

PETER HOWSON

PHLEGETHON

21 CORK STREET
LONDON, W1S 3LZ

T: +44 (0)20 7439 7766

13 October- 20 November, 2021

press@flowersgallery.com
www.flowersgallery.com

Flowers Gallery is pleased to present new works by Scottish artist Peter Howson. The exhibition of apocalyptic paintings and drawings takes its title from the mythical river Phlegethon, also known as the 'river of fire', which featured notably as a site of punishment in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

Throughout his career, Howson has tackled the subject of human conflict and destruction, both in his role as a former official war artist, and in his observations of everyday struggles.

In this exhibition, Howson explores themes of prophecy, suffering and redemption, aligning his harrowing vision of contemporary crisis with a collision of references stemming from medieval literature, Renaissance poetry and 20th century science fiction.



Vox Et Praeterea Nihil (A Voice and Nothing Besides), 2021,
various inks on paper, 51 x 76 cm

Howson's epic scenes seethe with figures, often linked together by wire-like tendrils entangling the turbulent mass of limbs. Amongst narrative allusions to political events of our times, suggested by images of national flags, angry mobs, war and technology, Howson introduces symbolic motifs to address enduring questions of faith and spirituality. Texts engraved in pub signs and placards often provide wayfinders to navigate the images, such as the reference to John Donne's *Holy Sonnets* embedded in the sign 'La Corona' or the memento mori message of 'The Passing Bell', suggesting a meditation on mortality and impermanence.

For more information and images please contact Hannah Hughes: press@flowersgallery.com
+44 (0)20 7920 7777



Phlegethon (The Fiery Third River of Hell), 2021
oil on canvas, 153 x 183 cm

ABOUT PETER HOWSON

Peter Howson was born in London in 1958. Howson was a focal member of the group of young artists to emerge from the Glasgow School of Art during the 1980s dubbed the New Glasgow Boys, and one of his generation's leading figurative painters. He studied at Glasgow School of Art from 1975 - 1977, and returned in 1979 to complete a Masters degree. In 1985 he was the Artist in Residence at the University of St Andrews and also a part-time tutor at Glasgow School of Art. Howson witnessed the harrowing realities of combat as an official war artist appointed by the Imperial War Museum during the Bosnian War from 1993-4, culminating in a solo exhibition at IWM London in 1994. In 1996 he was awarded Doctor of Letters Honoris Causa, University of Strathclyde. Howson has exhibited extensively in the United States and Europe. His work is represented in public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate, London; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the British Museum, London; Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow; LYC Collection, Guangzhao, China; and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. His work was the subject of a feature documentary film *Prophecy* by director Charlie Paul in 2019.

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11am - 6pm or by appointment.

All images (c) Peter Howson, courtesy of Flowers Gallery.