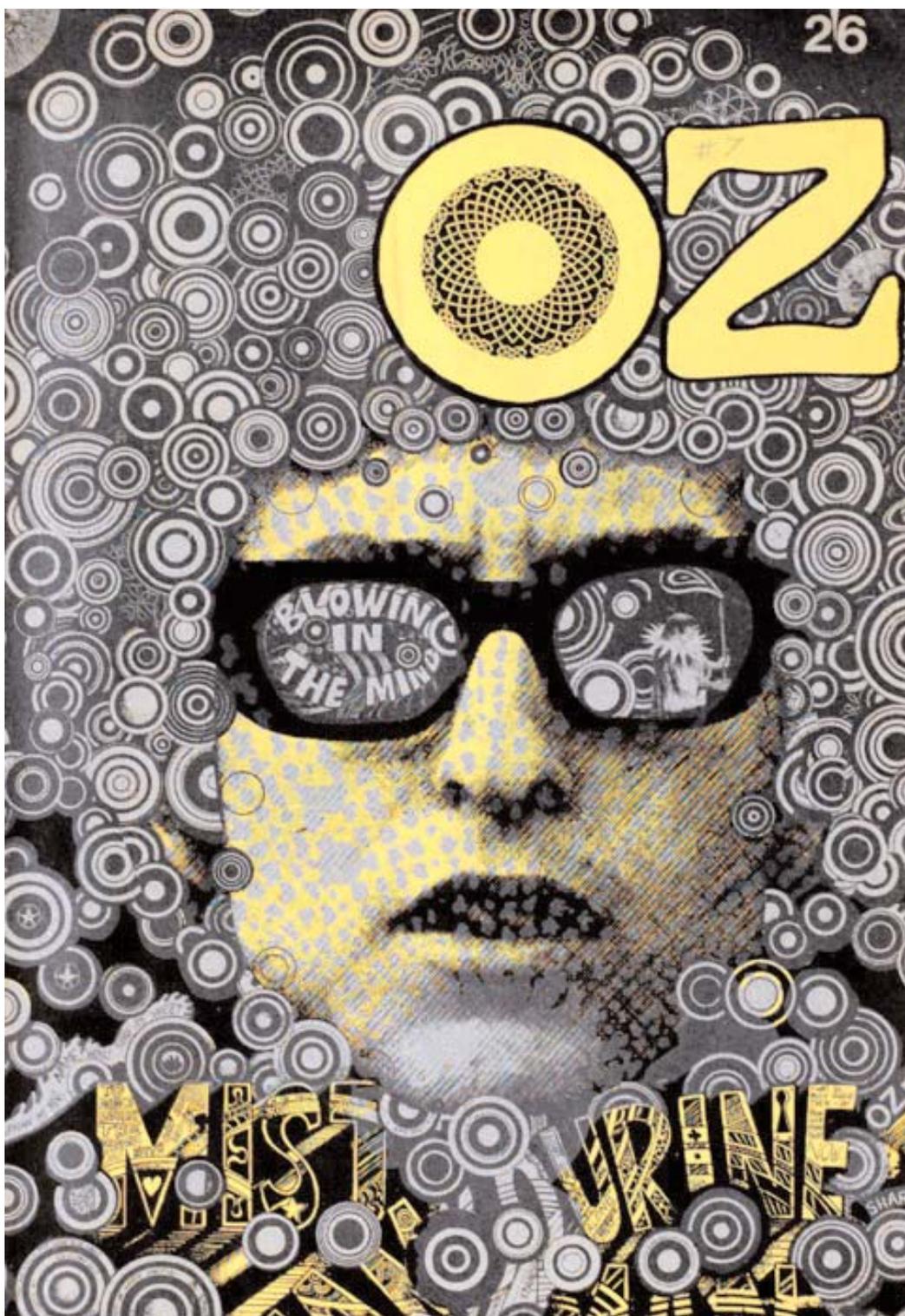


SUMMER OF LOVE: ART OF THE PSYCHEDELIC ERA

LIVERPOOL

TATE

TATE LIVERPOOL, 27 MAY – 25 SEPTEMBER 2005



OZ MAGAZINE BOB DYLAN: 'BLOWING IN THE MIND' © MARTIN SHARP

TEACHER AND STUDENT NOTES

AN INTRODUCTORY PACK FOR TEACHERS PLANNING A VISIT TO THE EXHIBITION. THE PACK CONTAINS GENERAL INFORMATION, KEY WORKS, DISCUSSION POINTS, LINKS AND ACTIVITIES. FOR USE IN THE GALLERY OR CLASSROOM. SUITABLE FOR TEACHERS OF ALL KEY STAGES AND OLDER STUDENTS. BY DEBORAH RIDING

