



Study for Progression of Rectangles

Anthony Hill

Not on display

Title/Description: Study for Progression of Rectangles

Artist/Maker: Anthony Hill

Born: 1953

Object Type: Paper

Materials: Gouache, Paper, Pencil

Accession Number: 31682

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England, Europe

Credit Line: Bequeathed by Joyce and Michael Morris, 2014

In the early 1950s Antony Hill made a series of sketches and paintings exploring different arrangements of black and white rectangles, progressing along a central horizontal axis. [1] In this sketch on graph paper, Hill tests out the impact of adjusting the sequence. The subtle variations between the different versions of *Progression of Rectangles* demonstrate Hill's commitment to a new language of 'constructionism' in art, non-figurative works generated from their own internal logic. [2]

In 1954 Hill translated the composition of *Progression of Rectangles* into his first relief format works, which share the same title. [3] The rectangles are cut in black and white plastic and placed on a transparent sheet, which has been mounted above a plywood base panel using distancing pegs. The relief format introduces a relationship between the different surfaces and planes of *Progression of Rectangles* that Hill went on to investigate more fully in his consequent constructed reliefs, abandoning painting altogether in early 1956. [4]

Lisa Newby, February 2021

[1] See sketches 31581, 31682 and 31688 in the Sainsbury Centre collection. A version of *Progression of Rectangles* (1953) in emulsion and canvas was included in Hill's 1983 retrospective exhibition at the Hayward Gallery and is illustrated in the catalogue. See *Anthony Hill, A Retrospective Exhibition*, exh. cat. (London: Hayward Gallery, 1983), p.23.

[2] For a recent account of Hill's early constructionist paintings, see Sam Gathercole, 'The Geometry of Syntactics, Semantics and Pragmatics: Anthony Hill's Concrete Paintings', *Tate Papers*, no.31, Spring 2019, <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/31/anthony-hill-concrete-paintings>

[3] See 31539 in the Sainsbury Centre collection.

[4] Alastair Grieve 'The development of Anthony Hill's work from 1950 to the present' in *Anthony Hill, A Retrospective Exhibition*, exh. cat. (London: Hayward Gallery, 1983), pp.5-67, (p.18).

Provenance

In October 1984, the University of East Anglia accepted a planned bequest from Joyce and Michael Morris (UEA Alumni). Michael died in 2009 and Joyce in December 2014 when the couple's wishes were implemented.
