

Etchings by Samuel Palmer (1805–1881)  
Paintings, watercolours and prints by John Piper (1903–1992)  
Paintings and watercolours by Ralph Maynard Smith (1904–1964)



# THE ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE

MONNOW VALLEY ARTS CENTRE

In conjunction with The Ralph Maynard Smith Trust, Wolseley Fine Arts and private lenders who prefer to remain anonymous



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## ILLUSTRATIONS

Front cover: John Piper, *Rocks on Glyder Mountain* 1951, cat. no. 35

Inside front cover: Ralph Maynard Smith, *Shepherd Landscape* 1928–46, cat. no. 42

Above: Samuel Palmer, *Christmas* 1850, cat. no. 5

Back cover: John Piper, *Tympanum with Hanging Lamps, Rowlestone* 1965, cat. no. 36

Exhibition dates 5 April – 1 June 2008

Exhibition organised by Monnow Valley Arts Centre

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from Monnow Valley Arts Patrons*

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# THE ROMANTIC LANDSCAPE

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At the beginning of the nineteenth century, as a reaction against the rationalist ideals of the eighteenth century, a romantic movement developed both in literature and in the visual arts. In Britain Blake and Turner were early exponents.

The visionary painter Samuel Palmer, born in 1805, was a landscape painter who glorified the undefiled pre-industrial landscape of Britain. Unlike Blake, his mentor, his work is rooted in the landscape of the North Downs in Kent where he lived from 1824 to 1832. Later he was to travel in Wales and Italy but these later works did not capture the mystery of the early naturalistic work.

Palmer's drawings and watercolours were interpreted in etchings in two phases: 1850 to 1862 and in the last years of his life. The editions were widely circulated at the time but relatively few have survived the ravages of time. They are the principle means by which collectors can own a work by Palmer today and have been the inspiration for the Neo-Romantic artists of the twentieth century such as John Piper.

The Neo-romantic movement focused on a personal poetic vision of the landscape and developed from the 1930s onwards partly as an insular reaction to the threat of invasion. The prints of William Blake and Samuel Palmer were major influences on Paul Nash, John Piper, Graham Sutherland and the other artists of the movement which included Ralph Maynard Smith.

John Piper (1903–1992) was born in Epsom on the North Downs near the area painted by Palmer a century before. The 1937 collaboration with John Betjeman on the Shell Guide to Oxfordshire is seen as a seminal moment in the development of Piper's romantic vision. During the war he recorded the effect of ruination and bombing around the country. Prolonged visits to Wales, firstly in Snowdonia in the late 1940s and later in Pembrokeshire, brought Piper back to painting the landscape and buildings within a pastoral setting.

Ralph Maynard Smith (1904–1964) was born in South Africa of English parents and studied to be an architect. He lived most of



Samuel Palmer, *The Herdsman's Cottage (Sunset)*, Cat. no. 4



John Piper, *Clytha Castle*, Cat. no. 38

his life in Surrey on or near the North Downs. Early influences were the writings of John Ruskin and Vincent van Gogh. His early landscape paintings display a deeply held love of quiet places. Maynard Smith battled not only with depression but the conflict he experienced between his paid works as a successful architect and his need and desire to be a painter. His work from the 1940s develops first through surrealism and subsequently into a form of meta-physical drawing.

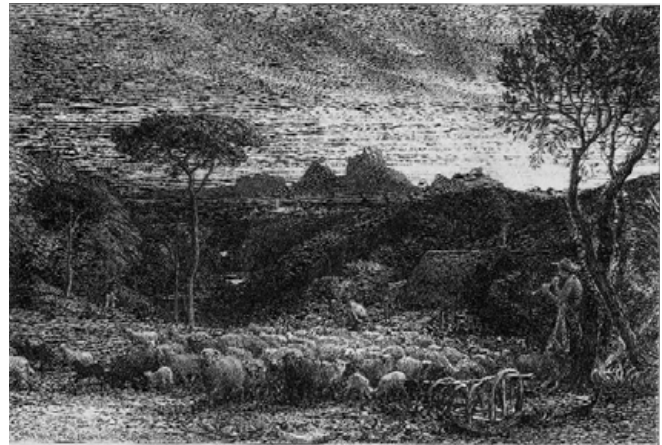
He never exhibited during his life and it is only through the efforts of his son Simon Smith, The Ralph Maynard Smith Trust and Wolseley Fine Arts that his work is being discovered.