SUMMER OF LOVE: ART OF THE PSYCHEDELIC ERA

USING THIS PACK

This pack is designed to support teachers and older students in the classroom and Gallery to help plan and enjoy your visit to *Summer of Love*. It provides an overview of the exhibition, information on some key works and suggested discussion points, activities and links. Activities are adaptable for specific age groups and are not aimed at particular key stages.

The pack contains:

- Introduction to the exhibition and psychedelia
- Ways of Looking
- Key works:

Phantasy Landscape Visiona II 1970 Verner Panton

Beyond Image 1968 Mark Boyle

VISITING THE EXHIBITION

Summer of Love can be found on the second and fourth floors of the Gallery. Admission £5, Concessions £4, Schools parties £3/pupil accompanying teachers free. To find out more about the exhibition and related events go to www.tate.org.uk. To book for general school visits or artist-led workshops please call Mike Stout on 0151 702 7451, email: mike.stout@tate.org.uk. There is a lunch space available but please well in advance. A planning a visit session at the Gallery is available for teachers at a cost of £10 per teacher.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE GALLERY

There is a reading bench in the exhibition and a free exhibition guide. There is also a catalogue for the exhibition, *Summer of Love: Art in the Psychedelic Era*, £19.99 available online or in Tate shops. Tate Liverpool's shop has a selection of books, postcards and related material.

WEBSITES

Tate online: www.tate.org.uk

Tate Learning: www.tate.org.uk/learning

Design Museum: www.designmuseum.org

Verner Panton site: www.panton.ch

Boyle family site: www.boylefamily.co.uk

FURTHER READING

David Mellor, *The Sixties Art Scene in London*, Phaidon Press

Ted Owen, Denise Dickson, *High Art: A History of the Psychedelic Poster*

Meaning in modern and contemporary art results through the interaction of the viewer and the object. To construct meanings, therefore, we need to be aware of the experiences we bring to looking and to be aware of all the information an object holds for us.

Postmodernism has encouraged us to think not of one 'correct' reading or interpretation but, of many readings depending on who you are and when, where and how you encounter an artwork. The four suggested approaches beneath provide a framework to investigate an artwork both in the classroom and Gallery.

THE PERSONAL

All analyses of works of art are processed through the different personal and social experiences we bring to the Gallery. These cannot be ignored and should be our first way in to thinking about an artwork.

THE OBJECT

The art work, whether a painting, sculpture, video or photograph has its own intrinsic qualities and these will inform our reading of each work. To understand these qualities we need to look at it *formally* – in terms of its form, line, tone, colour, space, mass etc.

Equally, looking at physical properties such as materials and processes will deepen our understanding of the object.

THE SUBJECT

Each art work can be looked at in terms of what it is telling us, be it through its content, its title or the type of work it is. In some cases the subject of the work will reside in its form as in very abstract work.

