

# SPACE



a learning resource for Kettle's Yard

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This learning resource is designed to help teachers and educators engage with the house and collection at Kettle's Yard and inspire their students.

Space is the last of three publications which focus on key themes of the house – Light, Nature and Space. Inside, you will find:

- ▶ information on artworks, objects and architecture
- ▶ artists' biographies
- ▶ examples of contemporary artworks engaging with space
- ▶ ideas and information for visiting with groups

Content from the sections on artworks and objects can be mixed and matched with the simple creative activities, found towards the back of this book, to create the right session for your group.

**KETTLE'S YARD**



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## WHAT IS KETTLE'S YARD?

Kettle's Yard was the home of Jim and Helen Ede from 1957 to 1973. Every afternoon they opened their home to visitors, a tradition that continues to this day. Jim Ede created a new way of looking at art by embedding it in a domestic setting. He interspersed his collection of art with natural found objects, antique furniture, glassware and ceramics. In this way Ede aimed to create a perfectly balanced space that can be understood as a work of art in its own right. He viewed the arrangement as similar to a composition of music – each element was significant on its own, but its contribution to the whole arrangement was equally vital.

While working at the Tate Gallery in London in the 1920s and 1930s, Ede befriended a young generation of artists including Ben and Winifred Nicholson, Christopher Wood and David Jones. He supported his artist friends by purchasing artworks early in their careers. Their paintings, prints and drawings form the basis of the Kettle's Yard collection.

During the 1940s and 1950s, the Edes lived in Morocco and France. They regularly travelled to America and Europe and continued to collect works of art, ceramics and textiles. When they moved to Cambridge, Ede's vision for Kettle's Yard was very clear; it was a place that should not be:

*"an art gallery or museum, nor ... simply a collection of works of art reflecting my taste or the taste of a given period. It is, rather, a continuing way of life from these last 50 years ... in which stray objects, stones, glass, pictures, sculpture, in light and in space, have been used to make manifest the underlying stability which more and more we need to recognise ..."*<sup>1</sup>

The house and collection were given to the University of Cambridge in 1966. In 1970 the Edes built an extension to the house along with a small exhibition gallery. Jim and Helen stayed on until 1973, when they moved to Edinburgh. The adjoining exhibition galleries were further extended in 1981, 1986 and 1994. In 2018 following a substantial capital redevelopment, Kettle's Yard reopened with two new state-of-the-art galleries, a four-floor Education Wing and a café. This development has enabled Kettle's Yard to present an exciting programme of exhibitions and activities that reflect the diversity of contemporary art practice. It provides a constantly changing counterpoint to the continuity of the house and collection.



# SPACE AT KETTLE'S YARD

*"We all want space – we are spatial beings; we move in space; we ask primarily for space in our daily lives; it is the natural air we breathe – and yet ... it is the one thing we least allow ourselves or are allowed."* Jim Ede<sup>2</sup>

Jim Ede's intention for Kettle's Yard was to create a house to display his collection where the architecture and the space within were as important to the whole effect as the artwork and objects.

During his renovations of the cottages Jim stripped the building back to its frame and spent time considering how the changing light conditions animated these revealed spaces. Each new placement of objects, furniture and artworks was carefully considered in relation to the other objects, the light and the spaces themselves, focusing on the spaces that exist between and around objects. This created dynamic moments of contrast, where space and objects are in conversation with each other.

Jim evolved Kettle's Yard into an environment that allows contemplation. He hoped the experience would have an emotional impact on the visitor, fascinated by how the space could influence wellbeing and mental health.

Kettle's Yard as a building is often considered an artwork in itself. The architecture of the 1970s extension and the Education Wing and new gallery spaces of 2018 reflects Jim's ideas about the fundamental requirements for an effective and balanced space.

Many of Jim's artist friends shared an interest in spatial theory. Sculptors experimented with innovative materials and painters played with perspective, balance and composition. This resource aims to explore approaches to 'space' from the varying perspectives of Jim Ede, the architects that designed Kettle's Yard and the artists whose works fill the spaces.



Rowland de Winton Aldridge, conversion of four cottages into the original Kettle's Yard house, 1957

# THE ARCHITECT OF KETTLE'S YARD

## Jim Ede and Architecture

Jim Ede described Kettle's Yard as *"a space, an ambience, a home"*.<sup>3</sup> The architecture of every part of Kettle's Yard is fundamental to each of these aspects and to continuing the atmosphere he created.

Jim set out to find *"a great house on the verge of a city – or a place of beauty in a town"*,<sup>4</sup> and eventually settled upon a project to transform four derelict nineteenth-century cottages into:

*"a living place where works of art would be enjoyed, inherent to the domestic setting, where young people could be at home unhampered by the greater austerity of the museum or public art gallery, and where an informality might infuse an underlying formality."*<sup>5</sup>

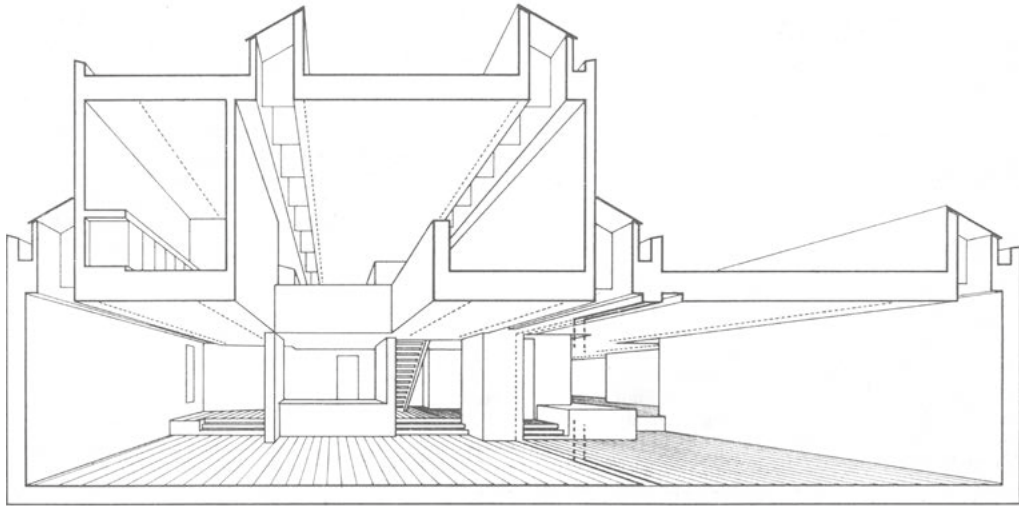
Kettle's Yard was intended as the final home for his collection and as an example of how one can integrate art and everyday life. The architectural designs of the different parts of the building bring together traditional and modern elements in a unified whole.

## The cottages

The Kettle's Yard cottages were originally four separate dwellings; three terraced and the fourth separate. Based on a design by architect Rowland de Winton Aldridge (1906–1997), these four nineteenth-century cottages were restored and remodelled to create light-filled living spaces. Some original elements remain, such as fireplaces and windows. The bay windows and spiral staircase tower were added to provide additional light and space, and the alleyway between the terraced cottages and the fourth was bridged at first-floor level to link the buildings together.

## GEOGRAPHY AND PLACE

- ▶ The area known as 'Kettle's Yard' is close to what was the main bridge over the river Cam from the medieval period until the 19th century, and was the main route into the market town of Cambridge.
- ▶ It is claimed that during the eighteenth century, someone named 'Kettle' built a popular theatre in the area. This was soon closed by the University authorities however, as they thought it would corrupt the morals of the students.
- ▶ In the late 19th and early 20th century, it was one of the city's poorest areas, with many small businesses. It was a dark and overcrowded site, characterised by cottages, workshops, pubs and shops and other businesses.
- ▶ The area was cleared as part of a radical reconstruction programme that reshaped many British cities after the Second World War. When new housing was built on nearby Honey Hill in 1956, only these four cottages were spared, through the efforts of the Cambridge Preservation Society.



