Upper Landing

John Piper 1903 – 1992

Redland Park Congregational Church, Bristol

1940

Oil on canvas

Kearley Bequest through Art Fund (1989)

John Piper’s lifelong interest in architecture found new expression in the recording of bombed churches he was commissioned to paint on behalf of the War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC). Piper was regarded as an ideal artist to depict these ‘instant ruins’ created by modern society. His emotive use of colour and stark sense of design appealed too many who saw his work as depicting a shared struggle during the Blitz.

Graham Sutherland 1903 – 1980

Thorn Head

1947

Oil on canvas

Hussey Bequest, Chichester District Council (1985)

Following the commissioned, by Dean Walter Hussey, to paint a Crucifixion for St Matthew's in Northampton, Sutherland began working on a series of paintings inspired by thorn bushes. They reflect, to a certain degree, Sutherland’s earlier belief that through metamorphosis, objects could find new form through feeling. Painted following his trip to Southern France, Sutherland adopted a new, brighter palette to reflect the warmth of the Mediterranean climate.

Bill Woodrow b. 1948

Regardless of History

1999

Bronze

Purchased with support from Art Fund and John Ayton MBE and John Booth (2019)

Woodrow emphasises humanity’s fragility in the face of nature, suggesting that we should remain respectful of nature’s power and our place in a natural order and most significantly learn from our history. The head is derived from a fallen statue and placed on a plinth in order to mimic traditional methods of display. The head is topped by a book and a tree, both symbolic of the accumulation of growth and knowledge.