

# Victor Pasmore: *The Final Decades*

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## Press Release

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The Directors of Marlborough are pleased to present an exhibition of the British master Victor Pasmore in what will be the first in depth exhibition on the artist in the United States since his 1988 retrospective at the Yale Center for British Art followed by the Philips Collection in 1989.

Victor Pasmore holds a unique place in the canon of British art. His work reflects and anticipates the changes that occurred in art and art practice throughout the twentieth century. A career that evolved from the lyrical landscapes of the young artist through the development of a new, pure abstraction to experiments with constructivist sculpture, spray painting, collage and Perspex made Pasmore one of the foremost exponents and theorists of abstract art. His work, in all its diversity, remains challenging and relevant today.

By 1950, Pasmore began to promote a number of the British Constructivists and gained a close association with Richard Hamilton and his exhibition *This Is Tomorrow*. Pasmore represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1961 and participated in Documenta II in 1959. By the 1960s, Pasmore's geometry softened introducing curved lines and edges along with bright colors blossoming into lyrical abstract compositions. These changes were complimented by his relocation to Malta in 1966 where he resided until his death. His first retrospective was held at the ICA in London (1954), to be followed by numerous retrospectives including the Tate Retrospective in 1964.

Presented here will be twenty large scale works executed between 1960 to 1996 accompanied by a fully illustrated book with an essay by the British critic, Martin Gayford. In his text, he quotes from interviews with Pasmore:

*When I talked to Pasmore in 1995, he explained that 'abstract' was 'a very bad word' to describe what he did. Then he added, I call it independent painting: that is, art that is independent like music. The musical parallel was evidently in his mind when he gave titles to a number of later paintings such as Symphony in Maroon and Five Colours, Grey Symphony, Black Rhythm or Green Development in Two Movements.*

Pasmore held positions as Director of Painting at Camberwell School of Art and Head of the Department of Painting at King's College, Durham University, as well as lecturing at Harvard University. He was awarded Honorary degrees from the Royal College of Art and the University of Warwick and was appointed CBE in 1959. He became a Trustee of the Tate Gallery in 1963-4 and was elected a Royal Academician in 1983. Pasmore's work can be found in major museums



*The Paradox of Progress*, 1984  
oil on canvas on board  
34¼ × 144 in. / 87 × 366 cm  
© The Estate of Victor Pasmore



Victor Pasmore in Blackheath Studio, 1960  
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and public collections worldwide, including: Tate Britain (UK), Royal Academy of Arts (UK), Museum of Modern Art (USA), The Courtauld Institute of Art (UK), Scottish National Gallery (UK), The British Council (UK), Yale Center for British Art (USA), Albright-Knox Art Gallery (USA), Art Institute of Chicago (USA), Kröller-Müller Museum (EU), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (EU), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (EU), amongst others.

## Marlborough

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