Leslie Martin and David Owers, extension to Kettle's Yard house and adjoining gallery space, 1970  
Reproduced with kind permission of David Owers

## The extension

When Jim Ede gifted Kettle's Yard to the University of Cambridge in 1966, it was agreed that an extension to the building would provide additional space for the growing collection, for music performances, and to accommodate temporary art exhibitions. Architects Leslie Martin (1908–2000) and David Owers (b. 1934) provided the design, which was completed in 1970.

The extension is characterised by light and space, showing Jim's interest in natural light and its ever-changing interplay with objects and spaces. Owers and Martin endeavoured to gently integrate modernist architecture in an historic building. Their design counterbalances the more intimate conditions of the cottages, though maintaining their domestic atmosphere.

The gallery space was enlarged several times in the 1980s and 1990s, enabling a high-quality exhibition programme and educational initiatives. For the ambitious programme, these spaces were relatively small, particularly

for visiting school groups. In 2004, work began to design a new Education Wing. In 2012, this project was extended to also renovate the gallery and public spaces.

## HISTORY AND CULTURE

- ▶ Leslie Martin was close friends with the artist Ben Nicholson, who was himself a good friend of the Edes.
- ▶ In 1937, Martin and Nicholson, together with the sculptor Naum Gabo, edited *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art*. This publication considered the principles of Abstraction and Constructivism across the disciplines of painting, sculpture and architecture.

## The new spaces

The most recent addition to Kettle's Yard, designed by Jamie Fobert Architects, opened in February 2018. This part of the building is again filled with space, light and volume, and these characteristics combined with carefully chosen materials create inventive conversations between the old and new. The new architecture has brought the various parts of the building together as a whole, allowing Jim's generous and open approach to his collection to be reflected in the gallery's spaces and programming.

## DESIGN AND MATERIALS

- ▶ The new spaces borrow a number of design elements from the 1970 extension in order to unify the site. The style of the roof lights in the lower extension has been adopted in Gallery 2; the double height of the Clore Learning Studio was inspired by the open central space of the extension; and original brickwork has been revealed and extended in the shop area.
- ▶ Modern materials ensure that the spaces also feel fresh and new. A polished concrete stairway guides visitors down into the Clore Learning Studio for educational activities, and a black steel staircase leads them up to the Edlis Neeson Research Space and Ede Room.
- ▶ The internal connecting spaces, such as the landings, were purposely kept wide to encourage moments of rest and conversation, in line with the welcoming experience and atmosphere of openness that Jim envisioned for Kettle's Yard.



Jamie Fobert Architects, new gallery and public spaces at Kettle's Yard, 2018

## Discussion starters

- ▶ Look around to see what materials have been used to build Kettle's Yard. Why do you think these have been chosen? How do the different materials affect any of the spaces at Kettle's Yard?
- ▶ Look at the floors and ceilings. Where does the material change? Can you identify the seams between different materials?
- ▶ Compare different sections of Kettle's Yard. Where does the light come from in these spaces? Why do you think it has been designed this way?
- ▶ As you move through the different parts of Kettle's Yard, take time to notice how each space feels; which spaces feel the same or what is different? Is it easy to tell which parts of Kettle's Yard are older?
- ▶ Think about each stage of the development of Kettle's Yard's buildings. What do these phases tell you about the changing use of Kettle's Yard over time?
- ▶ In 1970, the architect David Owers asked, *"Is Kettle's Yard a home, a gallery, an exhibition, a theatre, a museum or is it a combination of these? Is the question important?"*<sup>6</sup> What do you think?
- ▶ Leslie Martin, like many modern architects, believed the floor plan was the most important architectural drawing. What does a floor plan show? What kind of information about a building can we learn from floor plans?

There are further examples of ways to explore the architecture of the building in the section 'Engaging with the Kettle's Yard spaces'.





Joan Miró, *Tic Tic*, 1927, oil on canvas, 233 x 323 mm  
© Successió Miró / ADAGP, Paris and DACS London 2018

## JOAN MIRÓ - *TIC TIC*

Joan Miró's 1927 painting, *Tic Tic*, has an intense ultramarine blue background, layered over a warmer colour that can still be detected underneath. Across the surface, it shows black dots and lines, and an irregular white line down the centre. A red oblong shape is positioned to the top left-hand corner; a yellow dot can be seen on the right side. Written in black are the words 'Tic Tic'. This work hangs above two glass decanters that sit on top of a cider press in the cottage's sitting and dining room.



### Links and associations

#### PLACEMENT AND BALANCE

► Jim Ede used this work to discuss the notion of balance and composition when introducing visiting students to the house. He would cover specific details with his hand to explore how the balance of the painting changes by changing only one element.

*"If I put my finger over the spot at the top right all the rest of the picture slid into the left-hand bottom corner. If I covered the one at the bottom, horizontal lines appeared, and if somehow I could take out the tiny red spot in the middle everything flew to the edges."*<sup>7</sup> Jim Ede

- ▶ Jim applied the same ideas to the general arrangement of the rooms. For example, he placed a fresh lemon on the pewter plate to the left of the painting to reflect the yellow in *Tic Tic* and create a visual balance and connection across the room.
- ▶ Many people feel that Jim's deliberate use of colour, shape and placement to create a balance in space produce a calming effect for visitors.

### SYMBOLS AND MEANING

- ▶ Miró developed a personal visual language of symbols and signs. Like many artists of the 1920s, he was inspired by the circus and performing animals, often using those themes as subjects for his paintings.
- ▶ Some of the shapes found in *Tic Tic* could refer to animal forms and movement. The thicker black line intersected by 6 perpendicular lines could be likened to a horse's mane and head, and the curved lines surrounding a dot could be the flick of a tail.
- ▶ The words 'Tic Tic' are an integral element of the composition, but they also provide clues to interpret the work. In French, the sound for a horse's hooves is 'tic tac'.

### PROCESS AND TECHNIQUES

- ▶ The blue background is a feature in many of Miró's works during this period. In this painting the artist used a more intense blue to contrast with the black lines and coloured shapes.
- ▶ In preparing new paintings, Miró made several preparatory sketches. He would use the pencil impression made by one drawing as a starting point for the next. In this way, the images were continually reduced and abstracted.

### Biography: Joan Miró (1893–1983)

Joan Miró was born in Barcelona, Spain. After attending art school, he moved to Paris in 1920 where he came into contact with the Surrealist movement through artists such as Pablo Picasso and André Breton. Although he never became part of the movement, he was greatly influenced by surrealist ideas. Soon after, he started to develop his own personal style, inspired by his Catalan heritage. From the 1940s onwards, he began experimenting with new materials and art forms such as ceramics, tapestry, theatre, political writing and sculpture.

## Discussion and activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ How does covering the yellow dot affect the picture? Can you think of why it affects the picture in this way?
- ▶ Does the image have a foreground and a background? Which elements or colours appear to be more to the back or to the front?
- ▶ What colour do you see first in the painting? Looking around the sitting room at Kettle's Yard where else can you see the colours you find in the work?
- ▶ Does finding these colours help you see different things around you? Did you spot something you might not have noticed before?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Make a sketch of an object in the House. Then pick one element of this image and trace that in a new drawing. Repeat this process five times and discuss the end result. Translate your final drawing into a painting. Consider which colour you would like to use for each element.

# DAVID JONES – *FLORA IN CALIX-LIGHT*

*Flora in Calix-Light* is a large drawing, showing three stemmed glasses between an entangled mass of plants and flowers. When looking carefully, more details can be discovered in the background, such as a window and the leg of a chair on the left, or a wooded scene to the right. However, because of the subdued colours and the abundance of floral detail, the image space first presents itself as a blurred space or “an opaque surface”.<sup>8</sup>

“There is a confusion, an all over mixing common to the anonymity of all general impressions.”<sup>9</sup> Jim Ede



David Jones, *Flora in Calix-Light*, 1950, graphite and watercolour on paper, 570 x 768 mm  
Reproduced with kind permission of the David Jones Estate

## Links and associations

### COMPOSITION AND PLACEMENT

- ▶ The image is densely filled with layers of shapes on top of each other; there is almost no empty space on the paper. Still, as a whole the composition is very bright. Jones made many of the flower petals and stems seem transparent, as if sunlight is shining through them.
- ▶ Jim Ede paid careful attention to the placement of artworks in the space. Here, he placed Jones' piece of artwork between two large windows which bring in a lot of light. To the left there is also a delicate transparent lampshade.

