

## The Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

**Artist:** Valerie Thornton  
**Title:** *Arachora*  
**Medium:** etching  
**Edition:** 2 of 35

b.1931, London d. 1991, Suffolk

Valerie Thornton was born in London in 1931 where she later studied art at the Regent Street Polytechnic School of Art 1950-53. In 1954 she travelled to Paris to study printmaking with the renowned teacher Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17. She spent eight months in Hayter's atelier learning the secrets of his technique, and on her return from Paris, Thornton immediately purchased her first etching press. Thornton then moved to New York where she spent two years at the Pratt Institute, perfecting her technique and developing her personal style.

Her first exhibition of etchings and watercolours was held in 1960, and since then there have been numerous shows in Britain and America. Although Thornton occasionally tried abstract styles she most commonly employed representational elements in her work.

Thornton was greatly influenced by Romanesque architecture and sculpture. She first started drawing architecture after a visit to an exhibition of photographs showing details of church buildings, while still a student. This encounter would inform her artistic practice for the next forty years. Throughout the rest of her life, Thornton regularly made summer trips to Spain, France and Italy in search of Romanesque buildings that would inspire her etchings.

Thornton died at her home in Suffolk in 1991. Her work is housed in numerous prestigious collections around the world, including the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the National Gallery of Canada, the Albertina Museum Vienna, the Bibliotheque Royale in Brussels and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Information contained in this article is from The Modern Art Collection Trinity College Dublin (David Scott 1989).

---

This information has been compiled by Art Collections assistants, interns, and volunteers  
For further information please consult [www.tcd.ie/artcollections](http://www.tcd.ie/artcollections)