

RICHARD GREEN

FINE PAINTINGS • ESTABLISHED 1955

SIR MATTHEW SMITH

Halifax 1879 - 1959 London

Ref: CB 125

Peaches in a striped dish



Signed with initials lower left: MS; signed with initials and dated on the reverse: MS / 50

Oil on canvas: 20 x 24 in / 50.8 x 61 cm

Frame size: 29 x 34 in / 73.7 x 86.4 cm

In its original Louis XIV style composition frame



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Provenance:

Arthur Tooth & Sons, London;
Mr & Mrs Francis Halliday, acquired from the above 22nd June 1951
Crane Kalman, London;
Lord & Lady Harris, acquired from the above in 2000

Exhibited:

London, Arthur Tooth & Sons Ltd., *Paintings of various periods by Matthew Smith*, 20th June-14th July 1951, no.3
London, Tate Gallery, *Matthew Smith: Paintings from 1909 to 1952*, 3rd September-18th October 1953, no.79
London, Royal Academy of Arts, *A memorial exhibition of works by Sir Matthew Smith CBE 1879-1959*, 15th October-7th December 1960, no.221
Swansea, Glynn Vivian Gallery, Welsh Committee of the Arts Council, *Matthew Smith*, 18th June-16th July 1966, no.38
London, Waddington Galleries, *Mathew Smith : A loan exhibition : Paintings from 1920-1950*, 4th-27th January 1968, no.17
Sheffield City Art Gallery, on long term loan, 1990-2000

Literature:

Malcolm Yorke, *Matthew Smith: His life and reputation*, Faber & Faber, London, 1997, p.254, illus. in colour pl.65
John Gledhill, *Matthew Smith: Catalogue raisonné of the oil paintings*, Lund Humphries, London, 2009, no.675, p.249, illus.

In 1950 at the age of seventy, Matthew Smith was at the height of his fame in Britain. He was awarded a CBE in 1949 and in 1950 he was chosen to represent British art at the Venice Biennale along with John Constable and Barbara Hepworth. In 1953 the Tate gallery held a major retrospective of his work in which *Peaches in a striped dish* was included. The original owners of *Peaches in a striped dish* were Francis and Mary Halliday possibly acquiring the painting at the 1951 show at Tooth. Smith first met Francis Halliday in 1923 and they became lifelong friends. Halliday was a teacher of German at Manchester University and then later at Swansea University. In 1932 he married Mary with whom he shared a love of Smith's work. They had a good eye for quality and amassed a considerable collection of the paintings.

The scalloped edge striped glazed dish used in the painting was a favourite of Smith's in the early fifties and appears in a number of paintings from this period. The colour and the complex curvilinear geometry of the stripes would have appealed to him.

Always prolific Smith's output was undiminished in his final decade. Living in a tiny flat in Chelsea Cloisters with a new studio nearby he was producing a series of ever more ambitious still-lives, some of which were on an unprecedented large scale. Smith extended his use of colour even further than previously with the addition of violets, crimsons and blue-black to his palette. *Peaches in a Striped Dish* was a particularly successful, highly resolved composition from this period. As a testament to its quality it was often selected for major exhibitions at that time.

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John Gledhill, 2023