

56 GROUP WALES

8 January – 1 February 1969

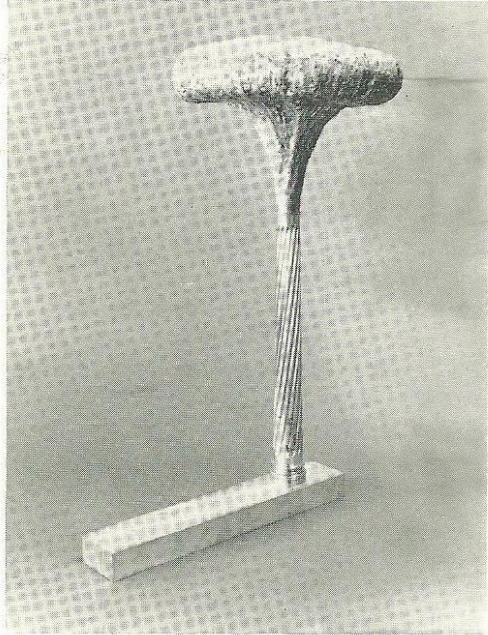
PRICED

Grosvenor Gallery

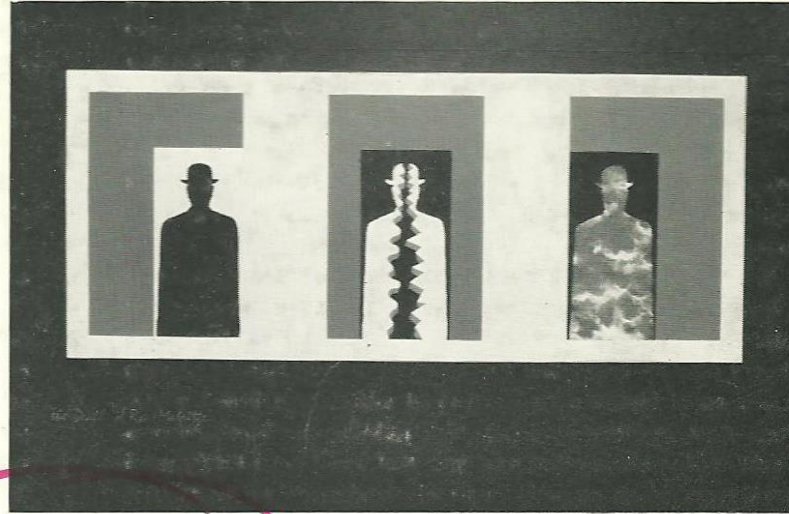
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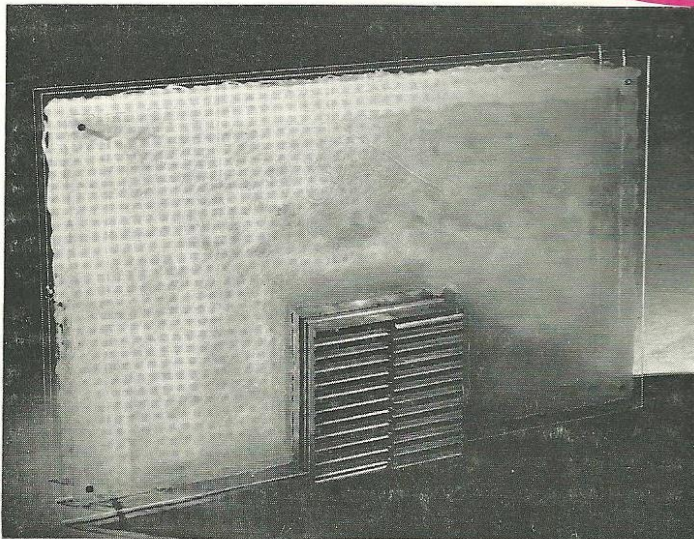
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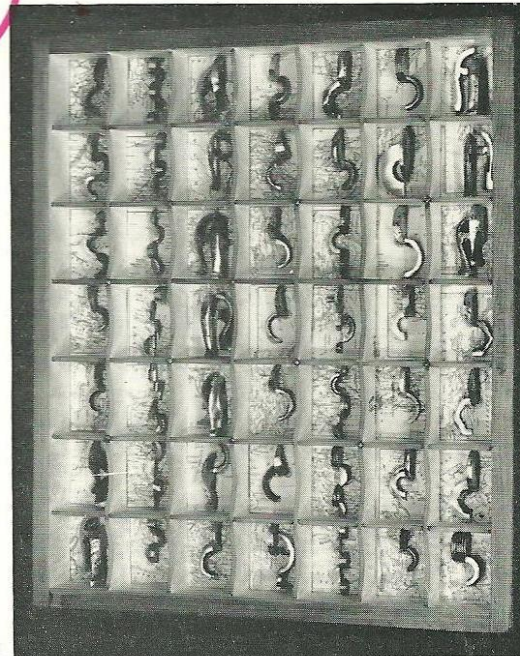
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PRICED

