

BEAUX ARTS

Peter Lanyon

Red Cliff

1964

Wood, metal, plastic, oil on wood

35.5cm x 152.4cm x 15.2cm (13.98 x 60 x 5.98 inches)



Provenance

Private Collection, 2006

Exhibited

London, Gimpel Fils, *Peter Lanyon, Reliefs, Constructions and Related Paintings*, 20 May - 21 June 1975, cat no.33

Bath, Victoria Art Gallery, *Porthmeor : A Peter Lanyon Mural Rediscovered*, 25 October 2008 - 4 January 2009, unnumbered

St Ives, Tate Gallery, *Peter Lanyon*, 9 October 2010 - 23 January 2011, unnumbered, illus colour

Literature

Andrew Causey, *Peter Lanyon: Modernism and the Land*, Reaktion Books, London, 2006, illus colour, p208

Chris Stephens, *Peter Lanyon*, Tate Publishing, London, 2010, illus colour, p96

Andrew Lanyon, *Peter Lanyon*, St Ives Publishing and Printing Company, Cornwall, 1990, illus colour p265

Toby Treves, *Peter Lanyon*, Modern Art Press, London, 2018, cat no. 557, illus colour p607

Description

The construction is the tallest of three works Lanyon made between 1963 and 1964, the other two being *Holiday Coast* and *Untitled (Playtime)*. It consists of a piece of wooden panel, painted red, black and yellow with brush, onto which the artist has attached various objects. The paint is thin, but not uniform. Grit has been added in places to give texture, and the areas of red and yellow contain subtle modulations of tone.

At the top, Lanyon nailed to the board a green wooden triangle. The triangle can be rotated. Below it, to the left, he attached a long piece of wood, painted white with a thin line of green running down its middle. Exact halfway down its right side a small section has been cut out, whose upper and lower edges are painted the same red as the panel. Further down the piece of wood are remnants of yellow ochre and, at its end, a section of solid blue. This blue is in fact the lid of a plastic box.

Screwed into the top of it is a metal bracket that holds in place one end of the metal rod painted red. The rod runs up to the triangular section of the board above, to which it is attached by another metal bracket. This triangular board, which is fixed to the long piece of white wood, appears to be the fragment from a painting. Below the triangle is the other half of the blue plastic box, whose interior face is painted the same primrose yellow as that found at the top of the construction. There are two holes inside the box. These correspond exactly to the two holes in the small rectangle of light green that the green triangle at the top of the work points to, as if the box had once been anchored there and come adrift. Directly below the blue plastic box, two small metal fastening hooks are screwed to the panel and, below them, a section of toothed metal is nailed on.

Whereas the other two tall constructions of 1963 and 64 can easily be seen as landscapes, this work's colours, forms and objects do not evoke any obvious landscape association, individually or together. Lanyon did not inscribe the construction or exhibit it in his lifetime. Because the work is not titled or dated in the probate valuation, and because Sheila Lanyon wrote the entry in the Estate record book, it is presumed that the details therein, including the title and the date of 1964, were assigned posthumously. Accordingly the date has been broadened to c.1964 and the title adjusted to *Untitled (Red Cliff)*.