

ALAN DAVIE

The Eternal Conjuror



Alan Davie, 1963, Private Collection / © The Lewinski Archive at Chatsworth / The Bridgeman Art Library

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8 MAY - 5 JUNE 2014

Monday – Friday
10 am – 6 pm
and by appointment

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Front cover: *Machine For Witch Watching No.3* Oil on canvas 48 x 60 ins Catalogue no.23

Alan Davie – The Artist That Time Forgot

When Alan Davie first visited New York in 1956, the city’s major artists – Pollock, Rothko et al – all turned out to meet him. When David Hockney saw the Scottish painter’s breakthrough exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in 1958, he immediately dropped his northern kitchen sink realism in favour of an expressive abstraction similar to Davie’s own. Davie was the enfant terrible of post-war art, the first British artist – probably the first European artist – to embrace ‘action painting’, to put himself physically in his pictures. Working stripped to the waist in a kind of Zen trance, Davie painted with a jazz freedom that blew away the cobwebs of the austerity-era art world. His exuberant improvisatory canvases had a ruthlessness, as he painted out passages of paint other artists would have killed to have created, in pursuit of a visceral anti-perfection, a sense of mystery and ritual that made the efforts of his British peers look positively effete in comparison.

Modest in stature, but muscular and possessed of apparently boundless energy, Davie pushed himself to the limits – as jazz musician as well as artist, poet, glider pilot and swimmer – embracing the infinite on many levels as the grey Fifties opened out into the technicolour Sixties.

Yet if you’ve never heard of him I wouldn’t be the least bit surprised. The best of Davie stands up beside the best of Moore, Bacon and Freud. But perhaps no other major British artist has undergone such a fall from prominence to obscurity. Not that his work was dismissed or derided by the critical establishment. He went on painting and exhibiting, pursuing his own creative preoccupations indifferent to the opinions of the rest of the world, but by the Seventies, he had almost disappeared from view.

Now Davie is on his way back, with renewed critical interest, exhibitions culminating in a major display at Tate Britain opening on 7 April, and prices for his early paintings rocketing. While you might assume that this revival was coming too late for the 93 year old artist to enjoy, that isn’t the case. ‘Really I need the whole of the Tate to show my work,’ he says with a laugh. ‘One display isn’t enough.’

The house where Davie has lived since 1954 lies in a trans-M25 nowhere land, down a lane past a McDonald’s restaurant off one of the major arteries out of London. But once you’re through the front door the rest of the world ceases to exist. The balance of pattern and startling colour – tomato red walls, mustard yellow carpet – echoes the structures of his paintings. There’s a profusion of imagery, Davie’s own alongside museum-quality ‘primitive’ art, and everywhere catalogues and books, all on the subject of Alan Davie.

Seated in the Eames armchair from which he now rarely shifts, white-bearded with long straggly hair, clad in an old fleece jacket, Davie presents a frail figure. Yet behind his apparent shyness and a certain typically Scottish reserve is a steely sense of his value as an artist and his contribution to the development of 20th century British art.

Born in Grangemouth in 1920, the son of a teacher and artist of minor reputation, Davie was able to draw and paint in an accomplished adult manner from an early age. ‘My father had these books of Holbein drawings,’ he says. ‘I used to sit looking at them, absolutely entranced. So I started doing my own drawings of people.’ Equally talented in music, he played the piano to a high standard, and after seeing the American jazzman Coleman Hawkins playing in an Edinburgh record shop took up the saxophone. He was soon highly proficient. By his own account shy and solitary, his early sense of himself was divided in a way that has characterised his whole life: on the one hand a reticent, even timid ‘poetic type’, on the other a Nietzschean superman who could excel at anything and had to pursue his own path, whatever the cost.

His tutors at Edinburgh College of Art were appalled by his apparent arrogance. ‘They used to say to me, “You’re mad, Davie. You’ve got to learn to paint!”’ he recalls with a chuckle. ‘As if painting was something you have to learn.’

After war service in the Royal Artillery, he dropped out of a teacher’s training course to become a professional jazz musician, touring as featured saxophonist with Scottish big bands. Around the same time he met his life’s partner, fellow art student Janet Gaul known as Bili. Married in 1947, they were barely out of each other’s company again.

