KEATS-SHELLEY HOUSE

*In the heart of Rome, a museum dedicated to the British Romantic poets in Italy*

# A Gift from the UK Prime Minister to the Prime Minister of Italy

Friday, November 5, 2021

We are pleased to announce that a painting exhibited at the Keats-Shelley House and created for our current temporary exhibition titled *Cloudy Trophies* has been given by UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson as a parting gift to Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi following the 2021 G20 Summit in Rome.

The painting, titled 'Selene', was created by UK artist Jeffrey Dennis during his residence in Rome as Abbey Fellow in Painting at the British School of Rome in summer 2021. The painting was first exhibited at the Keats-Shelley House, where Dennis spent time sketching his impressions of the city through the windows of the museum. The painting was included in the artist's temporary exhibition *Cloudy Trophies*, which runs till 18 December 2021.

Jeffrey Dennis's fellowship at the British School at Rome was specifically linked to his proposal to produce a body of artistic work arising from an extended visit to Keats-Shelley House. His aim was to explore the potential of the idea of Negative

Capability, as conceived by Keats, and to provide a conceptual framework allowing complex, layered work embracing ambiguity, narrative and contradiction.

'Selene' (oil and charcoal on linen) shows a woman standing on the *Scalinata della Trinitá dei Monti* (Spanish Steps) taking a photograph of the *Trinitá dei Monti* church which resides atop the Steps. Selene (associated with Diana or Artemis, and the moon) was an example, in classical mythology, of a female 'hunter'.

All of the paintings produced by Jeffrey Dennis during his residence in Rome feature inset vignettes or windows within a 'bubblescape', a layered space of small marks that allows the artist to build up complex spaces and colours, and images to emerge or sink back as the painting progresses.

