

**If Everybody Had an Ocean:  
Brian Wilson, an Art Exhibition**

**&**

**Coast to Coast**

***Summer 2007***

**26 May – 23 September 2007**

**Notes for Teachers**

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## Introduction

The Summer 2007 displays present the following:

### ***If Everybody Had an Ocean: Brian Wilson, an Art Exhibition (Gallery 1, Upper Gallery 2, Gallery 3, 4, 5 and the Apse)***

This exhibition of art since the 1960s takes as its premise the life and music of Brian Wilson, the creative force behind The Beach Boys between 1962-7. The exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, installations, text works, video, film, photography and artists' books. Around half the works date from the 1960s and more than half are by artists from Los Angeles.

### ***Coast to Coast: Modernism and St Ives from 1940 (Lower Gallery 2 & the Studio)***

This is a new display of work from the Tate Collection by artists associated with St Ives. Selected to complement *If Everybody Had an Ocean*, it includes dazzling works such as Patrick Heron's *Horizontal Stripe Painting November 1957*, Alan Davie's *Entrance to the Red Temple No.1* and Bryan Wynter's *IMOOS VI* 1965.

### ***social systems (Roof terrace and Level 3 Show Case)***

7 July – 2 September 2007

The Danish artist collective Superflex and German artist Regina Möller are showing new work as part of a series of international commissions in Cornwall. *social systems* is taking place throughout Cornwall this summer and has been organised by the contemporary visual arts organisation ProjectBase. Described as 'a social sculpture in process', new works will also be exhibited at Newlyn Art Gallery, The Exchange, Penzance and the public realm. For further information please visit [www.projectbase.org.uk](http://www.projectbase.org.uk).

## How to use this pack and structure your visit

The aim of this pack is to provide information about the artists whose work is exhibited, an exploration of key themes and suggested activities. The pack should help you create an introductory discussion about some of the issues raised by the current displays. It can be used to help focus work in small groups in the exhibition, and to allow follow-up within the classroom.

## 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.

### ***New Perspectives on Working with Modern and Contemporary Art, Teacher Training Day***

Monday 4 June 2007, 10.00 – 16.00

This course will explore a range of strategies for approaching contemporary art including a focus on the relationship between art and music. For further details please call 01736 796226 or email [visiting.stives@tate.org.uk](mailto:visiting.stives@tate.org.uk)

### **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 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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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

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)

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

Tel: +44 (0) 1736 796226

Barnoon Hill, St Ives, Cornwall, TR26 1AD

+ 44 (0) 1736 796226 [visiting.stives@tate.org.uk](mailto:visiting.stives@tate.org.uk)

# Ways of Looking

## Questions to ask of any work

### Personal responses – what do you bring to the artwork?

What are your first reactions to the work?

What is the first word that came into your head when you saw it?

What do you notice first?

Does it remind you of anything?

What do you think the artist wants to communicate?

### Looking at the artwork – what can you see?

What materials and processes has the artist used to make the artwork?

What is it? (Is it a film, photograph, drawing, sculpture, installation, performance etc?)

Where is it? Describe the space. Does it link with other artworks in the exhibition?

How big is the artwork? What effect does scale have on the artwork and our relationship to it?

Is it time-based? If so, describe what happened and how long it took. Is it repeated?

### Subject and meaning – what is it about?

Is the artwork about a subject, issue or theme?

Is it about real life?

Could the work have a symbolic, moral or political meaning?

Is there a story or narrative within the work?

How does the work make you think about time?

Does it make you consider aspects of life or art in a new way?

Does the work have a title? Does this affect the way you see it?

What information is available in the gallery (eg wall text or caption)? Does this information affect or change the way you see it?

### Art in Context – influences which shape the creation and reading of a work

Who is the artist? Do you think the background of the artist can inform us about why or how it was created, or what it might be about?

Was the artwork made for a particular location or event?

Does the artwork link to other works made by the artist?

How does the artwork link to work by other contemporary artists?

Does it connect to any art of the past?

What does the artwork tell us about the ideas and values of today's world?

How does it link or comment on contemporary social, cultural and political issues such as consumerism, globalisation and multi-culturalism?

Does the work make use of modern materials and technology or perhaps it re-invents age-old processes?

## ***If Everybody Had an Ocean: Brian Wilson, an art Exhibition***

*If Everybody Had an Ocean* is on display in Gallery 1, Upper Gallery 2, Gallery 3, 4, 5 and the Apse. This exhibition of art since the 1960s takes as its premise the life and music of Brian Wilson, the creative force behind The Beach Boys between 1962-7. Wilson's music becomes a 'prism' through which to view developments in art history in the last 50 years and, more particularly, art from Southern California. Curated by Alex Farquharson, the title is taken from the first words of *Surfin' USA* (1963). Farquharson explains,

*'If Everybody had an Ocean came about because listening to the Beach Boys kept reminding me of contemporary art, particularly art from the West Coast, with which it shares a social milieu. ...*

*While I hope the artworks offer fresh approaches to Brian Wilson's extraordinary music, the project also came about from the feeling that his work offers ways of understanding qualities in art since the 1960s that evade orthodox art historical perspectives. In particular the exhibition implicitly challenges commonplace distinctions made between the avant-garde and popular culture.'*

The exhibition includes paintings, sculptures, installations, text works, video, film, photography and artists books; half the works date from the 1960s and more than half are by artists from Los Angeles. Artists included are Billy Al Bengston, Peter Blake, Mel Bochner, John Cage, Brian Calvin, Vija Celmins, Russell Crotty, Thomas Demand, Kaye Donachie, Isa Genzken, Liam Gillick, Jeremy Glogan, Joe Goode, Rodney Graham, Richard Hawkins, Roger Hiorns, Jim Isermann, Sister Corita Kent, John McCracken, Lee Mullican, Kaz Oshiro, Raymond Pettibon, Richard Pettibone, Ken Price, Bridget Riley, Allen Ruppersberg, Ed Ruscha, Jim Shaw, Fred Tomaselli, Pae White and Jennifer West.

The unusual premise for the exhibition offers an opportunity to explore the relationship between art, music and myth and between avant-garde art and popular culture. Located at Tate St Ives, which overlooks one of Cornwall's best-loved surfing beaches, it has particular resonance. Displayed rather like a series of chapters from a book or tracks from an album, it becomes both a Brian Wilson biography and a fascinating social/cultural history.

The exhibition has four main phases:

1. *Surf City* (Gallery 3) explores the 'surf and turf' teenage utopia of Southern California within which The Beach Boys made their name in the early 1960s. Artists included are Billy Al Bengston, Russell Crotty, Joe Goode, John McCracken and Ed Ruscha.
2. *The Warmth of the Sun* (Gallery 4) focuses on the brightly coloured, more abstract images and objects that link more closely to Wilson's kaleidoscopic studio productions. Artists included are Jeremy Glogan, Sister Corita Kent, Bridget Riley and Jennifer West.
3. *It's so Sad to Watch a Sweet Thing Die* (Gallery 5) evokes the darker dystopian side of the Californian dream that began to emerge in the late 1960s. This parallels Wilson's own life who, at the height of his fame, had become a virtual recluse. Artists included are Brian Calvin, Rodney Graham, Al Ruppersberg and Roger Hiorns.
4. *You're Like the Lonely Sea* (Gallery 1) sees the exhibition ending with a selection of artists such as Vija Celmins, Thomas Demand, Kay Donachie and Isa Genzken, that offer a more optimistic, albeit cautionary note.

