

Peter Brook

LOOKING BACK AT THE PENNINES

17th October - 5th November 2013



Foreword

Peter Brook's quintessentially English art captured the essence of the rural North, just as Lowry did with the urban, industrial North – yet both cultivated many diverse themes. Neither was simply a provincial painter.

Peter was prolific. He painted for sixty years in the Yorkshire Pennines and Dales, for which he is perhaps most famous, but also in Cornwall, the Potteries, Lancashire and Scotland, although he never worked on the continent because he would not leave his beloved dogs. His work was collected by stars of stage and screen in England, Germany, Scandinavia, Switzerland and America, yet he remained quiet, shy and retiring, if supremely confident in his own skills and reputation.

He trained at Goldsmith's College, London and became an innovative and much-loved teacher before obtaining a contract from Agnew's of London which allowed

him to concentrate solely on painting. He was familiar with a wide range of artists, from the naive work of the Americans, to the freshness of the Impressionists and the abstraction of the avant-garde.

He made technical experiments - mixing fine sand-stone into his paints to give architectural solidity, and using rollers to give the flatness of finish he associated with Victorian and Edwardian photographs. He always 'worked out' how to convey an exact image, from the sturdy, lonely Tudor farms of the Pennines to the eerie distances of Scots mountains and lakes and the flapping marquees of agricultural shows.

Walls, trees, barns, people pottering and sheep wandering fascinated him, and his sharp eyes and original wit evoke the poetry of the mundane, the 'dearness of common things', and nostalgia for a vanishing civilisation with its stress on communal values. He relished the humour of

eccentricity and idiosyncrasy and hated pretentiousness against which he would swear violently.

He knew the 'loneliness of the long-distance runner' and loved the impact of snow on fields and farms. He came from a farming family and never forgot his forebears.

Peter Brook used his titles poetically, thought deeply about them and often hinted at the inspiration for his images through them. His work can be seen in many public collections in Yorkshire.

He had a unique gift for making us see the world in a different way – a true quality of a great artist. He died in 2009 and is much missed by his widow and childhood sweetheart Molly, his family and a legion of friends.

Stuart M. Archer, M.A. (Cantab).

October 2013

Front Cover: Peter Brook, *Worsening Conditions*, Oil on Board, 20" x 27 ¾"

Introduction

I got to know Peter Brook in the last six years of his life and it was a real treat to visit him and his wife Molly at their house in Brighouse. He was a quiet, gentle man with a wry sense of humour and some great one-liners. He was very knowledgeable about all aspects of art and we had numerous discussions about L.S. Lowry and his work – a well-known passion of mine.



Although he mainly painted Pennine landscapes Peter Brook was far more than a regional painter. His work is collected all over the world and he is undoubtedly one of the North's most important artists. In 1969 he had a sell-out show at Agnew's of Old Bond Street, one of London's most prestigious galleries. He was their answer to L. S. Lowry who at this time was exhibiting just around the corner at the LeFevre Gallery on Bruton Street. He exhibited at Agnew's for over 10 years and during this period his work was bought by celebrities such as James Mason, Tom Courtney, Ian La Frenais and several Hollywood film producers.

In the same way that Lowry documented the decline of the industrial North, Peter recorded the changing landscape of the Pennines and its disintegrating rural economy. His distinctive snow scenes, deserted farmhouses, derelict mills and lonely valleys are symbols of a vanishing world, well known and loved far beyond his native Yorkshire.

Ordinary people, ordinary buildings and ordinary animals make an extraordinary impact because of his brilliant observation and distinctive artistic judgment. Many of the later paintings feature Peter and his faithful dog Shep. Another one of his distinctive trademarks are the titles he

writes at the bottom of his paintings. Some are short and descriptive, others are ironic, occasionally bizarre and may go round two sides of the painting.

He enjoyed great commercial and critical success during his lifetime and left behind a wonderful legacy. His work is held in many prestigious public and private collections and 40 of his paintings can now be seen online on the BBC's 'Your Paintings' website.