## SAMUEL PALMER 1805–1881

1. **The Willow** 1850  
Etching, Lister 1i, 9 × 6.7 cm  
A fine early proof in the rare first state printed in the 1850s £3,000
  
2. **The Willow** 1850  
Etching, 2nd state of 3, Lister 1ii, 9 × 6.7 cm  
Published in the *Life and Letters of Samuel Palmer* 1892  
Private Collection
  
3. **The Skylark** 1850  
Etching, 7th state of 8, Lister 2vii, 12 × 9.5 cm  
As published by the Etchings Club in 1857 £2,900
  
4. **The Herdsman's Cottage (Sunset)** 1850 *Illustrated on page 3*  
Etching on laid paper, final state, Lister L3ii, 12.7 × 10.3 cm  
Published in *The Portfolio* 1872 £1,500
  
5. **Christmas** 1850 *Illustrated on contents page*  
Etching, 2nd state of 5, Lister 4ii, 12.3 × 17.7 cm  
A very rare early proof before the reduction in the plate  
printed in the 1850s £8,000
  
6. **The Sleeping Shepherd (Early Morning)** 1857  
Chromolithograph based on etching, Lister 6, 12.3 × 10.2 cm  
Private collection
  
7. **The Rising Moon (An English Pastoral)** 1857  
Etching on chine collé, 7th state of 9 Lister 7vii, 14.7 × 22.5 cm  
As issued in etchings for the Art Union of London  
by the Etchings Club £1,800



Cat. no. 9



Cat. no. 14

8. **The Weary Ploughman** 1858  
Etching, 7th state of 8, Lister 8vii, 13 × 20 cm,  
As published 1865 Art Union of London by  
the Etchings Club £2,000
9. **The Early Ploughman (The Morning Spread upon the Mountains)** 1861 *Illustrated*  
Etching, 5th of 8 states, Lister 9v, 17.8 × 25.2 cm  
Dedicated by Frederick Keppel to Charles Goulding £2,500
10. **The Early Ploughman (The Morning Spread upon the Mountains)** 1861  
Etching, 6th or 7th of 9 states, Lister 9vi or 9vii,  
17.8 × 25.2 cm  
Signed in pencil and inscribed Finished state £10,000
11. **The Morning of Life** 1860–1  
Etching, 6th state of 7, Lister 10vi, 14.7 × 21.4 cm  
A trial proof signed, titled and inscribed Touched Proof £10,500
12. **The Bellman** 1879  
Etching, 6th state of 7, Lister 11vi, 19.1 × 25.3 cm  
As probably issued by The Fine Arts Society £10,000
13. **The Lonely Tower** 1879 *Illustrated*  
Etching on wove paper, 5th state of 6, Lister 12v, 20 × 25.3 cm  
Signed in pencil, inscribed trial proof £11,000
14. **Opening of the Fold (Early Morning)** 1879  
Etching, 5th state of 9 Lister 13v, 17 × 23.5 cm  
Signed in pencil, published by The Fine Arts Society £3,000

Cat. no. 13





Cat. no. 16

## JOHN PIPER 1903–1992

15. **Valley Crucis Abbey** 1940  
Ink and watercolour wash, 20 × 28.5 cm      Private Collection
16. **Ruined Cottage** 1941  
Oil on canvas, 61.5 × 74 cm      *Illustrated*  
Private Collection

Items below are lithographs made for *English, Scottish and Welsh Landscape* 1944, printed by the Curwen Press and published by Frederick Muller in an unspecified edition.

17. **Pistyll Cain, North Wales** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 35, 18 × 12 cm      £225



Cat. no. 29

18. **Weathercote Cave, Yorkshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 36, 18.1 × 11.8 cm      £225
19. **Tomen-y-Mur and Roman Amphitheatre, North Wales** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 37, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
20. **Crongar Hill, Carmarthenshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 38, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
21. **At Lewknor, Oxfordshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 39, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
22. **Rievaulx Abbey, Yorkshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 40, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
23. **Trawsfynydd, Merioneth** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 41, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
24. **Approach to Gordale Scar, Yorkshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 42, 12 × 18.1 cm      £225
25. **Easegill, Lancashire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 43, 18.1 × 12 cm      £225