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56 Group Wales was founded in 1956 and has been exhibiting throughout Great Britain and Holland since 1957, shedding and gaining members during these last 12 years. This is its first exhibition in London (many individual members, of course, have held one-man shows or have participated in other group exhibitions in this city) and the full complement of members indicates the importance they set on this metropolitan group-showing. The founding fathers, so to speak, were Eric Malthouse and David Tinker – a prophetic Anglo-Welsh combination. At the time of the formation of the group there were two major exhibitions in Wales – the South Wales Group and the Arts Council Open Exhibition. ‘Only a minimum space’, wrote David Tinker, ‘was given to an artist who was aware of the rising tide of abstract art in New York and Paris . . . the need was felt to voice a clear radical point of view, radical in the sense of forward-looking. . . .’

What is significant is that in 1956 the founders believed there was a body of ‘forward-looking’ artists in Wales, and that the continued attraction of new members has justified that belief. How did it come about? After all, even today, few members of the national art-loving public could readily submit names of well-known Welsh artists. They might remember Augustus John, and his sister Gwen; perhaps David Jones and Ceri Richards. After that you’d get a blank; yet if you discuss the more typical Bardic talents of music, poetry, oratory, acting, the names of say, Geraint Evans, Dylan Thomas, Nye Bevan, Edith Evans and Richard Burton would probably be forthcoming.

It is important to understand that *56 Group Wales* is not a regional art manifestation in any obvious sense. It does not purport to establish some common denominator in Welsh art, to describe a creative spirit true of all artists in the Principality. It could not possibly do that since not all its artists are Welsh. The word ‘Wales’ in its title is a strictly geographic reference and should be interpreted as the link between artists born in Wales or of Welsh parentage, and others, of diverse origins, who at one time or another have lived and worked in Wales.

That might almost seem too broad a definition to justify the title or to permit exhibitable unity. This is not the case since it can be argued, and indeed it is my own personal opinion, that in their different ways the work of the members represent the most important strains and influences which have contributed to modern Welsh art, and which, curious though it may seem, have given it a Welsh flavour.

What I called the geographical content in the title *56 Group Wales* holds the clue. It was not locally-born artists who blazed any trails, but foreign ones, notably Josef Herman and other refugee artists, represented in the Group by Heinz Koppel. They proved that Wales was as good a place as any to make good art; indeed Herman showed that the archetypal figure of the Welsh miner was as potent a

symbol as any to express a personal philosophy. This was the kind of discovery which natives rarely make; they are too close to the national idioms, too self-conscious, to use them in this way. Note for instance the way Robert Hunter exploits a kind of museum or encyclopaedic intimacy with Celtic-Welsh art, in an entirely modern idiom; or even the magpie involvement with local *trouvailles* in Arthur Giardelli’s panel constructions. I think it is only foreign artists (both of them are English, although Giardelli is partly of Italian parentage) who see new localities with such freshness.

The second line of the foreign invasion came with the reorganisation of Welsh art schools. Many of the non-Welsh artists in *56 Group Wales* came to the area as teachers; there has been the important influence of Tom Hudson at the Cardiff College of Art, who together with younger artists, Terry Setch, Laurie Burt, Vyn Baldwin, Michael Tyzack, David Saunders, Norman Toynton, Alan Wood and Eric Rowan joined the Group.