All of the paintings in this exhibition have come from the Peter Brook estate and most periods and genres are represented in the show. I would like to thank Molly and her family for giving us access to this amazing body of work and to David Walker for all his help in putting the exhibition together. This is probably the largest number of Peter Brook paintings ever to be exhibited in a commercial exhibition in the UK.

Bill Clark

Bill Clark

October 2013

ClarkArtLtd



Hey Up! An Early Morning Jet Plane Arriving in Manchester and An Early Lamb in Bacup, Oil on Board, 20" x 28"

HEY UP!

ARRIVING IN MANCHESTER

PETER BROOK



Early Lamb, Oil on Board, 20" x 27 3/4"



Leaving Holme But Treading Carefully, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 144.



Only Thinking About Climbing the Wall, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"



Stray Calf Looking at You, 1980, Oil on Canvas, 12" x 12"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"*
by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 258.



Talk About Dogs, Oil on Board, 12 ¼" x 12 ¼"



Ewe and Lamb, Oil on Canvas, 7" x 11"



Hannah Hauxwell and More Snow Falling,
Circular Oil on Board, 29" x 29"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook*,
In and Out of The Pennines Even
1992 by Stuart Archer. Page 20.



Hannah Hauxwell (born 1 August 1926) is a retired English farmer who has been the subject of several television documentaries on Yorkshire Television. She was living alone at Low Birk Hatt Farm in an isolated area of the North Riding of Yorkshire (now County Durham) when she came to public attention. She was first featured in a *Yorkshire Post* article published in April 1970 entitled "How to be happy on £170 a year" and then, in 1973, on an ITV documentary, *Too Long a Winter*, made by Yorkshire Television, which chronicled the almost unendurable conditions of farmers in the High Pennines in winter.

Then a 46-year-old spinster, she toiled alone at Low Birk Hatt Farm, a dilapidated 80-acre farm that she had run by herself since the age of 35. With no electricity or running water her life was a constant battle against poverty and hardship, especially in the harsh Pennine winters, when she had to work outside tending her few cattle in ragged clothes in temperatures well below freezing.

Peter Brook and his wife Molly first met her in 1978. Peter found here a subject which fused all of his interests and over the next three years he produced a series of over 50 paintings featuring Hannah and her farm. These were successfully exhibited at Agnew's in London and have since become highly collectable.

Hannah became an international star, television personality and a publishing phenomenon. She now lives in a retirement home less than five miles from Low Birk Hatt Farm.

Hannah Hauxwell with Her Young Dog Oofie, Christmas 1979, Oil on Canvas, 20" x 8 ¼"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992. and in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 221.



Being Threatened Again, Oil on Canvas, 28" x 40"



April in England, Oil on Canvas, 28" x 39 3/4"

Leaving Abandoned Land, Oil on Board, 20" x 28"



LEAVING

ABANDONED LAND

PETER BROOK



In Winter, Drawing Outside, Oil on Board, 19 ½" x 22 ½"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 176.



An Old Fashioned Christmas Even, Oil on Board, 24" x 30"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker, 2012. Page 142.



Cold Dawn at 1200' A.S.L., Oil on Board, 24" x 33"



High Tea, Oil on Board, 20" x 28"



Silently Falling Snow, Oil on Board, 18 1/2" x 28"



The Main Road is Closed Too, Oil on Board, 20 ¼" x 16 ¼"

