

Peter Joseph

The New Painting

26 March – 10 May 2014
52-54 Bell Street

An abstract painter who came to prominence in the mid-sixties with environmental works and paintings of simple shapes in near primary colours, Peter Joseph has recently completed a series of freer and more openly lyrical works. This new vocabulary, or *The New Painting* as he calls it, finally breaks away from the formal restraint of over thirty years, featuring angular and biomorphic shapes floating over a neutral ground, which occasionally disintegrate or collapse into semi-translucent ethereal washes. Joseph's consistent conceptual discipline is still evident in his practice of first collaging together small swatches of painted canvas, before transferring and flattening these small, collaged works in order to re-enact or re-create them as large-scale paintings.

The new paintings feature the tonal evocations of previous series, but here the references are, according to the artist, the landscape and skies of his Gloucestershire home of 30 years, also reflecting his fascination with the powerful significances of classical Greek architecture. The marks of the brush strokes, becoming forms on a ground which gives a new space of transparency, are embodiments of atmospheres, memory or location. However, "Representation is, as always, something that belongs to words and not to pictorial substitutes," Joseph says. "For the artist, the subject of the painting is his life."

As one of only a handful of artists to show in the first year of the Lisson Gallery in 1967 (alongside Derek Jarman and Dom Sylvester Houédard among others), Peter Joseph is the gallery's longest serving artist. This will be his fifteenth exhibition at Lisson Gallery.

About the artist

Peter Joseph has, over the course of decades, dedicated his practice to seeking the potential in constraint. He rose to critical acclaim in the 1970s for his meditative, two-colour paintings, which set one rectangle within a frame of a darker shade. These early works are characterized by perfect symmetry, where every decision about colour, tone and proportion can be seen to be redolent of time, mood or place. While comparable to the work of American artists such as Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, Joseph's is an anomalous strain of Minimalism: his allegiance lies as much with Renaissance masters as with his contemporaries. In the late 1990s his format departed from his established 'architecture' to divide the canvas into two planes, horizontally or vertically, wherein loose brushwork, natural tones and patches of exposed canvas tap into new feeling. As Joseph says: 'A painting must generate feeling otherwise it is dead'.

Peter Joseph was born in London in 1929. Self-taught as an artist, he came to non-figurative painting from beginnings in advertising and graphic design. He lives and works in Stroud, Gloucestershire. Joseph has held solo shows at Unité d'habitation Le Corbusier, Briey-en-Fôret (1998); Museum of Modern Art, Oxford (1994) and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (1983) and has been included in major group exhibitions at Nouveau Musée National de Monaco (2013); Museum für Moderne Kunst Weserburg, Bremen (2011); Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Geneva (2007); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (1991), Städtische Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (1984) and the Royal Academy of Arts, London (1977). He won the John Player Painting Competition in 1968. Work by Peter Joseph is in numerous important collections, including the Tate Gallery, London; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; the Walker Art Gallery, Minneapolis; the Fogg Art Museum, Philadelphia; the Kunsthau, Zurich and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Since being founded in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it has championed the careers of artists who have transformed the way art was made and presented. It continues to support the future of its artists, the legacy of historical figures, the evolving practice of established artists and the wide-ranging potential of emerging and new talents.

In addition to two exhibition spaces in London, one in Milan and an office in New York, the *Lisson Presents* programme of off-site exhibitions extends a legacy of curatorial innovation beyond the gallery spaces, working with institutions and artists to present new initiatives around the world. As well as showing and supporting an important array of international artists, such as Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, Gerard Byrne, Liu Xiaodong, Tatsuo Miyajima and Santiago Sierra, Lisson Gallery also represents many younger artists of this stature, including Allora & Calzadilla, Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg, Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza.

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 11am-5pm

Location: 52-54 Bell Street, London, NW1 5BY

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