

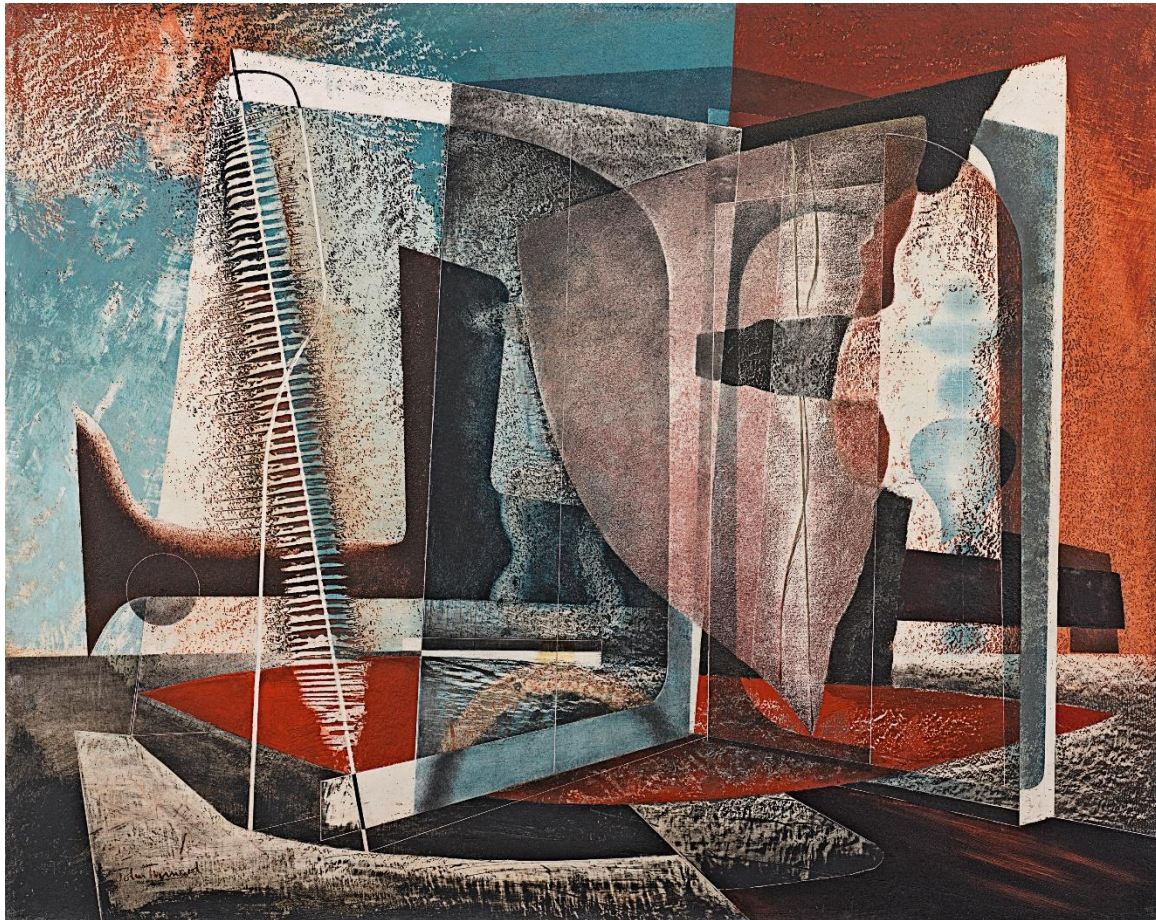
RICHARD GREEN

JOHN TUNNARD ARA

Sandy, Bedfordshire 1900 - 1971 Cornwall

Ref: CE 124

Painting



Signed lower left: *John Tunnard*
Oil on masonite: 24 x 30 ³/₄ in / 61 x 78.1 cm
Frame size: 31 x 37 in / 78.7 x 94 cm
In a silver gilded composition frame
Painted in 1948



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RICHARD GREEN

FINE PAINTINGS • ESTABLISHED 1955

Provenance:

Moulton Gallery, London (label on the reverse)

Chauncey Waddell, New York

Becky J Stebman, New York

Offer Waterman, London;

Professor Brian Alan Whitton (1935-2025), acquired from the above 28th April 2003

Exhibition:

London, McRoberts and Tunnard Gallery, *John Tunnard*, 26th November-23rd December 1959, cat.no.15

Literature:

Alan Peat and Brian A Whitton, *John Tunnard, His Life and Work*, Scolar Press, Aldershot 1997, cat. no.576, p.181, also visible in a photograph of the McRoberts & Tunnard Gallery exhibition in 1959 fig.39, p.121

Painting, 1948, by John Tunnard is masterly work by an artist at the forefront of British modernism. His highly individual style combines selective representation and abstract invention influenced by his first-hand knowledge and assimilation of the most progressive styles of the day. His multi-textural technique, featuring frottage and decalomania derived from Surrealist experimentation, and linear incisions into the paint surface familiar to Constructivism, suggest sophisticated *trompe l'oeil* and a sensuous pleasure in paint. This visionary artist was poised for greatness in 1939 when Peggy Guggenheim gave him a one-man exhibition at the Guggenheim Jeune Gallery before the Second World War transpired. During the War from 1939-1945, Tunnard was employed as an auxiliary coastguard at Cadgwith, Cornwall, spending many hours positioned in a cliff top hut looking out over the sea for approaching danger: 'The experience of being a coastguard gradually shifted the emphasis of Tunnard's paintings away from the minutiae of the early abstract works and forward to the later panoramic works with their effective illusions of great distances and ultimately infinite space. The source of this imagery was the long periods Tunnard was forced to spend watching the sea, although as a critic in *The Times* pointed out, Tunnard always transcended the documentary representation of the world around him with incredible flights of fantasy.'¹

This exceptional work was previously owned by Professor Brian Whitton, lecturer and Emeritus Professor in Botany at Durham University, who had a passionate interest in the work of John Tunnard, assembling what many regarded as the finest private collection of the artist's work and co-writing *John Tunnard, His Life and Work* (1997).

¹ Alan Peat and Brian H Whitton, *John Tunnard His Life and Work*, Scolar Press, Aldershot 1997, p.65.