

CASTLES & OTHERS

50 romantic landscapes
by

TERENCE SCALES



**NOTES & RECOLLECTIONS
FROM A LANDSCAPE LOG-BOOK**

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LONDON BOROUGH OF GREENWICH

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INTRODUCTION by Terence Scales

During the uneasy year of 1939 (the so-called phoney war,) I had been sent with thousands of other children out of London to the supposed safety of Brighton.

After a while I wrote home to my father enclosing what was to be my first serious painting, a painstaking watercolour of Brighton Clock Tower. The censor recognizing the threat to national security removed the work and my father received a letter with rather puzzling references and blacked out lines; It began a taste for romantic buildings in odd places which has grown stronger through the years and given me much pleasure in traversing England.

These landscapes, which are painted when the weather will allow, are really one half of my concern. The other half is larger very realistic paintings of casual objects on shelves, etc., known as 'Trompe L'oeil'. They make extreme demands on my skill and concentration, and it was almost in a spirit of light relief that, come April, I would leave these works to hang fire in the Studio and drive on the M.21 to Scotney Castle and into another world. These two groups of work are not alien to each other but complementary.

Rythmically it makes sense to have the freedom of direct, on the spot, landscape experience, and then when the weather is bad to stay in the snugness of the Studio and renew acquaintance with the "Trompe L'oeil" pictures in various stages of development. In this way it is like meeting old friends again.

Artists in the past diversified their interests to a far greater degree than now and were the richer, imaginatively speaking for it. Also richer was the way they felt akinship with the poets, exploring together a new arcadian innocence. Exhilarated by the sense of history in every hill and valley,

they created the tradition of the 'Picturesque'. Even now, it is impossible to live in England and be unaware of the strength of this tradition, for it re-appears in so many new forms.

Driving near Maidstone I came across a startling sight. In front of a Motor Spares store was a splendid rustic fence. The knarled branches were knotted together in a most exotic way. Looking closer I realised the whole fence was constructed of exhaust pipes welded together.

'Fantasy is a legitimate way of using our imagination to live beyond our means', it has been said, and standing in front of the Motor Shop one realised the truth of this.

In the group of Castle Paintings I indulge my own fantasies, and in painting such spectacles I hope to go on living beyond my means for as long as possible.

CATALOGUE by Terence Scales.

Interspersed between the catalogue notes are extracts from my logbook, giving information about the various places and circumstances associated with the landscape sites, etc.

The Riverside Series, Circa 1948-50

1. A day at the Races.
2. Boy at a window, Paradise St.
3. 'Our Gang'.
4. Unloading Rice at Cherry Garden Pier. Lent by Mr & Mrs Breakwell.
5. Dockers unloading Wine casks.
6. Tea Time.
7. Bermondsey Gardens are busy.

These very early watercolour drawings record impressions of my Rotherhithe boyhood.

Childhood memories of sucking Barley Sugar on Cherry Garden steps. Friendly dockers are unloading a barge of this

Still Waters at Scotney, 1977. No.37



*What a forest of woodwork in ochres and grains
Unevenly doubled in diamonded panes,
And over the plaster, so textured with time,
Sweet discoloration of umber and lime.*

JOHN BETJEMAN
Collected Poems

treasure and pass handfuls around on their way to lunch. In the evenings police launches cruise silently inshore to surprise boys playing on the barges and send them clambering to safety over muddy banks. So many young were drowned in the late 40's, that the L C C launched a poster campaign, 'Keep death off the River'.

This is really culture shock. All the works being made in my early teens after the trauma of returning to London from evacuation in Devon. Coming from the casual nature of country life to the intense family life-style of Bermondsey. A way of life I was removed from and suddenly dropped back into.

8. South London Gallery and Ruskin's Church after war damage. 1951
9. The Lizard Peninsula, Cornwall. 1957
10. The moon shines bright on Samuel Palmer. 1950
11. Cannock Chase. 1952
12. Greenwich picnic. 1956
13. Devon Hamlet. 1964
14. Goddess in a cornfield. 1950
15. Dog with a slipper. 1956
16. Tam O'Shanter. 1954

The source of No. 16 lies in the early lines of Robert Burns poem:

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
As, market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We think na on thee lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky sullen dame,
Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

Tam, on his way to the Inn, sees the kirk with sober eyes and in this early evening hour the mood is one of tranquility.

