

BRITISH MODERNISM

Tate Britain collect massive and greatful artworks from 1545 to the present day, including those by William Hogarth, Joshua Reynolds, Gwen John, J.M.W Turner, Mark Rothko and the pre-Raphaelites, as well as the most exciting contemporary work by artists such as David Hockney and Dame Barbara Hepworth. Most of the galleries in Tate Britain are chronological, in principle in decade increments, and are clearly signposted on the floor so that visitors can navigate the history of British art by following the chronological signs, a process that is like a time travel through art history and gives visitors a better sense of how art has changed and developed since 1545. Tate Britain is also classified by the theme of the artwork, including aisa and art, black identites and art, disability and art, etc.



Sign on the ground

The first sculpture that caught my eye after entering Tate was from FE McWilliam - Eye, Nose and Cheek in 1939. About Frederick Edward McWilliam, he was a Northern Irish surrealist sculptor. He worked chiefly in stone, wood and bronze. McWilliam's style of work consists of sculptures of the human form contorted into strange positions, often described as modern and surreal. during 1939-40, he made a striking series of carvings in wood and stone which he entitled 'The Complete Fragment'. These carvings were mostly part or parts of the human head, greatly enlarged and complete in themselves. McWilliam was interested in the interplay between solid volume and surrounding space in these works, and also how the viewer completes the 'missing' parts of the sculpture in the mind's eye.



What attracted me most to this work is that the artist did not create and display the full five senses, leaving more space for the imagination of the viewer to imagine and fictionalize the rest, It's not just a sculpture, it's more like an early 'interactive artwork' and even though it was created in 1939, it can still interact and connect with people in 2022 and beyond, Even if you are the same viewer, each time you look at the sculpture you will have a different idea and a different imagination. This is certainly a great early work, and it confirms my view that even if interior design is not a purely artistic subject, there is a requirement for white space to give the client a different and fresh experience. Art and design must require white space

and imagination. When we design a project, we must not fill a room with all the design elements, or put all the decorations and furniture and structures in a space where we can see all the way through.

The second work that attracted me was an exhibition by the artist JMW Turner, Joseph Mallord William Turner was the outstanding British painter of his generation(1775-1851). His work often portrays the development of the modern world. Turner made his name with watercolours of topographical landscapes and buildings. He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1790, when he was 15. He became known for the atmospheric effects he produced through his experiments with light and shade. From the early 1800s, he began to prepare his canvases with a white ground. This gave his oil paintings the luminous glow seen in his watercolours.



Yacht Approaching the Coast (1840)

In this unfinished sea painting the light of the sun, reflected by the water, dazzles the eye and obscures the view. This visual effect echoes the progress of Turner's own work on the painting. He returned to areas of the canvas over a period of several years, covering the original subject. Dark shapes that appear through the layers suggest boats. The buildings on the left have not been definitively identified but may represent Venice. By reworking the canvas Turner has shifted the focus of this painting from the yacht to a less tangible subject—that of light itself.

We can see that in many of JMW Turner's works, whatever the subject matter, the most attractive part must be the dazzling light. Turner's imagination was sparked by shipwrecks, fires (including the burning of Parliament in 1834, an event which Turner witnessed first-hand, and transcribed in a series of watercolour sketches), and natural phenomena such as sunlight, storm, rain, and fog. He was fascinated by the violent power of the sea, as seen in *Dawn after the Wreck* (1840) and *The Slave Ship* (1840).



***The Slave Ship* (1840)**

Turner's approach to the presentation of light reaches such a high level that even in 2022, when people approach his paintings, it is as if they can actually see the dazzle and glow, due to his research and combination of watercolour techniques and oil painting, as well as his constant research into experiments with light and shadow. In Turner's later years, he used oils ever more transparently and turned to an evocation of almost pure light by use of shimmering colour. A prime example of his mature style can be seen in *Rain, Steam and Speed – The Great Western Railway*, where the objects are barely recognisable. The intensity of hue and interest in evanescent light not only placed Turner's work in the vanguard of English painting but exerted an influence on art in France; the Impressionists, particularly Claude Monet, carefully studied his techniques. He is also generally regarded as a precursor of abstract painting.



Tate Britain



