

Trinity College Dublin Art Collections

Artist: Patrick Scott
Title: Lotus Pond (1988)
Medium: V'soske tapestry
Dimensions: h. 233.3 x w. 382 cm

b. Kilbrittain, Co. Cork, Ireland, 1921; d. Dublin, Ireland, 2014

Scott embarked on a full-time artistic career late in life in 1960, having first worked up to the position of partner at the renowned architecture firm, Scott Tallon Walker (STW), after qualifying in architecture in UCD. He also worked, over the course of his career, as a textile designer for Brown Thomas, Dublin, Tabard Frères et Soeurs, Aubusson, France, and with the village weavers of Oaxaca, Mexico; as a graphic designer for Coras Iompair Éireann; and as a carpet designer for Kilkenny Design Workshops.

Scott began exhibiting with the White Stag Group in 1941, with his first solo show at their gallery in 1946. In 1960, the year he left STW, he represented Ireland at the Venice Biennale. Between 1966 and '79, the artist collaborated with Francois Tabard, an important French weaver. During this time, he produced one of his masterpieces, *Blaze*, in 1972. In 1980 Scott exhibited at Rosc, with an important retrospective in the Douglas Hyde Gallery the following year.

Scott's art is notable for its pared back structure and the minimal yet beautiful materials which he uses. There is a zen-like meditative quality to all of his work. 'Circle and square are his fundamental units of form. In 1964 Scott began to use gold leaf and to a lesser extent palladium (silver). 'In Western and Byzantine art the use of gold is charged with Christian connotations...Yet by appealing to a cooler, Eastern aesthetic, related specifically to Japanese screens and interior design, Scott simply and effectively negated the potential complications of interpretation and meaning,' notes Aidan Dunne in the catalogue essay for Scott's 2005 Fenton Gallery exhibition.

Scott developed his unique, semi-abstract style in the '60s, in his bog paintings and the Device series, in which paint was stained or dripped onto unprimed canvas. He subsequently incorporated more geometrical or architectural forms, using gold leaf or thinly applied white tempera, always with an impeccable feel for design and surface texture. Scott's sustained focus on the circle is one of the most striking features of his sixty-year career; in fact, it has been suggested that he has done for the circle what Albers did for the square. It thus comes as no surprise to find that the earliest and most enduring design motif in the tapestries is the circle.

Information contained in this article is from The Modern Art Collection Trinity College Dublin (David Scott, 1989), www.whytes.ie, www.artireland.net, www.irish-architecture.com, and www.irishartsreview.com
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