

Exhibition at Guildford Cathedral

EXHIBITING in a cathedral is a daunting proposition but contemporary artist Paul Hobbs has risen to the challenge and produced a celebratory and sharply focused display that can be enjoyed on many levels.

Commanding the lofty nave is his eye-catching *The Body of Christ*, a bold 5m painting in the form of a split hanging, which sets the essentially exuberant tone of the display of 18 smaller acrylic paintings and prints that sing out from the columns and walls.

The dynamic hanging immediately draws the eye but the central composition that has inspired all the works exhibited is a vibrant triptych based on the Holy Trinity, a scaled-down version of a design originally created for a church wall.

A carefully orchestrated, but playful semi-abstract, it is composed in three flowing movements conveyed in rippling juxtapositions of rich red and deep blue, waves of white and fluttering streamers of yellow. The composition commences on the left with *The Father*, a joyous depiction of creation, followed by the central image of the Crucifixion, *The Son*, and concludes with *The Holy Spirit*, a fountain-like outpouring.

Individual elements in the first include a wheeling flock of birds, emerging kangaroos, a crashing of waves. In the



Part of Paul Hobbs' vibrant work at Guildford Cathedral.

second, Christ's fragmented body revolves around the Cross. In the third, a spiralling arc symbolising His blood ascends to become the wind.

Contrasting patterns, bold shapes and a strong overall rhythm bind the elements together and create richly textured effects on the densely worked painting, which is broken up into its key

constituent parts in smaller paintings and prints grouped around it.

Throughout, Hobbs' skilful use of shape and colour moves the mood from joy to despair to renewed hope.

The exhibition continues until the July 18 before moving on to Coventry Cathedral.

Beatrice Phillpotts