A suggested way to explore the exhibition would be to have a general look and then to focus on a few key works, such as the ones discussed below. However, to start off and focus discussion, you could ask students the following icebreaker questions. Consider also the 'questions to ask of any work' included at the beginning of this pack.

### **Ice-breaker questions**

- What are your first impressions of the exhibition?
- What do these artists seem to be interested in? (you could make a list)
- What sorts of materials and processes do these artists work with?

- Describe the range of art objects included in this exhibition (such as books and films)
- Can you find works that make direct reference to Brian Wilson?
- What do you think of the idea of a musician being the inspiration for an art exhibition?
- Can you find works that you feel evoke the feeling and form of the music or something of the world from which it arose?
- Can music help us understand art?
- The curator has included lyrics printed on the walls in the galleries. He says he wanted to evoke the idea of someone humming the tunes, or the sense that you are moving through music. What effect do the words have for you?
- Do you think it is significant that this exhibition is here at Tate St Ives? What links can you make between California and West Cornwall?
- What do you understand by the idea of the 'Californian dream'? Is there a 'Cornish dream' too?

### **Who is Brian Wilson?**

Brian Wilson was born in 1942 in Hawthorne California. Wilson formed The Beach Boys in the early 1960s with his brothers Carl and Dennis, his cousin Mike Love and school friend Al Jardine. Between 1962 and 1967 the band had a series of international hits including *Surfin' USA*, *Fun, Fun, Fun*, *Californian Girls* and *Good Vibrations*. Wilson also produced records for other artists at this time. In 1965 Wilson felt he could no longer play live with the band as well as write new material so Glen Campbell and then Bruce Johnston replaced him in the band. Wilson's creativity reached its heights with the album 'Pet Sounds', which has been regarded by many as one of the greatest pop albums ever recorded. He then began to work on a new album that became known as 'SMiLE' on which he collaborated with lyricist Van Dyke Parks. However resistance within the band and Wilson's own personal problems led to the cancellation of the project in 1967. Wilson retreated to his bed becoming a virtual recluse and for many years battled with drug addiction, eating disorders and mental illness.

Restored to health, Wilson launched a career as a solo artist in 1988 and over the next decade he released various albums including some new material. He astounded the pop world by performing 'SMiLE' live at London's Royal Festival Hall in 2004. More than 35 years after he had abandoned this legendary album it was finally released to great critical acclaim.

## Key themes

### Art and music

Consider what can emerge from the unusual premise of a musician acting as a model for an art exhibition. What is the relationship between visual art and music? What is the relationship between words, images and music? How can each reveal or encapsulate a sense of time and place? How do art and music create mythologies about a period or epoch? Unlike many musicians, Brian Wilson and The Beach Boys had no direct connection with the art world. In this exhibition you will find work that makes direct reference to them, but they are in the minority. What is significant is how Brian Wilson provides a sensibility, which seems shared with many of the artists exhibited.

### The studio

Brian Wilson is known as the 'master of the recording studio' and his studio in Glendale California is often described as a laboratory. What possibilities does the artists' studio hold? What does it offer to the creative process? Clearly it was where Brian Wilson felt most comfortable and this is the case for many visual artists. Wilson 'made' rather than 'composed' music – his music evolved out the dynamic elements of the studio, the musicians and the mixdown. Here a comparison can be made with an artist such as Bryan Wynter who was well know for creating a studio full of ideas and improvisations that could inspire his paintings. Wynter often hung objects from walls and ceilings, enjoying a fresh approach to familiar things.

### A good pop song

Brian Wilson says a good pop song 'needs energy, a creative push on the melody and a great vocal...' He cites The Beach Boys' *Good Vibrations* and Phil Spector's *Be My Baby* (performed by The Ronettes) as good examples. What makes a good painting or sculpture? Is it possible to translate Wilson's definition from music to visual art? Wilson has also always talked about the importance of making people feel loved through music. Do you agree with him and can visual art achieve something similar?

### Pop art and subcultures

Many of these artists draw on disparate visual languages and materials. You will find references that range from video games, comics, consumer packaging, drug culture, Hollywood celebrities and revolutionary groups. You will find them preoccupied with the urban environment, product design, ecology and social and political issues. Consider how art since the 1960s has challenged ideas about art as object versus idea, about fine art versus design or craft, about originality and repetition and about artifice versus reality.

### Assemblage art

Brian Wilson's instrumental tracks on 'Pet Sounds' (1966) and 'SMiLE' (1966-7, released 2004) include the use of a range of sounds and improvisations. He included animal sounds, the sound of water and waves as well as improvising with junk such as aluminium containers in place of cymbals. This 'collaging' and mixing can be compared to the creating of assemblages and 'readymades' that became so much part of pop art. As the new consumer culture of the 1960s emerged, artists played with junk materials and industrial techniques to create works of art that both celebrated and critiqued this new disposable lifestyle.

### The ocean

An overriding theme within the show is the idea of the ocean or seascape as a metaphor. The location of the gallery overlooking Porthmeor Beach is a very important context for the works. The ocean offers the idea of unbounded sound, of freedom, depth, motion and energy. The beach, as a Western 20<sup>th</sup> century space, celebrated outdoor life, summer time, open-top cars, nudity - a social and sexualised space where people have fun! Of course, the ocean also offers unfathomable depth, mystery, sleep and internalisation. Just as Brian Wilson famously never went surfing (he was scared of water) so

surfing itself combines both sun and sex with a more dangerous idea of man and nature.

### **Utopia/ dystopia**

Just as the ocean offers both freedom and danger, the 'California dream' and youth culture have a flip side. Brian Wilson's own life is characterised by extraordinary early success that plunged him into a darker world of drugs and mental illness. By the age of 24 Wilson was a virtual recluse. Los Angeles has long been known as the city of 'sunshine and noir' - it is portrayed as both earthly paradise and a place with bitter undertones of chaos and destruction. This exhibition provides an opportunity to explore the mythical significance of Southern California, the Hollywood Dream factor, and to consider how artists have been able to reveal this duality of 'edenic abundance and dystopian blight'.

## **Key art movements (from Tate glossary [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection))**

### **Assemblage**

Art made by assembling disparate elements often scavenged by the artist, sometimes bought specially. The practice goes back to Picasso's Cubist constructions, the three dimensional works he began to make from 1912. An early example is his *Still Life* 1914 which is made from scraps of wood and a length of tablecloth fringing, glued together and painted. Picasso himself remained an intermittent practitioner of assemblage. It was the basis of Surrealist objects, became widespread in the 1950s and 1960s and continues to be extensively used eg by the YBAs.

