

ALDE VALLEY SPRING FESTIVAL EXHIBITION 2020

On a Turning Wing : A Celebration of Birds, Flight & Migration

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE : EMMA GREEN

~

In the autumn of 2019 the ornithologist Collingwood Ingram bought a house called the Grange in Benenden, Kent. The following spring the blossom on two cherry trees in the garden of his new home caught his interest. They were most likely a variety imported from Japan : but he was unable to identify them from other trees in Britain; nor were experts in Japan able to help. He named them *Hokusai*, after the renowned Japanese ukiyo-e painter and printmaker. The two trees are thought to have inspired Collingwood 'Cherry' Ingram's lifelong passion for identifying and breeding Japanese flowering cherries. He was responsible for the re-discovery in England of the *Great White* cherry / *Taihaku* and became known in Japan as a saviour of many other flowering cherry varieties.

The Grange was built by Gathorne Hardy - the first Earl of Cranbrook. For a short time it was the home of my great grandparents Gathorne and Dorothy Cranbrook, before they moved to Great Glemham in Suffolk. It is conceivable - but not certain - that Gathorne Hardy or a descendant was responsible for the planting the two *Hokusai* trees that inspired Collingwood Ingram's lifelong interest in flowering cherries.

On 6th March 2000 a selection of cherry trees gifted to Windsor Great Park from Japan were planted at the Grange to mark the 80th anniversary of Collingwood Ingram's discovering the *Hokusai* trees at the Grange. On the 6th March 2020 the Festival hosted a tree-planting ceremony of *Hokusai*, *Taihaku* and *Kursar* cherry trees, supplied by the Jon Rose at Botanica Plant Nursery to mark the centenary of this important event in the history of Japanese cherry blossom history - and the move of the Gathorne-Hardy family to Suffolk.

Our Guests of Honour included the writer Naoko Abe [author of '*Cherry Ingram – The Englishman Who Saved Japan's Blossom*' and her husband Paul Addison; Peter Ingram, a grandson of Collingwood Ingram, with his wife Christina; and Heather Bowyer, a granddaughter of Ingram, with her husband Michael. To celebrate these links and the establishment of a Flowering Cherry Collection at White House Farm (now numbering over 55 trees from more than 15 varieties), the Festival invited the painter Emma Green who was Artist in Residence for a *Hedge Hut / Blossom Residency* in 2019 to return as the recipient of the *Cherry Ingram Blossom Residency* for Spring 2020.

For the 2020 Spring Festival Exhibition we are presenting a series of beautiful blossom paintings that arose from Emma's *Hedge Hut Residency* in 2019. A sound installation is being planned for the largest painting : a diptych that will be accompanied by a sound composition created by Dide Siemmond and Charlotte Jolly. This will incorporate birdsong recorded at the farm in February and March 2020. New cherry blossom paintings by Emma will form a part of the 2020 Open Studios linked to the '*Cherry*' *Ingram Blossom Residency*. This residency is currently working as a virtual project we are emailing images of each cherry tree as it comes into flower. If you would like to see images of these or commission a Blossom Painting please contact the Festival Office using the email address below.

For all sales, larger images and more details : enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk



1. *Taihaku 1*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



2. *Taihaku 2*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



3. *Prunus Avium* (Wild Cherry)

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



4. *Prunus Accolade*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



5. *Cherry At The Gate*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



6. *Nectarine 1 (Great Glemham House)*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



7. *Almond 2 (Great Glemham House)*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)



8. *Nectarine 2 (Glass House, Walled Garden)*

Oil on Board
H150mm W150mm
£395 (framed)

