



## **Attic Gallery at 50 - Then and Now: 14 July - 11 August**

**This year Attic Gallery, the oldest private gallery in Wales, is celebrating its 50th anniversary.**

We are holding a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition “Then and Now”, opening 13 July and running for a month until 11 August, to celebrate the history of the gallery and as a tribute to the artists past and present. We are tracing and will exhibit paintings from the very first exhibitions. We have also invited the artists who currently show with us to each provide a new work especially for the exhibition. We will show this new work alongside the paintings from the early 1960’s. We hope this exhibition will provide a fascinating insight as to how the visual arts in Wales have changed over 50 years.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication detailing the history of the gallery, particularly the early days, and the artists who have showed here.

The gallery, then named the Dillwyn Gallery, opened in Wind Street, Swansea on 19 July 1962 with a group show which featured all the artists who had joined the gallery. The gallery was started by Margaret Aeron-Thomas, Dorothy Leonard Thomas and Brenda Bloxam.

In his speech opening the gallery broadcaster Wynford Vaughan Thomas said that the setting up of the Dillwyn Gallery was “an act of astonishing and breath-taking courage” by “three lady adventurers”. “In the gallery the public would be able to see artists of achievement, the most modern artists and the best of contemporary Welsh painting.”

At that time the gallery provided an important and much needed venue for contemporary artists to show their work and represented many leading Welsh artists of the day. They included Ernest Zobole, Kyffin Williams, Alfred Janes and Will Roberts. These often radical early exhibitions were frequently reviewed in the national press.

The declared intention of the gallery was to take the work of Welsh artists outside Wales. To that aim exhibitions were taken to London, Cambridge, and even Washington DC where the exhibition was opened by the British Ambassador and reviewed by the London Art Critic of the New York Times

The gallery was not opened in isolation but as part of a general resurgence of the arts in Swansea. Writer Kingsley Amis, who was to host an exhibition in his Cambridge home, poet Vernon Watkins who opened several exhibitions and composer Daniel Jones were all part of that revival. The gallery became a centre for artistic activity being a place for artists to meet and exchange views.

In 1968 the gallery moved up to the attic rooms in the same building, changed its name to Attic Gallery but retained its artists. It continued to be run by Dorothy Leonard Thomas then in 1973 by Brenda Bloxam, one of the founders. In 1986 Brenda was joined by her daughter Alexandra Roe and her husband David who are the current directors of the gallery, now located in Swansea's maritime quarter.

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Open: Tues - Fri 10 - 5, Sat 10 - 4.30

Titles:

Left: Land 2, by Robert Alwyn Hughes, 1962

Right: Pot and Crocus Bowl by Vivienne Williams, 2012