### **Conceptual art**

This term came into use in the late 1960s to describe a wide range of types of art that no longer took the form of a conventional art object. In 1973 a pioneering record of the early years of the movement appeared in the form of a book, *Six Years*, by the American critic Lucy Lippard. The 'six years' were 1966-72. The long subtitle of the book referred to 'so-called conceptual or information or idea art'. Conceptual artists do not set out to make a painting or a sculpture and then fit their ideas to that existing form. Instead they think beyond the limits of those traditional media, and then work out their concept or idea in whatever materials and whatever form is appropriate. They were thus giving the concept priority over the traditional media. Hence Conceptual art. From this it follows that conceptual art can be almost anything, but from the late 1960s certain prominent trends appeared such as Performance (or Action) art, Land art, and the Italian movement Arte Povera (poor art). Poor here meant using low-value materials such as twigs, cloth, fat, and all kinds of found objects and scrap. Some Conceptual art consisted simply of written statements or instructions. Many artists began to use photography, film and video. Conceptual art was initially a movement of the 1960s and 1970s but has been hugely influential since. Artists include Art & Language, Beuys, Broodthaers, Burgin, Craig-Martin, Gilbert and George, Klein, Kosuth, Latham, Long, Manzoni, Smithson.

### **Minimalism**

Minimalism or Minimal art is an extreme form of abstract art that developed in the USA in the second half of the 1960s. It can be seen as extending the abstract idea that art should have its own reality and not be an imitation of some other thing. It picked up too on the Constructivist idea that art should be made of modern, industrial materials. Minimal artists typically made works in very simple geometric shapes based on the square and the rectangle. Many Minimal works explore the properties of their materials. Minimal art was mostly three-dimensional but the painter Frank Stella was an important Minimalist. The other principal artists were Andre, Flavin, Judd, Lewitt, Morris, and Serra. There are strong links between Minimal and Conceptual art. Aesthetically, Minimal art offers a highly purified form of beauty. It can also be seen as representing such qualities as truth (because it does not pretend to be anything other than what it is), order, simplicity, harmony.

### **Pop art**

Name given to British and American versions of art that drew inspiration from sources in popular and commercial culture. These sources included Hollywood movies, advertising, packaging, pop music and comic books. In Europe a similar movement was called Nouveau Réalisme (New Realism). Pop began in the mid-1950s and reached its peak in the 1960s. It was a revolt against prevailing orthodoxies in art and life and can be seen as one of the first manifestations of Postmodernism. Modernist critics were horrified by the Pop artists' use of such low subject matter and by their apparently uncritical treatment of it. In fact Pop both took art into new areas of subject matter and developed new ways of presenting it in art. Chief artists in America were Lichtenstein, Oldenburg, Warhol; in Britain, Blake, Caulfield, Hamilton, Hockney, Jones, Self.

**For definitions of key art historical terms and movements such as these please refer to the Tate Glossary at [www.tate.org.uk/collection](http://www.tate.org.uk/collection)**

## Further reading and resources

Note: The exhibition continues at CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux in November 2007

A range of information on Brian Wilson, the Beach Boys, the art and architecture of Los Angeles and the artists in this exhibition is available at the **Exhibition Study Point** and the **gallery shop**.

A **free exhibition guide** written by curator Alex Farquharson provides an introduction to each display.

*If Everybody Had an Ocean* with essays by David Toop and Alex Farquharson and an interview with Brian Wilson by Hans Ulrich Obrist (Tate St Ives) 2007, priced £7.95.

*Brian Wilson, an Art Book* edited by Alex Farquharson (Four Corners Books) 2005, priced £11.95.

Badman, Keith, *The Beach Boys, The Definitive Diary of America's Greatest Band on Stage and in the Studio*, Backbeat Books, San Francisco, 2004

Doe, Andrew G & Tobler, John, *Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys the Complete Guide to their Music*, Omnibus Press, London, 2004

Granata, Charles, *I just wasn't made for these times – Brian Wilson and the making of Pet Sounds*, Mq Publications, 2003

Lambert, Philip, *Inside the Music of Brian Wilson*, Continuum, 2007

<http://thebeachboys.com> – Capitol Records official site

[www.beachboysband.net/](http://www.beachboysband.net/) - official site of the current touring Beach Boys

[www.brianwilson.com](http://www.brianwilson.com) - Brian Wilson's official site

[www.beachboys.com/](http://www.beachboys.com/) - unofficial site

[www.thesmilesshop.net](http://www.thesmilesshop.net) - information on SMiLE

### Pop Art & Minimalism

Batchelor, David, *Minimalism*, Cambridge University Press, 1997

Livingstone, Marco, *Pop Art: A Continuing History*, Thames & Hudson, 2000

McCarthy, David, *Pop Art*, Tate Gallery, 2005

Madoff, Stephen Henry, *Pop Art: A Critical History*, University of California Press, 1997

Osterwold, Tilmna, *Pop Art*, Taschen, 2003

Williams, Robert, *Pop Surrealism: The Rise of Underground Art*, Last Gasp, 2004

### Installation

Crary, Jonathan (editor), *Installation Art in the New Millennium: The Empire of the Senses*, 2004, Thames & Hudson Ltd.

Kaye, Nick (editor), *Site Specific Art: Performance, Place & Documentation, 200*, Routledge

Oliveira, Nicolas de, *Installation Art*, 1996, Thames & Hudson Ltd.

Rosenthal, Mark, *Understanding Installation Art, From Duchamp to Holzer*, 2003, Prestel

### Contemporary/ British Art

*Tate Triennial: New British Art*, exhibition catalogue, 2006, Tate Publishing

Buck, Louisa, *Moving Targets 2, A User's Guide to British Art Now*, 2000 Tate Publishing

Button, Virginia, New Revised Edition, *The Turner Prize*, 2005, Tate Publishing

Button, Virginia, & Esche Charles, *Intelligence, New British Art 2000*, 2000, Tate Publishing

Kent, Sarah, *Shark Infested Waters: The Saatchi Collection of British Art in the 90s*, 1994, London

Nesbitt, Judith & Watkins, Jonathan, *Days Like These, Tate Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary British Art*, 2003, Tate Publishing

Stallabrass, Julian, *Art Incorporated: The Story of Contemporary Art*, 2004, Oxford University Press

Taylor, Brandon, *Art Today*, 2004, Laurence King Publishing

Weintraub, Linda, *Making Contemporary Art: How Today's Artists Think and Work*, 2003, Thames & Hudson Ltd.

