

# DAVID HEATHCOTE

## BEYOND HORIZONS

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8<sup>th</sup> February – 21<sup>st</sup> April 2011  
Private view 10<sup>th</sup> February, 6–9 pm  
GV Art Gallery, 49 Chiltern Street, London, W1U 6LY

**Beyond Horizons** is a new solo show by David Heathcote, hosted by GV Art Gallery, London. The exhibition brings together a remarkable selection of works from an artistic and academic career which has spanned some 60 years. *Beyond Horizons* will include landscape paintings, sculptures and drawings. An illustrated catalogue, containing an interview with the artist and an essay by Prof. David Reason, will accompany the exhibition. Selected works exhibited will also be available as limited edition reproductions.

David Heathcote has produced a great range of work — of media, form, style, and of ambition and reach. His landscape drawings breathe an air of contemplative calm, and his sculptures (carved or modelled) have the presence of a profound inwardness. His painting challenges categorisation, as he often merges representational elements within abstract painting.

Heathcote was born in London in 1931. A couple of years later, the family moved to Kent, first to Whitstable, then to a small rural village near Dargate. The young boy's recollection of the Battle of Britain overhead became the inspiration for a double page piece in his later work, *Deliberate Holiday*. Despite the war, Heathcote's childhood enjoyment of the tranquillity of the Kentish countryside led him to value such pastoral landscapes as unfailing sources of renewal. After attending Canterbury School of Art, he studied at London's Slade School of Art. As a young artist, Cubism had helped him to find his bearings, and resonates in his later sculptures. As Heathcote comments, 'Its architectural structure affected me at a time when I was very uncertain, and it appeared to give me a really clear path for the future.'

National Service in the RAF was followed by a move to Africa in 1959 to teach, first in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and then in Nigeria. He returned to Kent in the late 70s, and in the early 90s he established Sculpture at what is now Canterbury Christ Church University. Inevitably, his experiences in Africa have affected Heathcote's sensibility and forms of expression; the intensity of his African landscape memories has encouraged the use of vivid colour, structural clarity, and dynamic motif, mark making,

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gesture and texture. However, his familiarity with Nigerian indigenous cultures, and his particular study of Hausa embroidery, has not led to any masquerade of exotic otherness, but has been digested and assimilated to advance his own distinctive work.

Beyond Horizons offers an insight into the history of Heathcote's gradual recognition of the importance of landscape in his life, and its potential for nourishing his painter's journey of self-discovery. His early, dutiful commitment had rated the human figure as the most important subject for a serious painter. However, this commitment slowly weakened as the figure began migrating from his paintings to an alternative position in stimulating his late development as a sculptor. At the same time, landscape became progressively more important, and today this topic forms Heathcote's overriding preoccupation as a painter.

His most recent work conjures a newfound sense of recollection, of renewal and of something redeemed. In the case of the painting *Algerian Journey*, as with all Heathcote's paintings (but not his drawings), what appears to be a reference to landscape in the image relates more directly to memories of place, flushed with emotions. In such luminous images, we could be hesitating on the threshold of a world in which each revealed horizon glows with the disclosure that it already contains its own 'beyond.'

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

David Reason graduated from the University of Essex and was appointed to a post in Interdisciplinary Studies (in the Faculty of Social Sciences) at the University of Kent in 1971. He was a founding member of the Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies in the Humanities (the first such in Europe) and of degree programmes in Communications & Image Studies, before joining the School of Arts. In 2005, Dave became Master of Keynes College, a post he held alongside his teaching and research. He retired from the university in 2008.

David Reason has produced many publications, including notable critical studies on land art and environmental art. He has also curated significant exhibitions, most recently *Two Cameroonian Photographers: Joseph Finlak and Samuel Chila* (with David Zeitlyn) at the National Portrait Gallery, London, 2006. He is still active in all his fields of interest, working freelance.

GV Art is a contemporary art gallery which aims to acknowledge the diverse enquiries into present day creative practices. The gallery produces exhibitions and events that are a platform for a wider dialogue, focusing on the inter-relationship between man and his environment, and the technical and creative. How we witness change and investigate or question fresh approaches to understanding the human condition is at the very core of GV Art's explorations.

#### **VISITOR INFORMATION**

GV Art, 49 Chiltern Street  
London W1U 6LY nearest tube Baker Street  
Tel: 020 8408 9800  
Email: [info@gvart.co.uk](mailto:info@gvart.co.uk)

#### **GALLERY OPENING HOURS**

Tuesday to Friday 11am – 6pm,  
Saturdays 11am – 4pm or by appointment.  
Admission Free

Image (previous page): *Algerian Journey*, oil on board, 2006

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# DAVID HEATHCOTE BEYOND HORIZONS

IMAGES

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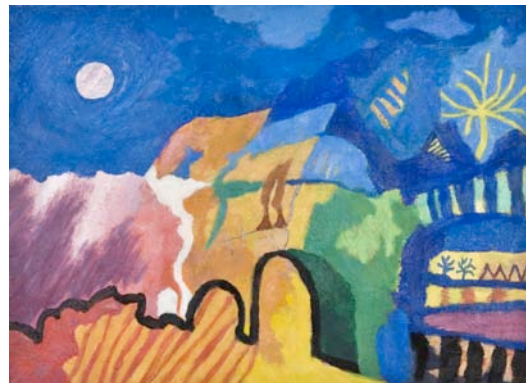
*Red Bridge*, oil on board, 2006



*Pagoda*, oil on board, 2002



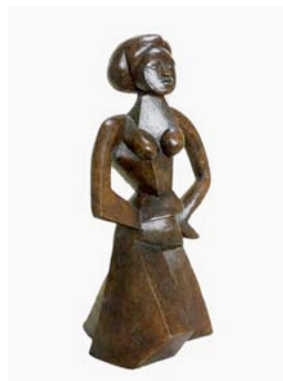
*Sailing to Byzantium: Drying Her Wings*, mixed media on paper, 1999



*Algerian Journey*, oil on board, 2006



*Landscapes of Childhood: Battle of Britain* (detail), 1958



*Woman in a Long Dress*, bronze, 1997



*Blind Girl with a Bird*, bronze, 2000