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'The Alphabet of Nature': Pattern and Process, 1964–75

The Wynters' new home at Treverven presented quite a different prospect from the Carn. Sheltered by rising fields to the north, with the south light pouring in on the other side, where a small valley ran down to the sea, it was a benignly aspected place, altogether on a grander, more comfortable scale. Wynter threw himself into sorting out his new demesne. He bought a rotavator and ploughed a vegetable patch in the large garden that surrounded the house, and hacked through thick bramble overgrowth to clear the path down to the cove below. Like Lanyon, who had moved into Little Park Owles in 1955, and Heron at Eagles Nest, Wynter now occupied one of the larger properties in West Penwith.

There were considerable advantages. The house afforded plenty of space both for work and family life: there were two drawing-rooms (one in the artistic, the other in the social, sense), a photographic dark-room, a workshop outside and ample wall space for hanging even Wynter's largest canvases. Tom Wynter recalls how, growing up there, he and his brother enjoyed the cornucopia of junk their father had acquired, 'out of curiosity, or in case one day it might be useful: relays, transformers, motors, search light mirrors, magnets, sheets of Polaroid filters, bottles of concentrated nitric acid'. Mixing sugar and weed-killer, Wynter created 'improvised but very effective rockets'.¹ While the next ten years were to see further, striking developments in his work, this move marked the effective end of one long-running theme in Wynter's life, his war of resistance against middle-classness. Perhaps he felt able to take on Treverven, which involved constant effort and expense in its upkeep, partly because, in his childhood's ample, well-tended surroundings, the heavier tasks of household and garden management had all been performed by employees.²

The move also coincided with changes in Wynter's working practice. In place of the accumulation of marks, carefully executed but never preconceived, of which his great series of all-over abstracts from 1956 onwards had

been composed, he began more often to base his work on consciously selected and pre-formed shapes. This may have been a consequence of working on the IMOOS, which required precise calculations and carefully constructed parts in order to function properly. This change also seems to relate to Wynter's increasingly specific and technical application of the 'stream' metaphor to his painting, and to other aspects of his life. In 1961, when he'd painted *Kayak* (see fig. 131), Wynter was still balancing a free, gestural manner with an architectonic feeling of structure (reminiscent in its lower left-hand section of Lanyon's contemporaneous *Silent Coast* or *Thermal*). As Bowness observed, there was a sense of 'cosmic energy ... brought into a fruitful conflict with the demands of architecture and spatial organization'³ – qualities that continue to be felt in his work of the early 1960s, as in *Black White* (fig. 137), painted in 1964. The paint handling in other works from around this time, however, starts to appear at once more fluid and more sharply defined. In *Spate II* (1964; fig. 139) the systematic 'optical' hatching first seen in such paintings as *The Black* (1962) is accented by a crisply marked C shape that was to become a motif of remarkable versatility in Wynter's paintings in the following decade.

The titles of many works from the mid-1960s are specifically to do with kayaking. These include the 'Spate' series (figs 138, 139, 140), *Clapotis* (the term for a standing wave; fig. 143), *Tailrace* (fig. 142), *Tidal Surge* (fig. 141) and *Fall I* (fig. 146). Whereas Wynter's earlier explorations on the water had often involved ocean canoeing and kayaking – activities that, post-heart-attack, were thought unadvisedly strenuous and unpredictable – he now began avidly studying maps of Cornwall for suitably navigable rivers and taking every opportunity to explore the Severn Valley and Welsh rivers with his brother. Manoeuvring a canoe and especially a fibreglass kayak, which sits almost on the water surface and has a natural tendency to float broadside to the



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'The Tendency to Look Deeper': Wartime and Oxford, 1938–45

When his call-up papers came, Wynter decided to refuse military service and to register as a Conscientious Objector (CO). The motives for his decision were complex but were clearly informed, once again, by convictions to do with individual freedom and integrity. Moreover, Wynter belonged to a generation that, during the later 1930s, had come to accept as a given the association between progressive art, whether Surrealist or Constructivist, and anti-fascist politics. Art during these years was part of the ideological battleground. How could anyone doubt this, on seeing Picasso's monumental protest painting *Guernica* (shown in London at the New Burlington Galleries, then the Whitechapel Gallery, in the winter of 1938–9) or on hearing news of the 1937 Nazi blockbuster show 'Degenerate Art', in which works by modern artists were sneeringly juxtaposed with the productions of mental patients and 'primitive' peoples? However improbable it now seems that, by opposing state propaganda and militarisation, free intellectuals and artists could stall the momentum of war, this hope was earnestly shared by many of Wynter's contemporaries.