**West Coast Art**

Banham, R, *Los Angeles: Architecture of Four Ecologies*, 1971

*Los Angeles 1955-1985, The Birth of an art capital*, Exhibition Catalogue, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2006 (student guide available online at [www.centrepompidou.fr](http://www.centrepompidou.fr))

Stephanie Barron, *Made in California: Art, Image and Identity 1900 – 2000*, University of California Press, 2000

Stephanie Barron, *Reading California: Art, Image and Identity 1900 – 2000*, University of California Press, 2000

Plagens, Peter, *Sunshine Muse: Art on the West Coast, 1945-1970*, University of California Press, 2000

Selz, Peter, *Art of Engagement: Visual Politics in California and Beyond*, University of California Press, 2006

Whiting, Cecile, *Pop LA: Art and the City in the 1960s*, University of California Press, 2006

[www.moca.org](http://www.moca.org) Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art

[www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org) Los Angeles County Museum of Art

**Peter Blake**

Rudd, Natalie, Peter Blake, Modern Art Series, Tate, 2003

Et Al Biggs, Peter Blake About Collage, Tate, 2000

<http://ruralists.com> Brotherhood or Ruralists

Note: *Peter Blake: A Retrospective*, 29 June – 23 September 2007, Tate Liverpool

See [www.tate.org.uk/liverpool](http://www.tate.org.uk/liverpool)

**Sister Corita Kent**

Ault, Julie, *Come Alive, The Spirited Art of Sister Corita*, 2006

[www.corita.org/](http://www.corita.org/) Corita Art Centre

## Key work

### Peter Blake

#### ***The Beach Boys* 1964**

Screen print on paper, 80 x 53 cm

Lent by the artist

In this print Peter Blake has combined an image of the Beach Boys with bold colourful typography. Blake based the top half of his print on a promotional photograph of the young boys posing next to American cars. He has left it partially uncoloured, almost as if to emphasise the copying process. The 3-D lettering of the bottom half of the print makes a dramatic contrast to the softer lines and colours of the image of the band.

In 1963 Blake was commissioned by the Sunday Times to do a set of drawing in Los Angeles. This print is one of twenty silk-screen prints published by the ICA in London in 1964. Blake recalls how the band was currently on tour in the UK and the artist signed five extra prints and delivered them to the stage door where they were performing.

Peter Blake was a fan of the Beach Boys and he bought each album as it was released. During his time in Los Angeles he describes how he was lent a gold Corvette Stingray and he drove around the city listening to the Beach Boys on the car radio. Blake has remained a fan of Brian Wilson, attending Wilson's more recent performances of 'Pet Sounds' and 'SMiLE'. He also designed the cover of Brian Wilson's album 'Gettin' in over my Head', 2004.

**Sir Peter Blake** was born in Dartford, Kent in 1932. He studied at Gravesend Art School before serving in the R.A.F. He later studied at the Royal College of Art. He won the Leverhulme Research Award in 1953 and travelled across Europe studying popular art. In 1961 he was included, along with David Hockney and R.B. Kitaj, in the 'Young Contemporaries' exhibition at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London. He won the 1961 John Moores award for his *Self Portrait with Badges* (Tate Collection) and in 1962 he was featured in Ken Russells' BBC film *Pop Goes the Easel*. Blake became a leading figure in the British Pop Art movement during the 1960s. He is perhaps best known for his cover of the Beatles's Album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967). He has also designed album covers for *Band Aid*, Paul Weller, Ian Dury, The Who and Oasis. In the 1970s he made a set of watercolours to illustrate Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* and in 1975 he was a founder of the *Brotherhood of Ruralists*, a group of seven artists who moved to the West Country. In 1981 he was made a Royal Academician. In 1983 he was awarded a CBE, in 2002 he received a knighthood. The Sir Peter Blake Music Art Gallery at the University of Leeds was opened in 2005. Today he lives and works in Chiswick, London.

## For discussion

- What does this print tell you about the Beach Boys?
- Why do you think Blake has divided the image in two?
- Why are some parts left uncoloured?
- Blake said he wanted to be the visual equivalent of pop music. In what ways do you feel this print equates with the music of the Beach Boys?
- Why do you think Blake based his image of the young pop group on a promotional photograph rather than painting them from life?
- Compare *The Beach Boys* with Blake's more recent print *Our Sweet Love* 2004, on display in the Mall downstairs.

## Key themes

**The Beach Boys Brand.** Blake's print epitomises the group's early image of teen surf and car songs. He presents the Beach Boy 'brand' just as their lyrics were peppered with brand names such as Honda motorcycles, Thunderbird cars and coca-cola. In 1964 the Beach Boys were at the height of their commercial success. Backed by Capitol Records and managed by Brian's father, Murray, they went on their first overseas tour and achieved their first number 1 hit. It was also the year that Brian withdrew from live shows and sacked Murray.

**Pop Art.** Pop art was the name given to British and American versions of art that drew inspiration from sources in popular and commercial culture that emerged in the late 1950s and 60s. These sources included Hollywood movies, advertising, packaging, pop music and comic books. Blake became a key figure in British Pop Art, his art reflecting his own affection and nostalgia for the popular culture of his youth. His favourite sources included toys, comics, badges, pop music, films, fairgrounds and other popular entertainments. He was also fascinated by American popular culture and his art makes references to American film stars and pop music such as Elvis Presley and the Beach Boys.

**Realism versus abstraction.** Blake worked in the simplest most direct way possible. A common feature of his work in the 1960s was this combination of two different types of visual images, one half often being based on found imagery, the other more abstract or, as in the case here, based on lettering. He liked to juxtapose diagrammatic or graphic with illusionistic or trompe l'oeil effects.

**Art and reproduction.** Blake plays with ideas about art and reproduction. As with this print, he often combined bold coloured stripes or lettering with everyday images. Blake loves to work in different media producing collages, sculptures, engravings, printmaking as well as commercial art such as book illustrations and album covers. He has always talked about making art accessible and says 'I wanted to make an art that was the visual equivalent of pop music...'

## Suggested follow-up activities

**Branding.** We are all so familiar with the idea of brand, image and logo today. What makes a successful brand image? Compare those early brand names such as coca cola and Heinz with today's successful brands. Compare the first modern pop groups such as the Beach Boys or the Beatles with today's marketing of music. Invite students to design a brand image or logo for a consumer item or music group of their choice.

**Collage 2007.** In the 1960s Blake made collages with photographs, posters and other ephemeral images. He collected post cards, magazines, comic and other bits and bobs that reflected the popular culture of his time. Challenge students to make their own collages combining images from the world around them today.

**Typography: lettering & image.** Blake often includes lettering and signs within his work. He explores the relationship between words and images. Invite students to experiment with typography - mixing typefaces and sizes to create work that combine words or letters with visual images.

**Album covers.** Peter Blake is well known for his album covers. Invite students to design album covers for their favourite bands. Encourage them to take inspiration from Blake's eclectic use of sources and combine collage and found materials as well as computer-generated images.

## Key work

### John McCracken

#### *Dream* 2002

Resin, fibreglass and plywood

234 x 355 x 18 cm

Courtesy of Nicholas Logsdail

*Dream* is an example of McCracken's 'planks' – monochromatic rectangular sculptures that lean against the wall. Despite the industrial look of the work, it has been meticulously hand made, applying fibreglass and layers of resin to plywood boards. The smooth yellow surface has been so highly polished that it offers a reflection to the viewer as you walk past it.

McCracken is one of a group of artists, including Ed Ruscha, Joe Goode, Billy Al Bengston and Ken Price, who represent Pop Art and Minimalism in Southern California in the 1960s. These artists reflected the social environment of Los Angeles, many adopting the materials and processes shared by the surfboard shapers and car customisers. They emerged just at the time that the Beach Boys released their first albums about surf, custom cars and teenage romance. McCracken's immaculate surfaces and primary structures can be compared to the perfectly polished harmonies of the early Beach Boys.

