

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Howard Hodgkin paintings unseen for 20 years to go on public display
Artist says he had forgotten all about series of kaleidoscopic artworks made in Wiltshire in early 1990s and inspired by India

Mark Brown



Detail from Marine Drive, one of the rediscovered Howard Hodgkin paintings.

Thirty kaleidoscopically coloured works by the artist Howard Hodgkin have been rediscovered after more than 20 years and are to be shown in public for the first time.

Hodgkin said he had forgotten all about his series of hand painted gouaches called Indian Waves until they were sent to him in brown paper wrapping earlier this year. “When I did see them properly I felt very happy. I’m very pleased.”

The series was made in 1990-91 at the 107 Workshop in Wiltshire. Because Hodgkin did not consider them finished they were packed and stored away in the workshop and there they remained until its influential printer Jack Shirreff retired.

The series represents one part of Hodgkin’s life-long love affair and fascination with India, a country he has been visiting since 1964. Each gouache has an evocative title linked to a place or event or sensation – Mumbai Wedding, Border, Orange Sunset, Another Rainbow, Goanese and so on.

They were made in two stages. First Hodgkin used a technique known as “carborundum printing” – using a paste made from carborundum powder – in which he made textural prints that had an untramarine blue wavy line (the sea) at the bottom and an emerald green arc (sky/hill) above. He then hand painted vibrant colours on these prints from a palette that including red, yellow, orange, rose, black, white and a green which used an egg tempura Vert Véronèse - at the time banned in the UK.

The gouaches are of particular interest because Hodgkin used, for the only time, handmade Indian Khadi paper brought back from India.

Hodgkin, who was knighted in 1992 and made a Companion of Honour in 2003, said he was delighted to have been reunited with the works though doubted there was any more of his work remaining to be found.

He said would not have been able to produce the art he has if it were not for India: "I couldn't work without it."

The works will go on public display at the Gagosian gallery in Mayfair, London on 28 November.