Like other young idealists, too, Wynter was fired by his reading of Aldous Huxley, whose *Ends and Means* (1937) set out the case for non-violence as a moral and courageous means of opposing war – in fact, the *only* effective way to achieve a peaceful future. Eric Wynter recalled how his discussions of the book with Bryan helped to form their joint determination to register as COs. In other ways, too, Bryan's thinking was influenced by Huxley, especially his reframing of the Buddhist concept of non-attachment for an educated Western readership. In Huxley's view, non-attachment specifically entailed the rejection of state authority and its manipulation of 'the sub-human world of crowd emotion'. 'The most nearly free men', he declared, 'have always been those who combined virtue with insight ... The ideal man is the non-attached man.'¹ By contrast, those who embraced 'military slavery, or conscription' allowed themselves to become pawns in the sinister

machinery of the modern planned state. Such a course was little better, he implied, than becoming a fascist yourself, since 'All Fascist planning has one ultimate aim: to make the national society more efficient as a war machine'.² In this context, said Huxley, Conscientious Objectors were 'men of exceptional moral force'.³

Huxley was not, to be sure, solely responsible for such beliefs. The Romantic tradition identified by Herbert Read (himself a hardy anarchist) as a core element in Surrealism – or, at any rate, British Surrealism – had its own tough political credentials. Wynter's extensive reading of poetry may have included Wordsworth's exhortation in *The Prelude* to 'Build social freedom on its only basis,/ The freedom of the individual mind', a freedom whose authoritative self-sufficiency he evoked a few pages later, reflecting that 'the mind is to herself/ Witness and judge'.⁴ Many men and women of Wynter's age who opted to become COs were also, of course, influenced by their experience of the First World War – not at first hand but through those fathers and uncles who, twenty years earlier, had returned alive but whose enforced participation in the world's first great experiments in mechanised mass slaughter had in so many cases left them physically and mentally broken.

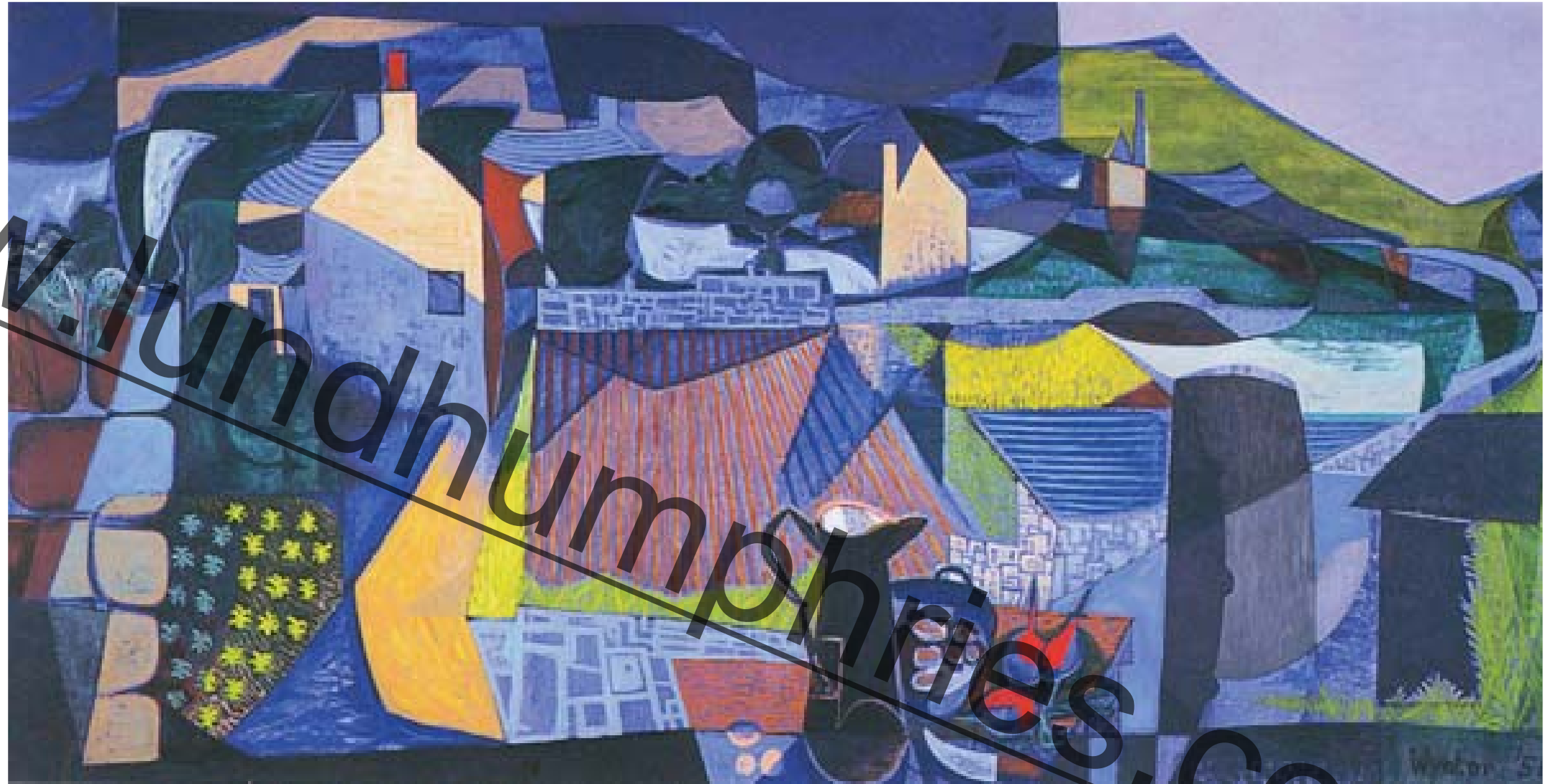
The government's attitude to COs in the Second World War was more humane than it had been during the previous conflict, when they were routinely humiliated and their objections cavalierly overruled. In any case, the armed forces were not keen to enlist too many articulate young people who had tanked up on Huxley or Marx. Those who did not want to register for military service had to put their case in person to a tribunal, but this time the assessments were made by civilian boards not military personnel. After attending a tribunal in Reading – a rowdy affair in which members of the Oxford Playhouse company vociferously declared their pacifism – Wynter was assigned to work on the land, one of the Ministry of Labour's standard occupations for COs. He dug and cleared ditches along the Thames Valley and,