### ART ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ In visual art, the filling of the entire surface of a space or an artwork with detail is called *horror vacui*, which is Latin for 'fear of empty space'. Artwork that uses *horror vacui* can be found in many different time periods and cultures, such as in Islamic Art, in medieval Celtic book illumination, and even in the *Where's Wally?* book series.
- ▶ Jones also published books of poetic and narrative writing, for example *The Anathemata* (1952) and *In Parenthesis* (1937).
- ▶ An inscription titled *Quia per Incarnati* (c 1953), on display in the Kettle's Yard extension, is another good example of how Jones combined two main interests, poetry and visual art. Shaped or 'concrete' poems are artistic experiments in which the shape and positioning of the letters is equally important as the meaning of the words.

## Biography: David Jones (1895–1974)

David Jones was a painter, engraver, poet and maker of inscriptions. Jones was born in Brockley, South London, and was the son of a Welsh printer. He studied at the Camberwell School of Art before serving in the First World War. Due to his experiences during the war he suffered from ill health, both mentally and physically, throughout his life. His artistic output was large and varied, often reflecting his interest in early Christianity and his Welsh heritage. He also received high praise for his poetry and essays.

## David Jones and Kettle's Yard

Jim Ede met David Jones in the 1920s while he was working for the Tate Gallery in London. They shared an interest in spirituality and religion, and their friendship lasted until the artist's death. In a 1956 letter to Jones, Ede described his first ideas that would later develop into Kettle's Yard:

*"It would be interesting to be lent a great house ... or a place of beauty in a town (Cambridge I have in mind) and make it all that I could of lived in beauty, each room an atmosphere of quiet and simple charm, and open to the public (in Cambridge to students especially) ..."*<sup>10</sup>

## Discussion and activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ What, to you, stands out most in this drawing? Share this with each other. Was it the same for everyone?
- ▶ What is the smallest thing you recognise in the drawing? What is the largest? Do you think the larger items were any more or less meaningful for Jones? Why?
- ▶ Look around the room. Can you find shapes or objects in this room that resemble something you see in the drawing?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Imagine the rest of the room in which this arrangement of glasses and flowers might be located and make a drawing of it.
- ▶ Draw two squares of the same size. Fill one square by repeating the same shape in varying sizes. In the other square, you can only draw this shape once. Which square took the most time to draw out? How did you have to plan for each square?

## NAUM GABO – *LINEAR CONSTRUCTION IN SPACE NO.1*

This sculpture is made from a Perspex frame and thin nylon threads. The Perspex frame creates the work's form by providing a solid outer shape and defining an open space in the middle. The nylon threads link up the sides of the frame like connecting points on a graph. Although the lines are straight, they create the illusion of curves, and cast subtle light and shadow effects. The sculpture was a small prototype for a large-scale public sculpture to be placed near a textile factory, to honour the skills of the factory workers. Gabo believed that art should play a central role in making society a better place, and wanted this work to contribute to that by celebrating working people.

## Links and associations

### SPACE AND MOVEMENT

- ▶ Gabo wanted his artwork to represent continual movement, rather than a frozen moment in time. He created sculptures that set up an opposition between different qualities of space – such as mass and void, solidity and transparency, density and lightness.
- ▶ Gabo was very interested in volume and space, and how a work of art could make you challenge how you regard these things in the world around you.

### MATHS

- ▶ Gabo's studies included mathematics and engineering, and many of his sculptures have visual similarities with mathematical models and graphs such as line graphs.
- ▶ In his work, Gabo used empty spaces, curving frames and dynamic lines to help direct the viewer to think about shape in terms of surfaces as well as mass.



Naum Gabo, *Linear Construction in Space No. 1*, 1944–45  
Perspex and nylon thread, 308 x 310 x 63 mm  
The Work of Naum Gabo © Nina & Graham Williams

## MATERIALS

- ▶ Naum Gabo believed that art should be made out of the materials we use in everyday life. He liked working with plastic because it was modern, transparent, easily workable and cheap.
- ▶ This sculpture was his first experiment in making art from Perspex combined with nylon thread. At that time, Perspex was a relatively new material and was mainly being used industrially, such as for making windows for aeroplanes.
- ▶ A number of Gabo's sculptures fell apart a short time after he made them because the properties of these materials were not yet fully tested or understood, and they turned out to be less durable than expected.

## Naum Gabo and Kettle's Yard

Jim Ede and Gabo first met in Paris around 1923, and when Gabo moved to London in 1935 he repeatedly visited Jim in his London home. Gabo affectionately dedicated his monoprint *Opus 5 (The Constellations)* to Ede, and Gabo's daughter Nina Williams donated *Construction in Space, Suspended* to Kettle's Yard after his death. Gabo's vision that art should contribute to social improvement tied in closely with Ede's hopes for Kettle's Yard. He placed Gabo's sculpture *Linear Construction in Space* on top of the piano in the lower extension and next to Ben Nicholson's *1933 (musical instruments)* to bring their central theme of rhythm into conversation with each other.

## Biography: Naum Gabo (1890–1977)

Naum Gabo was born in Russia. He studied medicine, natural sciences and engineering in Germany, before moving to Paris to join his brother, the artist Antoine Pevsner. Together they wrote *The Realist Manifesto*, a vision for Constructivist art. He moved across Europe during and after the First World War and in 1935 Gabo moved to England to escape the increasing oppression of the Nazi regime in Germany. There he worked with a number of artists with close ties to Jim Ede – editing the book, *Circle: International Survey of Constructive Art* with Ben Nicholson and Leslie Martin, and seeing out the war with Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth in St Ives. Gabo moved to the USA in 1946, where he was commissioned to make several large public sculptures.



Naum Gabo, *Opus 5 (The Constellations)*, 1950, 270 x 220mm, wood engraving (monoprint) on paper  
The Work of Naum Gabo  
© Nina & Graham Williams

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ Look carefully at the sculpture. How many different shapes can you see within it?
- ▶ Jim Ede placed this sculpture on a piano and next to a painting of a guitar, because they all create rhythms. Tap out the rhythm you feel the sculpture would make.
- ▶ If this sculpture made music, what might it sound like?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Imagine you had to create a sculpture for a public place, such as your playground or school. Draw a design and explain how it celebrates that place.
- ▶ Look carefully through the sculpture – both the space in the middle and the translucent frame. Draw what you can see on the other side.



Alfred Wallis, *Mount's Bay with four lighthouses*, n.d., oil, crayon and graphite on card (brown), 445 x 650mm

## ALFRED WALLIS - *MOUNT'S BAY WITH FOUR LIGHTHOUSES*

*Mount's Bay with four lighthouses* is a painting showing Mount's Bay, a large area on the south coast of Cornwall. The painting's composition pivots around the characteristic conical shape of St. Michael's Mount (positioned just left of centre) around which the coastline marked with harbours and lighthouses spreads along the painting's edges. Three large sail boats are welcomed into the bay.

## Links and associations

### GEOGRAPHY AND PLACE

- ▶ Surrounding the iconic St. Michael's Mount are the harbours of Mousehole, Newlyn, Penzance, Porthleven and Mullion, and the lighthouses at The Lizard, Penzance and Newlyn. The fourth lighthouse is the tower of St. Michael's Chapel on the island, which also guided ships coming into the bay.
- ▶ This painting shows an area of the Cornish coast that was very familiar to Wallis. The relationship of the landmarks of Mounts Bay are geographically correct providing evidence of Wallis' extended knowledge of the area.

