

St IVES  
**TATE**

**John Hoyland, Tony O'Malley**

***Summer 2006***

**20 May – 24 September 2006**

**Notes for Teachers**

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## **Introduction**

The summer 2006 displays present the following;

### **Tony O'Malley**

#### **A Retrospective: A Selection from the Irish Museum of Modern Art exhibition**

This exhibition includes more than twenty paintings and highlights O'Malley's career from the early 1960s until his death in 2003. It includes works from his well-known Good Friday series, early monochrome works as well as the more exuberant paintings inspired by his visits to the Bahamas. O'Malley had a long connection with St Ives, living and working in the town for thirty years, before returning to Ireland in 1990. In the Studio (off lower gallery two), O'Malley's works are displayed alongside those by other St Ives artists.

### **John Hoyland**

#### **The Trajectory of a Fallen Angel**

##### ***Paintings 1966 – 2003***

This exhibition highlights the evolution of Hoyland's paintings over four decades. One of Britain's leading abstract artists, Hoyland has developed a unique personal style producing large-scale paintings often with extreme formal reduction and high-key colour. The exhibition charts Hoyland's gradual move toward more thickly painted and richly textured paintings that embrace imaginative and mysterious qualities.

### **Bernard Leach and his Circle**

The Wingfield-Digby Collection of ceramics by Bernard Leach and his circle is on display in the showcase in Upper Gallery Two. It includes a number of key studio potters who worked alongside Leach at the St Ives pottery.

### **Modernism in St Ives**

In Gallery One there is a new display of works by artists associated with the St Ives School of Moderns including Barbara Hepworth, Peter Lanyon, Ben Nicholson, Naum Gabo, Bryan Pearce and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham.

There are many starting points appropriate to these displays (see page 4) that you could develop according to your group's needs and interests. Consider some of the following:

- Colour
- Abstract art
- Landscape art
- A sense of place
- Place, time and history
- Real and imaginary places
- The sea/water
- Space and the illusion of space
- Painting techniques and materials
- St Ives and St Ives artists

## **How to use this pack and structure your visit**

The aim of this pack is to provide information about the exhibition, information about key works on display and suggestions of themes and routes to use around the displays. The pack should help you create an introductory discussion about some of the issues raised by the current displays. The key works cards can be used to help focus work in small groups in the exhibition, and to allow follow up within the classroom.

## Key themes and suggested routes

The artists included in the Summer 2006 displays at Tate St Ives are all very different and they explore a variety of subjects and media. However, exhibited together their works do share some common themes. To help you plan your visit some of these key themes are listed below together with a suggested route through the galleries. We recommend that you plan a focused look at four-five art works at the most. Of course, these are only some of the many possible ways to work with the displays. If you need any help planning your visit please do contact the education team.

Note: Suggested activities are included with each Key Work Card.

### Feast of colour

Explore John Hoyland's large-scale colour paintings. Compare and contrast Tony O'Malley's early monochromes with his later more colourful and exuberant works. See also works by St Ives artists in Gallery One and consider how they celebrate the light and colour of the Cornish landscape. There are plenty of opportunities to discuss colour theories, colour mixing, primary colours, dark colours, bright colours and monochrome painting.

#### **Suggested route:**

Mall	Patrick Heron's Window
Gallery Five	John Hoyland's paintings
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley's paintings
Gallery One	Terry Frost <i>Black and White Movement</i> 1952 Patrick Heron <i>Azalea Garden</i> 1971

### A sense of place

The new displays provide a great opportunity to explore different ideas about landscape and a sense of place. How do we describe a sense of place or history? How do we record the passing of time and its effects on a place? The Cornish, Bahamian and Irish landscape, inspired Tony O'Malley. Peter Lanyon described trying to paint 'placeness' and Barbara Hepworth talked of the inspiration of the wild rugged coast and moors of west Cornwall. Many works demonstrate an emotive response to the colour, light, textures, surfaces and materials of the natural world.

#### **Suggested route:**

Gallery One	Wilhelmina Barns-Graham <i>Island Sheds No.1</i> 1940 Barbara Hepworth <i>Pelagos</i> 1946 Paul Feiler <i>Morvah</i> 1958
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley's paintings
Studio	Peter Lanyon <i>Wreck</i> 1963 Bryan Wynter <i>Seedtime</i> 1958-9

### Real or imaginary?

How do artists record real events, tell stories or invent mysteries? Some of these artists describe real places and real events. Some choose to simplify, exaggerate or abstract from reality. Others construct from memory and imagination creating mysterious and enigmatic images.