Davie took up a travel scholarship he’d been awarded before the war, and the couple headed off on a romantic journey across war-ravaged Europe, arriving in Venice in time for the 1948 Biennale, the first since the war.

‘There were huge exhibitions of Picasso and Paul Klee,’ recalls Davie, ‘and for the first time I saw the work of my American contemporaries – Pollock, Rothko, de Kooning. I started painting again, working on big rolls of paper on the floor in cheap hotel rooms.’

A chance encounter with the stellar collector Peggy Guggenheim, who bought two of his paintings, launched his professional career.

Davie was then virtually alone among British artists in being aware of the innovations of the American abstract expressionists. The question of whether Davie followed Pollock’s lead or pursued his own parallel, but independent path has hung over Davie’s work. But Helen Little, curator of Tate Britain’s display believes the connection has been overstated. ‘The Pollock paintings Davie saw in Venice were in his early surreal style, not the famous drip paintings. Davie seems to have arrived at his improvisatory way of working quite independently.’

At Guggenheim’s recommendation Davie was taken on by the leading London gallery Gimpel Fils. But success was far from instantaneous. He didn’t sell a single painting during his first seven years with the gallery. His paintings’ primal fervour and lack of typical British gentility found more favour abroad. At his first New York exhibition in 1956, every painting sold, mostly to major institutions. But returning to Britain and a fellowship at Leeds University, Davie again faced incomprehension. ‘People thought that he was arrogant and his work was ugly,’ says Yorkshire collector Ronnie Duncan, who befriended Davie at the time. ‘There was a tradition that the university’s artist-fellows were each given an exhibition at the Wakefield Art Gallery, but the director Helen Kapp felt such antipathy to Davie’s work she felt she couldn’t go ahead with it.’

But at the last minute a light bulb went on for Kapp, the Wakefield exhibition went ahead, transferring to the Whitechapel and

launching Davie to the forefront of the British avant garde. As the paintings got bigger, the colours brighter and the prices higher, the sax-blowing, glider-flying, E-type-driving artist became a staple of the newly created colour supplements, and saw his paintings featured in the iconic Swinging Sixties film ‘Blow Up.’

But Davie was never a joiner. Although closely associated with the abstract expressionists and the St Ives artists, he remained always slightly apart.

With his house extended to include a massive studio, totally fulfilled in his relationship with Bili, he barely noticed as he drifted slowly off the critical radar.

Davie’s life completely embodies his art. ‘It’s an urge, an intensity, a kind of sexual need,’ he said, when I went to see him recently. ‘I don’t practice painting or drawing as an art, in the sense of artifice, of making an imitation of something. It’s something I do from an inner compulsion, that has to come out.’ He isn’t entirely oblivious to the rest of the world: he finds graffiti fascinating, buys tattoo magazines and thinks Damien Hirst’s ideas are ‘interesting’. But the only thing that matters to him – that has ever really mattered to him – is to get into the zone of his inner creativity, where inexplicable, ‘miraculous’ (a favourite Davie word) things happen. For a time he had the attention of the art world, then he lost it. Now the circle has come round again. Davie doesn’t go into his studio to paint any more. He no longer plays the piano, which he did for two hours a day until very recently. But he is still drawing: tiny works made using the cheapest ballpoint pen with the television blaring, the hypnotic semi-abstract patterns sometimes left open and airy, at others imbued with an ominous animal energy, densely and obsessively worked so they take on a rich, encrusted, jewel-like appearance. ‘Just making marks becomes an obsession,’ he says. ‘You’re making something that has an innate power, but which is beyond comprehension.’

Mark Hudson

The full version of this article was published in The Daily Telegraph on 22nd March 2014

In 1955, Davie made a significant breakthrough and experienced a tremendous burst of creativity with 25 important paintings appearing, twice as many as in 1954. The grid-like elements of the late 1940s and early 1950s and recessive effects of such paintings as *Between Screens* (1953) and *Altar of the Black Diamond* (1953) which had given way to the tremendously powerful abstract expressionist style of paintings like *Upsurge No.1* (1952) and *Green Egg* (1952), transform into a more elaborate mix of structure and swirling forms seen in works such as *Witches Sabbath* (1955). Mysterious cave-like structures and visceral bone formations are seen in such masterpieces as *Fate of the Lovely Dragon* (1955).

