

# OSBORNE SAMUEL

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

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ALAN REYNOLDS



**Small Structure**, 1965

Oil on paper  
35 x 30.5 cms  
(13.76 x 11.99 in)  
P.O.A.

Signed & numbered 6 lower right. Titled & inscribed 'A Festival' verso

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The episodic and dialectical nature of Reynolds's 'oeuvre' reflects the workings of inner necessity, an aesthetic integrity and a creative imperative opposed to the superficialities of fashion. As a result Reynolds's work has always been well received by an admiring and well-informed group of connoisseurs, rather than simply investment collectors. This small oil on paper is a late variation on the Ovoid theme that pre-occupied him during the first half of the 1960s. The paint handling offers the personal touch within an ordered and symmetrical composition that, with hindsight, is a sure step towards later concretist ends.

Both in terms of its nuanced paint handling, colour and poised compositional elements – reduced to the horizontal, the vertical or the diagonal – 'Small Structure' recalls the intimate bottle subjects of the reclusive Bologna-based Italian still life painter Morandi. The bottles are ciphers of contemplation and, shorn of any allusion to such familiar everyday objects, Reynolds's thick 'bars' and thinner 'sticks' of white, black, caramel or sienna paint similarly seduce the viewer; Michael Harrison explains the oval format as an effective means of concentrating our attention on the formal facts while allowing the artist a method of "exploring a more cosmic, gravity-free space."<sup>1</sup>

'Alan Reynolds: The Making of a Concretist Artist' Michael Harrison p.61, Lund Humphries 2011.