

Basic Detail Report



Ringed Lily

Date

1948

Primary Maker

Ivon Hitchens

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

58.4 x 76.2 cm

Description

IVON HITCHENS 1893 - 1979 Ringed Lily - 1948 Oil on canvas 58.4 x 76.2 cm Prov. presented by the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland, 1968. Ivon Hitchens is best remembered as a landscape artist, though he also painted figure studies, still-life and flower-pieces and carried out several murals. He moved to Sussex, in 1940, when his London studio was bombed and lived there for the rest of his life, concentrating on the richly wooded landscapes around his home. There he developed a notional technique, employing large sweeps of colour to suggest light, distance, atmosphere and seasonal change - the spirit of the place rather than the actual look of a landscape. Water and light reflected on water was a life-long fascination for him. Ringed Lily, painted in 1948, employs a bright palette where colour is used both structurally and expressively. A marvellous sense of rhythm and movement is created; the viewer's eye is guided circuitously across the surface of the painting by the profusion of foliage and is only gradually drawn into the picture. Hitchens attended St John's Wood School of Art and the Royal Academy Schools, London, between 1912 and 1919. A member of the Seven and Five Group during the 1930s and influenced by artists such as Cézanne and Matisse, he exhibited alongside Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and others, and developed a personal style of abstract figuration, largely through landscape painting. Following the bombing of his London studio in 1940 he moved to woodlands in Sussex, where he lived for the remainder of his life and where his mature style found its full expression. Ringed Lily exemplifies Hitchens interest in evoking the essence of a place and effects of light over direct representation of the motif. Broad sweeps of vivid colour are used both structurally and expressively, and the viewer's eye is lead circuitously over the surface of the painting by the looseness of the brushwork, only then becoming drawn deeper into the composition. Discussing this sense of rhythmic movement in his paintings, Hitchens commented, 'I use a notation of tones and colours so that the design flows from side to side, up down, and in and out. I am not interested in representing the facts as such until this visual music has been created'.