

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLYDE HOPKINS

Chaunticlere: Paintings from the 1980s

April 22 – June 11, 2022

23 East 67th Street



NEW YORK, NY – Upsilon Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of seminal paintings by the late British artist Clyde Hopkins (1946-2018) titled *Chaunticlere: Paintings from the 1980s*, on view from April 22 to June 11, 2022. Presented in cooperation with the artist’s estate, this group of works places enormous value on emotional spontaneity, instinctive creation and scale in response to political and social issues in the wake of Thatcherism. This exhibition marks the first showing of Hopkins’ artworks with Upsilon Gallery in New York. An opening reception will be held at 23 East 67th Street on Thursday, April 21, from 6:00–8:00 PM.

Stylistically linked to many of the most important art movements of his time, Hopkins’ legacy is his large and diverse body of work, expressing both abstraction and early referents to representation in imaginative, surprising and lyrical ways.

Throughout his life and career, Hopkins drew his inspiration from one of his greatest passions: nature. In the paintings selected for this exhibition, Hopkins demonstrated visceral attitudes toward the then political and social climate in the UK. Even though abstraction was apparent, landscape and the natural world were still important and acted as a starting point, as is evident in the pictures, *Reluctance: State Peach* (1984), *The Diary and the Coast* (1985), and *Diving for Pearls* (1986). The covert reference in the titles to a moment of political confrontation was manifest in the turbulent nature of the paintings.

Hopkins combined Abstract Expressionism’s active gestures and freedoms with the intuitive approach to composition he had been developing. He worked instinctively, yet methodically—these works represent the evolution of his skill as a painter. It speaks to his ability to create volume in space, his mastery of color and his ability to harness the stark emotive power suggesting an attempt to access a kind of thought-before-words, uncorrupted by the socialized realm of language.

About this selection of paintings, Metropolitan Museum of Art curator John Guy notes, “[They] represent Hopkins’ intensely personal psychological journeying, that is at once dangerous and inviting. Whilst venturing far from shore, Hopkins always extended a lifeline to his viewer, a glimpse of something that just might be a remembering of something figurative, a powerful idea, or a quirky title that evoked its own sense of place, or, of a moment experienced, made unexpectedly familiar.”

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Guy goes on, “[They] have another quality not immediately apparent at first glance: they are deeply pleasurable. Colours have a remarkable intensity, a dark ominous blue or impasto black verging on the foreboding, creating a tension that is then relieved on occasion by grid structures or by arabesques that cartwheel across the composition. Light blues and whites are given the luminous effervescence of reactive minerals, radiating off the dark dense canvas. Others have a lighter mood, curlicues that evoke a memory of Matisse’s balcony, with the atmosphere of a balmy Mediterranean summer night. In Hopkins abstractions, you always stay connected, no matter how tenuously, with the material world.”

About Clyde Hopkins

Clyde Hopkins was born in East Sussex in 1946 and moved with his family to Cumbria when he was 11, before studying fine art at Reading in the 1960s where he met his future wife, Marilyn. He exhibited work for over 40 years, produced in studios in Greenwich, Deptford and St. Leonards-on-Sea. During his life, Clyde was awarded the Mark Rothko Memorial Fellowship (USA) in 1990-91 and the 1999 Lorne Award. Widely admired as a generous teacher and mentor, he was a visiting artist in many art schools during the 1970s until becoming Head of Painting, then of Fine Art, at Winchester School of Art in 1982. From 1990 to 2006 he was Head of Painting at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, and retired as emeritus professor at the University of the Arts London. After his death in 2018, some of his works were acquired by the Tate.

Solo exhibitions included the Serpentine Gallery London (1978 and 1986), the Acme Gallery London (1979), the Ikon Birmingham and Rochdale Art Gallery (both 1985), Salisbury Art Centre (1988), Modern Times at the Castlefield Gallery Manchester (1989), Kunstverein Kirchzarten Germany (Kunst Europa 1991), Reg Vardy Arts Foundation Sunderland (1994), Atkinson Gallery Millfield School (1996), *Vodka, a Stiff Breeze and Paranoia* at the London Institute Gallery (1998), the Francis Graham Dixon Gallery London (1989, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1997) and Galeria Joan Prats New York (1990 and 1994). In 2012, he had two solo exhibitions—*Brown Madder* at Chelsea Futurespace, London, and *Indian Yellow* at the Merston Gallery, Chichester.

Upsilon Gallery is located at 23 East 67th Street, New York NY 10065. Exhibition hours are Monday to Friday 10:00 AM–6:00 PM, Saturday by appointment. Please contact the gallery at (646) 476-4190 or email at info@upsilongallery.com for further details.

Image: Clyde Hopkins, *Chaunticlere*, 1989, oil on canvas, 70 x 67 in. (183 x 170 cm).

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