#### **Suggested route:**

Gallery One	Margo Maeckelberghe <i>Smeatons Pier</i> 1951 Alfred Wallis <i>Schooner under the Moon</i> 1935-6
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley's paintings
Studio	Peter Lanyon <i>Wreck</i> 1963
Gallery Five	John Hoyland <i>Quas 23.1.86</i> 1986

## Space and scale

These artists explore and describe space in different ways. How does Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Tony O'Malley or Peter Lanyon describe space within a landscape painting? What happens when you enter a room of paintings by John Hoyland or pass Patrick Heron's window? Hoyland challenges and teases the idea of pictorial space choosing to work large-scale with strong colours and bold forms. How does the architecture of Tate St Ives affect your response to the artwork?

### **Suggested route:**

Mall	Patrick Heron's window
Gallery Five	John Hoyland's paintings
Gallery Four & Three	John Hoyland's paintings
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley <i>Bahamas Inscape</i> 1987
Gallery One	Victor Pasmore <i>Abstract in White, Green, Black, Blue, Red, Grey &amp; Pink</i> c. 1963
	Peter Lanyon <i>Thermal</i> 1960

## Materials and processes

The displays embrace a wide range of materials and techniques. You can examine Tony O'Malley's idiosyncratic marks in oil paint as well as his constructions in wood and found materials. You can relish Hoyland's use of bold acrylic paint and his techniques of pouring, dripping and staining the canvas. Hoyland's works provide good examples of the enormous range of different effects that can be achieved with acrylic emulsion paint. Explore also the painting techniques of artists such as Roger Hilton, Paul Feiler and Peter Lanyon as well as the sculpture of Barbara Hepworth, Naum Gabo and Brian Wall.

### **Suggested route:**

Gallery Five	John Hoyland's paintings (acrylic paint)
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley's paintings (oil paint)
Studio	Peter Lanyon <i>Turn Around</i> 1963-4 (construction)
Upper Gallery Two	Bernard Leach's pots (ceramic)
Gallery One	Sandra Blow <i>Beige, Plaster &amp; Red</i> 1982 (collage)
	Alfred Wallis <i>Schooner under the Moon</i> 1936 (scrap materials)
	Naum Gabo <i>Spiral Theme</i> 1941 (sculpture)

## Abstraction

Many of the artists on display explore an abstract or non-figurative language. The displays provide a good introduction to the ways artists use line, colour, transparency, layering, texture, surface, shape and form to play with the illusion of space.

### **Suggested route:**

Mall	Patrick Heron's Window
Gallery One	Naum Gabo <i>Spiral Theme</i> 1941
	Roger Hilton <i>Untitled</i> 1971
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley's paintings
Studio	Bryan Wynter <i>Seedtime</i> 1958-9
Gallery Three, Four	John Hoyland's paintings

## Narrative and storytelling

'Step inside' some of these paintings and explore rich, imaginary worlds. What narrative or stories are being told? Look at how artists such as Peter Lanyon and Tony O'Malley use narrative within their paintings. These artists use the language of abstraction to layer and weave stories and references to mythology, history and literature.

### **Suggested route:**

Gallery One	Alfred Wallis <i>Schooner under the Moon</i> 1935-6
Lower Gallery Two	Tony O'Malley
Studio	Peter Lanyon and Tony O'Malley

## **Tony O'Malley (1913-2003)**

### ***Bone Birds at the Green Lake, Bird Lake III – Old Residents, Paradise Island, Bahamas, 1986-7***

Acrylic on canvas, 121.9 x 182.9 cm

***Located in Lower Gallery Two***

#### **Background**

This painting appears to be teeming with life, movement and energy. Bird and plant-like forms seem to flicker across the canvas in a swirl of hot colours. The reds, yellows and purples of the sides seem to hem in the beaky birds in the bottom centre of the canvas - suggesting a deep pool or an underwater world.

This painting was inspired by one of O'Malley's visits to the Bahamas. Between 1974 and 1986 he made regular winter working visits to these islands. He responded to the different light and the tropical flora and fauna, describing his experience of the Bahamian landscape as having a hugely liberating effect on his work.

In contrast to his early paintings that are characterised by muted, 'winter' colours and geometric and block like compositions, O'Malley's paintings in the 1970s are full of colour with decentred compositions. For practical reasons, he also began to work on canvas in contrast to his preferred choice of oil on board. The surface of this painting reveals vigorous working and scoring as the layers have been built up. On the left are O'Malley's characteristic initials and on the right he has written the date.

Throughout his career O'Malley's key focus was the landscapes of Ireland, St Ives and also the Islands of the Bahamas, the Canaries and the Scilly Isles. His works do not describe but rather refer to aspects of nature and the countryside. He developed a personal abstraction language that blends aspects of the natural world and the history of a place with atmospheric qualities and a sense of surface. Curator Catherine Marshall describes this language as 'encompassing an extraordinary range of referential opportunities, between sound and silence, between history and the landscape'.