detail of 27
Birds, 1944

Blue Landscape
oil on canvas
122 x 241.5 cm (48 x 95 in)
1951
Collection of the Suter Te Arato o
Whakatu, Nelson, New Zealand

place in the front ranks of younger British artists seemed assured. He was featured by Herbert Read in *Contemporary British Art*, a mass-market paperback intended to popularise 'the leading artists and sculptors of the modern school'.⁴ The painting Read reproduced, *Foreshore with Gull* (see fig. 2), had already been acquired for the British Council's art collection, and Wynter was duly included in a British Council exhibition that toured Germany that year. He was also among the sixty artists commissioned to create work for an exhibition of paintings to accompany the Festival of Britain (this list, for which Nicholson and Heron were among those quietly recommending names, was in effect the Arts Council's definitive take on contemporary talent). Artists were required to produce works of at least 45 x 60 inches (114 x 152.4 cm) in size, for which canvas and stretchers (still an expensive luxury in 1951) were supplied. Before this, Wynter had painted mostly either on paper or, using a common trick of the time, on a canvas-textured support made by gluing butter muslin to hardboard.

For Wynter, as for most artists of his generation, the Festival painting was his first public commission. Lanyon laboured for months in St Ives to complete his towering vertical landscape *Porthleven*, in which realism and abstraction were not so much combined in a 'middle course' as thrown at each other's throats like wrestlers. Wynter, meanwhile, set up studio in Richmond, where he rented premises with his Oxford friend Edward Walton, who had (according to Berlin) 'done a Gauguin on his wife'.⁵ Up at the Carn there was room enough to work on gouaches and drawings, but for this commission Wynter needed more space. He could have found a serviceable old sail loft in St Ives; instead, as he was again to do when embarking on a new scale or type of work, he preferred to reinstall himself in London. Like Lanyon's, his submission, titled *Blue Landscape* (fig. 54), had a Cornish landscape theme. But where Lanyon's painting records his furious determination to engage with the nature of a real place while retaining a qualified allegiance to the



principles of Constructivist abstraction (he never lost his admiration for Naum Gabo), Wynter's resolution of moorland topography into abstract patterns has a much more detached, reflective effect. Subject and pattern seem to float exactly level with each other: here are fields, cottages and hillsides, but there's no hint of narrative, illustrative bait to draw you in, as there almost always is in Neo-Romantic art such as Craxton's or Minton's. The imaginative movement that Wynter had 'mentioned as a theory of art' to Hedy in 1945 still held

good for him: the picture plane is a threshold across which passes a two-way traffic between mind and material reality.

