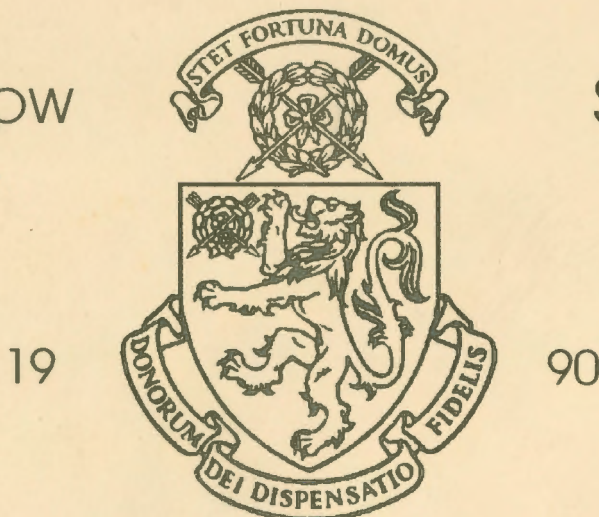


HARROW

SCHOOL



Exhibition

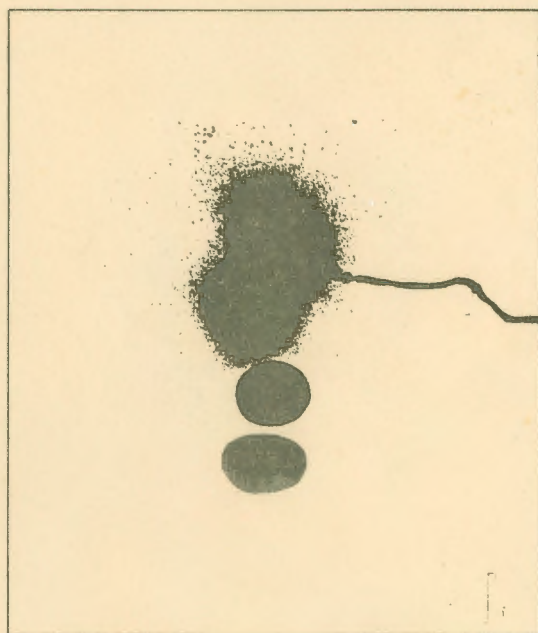
OLD SPEECH ROOM GALLERY

2 March - 22 April

VICTOR PASMORE CH, RA

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*Burning Waters, 1988*

### Acknowledgements

The idea for this exhibition came from the artist himself. He suggested it to Ashley Barlow, a master at the School and fellow exhibitor, at the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition 1989. This is the second Pasmore exhibition in the Old Speech Room Gallery, following the inaugural exhibition of 1976. The School is privileged to have as an Old Harrovian one of this century's most eminent artists.

We wish to express our gratitude to the artist for conceiving and nurturing the exhibition. We would also like to thank Alexandra Wettstein of Marlborough Fine Art (London) Ltd for her generosity and ready assistance in the preparation of this event.



- 1908 Born in Surrey, son of the distinguished doctor, Edwin Pasmore. Brother, Dr Stephen Pasmore, MB, BS, FRCGP, born 1910. Sister, Winifred Pasmore, 1914 - 1989, artist and teacher.
- 1923 - 26 Educated at Harrow - Bradbys 1923<sup>1</sup>. Winner of the Yates Thompson Prize for Art, 1924, 1925 & 1926. Brother, Stephen Pasmore - Small Houses and Bradbys 1924<sup>3</sup>.
- 1927 - 37 The death of his father obliged him to take a local government post, Public Health Department, LCC. During this period he attended evening classes at the Central School for Art, and became involved with the London avant-garde.
- 1932 First one-man exhibition, London Artists' Association Gallery, Bond Street.
- 1934 Early experiments with abstraction in art.
- 1938 Able to paint full-time. Established the Euston Road School with Claude Rogers and William Coldstream.
- 1940 Married the painter Wendy Blood.
- 1938 - 47 Painted traditional works and later naturalistic landscapes, often views of the Thames. Lived on the Thames at Chiswick Mall and Hammersmith.
- 1943 - 49 Visiting teacher at Camberwell School of Art.
- 1947 The final move to abstraction, described by Herbert Read as 'the most revolutionary event in post-war British Art'. Victor Pasmore has written 'true painting, in any form, always develops a concrete existence of its own, independent of what it represents'.
- 1949 - 54 Visiting teacher at the Central School for Art.
- 1951 Large ceramic mural, Regatta Restaurant, Festival of Britain. Started to exhibit constructed reliefs.
- 1954 - 61 As Director of Painting, Department of Fine Art, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, did much to stimulate new thinking in art education towards courses based on abstract principles of design.
- 1955 - 77 Consulting Director of Urban Design, Peterlee New Town, County Durham. Designed the South-West area of the town.
- 1959 CBE
- 1960 Selected for British Pavilion, Venice Biennale. Thereafter, retrospective exhibitions in many countries and frequent participation in international exhibitions.
- 1964 Started working in graphics. Carnegie Prize, Pittsburgh International.
- 1965 Retrospective exhibition, Tate Gallery.
- 1966 Acquired a house and studio in Malta.
- 1976 *Victor Pasmore*, inaugural exhibition, Old Speech Room Gallery, Harrow School.
- 1980 Retrospective exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts.
- 1981 CH
- 1983 Elected RA
- 1988 - 89 Retrospective exhibition, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, Conn, and The Phillips Collection, Washington.
- 1980s His recent work, as represented in this exhibition, allies his natural gift for lyrical expression and poetic interpretation, with his constant interest in the theoretical basis of art. See *The Independence of Painting*, below.