### PLAYING WITH PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ An important aspect of Wallis' paintings that impressed many artists, as well as collectors, was the way he used perspective. In reality, this view of the bay would not be possible. Instead, Wallis employed a kind of flattened or 'aerial' perspective to distort the space. This can be seen by comparing the houses drawn up the left side to the ships and the other elements. Similar aerial perspective techniques can also be found in many pre-Renaissance works of art, such as medieval manuscripts and tapestries, as well as in art from other cultures such as the Ukiyo-e prints of Japan.

### MEMORY AND EXPERIENCE

- ▶ Wallis did not start painting until his 70s and what we see is the experience of a mariner rather than the experience of a trained artist. In a letter to Jim Ede, Wallis states, "*What I do mos[t]ly is what use[d] to be ...*"<sup>11</sup> Wallis uses his paintings to record the changes he had seen to fishing boats and his memories of his experiences of the sea and coast. His paintings of the ships and boats he recalled from a lifetime at sea display a high level of technical accuracy.
- ▶ Wallis gave more space in his paintings to the things he found most important, often making lighthouses, ships and fish the largest elements of a painting.

### MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

- ▶ Wallis used materials that were readily available to him. Most of his pictures are painted on pieces of card or board, using industrial boat paint.
- ▶ The irregular shapes of these boards had their own influence on the way he would compose the image. Wallis allowed the image to react to the available space of the surface he was painting on.

### Alfred Wallis and Kettle's Yard

While Jim Ede was working as an assistant at the Tate Gallery in London, he was introduced to Wallis' work by Ben Nicholson. Jim became an important collector of his work, and they remained in contact. Wallis would send bundles of paintings to Jim and he would often buy several at a time. Kettle's Yard now has the largest collection of works by Alfred Wallis in the world.

*"... when he painted, his awareness being so sure, it comes out right. He knew what it was to be at sea – entirely and totally – his paintings carry with them a ship-feeling, and a land-in-the-distance feeling ..."*<sup>12</sup>

Jim Ede

### Biography: Alfred Wallis (1855–1942)

Alfred Wallis was born in Devonport, Plymouth and spent most of his life in Cornwall and at sea. He worked as a fisherman and later as an ice cream seller and scrap metal merchant in St Ives, Cornwall. He started painting in his 70s after the death of his wife. In 1928 on a visit to St Ives, the artists Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood met Wallis by chance and were greatly inspired by his paintings. They mostly admired the purity of his artistic expression, free from any traditional rules of the art world.

### Discussion and Activities

#### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ Many people love Wallis' paintings because of their childlike qualities. Why do you think this is?
- ▶ Would you say these paintings are accurate? How do you define accuracy? Can that definition change?



Alfred Wallis, *Boats under Saltash Bridge (Royal Albert Bridge)*, c 1935–37, oil on card, 300 x 500mm

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Make a painting using any materials you can find. This could be on a scrap of cardboard, a piece of wood, a leaf, or an old jam jar.
- ▶ Make a drawing of a place or experience from your memory. It may help to think about the elements that are most remarkable rather than trying to remember every detail.
- ▶ Compose a picture using rules other than the rules of perspective. For example, the largest thing in the painting could be what you think is the most important object, rather than what would really be the largest or closest. Think of your own set of rules to make a more personalised image.

## BARBARA HEPWORTH – *THREE PERSONAGES*

*Three Personages* is part of a series of sculptures in which slate forms are composed on rectangular wooden bases. During this period of her artistic career, Barbara Hepworth often worked with repetition and played with the arrangement of identical forms. She was interested in the objects' relationship with each other and the space between them.

*"grouping of people when they are working together, producing a spatial movement which approximates to the structure of spirals in shells or rhythms in crystal structures; [and] the meaning of the spaces between forms ..."*<sup>13</sup>

### Links and associations

#### ART ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ Hepworth was fascinated by theatre, music and dance, and by the dynamics and rhythms of people interacting.
- ▶ In this sculpture, the asymmetry of the composition and the tilting of the figures convey a strong sense of dynamism. The three personages could be actors or dancers on a stage.

#### GEOGRAPHY AND PLACE

- ▶ Hepworth's work shows an interest in the relationship between landscape, human figure and sculpture. However, she always balanced her interest in the land and seasonal patterns with more abstract forms.
- ▶ Many of the works she created while living in Cornwall were inspired by the Neolithic standing stones of the Penwith peninsula. This is visible in this work in the three vertical figures and their arrangement in space.

#### MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

- ▶ Grey-black slate can be found in industrial areas such as Wakefield, where Hepworth grew up. Here it has been highly polished, making it darker.





Barbara Hepworth, *Three Personages*, 1965,  
slate on wooden base (painted in black), 397 x 355 x 278mm  
Barbara Hepworth © Bowness

- ▶ Unlike most sculptors before her, who paid stonemasons to do their carving, Hepworth did the dusty hard work herself. She studied in Rome with an Italian master carver.
- ▶ Slate can withstand high temperatures and is versatile in use. It is often used as a building material for making tiles, walls and fireplaces.
- ▶ Direct carving is an approach to making carved sculpture where the actual process of carving provides the final form rather than a carefully worked out preliminary model.

### Biography: Barbara Hepworth (1903–1975)

Barbara Hepworth was one of the foremost 20th-century sculptors and exponents of direct carving in Britain. She was born in 1903. She studied at Leeds School of Art and won a scholarship to the Royal College of Art in London. In 1939 she was forced to move to St Ives by the outbreak of the Second World War. The Cornish town had been an artist colony since the end of the 19th century and Hepworth settled there for the rest of her life.

### Discussion and Activities

#### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ How would you describe the material used for this sculpture?
- ▶ Describe the relationships between the three forms that make up the sculpture. Do the forms change as you move around it?
- ▶ How does the placement of the sculpture impact how you experience it? Look around for other possible locations to put this work and discuss how it might look different if the sculpture was placed there.

#### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Look at the sculpture from different angles. Make a drawing of what you think the spaces between would look like from above or below.
- ▶ The sculpture is titled *Three Personages*. Write a story about who these three personages might be, and their relation to each other. Now rewrite your story, by imagining the same shapes but made of different materials.



Ovidiu Maitec, *Radar II*, 1970, walnut wood, 297 x 522 x 115 mm  
Reproduced with kind permission of the Ovidiu Maitec estate

## OVIDIU MAITEC – *RADAR II*

*Radar II* is a handmade wooden carving. Using precision tools, the wood was notched and pierced with clear cut holes in a uniform spatial rhythm, allowing free circulation of air and light through the body of the wood. This roughly symmetrical construction is made of two separate parts, with the top (shaped like wings) balanced by a pivot on a base. It suggests a revolving or swinging movement. There is a visual tension between the strict geometry of the outlines and the organic shapes that perforate the

form. The title *Radar II* comes from the Cold War era of the mid-twentieth century, but by carving in wood and exposing the natural patterns of the material, Maitec relates this modern subject to Romanian folk art traditions.

### Links and associations

#### TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ A radar uses radio waves to determine the position, course and sometimes shape or size of specific objects, such as aeroplanes, ships or spacecraft.
- ▶ Radar technology was used extensively during the Second World War and subsequently further developed during the period of the Cold War.

#### MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

- ▶ Maitec mostly carved in walnut wood, which reflects a specifically Romanian tradition of woodcarving dating back to the Neolithic period (between 7000–1700 BC).
- ▶ The artist also made use of more modern techniques. For this sculpture, Maitec used an antique peasant's axe, as well as the latest electronic handheld tools to shape and pierce his works.
- ▶ The surface of the work is left pure to show the grain and lines of the wood.

#### ART ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ As with works by Naum Gabo, the space around the object and the use of negative space within the shape is as important as the object's outline. Subtle changes in light cast patterns of shadow, showing how the sculpture interacts with its surroundings. The use of negative space or 'positive void' were characteristic of Maitec's work from the 1960s.
- ▶ Maitec combines machine-like forms with Romanian folk-art techniques. In this way, he continues in the tradition of sculptor Constantin Brancusi. They also share an interest in a number of recurring motifs, such as flight, birds, gates and thrones.



