



Bowl

James Tower

Not on display

Title/Description: Bowl

Artist/Maker: James Tower (Artist)

Born: 1980

Object Type: Bowl

Materials: Ceramic, Earthenware

Technique: Handbuilding

Measurements: d. 270mm

Accession Number: 50773

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England

Copyright: © Estate of James Tower

Credit Line: Accepted under the Cultural Gifts Scheme by HM Government from Leslie Birks Hay and allocated to SCVA, 2016

This press-moulded bowl is a dynamic convex canvas. Rhythmic *sgraffito* lines and markings intersect and diverge across its luminous tin-glaze surface. James Tower's ceramics capture the constantly changing patterns of the natural world. Influenced by his childhood on the Kent coast and in contrast to the area's expansive landscape, the shapes that attract Tower are small, organic and detailed. He cites being captivated by the movement of reeds in the wind and graduations of shells and flints on the beach. [1] It is these types of subtle patterns he abstracts, magnifies and harmonises in his work.

Tower initially studied painting and then ceramics at the London Institute of Education in 1948, where he was taught by William Newland. It was Newland who, influenced by the tin-glazed ceramics of Picasso, introduced Tower to the technique of incised drawing over a fired tin-glaze that we see here. Tower went on to use this method, working primarily with black and white glazes from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Sim Panaser, June 2020

[1] Peter Lane, 'James Tower: Artist Potter', *Ceramic Review*, 88 (July/August 1984), p. 8.

Further Reading

Birks, Tony, 'James Tower: Painter Sculptor', *Ceramics: Art and Perception*, 98 (2014), 34-37

Lane, Peter, 'James Tower: Artist Potter', *Ceramic Review*, 88 (July/August 1984), 6-9

Wilcox, Timothy, *The Ceramic Art of James Tower* (Farnham: Lund Humphries, 2019)

<http://www.jamestower.co.uk> [accessed 28 July 2020]