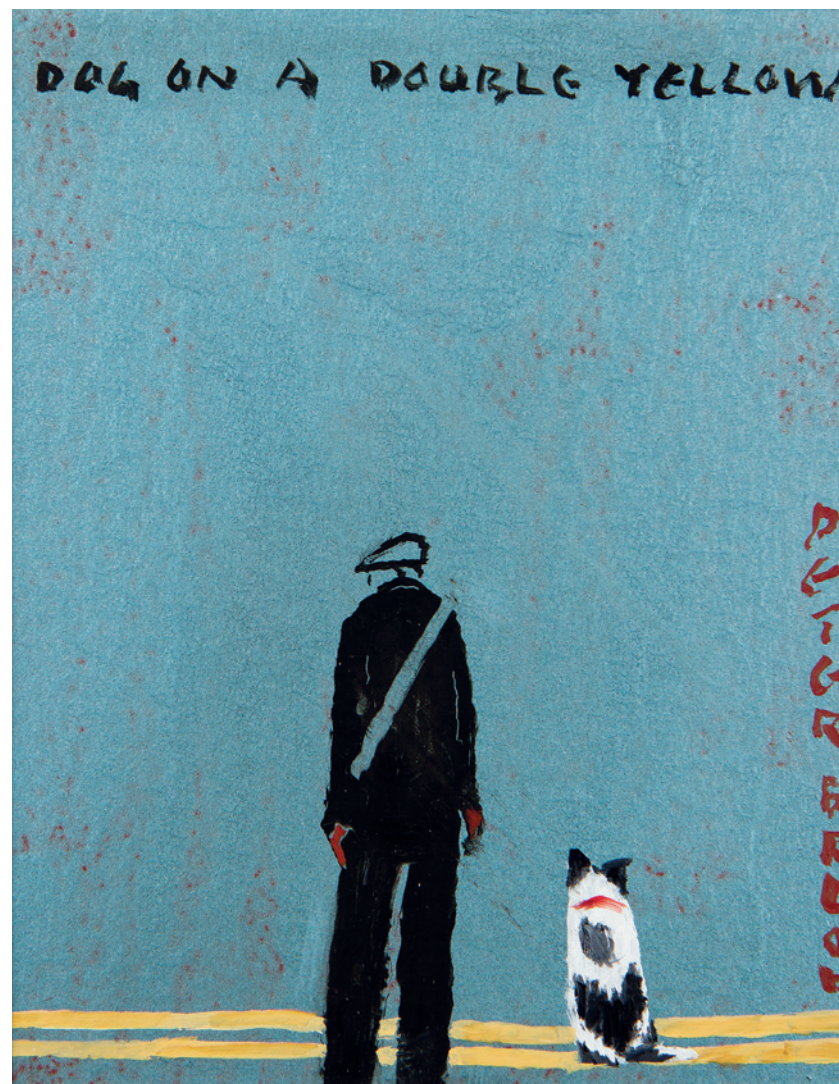
This painting is illustrated on the dust jacket of *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"*, 2012
by Stuart Archer and David Walker.



The Pennine Winter, Oil on Board, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
Illustrated in *Peter Brook, In and Out of the Pennines Even*, 1992 by Stuart Archer. Page 62.



Peep O! Border Collies is Best, Oil on Board, 7" x 6"



