

MEDIA RELEASE

May 11, 2015

COLOUR SENSATION: THE WORKS OF MELINDA HARPER

Opening June 27, 2015, *Colour Sensation: The Works of Melinda Harper* surveys the work of one of Australia's most significant contemporary abstract artists in her first major museum exhibition.

Over the last three decades, Melinda Harper has developed a distinctive and widely admired body of abstract works animated by brilliant colour relationships and dazzling arrangements of geometric shapes. While Harper is best known as a painter, this exhibition will reveal the diversity of her practice through its inclusion of drawings, collages, screenprints, experimental photographs, painted assemblages and exquisite hand stitched embroideries. It also marks the first time in recent years that Heide will present a solo exhibition of an artist whose work is entirely abstract.



Melinda Harper, *Untitled 2011*, oil on canvas, 153 x 182 cm, Courtesy of the artist and NKN Gallery, Melbourne

Harper's first exhibition was in 1987 at Pinacotheca gallery in Melbourne and she was a leading member of the Store 5 artists' group in Melbourne (1989–1993). Initially small in scale and simple in composition—as much due to economical as aesthetic considerations—her paintings have since increased in size and become more complex. Among those included in this survey are pared-back constructivist paintings on wood from the late 1980s, mid-1990s works inspired by the decorative elements of Persian miniature painting, and recent large canvases which provide stunning new geometric and colour variations on her characteristic abstract themes.

Typically in Harper's works, forms similar in type—blocks, stripes, circles, triangles or variants of these—are amassed in striking compositions of seemingly endless variety, from the harmonious to the cacophonous. Harper builds upon early twentieth-century abstraction and later generations of modernists—her intimate embroideries and her screenprinted fabrics (produced with fellow artist Kerrie Poliness) paying particular homage to modernist women artists. Her investigations of colour and form are also intensely felt, visual responses to lived experience, embodying in her words 'the act of looking, the obvious, the precise and the precious.'

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Melinda Harper, *Untitled 2003*, oil on canvas, 183 x 152 cm, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Purchased through the Heide Foundation with the assistance of the Heide Foundation Collectors' Group 2008

Curator: Sue Cramer
Heide III, Central Galleries

***Melinda Harper and Sue Cramer are available for interview.
High res images are available upon request.***

EXHIBITION

COLOUR SENSATION: THE WORKS OF MELINDA HARPER

Saturday 27 June – Sunday 25 October 2015

#coloursensation

RELATED PROGRAMS

ART TALK WITH MELINDA HARPER

Sunday 28 June, 2pm

Artist Melinda Harper discusses her colourful and optically vibrant abstract works with curator Sue Cramer. Focusing on her achievements as a painter, she will also explore the interconnections between different aspects of her practice including drawings, collages, screenprints, decorative assemblages and textile works.

FREE with admission

Venue Heide III: Central Galleries

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ART WORKSHOP: ABSTRACT INVESTIGATIONS WITH MELINDA HARPER

Saturday 22 August, 10am–1pm

Experimenting with colour, line and shape, participants will produce a vibrant abstract work using acrylic paint on canvas board under the guidance of artist Melinda Harper.

Cost Adult \$55, Member/Concession \$50 (includes admission & materials)

Venue Sidney Myer Education Centre

Bookings: 9850 1500

MORNING TEA: A DESIGNER AND AN ARTIST

Thursday 27 August, 10–11.30am

Join Liane Rossler, co-founder and former designer and director of Dinosaur Designs, and artist Melinda Harper in a unique dialogue, as they speak about their shared love of abstraction and their individual approaches to working creatively with shapes, colours, textures and materials. A viewing of Harper's thirty year survey exhibition and a delicious morning tea from Café Vue is included.

Cost Adult \$22, Member/Concession \$18 (includes admission & morning tea)

Assemble Heide III Information Desk

Bookings: 9850 1500

CAFÉ VUE HEIDE DINNER: COLOUR SENSATION

Friday 28 August, 7pm

The latest in Café Vue's artist dinner series, join artist Melinda Harper for an exhibition talk and viewing to gain an insight into her remarkable body of abstract works. The Café Vue chefs will then interpret the optical vibrancy of Colour Sensation: The Works of Melinda Harper over three courses with matching wines.

Cost \$130 per person for private exhibition tour, dinner and matching wines

ART TALK: BEYOND THE PRESENT

Sunday 30 August, 2pm

Dr Anthony White, senior lecturer at the School of Culture and Communication, the University of Melbourne, discusses the art practice of Melinda Harper, from her earliest paintings of geometric shapes on pieces of found wood or board, to her most recent large canvases with their brilliant colours and dazzling formal arrangements. Reflecting on the relationship between Harper's work and the history of modernism, Dr White will respond directly to the works in the exhibition, exploring the expressive vitality of abstract painting today.

FREE with admission

Venue Heide III: Central Galleries

EXHIBITION TOURS

Every Tuesday, 30 June – 25 August, 2pm

Sunday 5 July, 2pm

Sunday 12 July, 2pm

Saturday 25 July, 2pm

Saturday 8 August, 2pm

Volunteer Guide

FREE with admission

- END MEDIA RELEASE-

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Heide Museum of Modern Art

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Museum Opening Hours

Tuesday-Sunday 10am-5pm. Closed Mondays.