

Springing to Life
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Annely Juda Fine Art

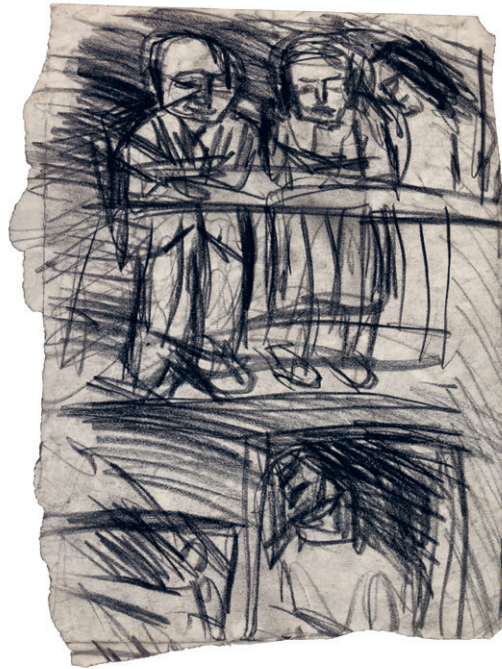
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Monday - Friday 10 - 6 and Saturday 11 - 5

cover: Embankment Underground Station, 1993, pastel and charcoal on paper, 59.5 x 69 cm



Mother and Father on the Balcony of the Beaux Arts Gallery 1957
charcoal on paper 25.4 x 20 cm

Springing to Life: Drawings by Leon Kossoff

by Andrea Rose

Sometime in 1986 a student wrote to Kossoff asking if he could write a thesis on him. Kossoff, wary that his privacy might be invaded, wrote back, explaining the set-up in his studio, and offering clues as to how he went about things:

‘My studio is like a field’ he wrote, ‘a field in a house. Muddy hillocks of paint-sodden newspapers cover the floor burying scraped off images. Derelict boards stand in all corners, remnants of recent activity. Yet, down there in the mess on the floor a little head of Heinz looks back at me. Can I leave it now after all this time? And those other boards lying there, Fidelma before going to Kiev, Peggy and John, Chaim only almost emergent, and Kilburn Underground, half there, which is not there. My dialogue is with these discarded images left on the floor..... Drawing is a springing to life in the presence of the friend in the studio or in the sunlit summer streets of London from this excavated state, and painting is a deepening of this process.’

Excavation and elation – these pervade Kossoff’s extraordinary body of drawings. Amongst the earliest in this exhibition is a study of Rosalind, sitting naked for the 26-year-old artist in his Mornington Crescent studio.

They are soon to be married, and she poses with a certain resignation. In the drawing, it's the delicacy of feeling however that resonates above all. A few years later Rosalind is seen cradling their baby son. And a few years further on still, their two-year is seen sleeping in his own bed, sucking his thumb or lying with his teddy next to him. This is the ordinary stuff of life, one thing following another as transient moments elide into patterns of behaviour.

