

FOREWORD

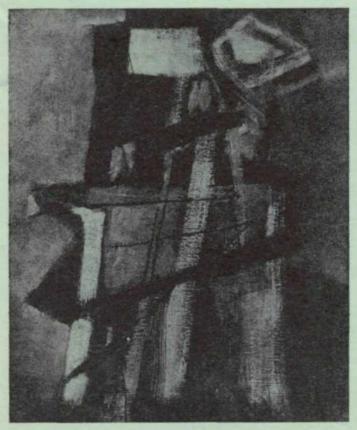
This exhibition has been arranged for us by Mr Rex Nan Kivell, to whom we are most grateful.

We must also thank him for allowing us to reprint Mr Denys Sutton's introduction to the Redfern Gallery catalogue of a similar group of paintings in 1957.

P. A. TOMORY

Auckland City Art Gallery May, 1958

RODGER HILTON Composition in Grey (37)



PREFACE BY DENYS SUTTON

The widespread passion for 'modern' art in all its phases, so characteristic of the years since the end of the war, has coincided with the emergence both in Britain and abroad of painters who, regardless of the consequences, are eager to press ahead into little charted territories. Such activity can be construed as a sign of post-war restlessness or as the consequence of a desire at once optimistic and positive to make one's mark in one's own time, for better or for worse.

What is more, it is no longer necessary to confess, as was the case some twenty years ago, that the English artist is averse to experiment. To look at the contemporary school in Britain, in fact, is to be made aware of the variety of trends that exist, ranging from Realism to Constructivism or Action painting.

Nevertheless to suggest, as is sometimes done, that only one style is valid at any given period to the exclusion of all others, is to run counter to the lessons of history: diversity and complexity are as essential to art as to life or to politics. Then, too, painters may enjoy quite distinct enthusiasms at each stage in their careers: many can, and indeed do, move between such opposite poles as Realism and Abstraction. This is certainly true of some of those who appear in this exhibition.

The extent to which several of these artists are the originators of the particular styles which they now practise, or how far they depend on the example of their colleagues, here or elsewhere, is not merely of academic interest; but whatever may be the solution to such problems is does not detract, on the whole, from the calibre of their contributions.

The common denominator that relates them, moreover, is not adherence to one single creed; to say of them - as we could, for instance of the Fauves or Cubists - that they share an aesthetic, is not true. There is a very clear distinction between the mathematically precise 'architecture' of Constructivism and the lyrical emotionalism of 'Tachisme.' All the same, these artists are bound by their refusal to be slaves of the object. But if some are prepared to divorce their achievements from the observation of objects, in one way or another, their apprehension of the world, whether that of external life or of their own imagination, directs their vision; and one might suggest that their experience of life is the necessary force that imparts shape to what they produce. They paint the way they do because there is no alternative; they claim such freedom, one supposes, with a due recognition of the challenge, as well as the dangers, involved; they explore, reject and even head for blind alleys.

Action painting — the hybrid child of the Frenchman Dubuffet, the German Ernst, the American Jackson Pollock — has now become an international style, susceptible of different interpretations at the hands of each of its practitioners. This approach from its

very nature places the responsibility on the artist's own shoulders: that shipwrecks at times occur is perhaps inevitable. Yet the liberty contained in this manner permits the artist, if so inclined, to revel in his attack on the canvas and to move his paint as free will and the unconscious dictate. Yet what is often noticeable is that the result succeeds in achieving what one would imagine to be unobtainable; the realisation of an organic whole.

It may well be that the painter's determination to discover a fresh vision — a spur that has directed artists at all times — carries with it certain precise, if at times almost unconscious safeguards. His painting becomes nothing less than a search to find in the incoherence of the swirling movements of ideas and sensations that form part of human nature, a logic that is perceived in the last analysis by means of ratiocination. The power of decision and of selection or rejection occurs, not at the outset, when the canvas is being, so to say, plotted, but at the end, when the discoveries of the artist's impulses are laid out; then a fashioning of the material comes into play and the result is one that can conform to the demands of the picture space itself. Even at the height of a process which when one considers it in cold blood to smack of 'rock and roll,' the artist's sense for colour and form intervenes decisively.