O'Malley has had a long connection with St Ives, living and working in the town for 30 years. It was through his association with the St Ives School of Moderns and close friends such as Peter Lanyon and Patrick Heron, that he was able to embrace abstraction. Instead of landscape, O'Malley talked of 'inscape' stating 'I suddenly saw that abstraction enabled you to get under appearances, and the expression in the mind, and all together – a synthesis of the two' (Interview with Brian Fallon reprinted in the exhibition catalogue).

**Tony O'Malley (1913 – 2003)** was born in Co. Kilkenny, Ireland. O'Malley was employed by the Munster and Leinster Bank from 1934, retiring in 1958 due to ill health. Entirely self-taught, he began painting in 1945 while recovering from a lung operation. In 1960 O'Malley moved to St Ives in Cornwall. In 1973 he married the painter Jane Harris. During the 1970s and 1980s he made winter visits to the Bahamas. He also spent winters in Lanzarote and he visited Italy for the first time in 1997. In 1990 O'Malley returned to live permanently in Ireland settling at Physiciantown, Callan, Co. Kilkenny. He received many awards towards the end of his life including, in 1999, the IMMA/Glen Dimplex Award for a sustained contribution to the Visual Arts in Ireland.

### For discussion

- Take your eyes on a journey around this painting. What do they focus on first? Describe the sense of space within the painting. Describe the different textures and marks. Is it possible to work out O'Malley's painting process?
- Imagine stepping inside this painting. Where would you be and what would be happening? What would you hear and what temperature would it be?
- What would you call this painting? Make up your own title for it.
- Compare/contrast this painting to earlier works by O'Malley such as *The Hawk Owl* 1964. What is different about his use of colour and treatment of space?
- O'Malley made this painting in response to a visit to the Bahamas. Consider what aspects of the Irish, Cornish or Bahamian landscape O'Malley was most interested in.
- O'Malley said he was interested in the idea of 'inscape' rather than landscape. What do you think he meant by this and how could it link to this painting?
- O'Malley's paintings often contain bird imagery. What do you think birds symbolised for him? See also his *Bird Song Circle* paintings (Upper Gallery 2).

### Activities

**Visual diaries.** O'Malley regarded his sketchbook as an indispensable visual diary which he worked on daily (see *Tony O'Malley: The Visual Diaries*, Butler Gallery, 2005). He saw drawing as an essential basis or 'underpinning' for all his painting. Encourage students to make a visual diary based on a series of bold drawings from direct observation.

**The natural world: structure, form, texture and colour.** Develop drawings and collage work based on observation and collection of materials and objects from the natural world.

**Hot and cold landscapes.** Develop large-scale work exploring the theme of a sense of place. Look at O'Malley's paintings to discuss responses to different places with contrasting histories, climates and vegetation.

**Mark making, layering and inscribing with paint.** Experiment layering paint on a surface. Try adding and removing paint from the surface in different ways including inscribing into wet paint with different tools. Contrast pure colours with mixed colours. Contrast sharp geometric shapes with more organic forms and marks. Experiment with different types of paint such as watercolour, acrylic or oil.

**Poetry and narrative.** Explore some of his references to poetry, storytelling and mythology. For example, look at his fascination with birds and their symbolic associations and link to the poetry of W.B. Yeats (*The Second Coming*) and Gerard Manley Hopkins (*The Windhover*). This could be the starting point for a word and image project.

### Links

Compare and contrast this painting with O'Malley's more sombre early paintings such as *The Hawk Owl* 1964 or *In Memory of Peter Lanyon* 1964. See also works from his well-known series exploring the theme of Christ's Passion. Made every Good Friday these works range from wooden constructions to dark paintings.

Link O'Malley to other St Ives artists such as Peter Lanyon, Bryan Wynter and Patrick Heron. See Gallery One and also the display in the Studio (off Lower Gallery Two) where works by O'Malley are displayed alongside these artists.

Explore the history of abstract painting and compare paintings by O'Malley with those by John Hoyland currently on display at Tate St Ives.

O'Malley lists the British landscape artists John Sell Cotman, John Crome and John Constable as early influences. He also cites Jean-Siméon Chardin, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne and Maurice de Vlaminck as important. O'Malley's later works, when his eyesight was failing, have been compared with Claude Monet's Water-lily paintings (see [www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)).

O'Malley's paintings have been identified as linking to a tradition in Irish art and he is often compared with painters such as Jack B. Yeats. See Irish Museum of Modern Art at [www.imma.ie/](http://www.imma.ie/) or Irish National Gallery of Art at [www.nationalgallery.ie/](http://www.nationalgallery.ie/).

O'Malley's painting techniques have led to comparisons to Ben Nicholson's technique of inscribing (scraping into the paint) as well as Bernard Leach's sgraffito style (scratching into the wet clay slip before firing).

O'Malley was familiar with the carvings and sculptures seen in local churches and ruins in Ireland, particularly the twelfth-century Cistercian Jerpoint Abbey, Kilkenny and the work by the sixteenth century tomb maker Rory O'Tunney. See [www.travelsinireland.com/abbey/jerpoint.htm](http://www.travelsinireland.com/abbey/jerpoint.htm).

Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk).

## **John Hoyland (b1934)**

### **Quas 23.1.86 1986**

Acrylic on canvas 2438 x 2438 cm

*Located in Gallery Five*

#### **Background**

A bright orange triangular form painted onto a stained green/ brown background dominates this large square painting. On either side are smaller circular shapes in red, yellow and pink. It is as if the geometric forms have been melted or dissolved by the washes and splashes of paint that have been allowed to run across the surface.

Since the late 1950s Hoyland has developed an abstract language for painting. Strongly influenced by developments in American art, his early works are characterised by extreme formal reduction and high-key colour. He was concerned with formal issues of scale, colour and the relation of shapes. He abandoned oil for acrylic paint and began painting on large horizontal canvases. Simple geometric forms are arranged in a sequence in the foreground, appearing to lie on the surface. This impression is reinforced by drips and passages where the paint has bled into the canvas. The quick-drying properties of the new water-based acrylics also enabled Hoyland to pour and stain his canvases.

These highly structured paintings gradually gave way to a more expressive use of paint and form in the 1970s. Hoyland gradually moved away from the American emphasis on 'purity' to create works that were more sensuous and mysterious. *Quas* is a good example of Hoyland's work since the 1980s where he attempts to conjure an enigmatic space within his paintings. It also demonstrates his freer way of working that includes pouring, splashing and moving the canvas around.

Hoyland used not to give titles to his works preferring to simply date them when he considered them finished. More recently he has started to create his own titles. He describes his titles as 'counterpoints' and does not consider them explanatory or descriptive. 'Quas' is the name of a mythological fallen angel and was taken from the *Dictionary of Angels* by Gustav Davidson (New York, 1971). This book has provided Hoyland with a number of titles for recent works.

Hoyland's title therefore alludes to cosmic elements, to stars and distant universes. It reinforces the idea that *Quas* is not simply a painting about material processes but one that combines formal transformation with a sensuous and imaginative quality. Curator Paul Moorhouse comments that the idea of a fallen angel seems to be strangely appropriate for an artist whose pursuit of formal reductionism and the elimination of imagery has ultimately resulted in paintings teaming with imaginative associations.

*'Paintings are not to be understood, they are to be recognised. They are an equivalent to nature, not an illustration of it'* John Hoyland

**John Hoyland** was born in 1934. He studied at Sheffield College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools. He began to experiment with colour abstraction in the 1950s, attending a summer school in 1957 where Victor Pasmore and Harry Thrubron taught him. He was deeply impressed by exhibitions of Abstract Expressionist painting seen in London in 1956 and 1959. He exhibited at the *Situation* exhibitions in 1960-1 in London. In 1964 Hoyland visited New York and met painters such as Helen Frankenthaler, Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski. He also met the art critic Clement Greenberg. He went on to develop strong ties with America, teaching and working in New York for periods during the 1970s. During the 1960s, 70s and 80s Hoyland also taught at various London art colleges including Chelsea, St Martins, The Slade and the Royal Academy Schools. He had his first one-man show in London in 1964. He has since exhibited worldwide and a retrospective was held at the Royal Academy in 1999. He has received many awards and in 2001 he received an Honorary Doctorate from Sheffield Hallam University. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1991. In recent years Hoyland has travelled extensively in Africa, the Caribbean and the Far East. He lives and works in London and is represented by Beaux Arts.

### For Discussion

- Look closely at the colour, surface, texture and edges of this painting. Can you tell how Hoyland painted it? Which colours did he apply first? Can you see layers or areas where the paint has been mixed, poured, splashed, dripped or stained? Why do you think Hoyland likes to paint in acrylic rather than oil?
- Hoyland's paintings are often very big. Imagine this painting was much smaller – what effect would this have on you?
- Hoyland is interested in how a painter can play with the illusion of space on a flat surface. What type of space is created by this painting?
- Hoyland talks about the 'beauty of what paint can do' and the paintings in gallery five have been described as 'iridescent'. What do you think is meant by this?
- What is a fallen angel? Why do you think Hoyland titles his paintings after the names of fallen angels?
- This painting has been described as enigmatic and mysterious. Would you agree?

### Activities

**Colour, texture and gesture.** Develop activities that explore colour, texture and layering with paint and other materials. Discuss the range of colours and techniques used by Hoyland. Encourage students to experiment building up a series of layers and surfaces using a range of materials and mark making. Encourage students make one final dramatic gesture to finish their work.

**Word 'books'.** Invite students to make their own book of words to describe the way Hoyland paints (simple paper books can be made with a sheet of A4 paper). Use these word books as guide for students to then make their own paintings.

