

**SUMMERS PLACE AUCTIONS TO SELL
"EDDIE'S EYE 2"
A COLLECTOR'S VISION
AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM HIS LENKIEWICZ COLLECTION**

Summers Place Auctions are delighted to be offering the personal collection of **Eddie Powell**, the well known owner and curator of The Sculpture Park, in Churt, Surrey. Over the last 40 years Eddie has not only collected sculpture, but also paintings, photographs, furniture and objet d'art. The over 200 lots included in the sale on **Tuesday, 23rd June 2015** will be reflecting this.

Eddie Powell is also a well-known collector of works by iconic artist Robert Lenkiewicz. The sale will include an important group of over 40 pictures and prints by the artist, with estimates from £80-150 for a print up to £20,000-30,000 for the top lot, *The Painter with Samantha*, an oil on canvas from 1989.



Robert Lenkiewicz was born in London in 1941, the son of refugees who ran a Jewish hotel in Fordwych Road catering mostly to elderly residents. At sixteen Lenkiewicz attended St Martin's College of Art & Design and later the Royal Academy. However, he was virtually impervious to contemporary art fashions, being more interested in his favourite paintings in the National Gallery.

Inspired by the example of Albert Schweitzer, Lenkiewicz threw open the doors of his studios to anyone in need of a roof – down and outs, addicts, criminals and the mentally ill congregated there. These individuals were the subjects of his paintings as a young man.

He moved to Plymouth in 1969 and continued on the same lines, but attracted so many vagrants and street alcoholics that Lenkiewicz was forced to commandeer derelict warehouses to house them. One of these also served as a studio and in 1973 became the exhibition space for the *Vagrancy* Project.

Eddie's collection includes various portraits and works from the such projects as *Death and the Maiden* (1974), *Mental Handicap* (1976), *Suicide* (1980), *Death* (1982), *Sexual Behaviour* (1983), *The Painter with Women* (1988-96), *Addictive Behaviour* (1997) and one of his work during his 'Paintings Painted Blind' Project (2000). Lenkiewicz continued to examine the lives of ostracised, hidden sections of the community in all his works and often adopted a metaphorical pictorial style to portray 'human physiology in a state of crisis'.

Lenkiewicz concluded that the kinds of sensations people felt when a lover abandoned them or when their cherished beliefs were threatened were identical to the withdrawal symptoms and anxieties experienced by addicts or alcoholics. The Projects thus became an extended study in 'addictive behaviour' – the title of his 20th Project, unfinished at the time of his death in 2002. His own observations were supported by his 25,000 volume private library, which contained large sections on philosophy, theology, fascism, anti-Semitism, the witchcraft phenomenon and the occult, and which he viewed as a history of 'fanatical belief systems'.

Robert Lenkiewicz died on 5 August 2002 from a serious heart condition. In his obituary of Lenkiewicz, art critic David Lee observed: 'Robert's greatest gift was to show us that an artist could be genuinely concerned about social and domestic issues and attempt the difficult task of expressing this conscience through the deeply unfashionable medium of figurative painting. In that sense he was one of a few serious painters of contemporary history.'



Eddie Powell added: "I started collecting Lenkiewicz after his death, but had always been fascinated by his skill and rebel attitude to creating portraits of subjects contemporary art would normally shun. I will be sad to see most of them go, but I hope they will go to equally discerning collectors."

**The outdoor items of the sale can be viewed at
The Sculpture Park
Jumps Road, Churt, Surrey, GU10 2LH
and
the indoor pieces, including the Lenkiewicz paintings and prints
at Summers Place Auctions
The Walled Garden, Summers Place, Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9AB**

The catalogue will be available a few weeks before the sale and will be fully illustrated on the Summers Place Auctions website.

Viewing Times: Sunday 21st June and Monday 22nd June
or by appointment.

For further information on the auction, please visit www.summersplaceauctions.com or call 01403 331331. For press information or images please contact Silke Lohmann (silke@exclamationpr.co.uk/ 07932 618754).

Notes:

Summers Place Auctions are the world's leading auctioneers of Garden Statuary and Natural History.

The sales are held in the award winning 5000sq ft gallery nestling within 6 acres of walled gardens and the arboretum of the Victorian mansion, Summers Place.

Eddie Powell was born in the mining village of Cwm, near Ebbw Vale, South Wales in 1950. After an abortive year studying Mechanical Engineering at Cardiff University he studied at Guildford School of Art and West Surrey College of Art & Design in 1976 - 1977 where he graduated with a first class Honours degree in Photography and Sculpture. His work received 100% marks from external assessors which was (and probably still is) unheard of!