Action painting, which is the most 'novel' of the tendencies shown in this exhibition, from a national point of view, can claim to a respectable origin. Think only of Alexander Cozens (c. 1717-1786), the champion of the famous theory of the 'blot.' Also, of course, the Action painter is one of the upholders of an aristocratic point of view; his painting is the offspring of an attitude of mind that refuses to believe, as far as art is concerned, in equalitarian concepts. He asks of the spectator that he must enter a 'Jardin d'Amour' in which the conventions established are those provided by his own imagination. We can accept or reject, as we think fit.

Such painting, then, refuses to come to terms with life as we know it; it shows us a way into a different sort of life. In its essence, it is a world in which the appeal is directly to the eye and to the fancy; colours, internal rhythms, echoes from the past such as touches of gold (that hark back to the Middle Ages and to Byzantium) are present in order to seduce us by their visual appeal. As for the meaning, what, in any case, do we know about meaning: is an egg an egg when it forms part of an cmelette? - a philosopher once asked. What is the message in such painting, or is there none? Is it that of Hedonism or of a Danse Macabre? Are we confronted with the tail end of civilisation, going out with a bang, or with the lifting of the curtain on a new performance - possibly no more than a one-act play? Yet as we see it today, Action painting, vivid, dazzling, amusing, teasing often, possesses one single and irresistible quality: that of life-enhancement.



ADRIAN HEATH Composition, Red and Black (31)

THE CATALOGUE

GILLIAN AYRES

- 1 Black, Brown, Yellow Fusion 121½ x 24¼
- 2 Red Fusion 121½ x 48
- 3 Ochre Fusion 24 x 72
- 4 Tachiste Painting 36 x 10

Dimensions are given in inches, height before width

SANDRA BLOW

5 Painting, White and Red 36 x 48

DENIS BOWEN

- 6 Atomic Image, Black and Red 54½ × 30
- 7 Explosive Image 32 x 56
- 8 Atomic Image, Black, Red and White 201 x 241
- 9 Atomic Image, Red and White 461 x 43

HENRY CLIFFE

- 10 Landscape, late Evening 18 x 14½ Signed H. Cliffe '56
- 11 Painting, Blue and Yellow 14 x 16#

BERNARD COHEN

12 Objects, 1957, I 32 x 28

HAROLD COHEN

13 Garden VII, Autumn 30 x 28

JOHN COPLANS

- 14 Open Forms I 39 x 30
- 15 Open Forms II 30 x 39
- 16 Open Forms III 54 x 30

PETER COVIELLO

- 17 Head Image 36 x 28
- 18 Rose Emergence 39½ x 29¾
- 19 Red Head Image 29½ x 19¾

ALAN DAVIE

20 Flag Dream II (Punch) 48 x 60

ROBYN DENNY

21 Painting 1957 38 x 28 Signed Denny '57

PAUL FEILER

- 22 Summer 44 x 60
- 23 Porthledden Black 14 x 18 Signed Feiler 56
- 24 Landscape and Sea 31 x 47

DONALD HAMILTON FRASER

25 Blue Sea Coast with Distress Rockets 36 x 28

TERRY FROST

- 26 Abstract, Blue, Red and White 55½ x 48
- 27 Head 24 x 15

WILLIAM GEAR

- 28 Red and Yellow 13 x 18‡
- 29 Study with Blue and Orange 18 x 213
- **30** Red Preserve, May 1957 32 x 43

ADRIAN HEATH

- 31 Composition, Red and Black 33½ x 23½
- 32 Painting, Yellow and Grey 36 x 30
- 33 Painting, Red and Black 48 x 50

PATRICK HERON

- 34 Autumn Garden 72 x 36
- 35 Summer Painting 72½ x 36
- 36 Tulip Garden 36 x 15

ROGER HILTON

37 Composition in Grey 20 x 24

JAMES HULL

38 Painting, Black and Yellow on White 30½ x 48

GWYTHER IRWIN

- 39 Insect Form 30½ x 46½
- **40** Bosky Glade 19½ x 28
- 41 Gun III 24 x 36 Signed Irwin

LOUIS JAMES

- 42 The Approaching Night 40 x 20 Signed Louis James
- 43 Acacia Trees III 39½ x 79½ Signed Louis James
- 44 The Garden
 50 x 24½ Signed Louis James

