

# T E Fine Art

45 Maddox Street, London, W1S 2PE

David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

SERIES 1



# T E Fine Art

45 Maddox Street, London, W1S 2PE

Contact:

Sophie Teer

[Gallery.TE.FineArt@GMAIL.COM](mailto:Gallery.TE.FineArt@GMAIL.COM)

T: 02076296645

Whatsapp: 07704216329

 T\_E\_FineArt\_

Illustrated cover:

David Williams (British, 1950–2022)  
*Hayley 1*  
Acrylic on paper mounted on board  
83 x 125.4 cm

Photography:

Yuugen Visuals



## David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

David 'Dave' Williams was a British artist celebrated for a unique and eclectic body of work produced over several decades. Described as an "eccentric outsider...potentially recognisable today as autistic" by his contemporary John Stray, Williams always had a different view on the world. Suggesting texture with flatness, the epic with modest proportions, he has left us a rich, original artistic legacy pregnant with tantalising paradoxes – one that deserves considerably more attention than it has received thus far.

### Early Life and Education

Born on 28 August 1950 in the North-East of England, Williams was raised as an only child by his parents, Robert and Maud. Perhaps tellingly for someone whose works – as Stray noted – resemble bird's-eye views from aircraft, the artist's father was a pilot in the Royal Air Force (RAF), whose career caused the young Dave to have a fairly peripatetic childhood as the family moved between air force bases in South Yorkshire – the place the artist would come to call home.

Williams' education began at Thorne Grammar School in Doncaster. After completing secondary school, he pursued his passion for art by enrolling at Doncaster Art College. This was a formative period, during which he began to forge his distinctive artistic identity. And it was a lesson that was not forgotten: inspired by all he had learned – and no doubt the sculptural qualities of the local landscape – in later life he had a large studio in a semi-derelict part of the college for many years until his death.

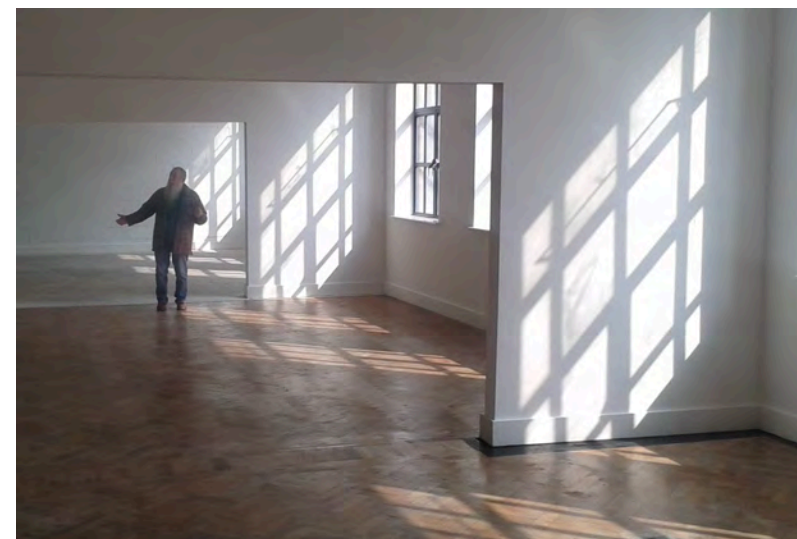
In his early artistic endeavours, Williams was experimental and conceptual in his approach. He dabbled in various art forms and conceptual ideas. In his youth he created a postcard-sized canvas with a minimalist concept – a simple horizon featuring green grass and a blue sky with a jelly baby glued at its centre. As recalled by John Stray, the sweet swiftly melted under the central heating, but this interest in a geometric, almost abstracted landscape remained. This early work reflected his unconventional and imaginative approach to art – an approach that, in time, would lead him to some highly novel techniques.

### C a n t e r b u r y   a n d   A r t   C o l l e g e

In 1970, Williams and John Stray moved to Canterbury, with Williams enrolling at the local art college. Here he was able to enjoy a supportive community and a vibrant cultural scene, as Canterbury was a hub of artistic expression, home to the bands Soft Machine, Caravan, and Gong who pioneered a blend of improvisational psychedelia. Indeed, Williams' then tutor, Ian Dury, later formed the well-known bands Kilburn and the Highroads (whose members included the painter Humphrey Ocean), and the Blockheads. Another Canterbury contemporary was the painter and printmaker David Shaw, who also produced many abstracted landscapes over his career.

### L o n d o n   Y e a r s

In 1979, Williams moved to London with his partner Sally, who was studying medicine at Imperial College. He found employment working on the British Leyland production line, albeit finding it somewhat monotonous due to frequent strikes in the decade that saw the 'Winter of Discontent'. Subsequently, Williams ventured into the world of interior decoration, working on luxury projects, including installing antique and handcrafted marble fireplaces in prestigious residences (and at times sculpting his own fireplaces). Williams' resourcefulness extended to converting an old ambulance into a work van for his decorating business. He also sourced produce for the upscale Arc restaurant from Spitalfields Market.



David Williams in the new C-View Galleries 2019

### C a r e t a k e r   a n d   F a m i l y

In 2008, Williams' life took a significant turn when his father, Robert, suffered a stroke. Recognizing his mother Maud's inability to manage alone after breaking her hip the previous year, David moved back to their Doncaster house, on Somerton Drive. He became the primary caregiver for his parents during this period, which included supporting his father, who was later diagnosed with dementia. Following the passing of both his parents, Williams continued to reside at Somerton Drive, preserving its original 1970s décor. Those in his circle have described Dave's prioritisation of functionality over aesthetic in his domestic space as a reflection of the artist's eccentricities. His passion for art and disregard for conventional comforts were notable aspects of his personality: his living spaces were filled with his artworks, and he was known for eschewing traditional furniture and ornamentation. Visitors to his home often found themselves sitting on rickety stools as opposed to the sofa.

