

PRESS RELEASE

POST-WAR TO POP

Modern British Art: Abstraction, Pop and Op Art

After World War II, **Abstraction** became a much more powerful force in modern art than it had ever been before. During the 1950s, Frank Avray Wilson, William Gear and Robyn Denny practised '**Tachisme**', a free, improvisatory abstraction as shown in their paintings *Constellation* (1957), *l'Arbre Mort*, (1950) and *Painting S.T.* (1957).

By the mid sixties many of the abstract painters delved into **Hard-edge Abstraction**. Denny, leaving the 'Tachist' spirit altogether, progressed to paint large brooding and often sombre works. *Untitled* (1968) shows John Plumb revel in colour and Hard-edged dynamism often on a scale usually only contemplated by the American abstractionists.

The more lyrical side of Hard-edge painting is represented by the work of **Patrick Heron**. His *Rumbold* (1968-1970) shows his trademark large strong coloured shapes. *Two Red Forms* (1968) by Paule Vézelay and *Composition Pink* (1963) by Vera Spencer on the other hand illustrate the more delicate rhythms of Hard-edge Abstraction.



Patrick Heron, *Rumbold*, 1968-1970



Anthony Donaldson, *That'll Be the Day*, 1964

Pop art reacted heavily against the dominance of Abstraction and introduced a revival of figurative art. **British Pop Art** as a movement gathered momentum at the 1961 Young Contemporaries Exhibition where the 1958-63 generation of students at the London Royal College of Art showed as a group. Its original participants included Sir Peter Blake, Derek Boshier, Allen Jones, Peter Phillips and Colin Self, whose works are all included in this exhibition. In addition, Whitford Fine Art will show works by **Anthony Donaldson**, Adrian Henri and Clive Barker.

At the same time during the 1960s Abstraction flourished under the form of **Op Art**. On show at Whitford Fine Art will be major Op Art works by **Michael Kidner**, Peter Sedgley, and Jeremy Moon.

This exhibition captures the excitement which gripped Britain after the Second World War. It was an age of experiment and 'cool', practised through bold colours, large canvasses, odd shapes, psychedelic optical illusions and sexy Pop Art imagery and became known as the legendary Swinging Sixties.

A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

EXHIBITION: Thursday, 22nd May-Friday, 20th June 2008

PREVIEW: Wednesday, 21st May 2008 - 6pm to 8pm

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Hours: Monday to Friday, 10am to 6pm

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Michael Kidner, *Brown, Mauve, Green and Ochre*, 1965