

PRESS RELEASE

ROY OXLADE: WORK FROM THE 80s & 90s
21 FEBRUARY - 7 APRIL 2018
OPENING: TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY, 6-8PM

Alison Jacques Gallery is delighted to present a solo show of paintings by British artist Roy Oxlade. This is the first solo exhibition of Oxlade's work since his death in February 2014 aged 85. The paintings shown were all made in the 1980s and 1990s and expand our understanding of the themes and metaphors which are central to Oxlade's practice along with his use of bold colour and improvised image. His home and studio in Kent formed the basis of his subject matter, with anglepoise lamps, lemon squeezers and his wife Rose Wylie as some of the recurring themes. As Roy Oxlade stated a year before he died:

'Painting to me is like a room of the imagination. It's up to me what I do with it. I choose its size and its materials – usually canvas and oil paint. At the beginning its relationships don't amount to much – it's a rectangle in a jumble of art history I relate to [...] There would not be much fun in leaving the room empty [...] I have put in some other stuff, some characters, some actors – tables, pots, colours, easels, lamps, scribbles, figures and faces to interact with each other. I adjust the temperature, open the windows, shut the windows, throw things out, change the lighting.'

Roy Oxlade emerged in the 1950s as one of a prominent group of London-based painters which also included Frank Auerbach and Leon Kossoff. Taught by David Bomberg, Oxlade remained true to Bomberg's values of authenticity in brush marks, immediacy and truth of feeling, whilst at the same time forming a unique vocabulary of his own. Oxlade's work combines a love of the absurd with wit, sensuality, spontaneous brushwork and a rejection of 'artiness', something he felt damaged art. His paintings evolved from a determination to create 'real' art, freed and uncorrupted by formal painting traditions.

Roy Oxlade was born in Tottenham, North London in 1929. While studying at Bromley School of Art, he attended evening classes taught by David Bomberg at the Borough Polytechnic (now London South Bank University). Oxlade completed a one year art teachers diploma at Goldsmiths College, and later, both at the Royal College, he completed his MA thesis '*Bomberg and the Borough – An Approach to Drawing*.' (1976); and a PHD thesis, '*Bomberg's Papers: The Spirit in the The Mass – A Commentary*' (1980).

It was at Goldsmiths College that Oxlade met and married fellow art student Rose Wylie, having got engaged after two weeks of meeting each other. Since then, Rose has been a central muse and consistently features throughout his work. In 2016, *Rose & Roy*, an award-winning documentary by Adolfo Doring and Claudia Baez (2015) was the gala opening film at The New York City International Film Festival.

Roy Oxlade's first major solo exhibition was in 1963, at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Canada, and key group exhibitions included the John Moores Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (1962), the Hayward Annual (1982) and EAST International at Norwich University of the Arts (1991). In 2000, he was included in *not enough British Art* at the Velan Center for Contemporary Art, Turin, and in *Towards Night* at the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne (2016).

Alongside his own work, Roy Oxlade was a hugely influential figure in art education. An outstanding teacher, he was also a highly prolific writer on art and contributed regularly to *Modern Painters*, *Art Monthly*, *Blunt Edge* and *The London Magazine*. In 2010, Ziggurat Books published *Art & Instinct, Selected Writings of Roy Oxlade*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT FIONA MCGOVERN
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FORTHCOMING: BIRGIT JÜRGENSSEN: 17 APRIL - 19 MAY 2018, OPENING: 16 APRIL, 6-8PM