Among the Welsh-born artists there are also some notable figures; Jeffrey Steele, for instance, has won national and international acclaim for his brilliant optical arrangements. Although this quasi-scientific, mathematical kind of art may seem remote from any picture-kit image of the Welsh temperament, for me his art contains enough passionate romanticism combined with what I can only call ‘linear morality’ to make it very Welsh indeed. There is a similar temperamental, if not stylistic, strain in the work of Richardson-Jones. A more obvious, Dylan Thomas-like sensuality is clearly present in the work of Ernest Zable. This is more likely to be because his parents were full-blooded Italians than because he was born in the Rhondda Valley. Nevertheless his sensuous treatment of the local landscape, so that it begins to resemble the voluptuous curves of a woman’s body, has much in common with the landscapes of another Welshman, John Selway.

Apart from Burt, whom I have already mentioned, Hubert Dalwood is the most prominent sculptor in this Group. Not actually Welsh – born in Bristol – Dalwood is certainly quite outside any typical English tradition; either the nature-inspired manner of Moore and Hepworth, or the anti-nature geometry of younger artists. His hierarchical, heraldic historicism has much more in common with Celtic imagery and symbolism, evident also in the work of Anthony Stevens. The younger sculptors, notably Brian Macdonald and Christopher Shurrock are more diverse and experimental in their preoccupations.

To sum up, what you will see in the work of many of these artists is much of the Welsh past and the look and feel of Wales. *56 Group Wales* represents the most exciting, most imaginative statements by artists living, working, teaching, creating in Wales. We are fortunate to have the opportunity of seeing their work in London.

Charles Spencer

inches

BALDWIN Vyn born Lincolnshire, 1934. Senior Lecturer in Sculpture, Cardiff College of Art

- 650
150
- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|-------|
| 1 | Caryatid 1968 | polyester resin/fibre glass | H.110 |
| 2 | Ironic Column 1968 | machined and welded aluminium/polyester resin | H.43 |

BURT Laurie born Leeds, 1925. Visiting Lecturer at Leeds College of Art, Wolverhampton

- 210
190
- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| 3 | Sweet Nothing | emulsion/oil on canvas | 60×60 |
| 4 | Death of René Magritte 1968 | a painting | 24×36 |

DALWOOD Hubert born Bristol, 1924. 1967-68, Visiting Professor of Sculpture, University of Wisconsin

- 150
150
150
- | | | | |
|---|--------------|------------------|-------|
| 5 | Invasion I | mirror/aluminium | 19×25 |
| 6 | Invasion II | mirror/aluminium | 19×25 |
| 7 | Invasion III | mirror/aluminium | 19×25 |

GIARDELLI Arthur born London, 1911. Lecturer at University College, Aberystwyth

- 300
80
- | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------|-------|
| 8 | Night Sea | brass/silk/burlap | 36×60 |
| 9 | Old Worlds | brass/wood | 15×14 |

HUDSON Tom born Durham, 1922. Director of Studies, Cardiff College of Art

- 175
250
250
- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| 10 | Rainshine | aluminium resin | 24×24×6 |
| 11 | Industrial Spectrum | acrylic/polyester/aluminium | 48×30×12 |
| 12 | Rainbow Room | acrylic/wood/polyester/glass fibre/aluminium | 29×24×12 and 26×18×6 |

HUNTER Robert born 1920

- 210
75
30
- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 13 | Invitation from Daedalus | oil/string/paper/canvas | 50×60 |
| 14 | O.K. Today | oil/string/paper/canvas | 30×24 |
| 15 | Special Invitation (Blue) | oil/string/paper/canvas | 14×11 |

KOPPEL Heinz born Berlin, 1919. Teaches in Liverpool

- 250
- | | | | |
|----|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 16 | Progression 1967 | acrylic on canvas | 96×72 |
|----|------------------|-------------------|-------|

MACDONALD Brian born Singapore, 1932. Head of Sculpture Department, Sheffield College of Art

