

CHAMP LACOMBE

Carter 1960-1980

March 02 - April 14, 2024

Carter's refined practice was first recognised as part of the renowned 'New Generation' series of exhibitions mounted at the Whitechapel Gallery, London in the late 1960s.

The second in the series of four 'New Generation' exhibitions demonstrated a resounding interest in a new direction of abstract sculptural form, influenced predominately by Anthony Caro whose tenure at St Martin's gave rise to what would later become known as 'New Generation' sculpture.

This new direction frequently made use of materials that lay beyond the traditional lexicon, experimenting with forms, materials and colour, with the shared aim of questioning sculpture's previously held confines.

Carter's works, born of this same spirit, were included in the third of the New Generation exhibitions, titled 'Interim', and were shown alongside the works of Philip King, Tim Scott, David Annesley (often referred to as the 'School of Caro'), Allen Jones, David Hockney, Bridget Riley and Patrick Caulfield, amongst others.

It is this period of Carter's practice that this exhibition will highlight, demonstrating the artist's path from early 60s references to Pop, giving way to a formally complex and constructivist practice for which he is now known. Often fragments of an implied whole the works are poetic in their reduction and lyricism. Colour and volume are utilised with a confident musicality, creating interplays of forms that invite the viewer to participate in their completion, each work requiring the viewer to enter a subtle visual game.

Carter's influences are various, from the American landscapes of New Mexico to the works of Stella, Mangold, Mary Martin, Anthony Hill, and the architecture and proportioning theories of Le Corbusier.

Art Historian Mel Gooding wrote of Carter's practice: « Consistently resourceful and inventive, each successive phase of his patient and persistent research reflects the creative play of a restless mind over fundamental problems of perception and cognition. »

Further information of the over 30 works (including maquettes, sketch books, works on paper and sculptures) featured in the exhibition are available via email. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue.

Biography :

John Carter (b.1942) lives and works in London. He first studied at the Twickenham School of Art from 1958 and then at Kingston School of Art until 1963. A Leverhulme Travelling Scholarship took him to Italy, where he made his first abstract constructed works at the British School at Rome. This exhibition features a near complete group of the works made in this period. Carter won a travel scholarship to the USA, where he stayed at the Chelsea Hotel, and travelled by bus to New Mexico, providing the inspiration for works 'Mesa', 1968, and the 'First Spacer Painting', both works connected to notions of passage, travel and inspired by the geometries of American landscape.

On returning to England, Carter was engaged as an assistant to the sculptor Bryan Kneale and had his first solo exhibition in London in 1968. After winning two Arts Council Awards, a retrospective exhibition of his work was held at the Warwick Arts Trust, London in 1983. Later, Carter participated in the international show Die Ecke at Galerie Hoffmann, Friedberg, Germany, where he made his first contact with European concrete and constructive artists.

He has since exhibited widely in Europe, Japan and the USA. John Carter held a teaching position at the Chelsea College of Art and Design, until his retirement from the post in 1999. A solo exhibition of his work was held at the Royal Academy in 2013, entitled 'John Carter RA: Between Dimensions'. Elected Royal Academician in 2007, Carter was the subject of a retrospective at Jerwood Gallery, Hastings, in 2019, while a retrospective exhibition of his printmaking was held at the Royal Academy later in the year.