1955 is, perhaps, Davie’s greatest year, with not only the *Bull God* series, but such great works as *Birth of Venus* (Tate), *Witches Sabbath*, *Altar of the Moon* and *Seascape Erotic*. *Bull God No. 5* is a museum quality painting of great importance and the last and, arguably, the most successful of the series described by Alan Bowness as “pure inventions of never to be forgotten power”.

The dark and earthy colours and areas of extremely free and swirling brushwork mix with deliberately calligraphic motifs amid

the general chaos and turmoil. The famous blue triangle, which made its first appearance in *Altar of the Blue Diamond* (1950), and, perhaps, most famously, in *Blue Triangle Enters* (1953), re-appears to provide a sense of continuity and a break into the general confusion. The tremendous depth of the paintings is greatly added to by the brilliant red central form which anchors the composition and creates a tremendous sense of depth as the beast looks out from almost cloud-like formations, the very mists of time. The recessive effect is further enhanced by the blue triangle and the tusks of the creature which contain their own world of shape and space. There is an overwhelmingly primeval feeling and magic and mystery are everywhere as it stares out of an ancient world. Part god, part animal, the painting draws upon Davie’s most powerful themes of ritual and deep intuition. In Davie’s own words he was seeking “an expression of philosophy ... the visible sign and sacrament of all that the artist felt to be the inner meaning, the everlasting element in man and in nature, present, past and future”. Summarising his career to date in 1966, Davie stated that he was “engaged in a ritual of religious communion with the great eternal” and in *Bull God No.5* we see the embodiment of Davie’s central purpose.

1. **Bull God No.5**

Signed, titled and dated ‘55’ (verso)
Oil on board
48 x 60 ins
Opus 0.124

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Exhibited: London, Gimpel Fils, *Alan Davie*,
29 November - 7 December 1967, cat.no.93

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries,
London, 1967, cat.no.93
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.124.



The magician's box, mysterious and hiding unknown magic, might be a metaphor for Davie's own repository of tricks. Like a scene from Alice in Wonderland, Davie gives us a blue clock, dark recesses, unfathomable shapes and a writhing, anthropomorphic figure. It is similar in form to *Woman Bewitched by the Moon No.2*, and *Articulated Masks* of the same year and, recalling *Witches Sabbath*, Davie pulls together his most powerful themes of sorcery to call upon the spirits he sees deep within.

2. The White Magician

Oil on board
60 x 96 ins

- Provenance: Peter Stuyvesant Foundation, London
Carerras Tobacco, Basildon
Basildon Arts Trust
- Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London 1967, cat.no.146, illustrated plate 30
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.184
- Exhibited: Gimpel Fils, 1956
London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, *Alan Davie, Paintings and Drawings from 1936-1958*, June – August 1958, cat.no.45 (where lent by the artist)
Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *Alan Davie, In Retrospect*, 10 September – 5 October 1958, cat.no.42
Zurich, Charles Lienhard, *Alan Davie*, 30 April - 28 May 1960, no.3
Brazil, Bienal de São Paulo, 1963, no.3



In the mid 1950's, Davie started to become interested in both Zen Buddhism and Jungian psychology and found the emphasis on releasing the subconscious from the strictures of the everyday very appealing. At the time, Davie was teaching, first at the Central School of Art and from 1956-59 as Gregory Fellow at Leeds University and in his classes he encouraged his students to allow their art to grow in an unforced and relaxed way that released the creative process. Davie's painting as a result exhibits a multitudinous variety of imagery and physical mark-making. The paint is brushed, scraped, splashed and dragged across the canvas to create works which seem to suggest so much yet leave the viewer with a sense that further discoveries are still to be made.