**John McCracken** was born in 1934 in Berkeley, California. He studied at the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland. He had his first solo show in 1965 and in 1968 he was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts. He was appointed Professor at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1968 at the School of Visual Arts New York in 1969. Between 1975-85 he taught at the College of Creative Studies, University of California in Santa Barbara. He has exhibited internationally since the 1960s and has work in many public and private collections. He lives and works in Sante Fe, New Mexico.

## For discussion

- Why do you think McCracken chose to lean this work against the wall?
- What happens to the light and your reflection as you look 'into' the surface of the work?
- How and where do you think it was made? Does it remind you of any other objects?
- What aspects of the so-called 'Californian Dream' could this work relate to?
- Compare *Dream* with McCracken's *Visitor* 2002 (Gallery 3) and *Wing* 1999 (Gallery 5). Consider how the later work can symbolise a change that can parallel the biography of Brian Wilson in some way.

## Key themes

**Surfboards and customised cars.** McCracken uses techniques to make his sculptures that are used in surfboard construction. He was one of a number of West Coast artists who took their inspiration from the new high tech sports and leisure. The youth obsession with customised cars and surfing became a lifestyle that was popularised by music, TV and films. The innovative techniques of surfboard and custom car designers were greatly admired. The writer Tom Wolfe famously wrote his essay 'The Kandy-Koloured Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby' after a visit to Los Angeles in 1963.

**Perfect sheen.** McCracken was part of a group who became known as the *Finish Fetish*. The title refers to the almost obsessive way in which artists polished their works surface, which had to be flawlessly smooth and shiny to allow for light reflection.

**New materials.** McCracken took advantage of cutting-edge technology, primarily related to the aeronautic industry, which offered new materials such as spray paints, polyester resins and synthetic laquers. His boards are made of resin on fibreglass. His use of bright colours, simple geometric shapes and highly reflective surfaces relate to product design of the time.

**Minimalist shapes.** McCracken call his objects 'blocks, slabs, columns, planks...basic beautiful forms, neutral forms'. The translucent quality of the surface of *Dream* emphasises the physicality of pure abstract form. McCracken's choice of simple abstract shapes has led his work to be compared to Minimalist works made in New York at this time. However, what distinguishes his pieces is the combination of bright colours and glossiness. Minimalism or Minimal art is an extreme form of abstract art that developed in the USA in the second half of the 1960s. It can be seen as extending the abstract idea that art should have its own reality and not be an imitation of some other thing.

**Good Vibrations.** McCracken describes The Beach Boys' *Good Vibrations* as one of his all time favourite pieces of music. He says it suggests to him an 'infinite heavenly space' and that it symbolises for him the positive aspects of that era. Brian Wilson recorded *Good Vibrations* in 1966 and it is considered revolutionary in its modular structure, use of cello as a rhythm instrument and its use of an electro-theremin.

## **Suggested follow-up activities**

**Design a surfboard.** Invite students to develop a design to suit a surfboard. Encourage the combination of text and image and to consider materials, textures and surface quality.

## Key work

### Sister Corita Kent

#### *yellow submarine* 1967

Serigraph on paper, 58.5 x 89 cm

Courtesy of the Corita Art Center, Immaculate Heart Community

Sister Corita Kent became famous for her vibrant graphic art in the 1960s. Her work is characterised by contrasting typography and bursts of colour and text. She used popular culture as raw material, taking slogans, phrases and mottos, which were then reversed, chopped or 'morphed' in some way.

Sister Corita would take words and phrases from popular songs, religious poems and even advertising slogans. Her work was often political quoting civil rights or activists anti war protestors. *yellow submarine* can be seen as a protest against the Vietnam War. It quotes a line from Paul McCartney and John Lennon's song Yellow Submarine 'Make love not war Vietnam What has it done to the home of the brave? VIETNAM and our friends are all aboard many more than live next door'.

This work is included in Gallery 4 and is part of the display entitled *The Warmth of the Sun*. The majority of images and objects in this room are brightly coloured and abstract. Described as the 'instrumental section' of the exhibition, these works share what Brian Wilson called the 'psychedelicacy' of his studio productions. By the mid 1960s Brian Wilson had retreated to his studio where he abandoned simple rock arrangements for an extraordinary syntheses of classical, jazz, folk, pop and exotica. Wilson combined conventional instruments with diverse found sounds such as running water and barking dogs.

**Corita Kent**, also known as Sister Corita, was born in 1918 in Fort Dodge, Iowa and died in 1986 in Boston. Described as an innovative graphic designer and educator and political activist, she became a Catholic nun and joined the Order of the Immaculate Heart in Los Angeles in 1936. She studied art history at the University of California and in 1951 she exhibited her first silk screen print. During the 1950s and 60s she taught art at the Immaculate Heart College. By 1968 Corita decided to devote herself entirely to making art, leaving the Order and moving to Boston. She continued to produce a large amount of prints as well as commissioned work, including book covers, mural and advertisements. She remained active to social and political causes and her poster and billboards often caused controversy. She also designed the Postal Service's 'Love Stamp'. Her later work included watercolour paintings and floral silk screens.

## For discussion

- What has happened to the word 'Vietnam' in this print?
- What sorts of messages does Sister Corita's work convey?
- What do her messages tell us about the times she lived in?
- Why do you think her work became so popular in America in the 1960s and 70s?
- Not everyone liked Sister Corita's work. For example, she did not create the sort of work normally associated with the Catholic Church. What particular aspects of her work do you think people found difficult?
- Why do you think Sister Corita liked the technique of screen printing so much?
- Compare Sister Corita's work with others on display in Gallery 3,4 & 5. Can you find other works that combine words with image?

## Key themes

**Warmth of the Sun.** How does this title relate to the work on display? Why was sunshine and heat so much part of the Californian dream? Consider also how this phrase has been used in connection with artists associated with St Ives. It was the artist John Wells (see Lower Gallery 2) who famously wrote in 1945 ‘...But how can one paint the warmth of the sun, the sound of the sea or the journey of a beetle across a rock or thoughts of ones’ own whence and wither’.

*The Warmth of the Sun* was composed by Brian Wilson and Mike Love and included in *Shut Down, Volume 2*, released in March 1964. The song was composed a few hours after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November 1963 and is considered to express a sense of loss. It also represents a departure from the Beach Boys earlier more conventional teen pop songs towards the more ambitious harmonies of ‘Pet Sounds’.

**Kaleidoscopic and Synaesthesia.** The work in this room could suggest the more kaleidoscopic qualities that began to emerge in Wilson’s music. Here the relationship between words and music must be considered. Music has often been evoked in support of abstract art - for example the Wassily Kandinsky, a pioneer of abstract art, often called his paintings Compositions or Improvisations. Can sounds evoke visual images? Can music have colour? Can visual images suggest music? The concept of synaesthesia, described as a condition whereby one sense is confused with another; hearing with sight or sight with taste, is key to understanding Wilson’s idea of ‘psychedelic’.

**Typography.** Sister Corita’s prints often blend fragments of advertising slogans with religious and avant-garde poetry and pop song lyrics. Her striking use of often crisp-edge fonts with sloppy handwriting has long been admired by designers such as Charles and Ray Eames, Buckminster Fuller and Saul Bass.

