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### Barrie Cooke - Biography

Barrie Cooke was born in Cheshire in 1931. As a teenager he lived in the US and studied Art History at Harvard University. He moved to Ireland in 1954 and at present he lives near Boyle in Co. Sligo. He has exhibited widely in Ireland and internationally and his work is in the collections of IMMA, the National Gallery of Ireland as well as and many collections abroad. He is a member of Aosdána

### Try to consider these questions about *Two Lough Key Islands*

1. The title of this work is "Two Lough Key Islands" how many islands can you see?
2. The centre of this painting is green and around the green there is a kind of grey colour, what do you think the grey area is a painting of?
3. Look carefully at the bottom of this painting. What does this detail reveal about the work?
4. Stepping into the painting where are you? What kind of a place is this? Why is this a place that we should know about?
5. This could be described as a portrait of water. Given our experience of the first decade of the 21st century, could such a theme have a political implication?
6. Art uses phrases like Modern, Abstract, Representative, Romantic, etc. as signposts to open up the history and the viewing of the work. What terms are useful when looking at a work like this?

On the reverse of this sheet is a short one-page exercise to assist you while looking at the painting. It comprises of five questions. Feel free to fill it out and take it home with you or you can simply use the questions in your mind as prompts to look at the painting more thoroughly. (If you do fill it out, please tell a member of staff so we can replace it for the next visitor)

1. Answer the first question, "Like/Dislike", with just one of these two words.
2. The next one is "Description", here describe all the physical details you can about the painting such as the name of the artist; the title; medium; dimensions as well as how the paint is applied and so on.
3. For the next one "Imagery", note down what the painting is of. For example Barrie Cooke's *Two Lough Key Islands* might include, "an island in mist, sort of abstracted, out in the lake but sort of floating in the painting" or Blaise Drummond's *Wreck of Hope* might include "a passenger aeroplane flying through a circular gap in stormy clouds in the centre of the painting. The plane is very small for the size of the painting" Describe as much as you can, everything you notice such as the choice of colours, the position of things in the painting and so on.
4. In the next one "Interpretation". Try to figure out what the artist was trying to communicate, what they meant by putting these things on the canvas, why are they there, what does the choice of colours signify, how does one bit relate to another, what was the artist feeling? Think about this for a couple of minutes before you come to your conclusions.
5. Finally you come to "Like/Dislike" again, but this time rather than just one word, give a sentence or two about your answer.