He exhibited at various galleries throughout the 1970's and 1980's including a one-man exhibition at The Photographers Gallery, London.

As well as a successful practising sculptor, Eddie has enjoyed a varied entrepreneurial career in businesses as diverse as Interior Design and Retail; Hotels, Bars and Restaurants; He established the thriving Interior Design business "Miscellanea" in 1980 and also in Churt, Surrey bought 10 acres of land , which he transformed into the Sculpture Park, opening in 2003.

Eddie has spent the last 15 years transforming the 10 acre site, adjoining Frensham Common Country Park into one of the leading Sculpture Parks in the UK attracting tens of thousands of visitors a year. Taking advantage of the natural contours of the undulating Surrey Hills, he has created the perfect haven for the display of sculpture, with paths meandering through mixed heathland and woodland in a natural valley enhanced by 3 lakes fed by two natural streams. All of the outdoor sculpture in the sale will be on view in the Sculpture Park.

The Lenkiewicz Foundation is a registered educational charity (No. 1063357) created to preserve and disseminate the library, paintings and other original works of artist Robert Lenkiewicz (1941-2002). Through exhibitions and related educational activities the charity aims to raise awareness of the thought-provoking life, work and ideas of Robert Lenkiewicz.

www.robertlenkiewicz.org info@lenkiewiczfoundation.org

Francis Mallett Chair of the Lenkiewicz Foundation:

Through recent public gallery exhibitions such as 'Self Portraits 1956–2002' at London's Ben Uri Jewish Museum of Art (2008), 'Still Lives' at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol (2011) and 'Human, All Too Human', the first international touring exhibition of his work in Leipzig and Nuremberg (2013), Robert Lenkiewicz is now gaining long-overdue recognition as one of this country's most significant post-war figurative painters. Lenkiewicz has always been an artist whom people either love or loathe with little half measures. While he was alive, right from his very early years in Plymouth, the artist's many 'patrons', who came from all walks of life – from nobility to businessmen, from lawyers and doctors to taxi drivers and plumbers – would support him on a kind of feudal bartering system, often reinforced by Lenkiewicz's magnetic charisma. In return for paintings, they would pay for his vast studios and their running costs, his paints and materials, as well as the cost of his ever-growing library.

However, in the years since his death, new collectors have emerged, equally passionate about the man and his work. All these obsessive collectors have tended to share one particular characteristic: they are fiercely independently-minded, caring little about current art fashions or what the art critics

tell them to like. They certainly have an appreciation of skill and tradition in art, but, more significantly, they seem to subconsciously recognise in Lenkiewicz a fellow free-spirit and a genuine radical.

Eddie Powell is one of these collectors, whom I first met at a Sotheby's auction when we were both bidding for the same Lenkiewicz painting: a powerful self-portrait with model. I managed to buy it on the day but then, about a week later, Eddie called me, asking how much I wanted for it. We agreed a price. It wasn't long before I started to regret it and think that he'd had the best of the deal after all. The painting was later included in the exhibition of self-portraits at the Ben Uri Museum. But it is that confidence in your own taste, the pursuit of your own judgement of quality and the determination to acquire it, which is the unmistakable sign of the real collector. What perhaps strikes me most about Eddie Powell's collection of Lenkiewicz's paintings is that it reveals an artist totally at odds with the popular media's usual clichéd caricature of him as a serial womanizer, embalmer of tramps and faker of his own death. The paintings which Eddie has collected over the years get straight to the dark heart of Lenkiewicz's vision with no punches pulled, and, in particular, the artist's obsession with decay and mortality. 'To paint oneself is to paint a picture of someone who is going to die', Lenkiewicz often remarked. 'And the same applies if one paints anyone else', he added. Lenkiewicz's aim was to capture the transient and haunting qualities of his subjects. His empathy for the disenfranchised, society's down-and-outs and misfits, resulted in some extraordinary and haunting paintings. Beginning with *Vagrancy* in 1973, and in so-called 'Projects' on *Mental Handicap*, *Old Age*, *Suicide* and 1982's *Death*, his fifteenth Project, he examined in depth the effects of human isolation and brought wide public attention to hidden sections of the community.

He painted figuratively at a time when Pop Art, Abstraction, as well as the emerging new forms of Video and Conceptual Art, were the flavour of the day in British Art. Although unfashionable in the art world of his time, Lenkiewicz's work is proving that not only does it have the power to communicate directly with people about their own lives and the world they live in but also attract a new generation of shrewd collectors.

Forthcoming Sales:

2015

23rd - 24th June – Garden & Minerals

23rd June - **Eddie's Eye²** - A Collector's Vision

8th - 9th September – Garden, Design & Natural History

25th November - Evolution

