

P R E S S R E L E A S E

DOUBLE PORTRAIT

Paintings by

Arturo Di Stefano & Anthony Eyton

29 June – 4 August, 2023

A 38 page catalogue with an essay by
Andrew Dempsey is available.

Anthony Eyton, oil on linen, 169 x 90 cm
by Arturo Di Stefano

The exhibition celebrates the friendship between the painters Anthony Eyton and Arturo Di Stefano on the occasion of Eyton's one hundredth birthday in May this year.

The idea for this joint exhibition was a photograph of the two artists in a wonderfully humorous pose in front of the seventeenth century English painter William Dobson's 'Portrait of an Old and a Younger Man (John Taylor and John Denham)'. It was taken by Anne-Katrin Purkiss on the instigation of Arturo after he'd seen the painting hanging in Tate Britain while on loan from the Courtauld.



© Anne-Katrin Purkiss

As with the two poets in the painting here are two painters from different generations and cultural backgrounds. Both have experienced totally different art school education and paint radically different paintings but despite all they share a deep respect for each other's work and a shared vision and belief rooted in a tradition of painting.

Inspired by the photograph the idea of making a film of them in conversation about their work in each other's studios took shape. It was then decided to extend the project and continue to record at intervals, conversations about their studio practice and work in progress and then to hold a joint exhibition. The film will be included in the exhibition.

The exhibition includes work by both painters including portraits of each other – a painting by Eyton using the format of Purkiss's photograph and Di Stefano's remarkable full-length portrait of Eyton entering his house from his spectacular south London garden (also featured in Eyton's exhibited paintings). The different roots and affiliations of each are seen in paintings by Di Stefano of Parisian subjects and Eyton's painting of the Indian city of Varanasi, of bathers in the holy waters of the Ganges. India is a country that has been almost as important a source for Eyton as Italy is for Di Stefano.



Double Portrait, oil on canvas, 40 x 54 cm
by Anthony Eyton

Arturo Di Stefano (born 1955) studied at Liverpool Polytechnic (1973), Goldsmiths' College, University of London (1974-77), the Royal College of Art (1978-81) and Accademia Albertina, Turin, Italy (1985-86). He is the son of Italian immigrant parents and has returned often to Italy which has given him many of the subjects of his painting.

Anthony Eyton (born 1923) studied painting at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts but before that he was tutored at school in his teens by the Constable expert Ian Fleming Williams. He was awarded an Abbey Major Scholarship to work in Italy (1951-52), elected Royal Academician (1976) and was Resident Artist on the Eden Project, Cornwall (1999-210).

Gallery Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am – 6 pm
