from Kate Milsom

Description

The first painting I ever owned was a Fisk. I had spied it the first time I was whisked up to the lofty heights of Eugeneâ??s garret at the top of the Kilvert Gallery. It was a small landscape of Hever Castle, propped in a corner, catching the light like a golden treasure. The castle, not grey stone, but vibrant coral, against a primrose sky with tangerine clouds â?? the lime green topiary reflected aubergine in an orange moat â?? I knew I HAD to possess thisâ?¦ but I had no money at the time, and having never bought a piece of art before was still under the illusion that these things were luxury itemsâ?¦ I now know of course that these things are ESSENTIAL..but I was youngâ?¦.

Over the next year, every subsequent visit I made to the garret I would nervously check it was still there. As Eugene produced more and more work it would become obscured behind the latest creation but I would always spy it eventually, and edge it out so I could look at it while we talked and Eugene continued to paintâ?¦and paintâ?¦ until the proliferation of work at the top of the house began to worry Lizzie who was convinced that there would be a day when the sheer weight of it all would come crashing through the ceiling.

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There was too much for an exhibition, and no space now in the studio for a willing buyer to be able to look through what was there, but Lizzie was adamant work must be sold and came up with the idea of a printed catalogue studio sale. Knowing I worked on â??the machineâ?• as Eugene referred to it, they asked me if I would catalogue what turned out to be roughly 100 paintingsâ?¦and how much this would cost?
Hever Castle, I said without hesitation.

This painting, hung in my bedroom for the last 25 years, has been the most precious of preciouses. And Eugeneâ??s unceasing kindness, love, generosity and friendship have been there with it, for all that time too.

As we all know, Eugeneâ??s friendship was no small thing. It demanded much but also always gave more. The last time I saw Eugene he said, as he often did, playing the petulant child â??this other life you have, that takes you so far away â?? its MOST inconvenient to MEâ?•â?¦. Well Eugene â?? this other life you now have that takes you away â?? it is indeed most inconvenient to us.

Category

1. Tributes

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