This was certainly not how Heron saw things. For him a painting's primary function was to create an experience of illusory space. 'What time is to the musical composer,' he wrote, 'space is to the painter.'⁶ In his discussions of pictorial space Heron rarely looked behind the image into questions of motivation or meaning. Psychology (or indeed any other scientific or literary discipline) seemed

to him barely relevant to the business of visual art. In *Blue Landscape's* cusped, zigzagging interpenetration of floodlit colour and inky nocturne, Heron probably sensed above all the presence of Braque. What else would have led Wynter to replace the two galvanised milk churns that occupy the foreground of his small preliminary gouache with a table-top still-life in which a Braque-style wine pitcher, bowl of apples and wineglass are thinly disguised as a milk jug, pan of potatoes and bunch of radishes or beetroots? Instead of inviting the viewer into



50
Birds Disturbing the Sleep of a Town
 monotype and gouache on paper
 35.5 x 50.7 cm (14 x 20 in)
 1948
 Private collection



52
Cornish Farm
 monotype and gouache on paper
 50.8 x 73.6 cm (20 x 29 in)
 1947
 Artist's estate



53
 Sue Lethbridge in the Toy Trumpet workshop, St Ives, c. 1947

In the late 1940s Wynter's closest neighbours were the so-called Moor Poets, who formed a small, shifting colony in the Zennor area. Wright was often around, as was Heath-Stubbs, who had left Oxford and was now living in London, and Michael Hamburger, who had apparently been helping Hedy in her search for work as an illustrator. George Barker and John Fairfax rented a house near by. In a valley running inland below the Carn lived Kit Barker, George's brother, with whom Wynter shared an exhibition at Downing's Bookshop in St Ives in the autumn of 1948. It was around this time that Sue became pregnant, and, following Wynter's own, curiously insistent advice to Hedy when she'd found herself in the same situation three years earlier ('If you really want to have a child, why not settle the matter between you & get married'⁴¹), the couple married early in 1949.

Writing to Hedy in March, Wynter was again proffering advice about life with children: she must arrange some regular childcare for her young son, he told her, so that she could get out and meet people. In his own case he sounded self-pityingly adrift: 'I think I do best on my own. No one will look after me & encourage me in my work

without trying to eat out my soul.'⁴² There were professional anxieties too: 'How I live & how I paint are so closely linked & how I paint now seems to affect how much money I make & the money again affects how I live – a treadmill very precariously balanced.'⁴³ A trip to France that April with his brother Eric, who paid their air fares, temporarily cheered him up. They stopped off in Paris, where Wynter found contemporary French art 'tasteful but without force or direction'; he then proceeded to the Riviera and Provence alone. In the south of France, he reported, he had 'drawn & drawn & drawn', and hoped to paint a series of Provençal landscapes on his return. Yet 'the air here is so clear, the sun so hot, & the colour so brilliant that I sometimes doubt whether I will be able to resurrect it in the grey & sombre atmosphere of Cornwall.'⁴⁴ There was no mention of impending fatherhood.

Back in Cornwall, the Wynters' first child, Jake, was born in July. At the age of thirty-three Wynter was apparently still far from ready to settle down. Family life didn't mix easily with 'leaping about on the moors' – he seemed more than usually restless and preoccupied.



51
Three Birds
 monotype on paper
 51 x 75 cm (20 x 29½ in)
 1949
 Artist's estate

He has a passion for leaving large objects such as paraffin cans, rucksacks & on one occasion his trousers, trodden off onto the ground & lying there like a cowpat (he had just got back into bed) right in the centre of the floor ... He also produces stencilled patterns of his chair & feet in cigarette ash, ends, matches & scraps of paper on the carpet.⁴⁰

took on a peripatetic rhythm: they would camp out at the Carn for three days at a time, then return to Sue's small house in St Ives. Wynter, she recalled, was 'always leaping around on the moors'.³⁸ Sometimes he worked up at the Carn alone; sometimes he disappeared to London or elsewhere. Like him, Sue was determinedly independent: in her portrait by Heron this determination can be felt breaking through the decorous homage to Braque. After war work servicing Spitfire engines in Scotland, she had turned to making miniature gypsy caravans and other 'toys'. In the early days of the business these beautifully crafted objects weren't really intended for children, being sold to collectors in Burlington Arcade, Fortnum & Mason, Harrods and other upmarket London outlets.³⁹

Despite its isolation, visitors frequently made their way the Carn. For all his rejection of social convention and consumer comforts, Wynter liked to maintain a certain order in his living and working arrangements. When the deaf South African poet David Wright came to stay in March 1949, Wynter wrote exasperatedly to Hedy of his slovenly habits:



corny rhapsodies about the creative 'Spirit of the Moors' or the clunky, rather inept earnestness of his stone carvings, which fortunately could be readily interpreted as the outcome of a passionate primitivism.