THE CONTEXT

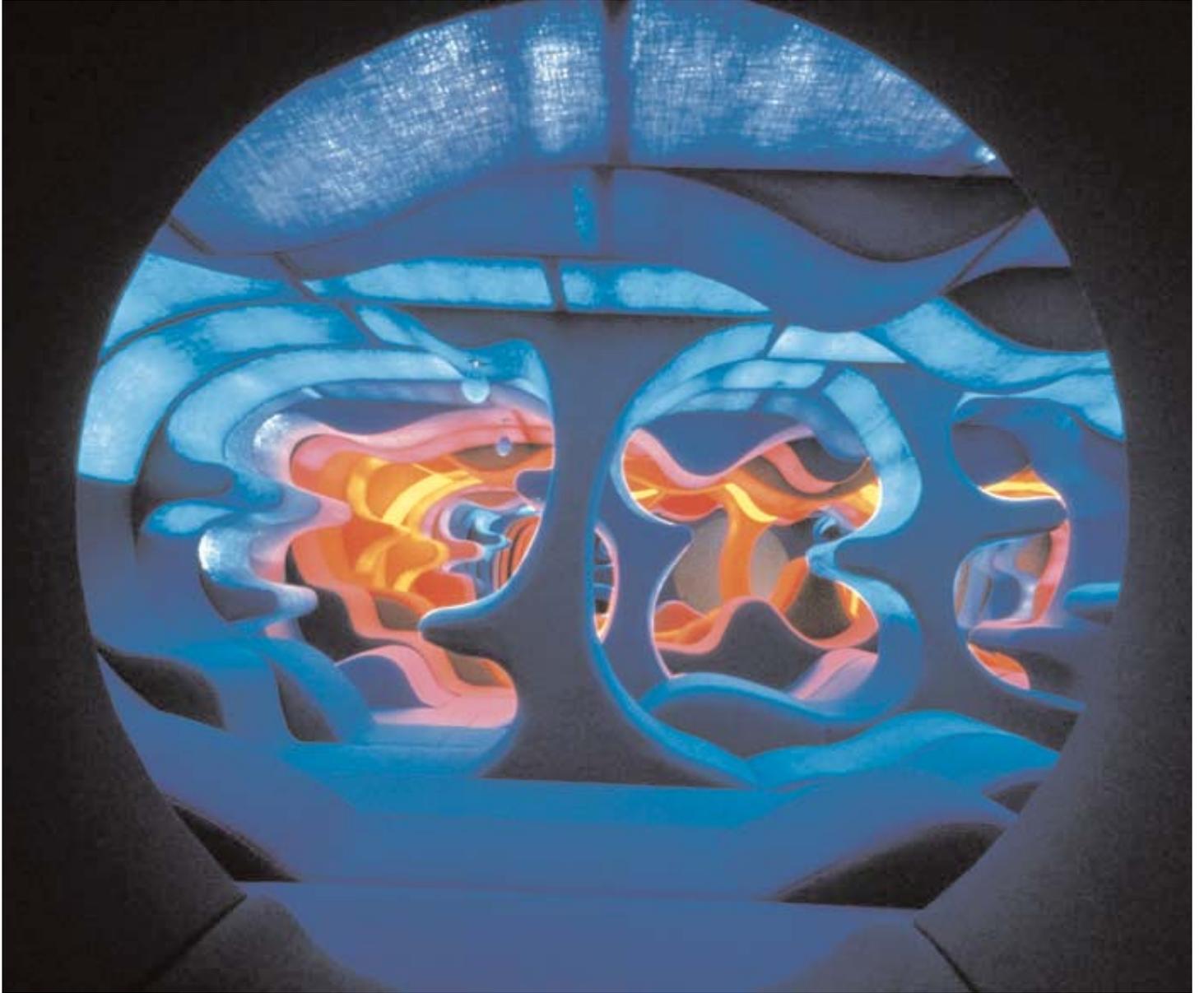
Investigating when and where a work was made and by whom can reveal more about a work. To read the work simply in terms of the artist's biography, or by an assumption of what the artist's intentions were is insufficient and can be misleading. Researching the context within which the work was produced (the political climate, social history and culture of the time) will undoubtedly tell us more about a work. Equally the present day context may give us a different reading. The positioning in the gallery and the information presented with it reveal another story. Seeing the work within a broader visual culture can also generate new and even contradictory meanings for the paintings and sculptures.

Summer of Love is one of Tate Liverpool's most ambitious projects to date. Bringing together an enormous range of works from Europe and America, this exhibition re-discovers an important chapter of visual culture largely ignored by art historical commentary. Psychedelia engaged with the political revolution and counter culture of the late 1960s and early 1970s and exemplified a new sense of personal and sexual liberation. Artists, architects and designers employed strategies that undermined convention and challenged hierarchies, contributing to a new visual culture that was both informal and inclusive. Its sense of individuality and freedom manifested itself in an aesthetic that featured bright, dynamic colours and swirling shapes and forms; often referencing the motifs of Art Nouveau. It visualised the experience of sensory overload and expanded consciousness often brought on by hallucinogenic agents. Psychedelia was a holistic enterprise that blurred the distinctions between art, film, design and craft. Collaboration was popular and a sense of community prioritised. The period saw much experimentation with living environments and the exhibition features proposed designs by the architectural group Archigram who developed many (mainly unrealised) designs for housing units and cities of the future.

