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David Hockney

*Paper Pools*

The *Paper Pools* are a group of ninety-five (including variations) paper-pulp works created during a three-month period of collaboration in 1978. David Hockney spent several days experimenting with this new medium, adapting to it, and learning how to control the technique of forming images using cookie-cutter molds. After making numerous studies to test colors and techniques, he made his first images. The project began with *Sunflower*, *Steps with Shadow*, *Green Pool with Diving Board and Shadow* and *Gregory in the Pool*, which became editions of fifteen to twenty variations each.

The process developed involved six different steps in which newly made pulp sheets were couched and then colored. First, image molds constructed from galvanized metal strips were cut and shaped following the artist's line drawings and soldered together. The molds were placed on newly made pulp base sheets, and colored pulps and dyes were applied. After removing the molds, Hockney applied pulps and dyes freehand using a variety of tools, including spoons, turkey basters, soup ladles, brushes, and dog combs. The pulp sheets were repeatedly pressed, with Hockney constantly adding, removing, and altering the colored pulp. Once he completed a work, the sheets were dried between blotters.

After the *Sunflower* variations, Hockney concentrated on the Tyler swimming pool. He photographed, sketched, and studied it. He recorded the water's light qualities and how they changed at different times of day, under artificial illumination and at night, and in different weather conditions. Metal molds were again fabricated, conforming to outline shapes from Hockney's charcoal sketches. White base sheets were couched, and groups of three, six, or twelve sheets were arranged side by side, spanning seven to fourteen feet across. To accommodate the multipanel works, Kenneth Tyler built a platform on the driveway between the paper mill and the swimming pool. This brought the artist and the work out of the studio, brought the artist and his subject closer, and provided more space for the project.

During the project Lindsay Green and Tyler, directed by Hockney, mixed hundreds of gallons of pigmented pulp. Hockney made numerous small trial pictures to work out his palette, which changed daily. Each of the three-, six-, and twelve-pane 1 works was made in one day, using the colored pulps made that day specifically for the work.

The Paper Pools series includes sixty-eight single panel works making up the four variant editions, one three-panel image, twenty-three six-pane1 images, and three twelve-pane 1 images. Each of the multi-paneled works is signed D.H. and dated in white ink lower right of the lower right panel and signed David Hockney and numbered in pencil lower left verso of the lower right panel, with the chop mark lower left verso of the lower right panel.