

# LISSON

## SEAN SCULLY



### BIOGRAPHY

Sean Scully's work has shifted the paradigm in American abstraction from Minimalism and its reduced vocabulary towards an emotional form of abstraction, returning to the metaphor and spirituality found in the European painting tradition. While known primarily for his large-scale abstract paintings, comprised of vertical and horizontal bands, tessellating blocks and geometrical forms comprised of gradated and shifting colours, Scully also works in a variety of diverse media, including printmaking, sculpture, watercolour and pastel. Having developed a style over the past five decades that is uniquely his own, Scully has cemented his place in the history of painting. His work synthesises a thoroughly international collection of influences and personal perspectives – ranging from the legacy of American abstraction, with inspiration from the likes of Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock, and that of European tradition, with nods to Henri Matisse and Piet Mondrian, as well as references to classical Greek architecture. While monumental in scale and gesture, Scully's work retains an undeniable delicacy and sincerity of emotion.

Sean Scully was born in Dublin in 1945 and raised in South London. Wanting to be an artist from an early age, Scully attended evening classes at the Central School of Art in London from 1962 to 1965, and enrolled full time at Croydon College of Art, London from 1965 until 1968. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Newcastle University in 1972. He was awarded the Frank Knox Fellowship to Harvard University in 1972, where he visited the United States for the first time. In 1975, he moved to New York full-time. Today, he lives and works between New York and Bavaria. With a career that spans more than five decades, he has received numerous accolades and has been the subject of multiple touring

exhibitions. In 2014, he became the first Western artist to have a career-length retrospective in China. *Follow the Heart: The Art of Sean Scully 1964 – 2014* included over 100 paintings and travelled from Shanghai to Beijing. Scully was named a member of the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 2013 and has received honorary degrees from institutions such as the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston; the National University of Ireland, Dublin; Universitas Miguel Hernandez, Valencia; Burren College of Art, National University of Ireland; Newcastle University, UK, among others. A series of essays and conversations between Scully and the esteemed art critic Arthur Danto was published by Hatje Cantz in 2014, and a collection of Scully's own writing, selected speeches and interviews, *Inner*, was released in 2016.

Significant solo exhibitions of his work were recently on view at Bucerius Kunstforum, Hamburg, Germany (27 June – 2 November 2025); Art Museum of Sichuan Conservatory of Music, Chengdu, China (12 June – 12 October 2025); Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, NY, USA (11 May – 21 September 2025); Daegu Art Museum, Daegu, South Korea (18 March – 17 August 2025); La Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera, Barcelona, Spain (14 March – 6 July 2025); Centre Pompidou, Paris, France (14 October 2024–24 February 2025); He Art Museum (HEM), Shunde, China (2 August – 27 October 2024); Broadway, New York, USA (12 July 2024 – March 2025); Château d'Oiron, Plaine-et-Vallées, France (23 May – 6 October 2024); Église Saint-Nicolas, Caen, France, as part of the Festival Normandie Impressionniste (21 June – 22 September 2024); Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris Marais, France (24 May – 27 July 2024); Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, Hungary (16 May – 1 September 2024); Ludwig Museum, Koblenz, Germany (28 April – 16 June 2024); Thaddaeus Ropac, Paris Pantin, France (3 June – 30 September 2023); Collection Lambert, Avignon, France (1 July – 15 October 2023); Passerelle Centre d'art contemporain, Brest, France (20 October 2023 – 13 January 2024); and Houghton Hall, Norfolk, UK (23 April – 29 October 2023); Thorvaldens Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark (2 September - 5 March, 2023), Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, USA (11 April - 31 July, 2022), Museum of Fine Arts – Hungarian National Gallery, Budapest, Hungary, (October 13 – January 15, 2021), Skulpturenpark Waldfrieden, Wuppertal, Germany (June 11, 2020 - January 3, 2021), Albertina, Vienna, Austria (7 June – 8 September 2019); Instituto Cultural Cabañas, Guadalajara, Mexico (23 May – 29 September 2019); San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, Italy (11 May – 13 October 2019); LWL-Museum for Art and Culture, Münster, Germany (5 May – 8 September 2019); Villa Panza, Fondo Ambiente Italiano, Varese, Italy (18 April 2019 – 6 January 2020); National Gallery of Art, London, UK (13 April – 11 August 2019); The Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, CT, USA (23 February – 19 May 2019) and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., USA (13 September 2018 – 3 February 2019); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, UK (29 September 2018 – 6 January 2019); De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, The Netherlands (21 April – 26 August 2018); Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe, Germany (24 March – 5 August 2018); Cuadra San Cristóbal, Mexico City, Mexico (7 February – 24 March 2018); State Russian Museum – Marble Palace, St. Petersburg, Russia (3 March – 9 May 2018); Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, Russia (3 November – 10 December 2017); Museum of the Nanjing University of the Arts, China (8 April – 8 May 2016); Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China (6 September – 9 October 2016); Hubei Art Museum, Wuhan, China (10 January – 12 March 2017); Shanghai Himalayas Art Museum, China (23 November 2014 – 25 January 2015); and Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA), Beijing, China (12 March – 23 April 2015). In 2015, Scully oversaw a complete renovation at the Romanesque chapel Santa Cecilia de Montserrat, near Barcelona, featuring his work in dialogue with the historic architecture and restoring the church to working condition.

Sean Scully's work is in the permanent collections of numerous important institutions including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New

York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Art Gallery of Ontario, Canada; Tate Modern, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg; Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid; The Fort Worth Museum of Art, Fort Worth; Albertina, Vienna; and Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China, among many others.