3. Bath Darling

Signed, titled and dated '56' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 60 ins

Provenance: The Artist

Private Collection

The Frank Cohen Collection

Exhibited: Sheffield, Graves Art Gallery, *Alan Davie Retrospective*, June - July 1965, cat.no.12 (where lent by Bili Davie)

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967, cat.no.131

Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.169



4. **Arrow And Guitar Shape No.2**

Signed, titled and dated '56' (verso)

Oil on canvas

18 x 24 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York, 1 October 1959

Stanley J. Seeger Jr. Collection

Exhibited: Princeton, Princeton University Art Museum,

The Stanley J. Seeger Jr. Collection, 1961, cat.no.58



5. Snail Elements

Signed, titled and dated '56' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 60 ins

Opus 0.163

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
James Hyman Fine Art, London

Exhibited: London, James Hyman Fine Art, *The Challenge of
Post-War Painting: New Paths for Modernist Art in Britain
1950 - 1965*, 3 June - 4 September 2004, cat.no.8

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London,
1967, cat.no.126
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.163



6. **Game For Girls**

Signed, titled and dated 'APR 57' (verso)

oil on board

40 x 48 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Mr and Mrs Yoland Markson, Los Angeles

Private Collection, U.K.

Exhibited: Los Angeles, Ester Robles Gallery, *Alan Davie*, 1961

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967, cat.no.165



7. **The Divination**

Signed, titled and dated 'March 1957' (verso)

Oil on canvas

84 x 68 ins

Provenance: The Frank Cohen Collection

Exhibited: New York, Catherine Viviano Gallery, *Alan Davie*,
5 – 23 November 1957, cat.no.7
Glasgow, McLellan Galleries, *The Alan Davie Retrospective*,
1937 to the Present, 1992, cat.no.25, this exhibition
travelled to Bristol, Royal West of England Academy

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London,
1967, cat.no.164, illustrated plate 44
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.209, illustrated
plate 13



8. **Flag Dream No.1**

Signed, titled and dated 'June 1957' (verso)

Oil on board

60 x 78 ins

Provenance: Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York, where purchased by Stanley Seeger Jr., Frenchtown, New Jersey, February 1961
The Frank Cohen Collection

Exhibited: New York, Catherine Viviano Gallery, *Alan Davie*, 5 - 23 November 1957, cat.no.11
Princeton, Princeton University Art Museum, *The Stanley J. Seeger Jr. Collection*, 1961, cat.no.63
California, Los Angeles County Museum, *European Painting and Sculpture Today*, 1959, cat.no.59;
this exhibition travelled to the Minneapolis Institute and North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh under the exhibition title *European Art Today*, cat.nos 35 and 18
Chatsworth, Chatsworth House, *Frank & Cherryl Cohen at Chatsworth*, 19 March - 10 June 2012

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967, cat.no.176, illustrated plate 35
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.233, illustrated plate 15



9. **Moon's Nest**

Signed, titled and dated '1957' (on a label attached to the backboard)

Oil on paper laid on board

8½ x 18 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London, where purchased by David Rust,
September 1958
Private Collection



10. **Discovery Of The Chariot**

Signed, titled and dated '58' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 72 ins

Provenance: Alan Davie Family

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries,
London, 1967, cat.no.199, illustrated



11. **Insignias Of The Gannet People**

Signed, titled and dated '1958' (verso)

Oil on canvas

82 x 90 ins

Provenance: Bryan Thomas, Colchester
The Frank Cohen Collection

Exhibited: London, Gimpel Fils, *Alan Davie, Paintings*, March 1960,
cat.no.1 (where lent by Mr Bryan Thomas)

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967,
cat.no.195, illustrated plate 50
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.244



12. Anthropomorphic Figures No.1

Signed, titled and dated 'FEB 1958' (verso)

Oil on canvas

84 x 68 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
David Thomson Esq.

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967, cat.no.193, illustrated plate 47
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.242

Exhibited: Wakefield, Wakefield City Art Gallery, *Retrospective Exhibition*, 1 – 30 March 1958, cat.no.73
London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, *Alan Davie, Paintings & Drawings from 1936-1958*, June – August 1958. cat.no.81
Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *Alan Davie, In Retrospect*, 10 September - 5 October 1958, cat.no.73
Leeds, Leeds City Art Gallery, *Yorkshire Artists Exhibition*, January - March 1959, cat.no.131
Zurich, Charles Lienhard, *Alan Davie*, 20 April – 28 May 1960, cat.no.10
Hanover, Kestnergesellschaft, *Alan Davie*, December 1967, cat.no.11
Dusseldorf, Kunstverein, *Alan Davie*, January 1968, cat.no.11
Edinburgh, Richard Demarco Gallery, *Alan Davie*, June 1968, cat.no.21
Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, International Festival 1972, *Alan Davie, Paintings 1952-72*, 19 August - 17 September 1972, cat.no.8 (exhibited as *Anthropomorphic Figure No.1*); this exhibition travelled to Kunstverein Braunschweig and Badischer Kunstverein
London, Gimpel Fils, *Alan Davie, Major Works of the Fifties*, January - February 1987, cat.no.19
London, Barbican Art Gallery, *Alan Davie*, 8 July - 5 September 1993 (where lent by the artist)