As well as paintings and sculpture the show features posters and contextual ephemera, photographs, installation, design, architecture, film and lumia. It references the dialogue between music and visual arts at the time and has several examples of collaborations between artists and musicians. Slide and film projections and light shows were pioneered during this period, transforming rock concerts into multimedia experiences that overloaded the senses with visual as well as aural material. New cultural spaces developed that provided venues for the psychedelic experience, fostering a social as well as visual phenomena. Posters advertising these venues became an important visualisation of the psychedelic experience, developing a distinctive aesthetic and graphic style.

Summer of Love features work by artists known for their psychedelic work like Isaac Abram but also many artists, filmmakers and photographers better known for other work, like Andy Warhol, who experimented with psychedelia at the time.

Summer of Love presents an exciting opportunity to explore this significant period of 1960s visual arts and its impact on popular culture. A visually stimulating show, it provides a range of media to investigate with plenty of material for discussion and multi sensory experiences to enjoy. It will provide students with a real taste of the 'Summer of Love'. The exhibition is ideal for both primary and secondary groups and works on several levels. For primary teachers it provides a wonderfully inspiring environment in which to think about design, architecture, space and pattern. Its bright colours and stimulating aesthetic will engage younger visitors in the Gallery and encourage bold and creative experimentation back in the classroom. For older students *Summer of Love* includes many key works and artists rarely featured and represents a hugely underestimated era in the visual arts. It provides a platform for thematic discussions on, for example, popular culture or art vs design, as well as more focused practice based research. *Summer of Love* has great potential for cross curricular projects looking at art and music, history, fashion, design, science, film and citizenship.



VERNER PANTON *PHANTASY LANDSCAPE VISIONA II* 1970

VERNER PANTON

DANISH ARCHITECT AND FURNITURE DESIGNER (1926–1998)

Phantasy Landscape Visiona II, 1970

As a child, Panton yearned to become an artist but was encouraged by his parents to pursue a career in architecture. He quickly established a reputation as a visionary designer and by the early 1960s, was experimenting with materials, technologies and a whole approach to design. He never lost his passion for painting however and realised his artistic flare through his designs.

‘The main purpose of my work is to provoke people into using their imaginations...By experimenting with lighting, colours, textiles and furniture, I try to show new ways to encourage people to use their phantasy and make their surroundings more exciting.’

During the 1950s, Panton believed the post war climate presented an ideal opportunity to shake up traditional living, from social structures to our experience of domestic environments. He wanted to empower people to be imaginative and creative with their own living spaces.

Using futuristic yet organic designs, he incorporated the fluid motifs popular throughout Scandinavian design in the 1960s. However rather than the pale natural wood favoured by other designers, Panton experimented with new man made materials like plastics, fibre glass, Perspex and foam rubber, that could be moulded into brightly coloured and more adventurous forms. He rejected the modernist aesthetic that preceded him and was bold with shape, colour and texture prioritising form as well as function. Well known for his fun approach, he designed objects like the first inflatable furniture, that appealed to an emerging consumer society that desired ‘designed’, objects that looked good as well as being affordable. He is perhaps most famous for the Panton chair, the first cantilevered chair made from a single piece of plastic. Glossy and brightly coloured it has become a design classic due its popular shape and elegant design as well as its technical achievements. His furniture echoed the human form through organic shapes and his designs explored functionality to its extremes, for example with a two-level seat contoured to the body and designed to seat one person on top of the other. His interior spaces experimented with new concepts for living, with 3D carpets and multi functional seating that allowed flexible interaction.