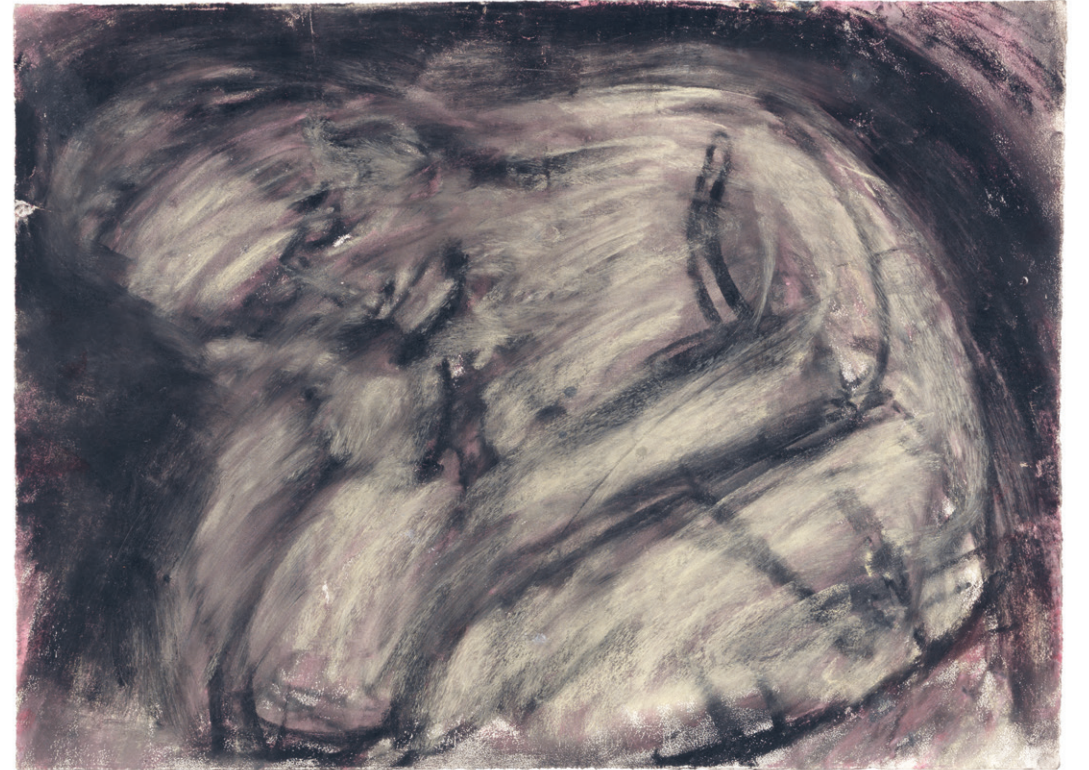
From his immediate family circle the exhibition broadens out into the vast amphitheatre of London: its railways, bridges, schools, swimming pools, churches and gardens. At Willesden Junction, where Kossoff had a studio in the early 1960s, the drawings become panoramic, the complexity of the railway site bringing out Kossoff's fierce sense of spatial depth and his ability to create in two dimensions the mass, volume and extent of three. At Willesden Swimming Pool, newly built in 1965, the drawings crackle into life, bodies dissolving and re-shaping themselves as abstraction and figuration play catch-up round the pool. At equally busy Kilburn, Embankment and King's Cross stations, people crowd in, their pressing flow washing through the capital. Kossoff seizes on all this while at the same time celebrating the grandeur of some of London's architecture. On Willesden

Lane, a red-brick Victorian school stands its ground. At Spitalfields, Christ Church reaches into the sky, transcending time and tide.

For time, as well as tide, is one of Kossoff's great subjects - the way it persists. Kossoff was an avid visitor to the National Gallery, taking the tube from his studio in Willesden Green to Embankment station in the early hours of the morning so that he could draw before the Gallery opened to the public. He made innumerable drawings from works in the Collection. It was less a question of copying, than searching the worlds of the Old Masters, closing the intervals between past and present. 'I suppose it's the difference between looking and experiencing', he told the critic Richard Kendall talking about Poussin's 'Cephalus and Aurora'. In his drawings after Poussin, it's the Old Master's passion that come to the fore; in his drawings after Hals, Rubens and Rembrandt, their seemly exuberance. They stretch into the past while being ever present.