One of Davie's most exhibited, personal and important paintings. This is Davie at his best with some of the most vigorous gestural brushwork of the 1950s. Browns and greens suffuse into the two central swirling black figures. He wildly encircles the two black marks and rips a long red line down the front of the canvas. These incredibly dynamic swirling figures are also seen, among others, in his magnum opus triptych, *Marriage Feast* (1957), *Creation of Eve* (1957), *Target for No Shooting* (1958), and, only a few months before *Anthropomorphic Figures* was painted, in the extraordinary *Farmer's Wife No.2* (Jazz Musician and Lady) with which it shows great similarities in the depiction and form of the two characters. In *Bath Darling*, catalogue no.3, (1956), we are given a glimpse into Alan Davie's domestic life and here we may well have Davie and Billi gyrating to the same music. Davie summed up his attitude to painting in the Notes to the Whitechapel catalogue:

"... one must concern oneself with the activity of painting, be it a physical one (like a dance) or an improvisation with ideas or concepts... I have in the end reached some enlightenment in the realisation that my work entails a kind of symbolic self-involvement in the very processes of life itself."

With a composition similar to *Magician's Column* (1953), Davie's strong structural background gives way to the two figures painted in a great flurry of creativity, the essence of Davie's intuitive act towards which he always strove. Bowness refers to the "anthropomorphic figures" seen in Davie's major works such as the *Woman Bewitched by the Moon* series, more accurately so described than human. He also alludes to the frequent contrast between order and chaos, so clearly shown in *Anthropomorphic Figures*.

Anthropomorphic Figures No.1 was exhibited in many of Davie's most important exhibitions, including the Whitechapel about which Alan Bowness comments that "as with many other cases it was the Whitechapel exhibition that really established Davie's reputation. He was as the Times of 6 March said "an artist who bids fair to be the most remarkable British painter to have emerged in recent years ... The Whitechapel exhibition also represented a climax in Davie's own creativity."



Red Knight is one of Davie's last 50s paintings and represents the culmination of his ideas. It is one of only ten major paintings he produced in 1959. We see in *Red Knight* a vertical schematic similar to *Satori (Enlightenment)* (1957), together with the rare and wonderful spectral presence seen only in his most important works such as *Martyrdom of St Catherine* (1956), *The Divination* (1957), and *Alchemistic Vision*, (1958). The black circles were last used most famously in the *Fish God* series and he delves even further back, to *Grey Block* and paintings of the early 1950s, for shapes within squares and his famous triangle, most notably present in *Blue Triangle Enters* of 1953. Add the wonderful colouration and free brushwork and *Red Knight* brings together much of the best of the Davie's most successful and innovative decade.

13. **Red Knight**

Signed, titled and dated '1959' (verso)
Oil on board
48 x 60 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Exhibited: London, FBA Galleries, *Alan Davie Retrospective*,
6 - 29 September 1962, cat.no.16
Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Alan Davie Retrospective*,
9 November - 10 December 1962
Bern, Kunsthalle, *Alan Davie Retrospective*,
4 May - 3 June 1963
Paris, Galerie de France, March 1967
Zurich, Gimpel & Hanover, May 1967
Hanover, Kestnengesellschaft, *Alan Davie*,
14 December 1967 - 14 January 1968; no.12; this
exhibition travelled to Dusseldorf, Kunstverein fur
die Rheinlande und Westfalen, 21 January - 3 March
1968, and to Lubech, Overback-Gesellschaft,
17 March - 14 April 1968
Stuttgart, Galerie Maerklin, May – June 1978

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries,
London, 1967, cat.no.207



14. **Magic Windmill**

Signed and dated '59' (upper left), and titled (verso)

Oil on paper laid on board

16½ x 21 ins

Provenance: Gimpel & Hanover, Zurich, 1963



15. **Red Ball Game**
Signed, titled and dated '1960' (verso)
Oil on board
24 x 30 ins
Provenance: Private Collection