**Painting processes past and present.** When acrylic paint first became available to artists in the 1960s it was marketed as the first new painting medium in 500 years and was described as 'to painting what the electric guitar was to music'. Consider why acrylic paint has been so important to artists such as Hoyland. Students could investigate the properties of different media such as oil, water and acrylic paint.

**Space and scale.** Develop large-scale paintings or colour drawings/collages. Hoyland is interested in exploring the effects of different arrangements of colours and shapes on visual perception. Demonstrate how a change in colour can alter the effect of shape on the paper/canvas and even transform the overall mood of the work.

**Other worlds.** Hoyland's recent paintings have been described as evoking imaginative or dream-spaces. Develop visual and written work in a range of media (including photography/film)

that suggest an imaginary or 'other world'. Look at artists and writers who create dream-spaces in their work.

**Links**

Link to the abstract painted metal constructed sculptures of Anthony Caro such as *Early One Morning* 1962 (Tate).

Link to American painting from the 1960s, especially Colour-Field painting and Post-Painterly Abstraction associated with artists such as Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Helen Frankenthaler, Kenneth Noland (especially his target paintings such as *Gift* 1961-2, Tate) and Morris Louis. Hoyland has also greatly admired the work of Nicholas de Stael and Hans Hoffman. Look also at the writing of Clement Greenberg (*Collected Essays and Criticism*, University of Chicago, 1986).

Compare and contrast to other British artists who have developed an abstract language for painting. For example, Bridget Riley or Patrick Heron (see work by Heron in gallery one and the Studio).

Link Hoyland's more recent paintings to the work of Joan Miró and the stories and poetry of Jorge Luis Borges. The artist cites both as influential on his development of a more mysterious, dream-like space within his paintings.

For further information on twentieth-century American art and Tate works please see the Tate website at [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk).

## **Bernard Leach**

### ***Tile c. 1925***

23 cm square, 2 cm thick

***Located in Upper Gallery Two***

#### **Background**

This stoneware tile has the design of a bird feeding its' young painted in iron. It has sgraffito detailing where Leach scratched through the wet clay slip before firing. It is an excellent example of Leach's commitment to quiet, contemplative forms with soft, muted colours derived from the earth. It also shows his powerful sense of composition.

Leach would sketch his ideas before decorating his ceramics. He was an expert at combining pattern and motif with the colour and shape of each work. He had his own favourite decorations such as birds, horses and griffins and he often combined animals and plants with simple patterns and marks. Look here how he fits the curved design with the shape of the square tile. The drawing has a lightness to it that is both playful and energetic.

This tile has the St Ives pottery stamp and another illegible signature in the lower corners and there are eight St Ives seals impressed on the back. Leach set up the St Ives pottery in 1920 with fellow potter Shoji Hamada. With a team of workers and students, Leach made a range of ware that included decorative raku, and functional tableware, souvenirs and large earthenware dishes. He also produced individual pieces in stoneware such as this tile.

Leach spent much of his early life moving between Britain and the Far East, studying in both London and Japan. His experience of both the East and the West meant his work included ideas, aesthetics and stylistic influences of contrasting cultures. Leach was passionate in his desire to introduce to Britain a feeling for harmony in pottery that he had learned in the Far East. At St Ives he and Hamada built the first oriental climbing kiln in the West. His sources of inspiration were wide; he studied Medieval British and Staffordshire pottery as well as Chinese, Korean and Japanese ceramics.

Leach travelled extensively throughout his life and in 1940 he published his *influential A Potter's Book* outlining his philosophy and methods. He is often described as the 'father of the modern studio ceramic movement' inspiring people all over the world to value andcrafted work. Leach coined the term 'head, hand and heart' to express the sense of equilibrium and wholeness that he believed industrial societies needed to regain.

**Bernard Leach (1887-1979)** spent the first ten years of his life in Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan before going to school in Britain in 1897. He studied at the Slade School of Art and in 1909 returned to Japan where he studied traditional Japanese pottery. In 1920 Leach set up the St Ives pottery with fellow potter Shoji Hamada. They built the first oriental climbing kiln in the West making a range of work including raku, tableware and earthenware. While running the Leach pottery he visited China and Japan regularly. In 1932 Leach set up a new pottery at Dartington, while his son, David, managed the pottery in St Ives. In 1940 he published *A Potter's Handbook*. Leach returned to St Ives in 1941 establishing a range of tableware in stoneware that became known as Standard Ware. Leach travelled extensively throughout his life passing on his ideas to potters throughout the world. In 1962 Leach was awarded the Freedom of the Borough of St Ives.

