

<p><b>Sandra Blow,</b> <b><i>Space and Matter,</i></b> 1959, oil on hardboard, 152 x 123 cm (60 x 48")</p>	<p>Initial analysis: an improvised analysis using overlapping attentions.</p>	<p>Sandra Blow (1925-2006). Blow was in her early thirties when this work was factured. It was purchased by the Tate in the year after its production.</p>
<p>The picture plane has been divided by drawn lines containing areas of colour which overlap and in many places interact with adjacent areas.</p> <p>The colours used are reserved and imply a landscape or the ground, both a close-viewed fragment and an aerial view from a distance. That is to say both an implication of soil, sand, chalk and air. The mark facture that provides divisions by black lines asserts that this is an artefact. This feature links the picture directly to human dynamic and constructionist activity.</p> <p>The lines angled from the bottom right and the parallel righthand edge of the black area provide a dynamic foil to the near vertical lines lifting from the centre of the base line. There is also a further directional movement from the left hand edge meeting and overlapping the vertical lines.</p> <p>In terms of Blow's European contemporaries and predecessors we could attend to landscape practices in Wilhelmina Barns-Graham and Peter Lanyon., material practices of Antonin Tapies and Albeto Burri and the abstract 'tradition' provided by Russian Constructivists in her use of line and Kurt Schwitters in her use of varied materials, shape and contrast.</p>	<p>The painting extends the new traditions in painting evidently provided in Europe by a new attention to materials as much as a vibrant attention to mark facture. The work is capable of evoking both the excitement of being in the landscape and the intelligence of engaged analysis in the processes of aesthetic facture.</p>  <p>In terms of aesthetic function the work provides visual and material information about its placing in harness to the conveyance of pleasure. There is a rhetorical complexity in the continuing shifts between large and intimate scales and between a vertical and a plan view. Shifts emphasised in the mark facture of lines and brushed surfaces.</p>	<p>The materials used are listed as oil on hardboard, but the effect is of a small range of materials including charcoal, sand and earth. The Tate labelling names liquid cement, charcoal and chaff. The overall effect is that of an activity on the land surface, initially seen from above, but eventually just as feasible on a vertical plane.</p> <p>The scale of the picture is human vertically and in width and also by association with the varied mark facture, an association with the land and allusions to wind and weather.</p> <p>The mark facture varies from hard edge lines, areas painted with an open brush, areas where the brush application is almost like a flick producing a spray of paint and areas of intensity hard brushed over the area.</p> <p>The efficacy of the picture is its relationship between the human physical encounter with the picture surface and that encounter's capacity to evoke a ground and landscape. It is as if the Cornish environment is appraised by the activity of abstraction.</p>
	<p>The painting is in the Tate collection, usually in their store at Southwark and not on display.</p>	