- 300
100
- | | | | |
|----|------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
| 17 | Link | stainless steel | 102×72×60 |
| 18 | Reflective | chromium plated steel/perspex | 7×14×12 |

MALTHOUSE Eric born Birmingham, 1914. Teaches at Cardiff College of Art

- 200
150
75
60
- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----|-------|
| 19 | Watchers of the Field | oil | 50×40 |
| 20 | Long Touching | oil | 36×24 |
| 21 | Orion II | oil | 12×16 |
| 22 | Midsummer II | oil | 10×16 |

RICHARDSON-JONES Keith Lecturer at Newport College of Art

- 275
- | | | | |
|----|------|------------------------|-------|
| 23 | Beam | co-polymer/procion dye | 53×91 |
|----|------|------------------------|-------|

ROWAN Eric born Liverpool, 1931 Teaches at Cardiff College of Art

- 240
180
- | | | | |
|----|--------|------------------|-------|
| 24 | Quetz | acryla on canvas | 78×48 |
| 25 | Bridge | acryla on canvas | 49×28 |

inches

SAUNDERS David born 1936. Teaches painting at Newport College of Art. Visiting Lecturer at Portsmouth and Winchester Colleges of Art

- 170
- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 26 | Group and Reflections | polymer on canvas | 54×60 |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|

SELWAY John born Yorkshire, 1938

- 160
100
300
250
- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| 27 | Cake | ceramic sculpture | 8×10 |
| 28 | Ice Cream Box | ceramic/wood/metal | 14×24×18 |
| 29 | Cinema (Blue Mountain) | oil | 50×50 |
| 30 | Cinema | oil | 36×36 |

SETCH Terry born London, 1936. Senior Lecturer in Fine Art, Cardiff College of Art

- 300
- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 31 | Midnight Columns 1966 | acrylic on canvas | 72×84 |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|

SHURROCK Christopher born Bristol, 1939. Lecturer, Cardiff College of Art

- 170
130
- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| 32 | Serial: 29/Composite/2/68 | acrylic sheet/ink/wood | 36×36×4 |
| 33 | Serial: 22/A/3/66 | acrylic sheet/ink/wood | 36×36×6 |

STEELE Jeffrey born 1931. Head of Fine Art at Portsmouth College of Art and Design

- 300
200
- | | | | |
|----|---|---------------|-------|
| 34 | Duologue | oil on canvas | 30×40 |
| 35 | Keharwa (eight colour unit for expansion) | oil on canvas | 21×14 |

STEVENS Anthony born Shirenewton, Chepstow. Monmouth. Principal Lecturer in Sculpture, Newport College of Art

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200
- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|---------------------------------|----------|
| 36 | Malekula | fibreglass/wood/aluminium/latex | 48×42×42 |
| 37 | Black Mountains | fibreglass/aluminium | 30×48×30 |

TINKER David born 1924. Lecturer in Fine Art, University College, Aberystwyth

- 60
75
- | | | | |
|----|---------------|---------|-------|
| 38 | Tondo | acrylic | 40×40 |
| 39 | Double Yellow | acrylic | 50×40 |

TOYNTON Norman born London, 1939. Lecturer in Fine Art, Cardiff College of Art

- 300
- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 40 | My Room with de Chirico | acrylic on canvas | 84×84 |
|----|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|

TYZACK Michael born 1933. Lecturer at Hornsey College of Art

- 500
- | | | | |
|----|------------------|------------------------|-------|
| 41 | Zanfini: 1967-68 | acrylic on cotton duck | 96×84 |
|----|------------------|------------------------|-------|