PETER KINLEY

45 Painting, Blue and Black 50½ x 25½

PETER LANYON

46 Trencrom Hill 37 x 24

DEREK MIDDLETON

- 47 Blue Painting 28 x 36
- 48 Water Reflections 201 x 291
- 49 Objects Submerged 493 x 36

J. MILNES-SMITH

- 50 Ochre and Brown Painting 24½ x 31
- 51 Red, Blue and White Painting 24 x 193
- **52** Composition Landscape 23 x 32

HENRY MUNDY

53 Blue Atmospherics 20 x 24

RODRIGO MOYNIHAN

- 54 Painting, Red and Violet 36½ x 28
- 55 Painting, Vertical 193 x 50
- 56 Painting, Green and Grey 16 x 201

VICTOR PASMORE

- 57 Spiral I 24 x 83
- 58 Spiral II 24 x 12

RALPH RUMNEY

- 59 Tachiste Painting I
- 60 Tachiste Painting II 48 x 48
- 61 Tachiste Painting III
- 62 Tachiste Painting IV 63 x 60

FRANK AVRAY WILSON

- 63 Red Configuration 35½ x 35½
- 64 Yellow Configuration 36 x 36
- **65** Black, Red, Blue Configuration 66 x 40
- **66** Mauve, Yellow Configuration 72 x 24
- 67 Horizontal Forms 22½ x 30

BRYAN WYNTER

- 68 High Country 60 x 40
- 69 Impenetrable Country 8 x 40
- 70 Sunken World 30 x 24

THE PAINTERS

GILLIAN AYRES

Born in Barnes, England, 1930. Educated at St Paul's School. Camberwell School of Art, 1946 to 1950. Exhibited in London Group since 1951. Group Show in A I A Gallery, 1954. One-man show Gallery One, 1956. Oslo, 1957. Also shown in mixed exhibitions at the Redfern, New Vision and Leicester Galleries.

SANDRA BLOW

Born in London, 1925. Studied at St Martin's School of Art and Royal Academy. Exhibited at Royal Academy, 1946, 1947. Exhibited group shows: I C A December, 1950; Gimpel Fils, 1951; Galerie Origini, Rome, 1952; Oxford, Blackhall St Giles, 1952; Tate Gallery, 'Figures in Their Setting,' 1953. One-man shows: Gimpel Fils, 1952 and 1954; Exhibition at the Saidenberg Gallery, New York, January, 1957.

DENIS BOWEN

Born 1921 in Kimberley, South Africa. Studied at Huddersfield School of Art. 1949 received Diploma in painting at the Royal College of Art. Founded New Vision Group, 1955. Instructor in Theory of Design at Central School of Art, Hammersmith School of Art and London School of Printing and Graphic Art. Exhibited at Galerie Creuze, Paris; New Vision Centre; London Group and in Serigraphic Exhibition at the ICA, 1957.

HENRY CLIFFE

Born at Scarborough, Yorks, 1919. Studied at Scarborough School of Art and Bath Academy School of Art, Wiltshire. Exhibited at Cincinatti Biennial of Colour Lithography in 1952, 1954, 1956, and also British Pavilion at Venice Biennale, 1954. Engelske Originallithografier, Scandinavia, 1956. Mixed shows at the Redfern Gallery, 1954, 1955, 1956. Exhibitor, London Group. First one-man show, Redfern Gallery, 1956. Teaches painting and lithography, Bath Academy of Art, Corsham, Wilts.

BERNARD COHEN

Born in London in 1933. Studied at St Martin's School and the Slade School of Art. Has exhibited at Gimpel Fils since 1953, and at the Redfern Gallery.

HAROLD COHEN

Born 1928. Studied at the Slade School of Art, 1948-1952. Won Abbey Minor Scholarship, 1952. Held his first one-man show in 1950 at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and his second one-man show in 1954 at Gimpel Fils, London. Represented in the Arts Council Collection. Designs and makes furniture.

JOHN COPLANS

Born in 1920, London. Mainly self-taught. Exhibited R B A, 1950; London Group, 1954; the I C A and the Redfern Gallery, 1956; New Vision and Volkerkunde Museum, Munich, 1957.

PETER COVIELLO

Born in London in 1930. Studied at Willesden and Guildford art schools from 1947 to 1952. Served in the R A F. Has exhibited with Young Contemporaries, 1951-1952; at the Royal Academy, 1952-1953; I C A 'Five Young Painters,' 1958; Redfern Gallery, 'Christian Vision,' 1958.

