

Maurice Campbell-Taylor Bedford Library 1955 Cecil Higgins Art
Gallery

£6,000



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REF: 11690

Height: 51 cm (20.1")

Width: 69 cm (27.2")

Depth: 2 cm (0.8")

Description

Maurice Campbell Taylor (b.1900) : Bedford Public Library 1955

Oil on artist's board

Signed lower left Maurice Campbell-Taylor

In original white painted frame

Measures: length 69cm., 27" height 51cm., 20".

Exhibited : The Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Castle Close, Bedford, Exhibition -Bedford Past & Present , Loan March/April 1970, Lent by H&R Gale

Verso bearing Cecil Higgins Art Gallery loan label for above

BEDFORD LIBRARY formerly Assembly Rooms now known as The Harper Suite

Built as Assembly Rooms between 1834 and 1835, to the designs of architect and builder Thomas Gwyn Elger (1794-1841). An elegant, now Grade II* listed, public building, the Assembly Rooms was created in the Greek Revival style, reflecting the home of an early learned society encouraging education in the arts and sciences. The east wall of the Assembly Rooms features a stained-glass window by Thomas Willement (1786-1871), a leading Victorian designer of stained glass. The private subscription library of the Bedford Literary and Scientific Institute was bought by the Town Council in 1936 and the building reopened as a public library in 1937. In 1969, St. Paul's Methodist Church and Sunday School, next to the library, were demolished and replaced by a new and purpose-built Bedford Central Library, which opened in 1972. The former public library became known as the Harpur Suite. An extension, added around 1975, linked it to the Corn Exchange on St Paul's Square, together functioning as an entertainment venue for the town.

CECIL HIGGINS ART GALLERY, now known as The Higgins Bedford

The Higgins family founded a family brewing business at Castle Lane in the 1820's which they ran until the late-1920s when Cecil Higgins sold it to focus on his philanthropic ambition to found a museum. He devoted his later life to collecting fine and decorative arts with the aim of founding a museum "for the benefit, interest and education of the inhabitants of, and visitors to Bedford".

The Cecil Higgins Art Gallery & Museum opened to the public on 25th July 1949, housed in the former Higgins family home. It housed Cecil's collection of ceramics, glass and objets d'art. Cecil Higgins left a complex will to protect his collection which stipulated how the museum was to be organised. He also left a trust fund, to be used for museum purposes, but principally for acquiring works of art (which included Decorative and Applied). The Trustees of the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery still administer the trust, safeguarding the Cecil Higgins collection, enabling new acquisitions and vital conservation work.