26. **Park Place, Berkshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 44, 12 × 18.1 cm £225
27. **Talland Church, Cornwall** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 45, 12 × 18.1 cm £225
28. **Stonesfield, Oxfordshire** 1944  
Lithograph, Levinson 46, 12 × 18.1 cm £225
29. **Rocks North Wales** 1949 *Illustrated*  
Coloured crayons, ink and wash, 11.5 × 26.5 cm  
Signed lower right, titled verso £7,500
30. **Rocks Bodesi** 1949 *Illustrated*  
Coloured crayons, ink and wash, 11.5 × 28 cm  
Signed and inscribed lower right £6,500
31. **Lake near Snowdon** c. 1950  
Black ink and wash, 19 × 26 cm  
Signed lower left and inscribed lower right £5,250
32. **Slope of Tryfan** 1950  
Watercolour, bodycolour and ink, 28 × 37.5 cm Private Collection
33. **Slopes of Tryfan** c. 1950  
Ink, watercolour and gouache, 53.5 × 67 cm  
Exhibited: Arts Council touring exhibition 1964/5 No. 35  
Private collection
34. **Towyn, Near Rhyl** 1950  
Crayon, watercolour and ink, 13 × 28 cm Private Collection



Cat. no. 37

35. **Rocks on Glyder Mountain** 1951 *Illustrated front cover*  
Oil on canvas, 50 × 60 cm Private Collection
36. **Tympanum with Hanging Lamps, Rowlestone** c. 1965  
Colour lithograph, Mastil coated, 50 × 67 cm Private Collection
37. **Corbels at Kilpeck** 1976  
Screenprint, Levinson 261, 23.1 × 33.7 cm Private Collection
38. **Clytha Castle** 1976 *Illustrated on page 3*  
Lithograph in colours on Arches, Levinson 257, 25.5 × 38.5 cm  
Signed and numbered 1/90 £1,000
39. **Clytha Castle, Triptych** 1981  
Screenprint in colours on Arches, Levinson 319, 73 × 59 cm  
Signed and numbered 21/70 £1,650
40. **Stokesay Castle** 1981  
Screenprint, Levinson 321, 54.5 × 77 cm Private Collection

## RALPH MAYNARD SMITH 1904–1964

41. **Recto: Mountain Landscape with a Lake** 1927 *Illustrated inside back cover*

**Verso: Landscape with Trees in a Valley** 1927

Oil on wood panel, K154.00 and K161.00, 23.5 × 33 cm

Studio stamp verso £6,500

42. **Shepherd Landscape** 1928–46 *Illustrated inside front cover*  
Oil in canvas, K170, 61 × 91 cm £25,000

43. **The Road to Woldingham** 1929 *Illustrated inside back cover*  
Oil on paper, K180, 22.8 × 32 cm  
Signed and dated lower right £6,000

44. **The Fir Wood** 1938  
Watercolour, K466.00, 12.7 × 17.8 cm  
Studio stamp £2,200

45. **Study for Free is the Prospect Here** 1940  
Pencil and monochrome watercolour wash, K513.00,  
12.5 × 18 cm  
Studio stamp £1,600

46. **Cove** 1941/2  
Watercolour, bodycolour and pencil, K553.02, 13.3 × 19.3 cm  
Titled and signed lower right £2,000

47. **Woody Bay, Isle of Wight** 1946 *Illustrated*  
Oil on paper, K893.00, 14.5 × 21 cm  
Initialed bottom right £4,500

48. **Dark Forms Sharply Lit** 1947  
Watercolour on kaolin ground, K971, 14.6 × 20 cm  
Studio stamp lower right £2,250

49. **Sand Banked up by Wind, Cannebeinne** 1950  
Watercolour and pencil, K1201.00, 12.1 × 17.8 cm  
Signed with initials lower left £2,000

50. **Dark Hill and Moon** 1958 *Illustrated inside back cover*  
Pen & ink and ink & watercolour wash, K1551.00,  
16.2 × 20.3 cm  
Studio stamp £2,500

Cat. no. 47





*Mountain Landscape with a Lake, Cat. no. 41*



*The Road to Woldingham, Cat. no. 43*



*Dark Hill and Moon, Cat. no. 50*