ALAN DAVIE

Born in Scotland, 1920. Awarded the Andrew Grant Scholarship, Edinburgh, 1938; the Edinburgh College of Art Diploma, 1940; the Andrew Grant Travelling Scholarship, 1940. Served with the Royal Artillery, 1940-1946. Received Guthrie Award, R S A, 1941. Held one-man shows in Edinburgh, 1946; Florence and Venice in 1948, and several at Gimpel Fils between 1950 and 1956. Has been included in exhibitions shown in Mexico, New York, Rome, Brussels, the British Council's Scandinavian Show of British Art and the Critic's Choice Exhibition, London, 1956. One painting was amongst five chosen by the National Jury to go forward for consideration at the Guggenheim International Award in Painting, 1956. Works have been bought by the Museum of Modern Art; Guggenheim Foundation; Albright Museum, Buffalo, and the Contemporary Art Society, London.

ROBYN DENNY

Born in Surrey in 1930. Educated Clayesmore School. Royal Navy 1949-1951. Studied at St Martin's School of Art, 1951-1953. R C A, 1954-1957. Exhibited 'Young Contemporaries,' 1953, 1954, 1956, 1957. Visual Arts Exhibition, Leeds, 1953.

PAUL FEILER

Born in 1918. Studied at the Slade. One-man shows at the Redfern Gallery, 1953, 1954, 1956. Also one-man show at the Obelisk Gallery, Washington, 1953.

DONALD HAMILTON FRASER

Born London, 1929. Studied at St Martin's School of Art, 1949-1953. Awarded French Government Scholarship, 1953-1954. Exhibited one-man shows at Gimpel Fils, 1953, 1956; Paris, 1956. Included in Critic's Choice Exhibition, 1955; Six Young British Painters, Oxford, 1956; Tate Gallery C A S Exhibitions, 1952, 1953, 1956. Daily Express 'Young Painters' prizewinner, 1955; British Painting, Whitechapel Gallery, 1954; British Romantic Painting in the Twentieth Century, Arts Council, 1953.

TERRY FROST

Born in Leamington Spa, 1915. Studied at Camberwell School of Art and in Cornwall. One-man shows at Leicester Galleries, 1952, 1956. Exhibited at Pittsburgh Biennale, 1956; Oslo, Copenhagen and Canada, 1956; Tokyo Biennale, 1957.

WILLIAM GEAR

Born in Scotland, 1915. Studied at Edinburgh College of Art, 1932-1937. Received Diploma of Art, 1936. Travelled in Europe with scholarship 1938-1939. Worked in Paris, 1947-1950. Member of London Group. One-man exhibitions: Florence, 1944; Hamburg, 1947; Paris, 1948; New York, 1949, 1957; London (Gimpel Fils), 1948, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1956; South London Art Gallery, 1954.

ADRIAN HEATH

Born in Burma, 1920. First painted in Newlyn, Cornwall, under Stanhope Forbes, R A, and in 1939 at the Slade School, Oxford. First abstract painting shown at the London Group, 1949. In 1953, held first one-man show at the Redfern Gallery. Exhibitions at Roland, Browse & Delbanco, Gimpel Fils and the Redfern Gallery.

PATRICK HERON

Born 1920. Exhibited Redfern Gallery, 1947, 1948, 1950, 1951, 1954 and 1956. Also exhibited in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Paris, Venezuela, U S A and Canada. Exhibited twelve paintings at 2nd Bienal at Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1953. Art Critic of the New Statesman and Nation from 1947 to 1950. Published The Changing Forms of Art, 1955.

ROGER HILTON

Born in Middlesex, 1911. Studied at the Slade School of Art, London. Awarded a scholarship and an Orpen Bursary. Studied in Paris at the Academie Ranson under Bissiere. Had a show at the Bloomsbury Gallery, 1937, and Gimpel Fils, 1952. His work has been included in exhibitions at the Tate Gallery, '17 Collectors,' 1952, and 'Figures in Their Setting,' 1953. Also 'Contemporary British Art,' Paris, 1952, and 'Recent British Painting' (Arts Council, 1954).

JAMES HULL

Born in 1921. Studied architecture from 1936 to 1939 followed by war service 1939-1945. Has painted since 1928. One-man exhibitions have been held yearly since 1948 in London (Brook Street Gallery, Gimpel Fils), Paris, New York, Brooklyn and Munich.

