



Isolated Being

Date

1962

Primary Maker

Louis le Brocquy

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

152.4 x 91.5 cm

Description

Since early in his career Louis le Brocquy has devoted himself to themes of human isolation within the community. In the 1950's the isolated individual, in relation to the collective human condition, became the focus in his paintings of single white presences, which emerge from a pale ground. In *Isolated Being* the artist attempts to present a universal image and sense of humanity. He dismisses the straightforward representation of human form, seeking instead to evoke

its presence, to convey a sense of the psychological as well as the physical essence and thus arrive at a form, which universally symbolises the human condition. Tadayasu Sakai aptly describes this work in the following terms: "The aim of this work is not to represent the physical structure and physical appearance as well as possible. It is literally to make spirit visible, to evoke a kind of spiritual experience." A self-taught artist, le Brocquy is Ireland's best-known artist. He was a founder member, with Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone, of the Irish Exhibition of Living Art. In 1956 his painting, *A Family*, won a major international prize at the Venice Biennale. In 1958, he married the painter Anne Madden and has since lived and worked in France and Ireland. In 2004, Louis le Brocquy explained: "I have experienced one colourful period during the late 1940s, as well as a number of colour backgrounds towards the end of the Presence period. *Isolated Being* is an example of the latter. It is also an example of the semi-autonomous nature of painting itself, emerging - as it does - within its own instinctive logic. At a certain point in its development, I felt the need to turn the painting literally upside down before I could discover the image that eventually emerged."