

# Scene Through Wood

## A Century of Modern Wood Engraving

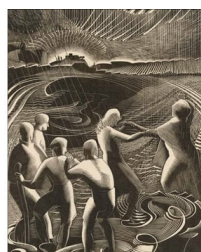
Anne Desmet RA

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- Covers the entire history of wood engraving, including every major artist of the genre
- Accompanies the *Scene through Wood: A Century of Wood Engraving* exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum, from 28 March to 12 July 2020

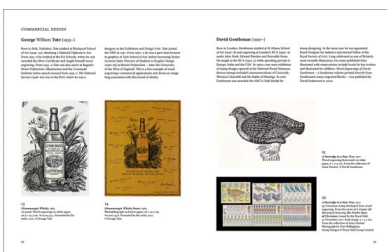
The Ashmolean Museum houses one of the most extensive collections of wood engravings in the world. The collection effectively began with the gift in 1964, by Arthur Mitchell, of over 3,000 prints, including a large group of wood engravings. During the 1980s and 1990s, it expanded remarkably with acquisitions of large groups of prints, often as gifts from the artists, resulting in a succession of monographic exhibitions on some of the most important wood engravers. They included John Farleigh (1986), John Buckland Wright (1990), Clare Leighton (1992), Monica Poole (1993) and Anne Desmet (1998). A key point in this period of expansion was the acquisition of a comprehensive body of work by Gertrude Hermes and Blair Hughes-Stanton in 1995 from the artists' family, which resulted in a memorable exhibition organised by Katharine Eustace. More recently, the Ashmolean has formed a close partnership with the Society of Wood Engravers (SWE) and has been keeping the collection up to date by acquiring work by members, both at the Society's annual exhibition and privately. This exhibition catalogue covers the entire history of wood engraving, including every major artist of the genre.

**Anne Desmet**, is only the third wood engraver to have been elected a Royal Academician; her predecessors were Gertrude Hermes and Charles Tunnicliffe. She has close links with the Ashmolean and with Oxford, having studied at the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art as an undergraduate at Worcester College, which recently elected her to an honorary fellowship. Anne has worked tirelessly on this project, bringing a particular sensitivity to the selection as one of the most distinguished and imaginative of wood engravers.



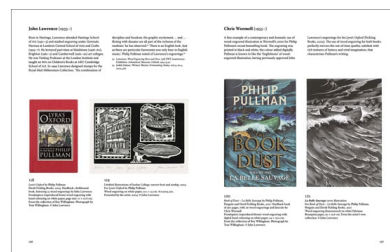
Wood Engraving takes Centre Stage  
George William Tate (1893)

George William Tate (1893) 'Wood Engraving takes Centre Stage'. This engraving is a powerful statement on the medium of wood engraving, depicting a group of figures in a dynamic, swirling composition. The figures are rendered in a style that is both expressive and detailed, with a focus on the interplay of light and shadow. The overall effect is one of movement and energy, capturing a moment of intense activity.



David Lindström (1907)

David Lindström (1907) 'David Lindström (1907)'. This engraving is a simple, stylized depiction of a bird, possibly a chicken, rendered in a manner that is both direct and expressive. The bird is shown in profile, facing right, with a focus on its form and the texture of its feathers. The overall effect is one of clarity and simplicity, capturing the essence of the subject.



Philip Pullman (1998)

Philip Pullman (1998) 'Philip Pullman (1998)'. This engraving is a complex and detailed work, featuring a book titled 'BOOK BUST' and a figure standing next to it. The composition is rich with detail, with a focus on the textures of the book and the figure's clothing. The overall effect is one of depth and complexity, capturing a moment of quiet reflection.