

The volume also includes documentary illustrations and photo material that have been features of the artist's work. As well as the catalogue the texts include a foreword by Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, an introduction by the compiler which traces the influences on Rothenstein's technical and artistic development, a detailed chronology and bibliography, some key statements by the artist, and accounts by the printers who have assisted him in the studios at Great Bardfield and Argus Studio.

The complete work is not only an essential reference volume for all those concerned with the prints of Michael Rothenstein and twentieth-century printmaking but also partakes of some of the visual excitement and tension that are to be found in his images.

About the Author

Tessa Sidey is Assistant Keeper, Fine Art at Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, with a particular interest in twentieth-century graphics. She regularly works with contemporary artists, most recently in the areas of photographs and public art commissions. Formerly at York City Art Gallery, she has curated a number of print exhibitions including Edward Gordon Craig, an exhibition of wood-engravings and woodcuts (1982), Patrick Proctor Prints 1959-1985 (1985), Sharp Voices, Still Lives: Birmingham Photography in the 1980's (1990) and The Prints of Michael Rothenstein 1950-1990 (1990).

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