

Robert Therrien

Works 1975–1995

2 October – 11 December 2016

(Preview: Saturday, 1 October, 12–2 p.m.)



Left: Robert Therrien, *No title*, 1987–1990. Enamel, brass, 191.8 x 63.5 x 12.1 cm (75½ x 25 x 4¾ in). Courtesy of Berlingieri Collection. Photograph by Dorothy Zeidman. **Right:** Robert Therrien, *No title*, 1991. Steel, paper, enamel, mixed media. 147.3 x 269.2 x 33 cm (58 x 106 x 13 in). Courtesy of Berlingieri Collection. Photograph by Douglas M. Parker Studio.

Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is delighted to present Robert Therrien: *Works 1975–1995*, the first major solo exhibition in Europe of the artist's works from this 20-year period. The exhibition of 43 works includes sculptures, reliefs and works on paper executed in two and three dimensions and various media. The show marks a significant contribution to art history at a crucial period within the artist's oeuvre, and is especially important as a number of these early works are held in private collections and have not been seen in public for many years.

Robert Therrien's earlier works interact with some of the vital art movements of the late twentieth century, including Minimalism, Pop Art and Conceptualism. Taking his inspiration from everyday things – a water pitcher, a hat, a snowman, a cloud, for example – he simplifies their form and manipulates the scale of his then idealised motifs, which recur in various forms in his immaculately resolved works. Understanding that the theme of a simple snowman motif is change – snow melts and eventually reforms as snow – offers insights into his other works, all of which are equally immediate and confounding. Therrien's use of the familiar and domestic creates a tangible narrative of childhood memories within his early oeuvre and has provided the vocabulary that has shaped the renowned and immersive sculptures of his later work.

For this exhibition at Parasol unit, the ground floor gallery shows the artist's works from the 1990s. It includes *No title (black Dutch Doors)*, 1993, a sculpture formed of two identical rectangular shapes stacked one above the other, mounted to the wall and extending out from it at different angles. Although passage through them is obstructed by the gallery wall, they have a quiet welcoming openness and relate to the open, pointed portal of the artist's purple arch sculpture on the opposite wall. Therrien also pays homage to the humble pitcher in his simple, modestly-sized rendering of *No title (pitcher with yellow spout)*, 1990, while giving it a commanding presence in the over-sized, wall-mounted sculpture of the same motif with a black spout.

In the upper gallery, among Therrien's works from the 1980s, are the simple silhouettes of a red chapel and a tin-on-bronze snowman, as well as an aubergine coloured cloud with faucets. The cloud, created from three rounded shapes, suggests a state of flux, with the taps evoking some imminent precipitation and its inevitable dissolution. This transformation of something of an impermanent nature into a simple solid object suggests the precariousness of reality and poignancy of constant change.

A comprehensive publication accompanies the exhibition along with a programme of educational events that aims to engage the public with Robert Therrien's contribution to art history.

Note to Editors

Artist Biography

Robert Therrien, born 1947 in Chicago, Illinois, currently lives and works in Los Angeles, California. His work has been the subject of numerous solo and group exhibitions. Since 2008, several of his works from the 2000s have been exhibited in the United Kingdom as part of the ARTIST ROOMS project, a collaboration between the National Galleries of Scotland and Tate.

Therrien's works have been exhibited at, and is in the collections of, The Contemporary Arts Center, Ohio; Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico; Contemporary Art Museum, Houston; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Monterrey, Mexico; Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh; Public Art Fund, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; Kupferstichkabinett, Kunstmuseum Basel, Switzerland; The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin; De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, The Netherlands; Tate Liverpool, UK; The Metropolitan Arts Centre, Belfast; Paxton House, Berwick-upon-Tweed, UK; The Contemporary Austin, Texas; The Exchange, Penzance, UK; and Denver Art Museum, Colorado. Future exhibitions include: *No Place Like Home*, The Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel; and *Robert Therrien: Rooms and Other Objects*, Gagosian Gallery, Chelsea, New York.

Parasol unit appreciates the generous support of Linda L. Brown of the MaddocksBrown Foundation, Kathy Feld and:

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VISITOR INFORMATION

Founded in December 2004, Parasol unit foundation for contemporary art is a registered educational charity and a not-for-profit institution that operates purely for the public benefit. Every year the foundation organises four challenging and thought-provoking exhibitions of works by international contemporary artists working in various media, arranges other artistic projects and each year grants its Exposure Award, which offers graduating students from an annually selected London art school the opportunity to exhibit their work professionally. The foundation also engages with the public and its neighbouring community through a full programme of educational events. In its genuine mission to serve the public, the foundation does not bear the name of its founder, and its exhibitions do not derive from any particular private collection. Admission to all exhibitions at Parasol unit is free of charge. Thanks to its innovative model between private funding and public support, one of London's most vibrant contemporary art spaces has come to exist and thrive.

Free Admission

Parasol unit
14 Wharf Road, London N1 7RW

Opening hours:
Monday by prior arrangement
Tuesday–Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm
Sunday, 12 – 5 pm

Directions:
Tube to Old Street or Angel
Buses: 43, 205 or 214 via City Road

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