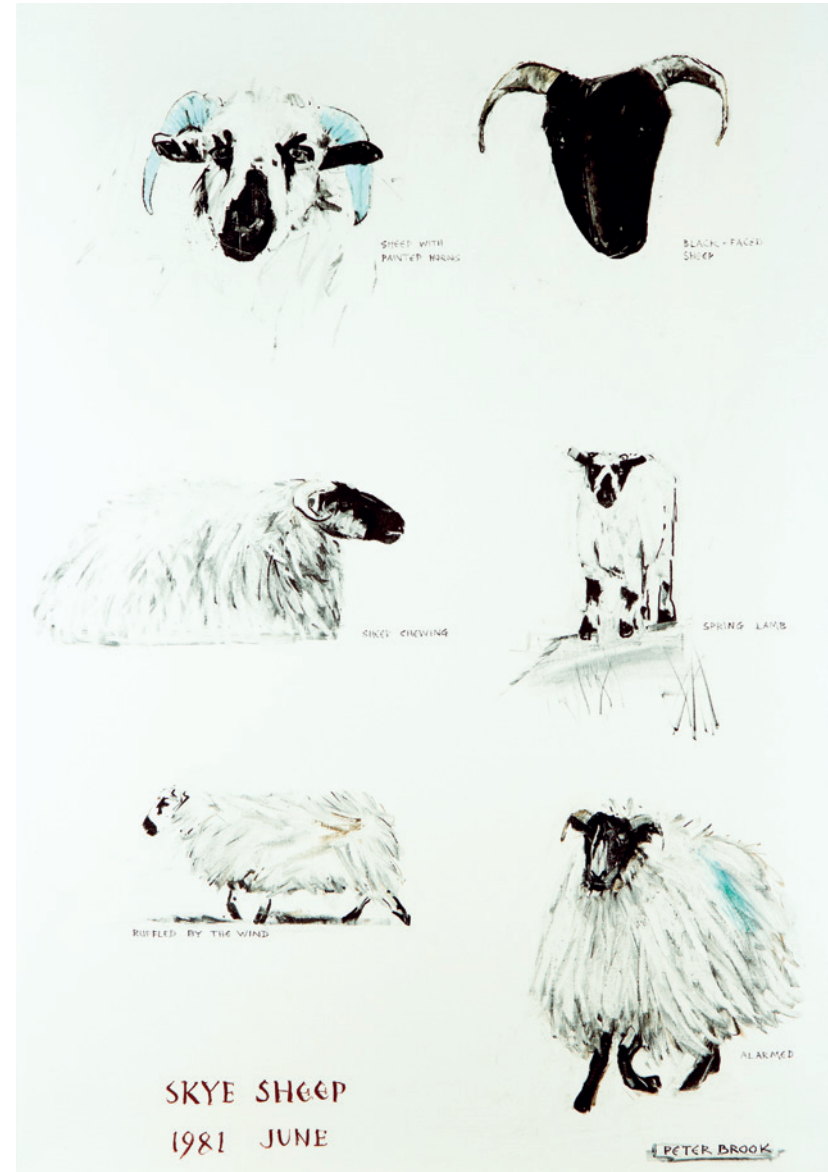
Dog on a Double Yellow, Oil on Board, 7 3/4" x 6 1/4"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker.
2012. Page 273.



Crossing in Car Headlights and Moonlight, Oil on Board, 8" x 14"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook, At Home in the Dales*. Page 10.



Snow on Snow 4 PM, Oil on Board, 28" x 20"
 Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 179 and in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Skye Sheep, 1981 June, Oil on Canvas, 30" x 20"
 Illustrated in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992.



Thick Drifting Snow, Oil on Canvas, 20"x 30"



Walking in the Dales in Winter, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012.

Page 149 and in *"Peter Brook – At Home in the Dales"* by Stuart Archer. Page 52



Shelter – Then and Now ... If You Need It, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Sheep Looking for Tit-Bits, Oil on Canvas, 20" x 30"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992 and in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 227.



Long Pennine Farm with Haystacks, Oil on Canvas, 20" x 30"
This painting is illustrated in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992.



Monday – Peter Brook and Dog Turning Away From This Mad Duck, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 146
also in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



There's Something About a Hen Hut, Oil on Board, 16 ½" x 20 ¼"



Winter Morning, Slowly Drifting Mist, Oil on Board, 16 ½" x 20 ¼"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 145.



Notice, Oil on Board, 7 1/2" x 9"



Upper Crumlin, Inside Out, Oil on Board, 7 3/4" x 8"



At The Last Refuelling Station Before the Moor, Oil on Board, 15 3/4" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 100.



2 Sheep Watching You, Oil on Board, 16 ½" x 20 ¼"



Calling the Dog, Oil on Canvas, 20" x 28"



Another Late Sunday Lunch with News of the World and an Approaching Storm, Oil on Board, 20" x 28"



Blowing Snow on Ice, Oil on Board, 20" x 24"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992.



