

21st–26th January, 2020

Business Design Centre, Upper Street, Islington N1 0QH

Private View, Tuesday, 21st January 6pm–9pm

Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23rd, 11am–9pm • Friday 24th, 11am–7pm

Saturday 25th, 11am–7:30pm • Sunday 26th 11am–5pm

Art First is delighted to present work by **Simon Lewty**, **Kate McCrickard**, **Jack Milroy**, and **Donald Teskey** for this 2020 edition of the London Art Fair. Their work is held in museums and public collections in the UK, Scotland, and Ireland, and also in the USA, together with notable publications. For more information about their practice please visit their minisites with exhibition, collections and biographical history at www.artfirst.co.uk

There is new work fresh from the studio by all four artists, as well as two significant historic pieces by Simon Lewty and Jack Milroy.

Simon Lewty

Approaches to an Ancient Fair, 1995, has not been seen since it was exhibited that year in Lewty's solo exhibition *Voices from Lost Fields* at Art First's Cork Street gallery. The tall, slim drawing—245.7 × 39.4 cm—is a Midlands palimpsest of sorts with various scenes showing urban brickwork walls, industrial chimneys, a raised motorway and mysterious arches, carefully drawn in black ink and set within lined margins. There are suburban scenes too, with bungalows and a kneeling reindeer in a field, then a cluster of bathing huts with raindrops and stylised sea scrolls, below which we are presented with four puppets, waiting perhaps for a coconut to come hurtling towards them.

These vignettes float over passages of text, some of which are illegible, so that we only have hints of the comings and goings within the broken narrative—'when we return home you can tell us all that happened. I am sure you did all that was expected of you . . .'

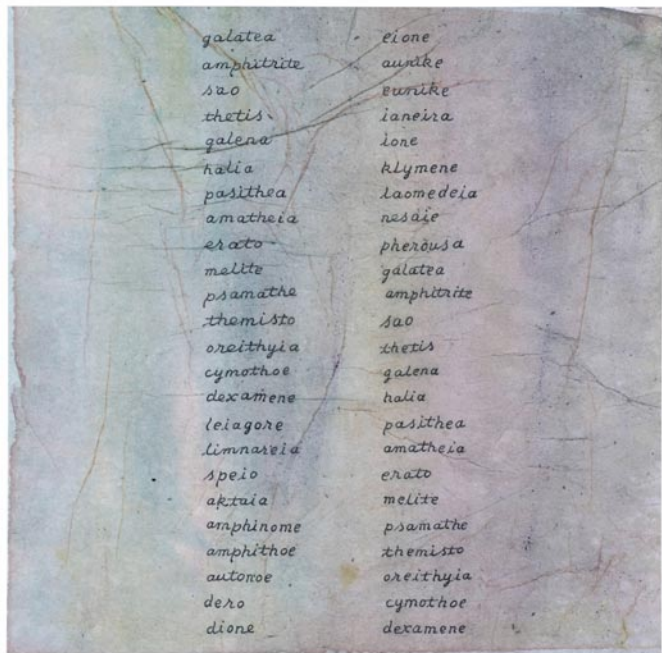
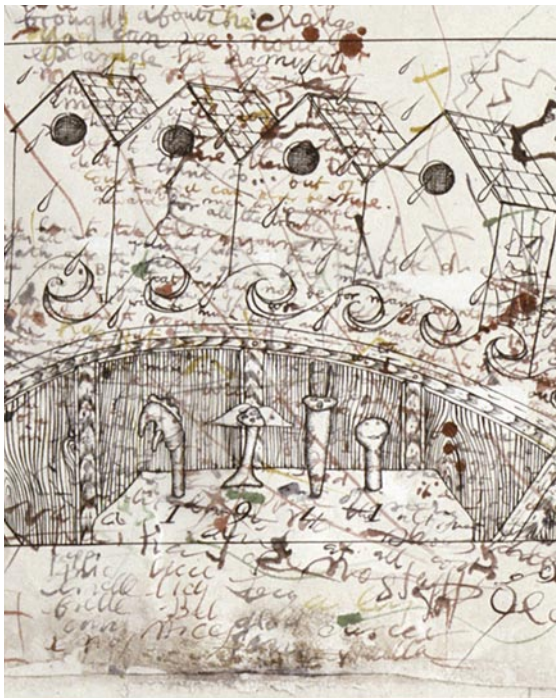
From another section, 'there is a moon and a diamond and a sun and a flash of lightning, a name and a stupidly gazing head . . . there is Venus and a door and a window and another door which has been barred . . . I have seen these, I have seen them all!'

