A RARE OPPORTUNITY – About the exhibition

Patrick Graham: Thirty Years — The Silence Becomes the Painting marks a rare opportunity to view the works of an artist who has been credited by critics and art historians with changing the face of painting in Ireland. Art historian, writer and curator Peter Selz, who curated this exhibition, says that Graham “confronts the viewer with drawings and paintings of shattering force ... [he] makes us aware that great painting has a presence and a future.” Art historian John Handley notes that Graham’s work “addresses the timelessness of time, the repetition of history, and the continuous cyclical nature of silence, abandonment, and redemption in the creative process.” In the artist’s own words, “The silence becomes the painting, the painting comes from silence. It is the moment when painting is no longer an act of doing or making but of receiving.”

Graham’s inspiration is deeply rooted in the Irish landscape, in vistas and places that hold deep meaning for him. The Irish affinity for nature, combined with profound experiences of both oppression and repression, has led to extraordinary artistic expressions in poetry, music, and dance. This cultural and artistic milieu formed Graham’s visual expression. His work incorporates ambiguous symbolic forms and scripted phrases that resonate like fragments of traditional song and lyrical poetry which spring from a unique historical consciousness; through them he explores the elemental processes of life and the existential journey. Among the realities he acknowledges in a sensitive voice is the Irish religious experience, particularly of the Catholic faith, yet his work has universal appeal to those who struggle with issues of identity, freedom, or faith.

“A LIVING NATIONAL TREASURE” – About the artist

Patrick Graham has been recognized by Ireland as a “living national treasure” through his induction into Aosdána (a society that honors outstanding work in the arts) since 1986. Graham was born in Mullingar, County Westmeath, Ireland in 1943, and studied at the National College of Art in Dublin. He has exhibited in Ireland and internationally since 1966, and is represented in major public and private collections at home and abroad. Graham’s work has been the subject of numerous exhibitions and symposiums internationally, including the National Gallery of Ireland, the Berkeley Art Museum, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Trinity College, Walker Art Gallery in England, the Hokkaido Museum in Japan, the University of Michigan, Northeastern University, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

September 23 – December 16, 2012
free public opening reception September 23 2–4 p.m.

This exhibition was organized by Meridian Gallery/Society for Art Publications, San Francisco, with the support of Jack Rutberg Fine Arts, Los Angeles. The exhibition is supported by Culture Ireland Cultúr Éireann

Patrick Graham, Dead Swan/Captain’s Hill, 1998–99. Oil and mixed media on canvas diptych. 72 × 132 in.
Patrick Graham - Thirty Years

THE SILENCE BECOMES THE PAINTING

Sample Images


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