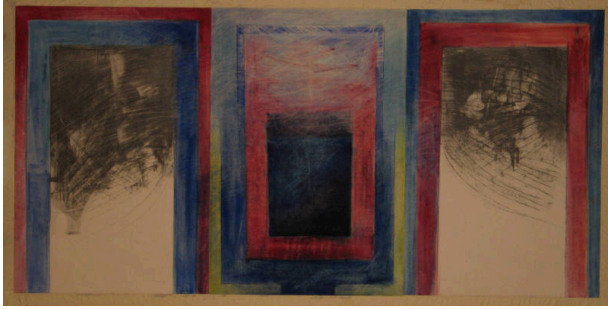


Basic Detail Report



Pompeiiian Openings VII (No. 14)

Date

1982

Primary Maker

Anne Madden

Medium

Oil and graphite on paper

Dimensions

111.8 x 228.6 cm

Description

'Pompeiiian Openings VII 1982' is a development from Madden's megalithic paintings of the early 1970s. To the strong vertical form of the megalithic abstracts, she introduced a horizontal element, which created an opening. On one level she saw this as an opening for herself in her work and a way out of the vertical paintings. On another level she saw it as 'a metaphor for interior-external space, a reconciliation of opposites: light/dark; life/death; day/night; male/female. I see these openings as thresholds, windows of the mind, metaphors of the artist's vision. Openings into a possible space, both psychic and physical, of the mind and of matter'. Parallel to this change of emphasis in her painting style, Madden visited Pompeii and found it held layers of meaning and significance, which she sought to express in her work. 'Pompeii seized hold of my imagination because of its apocalyptic end - it is both a memory and a mirror, a sort of condensation of our possible end by a nuclear holocaust. People and dogs seized and held in death in their everyday gestures, a whole city snuffed out as it went about its business, a door that closed. It lay buried for nineteen centuries under twenty metres of lava and when it was excavated, it revealed itself mainly in the form of doorways and windows - all the roofs were gone'. 'Pompeiiian Openings VII 1982', with its use of strongly defined bands of colour which provide frames for the openings onto areas of light and shade, is characteristic of the artist's Pompeii-inspired period which lasted for several years. In this painting, as in Madden's work generally, it is the successful articulation of the pictorial space and the eloquent construction of its elements of colour, light, form and space that are most important. (Extract from 'Images and Insights', Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin, 1993, p. 152)