

Major Ivon Hitchens exhibition announced for summer 2019 at Pallant House Gallery

Exhibition Details

Ivon Hitchens: Space through Colour

29 June – 13 October 2019

Press View: Friday 28 June 2019

Pallant House Gallery is delighted to announce a major exhibition on British painter Ivon Hitchens (1893 – 1979) for summer 2019. The largest exhibition of his work since 1989, it will consider the whole scope of his career, spanning a remarkable six decades from the 1920s to the 1970s. It will provide a fresh perspective on one of Britain's most admired modern artists, whose paintings brought continental colour to the English landscape.

The exhibition seeks to reappraise Hitchens' significant contribution to British art, following his journey towards abstraction through over 70 works, from his earliest figurative scenes to his final vibrant abstract paintings. Although Hitchens painted the landscape of the South Downs in Sussex throughout his career, his work transcended location, bringing him a national and international reputation.

1920s and 1930s

Hitchens was a progressive artist in the 1920s and '30s. He was one of the earliest members of the experimental Seven and Five Society alongside Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and Ben Nicholson. Hitchens' close friendship with



Ivon Hitchens, *Red Centre*, 1972, oil on canvas, Pallant House Gallery © The Estate of Ivon Hitchens

Ben and Winifred Nicholson is reflected in *Border Day (Morning, Bankshead)* (1925), whilst other friendships inspired works such as *Henry Moore in his Studio* (1929).

Some of Hitchens' earliest works will be included, such as *Didling on the Downs* (c.1922) and *Curved Barn* (1922), the latter presented by the artist to Pallant House Gallery in 1979. Hitchens was profoundly influenced by European artists, in particular Cézanne, Matisse and Braque, in paintings such as *Spring in Eden* (1925) and *Winter Stage* (1936), a break-out

work in which Hitchens' recognisable horizontal format emerged.

1940s and 1950s

The artist's retreat from London to Sussex at the outset of the Second World War gave rise to an extraordinary body of paintings over the subsequent four decades which were international in spirit despite being rooted in the English landscape. During this time he painted repeatedly at his home near Petworth, and in surrounding locations in the South Downs – Heyshott, Duncton and Iping Common, in particular. By far the greatest part of his work was produced in the six acres of woodland that surrounded his Sussex home, Greenleaves.

Hitchens always remained very aware of developments in modern art both at home and abroad, but from the 1940s onwards he chose to focus on the subject matter close to home. This included the landscapes of Sussex as well as flower paintings, interiors and studies of the nude and of family members, such as *Flower Piece* (1943) and *Piano Player* (1944).

1960s and 1970s

The last decade of Hitchens' life saw continued experimentation and a heightening of his palette, as he spent more and more time at his coastal holiday cottage at Selsey, West Sussex. By this time his works were almost completely abstract, whilst still rooted in the landscape that had provided his subject matter for many decades. Works such as *Arno II* (1965) and *Red Centre* (1972) show the power and intensity that Hitchens' retained in his work into his final years.

The exhibition includes loans from public and private collections across the UK, including Tate, The Hepworth Wakefield, Leeds Art Gallery, Manchester Art Gallery and Museums

For all press enquiries please contact:

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Sheffield. Alongside Hitchens' paintings, a number of drawings, mural studies, photographs and sketchbooks, as well as rare lithographs, will be on display.

--Ends--

Notes to editors:

- The exhibition is curated by Anne Goodchild in partnership with Pallant House Gallery. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with contributions from Alexandra Harris, Mike Tucker, Claudia Tobin, Claudia Milburn and Simon Martin.
- Alongside this exhibition Pallant House Gallery presents a season of exhibitions exploring the landscape as inspiration, in particular that of the South Downs in Sussex. This includes:
 - A new commission of photographs by photographer Simon Roberts exploring the locations where Hitchens painted.
 - An exhibition showing the outcomes from a collaboration with Outside In, in which artists facing barriers to the art world will create responses to works related to landscape from the Pallant House Gallery collection, through the Step Up: Exploring Collections programme.
- A concurrent exhibition 'Ivon Hitchens: The Painter in the Woods' runs at the Garden Museum, London from 8 May – 15 July, focusing on Hitchens' paintings of his gardens following his retreat to Sussex after the Second World War.
- Website Link: <https://pallant.org.uk/whats-on/ivon-hitchens-space-through-colour/>
- [Press image download](#)

Listings Information:

Exhibition Dates

29 June – 13 October 2019

Pallant House Gallery

8-9 North Pallant
Chichester
West Sussex, UK
PO19 1TJ

Opening Times

Tuesday – Saturday: 10am – 5pm (excl. Thursday:
10am – 8pm)
Sundays/Bank Holidays: 11am – 5pm
Mondays: Closed

Website: www.pallant.org.uk

About Pallant House Gallery:

Pallant House Gallery in Chichester is a leading UK museum that stimulates new ways of thinking about British art from 1900 to now. As well as an original and critically-acclaimed exhibition programme and a public programme with inclusion at its heart, the gallery houses one of the best collections of Modern British art in the country - all within the distinctive setting of an 18th century townhouse and a 21st century gallery.

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