

Richard Kenton Webb MA (RCA)

The work of Richard Kenton Webb is rooted in the romantic and metaphysical traditions of the great English landscape painters and takes its primary inspiration from the Cotswold landscape in which he lives. Webb's work is steeped in the memories of the landscapes that formed his life – from the childhood mud banks of the Chichester Estuary to the wild coasts of Cornwall where he walked with his young family and now to the Cotswold landscapes which are at the very centre of his working life.

He has lived in Gloucestershire for twenty five years and lives and paints in an old coach house near Cirencester. He is an artist and also a teacher: a Senior Lecturer in Drawing and Applied Arts at the University of the West of England and has taught at some of the finest art schools in the country including the Slade School of Fine Art and the Prince of Wales Drawing School in London. He has been awarded several international artist in residence programmes to Italy and Paris, the most notable of which was The Boise Travelling Scholarship to Rome. With two prestigious stained glass window commissions in the Gloucestershire churches of Eastington and Leckhampton and ten solo shows, Kenton Webb's work can be seen in many public and private collections both in the UK and overseas in Germany, Italy and the USA.

Webb's work moves across many different mediums, from drawing and painting to printmaking and sculpture. Since 2000 he has been working on an epic project to explore and understand the movement and language of colour through his paintings. For him, colour works as both language and form. Like a piece of music it can produce an emotional response from the viewer, the natural intensity of each colour becoming almost hallucinogenic, an effect which comes directly from the pure pigment of the colour itself. This intensity anticipates the form or movement peculiar to that colour within the painting, capturing what is inherent in a colour that the viewer wouldn't normally see. By exploring each colour in detail, Webb exposes the metaphysical and synaesthetic qualities that lie within the pigment qualities themselves and creates a dialogue between colour and movement which speaks to the viewer in a fundamental and intuitive way. He makes all his own paints and inks for both canvas and press, using pure and often rare pigments, many of which are sourced from the earth all over the world, like Lapis Lazuli from Afghanistan and Smalt from Egypt.

Webb has started with Red and Orange and is now moving towards Blue. The work is represented in larger paintings but also in multi-coloured linocuts which are reduced versions

of the paintings, made from the same pigments which are as exact in intensity and detail as the larger pieces. Webb describes his work as a visual poem, a dialogue between the artist and his medium which explores the meaning behind colour and translates it to the viewer opening a world of possibilities:

“Most of all colour is a journey of surprises, it resonates in our deepest sensibilities, expressing beyond words how we feel about ourselves. It is the most sublime of poetic experiences. So, learning to read colour is a wonder but to express ourselves within it is something else entirely.”