



## Sceaux Gardens Estate

### Date

1995

### Primary Maker

Keith Coventry

### Medium

Oil on canvas, painted wood and glass

### Description

This painting of the Sceaux Garden Estate in Camberwell forms part of a visually and thematically powerful series of 'Estate' paintings executed by the artist during the 1990s. In their style the paintings pay homage to early twentieth-century Russian abstract and Suprematist painter, Kazimir Malevich (1879-1935). However, Coventry's estate paintings represent a departure from such formal abstraction. Instead, Coventry produces aerial-view, linear and block-like, architectural arrangements of a number of mid-1950s London housing estates, all of

which creatively play on the modernist language of abstraction. Coventry forcibly contrasts the aspiring Utopian visions of many modernists – among them, abstract artists, architects and urban town planners – with the harsh realities and socio-political failures in post-war modern Britain, including social isolation, drugs, racism, prostitution and violent crime, all of which Coventry identified in the urban projects and social-housing in and around South London. Moreover, through a reductive approach to depicting such social and architectural experiments, Coventry also challenges modes of pictorial representation – as well as the visual language of modern abstraction itself. Although pictorially absent, the tenants and daily lives found within these housing estates remain a focal point for the subject of this 'Estate' series. In January 1960 the Architects Journal reviewed the newly completed Sceaux Gardens estate in Camberwell. Included were the original architectural plans and photographs which function as a fascinating source and counterpoint to Coventry's critical painting. <http://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/sceaux-gardens-camberwell-the-original-1960-aj-building-study/5204667.article> Benjamin Angwin – December 2014

### Dimensions

Frame Size: 965 x 715 x 55 mm (38 x 28 1/8 x 2 3/16 in.)