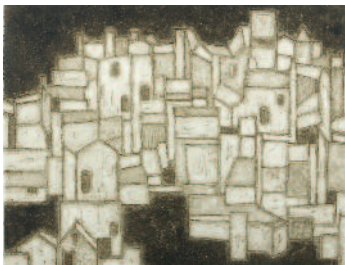




Architectural Themes in British Art and Prints by Ten American Painters 1964

There are two groups of art works in this building which represent contrasting aspects of the University collection. In the main ground floor corridor there is a display of British figurative works with architectural themes while in the first floor, immediately above, is a set of mainly abstract prints by a group of American artists.



1

The former works date from the 1950s to 1960s and illustrate a variety of responses to architectural subject matter. Not all of the artists have stressed the three dimensionality and solidity of buildings, Valerie Thornton's impression of *Mexico Cathedral*, for example, concentrates on the decorative façade, offering an image reminiscent of a two-dimensional stage set. Gerald Clements' *Cathedral IV*, similarly, is reduced to the simplest of geometrical shapes – circles, squares and rectangles. This is also the case with Herbert Jackson's *Fish Wharf* which, while not strictly architectural, explores the structure and geometry of the rigging. In contrast, Mary Hoad and Richard Demarco explore the atmosphere of a place, drawing us into a scene rather than being presented with a frontal image.

2



During a similar period a dramatic shift was occurring elsewhere with the emergence of Abstract Expressionism, Colour Field Painting and Pop Art which made America the

epicentre of creative development in contemporary art. In 1964 Sam Wagstaffe, Curator of the Wadsworth Athenaeum in Connecticut, commissioned a portfolio of screenprints by ten of the leading American



3

artists of the day and it is these that are displayed in the Institute of Education.

Examples of hard-edge abstraction are represented by Elsworth Kelly who explores the impact and relationship of two carefully balanced colour fields and by Ad Reinhardt who having renounced colour, exploits the subtle interactions of areas of black and nearly black. Pop Art is represented by Andy Warhol's *Birmingham Race Riot* and Roy Lichtenstein's *Sandwich and Soda*. The medium of screen printing was a favourite vehicle for Pop artists, facilitating the incorporation of photographic images and multiple reproduction; for the hard-edge abstractionists screen printing was ideal for reproducing unmodulated, sharply-defined areas of colour.

1. Valerie Thornton – Patterns of Stone and Brick
2. Andy Warhol – Birmingham Race Riot
4. Mary Hoad – Scene in Settle, Yorkshire

The University Collection of over 800 items is on display in the buildings and landscape of the University campus. You can look at images and find out where they are by visiting the Art Collection website <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/art>. To ensure the works you wish to see are available on the day of your visit, contact the Curator or Curatorial Assistant in advance at the gallery office on 024765 22589 or email E.A.Dooley@warwick.ac.uk

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