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David Hockney, Red Wire Plant, 1998

**ARTIST**

David Hockney (b.1937)

TITLE

Red Wire Plant

MEDIUM

Etching and aquatint in red and black
on Somerset paper

DATE

1998

SIZE

30½ x 36 in : 77.5 x 91.4 cm

EDITION / INSCRIPTIONS

From the edition of 35, signed, dated
and numbered by the artist in pencil

PRINTER

Printed by Maurice Payne

PUBLISHER

Published by the artist

PROVENANCE

Acquired directly from the Hockney Studio

LITERATURE

David Hockney Recent Etchings, Alan Cristea
Gallery, London, 1999, pp. 24 & 25 (col. illus.)

REFERENCE

A21-08



The etching and aquatint print *Red Wire Plant* (1998) demonstrates Hockney's unique style of mark making in this medium as the artist indicates the plant's flowers only by the negative space left, with encroaching marks further delineating their shape and detail. This etching and aquatint work is also an excellent example of Hockney's inventive approach to the production of his prints due to the use of wire wool and other unconventional etching tools. This approach was inspired by the graphics of Vincent Van Gogh and Pablo Picasso, who have both influenced Hockney throughout his career.

Red Wire Plant was produced in collaboration with the artist's old friend and master printer, Maurice Payne, who Hockney has depicted many times throughout his career. Payne lived with Hockney for more than a year and together they set up a print studio in the artist's Hollywood Hills home, with Payne leaving prepared plates around the house. This practice allowed Hockney to respond

spontaneously to the characters and objects that surrounded him throughout the day, with the focus on the artist's domestic environment imbuing the prints with an intimate quality. In all, fourteen etchings were created during this period.

The production of these etchings was the first time that Hockney had returned to this printing process since *The Blue Guitar* series in the mid-seventies and is also the last group of etchings that the artist has made to date. This example of *Red Wire Plant* which, importantly for etchings, has an early number within the edition of 35. It has not appeared at auction since 2015 although *Van Gogh Chair*, from the same series of fourteen etchings, recently achieved a record price of \$239,400 at Sotheby's New York in April 2021.

This example in PRISTINE condition - never framed or exposed to light since publication.

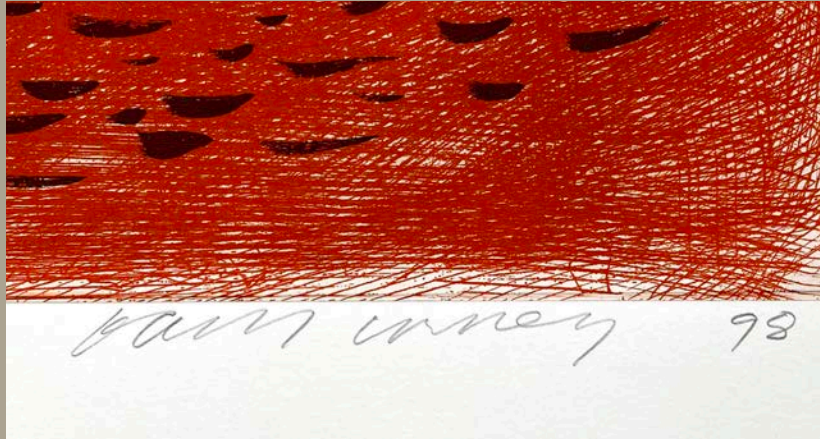


David Hockney

One of the most versatile and celebrated British artists of all time, David Hockney has worked across a multitude of mediums and projects from portraiture, opera set designs, photocollage and iPad drawings. Hockney's etchings, however, perhaps best demonstrate the artist's unique graphic style that would lay the foundation for his artistic career.

After graduating from Bradford School of Art, Hockney continued his art education at the Royal College of Art in London from 1959-62 where he began to experiment with the etching technique, thus beginning his printmaking career. Having run out of paint and money to buy new materials, Hockney turned to the printmaking department due to their provision of free materials, reflecting that 'I started etching [at the Royal College] because I hadn't any money. You know I hadn't any paint. Someone told me that everything was free in that department so I thought I would try my hand at it.'

While the artist's decision to turn to the medium of prints had primarily been a pragmatic one, Hockney continued to develop his printmaking practice and would go on to collaborate with great printers including Ken Tyler, Maurice Payne and Aldo Crommelynck (the master printer of Picasso's later etchings). Throughout his career, Hockney has worked predominantly in etching, aquatint and lithography. Possessing an insatiable curiosity when it comes to experimentation though, Hockney continues to challenge the conventions of printmaking and embrace new technologies. In the late 1980s and early 1990s this included developing 'home made prints' using photocopiers and fax machines. Today, his passion for experimentation has extended to include iPad drawings which are then printed to the artist's particular specifications, examples of which were shown in the recent exhibition *David Hockney: The Arrival of Spring, Normandy 2020* at the Royal Academy of Arts.



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