

Press release

HOWARD HODGKIN

AfterAll

From the 14th of September to the 31st of October

Opening on the 14th of September, 2017

The Galería Pilar Serra is opening the season with the second exhibition by the recently deceased English artist, Howard Hodgkin (1932 – 2017), a very well-known artist, both as a painter and as the author of an important series of lithographs and engravings. He was born in London, where he lived and worked most of the time; he attended Camberwell School of Art and Bath Academy of Art in Corsham. In 1985, he won the Turner Prize and represented the United Kingdom at the Venice Biennale. In 1992 he was given a knighthood. His work has been exhibited in many museums all over the world, with the Metropolitan Museum of New York and the Tate standing out, and in Madrid, the Reina Sofia devoted an extensive retrospective exhibition to him in 2007.

As a painter, he represents a highly particular case within the context of recent European painting and more specifically within the group of British artists with whom he has been linked since the 1970s. His spectacular refinement of brushstroke and colour palette mastering is the result of many long years of considered observation, first working with scratched out lines and the overlapping of layers of oil paint from the middle of the 1970s and with the new oil drying agents, with thin veils that look like watercolour. The fascination for the frames that mark out the limit of the edge of the painting and the window through which this must be looked at, led Hodgkin to extend his discourse towards the frame itself. From the very beginning, the subjects of his paintings have been centred on the observation of social relations between people, a subject that has been extended to relationships with objects, studying the relationship of the space included in the household interiors where he himself lived. And from the 1990s onwards, Hodgkin became interested in light variations and different atmospheric events. All of this shown in an abstract type of painting, a *rara avis* in the English context that has marked and influenced many subsequent painters due to his acute analysis and delicate sensitivity, to his attention to the smallest, most intimate and personal details, avoiding the bombast of the most important subjects.

The artist's first exhibition at the gallery, in 2007, which coincided with the one held by the Reina Sofia, included twelve etched and aquatinted engravings which, as is the norm for this artist, are finished by hand with oil paint, as if they were works on paper. This is the fundamental characteristic of his graphic artwork, an element that turns them into unique examples.

Now, we are presenting thirteen works from his last series, to which he gave a premonitory name: *AfterAll*, " what is left, after all? What remains when everything is said and done? If these are the questions, these paintings could be the answers: intense, vital, extraordinary recreations of emotion in its purest state-" These are the words of Andrew Graham-Dixon, in the foreword of the catalogue for these works. Howard Hodgkin's work can be compared to an autobiographical novel, made up of various parts. This is the final chapter, which includes memories of England, days by the sea, the flavour of an ice cream, the smell of autumn or some summer holidays.