17. Gilles, the Pierrot. After Watteau. 1952
18. Sketch for Tam O'Shanter. 1954
19. Boy flying a kite. 1953
20. Wild Bull. 1955
21. Snowdrifts with cattle and church. 1953
22. Old Farm Wall, San Braz, Portugal. 1973
23. Farmyard Terrace, San Braz. 1973
24. Quinta Da Rosa, San Braz. Lent by Mr & Mrs Bryan. 1973

3rd April 1973:- 'To Millwall Docks and boarded the Monte Ulia, destination, Port of Vigo, Spain. By mid-night we are still at anchor. A lightning strike by dockers forces the captain to sail to Rotterdam to discharge perishable fruit'.

Rotterdam, 4th April:- 'We are now further from our destination than we were in London. With time to kill we strolled from the dock and into what appeared to be a Red-Light district. The streets were clean and quiet but strictly not for tourists. Beautiful Eurasian girls sitting by mirrored windows waiting for the ships to come in'.

7th April:- 'Landed at Vigo, Spain and then a marathon drive down to the Algarve. Arrived at Tommy's Farm midnight, after 5 days on a journey which should have taken two'.

12th April:- 'Began Quinta da Costa painting in evening light only. Much reflected colour here, the sun reduces everything to a glowing unity'.

25. Karwendal, Bavaria early morning. 1974

26. Mountains near Mittenwald, Bavaria. 1974

12th August 1974:- 'Arrived Ostend by ferry and drove through the night to German border. Reached Frankfurt in the rush hour and misunderstanding maps and friendly advice rode twice around the city in nightmarish traffic. From then on took smaller roads to Mittenwald'.

18th August:- 'The Germans wear national costume in an unaffected way and when they dress for the mountains they really do it properly. The local shops sell socks hanging in rows like we sell ties'.

25th August:- 'Extraordinary moment while painting at the foot of a mountain stream. A vivid green lizard crossed my foot. At the same moment a butterfly landed on my hand'.

27. The artist's Garden. Hydrangea's by a trellis. 1974
- Works 1-12. Watercolour & Ink on paper.
Works 13-24. Oil on Board & Wood Panels.
Works 25-31. Watercolour & Gouache on paper.

28. Scotney Castle in a storm. 1976
29. Cathedral Gardens, Rochester. 1977
30. 'With William Morris in mind'. 1976
(Old life room, Camberwell School of Art.)

31. The Artist's Garden. London Pride overwhelming a stone Urn. 1977

32. Lauriston Castle, Edinburgh. 1977

33. Lavatory at Lauriston Castle. 1977

23rd August 1977:- 'Intending to paint Edinburgh Castle we arrived in the excitement of Festival time. Crowds, pageants, brass-bands and morris dancers. Too busy to work here, but discovered a fairy tale charmer of a place at nearby Crammond, Lauriston Castle, capped only by the even more charming public lavatory'.

34. Caernarvon Castle from the Bath Tower. 1973

4th August 1973:- 'To Caernarvon, North Wales, a town which does not know quite what to do with the thousands of visitors in the wake of the Prince of Wales's Investiture. Apart from the Castle it is a quiet unassuming place, bathing being difficult because of the sewage.

The Landmark Trust by saving old buildings and renovating them have made the impossible come true. How else would we find ourselves staying in a 13th Century Tower facing the Menai straight'.

7th August 1973:- 'The best aspect of Caernarvon Castle was from the top of our tower. At this height the winds were so strong I was forced to stuff coconut matting between the battlements. An upended bench kept it in place and enabled me to finish one panel in very difficult conditions'.

35. Luttrell's Tower, Hampshire. 1975

23rd July 1975:- 'Another Landmark gem. Built by an Irish aristocrat for the purpose of smuggling Brandy, etc to which purpose it was admirably suited. Coast-guard vessels approaching from either end of the solent could be seen in time and thus allow the loot to be stowed safely away.

