

DAVID HOCKNEY

b. July 9, 1937

“It is very good advice to believe only what an artist does, rather than what he says about his work.”

Initially famous for popularizing British pop art in the 1960s, David Hockney grew more influential as he evidenced his exceptional artistic flexibility. From oil paintings to lithography, photomontage to computer sketch, Hockney demonstrated an uncanny ability to adapt his creative talents to various media. The Hockney exhibit at the National Portrait Gallery in London from October 2006 to January 2007 was one of the Gallery’s most successful exhibitions.

Hockney began to display his work while at the Royal College of Arts in London in 1949. At a featured exhibition, he presented paintings that became forerunners of British pop art. Hockney won a gold medal for outstanding distinction at the College’s convocation ceremony.

Hockney’s early work often explored homosexual themes. “We Two Boys Together Clinging” (1961), titled after a Walt Whitman poem of the same name, became one of his more famous works. Lithography enticed Hockney in the early 1960s when he began to make prints of paintings. “Mr. and Mrs. Clark and Percy” (1971) is one of the most popular paintings in London’s Tate Gallery.

California’s promise of young athletic men lured Hockney to Los Angeles. Filmmaker Jack Hazan titled his 1974 movie about Hockney, “A Bigger Splash,” after Hockney’s famous work of the same name (1967). In “California Suite” (1978), Neil Simon used about a dozen of Hockney’s California-themed paintings in the film’s opening credits.

In 1985, Hockney was commissioned to draw with the Quantel Paintbox, a computer program in which the artist sketches directly onto the computer monitor. The BBC captured Hockney’s mastery of the Paintbox in a movie produced while he was working with the program. Also in 1985, Hockney designed the cover of the French edition of Vogue.

On June 21, 2006, “The Splash” (1966) sold at Sotheby’s for £2.6 million (\$5.3 million), the record for a Hockney painting.

Celebrated abstract artist David Hockney’s original design and signature style helped define 1960s British pop culture. Prestigious international museums and galleries display his work.



glat
★
HISTORY
MONTH

www.glbthistorymonth.com

Copyright ©2007 – A Project of Equality Forum