Reproduced with kind permission of the Ovidiu Maitec estate

## Ovidiu Maitec and Kettle's Yard

Jim Ede encountered and started to collect Maitec's sculpture in the late 1960s. The sculptor was grateful for Jim's support and through regular correspondence they became friends. Jim bought *Radar II* from the artist in 1971 and offered him a solo exhibition at Kettle's Yard in 1973, which was instrumental in establishing his reputation in Britain.

Maitec left it up to Jim to decide where to place his sculptures, writing "*it can be placed either up on a small platform protruding out of the wall or down on the floor according to the surroundings but the ultimate choice is yours*".<sup>14</sup> Jim's placing of *Radar II* exploits the light conditions and spatial relationships at Kettle's Yard. Positioned on a half wall at waist height in the upper extension, it rests where you can peer within, beyond, and around it like a screen or frame.

## Biography: Ovidiu Maitec (1925–2007)

Ovidiu Maitec was born in Arad, Romania. After training at the Academy of Arts in Bucharest, he taught artistic anatomy. In his homeland, he acquired a reputation for his monumental sculptures some of which were over two metres high. Interest outside of Romania, however, was mainly focused on his small-scale woodcarvings, such as those in the Kettle's Yard collection. Later in life, Maitec was awarded many prizes and honorary titles. He died in Paris in 2007.

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ What words would you use to describe the pattern, texture and shape of this sculpture? Does this sculpture look like anything you know?
- ▶ How do you think this sculpture was made?
- ▶ Why do you think Jim Ede positioned the sculpture in this place?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Negative space: punch holes of varying shapes and sizes in a piece of paper or card to create an art image. Now use these holes as a viewfinder. Peer through the holes and draw what you see through them.
- ▶ Create a sculpture using perforated objects. Try to attach different pieces to each other without using other materials, simply by fitting them together.
- ▶ Explore the space around you using sounds, such as your voice, clapping your hands, or tapping your feet. How does the space influence the sounds you hear?



William Scott, *Message Obscure I*, 1965, oil on canvas, 370 x 530 mm  
© Estate of William Scott 2018

## WILLIAM SCOTT – *MESSAGE OBSCURE I*

*Message Obscure I* is an abstract painting that shows four dark shapes against a lighter background. The smallest two shapes are slightly lighter than the bigger two. The edges of the figures are not sharp, but coarse and fuzzy, blending gently into the background. The shapes recall a semicircle, a cone and two curved rectangles, although they do not match precise geometric definitions.

### Links and associations

#### COLOURS AND SHAPES

- ▶ The painter is known to use delicate, gentle tones in his work. His colour palette is earthy and muted, referring to the natural world.
- ▶ Equally restrained is his use of form and composition. The shapes, colour, planes and lines are set out in carefully spaced, austere configurations.
- ▶ Scott's work explores abstract figures and the non-figurative. The shapes often recall the silhouettes of familiar objects but cannot be identified precisely.
- ▶ His restraint in colour and form produces a sense of immovable and timeless shapes in an undefined space.

#### ART ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ Scott was friends with famous Abstract Expressionists, such as Mark Rothko and Willem de Kooning. More locally, he was close to artists involved in developing an abstract painterly language in St Ives, Cornwall, such as Patrick Heron and Roger Hilton.
- ▶ Elements of abstract expressionism that can be found in Scott's paintings include a sense of stillness and a simplicity of expression. However, in contrast to the precise and crisp lines of some of his contemporaries, Scott's brushwork is often rough and bristly, as can be seen in the contours of the shapes in this work.

#### Biography: William Scott (1913–1989)

Scott was born in Greenock, Scotland. He studied at the Belfast School of Art, and in 1931 he moved to London to initially train at the Royal Academy of Arts Sculpture School. After serving in the Second World War he moved to Somerset where he taught at the Bath Academy of Art. He frequently visited St Ives, Cornwall, and got to know many of the artists there. Scott's paintings were mainly concerned around the theme of still life but in the early 1950s his work moved closer to abstract forms. From the mid-1950s he received many large-scale commissions, and in 1958 he represented Great Britain at the Venice Biennale.

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ What do you think the dark shapes could be? Do they remind you of any buildings or objects that are familiar?
- ▶ Some see the dark shapes as objects set against a lighter background, while others consider the dark shapes holes or punctures in a light surface. How do you see the piece?
- ▶ The painting shows the shapes on a two-dimensional plane. Imagine what they would look like in three dimensions.

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ William Scott produced a second painting called *Message Obscure II* in the same year (1965). Imagine and sketch what a third painting, *Message Obscure III*, could look like.
- ▶ If you were to draw a human figure into this painting, how big would they be in relation to the dark shapes? Would the whole figure fit on the canvas, or would only a part of their body be visible?
- ▶ Think of the work's title, *Message Obscure I*. Write a short (poetic or narrative) text about what the message could be.



## CHAIRS IN THE HOUSE

There are many chairs placed throughout the House at Kettle's Yard. Some are quite inconspicuous, while others are more ostentatious. The mixture of artwork, everyday objects and different types of furniture gives Kettle's Yard a very specific atmosphere, and the chairs offer continual invitations to stop and spend time in the space.

Jim collected the chairs individually and they are all different, ranging in material from elm, beech and mahogany, to metal and linen. Some have elaborate decorations carved into wood, others are upholstered. There are stools, lounge chairs, benches and sofas, and you are invited to try them all.

## Placement

Jim Ede carefully positioned all of the chairs himself, in the same way that artworks and other objects were deliberately positioned in the spaces. He would put an artwork or natural object in an unusual place, the intention of which would become clear when viewed from one of the chairs. Jim creates conversations in space between the position of the chairs and the viewpoints they provide, and the various works of art and objects from the collection.

You might also find similarities between decorative patterns on the chairs and details of nearby objects. Alternatively, some chairs are positioned to invite conversations amongst visitors to Kettle's Yard. In this way Jim curated an intricate web of spatial connections in each room.

*"I have felt strongly the need for me to give again these things ... in such a way, that by their placing, and by a pervading atmosphere, one thing will enhance another, making perhaps a coherent whole ..."* Jim Ede <sup>15</sup>

## The kubbestol or Norwegian chair

Ede put this chair on the bridge between the cottages and the extension, across from the Dancer Room. Here, Jim uses the shape and decoration of the chair as part of a visual exercise in repetition and balance across space; where the curved top of the chair reflects the dome of the church in the painting behind, the circular seat shape is repeated in the objects placed on top of the bookshelf next to it, and the rhythmical lines carved on the base continue to the spines of the books themselves.

### MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

- ▶ The kubbestol is carved out of a single tree trunk, more specifically the lower bit of a pine tree trunk before it branches off. The log is first placed upside-down, and the bottom part is hollowed out to make the finished chair lighter in weight.
- ▶ The base of the chair is decorated with an incised rhythmical pattern of arches. The sitter is provided with a sense of security by the high rounded back which is decorated with swirling patterns.

### HISTORY AND CULTURE

- ▶ Kubbestol in Norwegian means 'log chair'; it was quite common in Scandinavia in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- ▶ The carved or painted decorative patterns traditionally referenced the place where the chair was made, each district having their own style. Because of this, the decorations could be used to trace back to when and where a particular chair was made.
- ▶ The kubbestol was traditionally reserved for the head of the household, or was displayed as a sign of wealth and status. It would be placed next to the fireplace or the bed.



## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ Pick a chair in the House and consider why it was placed in this particular position. When sitting on it, do you see certain objects that you had not noticed before?
- ▶ Did you spend much time positioning pieces of furniture in your own room or house? What do you take into consideration when arranging a space?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Choose a chair to sit on and look at one object or artwork that is in your direct line of sight. Describe it in detail. Now sit in a different chair in the same room and write about the same object or artwork. Notice the differences that result from the change in point of view.