16. **Tiger Dips Its Tail**

Signed and dated 'JULY 1960' (verso)

Oil on canvas

12 x 16 ins

Opus 169

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Private Collection



17. **Variation for Empty Bottles No.2**

Signed and dated '60' (lower left)

Oil on paper laid on board

16 x 20 ins

Opus O.G.205

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Private Collection



18. **Ghost Rush**

Signed, titled and dated '1961' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 60 ins

Opus 0.397B

Provenance: The Artist

Gimpel Fils, London

Thomas Dane Fine Art, London

Exhibited: London, Thomas Dane Gallery, *Alan Davie, Paintings 1955-1967*, 6 February – 3 March 2007



19. **Horse Laughter**

Signed, titled and dated 'JULY 1962' (verso)

Oil on canvas

72 x 60 ins

Opus 0.484A

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Exhibited: London, Gimpel Fils, *Alan Davie*, 29 November -
7 January 2006

Literature: Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.484A



20. **Signal's For Little Tut**

Signed, titled and dated '1963 DEC' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 60 ins

Opus 531A

Provenance: The Artist, where acquired by the previous owner
in 2007

Literature: Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.531A



21. **Little Tut's Wagon**

Signed, titled and dated 'DEC 1963' (verso)

Oil on board

48 x 60 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London, *Alan Davie*, 29 March 1966, cat.no.6

Hannover, Kestner-Gesellschaft, *Alan Davie*, 1967-1968, cat.no.33

Dusseldorf, Kunstverein, *Alan Davie*, 1968, no.31

Edinburgh, Richard Demarco Gallery, *Alan Davie*, 1968, no.30

New Delhi, Lalit Kala Akademi, *2nd Indian Triennale*, 1971, no.7

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1967, cat.no.472



22. **Little Horse's Vision of Immortality**

Signed, titled and dated 'FEB 1963' (verso)

Oil on canvas

60 x 48 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Martha Jackson Gallery, New York
Anderson Gallery, Buffalo, New York

Exhibited: Venice, Palazzo Grassi, *Visione-Colore*, July - October 1963
New York, Martha Jackson Gallery, *Alan Davie*, 9
March - April 3 1965, no.8

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London,
1967, cat.no.450



23. **Machine For Witch Watching No.3**
Signed, titled and dated 'MAR-MAY 1963' (verso)
Oil on canvas
48 x 60 ins
Opus 0.519.B
Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Private Collection, London



24. **Butterfly Catcher**

Signed, titled and dated 'SEPT 1960-MAY 1964' (verso)

Oil on canvas

60 x 48 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London

Renee L. Rupert Granville-Grossman

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries,
London, 1967, cat.no.486



25. **Romance For Moon And Stars**

Signed, titled and dated 'June 1964' (verso)

Oil on board

72 x 96 ins

Provenance: The Frank Cohen Collection

Exhibited: Sheffield, Graves Art Gallery, *Alan Davie Retrospective*,
June – July 1965, cat.no.26.
Lincoln, Usher Gallery, *Alan Davie in Lincoln*, January
1966, cat.no.13.

Literature: Alan Bowness, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London,
1967, cat.no.474
Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund
Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.532A



26. **Fish Cross**

Signed, titled and dated '1967' (verso)

Oil on board

20 x 32 ins

Provenance: Private Collection



27. **Prelude For A Bird Dance**

Signed, titled and dated 'FEB 68' (verso)

Oil on canvas

60 x 84 ins

Provenance: Gimpel & Hanover, Zurich



Phantom in the Room No.9 is from one of Davie's important 1970s series and takes a new look at his mysterious rooms of the early 1950s which were filled with such intensity and were generally sombre. Here we have a positively joyous palette, yet there is still a sense of brooding contrasted against forms which could equally have sprung from his best 1960s works. There is the familiar tight composition and careful balance and highly sensitive use of colour to produce an intriguing and strong painting. *Phantom in the Room No.9* was in the Edinburgh Festival and is a seminal 1970s painting.