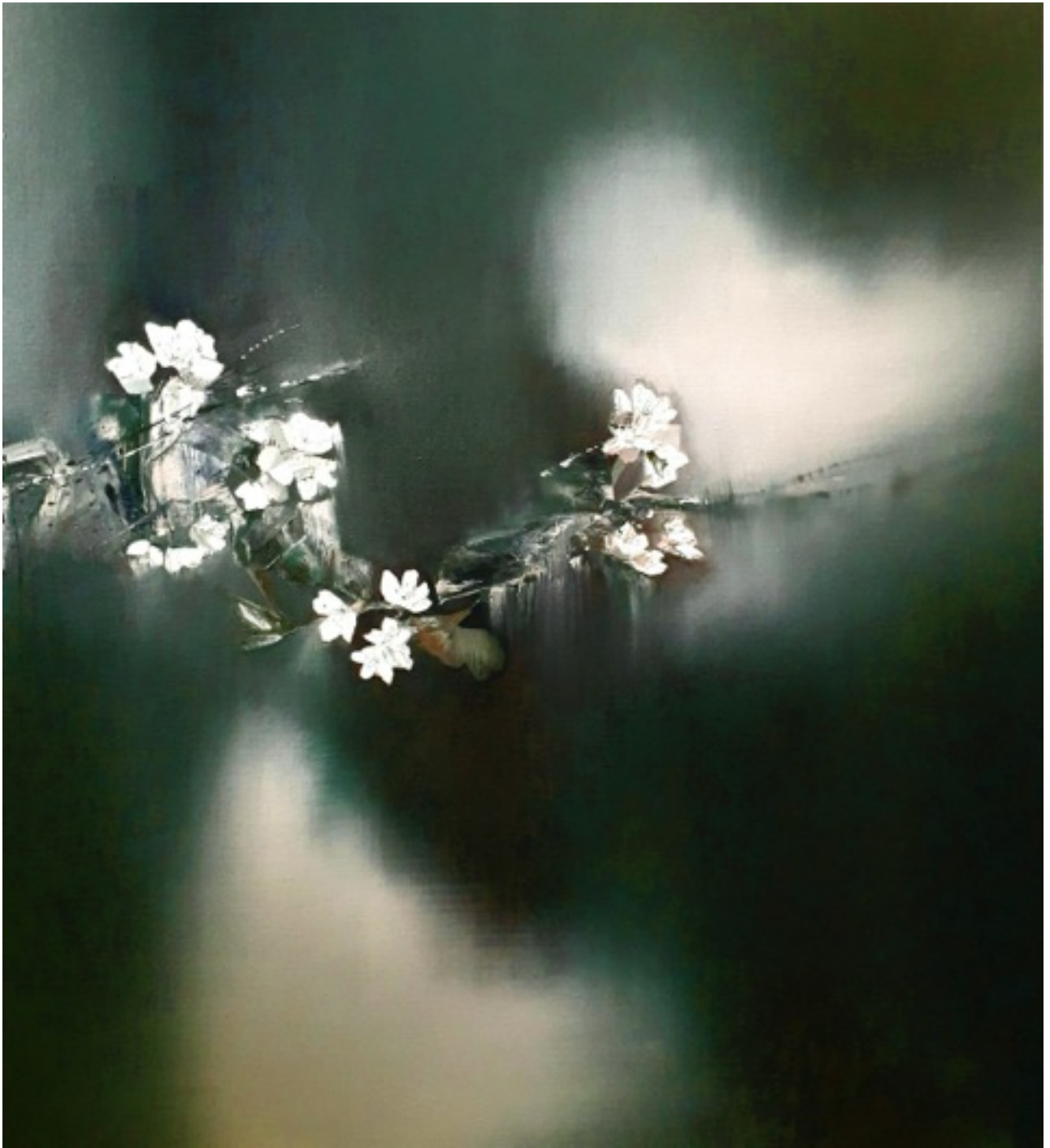


9. *Pyrus Communis* (Wild pear)

Oil On Board

H180mm W280mm:

£425



10. *Wild Cherry, Woodland Edge*

Oil On Linen:
H760mm W810mm
£1,250

ARTIST'S STATEMENT : Painting the Blossom at White House Farm.

Emma Green, Hedge Hut Residency 2019

Each year when winter is on the cusp of spring, my eye is always drawn to the clouds of white blossom that adorn our hedgerows and tow paths. So for many years now I have always painted that first blossom, Cherry Plum, and then the Blackthorn that follows.

With the Hedge Hut residency in 2019 at White House Farm, I began painting outdoors, directly in front of the many flowering cherries that have been planted on the farm, with all the joy that a new subject brings.

Each, I discovered, has its own special character, difference in petal shape and colour : from the delicate early blooms of *Winter Flowering Cherry* & *Prunus Okame*, with their small slightly ragged petals, ready to withstand the inclement chilly weather of late winter; to the broader , showy blooms of later flowering species. Among them the '*Taihaku*', was one of my favourites to paint, with its large single blooms, and distinctive copper-coloured foliage. I was so moved to discover this to be the same species, feared extinct in Japan, that was identified by 'Cherry' Ingram to be growing in England. A tree he later planted at his garden in Kent is one from which tens of thousands of trees were propagated.

Then one morning, mid April last year I saw From the Hedge Hut, looking up towards the Beech wood and footpath, a mass of blossom and an unmistakable burgundy haze in the background. This was our native Wild Cherry, *Prunus Avium*, and it was full of blooms and bees. I took my easel and board up there to paint it. It was the perfect spring morning. I was accompanied as I painted by a chorus of birds.

After painting under the Wild Cherry, I returned each day to make more sketches and notes. On the last day, the leaves were fully out, but the path was covered in petals, and the last few flowers were being tugged away in the breeze. I hope my work captures these contrasting elements of the cherry blossom : it's fleeting ephemeral beauty, but also, and this seems particularly significant to us here now, in the spring of 2020, to be a beautiful emblem of vigour, and renewal, of life.



Planned Sound Installation. I'd wanted to explore sound and painting again, after my first installation featuring a Nightingale recoding alongside a large oil on linen at the Alde Valley Spring Festival in 2015. I'd had the idea about incorporating instruments into a composition along with the recordings for some time. The Hedge Hut Residency and blossom paintings seemed the perfect subject with which to explore the idea. I am currently working on a sound installation to accompany a large oil painting from the Residency, working with the writer and composer Dide Siemmond and the musician Charly Jolly. I already knew of Dide Siemmond's work as an artist, writer and musician and it then seemed serendipitous to meet the talented clarinetist, Charly Jolly, and the sound project has flowed from there.

End of Catalogue

For all sales or for more information about any works

Please contact : enquiries@aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk

Website : www.aldevalleyspringfestival.co.uk **Instagram :** @aldevalleyfestival