People Don't Come Here Often, 1979, Oil on Canvas, 20" x 24"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 140.



Pennine Cottages, Where the Weavers Once Was, As They Say Round Here, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 96.



Look at This! Trespassing for the Sake of Art, Oil on Board, 15 ½" x 20"
Illustrated in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Turning Around and Wondering Why the Dog is Waiting for You, Do we Know?, Oil on Board, 20" x 28"



De-Restriction with a Short Cut, Oil on Board, 20" x 30"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 178.



Abandoned at 1200 Feet, Oil on Board, 28" x 40"



Keeping the Dog Back for the Moment, 2000, Oil on Board, 15 ½" x 24"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 143.



Abandoned But Drawing What's Left, Oil on Board, 24" x 23 ¾"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 138.



Still and Cold, Oil on Board, 20" x 24"



4 Fresh Witches Near Pendle in Lancashire, Oil on Board, 8 ¼" x 10 ¼"
 Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 252
 and in *Peter Brook, In and Out of the Pennines Even*, 1992 by Stuart Archer. Page 25.



Long Meg and Shep, Stone Circle Cumbria, Oil on Board, 10" x 11"



4 Sand Yachts, 1979, Oil on Canvas, 12" x 12"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 94.



Squall, 1979, Oil on Canvas, 12" x 12"



A Sign and Did Father Christmas Come Here Even? Oil on Board, 16" x 20"



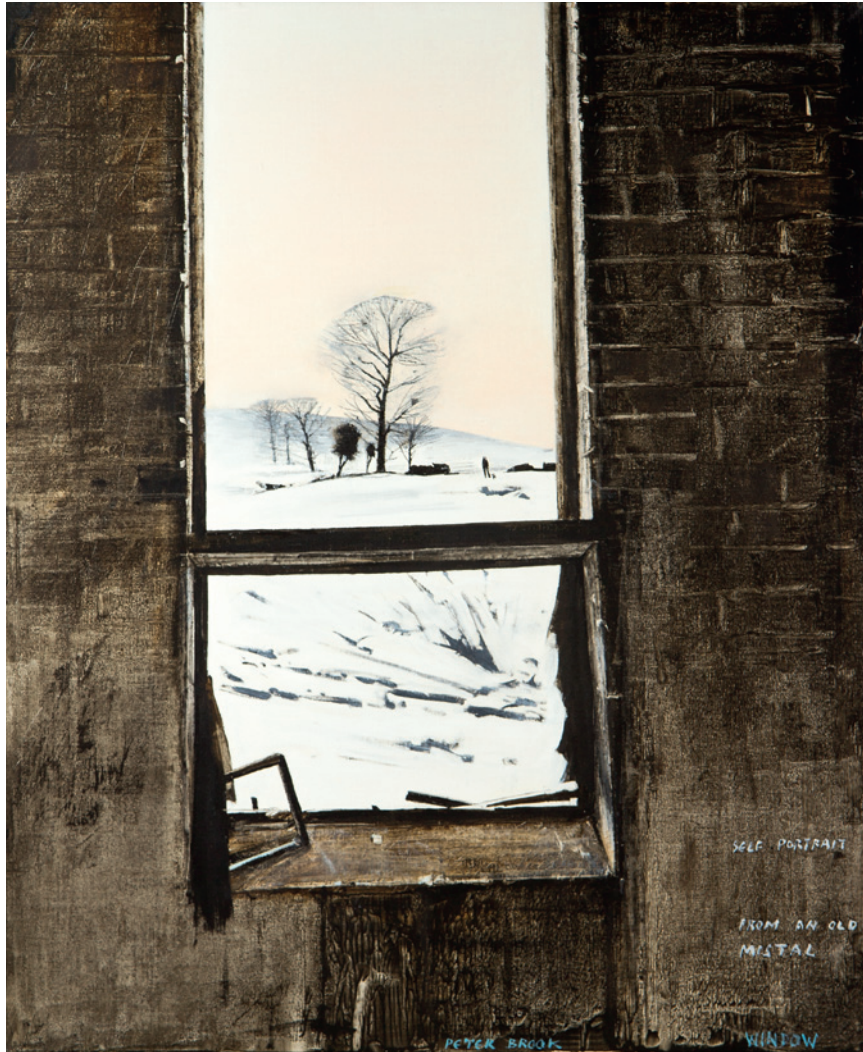
Flush House – Drawing Carefully on Sunday Even, 2001, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"