Around this time Wynter met the Scottish poet Sydney Graham and his partner, Nessie Dunsmuir, also a poet. They were living in two caravans, dubbed 'the Wheelhouse' by Graham, near the village of Germoe on the opposite coast of the Penwith Peninsula from St Ives, about eight miles distant. Graham had published two volumes of verse and had a fairly wide acquaintance among artists and writers in Glasgow and London, most of whom at some point found themselves obliged to lend him money. Growing up in working-class Greenock, he had left school at fourteen and, by the time Wynter met him, had dedicated his life to poetry with a single-mindedness that usually excluded the possibility of earning a living by other means. On one occasion, marooned in the Wheelhouse during stormy weather (life at the Carn involved a lot of long-distance walking and hitch-hiking), Wynter stayed several days with Graham and Dunsmuir, many hours of which were spent by the three of them reading poetry aloud. It was here on another visit, in August 1945, that he was introduced to the artist John Minton, a friend and loyal benefactor of Graham's. Minton was two years younger than Wynter but already a well-established Neo-Romantic artist in London, where he taught at the Central School and was a stalwart of Soho bohemia. His work of the 1940s has strong affinities with Wynter's own; it isn't always possible to detect which way the influence was flowing. Wynter's 1947 gouache *Derelict Boiler* (fig. 35), for example, is remarkably similar in composition to an illustration titled *Propriano: Timber and Lighthouse* (fig. 36), which Minton published the following year in Alan Ross's Corsican travelogue *Time Was Away* (which could, of course, have been based on an earlier sketch).

In their shared social contacts, their cultural background and professional interests these poets and

painters were deeply, essentially urban. Yet here they were, camping out in musty abandoned hovels, wind-rocked caravans and fish cellars in Cornwall as though the place were destined to become the epicentre of Britain's reborn post-war artistic life. Class-consciousness played a part in this Celtic epiphany: Graham remained pugnaciously sensitive all his life to the slightest hint of middle-class condescension; Wynter, for his part, was intent on leading a life that was the opposite in every way of 'the constant round of fatuous occupations' he associated with the privileged ambience of his upbringing.

By September, in return for a rent of £25 per year, Wynter was installed in his 'mountain retreat'. Here, as his brother Eric later recalled,

in his thirtieth year he found release to work as he wanted ... He also befriended the wild animals, climbed the great Cornish cliffs, skin-dived, drank in the St Ives pubs and mooched around on the moors, coming to know their communities of wildlife as an appreciative observer without wishing to take a scientific interest in them. He teased the animals and ate the plants.²²

On several fronts the move to the Carn marked a point of final transition from wartime Oxford. In his relationship with Hedy, Wynter had been harbouring an almost latent hope that they would eventually get back together; in August her announcement that she was pregnant by her

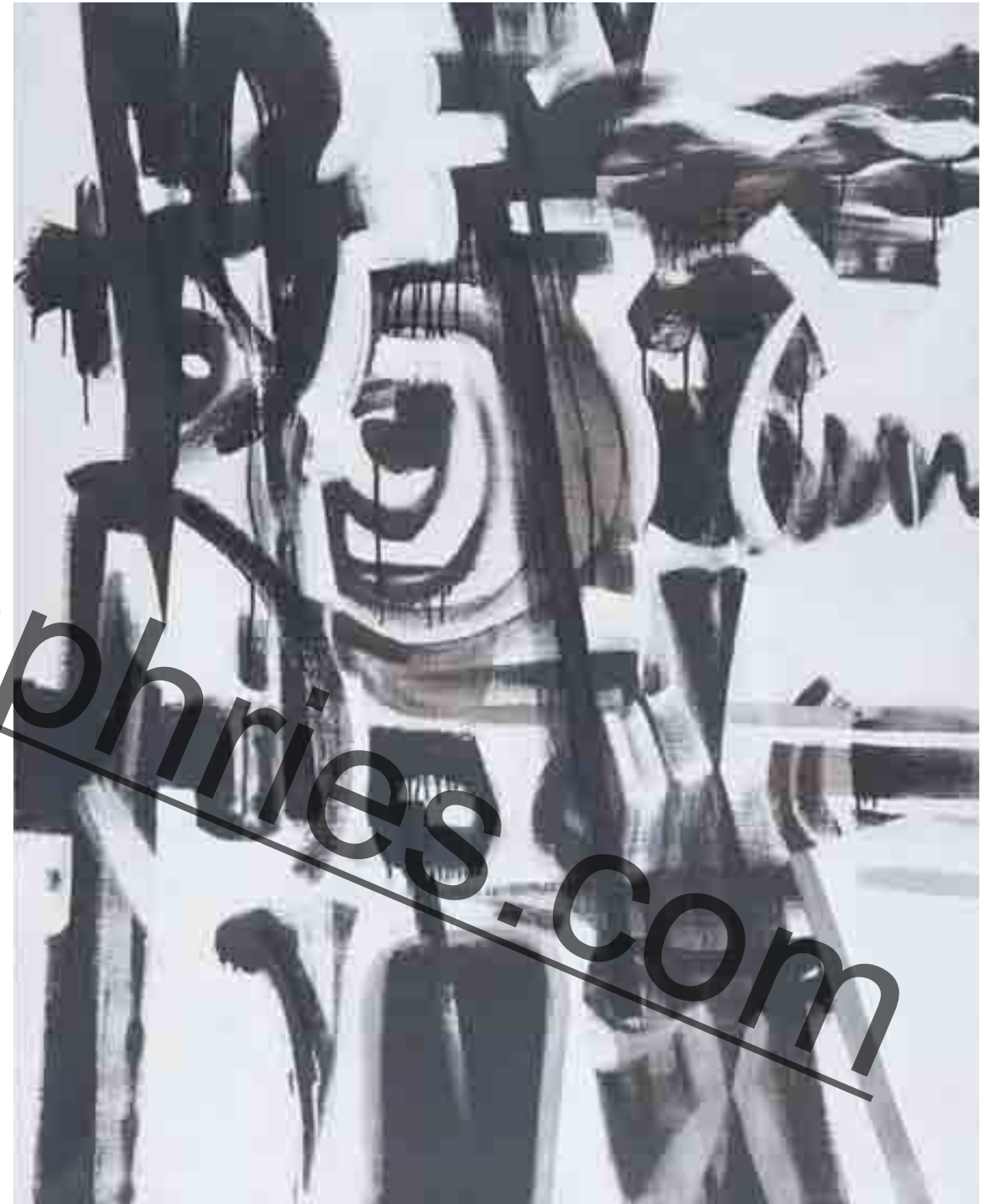
new lover put paid to that. As far as his own family was concerned, he felt as though he had made a decisive break. In answer to his mother's concerns about how he was going to manage without running water, electricity and other domestic comforts that, while standard in the Home Counties by 1945, were still rare in Penwith upland cottages, he confidently assured her that