## I n s p i r a t i o n   a n d   I n f l u e n c e s

Williams had a deep appreciation for nature and frequently ventured into the countryside with friends – had a fascination with seeds, often collecting them during his nature walks and cultivating them in his garden. He carried his camera with him and captured the interplay of light through trees and reflections on the water. The artist was also interested in astronomy and often used images from space telescopes as sources material for his art.

## A r t i s t i c   P r o c e s s

These joint interests of landscape and photography permeate the works that Williams is best known for. These are his paper 'topographies': richly patterned sheets of paper that combine serendipitous patterns with geometric rule – most often circles at the heart of the composition. Williams was able to achieve this curious synthesis thanks to a highly original, skilled technique: scrunching up a sheet of paper that would be flattened ahead of framing, he would then spray the paper from different angles in different tones or colours, to ensure that different pigments landed on separate peaks and troughs of the surface. In the photographer's lexicon, different parts of the sheet might be said to be 'exposed' at different times, and this is the effect created when the sheet was stretched flat; but this was but one facet of Williams' stimulating working method. In total contrast to his mimicking the immaterial techniques of photography, Williams' habit of scrunching up the paper ahead of painting meant, paradoxically, that he could only arrive at a two-dimensional result only by making what was in effect a sculpture. The fault lines of colour and tone stretching across his works are now the only testament to these parent works, works which had to be destroyed in order to attain the desired result.

This playful conflation of the boundary between painting and sculpture seen in contemporary British painting, most memorably in the encrusted dung heaps of Chris Ofili's works, but it is difficult to think of an artist who foregrounds the interplay of two- and three-dimensions – the famous 'paragone' that obsessed Italian Renaissance theorists – with the tantalisingly complexity of Williams. And it is even more of a surprise to be faced with such stimulating interplays of surface and flatness in work that, on first view, has the smoothness of Victor Vasarely's most famous late works.

Immensely popular around the time that Williams moved to Canterbury, Vasarely's compositions, especially his famous abstract compositions centred on globes, provide a probable starting point for Williams' mature visual language, not least in their (often) broad gamut of complementary colours; but the result is totally different both in effect. Instead, in his ability to suggest landscape through abstract, serendipitous means, Williams might meaningfully be placed in a long British tradition that unites Turner, Sean Scully and Dee Ferris.

## E x h i b i t i o n s

Throughout his career, Williams participated in various open exhibitions, including shows at the Hull Lefeliers Gallery, spaces in Doncaster and Scunthorpe, the Harley Gallery in the grounds of Welbeck House, and Project Spaces, Bermondsey, 2021. His work was also exhibited by Ben Elwes Fine Art, London. Williams often displayed his work in local cafés including and church spaces.

## L e g a c y

David Williams left behind a remarkable body of work that defied convention and drew from a deep well of creativity. His artistic journey was characterised by experimentation, dedication, and a unique perspective on the world. He remained committed to his art, rarely throwing things away, and his paintings spanned a wide range of styles and themes, from abstract landscapes to geometric designs.

Throughout his life, creating art was Williams' driving force. He never ceased painting, continuously producing artworks from the 1970s until his passing in 2022. His dedication to his craft remained unwavering, and he created many of paintings over the years, each reflecting his unique perspective on the world. Dave's legacy lives on in his extensive body of work, a testament to his unbridled artistic spirit.



David Williams C-View studio and materials

## David Williams (1950-2022)

1967-1968 - Doncaster School of Art  
1968-1971 - Canterbury College of Art

### Solo Exhibitions

1-12 June 2021 - *David Williams: Light*, Bermondsey Project Space, London

### Group Exhibitions

20 May - 14 July 2023 - *Opening Celebration: Peter Samson, Dave Hiskey & David Williams*, Fox Gallery, Mexborough

18-28 August 2021 - *Root and Branch: An exhibition by Peter Samson and David Williams*, Fronteer Gallery, Sheffield

5 June 2021 - D31 Art Gallery, Doncaster

May 2021 - *Together*, D31 Art Gallery

14 March 2020 - *Open Studios*, C-View, Doncaster

15 February - 26 April 2020 - *Ferens Open Exhibition 2020*, The Ferens Art Gallery, Hull

2019 - *'Colour and line' 5 artists*, C-View Gallery, Doncaster

2017 - *Ferens Open Exhibition*, The Ferens Art Gallery

2017 - *Open Studios and Open Galleries*, C-View, Doncaster

### Memberships

D31 Artists' co-operative and gallery. Founder member and trustee of new gallery space for Doncaster.



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)  
*Untitled*  
Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board  
95.8 x 95.8 cm (framed)  
Artist original frame

£4,800



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

*40 Fathoms*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

95.5 x 120.6 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£4,200





David Williams (British, 1950-2022)  
*Meet on the Ledge*  
Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board  
93.2 x 120.5 (framed)  
Artist original frame

£4,800



David Williams (British, 1950–2022)

*Untitled*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

82.5 x 117.5 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£4,800



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)  
*Castles in the Sand*  
Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board  
81.9 x 96.2 cm (framed)  
Artist original frame

£2,400



David Williams (British, 1950–2022)

*Blue Moon*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

95.1 x 121 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£3,200



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

*Hayley 1*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

83 x 125.4 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£4,800



David Williams (British, 1950–2022)

*Untitled*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

78.4 x 111.1 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£3,000



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

*Untitled*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board  
109 x 82 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£2,400



David Williams (British, 1950-2022)

*Inverse Reflections*

Acrylic on hand-made paper mounted on board

106 x 86 cm (framed)

Artist original frame

£3,000





TE Fine Art