

PRESS RELEASE

GEORGE ROWLETT

DRAWN TO COLOUR

New Paintings 2024

24 May – 19 July 2024

catalogue essay by

Richard Morphet

*Solanum interlaced with a Gourd Vine against Salvia Amistad & Blackeyed Susans*

George Rowlett is renowned for his masterful impasto landscapes – the coastal area of East Kent, London's River Thames and the occasional forays to the Lake District, Outer Hebrides and Humber Estuary. It is less well known, however, that he has produced equally challenging garden and flower paintings at every stage of his career. Indeed, with their pure intense colour, his flower subjects have often inspired composition more daring and extreme than the landscapes he was painting at the same time.

This exhibition concentrates almost exclusively on his garden and flower paintings. There is a small group of landscapes of the cliffs of Dover and two self-portraits but all else is a record of what he encounters in the secluded garden outside of his Walmer studio; a small but fertile, colourful and lovingly tended place.

Rowlett's passion for flowers lies behind the creation of some of his most affecting images. In many ways flowers are the ideal subject for a painter with his gifts. They invite bravura technique – the magical merging of thick oil paint with the delicacy of leaf and petal - and inventive colour combinations both of which are Rowlett hallmarks. Always impulsive rather than methodical he relishes the act of applying paint quickly and with great fluidity but above all it is his own sensual appreciation of the colours of the flowers themselves that unleashes his ability to use colour so brilliantly.

He treats the garden as a work in progress; a laboratory where plants are chosen and placed with an eye to constantly changing colour combinations. Some he knows and some are experimental and always there is the unpredictable, thrilling gifts given by nature. Often it is the complex 'tapestries' of colour that excites him and sometimes a particular plant will be singled out as if to cherish its special properties. And when winter arrives he searches out florist's blooms and exotic plants as he embarks on studio still-lives to keep alive this very special aspect of his practice.



Huge Orange centered Daffodils in the Green Jug with a Blue Glass

Born in Troon (1941) George Rowlett attended Grimsby School of Art (1960-62), Camberwell School of Art (1962-65) and the Royal Academy Schools (1965-68). His work is included in private and public collections worldwide including, Arts Council, British Council, Ruskin Foundation and Brantwood Trust, St. Andrews University, Hiscox and Baring Brothers. This exhibition will mark the 30-year anniversary of his representation by Art Space Gallery and a 48-page catalogue with 23 colour plates and an essay by Richard Morphet marks the occasion.

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