## Victor Pasmore at Harrow

At school he was taught along traditional lines and his gift for painting was soon recognized. He won the Yates Thompson Prize for Art three times.

He has written of his artistic beginnings:

When I was a boy the popular image of painting was that created by the Dutch, English and French naturalist tradition. I grew up with the idea, therefore, that the art of painting meant representing as realistically as possible the objects and effects of the natural world. From my parents I inherited an appreciation for art in all its forms and also a talent for drawing which I developed at first by copying pictures. But it was at school, at Harrow, that I first began to develop a sophisticated interest in painting. There, in its art studios, I was put to copying the Greek antique and the drawings of the Italian masters. I read the lectures of Joshua Reynolds, the Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci and the colour science of the French Impressionists. On visits to London I haunted the museums and at the Tate Gallery was brought face to face with the first intimation of the objective independence of painting - the late works of Turner. These works shone like the sun and I knew then that the imagery of painting was something in itself.

Alan Bowness and Luigi Lambertini:

*Victor Pasmore, a catalogue raisonné ... 1926 - 1979,*

Rizzoli, 1980

*The rest of this section has been contributed by the artist specially for this exhibition:*

There is one place at Harrow which I remember both with pleasure and gratitude - the Art School; a spacious, dignified and isolated building partially hidden among trees behind the Speech Room. Here I could escape into the fantasies of Art and here too I was first introduced to the great masters of painting.

But more than that; I was fortunate to have excellent art masters - Maurice Clarke, a first rate and sensitive painter in the best tradition of English watercolour and his assistant, John Holmes, who had more modern inclinations and who introduced me to the French Impressionists. With their encouragement I copied the antique and reproductions of drawings by the old masters.

But apart from academic exercises of copying, Maurice took a few of us on Saturday afternoons in the summer term outdoor sketching from nature in the country and local villages, trips which sometimes ended with tea, strawberries and cucumber sandwiches en route.

Harrow was my only art school; so although I learnt nothing that I can remember in the form rooms there I did discover Art. Indeed, in this Gallery, which was then my form room, I also discovered poetry. One day a new master arrived; but instead of calling on our ignorant services to translate some ancient Greek verse he did so himself and read it out beautifully, indeed so well that I suddenly woke up - 'Good Lord, this is poetry!'

I was fortunate too in being at Bradbys because the wife of the House Master, Major Freeborn, was herself a very talented painter under the influence of Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelites and her paintings decorated their billiard room.. This was also fortunate because when discovered one evening by Freeborn (Juggins) in my room painting a large imitation of Turner's 'Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus' with messy oil paints strewn all over the floor, during what should have been 'prep' time, nothing was said except - 'My dear Sir, what are you doing!'



### The Independence of Painting

Basically painting is a language about visual objects, but in terms of subjective effect; that is to say, their beauty. It is true that the ancient word 'beauty' has seemed to be too static for modern thought, so that attempts have been made to replace it with a more dynamic and inclusive connotation like 'sublime' or 'vitality'. But whatever substitution is made the image involved is equally tenuous and ambiguous. Either way we need to ask what is the function of beauty in relation to the objective world and what is the need for this extension of its appearance. In other words why does the natural world appear beautiful in both its calm and violent form?

The answer to this can only be abstract and relative to the evolution of human consciousness. Without the vision of beauty we would be deprived of a psychological link between what the eye sees physically and what intuitive consciousness knows intrinsically; that is to say, the physical world and its spiritual or metaphysical being.

In the past religious painting provided a link between sensibility and the mystery of God. But now, without God, the link is with Nature. What is the reality of the sky without the beauty of the stars spread across the surface of the night? But to be told that they are only objects leads us further away rather than nearer the mystery of their existence.