## For Discussion

- There has been much discussion in recent years as to whether ceramics is an art or a craft. Leach insisted that he was an 'artist-potter' and he always regarded his individual pots as objects of art rather than craft. Why do you think he considered these pots more important than the standard ware (tableware)?
- What do you think the display at Tate St Ives says about the status of these objects? Are they sculptures or domestic objects?
- The Japanese critic Soetsu Yanagi complimented Leach by describing his earthenware as 'born not made'. What do you think he meant by this?
- Leach said he wanted his pots to have 'vitality' – to capture a sense of energy and life. Can you find examples that you feel have this quality?
- The simplified motif of a bird was a favourite for Leach. He considered it a symbol of freedom and peace. Can you find other motifs in his work and what do you think they symbolise? You might like to compare Leach's images of birds with those by Tony O'Malley.

## Activities

**Everyday objects.** Explore and discuss everyday objects such as teacups, bowls, vases, jugs and plates. Build up a collection display of different objects. Encourage students to find words for shape, texture, pattern and rhythm of these objects.

**Designs for pots.** Students to make decorative designs for pots. Encourage them to combine pattern and form and to think carefully about how the design will suit the particular shape of the pot.

**Ceramic carpets.** Students to design and make individual tiles to create a 'ceramic carpet'. If clay is not available use other materials such as cardboard or wood.

**Experimenting with clay.** Explore different clays (and other materials) and encourage students to experience and describe their individual qualities.

**Firing the imagination.** Look at different kilns and firing methods around the world such as raku kilns, Nigerian bush firing or paper kilns. Explore the different cultural and community contexts for these methods. If there is access to a kiln, experiment with different firing temperatures and glaze materials. Consider also making paper and cardboard kilns (see Sebastian Blackie's book *Dear Mr Leach* listed in the Further Reading section)

## Links

Explore work by other key figures in the story of the Leach Pottery such as Shoji Hamada, Nora Braden, Michael Cardew and Katherine Pleydell-Bouverie. See the following websites:

[www.leachpottery.com](http://www.leachpottery.com) The Leach Pottery, St Ives (Note: closed until 2007 for restoration) and [www.theleachpotterystives.co.uk](http://www.theleachpotterystives.co.uk) The Leach Pottery Restoration Project. See also [www.japanesepottery.com](http://www.japanesepottery.com) (this site includes recent work by Shoji Hamada's grandson, Tomoo).

Link Leach to other artists associated with St Ives such as Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham and Tony O'Malley.

Look at contemporary ceramicists such as Richard Slee, Sebastian Blackie and Gwyn Hansen Pigott.

Look at 2003 Turner Prize winner, Grayson Perry, who recently had a display at Tate St Ives. Compare and contrast Leach and Perry. Note how Perry invites us to rethink the hierarchy of fine and applied crafts. See [www.graysonperry.co.uk](http://www.graysonperry.co.uk) or [www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize](http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/turnerprize).

## **Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912-2004)**

### ***Island Sheds, St Ives No.1* 1940**

Oil on wood, 330 x 405 mm

***Located in Gallery One***

#### **Background**

This painting depicts buildings on the promontory known as the Island in St Ives, with a fishing boat at sea on the left. Barns-Graham has used a palette of greys, whites, browns and greens that evoke Cornish winter colours. She has 'tipped up' the viewpoint so that the sea wraps around the land on the left side. Painted on board, you can clearly see the brush marks and her bold simplification of the architectural shapes.

*Island Sheds* was painted not long after Barns-Graham's arrival in St Ives in 1940 and can be linked to a series of paintings and drawings she made based on views of the town. The shallow pictorial space, the simplification of form and the reduction of colours produce a strong image that conveys a sense of directness and immediacy.

Barns-Graham soon became an active member of the St Ives artistic community and was associated with the so-called School of Moderns. Like many of these artists, Barns-Graham was inspired by the landscape and geology of Cornwall and her work links to the tradition of painting out of doors directly in front of the subject. But also like many of these artists, she pursued an idea of abstracting from nature or in her own words 'a process of laying bare'.

The simplified motif and handling of paint suggest the direct influence of Alfred Wallis. The retired fisherman, who lived close to Barns-Graham's Porthmeor studio, was admired by a number of St Ives artists for his direct, fresh approach to painting based on his memories of the town and fishing expeditions.

An untrained artist, Wallis was unaware of linear perspective but arranged the objects in terms of relative importance, determining their sizes accordingly. He would use shifts in perspective and scale to lead your eye around the picture. Wallis would use any available surface to paint on - building up layers often scratching and scraping into the surface. Wallis' work provided Barns-Graham with an example of the importance of memory and the total experience of a subject. His unusual techniques and materials also encouraged her to experiment.

As her work developed Barns-Graham became preoccupied with form and structure within the landscape and with the abstract geometry of line. *Island Sheds* reveals her underlying interest in the contrast of solid natural structures and architectural forms with the flux and flow of water and the intangibility of the atmosphere and light. This is developed further in a companion painting *Island Sheds No. 2*, which shows a close up view of the sheds and where the forms are flattened even more. During the 1940s her work gradually became more abstract culminating in her series of paintings based on the Grindelwald Glacier in Switzerland that she visited in 1949.

**Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912-2004)** was born in St Andrews, Fife. She studied at the Edinburgh College of Art. In 1940 she moved to St Ives and in 1949 became a founder member of the Penwith Society of Artists. In 1949 she visited Switzerland and worked on a series of drawings and gouaches of the Grindelwald Glacier. She had her first solo exhibition in 1947 and went on to exhibit widely in the UK and Europe. In the 1950s and 60s she made working visits to France, Italy and Spain. She taught at Leeds School of Art 1956-7. Between 1967 and 1992 Barns-Graham worked in St Ives, St Andrews, Orkney, Lanzarote and Barcelona. In 1992 she received Honorary Doctorate from the University of St Andrews. In 2001 she was awarded a CBE.

### For Discussion

- o Look closely at *Island Sheds*. Look at the colours and brush marks. Can you describe the way Barns-Graham paints the sea, rocks and grass?
- o Look at the foreground, middle ground and background. Why do you think Barns-Graham chose not to use conventional perspective? This painting is sometimes described as childlike. What do you think is meant by this? Consider the difference between childlike and childish.
- o What aspects of the landscape do you think Barns-Graham is most interested in? Compare her approach to that of, for example, Patrick Heron or Peter Lanyon.
- o Compare this painting with others in gallery one. What do these works have in common? Make a list.
- o How good are you at describing works? Choose your favourite work in Gallery One and describe it to the rest of the group.

### Activities

**Pattern, shape and detail.** Encourage students to explore the works by Gallery One and to create a series of sketches based on details from the paintings and sculptures.

**St Ives past and present.** Explore the history of St Ives through visual images, linking to geography or history work. Invite students to research and record St Ives (especially the harbour) through drawing, photography and written work.

**Water and waves.** Explore different ways to record the sea and the effects of light on water. Experiment with painting, printmaking, photography, collage and even 3-D construction.

**Memory paintings.** Students could create paintings based on places or experiences they remember. Ask them to choose places or events that have a particular resonance for them. Alternatively you could ask students to make sketches from observation during their visit to St Ives that could then be combined with sketches from memory when they return to school.

**Storyboards and maps.** Use material gathered during a visit to the Gallery and/or St Ives to develop visual stories, poems and maps. You could extend this work to link to projects on the idea of memories or journeys. Encourage students to make their own drawings or fantastic maps based upon different viewpoints.

### Links

Look at other artists inspired by St Ives and the Cornish landscape. See works by Alfred Wallis, Tony O'Malley, Bryan Pearce, Margo Maeckelberghe, Bryan Wynter, Peter Lanyon and Barbara Hepworth on display in gallery one.

A direct link can also be made to Wallis' *The Hold House Port Mear Square Island Port Mear Beach* c 1932 (Tate Collection, not on display).

Look also at other artists who have painted St Ives from JMW Turner to John Miller. Extend to look at artists who are interested in maritime subjects. You might consider a visit to the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth, [www.nmmc.co.uk](http://www.nmmc.co.uk) +44 (0)1326 313388.

Look at the work of other landscape artists past and present. The work of artists such as John Constable, Claude Monet and Paul Cezanne evolved from a deep contemplation of particular

places. Look also at the photographic work of Thomas Joshua Cooper or Jem Southam, recent exhibitors at Tate St Ives.

Further information on Tate works can be found at [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk).

## Tate Resources

There is an **Exhibition Study Point** on Level three that has a selection of books relating to the exhibitions. You can access the **Tate Collection databases online** at this point. The **Tate shop** has a selection of books, catalogues, postcards and related materials.

## Websites

Tate online [www.tate.org.uk](http://www.tate.org.uk)

Tate Learning [www.tate.org.uk/learning](http://www.tate.org.uk/learning)

This site includes the Staff Room, a dedicated area for teachers and group leaders.

Teacher resource notes for all major Tate exhibitions including, Tate St Ives and past Turner exhibitions, can be downloaded from the site.

Tate Tools [www.tatetools.com](http://www.tatetools.com) is a growing library of teaching resources for Key Stages 2 & 3 of the National Curriculum. Tate tools offer high quality learning to support the art curriculum. Annual fee of £90 plus VAT.

Tate Teachers [www.tate.org.uk/learning/teachers](http://www.tate.org.uk/learning/teachers) for continuing professional development.

