

ROWNTREE CLARK



Joe TILSON

b.1928

Painting 3.B. 1960

oil and sand on canvas

123 x 107 cm

framed: 138 x 127 cm

signed, titled, dated 1960 and inscribed on the reverse

PROVENANCE

New London Gallery, London where purchased by
Eugene and Penelope Rosenberg;

Private Collection, London until 2022

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Joe Tilson's first stay in Italy was in 1955, having been awarded the Rome Prize, and it marked the beginning of his lifelong fascination with Italian art and culture.

During this time, the artist created a number of paintings which were directly inspired by the landscape in Tuscany. The orange and terracotta tones that permeate the great series 'Summer 1959' are still present in 'Painting 3 B, 1960' and are a pictorial homage to the warm Mediterranean light, while the paint's grainy texture references the sandy Tuscan hills. Tilson has returned to Italy many times throughout his life, making it his second home alongside London.

This rare early painting is a telling example of Tilson's keen interest in exploring different materials and techniques, often including natural found objects such as sand, stone, straw and rope in the works and marks a turning point in his career just before his output shifts to Pop.

Eugene and Penelope Rosenberg were great collectors of 20th century British Art. The architect Eugene Rosenberg was a leading exponent of modernist architecture in Britain following the Second World War. Rosenberg's practice was responsible for a number of innovative architectural projects such as Gatwick Airport and the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford.

Rosenberg was passionate in promoting public art commissioning leading contemporary artists such as Henry Moore, Paul Feiler and Naum Gabo to create site specific works - in 1958 he commissioned the Altnagelvin Hospital Mural (1959-61) by William Scott for the first post-war NHS Hospital in Britain. Shortly before his death he wrote "I am committed to the belief that the artist has an important contribution to make to architecture. The bond between contemporary art and architecture is not easy to define, but I believe they are complementary - that architecture is enriched by art and that art has something to gain from its architectural setting."

In Rosenberg's retirement he continued his passion writing, with Richard Cork, "Architect's Choice, Art in Architecture in Great Britain since 1945". A number of works from their collection were donated to the Tate in 2015 including Peter Lanyon's "West Penwith".