**Magazines and artists book.** Sister Corita’s prints are exhibited alongside a range of artworks that includes ‘surf diaries’, artists-books and even magazine pages. Artists were experimenting and challenging materials and sites for art. See for example, Mel Bochner’s *Beach Boys 100%*, Russell Crotty’s *California Homegrounds* or Ed Ruscha’s *Every Building on Sunset Strip* (Gallery 3).

## Suggested follow-up activities

**Day-glo colour.** Sister Corita’s use of colour has been described as ‘exuberant’, ‘eye-popping’ and ‘like glancing at the city street corner while listening to three radios playing at once’! Her work provides an opportunity to explore colour and colour relationships and to encourage students to experiment with bright colours now available in acrylic.

**Twisting text.** Sister Corita turned graphic design on its head. She liked to cut up text and bend and warp it to make prints. Words were distorted, turned upside down or squeezed into odd shapes. Often phrases, words and even letters were not shown in full. With today’s mobile phone ‘texting’, it is hard to see just how radical her work was in the 1960s. Use her work as a springboard for a discussion about graphic design, and the use of text with image. Use it also to develop work around language and poetry.

**Printmaking/ Silkscreen printing.** Sister Corita was passionate about silk screen printing. She loved the effects of combining words with colourful images. Invite students to make their own designs for prints combining words and images about issues they feel passionate about. Techniques can range from simple relief printing to photographic screen printing.

**Artists’ books.** Students could design and make their own ‘artists books’. This can range from simple folded paper sketchbooks to more elaborate printed, bound or ‘accordion’ books (see Ed Ruscha’s work in Gallery 3). This could extend to research into the history of artists books past and present.

## Key work

### Roger Hiorns

#### *Untitled (2006)* 2006

Engine, steel, copper sulphate and cardboard

170 x 70 x 70 cm

Courtesy of Corvi-Mora, London

Hiorns has dipped a car engine into a copper sulphate bath so that it has become encrusted with bright blue crystals to evoke a strange coral like form. He has displayed the engine on a steel plinth with the engine's cables dangling down like a tail or umbilical cord. Another engine part also encrusted with crystals is stored on a shelf within the steel plinth.

Hiorns has also displayed series of ceramic vessels suspended at different heights from the ceiling in the Mall. Each vessel contains an element that transforms soapy water into a flow of white foam, which gradually flows out of the vessels into bizarre and delicate columns.

**Roger Hiorns** was born in Birmingham in 1975. He studied at Bournville College, Birmingham and Goldsmiths College, London. He has exhibited in a number of international exhibitions. In 2003 his work *Vauxhall* was exhibited in the Sculpture Court at Tate Britain and he had his first major solo exhibition in the UK in 2006 at the Milton Keynes Gallery. He lives and works in London.

## For discussion

- At first glance, what do you think this is?
- How do you think it was made? (look for clues)
- Now look at the sculpture from different positions around the room.
- Look closely at the base why do you think Hiorns has used this as a stand and what can you see inside one of the shelves?
- How heavy do you think this object is?
- Now look the range of work on display in Gallery 5. Can you find any links between the works?

## Key themes

**It's so Sad to Watch a Sweet Thing Die.** Gallery 5 attempts to evoke the disparity between the popular image of the Beach Boys and Brian Wilson's own life. By the late 1960s Wilson had retreated from the world having suffered mental breakdown and afflicted by drug addiction and eating disorders. Works in this room have been selected for their evocation of what is often called the 'flipside of the California dream'. Consider how these works reveal this sense of dystopia and loss of innocence.

**Transformation.** Hiorns' sculptures explore the transformation of materials. Here he transforms a heavy machine into a dazzling and decorative object. A chemical reaction has occurred perhaps suggesting a relationship between art and alchemy. He questions the status of mechanical objects

and thereby also the status of art objects. What is the status of the artist (compared with the mechanic, for example)?

**Chance.** Hiorns chooses materials such as copper sulphate or soap liquids which transforms themselves – it also introduces an element of chance as Hiorns' himself does not know what the final finish of the sculpture will be.

**Engine as body.** This sculpture takes a strange body-like presence in the gallery. Some people say it suggests a head and body perched on a stool or perhaps more disturbingly some strange metamorphosis.

**Familiar and alien.** Hiorns works are both representational and non-representation. He creates objects that appear unconventional and intriguing. Here a straightforward engine is combined with an element that provides a magical or poetic sense. His object appears both familiar and alien; we recognise the engine but it has become a strange creature. While in the Mall the ceramic vessels look functionally but the foaming bubbles creates a bizarre and unpredictable juxtaposition.

The sea. The dazzling blue crystals suggest the blue waters of the sea – as if this engine has been pulled from the depths of the ocean where at the bottom of the sea it gathered its encrusted surfaces. This theme of the deep ocean echoes around the exhibition and is particularly relevant to Gallery 5. Perhaps all the more poignant for the fact that Dennis Wilson, Brian's brother, drowned at sea in 1983 off the coast of Los Angeles.

## Suggested follow-up activities

**Transforming found objects.** From Marcel Duchamp and Pablo Picasso to Hiorns. Look at the tradition of transforming found objects and creating so-called 'readymades'. Invite students to create and transform their own found objects.

**Water music.** Use this exhibition as the springboard for a music/visual arts project. Included in Gallery 5 is John Cage's *Water Music* 1952 a musical score with instructions to the pianist that include the use of a radio, whistles, water containers, deck of cards and a wood stick. Explore the relationships between visual objects and sound. How might Hiorn's work, for example, sound? What shape would that sound have? Develop musical compositions that include found or collected sounds (just as Brian Wilson did).

## Key work

**Pae White**

### ***The Song of the Day Birds* 2007**

Printed plastic cling and paint

370 x 1676.4 x 100 cm

Courtesy of greengrassi, London

In response to Porthmeor Beach and the landscape beyond, Los Angeles artist Pae White has made an installation in the sea-facing showcase in Upper Gallery 2. *Song of the Daybirds* has been especially commissioned for the exhibition and its setting in the Gallery's 55ft showcase.

Here words, letters and shapes of varying size and scale have been stencilled onto the glass case against a painted blue background that gradually lightens from left to right. Some of the words are recognisable while others appear mixed up, tumbling across the glass front.

White is an artist that blurs the boundaries between popular culture and applied design, traditional and industrial techniques. She works across a range of media and art forms. Her projects have included sculptural installation, product design, urban planning, architecture, typography and graphics. See also her work in Gallery 1 entitled *The Inconsolable Wailing of the Damned* (red-greenish) 2007 and *Goodnight Moon* 2000 in Gallery 4.

**Pae White** was born in 1963 in Pasadena, California. She studied at the Art Centre College of Design in Pasadena, Scripps College in Claremont, California and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. She has exhibited internationally as part of both group and solo shows. She has also designed publications and advertisements for a number of museums and magazines. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

## For discussion

- What does this installation evoke for you?
- Can you tell how it was made?
- White made this work specifically for this space. How does it relate to the space, the curve of the gallery and the dramatic view of Porthmeor Beach? Also can you make any links to some of the paintings displayed in Lower Gallery 2?
- Is this work two-dimensional or three-dimensional?
- Why do you think it is called *The Song of the Day Birds*?
- Can you read any words? What has happened to some of the letters?