## Contacts

General enquires and group bookings

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## Further Reading and Useful Websites

\* Available in the shop at Tate St Ives

### Tony O'Malley

\**Tony O'Malley*, exhibition catalogue, Irish Museum of Modern Art & Tate St Ives, 2006

\*Lynch, Brian (ed) *Tony O'Malley*, New Island Books 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2004

\*Lynch, Brian & O'Malley, Jane, *Tony O'Malley: The Visual Diaries*, Butler Gallery, 2005

\*Whittaker, David, *Tony O'Malley, An Irish Artist in Cornwall*, Wavestone Press, 2005

[www.imma.ie](http://www.imma.ie) Irish Museum of Modern Art

### John Hoyland

\**John Hoyland The Trajectory of a Fallen Angel Paintings 1966-2003*, exhibition publication with an essay by Paul Moorhouse, Tate St Ives, 2006

Crook, Jo & Learner, Tom, *The Impact of Modern Paints*, Tate Gallery Publishing, 2000

Gooding, Mel, *John Hoyland*, Lund Humphries, 1990

Moorhouse, Paul, *John Hoyland*, exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1999

[www.beauxartslondon.oc.uk](http://www.beauxartslondon.oc.uk) Information on John Hoyland

### Wilhelmina Barns-Graham

\*Green, Lynne, *Wilhelmina Barns-Graham. A Studio Life*, Lund Humphries. 2001 \*Wilhelmina

Barns-Graham *Movement and Light Imag(in)ing Time*, exhibition catalogue with essay by Mel Gooding, Tate St Ives, 2005

## **Bernard Leach**

- \**Bernard Leach Come to the Edge*, exhibition publication with an essay by Emmanuel Cooper, Tate St Ives, 2005
- \**Bernard Leach, Hamada and Their Circle from the Wingfield Digby Collection*, Marston House, 1992
- \*Blackie, Sebastian, *Dear Mr Leach*, A & C Black, London, 2004
- \*Cooper, Emmanuel, *Bernard Leach, Life and Work*, Yale University Press, 2003
- \*Waal, Edmund de, *Bernard Leach*, Tate Gallery Publishing, 2003
- [www.leachpottery.com](http://www.leachpottery.com) The Leach Pottery, St Ives (Note: closed until 2007 for restoration)
- [www.theleachpotterystives.co.uk](http://www.theleachpotterystives.co.uk) The Leach Pottery Restoration Project

## **St Ives Artists**

- \**Homecoming The Pier Arts Centre Collection at Tate St Ives*, Essay by Andrew Dalton, 2003
  - \*Axten, Janet, *Gasworks to Gallery: The Story of St Ives*, Tate Gallery, 1995
  - \*Berlin, S *Alfred Wallis: Primitive*, London, 1949
  - Cross, Tom, *St. Ives and British Modernism*, 1999.
  - \*Cross, Tom, *Painting the Warmth of the Sun, St Ives Artists, 1939-1975*, Alison Hodge, Penzance, 1984
  - \*Davies, Peter, *St Ives Revisited – Innovators and Followers*, Old Bakehouse Publications, 1994
  - \*Gale, M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth: Works in the Tate Collection*, Tate Publishing, 1999
  - Gardiner, M *Barbara Hepworth, a memoir*, Salamander Press, 1982
  - \*Hammacher, AH, *Barbara Hepworth*, Thames and Hudson, 1968 Revised Edition, 1987
  - Barbara Hepworth, A Pictorial Biography*, Tate Publishing 1970. Reissued 1985
  - \*Mullins, E, *Alfred Wallis: Cornish Primitive*, London, 1994
  - Lax, Julian, *St. Ives. Eighty Years of Modernism*, 2001
  - \*Phillips M & Stephens C, *Barbara Hepworth Sculpture Garden*, Tate Publishing, 2002
  - Oldham, Alison, *Everyone was Working, Writers and Artists in Post War St Ives*, Tate St Ives/Falmouth College of Art, 2001
  - \*Rowe, Matthew, *John Wells*, Tate Gallery publication, 1988
  - \*Thislewood, D (Ed), *Barbara Hepworth Re-considered*, Liverpool University Press & Tate Liverpool, 1996
  - \*Val Baker, Denys, *Britain's Art Colony by the Sea*, Samson and Co, 1959
  - \*Whybrow, Marion, *St Ives: 1883-1993: Portrait of an Art Colony*, Antique Collectors Club, Woodbridge, 1994
  - St Ives 1939-64, Twenty-Five Years of Painting, Sculpture and Pottery*, Tate Gallery, 1985
- \*The St Ives Artists Series, Tate Publishing includes: *Terry Frost, Barbara Hepworth, Peter Lanyon, Patrick Heron, Bernard Leach, Alfred Wallis, Bryan Wynter and Christopher Wood.*

Tate publications have produced a series of **Key Work Cards for Teachers** including *Landscape & Environment, Portrait & Identity, and Sculpture & Installation*. For an order form call 01736 791114

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The **St Ives Archive Study Centre** holds a range of material about artists associated with St Ives. Tel: +44 (0) 1736 796408, e-mail: [archive@stivetrust.co.uk](mailto:archive@stivetrust.co.uk)  
[www.stivetrust.co.uk/archivesite](http://www.stivetrust.co.uk/archivesite)

## **Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden**

Tel: +44 (0) 1736 796496  
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