



PRESS RELEASE
20 March 2018

PATRICK HERON

Tate St Ives 19 May – 30 September 2018
Turner Contemporary, Margate 19 October 2018 – 6 January 2019

The acclaimed British artist Patrick Heron (1920–99) will be celebrated in this retrospective exhibition, the first major show of his work for twenty years. One of the most significant and innovative figures in twentieth century British art, Heron played a major role in the development of post-war abstract art.

This exhibition – spanning over fifty years of work from 1943 to 1996 – 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.’

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 in the new top-lit gallery at Tate St Ives is the first opportunity to bring together a group of these large-scale expansive works to Cornwall, reveal the full evolution of his vibrant abstract language, unlock new insights into his art and encourage 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 and juxtapositions across the full breadth of his career to encourage a new understanding of his achievement as an artist and the creative processes he followed.

Patrick Heron is curated by Andrew Wilson, Curator Modern and Contemporary British Art, Tate Britain and Sara Matson, Curator, Tate St Ives with Sarah Martin, Curator, Turner Contemporary. It will tour to Turner Contemporary, Margate from 19 October 2018 to 6 January 2019. 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 from Tate Publishing.

For press information please contact Arwen Fitch at arwen.fitch@tate.org.uk or call +44(0)1736 791124

Notes to Editors:

- The exhibition will bring together 45 paintings, including rarely seen from public and private collections around the world
- **About Patrick Heron**
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 Staël 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 1920, Heron spent his early childhood in Cornwall, returning regularly after the mid-1940s – 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.