## Key themes

**Los Angeles art.** In recent years Los Angeles has come to be recognised as a centre for art. Los Angeles art is often characterised by an openness to the vernacular and a free-flowing exchange of aesthetics between design and fine art. However, just as the Brian Wilson's seeming naive music belies something more complex, much LA art uses the same trait of wrapping simple or pleasing seductive images around something that is darker and more profound. Pae White is an example of an LA artist whose work reflects the complexity of the environment from which it has emerged.

**Real and virtual space.** This work unites actual and virtual senses of space. As an installation it uses the showcase and the architecture of the gallery while suggesting the virtual space of a giant computer screen. Different senses of scale operate within the work shifting us back and forth from the real space of the gallery to the deeper and more infinite sense of space. The painted blue background of the showcase seems to link the installation with the space of the ocean beyond the gallery walls.

**Letters and fractals.** White's installation is like a vast digital grid of numbers, letters and patterns. It suggests computer programming or perhaps urban planning. At first glance a clear grid like structure seems to dominate, however this gradually dissolves or breakdowns the closer you look. Certain words (the words are herbal remedies) can be made out but most letters are broken and fractured suggesting the breakdown of language.

**Unusual materials.** Pae White uses a real mix of materials that are traditionally not associated with art. She often chooses raw or natural materials as well as dazzling colours and delicate and intricate details. Her works tend to merge work with site and blur the boundaries between design and art.

**Installation.** This work was made specifically for this site. Consider how it has been installed (height, length, depth, surface and position). How, therefore, does it relate to the gallery and perhaps comment on both the building and context of this exhibition? What does it say about St Ives? Consider also why the whole exhibition *If Everybody Had an Ocean* has been described as an installation in itself.

**The ocean.** Metaphors for the ocean resound around this exhibition. Here an artist responds to the ocean bringing the intensity of the St Ives landscape into the gallery. What links can be made to West Coast Art of the 1960s (see gallery 4) or to post war St Ives Art (See *Coast to Coast* in Lower Gallery 2 & Studio)?

**Movement contained.** Pae White has described some of her works as 'movement contained' or 'like a waterfall on pause'. Is this installation more like a painting or more like a sculpture? Why is her work so magical?

## Suggested activities

**Light, movement and communication.** Students could create work to explore ideas about light, movement and communication using a range of materials. Compare *The Song of the Day Birds* with Pae White's other works included in this exhibition (see Gallery 1 and 4). There is also a wonderful opportunity to link White's work to Bryan Wynter's *IMOOS VI* on display in the Studio.

**Showcases & panoramas.** The curved showcase in Upper Gallery 2 has inspired many artists to create works that explore ideas about the panorama. A study of this installation could lead to an exciting project on the subject. For example, explore 19<sup>th</sup> century panoramas, stage sets, aquariums and other mise-en-scenes.

**Site and context for art.** Pae White is one of a number of international artists who raise issues about site and context for art. She often positions her work in unusual or unexpected places such as bookshop windows, a children's learning area and magazines. Challenge students to consider different ways and places to display art at Tate St Ives. Extend to create art work for other unusual and non-gallery sites. Research other artists such as Richard Serra, Jannis Kounellis, Richard Long and Robert Smithson.

## **Kaye Donachie**

### ***Never learn not to love* 2003**

Oil on canvas, 50 x 65cm

Courtesy Maureen Paley

Collection of Cigrang Freres

In this small painting a group of people are sitting around in some outdoor space. The figures have long hair and are wearing casual clothes, although Donachie does not include great detail. Donachie uses an overall tone of sickly orange/yellow - the effect is of a blurred or bleached ghostly image.

Like much of Donachie's work this painting is based on found images of rebellious and revolutionary groups. Donachie uses this source material to investigate group dynamics and power structures. She is fascinated by the codes of cults, communes and other non-conformist and youthful groups. She has collated a range of material that documents collectives, from the Manson Family and Friedrichshof Commune to Kommune 1 and the sanatorium at Monte Verità in Switzerland.

The title of this and the two other paintings included in this exhibition come from late 1960s Beach Boys songs featured in the 1969 album '20/20'. This album included Charles Manson's track *Cease to Exist* the lyrics of which Wilson changed to *Cease to Resist*. Donachie's painting therefore picks up on the link between the Beach Boys and the infamous Manson Family, the murderous cult that surrounded Charles Manson in 1960s California.

**Kaye Donachie** was born in Glasgow in 1970. She studied at the University of Central England, Birmingham, the Hochschule der Kunst, Berlin and the Royal College of Art, London. She had her first solo exhibition in 2004 and she was recently included in *Ideal Worlds*, Kunsthalle, Frankfurt, Germany. Donachie is currently represented by Maureen Paley, Interim Art. She lives and works in London.

## **For discussion**

- Look closely at this painting. What is the focal point of this painting? How does Donachie create a sense of distance? Which parts are painted in the most detail? Can you see any brushwork?
- What 'type' of people are depicted in this painting? What is a commune or cult? Discuss examples of rebellious and revolutionary groups. What is a utopian community? Why do you think Donachie is so interested in these people?
- Donachie's paintings are based on found images from film and photographic footage. Discuss the pros and cons of a painter using images from other sources.
- Donachie believes that painting is an appropriate medium through which to probe beliefs and all their paradoxes. Do you agree? What other mediums might be more/less appropriate?
- How does this painting symbolise aspects of the Beach Boys' life and times?

## **Key themes**

**Charles Manson.** In the late 1960s and shortly before the Sharon Tate and La Bianca murders, Charles Manson and his family lived for a brief period in Dennis Wilson's house. Dennis had come into contact with this cult group and Manson had even recorded a track with the Beach Boys. Dennis is reputed to have narrowly missed assassination himself. Manson, who was convicted of murder, has

come to symbolise the darker side of the American dream. Thomas Demand's work *Recorder* 2002 in Gallery 1 also refers to the link between the Beach Boys and Charles Manson.

**Art as document?** Donachie is not concerned with documenting or portraying the Manson family. She is more interested in conveying a mood as she distils and analyses her images. She made a number of drawings and watercolours before the oil paintings. She also makes reference to Paul Cezanne's painting *Large Bathers* 1899-1906 where a group of women are shown in a forest glade.

**Fragmented narrative.** Donachie is interested in the idea of fragmented narratives and she believes her paintings can review and redeem images from the margins of history. In *Never learn not to Love* she combines references to an infamous cult group and a famous pop band with art history to evoke a strange mood of nostalgia – as if we are viewing a faded dream.

### **Suggested follow-up activities**

**Painting from found images.** Develop project work based on found images such as photographs, magazines, CD covers and film stills. Encourage students to analyse and distil these images (photocopying, collaging and re-photographing them) to create their own paintings.

**Use film and historical biography as starting point for a project.** Students to develop paintings and or/ cartoon illustrations documenting an individual or community they have researched.

