

Turner Contemporary

Patrick Heron, 19 October 2018 - 6 January 2019

Press preview – Thursday 18 October, 11am – 2pm

Open now at Tate St Ives, 19 May – 30 September 2018

“My main interest, in my painting, has always been in colour, space and light.”



Patrick Heron, Red Garden Painting: June 3 - June 5 : 1985 . 1985. Copyright estate of Patrick Heron © All rights reserved, DACS 2018

The British artist Patrick Heron (1920–99) will be celebrated in this retrospective exhibition, the first major show of his work for twenty years, which opened at Tate St Ives on 19 May and travels to Turner Contemporary this autumn. One of the most significant and innovative figures in 20th century British art, Heron played a major role in the development of post-war abstract painting.

Spanning over fifty years of work from 1943 to 1996, the exhibition provides a rare opportunity to experience the scope and ambitious scale of Heron’s painting as well as his consistent attachment to the subject of colour. In 1962 he explicitly claimed that “colour is both the subject and the means; the form and the content; the image and the meaning, in my painting today.”

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Heron's abstraction is a direct response to the light, colour and shape that he encountered every day. An art of pure visual sensation, his paintings are the result of his experience of looking acutely at the world, and though they do not represent the garden and landscape surrounding his home and studio in Cornwall, those forms resonate in his painting in fundamental ways.

The exhibition is the first opportunity to bring together a group of these large-scale expansive works to Margate, revealing the full evolution of his vibrant abstract language, unlocking new insights into his art and encouraging the viewer — immersed in the rich aesthetic sensibility of his colour saturated paintings — to enjoy the simple and joyous act of looking.

Rather than a conventional retrospective, with a chronological display, this show is a succession of spaces, juxtaposing works from the full breadth of Heron's career to encourage a new understanding of his achievements as an artist.

An artist and a critic, Heron was central to debates in contemporary art since the 1940s. His recognition of the power of American abstract painting of the 1950s and 1960s was tempered by his unwavering attachment to the cultural values of European art found in the work of the French modern masters Paul Cézanne, Henri Matisse, Georges Braque and Pierre Bonnard, as much as his contemporaries such as Nicolas de Stael and Pierre Soulages, Peter Lanyon or William Scott. As an art critic in the 1950s for the American art magazine Arts, he introduced American readers to developments within British Art as well as offering a European perspective on American art.

Born in Leeds, Heron spent his early childhood in Cornwall, returning regularly after the mid-1940s, and moving permanently to Zennor, west Cornwall in 1956. He was foremost a painter, however during his career, he worked in a variety of media, from the silk scarves he designed for his father's company Cresta from the age of 14 to a stained glass window for Tate St Ives in 1993. A selection of the drawings, monoprints and gouaches Heron made throughout his career, will form part of the exhibition at Turner Contemporary.

Patrick Heron is curated by Andrew Wilson, Curator Modern and Contemporary British Art, Tate Britain and Sara Maston, Curator, Tate St Ives with Sarah Martin, Head of Exhibitions, Turner Contemporary. A joint symposium organised by Turner Contemporary with Tate St Ives will be held Friday 23 November 2018.

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue by Tate publishing.

Praise for Patrick Heron at Tate St Ives

"Patrick Heron's giant abstracts could make you swoon.... painting that seems so absolutely right"

Rachel Cooke, The Observer

"...a late style of mastery and experiment, exquisite design and broken space"

Jackie Wullschlager, FT

"You can sense the atmosphere of the elemental landscape around his house bleeding into these primal forms"

Mark Hudson, The Telegraph

Currently on view at Turner Contemporary

Animals & Us

25 May 2018 – 30 May 2018

A major exhibition exploring artists' reflections on the relationship between humans and other animals. Focusing on contemporary and 20th century artists and including historical artworks and artefacts, Animals & Us explores our lives and encounters with animals, and how these have been reflected in art.

Also showing at Turner Contemporary this Autumn...

Akram Zaatari

19 October 2018 – 6 January 2019

A new moving image commission by Lebanese artist Akram Zaatari, in collaboration with New Art Exchange, Nottingham. Zaatari's work is based on collecting, studying and archiving the photographic history of the Arab World.

Cornelia Parker, Perpetual Canon

11 September 2018 – 17 March 2019

Perpetual Canon by Turner-prize nominated artist Cornelia Parker is made up of sixty wind instruments that once belonged to a brass band and have been flattened and suspended in space, forming a circle. Supported by Royal Academy UK 250.

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Notes to editors

About Turner Contemporary

Turner Contemporary in Margate is one of the most distinctive galleries in the UK; its impact stretches beyond culture-led regeneration and the showcasing of world-class exhibitions, to pioneering change by making the arts more vital and connected to daily life.

Since opening in 2011, Turner Contemporary has:

- Generated over £58 million for the local economy
- Led to the opening of over 150 new businesses
- Safeguarded 155 jobs
- Attracted over 2.7 million visits

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- In copy please refer to Turner Contemporary and not 'The Turner Contemporary'
- Summer opening times: Open every day in August, 10am – 6pm.
- Post-summer opening times: Closed on Mondays. Open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 6pm (spring/summer), 10am – 5pm (autumn/winter). Admission to the gallery is free.
- Address: Turner Contemporary, Rendezvous, Margate, CT9 1HG
- Information: + 44 (0) 1843 233000, turnercontemporary.org
- Turner Contemporary is a charity, receiving public funding from Kent County Council and Arts Council England.



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