

MARGARET MELLIS

EXHIBITION - CONSTRUCTIONS

DATES: 27th February – 27th March 2008

Austin Desmond Fine Art is pleased to present an exhibition of constructions by Margaret Mellis. This is the third exhibition of Mellis's work undertaken by Austin Desmond: the two previous shows concentrated on early paintings and collages from the fifties and the hard edged abstract work of the sixties and early seventies.

The driftwood reliefs, which Mellis only started to make in 1980, are perhaps the most significant of all her work. In almost every phase of her long working life, Mellis's profound and intuitive sense of colour has always played a central expressive role in her work and nowhere is this more evident than in the late constructions.

It is probable that the constructions evolved from a much earlier period when Mellis was encouraged by Ben Nicholson – who was staying with her and Adrian Stokes in 1939/40 – to experiment with collage.

Although affiliated with Constructivism for a short period during the early 40s, the hallmark of these late reliefs refer more to a more personal expression of art whose antecedents were those of Picasso's early assemblages and the objet trouve surrealism of Paul Nash.

Like other British artists the coastline has been an important source of material for Mellis. The found objects and driftwood fragments thrown up from the sea bring with them their own subtleties of texture and colour. Mellis's sensitivity for the particularity of her materials ensures that the appropriation of these fragments are brought together with a highly developed sense of design and formal composition. Her response to the world manifests itself through the humour, wit and poignancy with which these constructions are imbued. It is in these works that Margaret Mellis has found a place of individual distinction.

A fully illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Michael Bird will be available.

Two earlier catalogues with introductions by Ian Jeffery, Damien Hirst, David Bachelor and Margaret Garlake are also available.

For further information please contact:
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