

PRESS RELEASE

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William Scott

McCaffrey Fine Art, New York
February 27–April 17, 2010

McCaffrey Fine Art is proud to present a survey exhibition of the work of William Scott. The first major overview of Scott's work in New York in almost twenty years, it features thirty-five paintings and works on paper created between 1950 and 1986. The show opens on February 27 and continues through April 17, 2010. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.

Born in Greenock, Scotland, in 1913 and reared in Northern Ireland, Scott received his art training in Belfast and London. An outward-looking soul in the often provincial London art scene, Scott was engrossed with developments in the arts of continental Europe and the United States throughout his career. While remaining faithful to the centuries-old genres of still life and the nude, he pursued innovation through the use of an intentionally awkward line, aggressive impasto, and flattened perspective, creating works that possess great subtlety and resonance.

Repeatedly marking, refining, erasing, adding, and deleting, Scott established a dialogue between subject, background, and genre, through which "an expression of an entirely different thing grows, a 'figure into landscape' or into a still life, 'a man into a woman.'" This in-between-ness is at the heart of Scott's work—as he once remarked, "I am an abstract artist in the sense that I abstract. I cannot be called non-figurative while I am still interested in the modern magic of space, primitive sex forms, the sensual and the erotic, disconcerting contours, the things of life."

Upon meeting Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock on a visit to New York in 1953, he found new freedom in scale and color, and his canvases enlarged and the palette warmed upon his return to Britain. Scott's first exhibition in New York took place the following year at the Martha Jackson Gallery, where he would show until 1979, to great acclaim. However, a lapse in representation in the United States thereafter led to the virtual disappearance of this singular figure from the American viewing public. Scott passed away in 1989, and this exhibition presents an opportunity to become reacquainted with the artist and his work.

Scott represented Britain at the *XXIX Venice Biennale* in 1958, and the first major retrospective of his work occurred in 1960 at the Kestner Gesellschaft, Hannover. Further retrospectives took place at Kunsthalle Bern, 1963; the Tate Gallery, London, 1972; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1975; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, 1986; and Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, 1998.

This exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, featuring an in-depth examination of Scott's work by David Anfam.

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