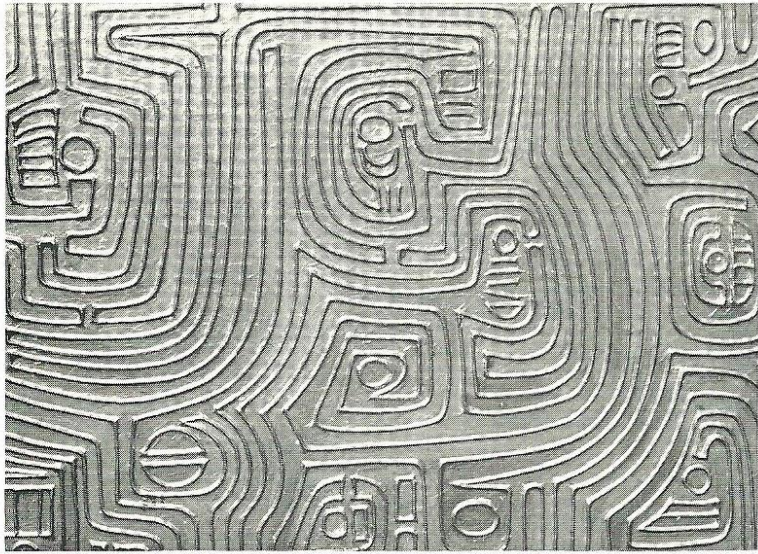
WOOD Alan born Lancashire, 1935. Principal Lecturer Fine Art, Cardiff College of Art

- 250
150
- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| 42 | Islands for Angels (Diamond) | p.v.a. on canvas | 68×68 |
| 43 | Poets Islands | p.v.a. on canvas | 68×16 |

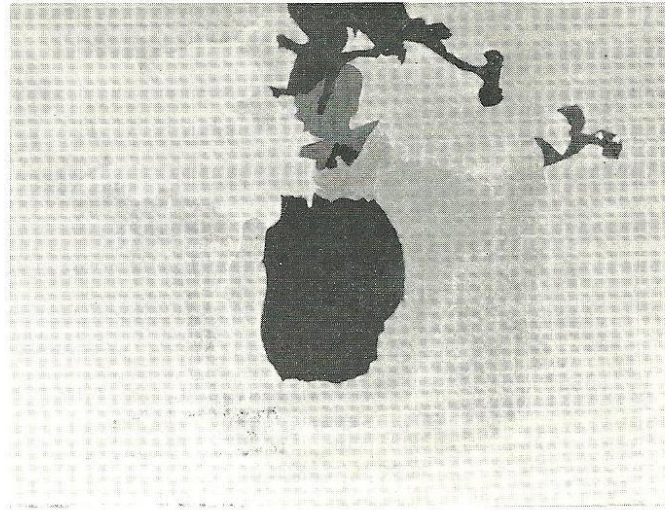
ZOBOL Ernest born Rhondda, 1927. Teaches at Newport College of Art

- 180
- | | | | |
|----|--|-----|-------|
| 44 | A Picture of the Sea, some Hills and the Sky and the Sun | oil | 48×36 |
|----|--|-----|-------|