Father in an Armchair 1943
charcoal and gouache on paper 76 x 55.5 cm





Mother Resting, No. 2 1963-64
charcoal and gouache on paper 58.4 x 79 cm



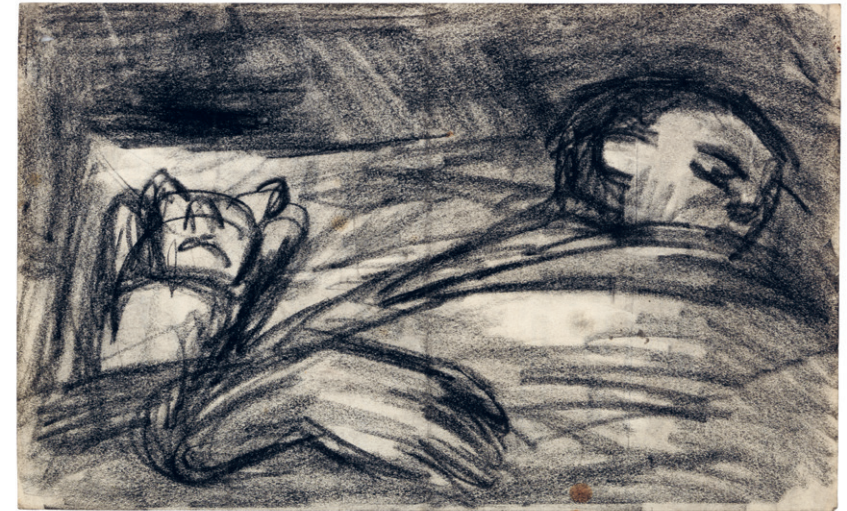
Seated Figure (Rosalind) 1953
charcoal on paper 56 x 76 cm



Peggy and David 1955
charcoal on paper 30.5 x 22.5 cm



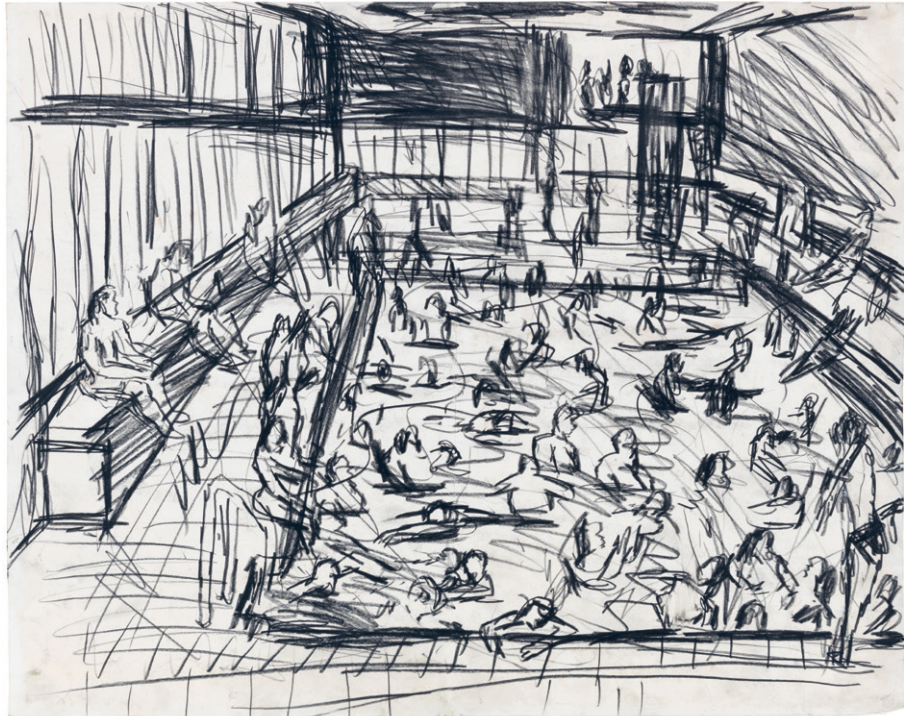
David Asleep c. 1957
conte crayon on paper 33 x 20.3 cm