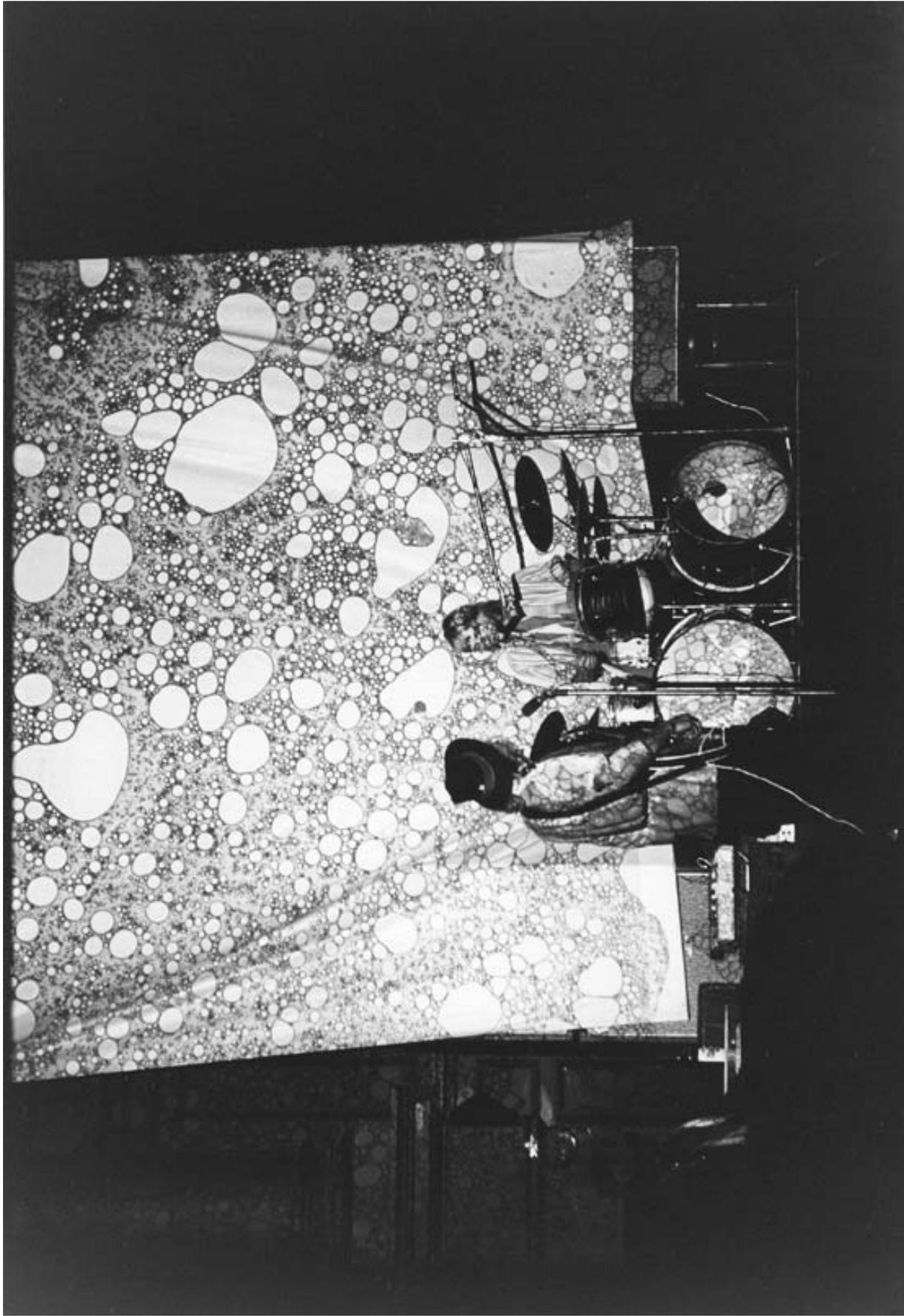
His desire to achieve a completely holistic approach to design culminated in his total environments. He designed the first of these in 1960 at the Norwegian Astoria Hotel. It led to more amazing versions developed throughout the late 1960s and early '70s. These environments attempted to overcome the usual distinctions between floor, walls and ceiling and disrupt the conventional ways in which we inhabit domestic spaces.

At the Visiona II exhibition at the Cologne furniture fair he created a womb like environment in foam rubber: *Phantasy Landscape*. It transformed the idea of the domestic interior into a living, almost breathing, environment that used organic shapes designed for reclining and socialising. Bold in its use of colour, shape and texture, the undulating curves of the foam structure are enhanced by spiral and ring lamps. Lighting is integrated into the upholstered walls of the space as distinctions are blurred between architecture, interior, furniture, fixtures and fittings. Entering the space is a unique and immersive experience and a highlight of the exhibition.