# CONTEMPORARY RESPONSES TO SPACE

In the following pages you will find three examples of how contemporary artists have responded to the theme of space. All of these artists have exhibited at Kettle's Yard; it is likely you will not be able to see their work in our galleries at the time of your visit but you can find further information of past exhibitions on the Kettle's Yard website.

The examples can be used in the classroom, or you could use them as a springboard to discover the collection and temporary exhibitions in a new way. The discussion starters and activities have been kept broad to encourage adaptation to your topic of choice.



Antony Gormley, SUBJECT 2018, 10 mm square section mild steel bar  
Reproduced with kind permission of the artist

## ANTONY GORMLEY

The exhibition SUBJECT was a site-specific installation by Antony Gormley responding to Kettle's Yard and the new spaces designed by Jamie Fobert Architects. Each gallery contained a single sculpture that invited the audience to consider how they encounter art and architecture through the experience of being in a body.

Antony Gormley's work investigates the relationships between the human body and space. The sculptures use Gormley's own body as a starting point, but the exhibition aims to affect the bodies of the visitors moving amongst them, and their imaginative responses.

*"The body is a place before it is a thing."*<sup>16</sup> Antony Gormley



Antony Gormley, CO-ORDINATE IV, 2018, 6 mm square section mild steel bar;  
and EDGE III, 2012, cast iron. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist

## CO-ORDINATE IV (2018)

CO-ORDINATE IV consisted of three fine steel lines that shot through the gallery spaces, passing each other and intersecting, but never touching. Together, they created a field of measurement that the visitors activated as their bodies move around the gallery.

## SUBJECT (2018)

SUBJECT was modelled on a 3D scan of Gormley's body, using steel rods brought together to create a meticulously constructed form of mass and space. Here, the same steel rods and 90-degree angles from CO-ORDINATE IV are now used to map the space of the human body itself.

The recognisable pose of the bowed human figure also invites visitors to recollect their own experiences of being in a body to make sense of the sculpture, and to be aware of their own bodies in the present. In this way, the net of the sculpture acts as an instrument for the visitor to project their thoughts and reflections into, inviting empathy, mindfulness and reflection.

## EDGE III (2012)

EDGE III is a solid iron body seemingly floating in space, part-way up a wall at the height of a bed. To make this sculpture, Gormley first formed a plaster cast around his own body, after which the empty cast was filled with molten hot iron. The presence of a body-shape in an unsettling position in the room invites visitors to question the position and experience of their own physical presence.

*"... just take a bit of time and see what it feels like to move through the spaces, and what you notice and you don't notice."*<sup>17</sup> Antony Gormley

## Biography: Antony Gormley (1950)

Antony Gormley was born in London. He is widely acclaimed for his sculptures, installations and public artworks. Gormley considers the space of art as a place of becoming, in which new behaviours, thoughts and feelings can arise. Since the 1960s he has continuously searched for new potential ways of engaging with sculpture. Gormley's work has been exhibited

throughout the UK and internationally, and he has been awarded many important prizes such as the Turner Prize in 1994. In 1997, he was made an Officer of the British Empire (OBE) and in 2014, he was made a Knight in the New Year's Honours list.

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ Pick a sculpture of a body (or an artwork depicting a body). Recreate that position using your own body. How does this feel? When have you felt like this before?
- ▶ Stand in a room or an enclosed outdoor space such as your playground at school. Look around that space carefully and try to describe how big it is. What kind of language are you using? Are you making comparisons with other places? Are you using precise numeric measurements? Or are you using approximations based on people and body parts?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Pick a sculpture of a body (or an artwork depicting a body). Imagine that it started to move. Which body parts would it move first? Does it look like it would move quickly or slowly, quietly or loudly? Try moving your own body the way you think the sculpture would move.
- ▶ Now use your own body to measure the space you are in. How many of your feet does it take to measure from one side to the other? Or how many normal steps does it take to cross the room? Draw up a 'measured plan' of the space using your own body's units instead of centimetres or inches.





Exhibition view of Caroline Walker, *Home*, 2017, dimensions variable, oil on board and canvas;  
*Showing Joy, 11am, Hackney*, 2017  
Reproduced with kind permission of the artist

## CAROLINE WALKER

*Home* is a series of paintings showing women who, for various reasons, are living in different types of temporary accommodation. The series was supported by Kettle's Yard, in collaboration with the charity organisation Women for Refugee Women. The paintings give an intimate, sensitive and honest account of these women's home lives and they allow the viewer to

reflect on broader political issues, as well as on the basic human desire to have a place to call home and on the notion of what a home is.

Jim Ede made Kettle's Yard as a sanctuary, a home, a place of "lived in beauty" to be shared. Like these paintings, it is a reminder that the way you live and pay attention to your surroundings can help you to take care of yourself.

*Home* was shown at Kettle's Yard in 2018 as part of *Actions: The image of the world can be different*; a group exhibition of diverse works that invite changes - politically, socially and personally - by taking or calling for action. Considering this context, the paintings speak of issues such as mass displacement of people due to war or natural disasters; housing crises; homelessness and how we look after people in need.

Before starting work on this series, Walker had visited a refugee encampment in Calais, France.

*"It was quite an affecting experience ... . In the camp, it was 99% men but I did meet one woman and we went into her make-shift accommodation. This woman had taken some care to make this little space feel a bit like home and it kind of triggered something in my head that made me think; how do people make somewhere, wherever it is, feel a little bit more familiar or a bit like where they've left behind."*<sup>19</sup>

She then met with five women in London and made photographs of them in the spaces in which they live. Walker used those photographs to make drawings and small painted sketches before creating the oil paintings in her studio. This process makes the images feel like natural, everyday moments rather than set-up events. The paintings give us a glimpse into the lives of people who have gone or are going through traumatic situations. We can see the personal objects and efforts they have made to make their space into a place – a home. By including details that hint at the women's personalities, we are invited to relate to them as individuals and to think of the importance of the spaces that surround us.

## Biography: Caroline Walker (1982)

Caroline Walker was born in Dunfermline, Scotland. She studied painting at Glasgow School of Art, followed by a Masters degree in painting from the Royal College of Art, London. Her paintings mostly involve women, at work, at home, old, young, in any part of society. They often communicate a powerful message handled with nuance and honesty. She currently lives and works in London.

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ Are these images different to the way you would imagine a painting of a refugee? In what way? Why do you think that might be?
- ▶ Do you have a favourite place where you feel safe and at ease? What is it about that place that makes you feel that way? Do you think it's important to have a place to call home?
- ▶ The exhibition, *Actions: The image of the world can be different*, took its name from a letter written by artist Naum Gabo, in which he describes his belief in art as an engine of change. What changes would you like to see in the world?

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Take a piece of paper and draw a box; this is an empty space. Fill this box with three objects that you would need to have in this space to make it feel like a home.
- ▶ Split into two groups. In group one, work together to make a list of the physical features of a house. In group two, make a list of what makes someone feel at home. Then compare the lists to see what is the same or different.

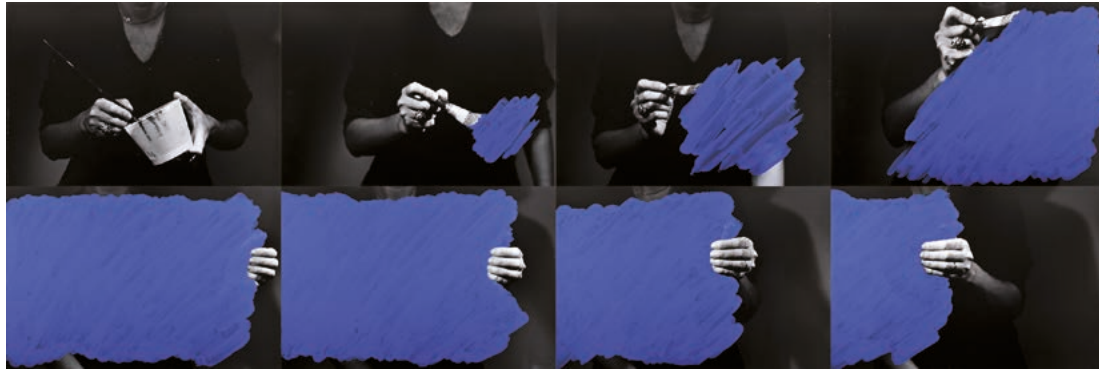
# HELENA ALMEIDA

*Inhabited Painting* consists of a series of 14 black and white photographs, showing the midsection of a person (Helena Almeida herself) while performing a number of gestures. She appears to paint a bright blue surface between herself and the viewer, and subsequently slides it away. These coloured fields are made by applying paint to the surface of the photographs, making the image space seem almost three-dimensional, with the subject's hand appearing to stick out of the surface of the photograph.

