

13 October 2004

Cambridge showing for Lucian Freud's latest prints in first major UK retrospective

A touring exhibition on display at the Fitzwilliam Museum this autumn, *Lucian Freud: Etchings 1946-2004* opens in the new Mellon Gallery on 15 October and presents for the first time to a wide UK public a full survey of Lucian Freud's etchings. Although less well known than his paintings, Freud's prints are on a similar level of achievement and demonstrate his essential strengths as an artist.

Although there have been major shows in the USA, Japan and continental Europe, there has until now been no full retrospective of Freud's etchings in the UK. The Cambridge showing of the exhibition is special in a number of ways, including the first public display of Freud's very latest prints. *Before the Fourth*, a study of a pregnant woman lying naked, is Freud's first etching of a full-length nude in nearly ten years. A new small painting of the same subject is also displayed for the first time, allowing a comparison of Freud's approach in painting and print. A similar comparison can be made in the case of another painting, lent specially for the Fitzwilliam showing, which relates to Freud's etched studies after Chardin.

Another new print on display will be *The Painter's Garden 2003-2004*, a large and impressive view down Freud's garden and a compelling follow-up to the extraordinary *Garden in Winter* of 1997-9. This will also be the first chance for many to see Freud's very rare early etchings, which were sometimes printed in editions as small as three impressions, not all of which survive; these are all from private collections otherwise inaccessible to the public.

Etching allows the artist to draw from life directly onto a printing plate. Freud's early masterpieces from the 1940s are small in scale and scrupulously observed in a tightly controlled, almost miniaturist, graphic language. His more sustained activity as an etcher over the last two decades has seen him develop the technique in more expansive ways, often in large-scale works, to produce prints that are as uncomfortably powerful and demanding as his paintings. As well as being impressive in their own right, Freud's etchings reveal much about the artist's general approach to portraiture and representation.

In addition to the new work on display, Freud's published prints will be complemented by additional loans of stage proofs and pre-publication proofs to shed further light on Freud's printmaking process. Also included in the exhibition is the copper plate for the magnificent portrait of *Lord Goodman in his Yellow Pyjamas* of 1987.

The Fitzwilliam Museum showing is supported by Taylor Vinters Solicitors and the Marlay Group.

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.../For further information

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Press | The Fitzwilliam Museum

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Information for Editors

Lucian Freud: Etchings 1946-2004 is on display in the Mellon Gallery, The Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RB, from **15 October to 23 December 2004**. The exhibition is open Tuesday - Saturday 10.00 am - 5.00 pm, Sunday 12.00 - 5.00 pm. Admission is free.

Free screenings of ***Lucian Freud: Portraits***, an unprecedented, intimate and revealing film produced by Jake Auerbach and Freud's biographer William Feaver, will take place in the Museum during the run of the exhibition. For further details and times, telephone 01223 332900.

The exhibition **catalogue**, published jointly by the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, has been written by Craig Hartley of the Fitzwilliam Museum, with the aim of introducing Freud's printmaking to a general public who know Freud primarily as a painter and may well be unfamiliar with his prints. It is available from the Fitzwilliam Museum Courtyard Shop, price £6.99.

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