David and Teddy c. 1957
charcoal on paper 20.4 x 33 cm



Old Charing Cross Hospital 1958
gouache on paper 56 x 76 cm

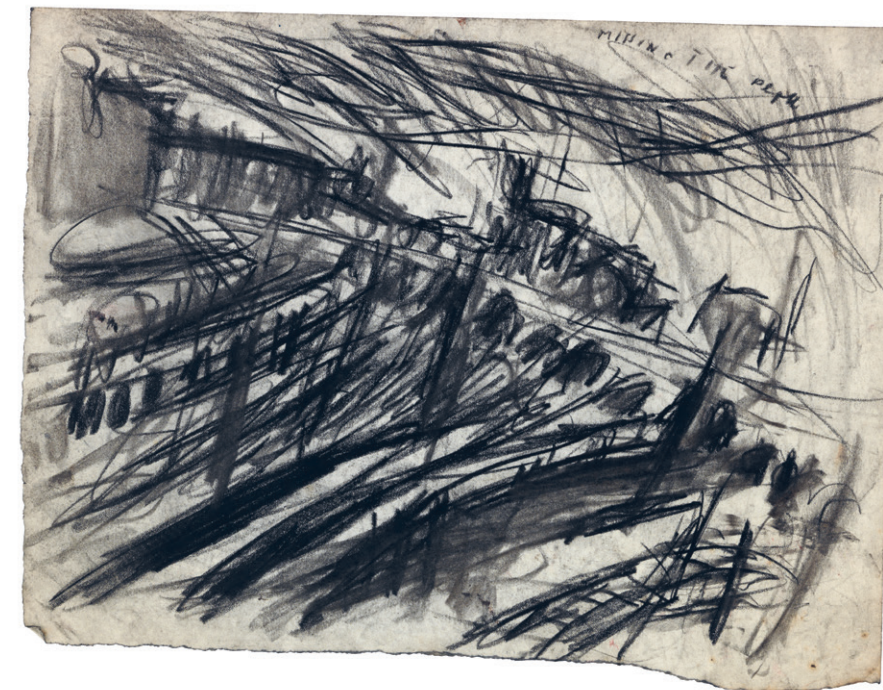


Children's Swimming Pool, Willesden 1969
charcoal on paper 41.8 x 52.7 cm



Children's Swimming Pool, Willesden c. 1970
charcoal on paper 41.8 x 63.5 cm

York Way Railway Bridge c. 1967
charcoal on paper 29.2 x 38 cm





Men at Work, Willesden Junction 1962
charcoal on paper 25.4 x 35.5 cm



Willesden Junction 1962
charcoal on paper 30.2 x 52 cm



Willesden Junction 1962
charcoal and pastel on paper 72.5 x 129 cm



Demolition of YMCA building, London, no. 2 1971
charcoal on paper 59 x 84 cm



Kilburn Underground Station, interior 1977
charcoal on paper 40.5 x 50.7 cm



Kilburn Underground Station, exterior 1976
charcoal on paper 42 x 65 cm



School Building, Willesden 1981
charcoal on paper 40.5 x 51 cm



School Building, Willesden c. 1980
charcoal on paper 40 x 50 cm

Head of Peggy 2004
charcoal and pastel on paper 75 x 55.5 cm





Sally c. 1987-88
charcoal and chalk on paper 76.5 x 56.8 cm



Cathy 1998
charcoal and pastel on paper 76 x 56 cm



From Hals: 'Family Group in a Landscape' c. 1965
charcoal on paper 41.8 x 59 cm



From Poussin: 'The Triumph of Pan' 1998
pastel on paper 53.5 x 57 cm



From Poussin: 'Cephalus and Aurora' c. 1980-81
charcoal and pastel on paper 40 x 50 cm