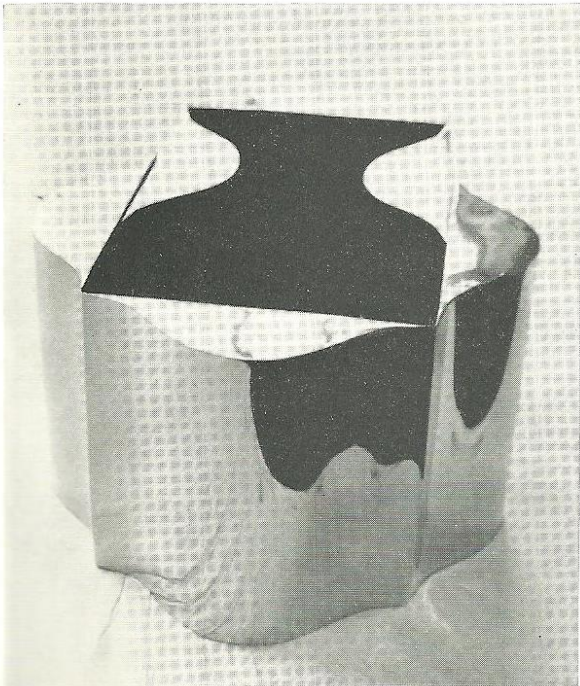
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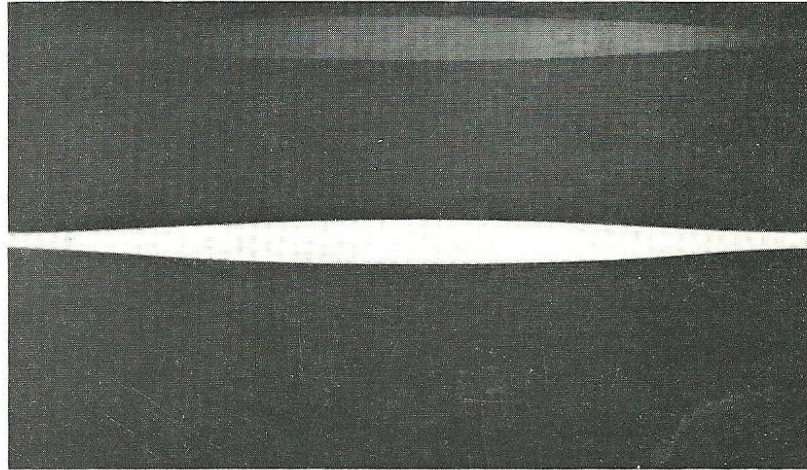
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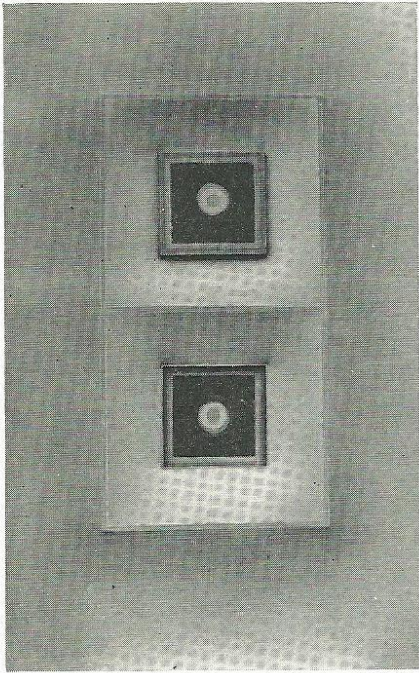
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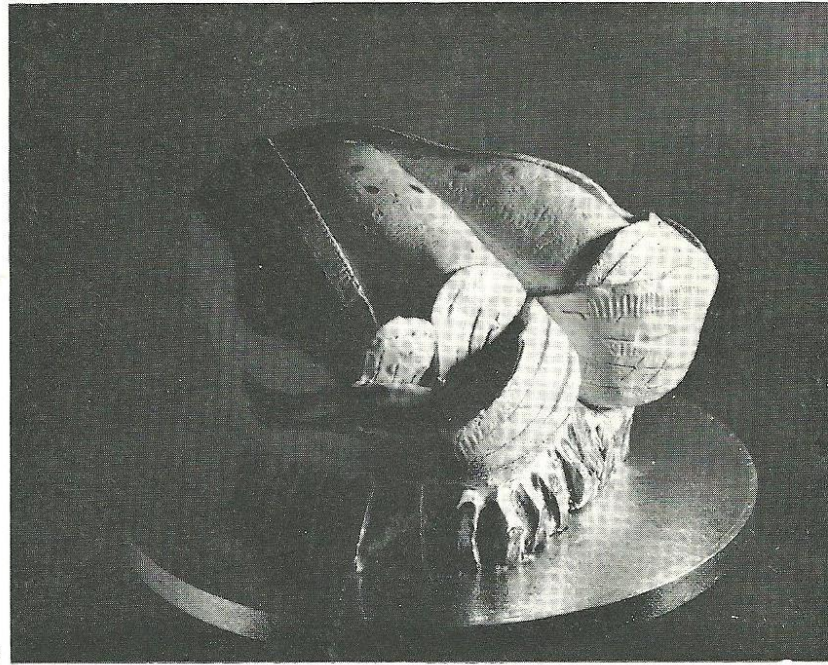
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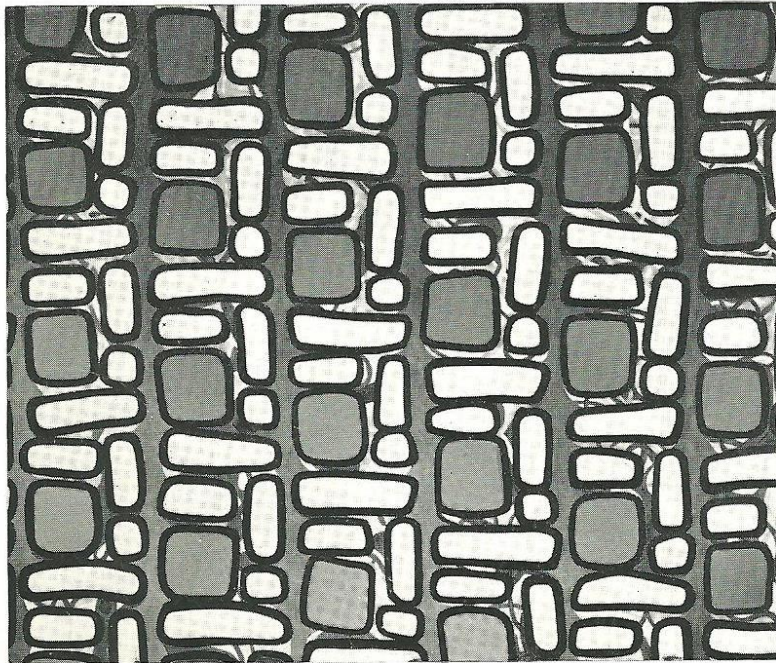
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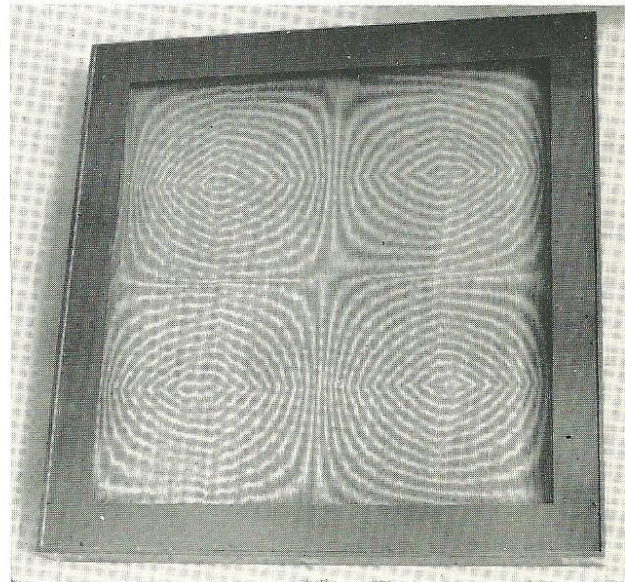


