

Stone in Estuary, 1935

Graham Sutherland OM

Sold



REF: 10733

Height: 30 cm (11.8")

Width: 23 cm (9.1")

Description

Graham Sutherland O.M. (British, 1903-1980)
Stone in Estuary
signed and dated 'Sutherland/35' (lower right)
pencil, gouache, pen and ink
30 x 23 cm. (11 3/4 x 9 in.)

In 1934, Sutherland embarked on a voyage of discovery in rural Pembrokeshire. It was here that he considered he really learned to paint. He revelled in selecting a small area of land and examining the minutiae contained within it. No stone was left unturned, literally, as he sought out primitive forms and shapes.

Of the estuary at Sandy Haven, he said "I am obsessed by those shapes in the mud" (Rosalind Thuillier, Graham Sutherland, *Inspirations*, Lutterworth Press, Guildford, 1982, p.32). This fascination is explored in the present work as the artist conveys the relationship between organic forms, light and shade. Grey rocks and brown soil take on hues of mauve, yellow and other colours as the weather shifts and changes.

"All in all, I look on the hidden places where I work as a marvellous playground - my estuaries as great 'salons' where I am alone with the 'personages' I find" (Op.Cit. p.36)

GRAHAM SUTHERLAND (1903-1980)

Born in London in 1903 Sutherland initially embarked on a career in engineering but abandoned a railway engineering apprenticeship after a year in order to study at Goldsmiths' College of Art, London from 1920 to 1925, where he specialized in engraving and etching. His early pastoral prints display the influence of the English Romantic Samuel Palmer, whereby prefiguring Sutherland's later involvement within the Neo-Romantic movement in Britain.

Sutherland held his first solo exhibition in 1925 and was subsequently elected to the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers in the same year. However the Great Depression of the early 1930s caused the collapse of the print market so Sutherland began to teach, design posters and to paint. Sutherland experimented with the mediums of oil, watercolour and gouache in the form of imaginary and atmospheric landscapes, created following his first trip to Pembrokeshire in 1934. He made sketches and watercolour studies of the area and worked from these and his memory on returning to his house and studio in Kent. Sutherland was fascinated with what he saw as the magic of Pembrokeshire's landscape and returned there every year until World War II consistently finding inspiration within the environment for his anthropomorphic natural forms.

As Kenneth Clark stated, 'Mr. Graham Sutherland has described how on his country walks objects which he has passed a hundred times - a root, a thorn bush, a dead tree - will suddenly detach themselves and demand a separate existence'. This also summarises the neo-romanticism within Sutherland's work, the intense and mysterious nature of his landscapes inspired fellow neo-romantics such as Paul Nash, John Craxton and John Piper. In 1938 and 1940 Sutherland had his first two one-man exhibitions of drawings and oils at Rosenberg & Helft and the Leicester Galleries respectively. In 1940, the year the present work was created, Sutherland also designed the ballet costumes and décor for Frederick Ashton's new ballet *The Wanderer* 1940.

Sutherland was employed as an official artist for the d...