

# The *Penwith Portfolio*

*A collection of original prints by  
12 renowned British Modernists*



**Opening 5pm**

**19. 09. 23**

**Continues till**

**06. 10. 23**

Robert Adams  
Alan Davie  
Merlyn Evans  
Duncan Grant  
Barbara Hepworth  
Peter Lanyon  
Bernard Leach  
F E McWilliam  
Henry Moore  
Ben Nicholson  
John Piper  
Michael Rothenstein



VM ART GALLERY

VM Art Gallery is thrilled to present The Penwith Portfolio exhibition. This collection showcases a remarkable selection of original prints by 12 renowned British modernists: Robert Adams, Alan Davie, Merlyn Evans, Duncan Grant, Barbara Hepworth, Peter Lanyon, Bernard Leach, F E McWilliam, Henry Moore, Ben Nicholson, John Piper, and Michael Rothenstein.

The Penwith Society of Arts was founded in 1949 in St Ives, Cornwall, UK, by abstract artists who separated from the more conservative St Ives School. The society provided a platform for artists to challenge traditional boundaries and explore innovative approaches to art-making.

The Penwith Portfolio was created in 1973 under the expert supervision of Stanley Jones at Curwen Press in London. It represents a unique collaboration between these esteemed artists and the Penwith Society of Arts. In August 1971, the Penwith Society of Arts acquired a subterranean car park adjacent to their gallery. The goal was to transform this space into a "permanent" exhibition showcasing prominent British Moderns associated with St. Ives, Cornwall. To fund the extensive conversion of the car park, the society organized various fundraising efforts, including the creation of the Penwith Portfolio.

Comprising of 11 lithographs and 1 screenprint, the portfolio features exquisite artworks that exemplify these artists' remarkable talent and innovation.

We are delighted to provide this unique opportunity for gallerygoers to appreciate and study these original prints as part of an enriching educational experience.

# *Robert Adams*

Robert Adams (May 29, 1917 - March 4, 1984) was a prominent figure among the British modernists and a Penwith Society of Arts member. He was a highly acclaimed sculptor known for his abstract and expressive sculptures; Adams incorporated organic forms, textures, and found objects into his sculptures, creating a harmonious blend between the human-made and the natural world. He experimented with materials like welded steel sheets, bronze, and stainless steel. Adams' work titled "Screen Form" in the Penwith Portfolio showcases his distinctive approach to form and composition in a two-dimensional format. It is characterized by clean lines and a sense of balance and harmony; the composition exudes a sense of solidity and stability.



Robert Adams  
*Screen Form, Unknown*  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
30.50h x 22w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Alan Davie*

Alan Davie (September 28, 1920 - April 5, 2014) was a Scottish painter and musician who significantly contributed to the abstract expressionist movement. Known for his vibrant and energetic style, Davie's work reflects a deep interest in mythology, symbolism, and the subconscious. His art combines bold brushstrokes, intricate patterns, and a rich palette of colors to create visually dynamic and emotionally charged compositions. Davie explored the tension between form and freedom throughout his career, creating works filled with symbols, signs, and gestures, inviting viewers to decode their meanings. His work "Bird Through The Wall" in the Penwith Portfolio exemplifies Davie's ability to create visually captivating pieces that invite viewers to interpret and engage with his intricate narratives. His art is a testament to his enduring influence and contribution to the world of abstract expressionism.



Alan Davie  
*Bird through Wall*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.50w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Merlyn Evans*

Merlyn Evans (1910 - 1973) was a prominent British modernist artist whose contributions to sculpture, painting, and printmaking left a lasting impact. Hailing from St. Ives, Cornwall, Evans exhibited a unique blend of organic and geometric aesthetics in his works. Evans's lithograph "St Ives Beach" in the Penwith Portfolio exhibition offers a glimpse into his ability to translate his sculptural sensibilities onto two-dimensional art. Evans utilizes the dynamic textures and tonal variations inherent to lithography to capture the essence of the beach.



Merlyn Evans  
*St. Ives Beach*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.20w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS



# *Duncan Grant*

Duncan Grant (January 21, 1885 - May 8, 1978) was a British Post-Impressionist painter and designer who played a vital role in developing modernism in Scotland and Britain. Known for his bold use of color and innovative compositions, his work encompassed various mediums, including lithography. Grant's involvement with the influential Bloomsbury Group further shaped his artistic vision. His lithographic print "Interior" features bold colors, intricate patterns, and a unique sense of perspective. Grant invites viewers into a whimsical and dreamlike space.