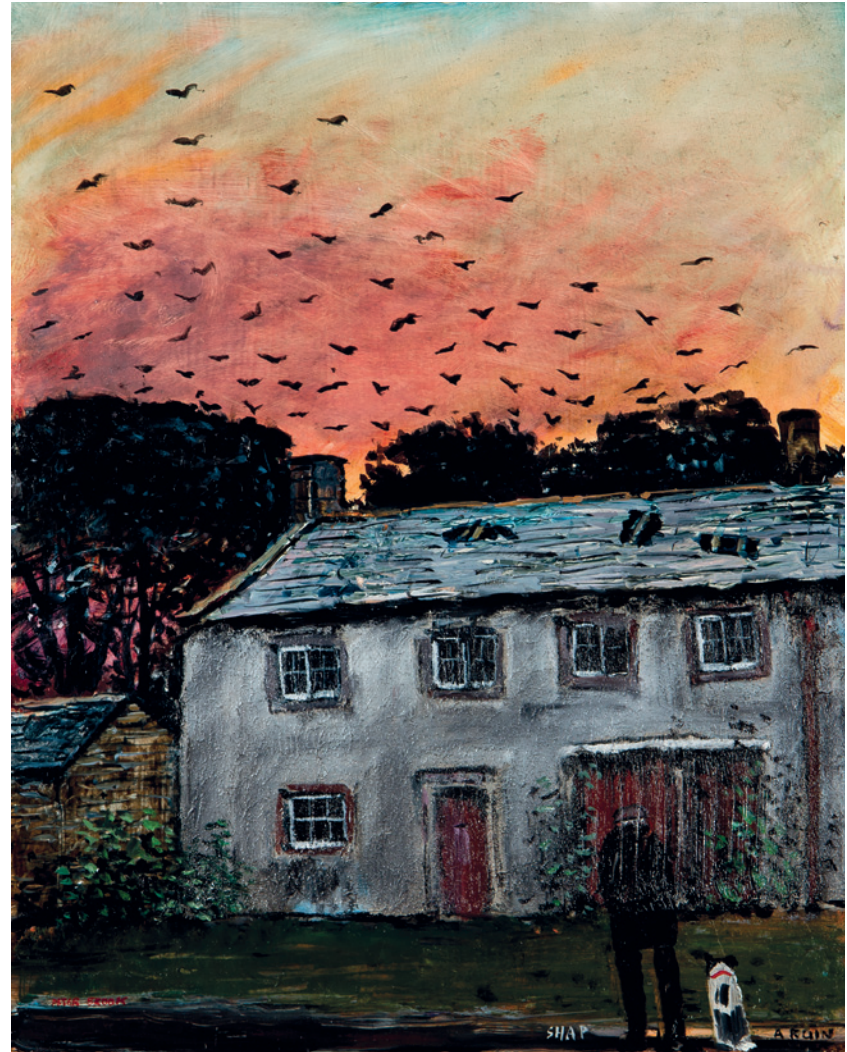
Gated Road in Winter, Oil on Board, 16 ½" x 20 ¼"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 130.



Pennine Winter, Oil on Board, 16 ½" x 20 ¼"



Self Portrait, From an Old Mistal, Oil on Canvas, 24" x 20"
 Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012, Page 141 and in *Peter Brook, The Pennine Landscape Painter*, Ryburn Publishing, 1992.



