

bernard jacobson gallery

Howard Hodgkin

Views

An Exhibition of Early Prints

2nd March – 2nd April 2013

Bernard Jacobson Graphics is pleased to announce an exhibition of limited-edition prints by Howard Hodgkin, which focuses on the first two decades of his printmaking. The exhibition shows the artist's long-lasting and close collaboration with Bernard Jacobson, who published most of the prints on view.

The exhibition covers Hodgkin's early output between 1966 and 1986, starting with his early experiments in printmaking such as the series "5 rooms." In subsequent series the artist introduced the use of hand-colouring and enlarged prints to an oversized dimension, finally achieving a sculptural quality and lushness which became a signature component of his printmaking practice.

Hodgkin became a printmaker in the 1960s and has since been impassioned with the process, inventing new techniques and methods to develop his idea of printmaking.

Howard Hodgkin started his printmaking career with lithographs as the process was very similar to the directness of applying paint to a canvas. In *Girl on a Sofa*, *Bedroom*, and *Indian Room* we see interiors with brightly coloured geometric shapes, sometimes recognizable as human figures or organic forms. After a voyage to India his interest turned towards capturing a variety of views: views from his train window while crossing the country, views through shutters, or views out of a window into a landscape. He also started painting borders around the image, which function as windows.

With hand-colouring, Hodgkin brought directness and spontaneity to his prints. As a result the texture became much richer with the colour bleeding into the printing ink – a chance encounter which Hodgkin encouraged and accepted. The hand-colouring could take place at any stage of the printing process and in the final print the many layers of paint and ink become undistinguishable under the opulence of the final texture. However, Hodgkin began questioning the autographic marks and decided to take on assistants who would execute the

bernard jacobson gallery

hand-colouring following his instructions. He mused, “I want the language to be as impersonal as possible. [...] I want to make marks that are anonymous as well as autonomous.”

The oversized print *Bleeding* in the exhibition, with its richness of colour, shows a development towards bolder prints. It is one of only two prints with preparatory studies. Featuring his New York apartment, it contains decorative designs that are inspired by Indian art as well as the Alhambra in Granada. His long-lived fascination with Indian culture and the Indian landscape finds here an almost figurative expression.

Later under the guidance of his new printer Jack Shirreff, Hodgkin introduced the use of carborundum to his printing. It allowed for deeper colours on a slightly embossed paper. As in *Red Listening Ear* and *Blue Listening Ear*, the texture becomes bolder and the hand-colouring of increasing importance in these prints.

Howard Hodgkin was born in 1932 in London. Having studied at the Camberwell School of Art and Bath Academy of Art from 1949 – 54, he started his career as a painter and later became a prolific printmaker. Hodgkin represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1984 and won the Turner Prize in 1985. He had many important exhibitions in museums around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1995; and a major retrospective exhibition touring the Tate Gallery, London; the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; and the Reina Sofia, Madrid in 2006. His work can be found in the collections of major museums, including MOMA, New York; the Tate Gallery, London; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.