

STEPHEN ONGPIN FINE ART



Paul Hogarth, (Kendal 1917 - Cirencester 2001)

Chicago Skyline

Watercolour, pen and black ink and grey wash, over an underdrawing in pencil, on thick white paper.
Signed and titled Paul Hogarth Chicago Skyline at the lower left.

407 x 588 mm. (16 x 23 1/8 in.) [sheet]

This large watercolour may be dated to 1978, and was used as a double-page illustration in Paul Hogarth's book *America Observed*, with text by Stephen Spender, published in 1979.

As Spender writes, in the text which accompanies the present drawing, 'The real and lasting triumph of Chicago is that the area extending a few miles inland from the lake and seven or eight miles along its shore contains a historic anthology of the most splendid architecture in America...But marvelous as certain buildings are, what makes Chicago so impressive is the placing of these buildings near the lake. Once I happened to fly from New York to Chicago on a bright winter day, and from the air the skyscrapers looked like formations of rock crystal glittering in the sunshine and arranged along the edge of a frosted mirror, the frozen and snow-swept lake; beyond these crystal towers the vast gridded lines of black streets and slum houses looked like latticework seen through encrustations of frost magically beautiful. Although one rarely sees it in the sparkling snow-white innocence of that particular morning, Chicago is architecturally successful in setting up great vertical towers near the lake, contrasting with the texture of the water the horizontality of the plains. Although in one of the flattest parts of America, the buildings – just because there is such a concentrated battery – project elevation and suggest, when one is on the ground, views from high up. And if one does go high up, one sees by day the immense luminous shield of the lake laid against the shore of roads and parks and buildings, and by night the endless moving sparkling chains of lights of cars against the lakeside towered over by golden luminous skyscrapers.'

A vertical variant of this watercolour, showing just the left half of the composition, is in a private collection. This smaller drawing was used as one of Hogarth's illustrations for Nigel Buxton's guidebook *America*, published in 1979.

Literature:

Paul Hogarth and Stephen Spender, *America Observed*, New York, 1979, illustrated pp.84-85.

Artist description:

Born Arthur Paul Hoggarth in Kendal in Cumbria, Paul Hogarth studied at the Manchester College of Art and at St. Martin's School of Art in London. Active as a watercolourist and printmaker, he was best known for the drawings and watercolours made on his extensive travels, many of which were used to illustrate books that he published. Hogarth also enjoyed a successful career as an illustrator. Beginning in 1962, he drew the covers for all of the novels of Graham Greene, published by Penguin Books, and developed a close friendship with the author. (He also illustrated books by Lawrence Durrell, Robert Graves and John Betjeman, among others.) Hogarth's first one-man exhibitions were held in London in 1952 and 1953. A visiting Lecturer at the Royal College of Art, he became an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1974 and an Academician in 1984. He was awarded an O.B.E. in 1989. Drawings and watercolours by Hogarth are in the collections of the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Tate in London, as well as the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, CT.