

BILL JACKLIN

TOWARDS THE LIGHT

21 July - 16 September 2023

Private View:

20 July 2023 | 6:00-8:00pm

Press Release

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Marlborough London is delighted to present *Bill Jacklin: Towards the Light*, a survey spanning seven decades of Bill Jacklin's artistic career. From early installation pieces and two-dimensional abstract 'system works' to figurative paintings and monotypes, this retrospective will showcase the artist's broad and prolific practice from the 1960s right up to the present day.

Born in London in 1943, Bill Jacklin attended Walthamstow School of Art from 1960 to 1961 to study graphic design, before enrolling in the Royal College of Art in 1964. During this time Jacklin experimented with printing techniques which also informed the conceptualisation of his 1963 installation piece *Invitation Card*, a wooden box encasing figures of saluting soldiers which – just like an aquatint print – had been exposed to varying degrees of acid.

While such early works were reflecting on the existential angst of the post-war era, Jacklin's artistic credo to 'aspire to the light' gave way to two-dimensional abstract works in the 1970s. Examining the flow of forms and the play of light and shadow through meticulously coordinated markings, these 'system works' explored the tension between the repetition of units as the base of the natural order and the asymmetrical complexity of the world's appearance.

Jacklin's 1977 series of etchings *Anemones* marked the artist's turn towards to figuration. The serialised depiction of gradually dying flowers reflect his continued exploration of light and shadow as well as the interest in concepts of seriality, repetition, and erasure.

Marlborough

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Monday - Friday 10:00-5:30
Saturday 10:00-4:00

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Bill Jacklin, *Towards the Light II*, 2023, oil on canvas

'Each time I make a line I hope to reach out to both the physical world and the metaphysical world', Jacklin states.

In 1985, the artist moved to New York City where the bustling streets provided a new setting to paint the city's 'flowing, pulsating energy'. This sense of movement is often embodied in his painted depictions of ice skaters, figures in the snow and large crowds. Similarly, the works he made during residencies in Hong Kong and Venice also seek to capture the rhythms of daily life as 'an energy mass'. Crowded city landscapes often appear as patterns of light and dark, making them seem simultaneously remote and familiar.

The exhibition will also feature Bill Jacklin's latest body of work in which he revisits both abstraction and figuration, bringing the enduring themes of light, repetition and energy into close proximity.

Bill Jacklin RA has work held in collections worldwide, including the Arts Council of Great Britain; British Council, London; British Museum, London; Royal Academy of Arts, London; Tate Gallery, London; Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; The Library of Congress, Washington DC.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Yale Center for British Art, Connecticut; Irish Art Council, Dublin; Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. Previous exhibitions include *Monotypes*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, *The Curwen Studio 50th Anniversary*, Tate Britain, London *New Monotypes and Etchings*, Skovridder Gallery, Oslo, *Urban Portraits Hong Kong 1993-95*, Hong Kong Arts Centre and *English Painting Today*, Musee d'Art Moderne, Paris. *Bill Jacklin, RA, A Graphic Artist 1961-2016*, Royal Academy of Arts, London. As a Royal Academician Committee Member for the *Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition 2023*, he curated Room II.