Shap A Ruin, Oil on Board, 20" x 16"
 Illustrated in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Just Look at the State of the Bloody Pennines, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Extreme Global Warming, Oil on Board, 8" x 15"

Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 180.



Look 4 PS Dancing on Ice, Oil on Board, 8" x 15"



I'm Over the Fence Watching the Mist Slowly Lift, Oil on Board, 10" x 16"



Marvelling at The Fantastic Northern Lights, Oil on Board, 10" x 16"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 241.



Danger, 1978, Oil on Canvas, 7" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012. Page 208.



A Few Words About the Weather, Oil on Canvas, 7" x 16"



Trespassing at Sunset, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"



England in Ruins But Beautiful, Taking a Photograph, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012.
Page 108 and in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



With Something for the Donkeys and Farmhouse Teas and Children Welcome, Oil on Board, 16" x 20"
Illustrated in *Peter Brook "A Life in Painting"* by Stuart Archer and David Walker. 2012.
Page 268 and in *"The A-Z of Peter Brook"* by Stuart Archer.



Son of Shep, Oil on Board, 20" x 24"



Dawn. Pennine Angel. Morning Star, Oil on Board, 7 1/2" x 7 1/2"



Pennine Sunset, Oil on Board, 14" x 8"



Sheep in a Circle, Oil on Slate, 11 1/2" x 6 1/2"

Peter Brook - Selected Artistic Chronology

1969

First one man show at Agnew's, London. It was a sell out.

1970

Second one man show at Agnew's. 40 sold on the first day. Signed exclusive contract with Agnew's.

1972

Agnew's exhibit his work in Australia.

1973

Agnew's exhibit his work in California. Peter painted a series of paintings in Scotland.

1974

Ran in Three Peaks race and met Joss Naylor. Member of Holmfirth Harriers. Painted for Oxford University Almanac. (Village of Wytham).

1977

Stopped teaching and became a full time painter.

1978

Agnew's produce a series of lithographs of paintings of months of the year. Met Hannah Hauxwell.

1979

Painted – tin mines and seascapes in Cornwall.

1981

Hannah Hauxwell paintings exhibited at Agnew's.

1982

Painted in Scotland.

1984

Painted for the Moores family in the Trough of Bowland, Lancashire.

1987-89

Painted at Jim Cropper's farm in Lancashire. Began tents and trials series.

1992

Published first book – *'Peter Brook: The Pennine Landscape Painter'* – followed by others – *'In and Out of the Pennines Even'* – *'Peter Brook – An A to Z'* by Stuart Archer. Retrospective exhibitions held at The Mall Galleries, London and Huddersfield Art Gallery.

1992-97

Exhibitions at Anna-Mei Chadwick Gallery in London.

1999, 2001, 2004

One man shows at the New Grafton Gallery, London.

2000

Exhibition at the Manor House, Ilkley. Long association with Harrison Lord, Brighouse. Began painting seriously in the Yorkshire Dales, influenced by JC Dahl, began moonlight paintings.

2004

Broke a leg but carried on painting – produced the book, *'Abroad - but not going far.'* Annual exhibitions at the Old School House, Muker.

2006

Association with AC gallery Huddersfield (prints).

2009

Exhibition of works in Public Collections Painting selected by the Mellon Centre for British Art, University of Yale, Universities of Leeds, York and Birmingham (at least eight donated by Arthur Haigh).

2009

Peter Brook died on November 25th at the age of 81. Many posthumous

exhibitions in London (Richmond Hill Gallery), Huddersfield (AC Gallery), Old School House (Muker) and Clark Art (Hale, Cheshire).

2011

Second entry in Tate Diary.

2012

Major book published - *'Peter Brook A Life in Painting'* by Stuart Archer and David Walker, photography by Richard Littlewood.

2013

Looking Back at the Pennines a retrospective exhibition at Clark Art, Hale.



PETER BROOK

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