

John Golding: Pure Colour Sensation
The Arts Club

26 April – 16 September 2017

Private View: Wednesday 26 January 2017, 6-8pm



John Golding in his studio, 1983, photographed by Becky Cohen, Courtesy of the John Golding Artistic Estate

The Arts Club is delighted to announce a solo exhibition by the respected artist and academic John Golding (1929-2012). Golding, initially a historian of modern art later found success as an artist in his own right, and his work now features in prominent institutions such as Tate, MoMA, the Scottish National Gallery, British Council, Ferens Art Gallery and Fitzwilliam Museum. Golding's paintings were brought to the forefront of the art world's collective consciousness through a display at the Tate to mark Golding's 80th birthday in 2009 as well as Bruno Wolheim's 2016, documentary *Artists on Film – John Golding: A Path to the Absolute*. Golding's work will also be shown in a suite of exhibitions at The Yale Center for British Art from 1 June 2017 – 13 August 2017.

The Arts Club exhibition presents a survey of work from the 1970s and 80s, ranging from large scale canvases to small and large pastels. Golding said in an interview about his use of pastel: *“I myself am obsessed by the properties of pure pigment, which is why I work so much in pastel. There is no binding medium, or virtually none, so that there is nothing getting between you and the pure colour sensation...”*

Golding's work, although abstract, repeatedly returns to the human body. The monumental canvases and the tactile handling of paint through expressive layering of pigment demand a visceral physical reaction from the viewer. At the outset of his career, Golding's work consisted of skeletal human forms realised in gritty, dark colour schemes. Raised in Mexico, Golding was profoundly affected by muralists such as Diego Rivera and José Orozco. Other artists, such as English Surrealist Leonora Carrington were also important early influences.

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Speaking in an interview for Artists' Lives, Golding recollected that his turn to abstraction was in "*recognition of what was happening in America in the 1950s...the most important thing going on in painting [of the day] but it took me a long time to find a way into abstraction*". It was his relationship with renowned art critic Clement Greenberg that was the catalyst for his transition from the figurative style of his earlier work to the more abstract style for which he became known.

The exhibition is curated by Aurore Ogden, Director of Art at The Arts Club and Matthew Travers, Director of Piano Nobile gallery. It will then travel onto Piano Nobile, opening in September 2017. A catalogue will be published to accompany the exhibition with an essay by Golding's former student David Anfam, a leading scholar on mid-century American art and curator of the Royal Academy's 2016 exhibition, *Abstract Expressionism*.

Notes to Editors

About The Arts Club

Since its foundation in 1863 as a Club 'instituted for the purpose of facilitating the social intercourse of those connected with, or interested in Art, Literature or Science', The Arts Club has gained international recognition as the London hub for artists, writers and creatives. The Club has a rich and expanding collection of contemporary art and carefully curated exhibition and events programme which is attentive to international trends while maintaining a focus on British artists. In the course of its existence, the Club has included amongst its members many outstanding figures in the history of art, literature and science. Today, the Arts Club is a place for creative and entrepreneurial patrons to come together to meet, exchange ideas, dine and participate in the Club's various events. The Arts Club is at the heart of contemporary cultural life in London.

About Piano Nobile

Piano Nobile specialises in Modern and Contemporary British and International works of art. The gallery also represents a select stable of contemporary artists and artists' estates. Established in 1985, they act as agents and principals for private, corporate and museum collections dealing with appraisals, acquisitions and dispersals.

With a discerning and individual vision, the gallery has established a reputation for holding authoritative exhibitions and producing publications under the gallery's imprint, Piano Nobile Publications. The gallery holds around six carefully curated exhibitions annually across both gallery spaces in Holland Park and King's Cross, and participates in many art fairs throughout the year.

About John Golding

Born in Britain but raised in Mexico, John Golding attended the University of Toronto, and worked briefly as a stage designer, before moving to London in 1951 to study art history at The Courtauld Institute of Art. Golding was appointed a CBE in 1992 and elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1994. In 1997 his masterpiece on abstract art, *Paths to the Absolute*, was published, as a result of the A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts series that he gave at Princeton. Spanning abstraction across continents and decades, this overtly formalistic account of the prominence of abstraction in modern art remains a hugely influential account of artists' search for the 'absolute' through abstraction.

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Telephone: +44 (0)20 7499 8581
Website: www.theartsclub.co.uk
Dates: 26 April – 12 September 2017
Opening Hours: **By appointment only:**
Wed, 10:00am-Midday
Sat, 10:00am-Midday

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