Duncan Grant  
*Interior*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
30.50h x 22w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Barbara Hepworth*

Barbara Hepworth (January 10, 1903 - May 20, 1975) was a leading figure of British Modernism in the 20th Century and a founding member of The Penwith Society of Arts in 1949. She was an extraordinary sculptor known for her innovative and abstract works. With a career spanning several decades, Hepworth's art often explored the relationship between form, space, and nature. Her sculptures, characterized by organic shapes and smooth surfaces, exuded a sense of grace and harmony. Hepworth's profound connection to her Cornish roots and the surrounding landscape heavily influenced her creations. Through her art, Hepworth challenged traditional notions of sculpture, pushing boundaries and creating a captivating dialogue between the artwork and the viewer. Hepworth's lithograph "Moon Landscape" in the Penwith Portfolio shows her trademark abstract, organic forms, and a thoughtful exploration of space and form within the print.



Barbara Hepworth  
*Moon Landscape*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.50w in  
Edition no. 3 of 90  
NFS

# *Peter Lanyon*

George Peter Lanyon (February 8, 1918 - August 31, 1964) was an important figure in British Modernism in the 20th Century and a founding member of The Penwith Society of Arts in 1949. Considered one of the most influential artists in post-war Britain, Lanyon's body of work significantly reevaluates modernism in painting. Lanyon's unique style blended abstract concepts with innovative perspectives on landscape and the human form. In the Penwith Portfolio, his piece "The Returned Seaman" stands out as a testament to his artistic vision. His artistic journey encompassed various movements, from Constructivism to Abstract Expressionism, culminating in a style reminiscent of Pop art.



Lanyon

Peter Lanyon  
*The Returned Seaman*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
26h x 32w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Bernard Leach*

Bernard Leach (January 5, 1887 - May 6, 1979) was known as the 'Father of British studio pottery' and was a founding member of The Penwith Society of Arts in 1949. Leach was recognized for his fusion of Eastern and Western aesthetics and played a significant role in reviving traditional Japanese pottery techniques in the Western world. His pots were renowned for their craftsmanship, simplicity, and harmony between form, function, and glaze. His "Drawing for a Pot" in the Penwith Portfolio exemplifies his draughtsmanship skills, capturing the essence of his ceramic creations through nuanced lines and forms.



Bernard Leach  
*Drawing for a pot*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
30.50h x 22w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS



# *F. E. McWilliam*

F. E. McWilliam (1909 - 1992) was a highly regarded Irish sculptor known for his emotive and balanced sculptures exploring human form and Irish folklore. His work spanned various styles and themes, from surrealism to abstraction. In the Penwith Portfolio, his work "Woman in Belfast" is featured as a lithograph, allowing his powerful sculpture to be shared on a broader scale while preserving its emotional impact. The inclusion of this piece highlights McWilliam's exploration of conflict and the human condition.



F.E. McWilliam  
*Woman of Belfast*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.50w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Henry Moore*