What for you would be 'amenities' are just a nuisance to me. The Carn provides me with my own particular brand of amenities, an enormous access to & experience of this wild corner of England which still holds out against the slow insidious invasion of garden suburbs and slum.²³

136
Untitled
oil on masonite
39.4 x 24.1 cm (15½ x 9½ in)
1961
Private collection



137
Black White
oil on canvas
101.6 x 80.7 (40 x 31¾ in)
1964
Private collection



Where, exactly, is that 'other side' from which Wynter says that he approaches 'nature'? Does he mean approaching from the psychic to the physical, maybe, or from principle to practice? In the year before the Zurich show he had had an experience that may well have informed this phrase. One evening in early May 1961 the Wynters had been entertaining Patrick and Delia Heron and their guest at the time, Prunella Clough. During the night Wynter was woken by severe chest pains. The doctor was called, and Wynter was ferried by Land Rover to the coast road and thence by ambulance to hospital in Penzance, where he learned that he'd had a heart attack. The treatment in those days, which Wynter was duly prescribed, involved three months of bed-rest at the cottage hospital in St Ives – an enforced absence from the Carn that exposed certain problems with life there for a young family. Monica, with a baby to care for, had not yet learned to drive, and the nearest telephone was several hundred yards away at Eagles Nest. During his long recuperation Wynter found convivial company on the ward, which he shared with another heart-attack victim, the painter Tony O'Malley. But he was shaken; despite his athletic pursuits and love of the outdoors, years of heavy smoking and addiction to fry-ups (what Wynter called 'the blue-smoke school of cookery') had taken their toll. These factors, combined with his growing family (the Wynters' second son, Billy, was born in August 1962), finally led to the decision, in May 1964, to move from the Carn to Treverven, an enormous house near St Buryan, on the milder, south-facing coast of the Penwith Peninsula.



6

'Dynamic Versus Static': an Art of Movement, 1959–64

By the early months of 1959 Wynter was being represented by a new dealer on the West End scene, Victor Waddington, who had opened premises in Cork Street, along the road from the Redfern. Waddington had been running a gallery in Dublin representing Irish artists, notably the prolific Jack Yeats (younger brother of the poet W. B. Yeats), whose semi-illustrative scenes of Irish life had an expressionistic fervour all their own. Arriving in London with a large stock of paintings by Yeats (who had died in March 1957), Waddington quickly identified a group of artists who were loosely united by their association with St Ives as a suitable English addition to his stable. His reasoning may have been that, in the current internationalist buzz surrounding abstract painting, their work, like Yeats's, might go down well in the USA. He also drew on the advice of the young Arts Council administrator Alan Bowness, who had recently married Hepworth and Nicholson's daughter Sarah and had extensive personal contacts among the artists of St Ives.

First to be given a solo show was Trevor Bell, whom Frost had met while in Leeds on a Gregory Fellowship and persuaded to come to west Cornwall. Wynter's exhibition, comprising twenty-eight paintings, followed in March 1959. It coincided with 'New American Painting' at the Tate, where, once again courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art, the American Abstract Expressionists were in town, this time represented by many more works than in 1956. Heron and others might debate the sources of contemporary abstract painting, but this was no mere subject for academic dispute, since there was considerable political investment in the promotion of American primacy. Typical of the hectoring, propagandistic tone that became standard in the artistic arena, as in any other field of Cold War competition, was the announcement by the London correspondent for *Art and Artists* that 'American "Action" paintings at the Tate stood as solid as the Rockies in the face of a score of mediocre London imitators'.¹ There was, the reviewer

conceded, just 'one serious challenge' to American dominance of the London scene – namely, Bryan Wynter.

