



Tranquility

COLIN KENT AND JOHN PIPER

'TOGETHER AT LAST....FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME'

**AT THE SAINT GILES STREET GALLERY NORWICH
FROM OCTOBER 31st TO NOVEMBER 24th 2009.**



Joined at the hip by their love of architecture and landscape, these two giants of post war and contemporary art share wall space for the first time in their illustrious careers at **The Saint Giles Street Gallery** in Norwich.

John Piper, deceased for twenty years now, continues to inspire and be emulated by many artists and though a man very much of his time, has never really gone out of fashion. One of his greatest fans is **Colin Kent** whose work continues to be successfully shown in one man and mixed shows throughout England and America. With a background in architecture forming the basis of his subject matter as well as his style, it is no surprise of his love of Piper's work and it is his use of mixed media such as pen and ink, gouache, crayon, watercolour and paint, that mirrors Piper's own approach to painting.

"There's one very odd thing about painters who like drawing architecture. They hardly ever like drawing the architecture of their own time. I know perfectly well that I would rather paint a ruined abbey half-covered with ivy and standing in long grass than I would paint it after it has been taken over by the office of works, when they have taken all the ivy off and mown all the grass with an Atco." So says Piper.

And the proof sits in the works, specifically sourced for the show entitled 'Tranquility'. Images of decaying structures echoing in their forgotten landscapes evoking memories of days gone by. Bathed in light and shimmering reflections, their ghostly auras tell many tales.



Colin's watercolours provoke immediate contemplation. His atmospheric compositions are stark, often haunting, yet always compelling. They invoke a sense of isolation without loneliness or melancholy. The deceptive simplicity of his work, particularly his studies of the Essex landscape, show how the ordinary can become dramatic, and be invested with a composite beauty so often overlooked by less perceptive observation.

The quality of his painting is further enhanced by the imaginative use of ink and gouache in conjunction with watercolour to achieve the texture and delicate tonal values by which his work is distinguished. It is often the sheer economy of his pictures that first strikes the viewer.

Since moving to Essex, his main source of inspiration have been those of coastal and inland locations in East Anglia, where solitude predominates and natural forms have softened the evidence of man.

Colin's work has been regularly exhibited at the RI, as well as the Academy, the Guildhall, the Royal West of England Academy and at a number of galleries in the United Kingdom and America. He was elected a member of the RI in 1971.



John Piper is best remembered for his paintings of churches, castles & stately homes. He was also an author of books, prolific photographer, etcher, printmaker, designer of scenery & costumes for opera, ballet & theatre, created murals, stained glass for schools, colleges, churches & cathedrals as well as designs for tapestries & fabrics & in later years began making ceramics.

Piper, the son of a solicitor, was born in Epsom in 1903. He was educated at Epsom College and trained at the Richmond School of Art, followed by the Royal College of Art in London. He turned from abstraction early in his career, concentrating on a more naturalistic but distinctive approach.

Piper was appointed an official war artist in the World War II. He collaborated with many others, including the poet John Betjeman (on the Shell Guides), as well as with the potter Geoffrey Eastop and the artist Ben Nicholson. In later years he produced many limited-edition prints.

His work often focused on the British landscape, especially churches. Along with Patrick Reyntiens he designed the stained glass windows for the new Coventry Cathedral. He also designed windows for many smaller churches. Piper created tapestries for Chichester Cathedral and Hereford Cathedral. He was a set designer for the theatre, including the Kenton Theatre, a theatre in Henley, Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff, the Royal Opera House for a production of Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and for the operas of Alun Hoddinott

182 of his works are in the Tate collection, including etchings and some earlier abstractions. Major retrospective exhibitions have been held at Tate Britain (1983-1984), the Dulwich Picture Gallery, the Imperial War Museum, the River and Rowing Museum and the Museum of Reading.

For Further information please the **Saint Giles Street Gallery** on **01603 663333**