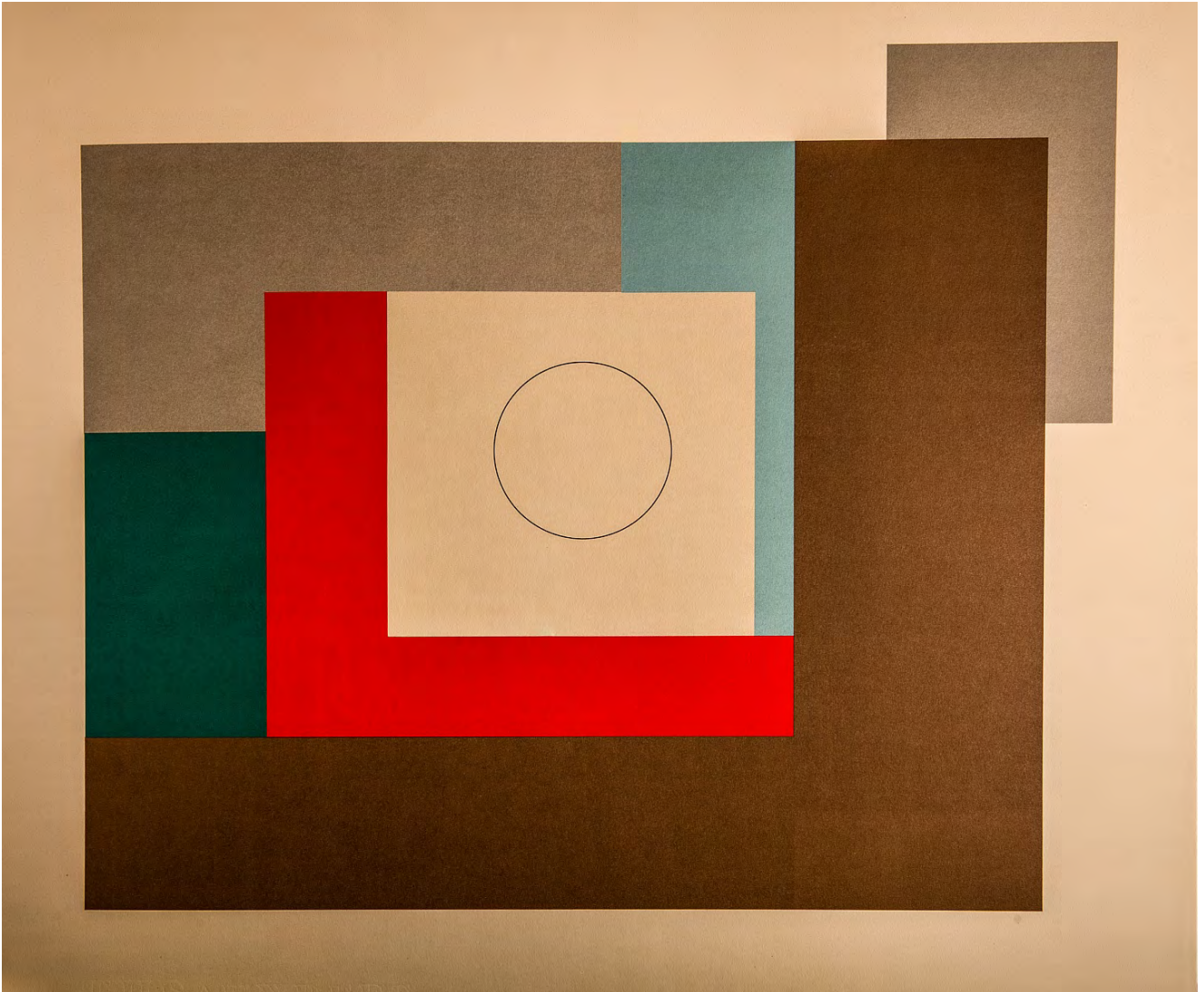
Henry Moore CH (1898 - 1986) was a leading figure of British Modernism in the 20th Century and an honorary member of The Penwith Society of Arts. He was an influential sculptor known for his monumental and organic forms. Moore's sculptures often depict abstract figures and explore the relationship between the human body and its surroundings. His work was deeply influenced by ancient and non-Western art. His print "Silhouette Figures with Border Design" in the Penwith portfolio exhibition showcases his ability to capture the essence of the human form in his evocative artworks.



Henry Moore  
*Silhouette Figures with Border Designs*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
30.50h x 22w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *Ben Nicholson*

Ben Nicholson OM (1894 - 1982) was a leading figure of British Modernism in the 20th Century and a founding member of The Penwith Society in 1949. Nicholson was an influential figure in British abstraction and was known for his innovative approach to art and his exploration of geometric forms. In the Penwith Portfolio, his lithograph “Abstract 1936” was from an original painting he did. The work showcases Nicholson's distinct style, characterized by clean lines, interlocking shapes, and a harmonious balance of form and color. It exemplifies Nicholson's fascination with the relationships between shapes and how they interact with negative space. The composition is carefully constructed, with geometric elements arranged to create a sense of rhythm and movement. The use of muted colors, typical of Nicholson's palette during this period, enhances the tranquil ambience of the artwork.



Ben Nicholson  
*Abstract 1936, 1973*  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
26h x 32w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS

# *John Piper*

John Piper (1903 - 1992) was an influential British artist held in high regard by Penwith Society members. Piper was known for his diverse work, encompassing painting, photography, printmaking, and stained glass design. Inspired by the landscapes and architecture of Britain, Piper's distinctive use of color and form showcased his talent for capturing the essence of historic buildings and countryside scenes. In the Penwith Portfolio, his piece "Annunciation of the Shepherds" stands out, exemplifying his mastery of composition and ability to infuse religious themes with a sense of mysticism. Through bold lines and blocks of color, Piper creates a dynamic image that blends abstraction and realism, conveying emotion and narrative.



John Piper  
*Annunciation to the Shepherds*, 1973  
Lithograph on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.50w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS



# *Michael Rothenstein*

Michael Rothenstein (1908 - 1993) was a highly regarded British artist known for his innovative printmaking techniques and ability to blend abstraction and representation in his vibrant artworks. Influenced by the natural world, Rothenstein's work encompassed painting, printmaking, and collage. His piece "Sunrise at 3600 ft" in the Penwith Portfolio showcases his mastery of printmaking and ability to convey a sense of awe and wonder in nature. Rothenstein creates a dynamic depiction of a sun-drenched sky at high altitude through vibrant colors and layered shapes, merging abstract elements with representational imagery.



Michael Rothenstein  
*Sunrise at 36,000 feet*, 1973  
Screen Print on Wove Paper  
22h x 30.50w in  
Edition no. 3/90  
NFS