Even though Almeida uses photography in her works, she says: *"I consider myself a painter. I studied painting and my works, as far as I'm concerned, are paintings. It's my way of painting"*.<sup>20</sup> Often, her artwork is about space and line, as well as about the relationship between the artist and the image. Contrary to traditional paintings, in which the artist constructs an image space from the outside by applying colours on the canvas, Almeida places herself as the artist within the image space – as if trapped inside the canvas – while the patches of colour seem to be placed outside or on top of the image space.

The photographs convey a storyline. Instead of depicting one significant moment, Almeida places successive frames from the story side by side in space, like in a comic book. In the process of making this series, Almeida first planned the photographs in detail. She imagined and sketched out the varying positions to choreograph the sequence of actions. She then performed the poses for the various frames in her studio; the photographs were taken by the artist's husband, Artur Rosa. After developing the images, Almeida carefully applied the bold blue colour patches.

The paint is *"a mixture of cobalt blue and ultramarine blue. It's the most energetic blue I could make and simultaneously associate with space"*.<sup>21</sup>



## Biography: Helena Almeida (1934–2018)

Helena Almeida was born in Lisbon, where she completed a Painting Degree at the Escola Superior de Belas-Artes. From 1960 she regularly exhibited around the world. Her work included painting, drawing, installation, sculpture, sound and video but from the 1970s, photography was her central element. Her first solo exhibition in the UK was held at Kettle's Yard in 2009, under the title *Helena Almeida: Inside Me*.

## Discussion and Activities

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- ▶ What is the object made of? Is it made of more than one material? Can you guess how it was made?
- ▶ What do you think the artist is trying to do with this choice of colour?
- ▶ Can you distinguish a foreground, a middle-ground and a background? What has the artist put in each 'layer'?
- ▶ How would you categorise this artwork, e.g. a painting, a photograph, a performance or dance, a story, a graphic novel? Does the title influence how you would categorise it?



Helena Almeida, *Pintura Habitada/Inhabited Painting*, 1976, 856 x 4396 mm, acrylic on 14 black and white photographs  
Reproduced with kind permission of the artist

### ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Write a short poetic or narrative text about what might be happening in the sequence of scenes.
- ▶ Plan and sketch a short story or event in a sequence of scenes.
- ▶ Plan and make a (photographic) series focusing on your own hands or feet. How are you going to position your hands/feet? Will the photograph be black and white or colour? Do you want to include other objects/materials? How will it work in practice, can you hold the camera, or do you need an assistant?
- ▶ Make an artwork in which you combine two or more different artistic disciplines. When finished, present your work to the group by explaining the various elements and why you combined them in this specific way.



# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT

In the following pages, you can find inspiration for using the information about the artists to create interesting exploratory, drawing, writing and discussion activities for use in the House, the gallery spaces, or back in the classroom. There are also a range of online resources for you to make the most of your visit to Kettle's Yard.

# ENGAGING WITH THE ARCHITECTURE OF KETTLE'S YARD

## CIRCULATION:

'Circulation' is a word used by architects to describe how people move around and through spaces.

- ▶ Use a floor plan of the building (available with our online learning resources) and trace the route you followed on floor plans of the building. Consider the turns you took on your way. Which spaces offered you different choices? Which spaces only allowed one direction?
- ▶ Trace your route in reverse. Would walking the route in reverse change your experience of the spaces?
- ▶ From a copy of the floor plans, cut out different rooms, spaces or walls. Collage them together to form a new plan. How does your arrangement affect the circulation?
- ▶ Consider how human movements might be organised or choreographed by the design of a building. Are certain spaces more or less attractive to move in, and what kind of movement is promoted or inhibited?

## IN AND OUT:

By exploring the expectations of interior and exterior spaces, you can reimagine new spaces.

- ▶ Which areas in the building give you a sense of the outside? Are there any skylights, windows or doors in those areas?
- ▶ Choose an area which has a connection to the outside. Imagine reversing what is closed and open. For example, what if the walls are opened up, and the windows and doors in turn became solid blocks of wall?
- ▶ Sketch what such a 'reverse view' would look like. Would you still be able to live in it? How could you make the space function as a museum?

## LIFE-SIZE:

The human body is often used as a measuring device. Distance can be counted in footsteps or using the average size of other human body parts. Within a person's body the arm span is generally a close approximation of their height, and a femur is around a quarter of the total body length.

- ▶ Have a friend trace your silhouette on a large sheet of paper and cut it out. Take your life-size model on a tour of the building and study its proportions in different rooms.
- ▶ By 'fitting' your silhouette in different places, consider what 'appropriately sized' might mean in different contexts. When does snug become too small or cosy become constraining?
- ▶ Cut a piece of string to your own height. Mark out the length of any other 'body units' that you consider important, such as your head, femur or foot.
- ▶ Use your string as a tape measure to study the size of spaces and objects in relation to your body. How many arms wide is a doorframe? How many heads tall is a coffee table?

## NEGATIVE SPACE:

Spaces are identified by solid elements, such as walls, floors, rooves, or steps. Architecture is the result of these solids and the empty space they frame.

- ▶ Imagine plaster or concrete was poured into the room, using it as a mould for a cast sculpture. What would the sculpture look like? What kind of shape and texture would it have? Draw a sketch of what the sculpture would look like.

## STILL LIFE:

Being aware of your own body in the space and how you naturally wish to behave can help you see a space in new ways.

- ▶ Pick a spot and stand or sit as still as possible. Which elements of your surroundings move even when you stand still? For example, are there any fluttering curtains or flickering shadows?
- ▶ Consider other types of movement in the room. Which parts of the building move because your body is moving, such as opening doors or creaking floor boards? What movements might be invisible?



## TALKING ABOUT ART

### Guiding a group discussion

**LOOK:** Spend time generously and allow the group to really explore the artwork. What are we looking at? What can you see? What have you noticed?

**QUESTION:** Others may draw our attention to something we have missed. What would you like to know more about? Imagine interviewing the artwork, what would you ask of it?

**THEORISE:** Use the knowledge of the group to address some of the proposed questions. Does anyone have a theory for why the artist carved in plaster / why the colours are smudgy / why the picture is low on the wall? What other clues can we find (in or near the artwork) to answer our question?

**INCORPORATE NEW INFORMATION:** Our understanding may shift as new ideas are introduced, but allowing your group time to discuss and uncover the answers will have a greater impact than declaring them at the beginning. How has your understanding of the artwork changed from when you first encountered it?

**CONNECT:** Encourage participants to make a personal link. How does the artwork make you feel? Does it remind you of anything you have seen before?

**EXTEND:** Encourage participants to push their thinking and add more detail to initial responses. Could you explain that a little further? Why do you think you've responded in that way?

### Springboards for discussion

**ARTWORK:** Scale, materials, colour, texture, form, pattern, subject matter, abstraction.

**ARTIST:** Intentions, interests, beliefs, location, nationality, dates, gender, influences.

**CONTEXT IN WHICH THE ARTWORK WAS CREATED:** Social, political, historical, geographical, environmental, religious, cultural, artistic, and technological factors.