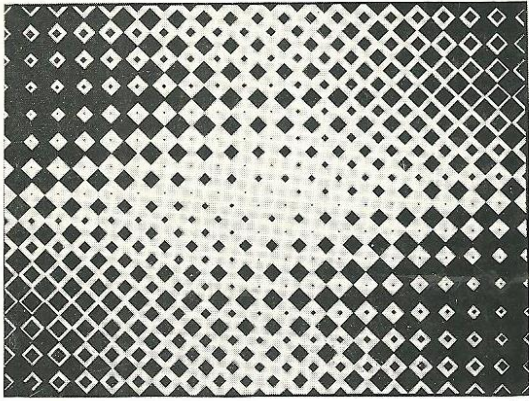
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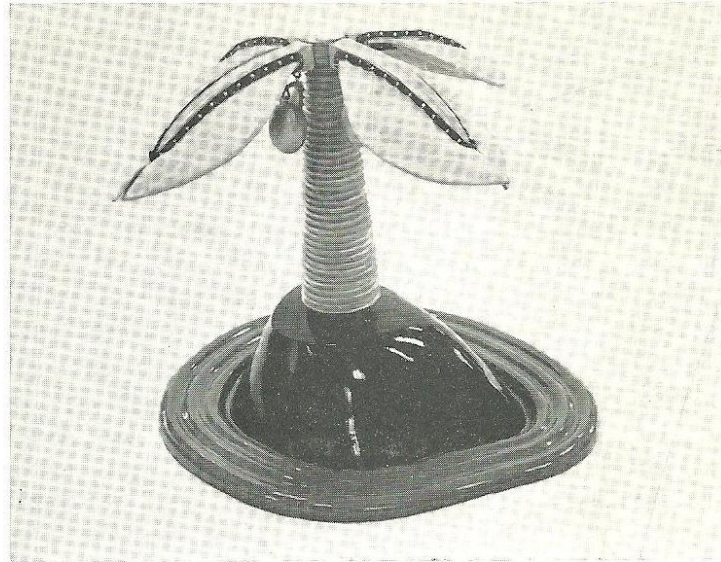
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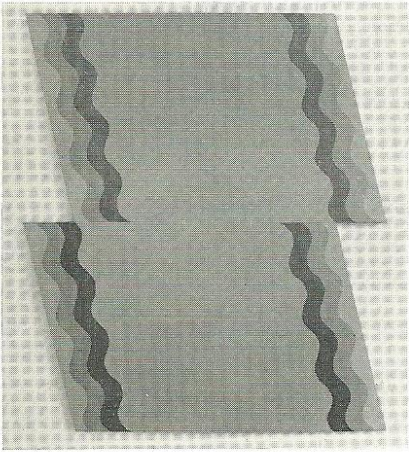




