

Open Eye – Leon Morrocco – Terre et Mer

Open Eye Gallery opens its summer exhibition on Friday. Terre et Mer is a new series of paintings by Edinburgh-born artist, Leon Morrocco, RSA, RGI.

Morrocco's sunny paintings capture the warmth of the southern European lifestyle, and the bright and calming beauty of its sea and mountainscapes.

For some of these works he moved up into higher ground in the Alps, and takes us into a colourful realm of harmony and comfort. The contrast with the more rigid and architectural cityscapes of the coastline reminds us of the multifaceted aspects of life, and encourages us to be more mindful of our environment and how we connect with it.

Leon Morrocco returns to the mountains of the South of France in a body of works which takes us from the streets and beach fronts of Nice to the hillsides of Roquefort-les-Pins. It was a visit to a family home in the heights of the Alpes-Maritimes that initially inspired him to paint the drama of the hillside.

Stepping back from the overwhelming popularity of the French Riviera, Morrocco then reconnected with the wonders of his cherished mountains, where he could explore the expansiveness of nature, rather than the confines of the architecture by the sea.

He said: "It was a relief to be using organic shapes... it was looser and freer, it freed me up actually. The process of painting became more open-ended... and somehow with the landscape I was able to change quite a lot, without feeling like I was diverging from the subject matter, I was actually adding to it, I was able to be more creative with the shapes."

This show might just transport you to the bewitching French Mediterranean.

The artist spoke to The Edinburgh Reporter in the gallery and explained where his new love of the mountains began. He said: "It started really, because my son bought a house in the south of France. And underneath the house was a large sort of basement, which I made into a studio and he he was very pleased to have me there, which was quite nice. But it was outside Nice, in the foothills of the Alps. And this took me in a different direction. So instead of going to the coastline, which was my normal thing- and the coastline down there is so developed and so busy that it turned me off a bit. And I was really wondering what I was going to do. So I started diving inland, and I was completely knocked out by the escarpments, and the kind of volcanic shape of and the mountains were just so impressive."



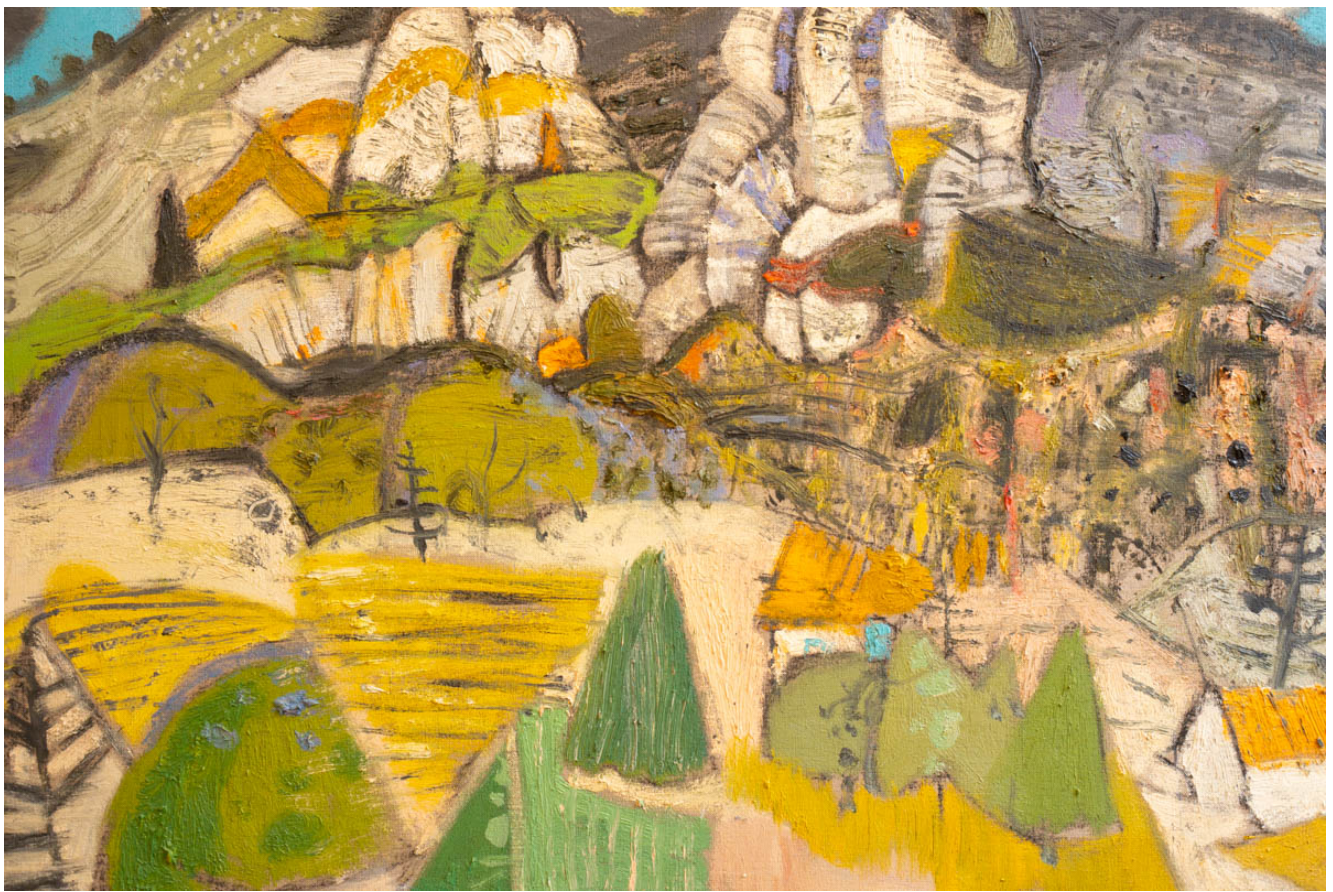
The scale of some of the paintings is huge...

- Terre et Mer 26 July to 24 August 2024
- Open Eye Gallery 34a Abercromby Place EH3 6QE

<https://www.openeyegallery.co.uk>



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