

# JOHN BLACKBURN MBE

(1932 -2022)

## ACADEMIC HISTORY

1947-50	Educated St Gregory's School, Luton Thanet School of Art
1950-52	Maidenhead School of Art
1952-54	National Service Royal Air Force

ARTIS Gallery has represented Blackburn since 2009 – and held an annual exhibition for him over the past sixteen years. Since Blackburn's death in October 2022, his family in England have continued to release works to ARTIS.

John Blackburn spent a decade in New Zealand after serving with the Royal Air Force and met his future New Zealand wife. On their return to his native England in 1961, he was arguably the most radical painter working in Auckland. Strangely, there is not a paragraph in New Zealand art history about him – besides his inclusion as one of ten artists at the Auckland City Art Gallery in November 1959. Colin McCahon, who selected the artist for this exhibition, spotted Blackburn's work at his first solo exhibition at Auckland's short-lived *Circle Gallery*.

From 1961 through to 1980, when he changed his focus due to a business venture opportunity, Blackburn was an adventurous and exciting full-time painter. It was the chance discovery of some of Blackburn's works acquired in the 1960s by the renowned collector, curator and writer, Jim Ede, which led to renewed interest in the artist. After an absence of twenty-five years, Blackburn was re-launched back into the art world with a full-scale retrospective, including striking large new works. This show at Folkestone's *Metropole Galleries* in 2006 was followed by an exhibition at the prestigious *Osborne Samuel Gallery* in Mayfair, London. *Osborne Samuel* Gallery continue to represent Blackburn since his death in 2022.

## SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2025	<i>JOHN BLACKBURN</i> , 4 – 18 February
2024	<i>Reminisce</i> , ARTIS, 27 February – 10 March
2023	<i>90 Years</i> – ARTIS Gallery 14 – 28 February
2022	<i>An Unbroken Duality</i> – ARTIS (with Margaret Lovell)
2021	<i>Extended Stay</i> - ARTIS
2020	<i>Parallel Reflections</i> - Blackburn & Fountain, ARTIS
2019	<i>All Fired Up</i> – Blackburn & Lovell, ARTIS
2018	<i>Two Modernists</i> – Blackburn & Panyoczki, ARTIS
2017	<i>New Works</i> , ARTIS Gallery, Auckland
2016	<i>Intimate Works</i> ARTIS Gallery, Auckland, NZ Osborne Samuel Gallery, Mayfair, London, UK The Open Eye Gallery, Edinburgh Ronnie Duncan Gallery, Ilkley, Yorkshire UK
2015	<i>Inspiration</i> ARTIS Gallery, Auckland, NZ
2014	<i>In Absentia</i> ARTIS Gallery, Auckland, NZ
2013	Osborne Samuel Gallery, Mayfair, London, UK
2012	<i>Mt Maunganui Paper Suite</i> , ARTIS Gallery, Auckland NZ
2011	<i>In the Shadow of the Mount</i> , ARTIS Gallery, Auckland NZ
2010	<i>The Muriwai Paintings</i> , ARTIS Gallery, Auckland NZ <i>John Blackburn: Paintings</i> , Lemon Street Gallery, Truro, Cornwall
2009	<i>Back After All These Years</i> , ARTIS Gallery, Auckland NZ Osborne Samuel Gallery, London Paulnache Gallery, Gisborne NZ
20076	Metropole Gallery Folkestone Osborne Samuel Gallery, London
2005	<i>Abstract February Series</i> , Westbere/Littlebourne

## PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Cambridge University: Kings; Magdalene; Clare; Jesus; Girton; Gonville & Caius  
University of Kent: Rutherford College  
Royal College of Physicians, London  
The British Embassy in Paris (on loan from Kettles Yard)  
Linacre House, Oxford  
Essex University  
Newcastle University  
Dublin University  
Kettles Yard, University of Cambridge (permanent and loan collections)  
The Bank of Ireland, London