Victor Pasmore, 1988

## Catalogue

### Works

- 1 *Farleigh Church in Spring, 1926*  
Oil on panel, 30.5 x 40.5 cm  
Lent by the artist  
Exhibited: Tate Gallery retrospective exhibition 'Victor Pasmore 1925 - 1965', 1965, illust cat 1  
Literature: Alan Bowness and Luigi Lambertini 'Victor Pasmore, a catalogue raisonné of the paintings, constructions and graphics 1926 - 1979', Rizzoli, 1980, no 4, illust p 32  
Victor Pasmore grew up at Farleigh in Surrey. This impressionist landscape is one of several views of the church which he painted whilst he was a pupil at Harrow.
- 2 *Plaster cast, c 1926*  
Oil on canvas, 36 x 26 cm  
Lent by the Towner Art Gallery and Local History Museum, Eastbourne  
This was painted in the Art Schools at Harrow where, in traditional fashion, the boys were taught to make copies from casts.
- 3 *Miss Humphries, 1944*  
Oil on canvas, 51 x 40.5 cm  
Lent by the artist  
Literature: Bowness and Lambertini, op cit, no 80, illust p 52  
Nos 1 and 3 are regarded by the artist as major early works.
- 4 *Linear Image: The Ambiguous World, No 1, 1975*  
Paint and gravure on board, 40.6 x 40.6 cm  
Collection: The Governors of Harrow School  
This work was generously presented by the artist, 1976.  
Literature: Bowness and Lambertini, op cit, no 607, illust p 157
- 5 - 8 *From 'Points of Contact', 1979/80*  
A set of screenprints, 70.5 x 53.3 cm  
Edition of 70  
    No 29  
    No 30  
    No 31  
    No 32
- 9 *Points of Contact No. 34, 1980*  
Screenprint, 71 x 53 cm  
Edition of 70
- 10 *Points of Contact No. 36, 1982*  
Screenprint, 70.5 x 54 cm  
Edition of 70
- 11 *Senza Titolo, 1982*  
Etching and aquatint, 120 x 120 cm  
Edition of 85
- 12 *Points of Contact No. 38, 1984*  
Screenprint, 67.1 x 64.5 cm  
Edition of 70
- 13 *Garden in Dar Gamri, 1985*  
Ink and watercolour on paper, 22.2 x 31.4 cm  
Initialed and dated lower right



- 14 *Garden in Dar Gamri, 1985*  
Ink and watercolour on paper, 22.2 x 33 cm  
Initialed lower right
- 15 *Garden in Dar Gamri, 1985*  
Ink and watercolour on paper, 52 x 40.7 cm  
Initialed lower right
- 16 *Vigna Antoniniana, 1985*  
Ink on paper, 52 x 40.7 cm  
Initialed lower right
- 17 *Green Darkness, 1986*  
Etching and aquatint, 65 x 93 cm  
Edition of 90
- 18 *Blue Image, 1986*  
Etching and aquatint, 69 x 87 cm  
Edition of 90
- 19 *The Passion Flower, 1986*  
Etching and aquatint, 69 x 87 cm  
Edition of 90
- 20 *Anxious Moment, 1986*  
Etching and aquatint, 148 x 103 cm  
Edition of 90
- 21 *Il Labirinto della Psiche, 1986*  
Etching and aquatint, 103.5 x 161 cm  
Edition of 90
- 22 *Blue Fantasy Two, 1986*  
Screenprint, 88 x 103 cm  
Edition of 70
- 23 *Untitled 1, 1988*  
Screenprint, 81.5 x 114.5 cm  
Edition of 70
- 24 *Untitled 2, 1988*  
Screenprint, 59.7 x 85 cm  
Edition of 70
- 25 *Untitled 3, 1988*  
Screenprint, 84 x 112.7 cm  
Edition of 70
- 26 *Burning Waters, Visual and Poetic Images by Victor Pasmore, 1988*  
Published in a signed de luxe edition of 50 copies with a lithograph  
Collection: The Governors of Harrow School
- 27 *Untitled, 1988*  
Lithograph from the book 'Burning Waters', 28 x 47 cm, 14/150  
Initialed and dated lower right  
Collection: The Governors of Harrow School
- 28 *Untitled 4, 1989*  
Screenprint, 85 x 141 cm  
Edition of 70

- 29 *Untitled 5, 1989*  
Screenprint, 111 x 113.8 cm  
Edition of 70

A price list is available on request.

Victor Pasmore at Harrow

- 30 Harrow School Admission Book 1892 - 1925  
January 1923 admissions
- 31 Harrow School Calendar, Easter Term 1923
- 32 Bradbys House Group, 1923
- 33 Bradbys House Group, 1924
- 34 The Harrovian, xxxvii (1924), p 65  
Torpids House Cricket matches, Newlands v. Bradbys
- 35 Bradbys House Group, 1925
- 36 B.S.R. Rambaut (West Acre 1925) scrapbook  
Speech Day 1925
- 37 The Harrovian, xxxviii (1925), p 100  
House Cricket matches, Bradbys v. Newlands
- 38 The Harrovian, xxxix (1926), p 77  
House Cricket matches, The Knoll v. Bradbys
- 39 Bill Book, May 1926, p 18  
Lower Fifth Form
- 40 Harrow Almanack 1927, p 46  
Yates Thompson Drawing Prize winners 1921 - 26, including Victor Pasmore three times
- 41 Bradbys House Group, 1926
- 42 Harrow School Trials Broadsheet, Christmas 1926  
Lower Fifth Form
- 43 A.J. Finberg 'Early English Water-Colour Drawings by the Great Masters', 'The Studio' Ltd, 1919; no 28, Turner 'The Blue Rigi: Lake of Lucerne, Sunrise', 1842  
The late works of Turner, first seen during his school years, were an important influence on the development of Victor Pasmore's philosophy of art. Finberg's book was in the Art Schools' library when Victor Pasmore was at Harrow.