From Rembrandt: 'Bathsheba' c. 1993
charcoal on paper 63 x 56 cm

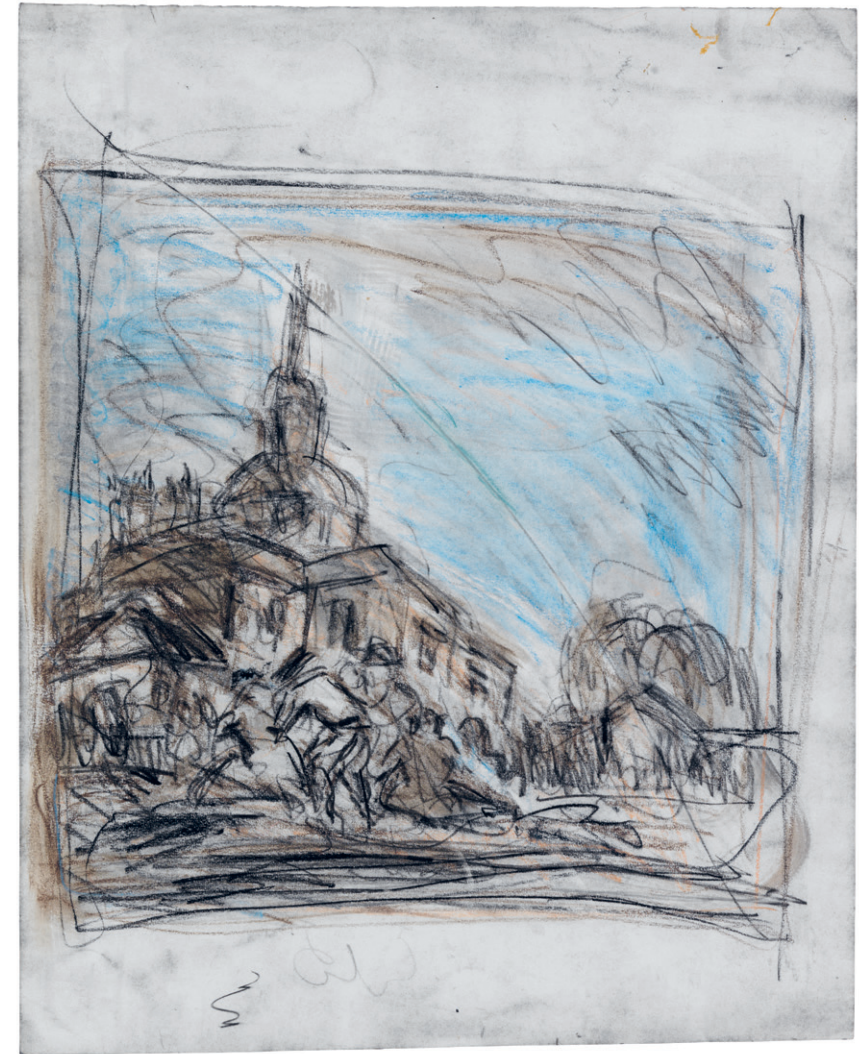


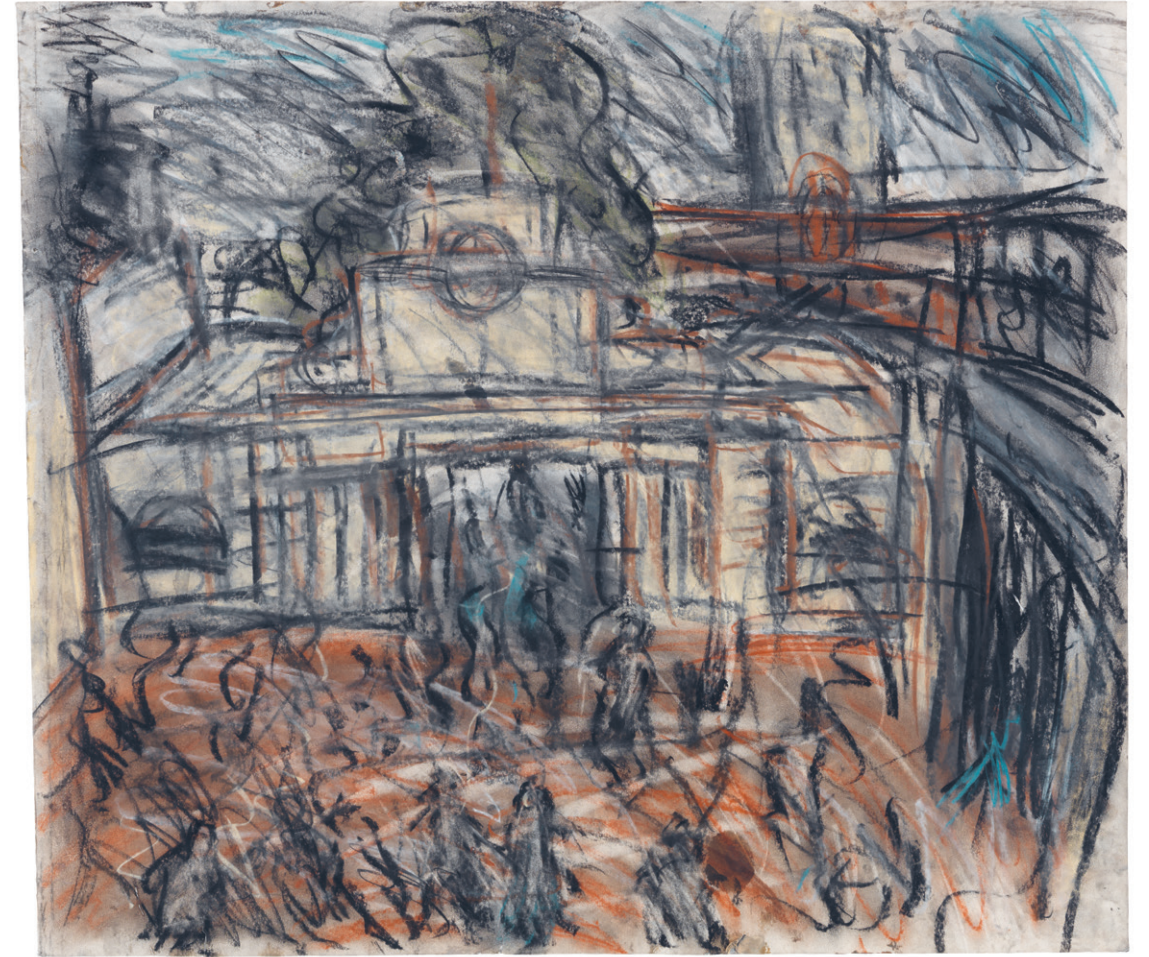
