

Louis le Brocquy (1916-2012)

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This month marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Louis le Brocquy who was born in Dublin on the 10th November 1916. In a career spanning over seventy years he has received many accolades and awards. He won the Premio Acquisito Internazionale in 1956 and in Ireland he is the only painter to be included during his lifetime in the Permanent Irish Collection of the National Gallery of Ireland. He received an honorary D. Litt. from UCD in 1962 and has

received honorary PhDs from Dublin Institute of Technology and Dublin City University. His work is exhibited in many public collections including the Guggenheim, New York and the Tate Modern, London.

After leaving school he studied Chemistry in Trinity College and afterwards worked in his family's business Greenmount Oil Company. In 1938 he married his first wife Jean Stoney with whom he had a daughter and left Ireland to settle in France. In 1958 he married for the second time, fellow Irish painter Anne Madden and they had two sons. At different stages during his career he has left Ireland to work abroad mainly in Europe.

His "Tinker" paintings were created between 1945-47 and according to Dr. Yvonne Scott in *Introduction: allegory and legend* he tried to capture travelling people "as symbols of individuality as opposed to organised settled society"

Louis le Brocquy worked on his widely acclaimed series "Portrait Heads" from 1975-2007. This series includes literary figures such as W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Seamus Heaney, fellow painter Francis Bacon and singer Bono.

The Library holds 18 books relating to Louis le Brocquy which includes 7 in Special Collections. *The Irish landscape* is a collection of his Irish landscapes in watercolour. He has also provided drawings, lithographs and illustrations for many literary books including *Dubliners*, *the Táin* and *The Playboy of the Western World*. In 2000 his painting *Travelling woman with newspaper* sold for over 1.1 million sterling which made him the first Irish living artist to break the 1 million pound barrier.

After his death in 2012 President Higgins paid tribute to him saying "Louis le Brocquy's pioneering approach to art, influenced by the European masters, was highly inspirational. His work including the "Tinker" paintings broke new ground and opened dialogue around the human condition and suffering"

References:

Wikipedia

A Chronology of a life by Anne Madden