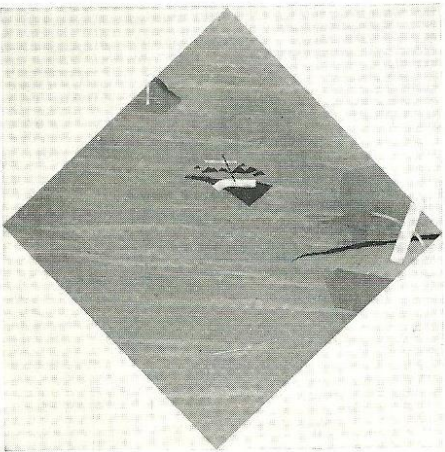
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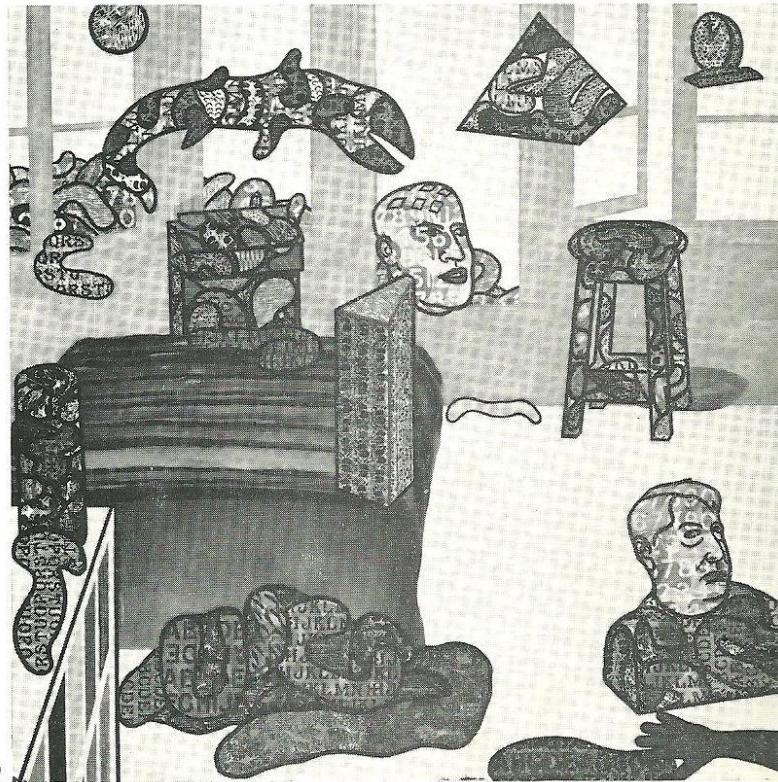
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