The work has something of an ancient manuscript about it yet it is familiar, with references to the everyday, to approaches to a fair, an ancient fair full of mystery. Shades of Joyce, Beckett, and Tolkien, but in the end, uniquely Lewty with his own stream of consciousness and countless references to Middle England, his home and source of inspiration over a lifetime.

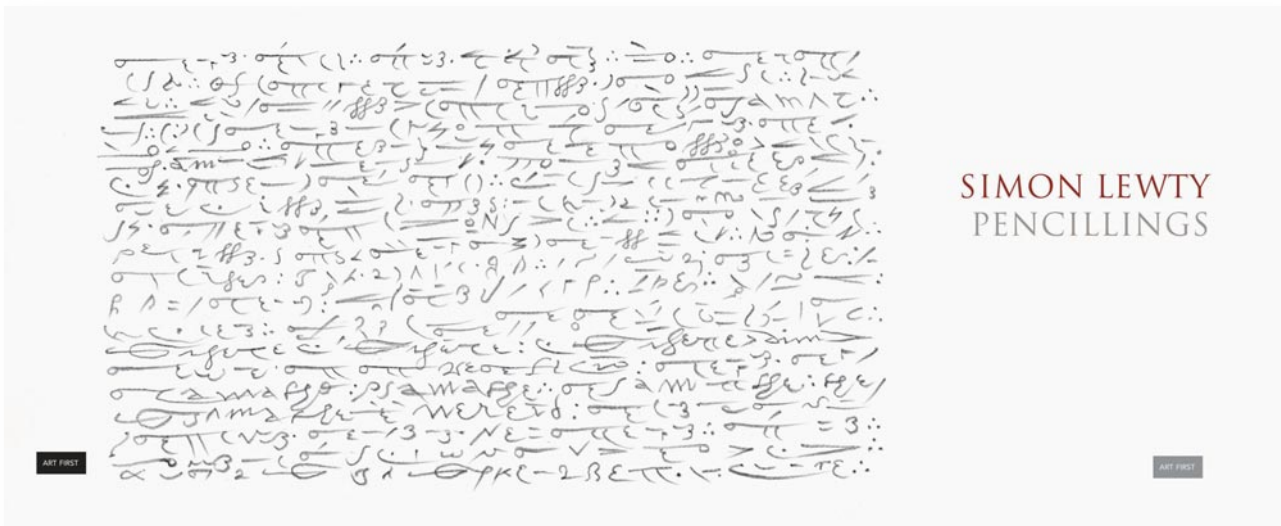
Approaches to an Ancient Fair, 1995

acrylic and ink on paper, 245.5 × 39.5 cm





Around 2000 Lewty abandoned his use of figurative imagery, deploying instead his mastery of calligraphy in many different hands to create exquisite text based drawings. The poetic narratives are all his own, some of them published separately. The small, beautiful recent drawings focus on the Nereids, those lovely, helpful sea nymphs in Greek mythology, the 50 daughters of Nereus and Doris, who often accompany Poseidon, the god of the sea. To complement them we have published **Pencillings**, an artist's book of coded text drawings, some of which, Lewty tells us, are 'invocations of a beach: the secrets of the Nereids, whose voices may cry in the murmurs of the waves. A kind of wordless sea-language'.



TOP LEFT
Approaches to an Ancient Fair (detail), 1995
acrylic and ink on paper, 245.5 x 39.5 cm

TOP RIGHT
Nereid List: Galatea-Dexamene, 2019
acrylic and ink on tissue paper, 25.2 x 25.4 cm

ABOVE
Simon Lewty-Pencillings
back & front cover spread



Donald Teskey

The sea is **Donald Teskey's** principal subject this year, and for the first time we are presenting the breathtaking new paintings to emerge from his Western Cape Residency in South Africa during February 2019. His familiar scenes of the Atlantic ocean crashing onto rocks on Ireland's West Coast in Co Mayo, give way here to a south-facing Atlantic and its meeting point with the Indian Ocean on the southernmost tip of Africa at Cape Agulhas. Looking south there is nothing between the Cape and Antarctica other than 3,800 miles of sea. False Bay, Cape Point, Kalk Bay, these are luminous, assured studies of natural forces by a painter who acknowledges a debt to the New York abstract expressionists as well as raw first-hand experience and they reveal an energy, a magical agility, in capturing the Cape's gorgeous skies, the distinctive mountain ranges, and wild rocks.



FROM TOP

Cape Agulhas, 2019
acrylic on paper, 76 x 105 cm

Cape II, 2019
acrylic on paper, 23 x 26.5 cm

Coastal Report VIII, Glenross Point, Co Mayo, 2016
acrylic on paper, 77 x 100 cm





Kate McCrickard

Straight from her Paris studio come **Kate McCrickard's** beguiling café scenes. Belleville is her 'hood' where she has come to know some of the regulars, pausing on her way to the studio to draw them and observe.