There is a reading area immediately outside the space for further information on psychedelia and its artists and designers.

DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

- What is the difference between craft, design and sculpture? Show your students examples of each and encourage them to think about who makes something, why and how. Who is it made for and where does it go when it's finished?
- Students could design a piece of furniture or household object that reflects the visual style of an artist you have looked at in the Gallery or online. It could be an artist from any era and could include looking at homes and interiors from that period.
- Groups could work together on designs for a chill out room in your school. They would need to think about how people would use it and come up with imaginative ways in which to support that through structure, texture, lighting and music.



MARK BOYLE AND JOAN HILLS *SOFT MACHINE WITH PROJECTIONS*, EDINBURGH FESTIVAL 1967 © MARK ELLIDGE

MARK BOYLE AND JOAN HILLS

Sensual Laboratory Lightshow c.1967–68

DVD projection with soundtrack by Softmachine

MARK BOYLE BIOGRAPHY

The Boyle Family are a family of collaborative artists based in London. They are Mark Boyle & Joan Hills & their children Sebastian & Georgia. During the 1960s their collaborative works were simply accredited to Mark but since 1985 the four of them have exhibited as the Boyle Family. Their aim continues to be to try and make art that does not exclude anything as a potential subject.

The media they have worked in have includes: performances and events, films and projections, sound recordings, photography, electron-microphotography, drawing, assemblage, painting, sculpture and installation.

From 1960–1964 mark Boyle experimented with light shows at home and in low key performances for friends. There was no formula and performances varied depending on the materials and equipment he used at the time. His first public light show was performed in Liverpool at the Bluecoat Arts Centre in 1966. he continued to experiment with his family at home, creating exciting new images via the projector with a variety of physical and chemical reactions.

‘...again and again we had the experience of quite suddenly realising that we had projected on the wall of our studio visual phenomena that we were pretty sure nobody had ever seen before. The whole family were involved. We had hundreds of bottles of different chemicals and many effects were discovered by chance, mixing chemicals at random. Some of the best things emerged when Cameron and Sebastian and Georgia had a turn. Then we would all try to work out exactly what the mixture had been. When we could repeat it, the formula was written down and we would all dance round the studio, screaming and shouting with excitement while our new discovery flared and exploded silently on the wall.’

The range of materials that they experimented with grew and included bodily fluids and live insects as well as the chemical described above. *Son et Lumiere for Bodily Fluids and Functions* was the first performance to be accompanied by sound created by amplified contact microphones that conveyed the sound of heartbeats.

This period saw many collaborations with dancers and musicians, the most fruitful of which was with the group Soft Machine who he first encountered at the psychedelic club, UFO in 1967. For several years he worked with the group, providing projections that filled the space and added to the intensity of the music. Together they toured Europe and America, playing in more traditional music venues as well as circus tents and plastic pavilions. Mark Boyle and his partner Joan Hills formed a collective with artists John Claxton and Des Banner called the Sensual Laboratory perfectly evokes the light shows of this time. The film features oils that bubble and swirl creating a filmic version of a lava lamp. The pulsating music of Soft Machine combined with Mark Boyles’s visuals provide a truly psychedelic multi-sensory experience. The light projections were created by oils pressed between sheets of glass creating a continually changing series of abstract shapes and colours. Four of these films feature in the installation on floor to ceiling screens providing a completely immersive experience.

DISCUSSION POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Look at other examples of how music and art have overlapped more recently by looking at the work of Damien Hirst and Christian Marclay for example.
- Make your own light shows using OHPs and mylar or data projectors and digital film and video. You could collaborate with music colleagues to produce a multi-sensory performance for the school.

This display does contain some references to drug abuse. Obviously this was an influence on the psychedelic experience and its associated aesthetic. If you intend to confront these issues in the Gallery we suggest that you contextualise this practice and site it within the cultural environment of that particular period. Obviously generations later, we are aware that using these substances can be extremely harmful and there are several organisations and resources available to you to support your exploration of those issues with pupils:

Liverpool Maritime Museum, RUSH Project. For details of events and a resource pack for teachers contact Mary Roberson/Liz Stewart on 0151 478 4466

www.talktofrank.com