



Press Release

Basic Design

The pioneering art education work of Leeds College of Art is under the spot light once more as the 'Basic Design' exhibition opens at Tate Britain. The exhibition is part of a wider research project called 'Art School Educated' that looks at the vital role the Basic Design course has played in the development of the artistic and cultural capital visible in the UK today.

From the mid 1950's Leeds College of Art led the way in the Basic Design movement, which was a new and radical approach to training in art schools that revolutionised art education across Britain, and led to the creation of the [Foundation Diploma](#) as we know it today.

The Basic Design exhibition looks at the work of some of the key teachers in the movement including our then Head of Painting Harry Thubron, as well as Richard Hamilton, Tom Hudson, Victor Pasmore from other art schools. The exhibition surveys the main features of Basic Design as they emerged and were taught, with accompanying archival material and video documentation.

Harry Thubron was appointed Head of Painting in 1955 and he was a major innovator for change, his new approach to art education led to our Vernon Street site being a hub for experimentation and creativity. It was said that Thubron electrified both staff and students and that the Basic Design principles of research and enquiry led to the total reform and restructuring of the whole College, and art education nationwide.

A series of scholars mornings are taking place as part of the wider Art School Educated project and College lecturer Garry Barker will be presenting at an event this Spring. Garry joined the College in the 1970's and throughout his career has studied Thubron's work initially by incorporating his teaching methods when he was a young art lecturer and through conversations with staff that worked with him during his time here.



Editor's Notes

Leeds College of Art

Founded in 1842, Leeds College of Art is an innovative institution that has changed the way art qualifications are taught and structured in Britain today.

We combine academic and vocational excellence in all our undergraduate programmes. Our focus is to put student's talents to practical use, so their creativity is channelled towards a successful career or postgraduate study.

Our students and staff create a unique community of vibrant, ambitious and deeply creative artists and designers. We are based in Leeds, an internationally acclaimed centre for teaching and learning in addition to being a leading hub for creative and digital industries.

www.leeds-art.ac.uk