This view was echoed by Bowness in a long piece on Wynter that appeared in *Art News and Review* the same month.² 'Bryan Wynter', he asserted, 'is now among the few English painters of unquestionable international status.' In this 'USA Special' edition of the magazine, Bowness's article, illustrated by the two large paintings *Carnival* (1956) and *Wilderness* (1958; fig. 104), was strategically sandwiched between Alloway's 'Paintings from the Big Country', which extolled the 'power and vitality' of American Abstract Expressionism,³ and three double-page spreads devoted to the subject of his encomium, the current exhibition at the Tate. The message was clear: Wynter was both Britain's answer to the New York School and (as you turned the pages from *Carnival* and *Wilderness* to works by Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, Franz Kline and the rest) an equal member of this international movement. The fact that all these paintings were reproduced in the standard foggy monochrome of 1950s' art magazines somehow emphasised their shared characteristics.

By this stage of the game numerous British artists had adopted an all-over, Abstract-Expressionistic manner of painting. For the general public and the press, who found it hard to distinguish one splash-and-drip canvas from another, the 'action-painting' maelstrom became 'the biggest joke since Moore's holes'.⁴ Where artists themselves were concerned, however, beyond a certain common ground lay distinct and even divergent tendencies. For example, there was broad agreement that an artist's 'gestures' in paint should be made with an automatic suspension of conscious control, although degrees of automatism varied. 'The artist seeks to eliminate his personality in his work', wrote the young abstract artist Ralph Rumney in 1956.⁵ Wynter, who declared that he wished to impose 'as little conscious interference as possible', would probably have agreed. Yet Rumney was soon taking a different tack altogether,

detail of
Title, date

8

Epilogue

Some time in the months after Wynter's sudden death Sydney Graham climbed Zennor Hill to look around the Carn. The foxgloves were out, the mist blowing around the high moors. This visit – or imagined visit, since he knew the place well enough to visualise every detail – formed the setting for his elegy to Wynter. 'Dear Bryan Wynter', it begins:

This is only a note
To say how sorry I am
You died. You will realise
What a position it puts
Me in. I couldn't really
Have died for you if so
I were inclined. The carn
Foxglove here on the wall
Outside your first house
Leans with me standing
In the Zennor wind.¹

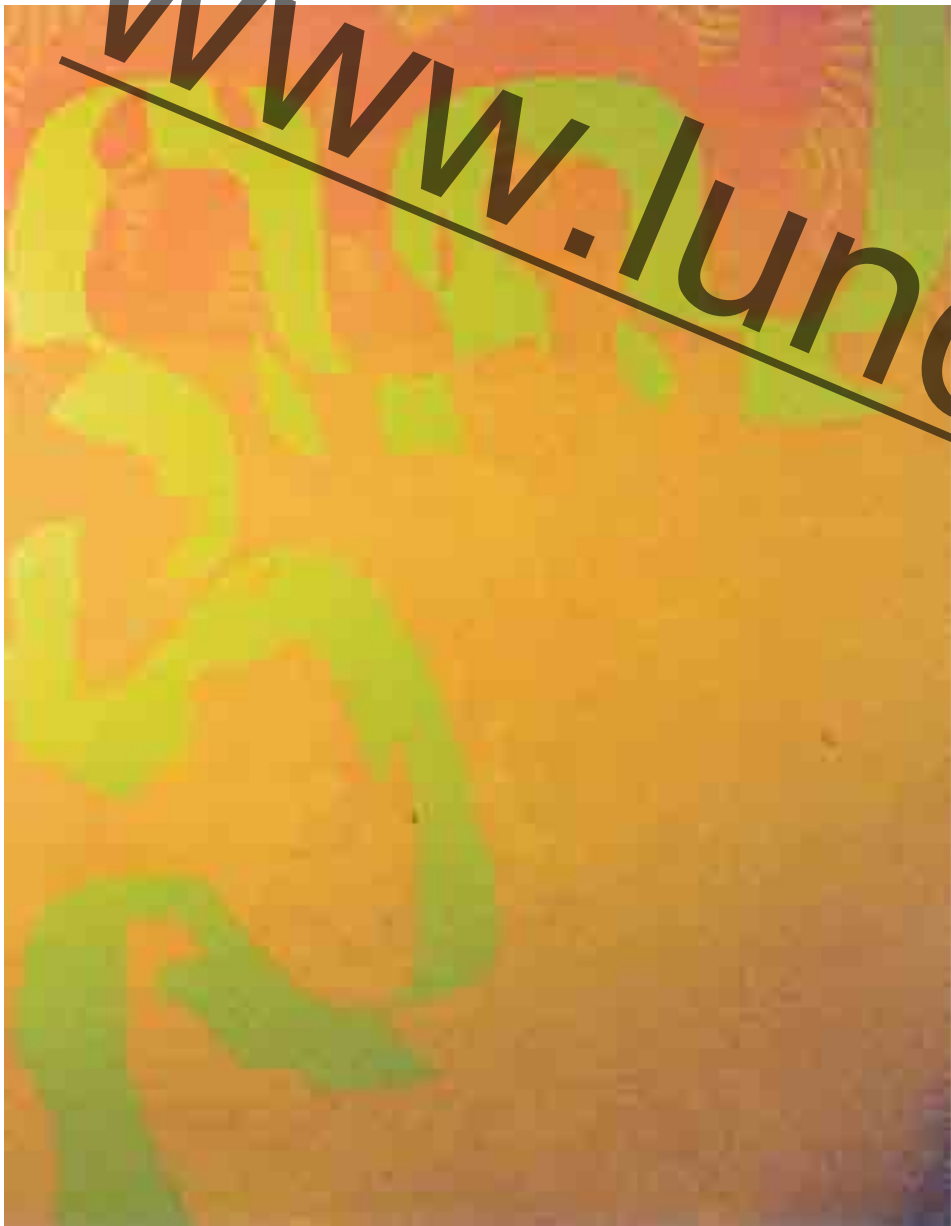
In mixing humour and pathos in these lines, Graham measures each quality in the exact proportion that he knows would have appealed to Wynter. Now that Wynter has gone, Graham tells him, he finds it difficult to go 'Beside Housman's star/ Lit fences'. Even worse, 'nobody will laugh/ At my jokes like you'.