**CONTEXT IN WHICH THE ARTWORK IS DISPLAYED:** How is the artwork shown (lighting, plinths and frames, labels)? Where is it (gallery, park, street) and what impact does that have? How does it relate to other artworks and objects nearby?



# DRAWING ACTIVITIES

## **BLIND DRAWING**

Draw an object without looking at the page. Not looking can be either self-regulated or by holding the paper to your chest, focusing all of your attention on the subject of your drawing.

## **DRAW AGAINST THE CLOCK**

Draw the same object in two minutes, one minute, 30 seconds, 10 seconds. What happens?

## **SINGLE-LINE WHIP**

Draw without taking your pencil off the page.

## **MASH-UPS**

Combine the best of two objects/artworks to create something new.

## **SMALL AND MIGHTY**

Draw what others may have overlooked. Collect a page of chair legs, light switches, teacups, and little corners of artworks.

## **CLOSE OBSERVATION**

Choose a section of a room and capture every single detail.

## **NEGATIVE SPACE**

Draw the space around objects. Focus on light and shadow only.

## **FROTTAGE**

Using the side of a pencil to shade, collect the different textures in the house (wood grain, rough plaster, rugs). Follow up activity: cut up and collage the patterned paper. Go large – fill the page.



## WRITING ACTIVITIES

**CONCRETE POETRY:** write a shape poem. Look at something in the house and draw its outline – for example a spiral of pebbles, a boat at sea, or a bowl of feathers. Write a poem which recreates the shape you have drawn and captures the mood, colours and feelings of the subject. You can also experiment with different typographies.

**RESTRICTED WORDS:** go on a word treasure hunt around Kettle’s Yard. Write down any ‘found’ words, for example, words engraved in glass, hidden in collages or pictures, instructions by the door, fire alarm, or postcard stand. Rearrange the words to make a poem or a paragraph.

**NARRATIVE 1:** imagine the rooms in the House to be completely empty. Create a character that encounters these spaces for the first time. Write about sensations, feelings, small details that the character might notice. You could also think about what kind of plans your character might envision for this room.

**MOVEMENT:** go around the house and stop at different art works. For each one, write two words to describe how a person, animal or thing you see might move – for example, leap, trudge, twirl, creep. Then write a piece in which something comes alive. Write in detail about the way he/she/it moves, and what it does in the house.

**INTERVIEW:** choose a sculpture or a person in a painting to interview. Think of questions that you would like to ask, making them as varied as you can. Examples might be: What are you afraid of; what kind of music do you like; or what are you thinking right now? What answers do you think they would give?





# BRINGING A GROUP TO KETTLE'S YARD

## Booking a Visit

Visiting Kettle's Yard is **FREE** for all UK based state schools. We offer a variety of different activities and types of visits to suit your needs. It is essential to book **at least two weeks in advance for any group visit** (including self-led groups) using the expression of interest form on our website.

We offer introductory tours and drawing activities in the house and galleries for free to all UK-based state schools and practical studio workshops with artists can be booked for an agreed fee. We tailor every visit and workshop to fit your requirements and we are always willing to provide additional support.

We have certain visit times in the mornings, outside of opening hours, set aside exclusively for schools. Self-led visits can be booked in advance during opening hours too.

Upon receiving your booking form, we will get in touch to discuss your visit further and then send a booking confirmation with final details. More information about visits and bookings, including transport and coach parking, can be found on our schools webpage [www.kettleyard.co.uk/schools](http://www.kettleyard.co.uk/schools)

## Teachers Programme

We offer a range of activities to support teachers to make the most of Kettle's Yard. This includes introductory tours for new exhibitions and a regular programme of workshops and activities to inspire your own practice and support you to bring new ideas into the classroom.

You will also find a range of resources for teachers on our website, including artist and exhibition teachers packs with information on suggested activities. More information can be found on [www.kettleyard.co.uk/schools](http://www.kettleyard.co.uk/schools)

## Stay in Touch

To stay updated on all opportunities for schools and teachers at Kettle's Yard, join our mailing list by emailing [learning@kettleyard.cam.ac.uk](mailto:learning@kettleyard.cam.ac.uk)



## ONLINE RESOURCES

Our website hosts a wide range of information about Kettle's Yard, including film and video content, a calendar of activities and events, and visiting information. **Go to:** [www.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk)

The links below are particularly useful for teachers when preparing a group visit, or for students to follow-up on their visit.

**TEACHERS RESOURCES:** [www.kettlesyard.co.uk/learn/resources](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk/learn/resources)

Find a range of teacher packs including information on current and past exhibitions as well as free learning publications such as *Light and Nature*, the other two books of this series of resources, and *Making Conversations*, a literacy activity book aimed at Key Stage 2 students.

**KETTLE'S YARD VIRTUAL TOUR:** [tour.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://tour.kettlesyard.co.uk)

Take a look around the interior of the house with close up images and contextual information about Kettle's Yard's history and the objects and artworks in each room of the house.

**COLLECTION DATABASE:**

[www.kettlesyard.co.uk/collection/collection-database](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk/collection/collection-database)

Information about all the artworks in our collection with images and artist biographies. **Tip:** To search for information on any work or artist in the collection, use the main website search bar tool (top right).

**A HANDFUL OF OBJECTS:** [www.kettlesyard.co.uk/handfulofobjects](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk/handfulofobjects)

Explore five key objects from the collection through film, sound, images and 360 degree views.

**RECOLLECTION: ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVE:**

[www.kettlesyard.co.uk/collection/recollection](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk/collection/recollection)

Listen to Kettle's Yard creator Jim Ede, artists, visitors and staff talk about Kettle's Yard. Explore the clips by interviewee or theme, and view a timeline of Kettle's Yard history with archival images.

# FOOTNOTES

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- 3 *A Tour of Kettle's Yard*, Focal Point Filmstrips, 1974.
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- 5 Jim Ede, *A Way of Life*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (1984), p.17.
- 6 David Owers, *Kettle's Yard design intentions: What do we call the Kettle?*, in *Cambridge Review* vol. 91 no. 2197, 29.05.1970, pp.170–174.
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- 8 Jim Ede, as quoted on the Kettle's Yard website, [www.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk), 2018.
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- 10 Jim Ede as quoted in *Kettle's Yard House Guide*, Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge, 2018, p.9.
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- 13 Barbara Hepworth as quoted on the Kettle's Yard website, [www.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk), 2018.
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- 16 Antony Gormley in interview with *Circuit*, unpublished, 24.4.18.
- 17 Antony Gormley in a talk to Kettle's Yard staff, 2018.
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- 19 Caroline Walker in *Actions Artists Interview by Circuit* (video), 2018.
- 20 Helena Almeida as quoted in Maria Brancós Barti (ed.), *Helena Almeida: Tela rosa para vestir*, Fundación Telefónica (Madrid), 2008.
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# COLOPHON

This publication was written by the Kettle's Yard Learning Team with contributions from Liz Ballard, Emily Chase, Lucia Hutton, Joe Lyward, Frieda Midgley, Luce Moelans, Rosie O'Donovan, Imogen Philips, Sofia Singler and Sophie Smiley.

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Front cover: View of the downstairs extension at Kettle's Yard, architectural design by Leslie Martin and David Owers; arrangement of artwork, objects and furniture by Jim Ede.

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Kettle's Yard

Castle Street, Cambridge, CB3 0AQ

United Kingdom

+44(0)1223 748100

www.kettlesyard.co.uk

Director: Andrew Nairne

Chair: Dr Rowan Williams

Kettle's Yard is a department of the University of Cambridge

**KETTLE'S YARD**



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# SPACE

**a learning resource for Kettle's Yard**

This learning resource is designed to help teachers and educators inspire their students and engage with the house and collection at Kettle's Yard. It includes cross-curricula information about objects and artworks from the collection, the architecture, examples of how contemporary artists have responded to Kettle's Yard and the theme of space, and useful ideas for supporting groups during visits and leading progression activities back in the classroom.

**KETTLE'S YARD**



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
**MUSEUMS**  
& BOTANIC GARDEN

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