36. Scotney Castle, high summer. 1975

37. Still waters at Scotney. 1976 - 77

38. Working drawing for the above. 1976

10th September 1975:- 'A squat 14th Century tower abutts a mellow Tudor Hall. The group then continues with an elegant Jacobean ruin placed at right angles. An equation of stone, brick, stone. All reflect gently in the waters of the moat. The ultimate in romantic landscape.

Two gardeners pass by my line of vision in a punt. They are gathering water-weed, and as they move reflections of battlements are stirred into a haze of naples yellow and cloud-whites. Finished one small detailed painting very mediaeval in feeling. Must come back next year'.

- 7th November 1976. Scotney:- 'Wild stormy skies. The giant kingferns at the waters edge are crushed and broken

into Siennas and Golds. Made watercolour under great difficulties. Improvised polythene shelter which allowed work after a fashion and stopped paper getting soaked.

The place is magnificent in stormy light. The tall yews are jet-black, ferns and shrubs at their feet glorious in their death. Romance of decay everywhere. A wet difficult day with marvellous moments'.

39. Severndroog Castle. 1975

4th November 1975:- 'This castle was built as an epitaph to an 18th century Naval Commander who subdued pirate forts on the Malabar coast. In the November mists it looks very Dracula-like - or is it bonfire smoke'.

13th October 1975:- 'Left London in promising light. Arrived Leeds Castle in torrential rain. Day wasted. Subsequently abandoned subject owing to obstructive attitude of management'.

40. Rochester Castle from the Cathedral close. 1976

12th July 1976:- 'From my low eye-level its height seems enormous, and emphasised by the shouts of children carried on the wind from the battlements. Eating sandwiches I'm mistaken for an archeologist by a prelate and offered tea.

41. Saltwood Castle. 1977

25th May 1977:- 'Amazing how much difference it makes to have a family in residence and the Castle as a home. A welcome change after the cold, bare mood of many D.O.E. places and the off-putting attitude of Leeds Castle. My vantage point is a difficult one, with a dominant central tower. The walls ramble away on either side and the danger is to make the Tower too separate from the rest. Next visit I must strengthen Pine-trees in foreground and spread the focus away from Tower'.

42. Gazebo and abandoned tent, Hall Place, Leigh. 1977

43. The Artist's Garden. Rear view. 1974

44. Bridge Place, Kent. 1975

45. Great Willow at Bridge Ford. 1976

46. Snowfall at Bridge, Kent. 1976

47. Rear view of Little Bridge Place. 1975

48. 'There, where the key lies underneath the mat,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sat'.
Sir John Betjeman, collected poems.

49. Little Bridge Place, Kent. 1976

50. Golf Cottage, Bridge. 1977

51. House of the Greyfriars, Canterbury. 1977

31st August 1976:- 'Down to the Shirley's House at Little Bridge, and started a large watercolour. In front, the rustic porch is almost overwhelmed by ivy and climbing rose. The bricks are indescribably strong in a mosaic of reds and oranges. Apparently they were Dutch imports'.

5th October 1976:- 'Rain is forecast for the South-East, but, taking a chance, drove down to Bridge and completed big watercolour after 4 hours work.

Jazz in the evening at a nearby club and then back to Greenwich through gale-force winds, steam, and juggernaughts shrouded in clouds of spray. Arrived home bathed in sweat'.

Works 32 - 41, 50, 51, Oil on Board and Wood Panel.

Works 42 - 49. Watercolour, Gouache & Ink on paper.

Terence Scales was born in Bermondsey, London, and studied painting at Camberwell School of Art 1946 - 1952.

After National Service in the R.A.F. and a short spell at the Slade School he worked in a variety of jobs, including work as a Docker in the Pool of London, Groundsman, Illustrator and Teacher.

Since 1960 he has taught painting at Camberwell School of Art, and taught at Byam Shaw School since 1970.

Paintings in many private collections, recently contributing work to 'British Realists', Ikon Gallery, Birmingham 1976; Royal Academy Summer Show 1977; and the Whitechapel Open Exhibition 1977.

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