From Rubens: 'The Judgement of Paris' c. 1998
charcoal on paper 56 x 76 cm



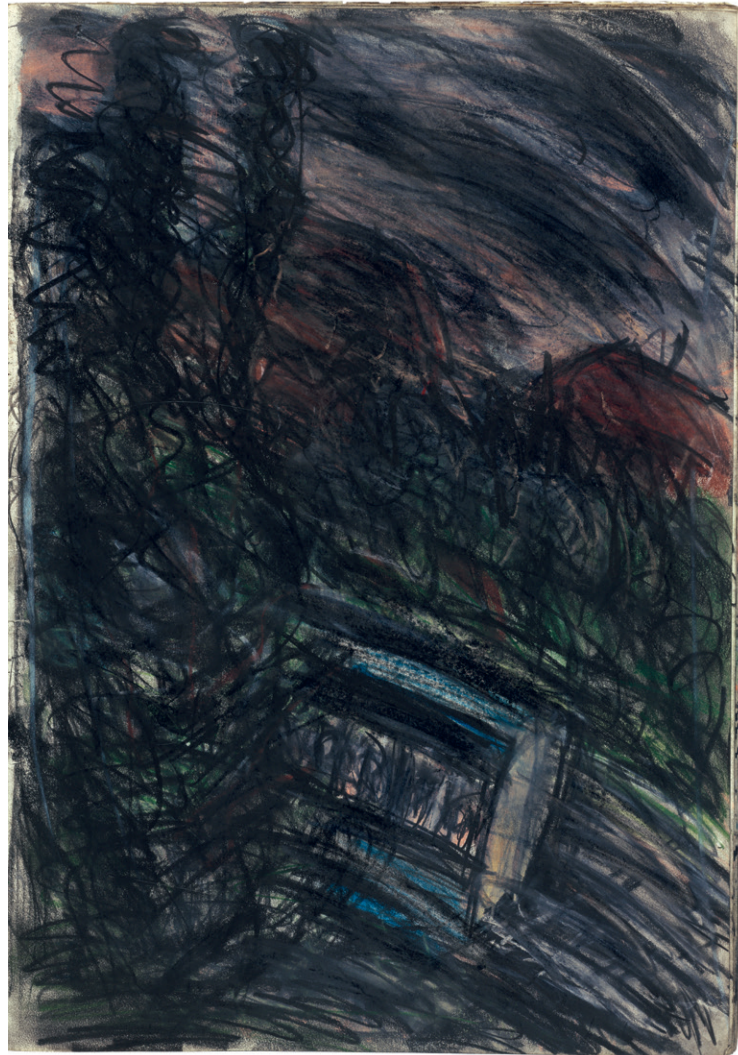
From Cézanne: 'The Murder' 1888
ink and charcoal on paper 50 x 70.5 cm