GWYTHER IRWIN

Born in Basingstoke, 1931. Trained at Goldsmiths Art School, 1951-1952; Textile design at the Central School of Art, 1952-1955. Exhibited with Young Contemporaries, 1953, also Artists Under Thirty-five, 1955. One-man show at Gallery One, 1957.

LOUIS JAMES

Born in Adelaide, South Australia, 1920. Served in the Infantry 1940-1944. Went to live in England in 1949. Had one-man show in Adelaide in 1949 and exhibited in most Australian capital cities, as well as in Washington, USA, Dublin, Belgium, and England. In London he has exhibited at the Redfern Gallery; Roland, Browse & Delbanco; Ohana Gallery; AIA Gallery; the New Vision Gallery, and with the London Group.

PETER KINLEY

Born 1926. Served in the Army 1944-1948. Studied at St Martin's School of Art, London, 1949-1953. Has taken part in the following group shows: Young Contemporaries, 1951, 1952, 1953.

PETER LANYON

Born at St Ives in 1918. Trained at Penzance and Euston Road Schools. Teaches painting at Bath Academy of Art; Joint Principal, St Peter's Loft School of Art, St Ives. One-man shows at Lefevre Gallery, 1949; Gimpel Fils, 1952 and 1954; Passedoit Gallery, New York, 1953. Exhibition at Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York, 1957.

DEREK MIDDLETON

Born in 1917. Studied in Munich before the war. Largely selftaught. Exhibited in the Royal Academy, the London Group, the Parsons Gallery in a show called 'Six Young Painters' in 1955. Also in mixed exhibitions at the Redfern Gallery.

J. MILNES-SMITH

Born in 1912. Trained and practising architect, ARIBA. First exhibition, 'British Abstract Art' at Gimpel Fils in 1951. Exhibited since at the Redfern Gallery, London Group, and other mixed exhibitions.

RODRIGO MOYNIHAN

Born in 1910 at Teneriffe, Canary Islands. Trained at art schools in Italy and at the Slade School. Member of London Group in 1933. Group exhibition of Objective Abstractions in 1934. Oneman shows at the Redfern Gallery, 1940, 1943, and Leicester Galleries, 1955. Teaches painting R C A since 1948. Became A R A in 1944, and R A in 1953.

HENRY MUNDY

Born in 1919 in Birkenhead, Cheshire. Studied at the Laird School of Art there. Served in the Army 1940-1946, then studied at the Camberwell Art School for four years. Has exhibited at Gallery One, 1954 and 1956; Oslo, 1957; AIA Gallery; the Redfern Gallery, and with the London Group.

VICTOR PASMORE

Born in 1908 in Surrey. Settled in London in 1927. Studied art privately and at evening schools. Joined the London Artists' Association, 1931, and the London Group, 1932. Associated with the exhibition of Abstract Art at the AIA Gallery and 22 Fitzroy Street, 1951-1953, and the 'Artist Versus Machine' exhibition at the Building Centre, 1954. Retrospective exhibitions at the ICA, 1954. Has held successive one-man shows at the Redfern Gallery since 1938. Appointed Master of Painting, Durham University, 1954.

RALPH RUMNEY

Born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1934. Lived in Cornwall, Paris, Sicily, from 1951 to 1955. Edited Other Voices, 1955. One-man show in Trieste, 1955, and Galleria Apollinaire, Milan, 1956 and 1957. Four paintings in an international exhibition in Tokyo, 1956. First London show at New Vision Centre Gallery, 1956. Exhibited in Galerie Taptoe, Brussels, 1957.

FRANK AVRAY WILSON

Born in Mauritius, 1914. Has painted since childhood, studied privately in France before the war, concurrently with physiology in Cambridge. Whole time painter since 1946. Studied in Norway and has been a non-objective painter since 1951. One-man exhibition at the Redfern Gallery, 1957.

BRYAN WYNTER

Born in London, 1915. Studied at the Slade School of Art. Oneman exhibitions at the Redfern Gallery, 1947, 1948, 1950, 1953, 1955 and 1957. Taught painting at Bath Academy of Art, 1951 to 1956. Now works full time in Cornwall, where he has lived intermittently since 1945.

