

A Complete Portrait of Arthur Jeffress 1905-1961

1947-1951 Becoming a Dealer

In 1948, Jeffress became one of the backers for Erica Brausen's exciting new Hanover Gallery in London. Her star artist was Francis Bacon; Jeffress and he loathed each other. The other backers were the artists Peter and Elsa Barker-Mill; his family had lived at Mottisfont near Romsey. Barker-Mill went on to support Arnolfini in Bristol. Today, the Arnolfini Collection is, by coincidence, shared between the city art galleries of Bristol and Southampton.



Erica Brausen mid 1920's
Courtesy Jean Yves-Mock



The opening show of the new gallery
showing E. Box's *Gentle Friends*



Robert Melville c1962
Courtesy of Roberta Korner

Arthur withdrew his funding and, in 1955, opened his own gallery: Arthur Jeffress (Pictures). Robert Melville, a distinguished art critic, managed the gallery for him, as he had at the Hanover, too. The new gallery had a manifesto, the focus of which was on Sunday painters, trompe l'oeil and magic realism. This was a European taste, unusual for London, and Jeffress wanted his shows to be sellouts, not necessarily making a large profit. His clients were mostly drawn from the worlds of theatre, design, fashion and writers. The opening show was of E. Box (Edna Fleming) his closest friend. In his bequest all her paintings were left to a close friend, none to Southampton. Edna herself was left his late Monet by far the most valuable work in his collection.



Interior of Jeffress' drawing room at 99, Eaton Square, showing works by Bauchant, Monet and Toulouse-lautrec. Photographed by Anthony Denney, Permission granted by Celia Denney image, Southampton City Archives



Arthur in front of one of his powerful middle eastern paintings that led people to believe he was "exotic" and really called Jeffersonian, © National Portrait Gallery, London