Her offset drawings with monoprint in oil on Japanese paper have become signature works within her practice, entering collections in the New York Central Library, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), and more. The butcher here has to walk two hours to get to work and then another two hours to get home, because of the current strikes. McCrickard, like other parents now has to walk her children to school . . . the city of light is fractious and tired but café life remains a sanctuary, a democratic, vital, creative meeting point for all.

During the hottest summer recorded McCrickard went to the local swimming pools, and recalled Leon Kossoff. We have a tribute here, and then she had family time in Arcachon with its beautiful beaches: *Sanders* captures the mood and enters the hidden dialogue on the stand where the Nereids, goddesses of the sea and beaches have plenty to enjoy.



FROM TOP

Butcher, Café, Belleville, 2018

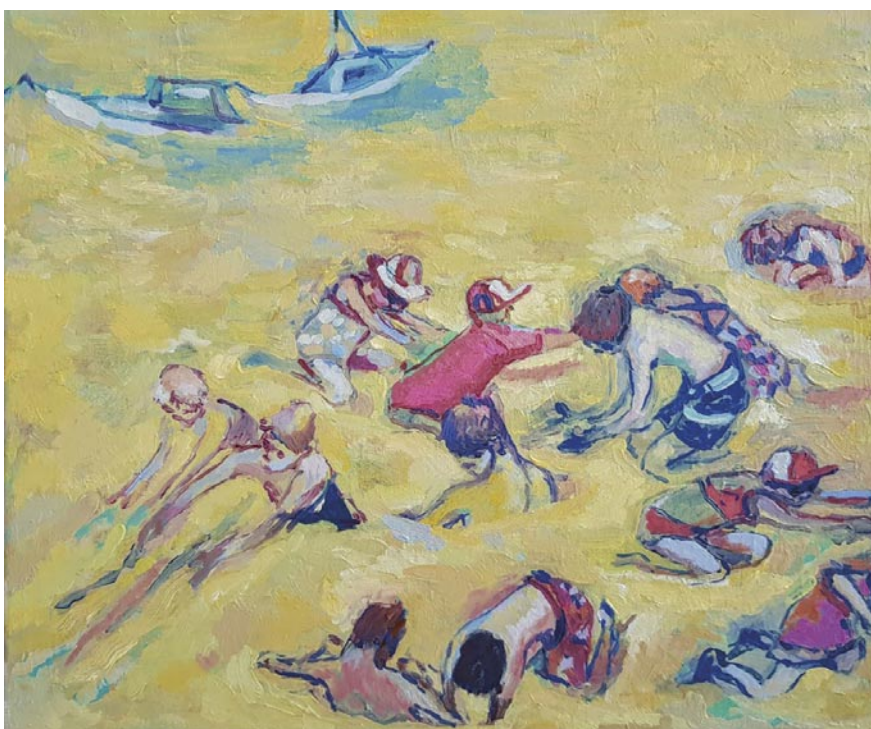
offset drawing with monotype, 47 x 63 cm

Café, 2019

offset drawing with monotype, 47 x 63 cm

Sanders, 2019

oil on canvas, 46 x 56 cm





Jack Milroy

Jack Milroy has just completed two masterful cut and constructed pieces in archival ink on film, set within Perspex boxes. *Live Well for Less*, 2019, is a metre and a half tall and it poses many questions. Why are so many of the birds perched upside down? Is the Sainsbury bag a symbol? The leaves are black and white, a star fish and an octopus make an appearance . . . this is gentle surrealism, with a point, and we all know the point, for it is climate change, a thing that matters to Milroy .

The Dream of the Customs Officer is No. V in this sexy and charming series, inspired by Le Douanier himself. It is a secret until you come and see it on the stand.

Lewty's 1995 *Approaches to an Ancient Fair* is joined by the second 'historic' work on the stand which is Milroy's 2000 *Traces of Passion*. Brilliantly cut with his scalpel, this Passion Fruit plant, with its curly tendrils and shapely leaves, is a rubbed drawing in graphite, importing the veins and textures of the plant directly into the beautiful arrangement. Timeless but poignant.

Please ask us for a copy of William Packer's monograph on Jack Milroy, *Cut*, which covers five decades of his life and work.

Jack Milroy, *Live Well for Less*, 2019
archival ink on film, 152 x 60 x 39 cm



Jack Milroy, *Traces of Passion*, 2000
cut and constructed graphite drawing, 122 x 153 cm
Gallery installation and detail

Further information

For further information, prices, and tickets for the fair, please contact:

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STAND 11