28. Phantom In The Room No.9

Signed, titled and dated 'AUG 71' (verso)

Oil on canvas

60 x 84 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Gimpel & Hanover, Zurich

Exhibited: Genoa, Rinaldo Rotta Galleria d'Arte Moderna, *Alan Davie, Mostra Personale*
Edinburgh, Royal Scottish Academy, International Festival 1972, *Alan Davie, Paintings 1952-72*, 19 August - 17 September 1972, cat.no.30;
this exhibition travelled to Kunstverein Braunschweig and Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe

Literature: Douglas Hall and Michael Tucker, *Alan Davie*, Lund Humphries, London, 1992, cat.no.650



29. **For The Soul Of A Bird No.13**

Signed, titled and dated 'MAY 1975' (verso)

Oil on canvas

48 x 60 ins

Provenance: Gimpel Fils, London
Private Collection, Germany

Exhibited: Brussels, Galerie Faber, February 1976



Selected Solo Exhibitions

1948	1965
Galleria Michelangelo, Florence	Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield
1950	1966
Gimpel Fils, London, first solo show and from then on shown regularly	Usher Gallery, Lincoln
1956	Queen’s Gallery, Leeds
Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York	Castle Museum, Norwich
1957	Rotterdamsche Kunstkring, Rotterdam
Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York	1967
1958	Galerie de France, Paris
Wakefield City Art Gallery, Wakefield	University of Minnesota Gallery, Arts Club of Chicago
Whitechapel Art Gallery, London	1968
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool	Kunsthalle Dusseldorf
1960	Overbeck-Gesellschaft, Lubeck
Gimpel Fils, London	Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh
Galerie Charles Lienhard, Zurich	1970
1961	University of Texas
Galleria del Naviglio, Milan	Musée d’Art Contemporain, Montreal
Galerie Rive Droite, Paris	1971
Martha Jackson Gallery, New York	Edinburgh festival, RSA Galleries
1961-2	1973
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh	Walker Art Galleries, Liverpool
Esther Robles Gallery, Los Angeles	1975
1962	Galerie De France, Paris
FBA Galleries, London	Chateau de Lucens, Switzerland
Stedelijk Musuem, Amsterdam	Gallery Comsky, Los Angeles
1963 Galleria La Medusa, Rome	Gimpel Hanover Gallery, Zurich
Kunsternes Hus, Oslo	1976
Kunsthalle, Berne	La Medusa Galleria, Rome
1963	Grace Hokin Gallery, Chicago
7th São Paulo Bienal	1977
1964	Gallery Zoumboulakis, Athens
Gimpel Hanover Gallery, Zurich	Gimpel Weitzenhoffer Gallery, New York

Public Collections

UK
Arts Council Collection, London
British Council Collection
Tate, London
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
City Art Gallery, Bristol
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Edinburgh College of Art
Ferens Art Gallery, Hull
The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
The Fleming Collection, London
The Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate
Southampton City Art Gallery
The Hepworth Wakefield, Yorkshire
Leeds Museums and Galleries
Nottingham City Museums and Galleries
The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum, Bedford
Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery
Worcester City and Museums
University of Warwick
Hatton Gallery, Newcastle Upon Tyne
Museums Sheffield
Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester
Towner, East Sussex
University of Leicester
Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums
National Museums, Northern Ireland
St Andrews University
Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow
Lakelands Art Trust, Cumbria
Amgueddfa Cymru, National Museum Wales
East Dunbartonshire Council
Paisley Museum and Art Galleries, Renfrewshire Council Collections

Manchester City Galleries
Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester
Jerwood Collection, Hastings

Australia
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Austria
Museum Des 20 Jahrhunderts, Vienna

Brazil
Museum of Modern Art, Rio de Janeiro

Canada
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

France
Foundation Maeght, St Paul

Germany
Staatliche Kunsthalle, Baden-Baden

Ireland
Arts Council of Ireland, Dublin
Trinity College, Dublin

Italy
Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

The Netherlands
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

New Zealand
City of Auckland Art Gallery

Norway
National Gallery, Oslo

Switzerland
Kunsthhaus, Basel
Kunsthhaus, Berne
Kunsthhaus, Zurich

United States
Museum of Modern Art, New York
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Museum of Fine Arts, Dallas
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven
Art Museum, Phoenix
Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh
Museum of Art, San Francisco
Washington University Museum, Washington
Metropolitan Museum, New York

Portland Gallery and Goodman Fine Art
would like to thank all the collectors
who have been kind enough to lend works to this exhibition.