## ***Coast to Coast: Modernism and St Ives 1940 to 1976***

A new display of works from the Tate Collection by artists associated with West Cornwall can be found in Lower Gallery 2 and the Studio. This display has been selected to complement *If Everybody Had an Ocean* revealing links and shared interests between British and American artists at this time. Included in the display are artists such as Sandra Blow, Trevor Bell, Wilhelmina Barns-Graham, Alan Davie, Terry Frost, Naum Gabo, Barbara Hepworth, Patrick Heron, Roger Hilton, Peter Lanyon, Denis Mitchell, Ben Nicholson, John Wells and Bryan Wynter.

### **Key work**

#### **Bryan Wynter**

#### ***IMOOS VI* 1965**

Gouaches on card reconstructed, mirror and mixed media

1202 x 1010 x 1168 mm

Between 1960 and 1965, Bryan Wynter made a group of six kinetic works of art (mobiles), which he called *IMOOS* (standing for Images Moving Out Onto Space). He later made a second set. Painted cards are suspended in front of a parabolic mirror. As the cards move from the heat of the lamp their reflections are broken up, reform, merge and loom out at the viewer.

Although three-dimensional, the *IMOOS* are closely connected to Wynter's paintings of the same time. He was concerned with illusionistic space and the idea of creating a visual flux; a surface pattern that seemed to be always moving.

The original idea for the *IMOOS* works came from an old parabolic mirror from a disused wartime searchlight that Wynter had in his cottage. At first he simply experimented with strips of card, painted with gouache and suspended. He then built an open-fronted box in which to enclose the mirror. The mobile was suspended from the top of the box and he used an electric motor to turn a magnet which in turn pulled and repelled the thin wire rods from which the cards hung. He later replaced the motor and installed a tungsten quartz light, the convection of which was used to move the cards. Today these works require a considerable amount of conservation and maintenance due to their fragile nature.

**Bryan Wynter (1915-75)** was born in London 1915. He studied at the Slade School between 1938 and 1940. A conscientious objector during the war, Wynter worked on the land around Oxford as well as assisting Solly Zuckerman's research at the Department of Primates, Oxford University. Wynter moved to St Ives in 1945. In 1946 he co-founded the Crypt Group, in St Ives and he later became a member of the Penwith Society of Artists. He had his first solo in London, in 1947 and between 1951 and 1956 taught at Bath Academy of Art, Corsham. He gave up teaching in 1956 and rented a studio in London for ten months. It was during this period that Wynter began his first non-figurative paintings, perhaps influenced by the show of American Abstract Expressionism at the Tate. In 1960 he began to translate his concerns into three-dimensions, creating his *IMOOS* (Images Moving Out Onto Space). These kinetic constructions did not replace Wynter's two-dimensional work, but rather can be seen as an extension of it. Wynter suffered a heart attack in 1961 but he continued to make art until his death in 1975.

## For discussion

- Describe what you see as you look into the hole?
- What happens to the shapes and colours as they move?
- Can you think of words to describe the effect?
- Why do you think Wynter made this mobile?
- In what ways is this mobile similar to some of the other paintings and sculptures in this room or Lower Gallery 2?
- How good are you at describing works? Explore the Studio and Lower Gallery 2 and find a work that catches your eye – look at it closely. Can you find words to describe it?
- Now glance around the whole display of *Coast to Coast* again. What sorts of things are these artists interested in? Make a list.
- Why do you think it is called *Coast to Coast*?
- This display creates some striking ‘conversations’ between works. Choose two works that you feel speak to each other in some way (they might share characteristics or they might be strongly contrasting) and explain to the group why.

## Key themes

**Movement and light.** The *IMOOS* works explore ideas about the visual perception of movement and light. The heat of the light inside the work causes the mobile to move. The mobile also moves due to the air currents in the room. The effect of the *IMOOS* is quite magical. Consider the strange and mysterious effect of the mirror on the simple painted shapes. As the mobile turns the images are enlarged, distorted and reversed – sometimes they recede, sometimes they extend. The images are constantly changing and as the mobile moves the shapes are reflected in unexpected ways. Notice how suddenly one of the shapes will loom and fill the lens. This same magical feeling can be seen in Wynter’s abstract paintings such as *Saja* 1969 and *Green Confluence* 1974 included in *Coast to Coast*. Compare also to other paintings and sculptures included in *Coast to Coast* which explore light and space in different ways.

**Op and kinetic Art.** The painted cards within the *IMOOS* are bright and bold. Wynter uses strong lines and colours and sharp geometric shapes. The *IMOOS* relate to the Op Art artists such as Bridget Riley, whose paintings sought to create a similar sense of physical and sensory disorientation and play with optical illusions (note: a painting by Bridget Riley can be seen in the Apse). Wynter’s work can be seen within this history of kinetic sculpture and it is interesting to make comparisons to Alexander Calder’s mobiles, for example.

**Coast to Coast.** This display evokes some common trans-Atlantic concerns in relation to modern art, music and place. Explore some of the links between artists associated with St Ives and those linked with Los Angeles and California. Can the ‘Cornish dream’ compare in any way to the American West Coast?

**Sense of place.** Notice how many of the artists in *Coast to Coast* explore and evoke their environment. The abstract work of Patrick Heron, Peter Lanyon and Bryan Wynter capture their sensation or experience of place rather than a view of the landscape. Many works demonstrate an emotive response to the colour, light, textures, surfaces and materials of the natural world.

**Abstraction.** This display shows how many of the artists associated with St Ives in the twentieth century explored abstraction. It includes a range of paintings, sculptures and reliefs by artists who have in various ways developed an abstract language. It provides a good introduction to the ways artists use line, colour, transparency, shape and form to play with the illusion of space.

**Space.** These artists explore and describe space in different ways. All the works play with pictorial space and illusionism often denying traditional perspective and depth. They create a sense of space and surface tension through colour, light, line, form, surface, relief, construction and texture.

## Suggested follow-up activities

**IMOOS.** From simple mobiles using card and string to bold experimentations with light and colour.

**A sense of place.** Students could create artwork based on places that they strongly identify with. Encourage them to create their own record of the place by taking photographs or making a film, making sketches and collecting objects.

**Pattern, shape and detail.** Encourage students to explore the works *Coast to Coast* and to create a series of sketches based on details from the paintings and sculptures. Talk about the striking contrasts between geometric and organic forms, between angle and curve, strong and soft colour.

**2D/3D.** This activity could be a development of the above whereby they use their sketches as the basis for paintings that they then transform into relief and sculptures. Encourage them to experiment with the sensations of space, light and movement. Students could then make drawings and paintings of their work to transform them back to two dimensions.

**Abstracting from nature.** Develop drawings and collage work based on observation and the collection of materials and objects from the natural world. Invite students to make a series of paintings or drawings gradually abstracting or distilling the patterns and forms. This activity works well in Lower Gallery 2 where students can make work based on their view outside to the beach and inside around the gallery.

## Further reading / resources

### Bryan Wynter

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*Bryan Wynter CDRom* with music composed by Graham Fitkin – available from [kerry.rice@tate.org.uk](mailto:kerry.rice@tate.org.uk)

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