Something that still comes through strongly when you speak to people who knew Wynter, or had even just briefly met him, is how sorely he was missed – what a gap his absence left in the landscape. In his obituary for the local paper (he wrote a second, more formal assessment of Wynter's career for *Studio International*) Heron paid tribute to Wynter's 'dazzlingly attractive personality' and 'quite extraordinary originality of mind'. 'No-one', he affirmed, 'who ran into him in a pub or at a private view or a party, ever forgot the sparkling impression of extreme intelligence and vitality – as well as of a true and deep human sympathy.'² All right, you think, this was written in grief, in the manner of a funeral

oration – let's allow for some overstatement, for a rhetorical turn of phrase that fits the occasion. Yet the terms in which Heron painted his verbal vignette of Wynter – 'charm', 'generosity', 'perceptiveness' and so on – are echoed by people who encountered him in all sorts of different contexts.

Lanyon had thought Wynter 'a very generous human being'.³ To fellow members of Penzance Canoe Club, with whom Wynter made many expeditions on the Lynher, Inny, Fowey, Camel and other Cornish rivers in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he was 'a fantastic person, easy to talk to', with 'an incredible sense of humour'.⁴ The 'great gentleness and kindness' remarked by Sven Berlin on his first meeting with Wynter at the Leach Pottery seems to have struck chance acquaintances in the streets of Penzance three decades later just as forcibly. And, although Wynter 'would talk about inventions, people, jazz, poetry, about underwater, about discoveries on walks', recalled Eric Wynter in his short memoir of 1984, 'He didn't talk much about art at all.'⁵ To his friends and associates Wynter's personal qualities seemed to belong to some greater creative enterprise that existed alongside and beyond his art. 'His original thinking', wrote Eric, 'his understanding of the country and his relish in communication had been bringers of freedom.'⁶

Throughout his years in Cornwall, Wynter's involvement with artistic factions and rivalries in St Ives was largely tangential. During one of his few meetings with Ben Nicholson he was struck by the senior artist's frank and business-like admission that, as part of his working routine, he set aside time each day to write letters promoting himself. If Nicholson was offering a piece of well-meant professional advice, however, he was talking to the wrong man. Another frequently observed characteristic of Wynter's was that he shied away from such self-promotion, from what Wyndham Lewis called the 'prize-fighter' behaviour necessary for artistic reputation-building. His modesty, in Heron's well-informed professional opinion, was 'without doubt partly



164
Pas
oil on canvas
100 x 100 cm (100 x 100 in)
1970
Plymouth City Museum
and Art Gallery



165
Landscape photographs
colour transparencies
1955-60s





141
Tidal Surge
oil on canvas
182.9 x 122 cm (72 x 48 in)
1964
National Gallery of Wales,
Cardiff

142
Tailrace
oil on canvas
182.9 x 122 cm (72 x 48 in)
1966
Artist's estate