From Goya: 'The Hermitage of San Isidro' 1994
coloured chalk on paper 54.2 x 48.3 cm





Embankment Underground Station 1993
pastel and charcoal on paper 59.5 x 69 cm

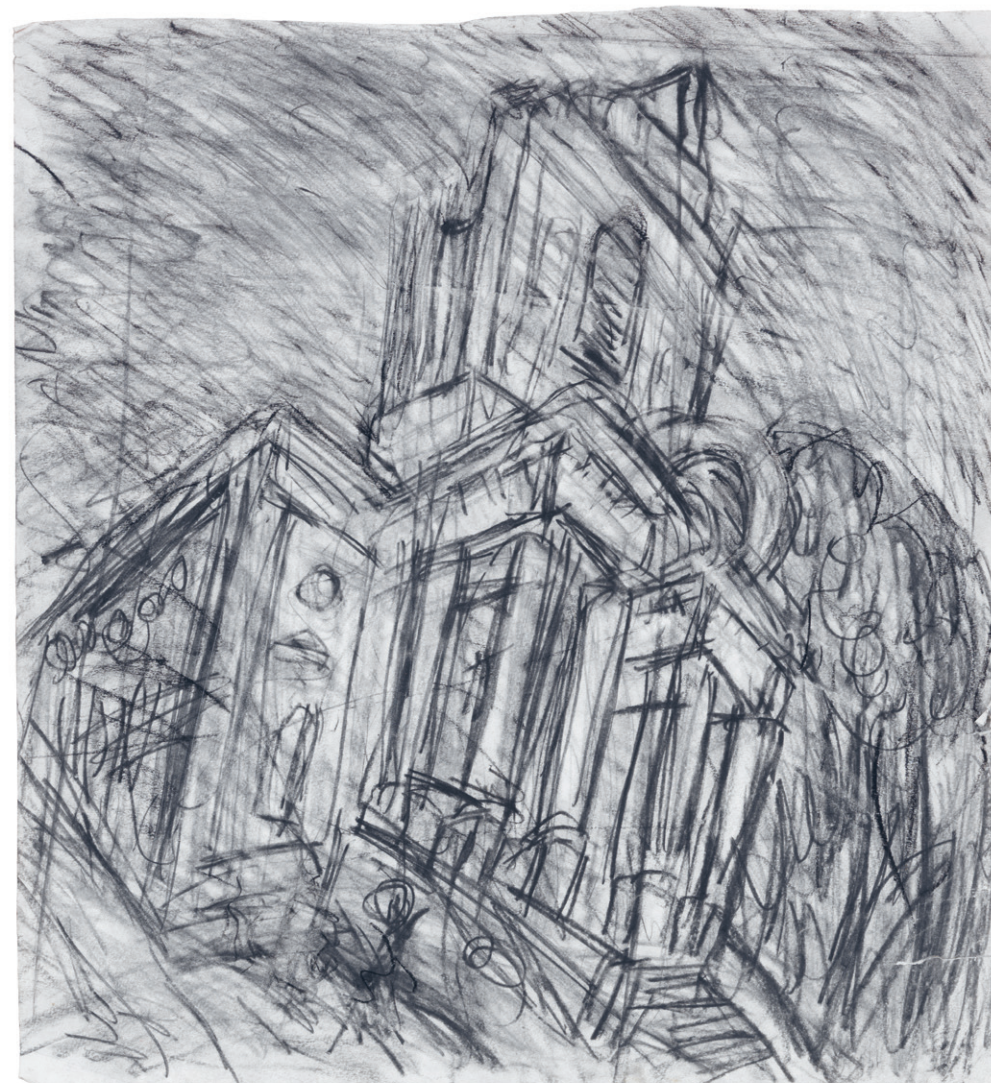


Train by Night no. 2 1990
charcoal and pastel on paper 59.5 x 41.9 cm



Train by Night no. 5 1990
charcoal and pastel on paper 59.5 x 41.9 cm

Christ Church Spitalfields c. 1990
charcoal on paper 63 x 56 cm





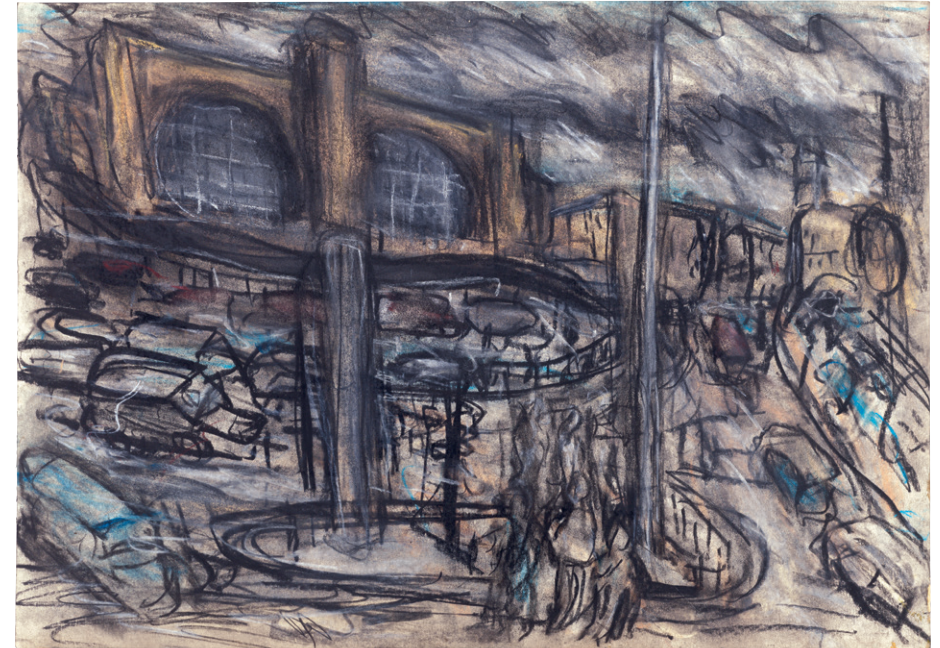
Embankment Underground Station c. 1987
charcoal on paper 56.5 x 59 cm



The Flower Stall, Embankment Underground Station 1994
charcoal and oil on paper 55.5 x 63.8 cm



King's Cross Building Site Early Days 2003
charcoal on paper 57 x 56.2 cm



King's Cross Stormy Day no. 4 2004
charcoal and pastel on paper 29.7 x 41.8 cm



Cherry Tree c. 2005
charcoal and pastel on paper 41.5 x 49.5 cm



Arnold Circus 2012
charcoal and pastel on paper 61.5 x 51 cm



Arnold Circus 2012
charcoal and pastel on paper 61.5 x 50.5 cm

Spring 2014
charcoal on paper 61 x 58 cm



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