

annet gelink gallery

JON THOMPSON

April 21 – June 16, 2018

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to announce its collaboration with Anthony Reynolds Gallery for a retrospective view of British painter Jon Thompson.

Jon Thompson (UK, 1936 – 2016) was one of the most influential personalities of the British art scene in the past four decades. After his first solo show of paintings at Rowan Gallery in London in 1960, followed by four in London and New York between 1960 and 1967, he stopped painting for the next 40 years.



Jon Thompson, *The Lyotard Suite, Sponge*, 2015

As a radical educationalist he turned Goldsmiths College (1970-92) into the generator of talent that it is today, fostering the YBA generation and setting the agenda for years to come. He then moved on to become the head of the Jan Van Eyck Academy in Maastricht (1992-98) before returning to London's Middlesex University. He also wrote significant books, catalogues and essays on the subject of art and artists and curated several crucial international exhibitions. He returned to painting as a full-time activity only when he retired from education in 2004.

"I am particularly interested in the metaphysical aspects of painting; achieving that special quality of formal unity which can instil an almost involuntary yet visually intelligent response from the viewer...for me, tying painting into the realm of the 'visual' holds it somewhat apart from the image dominated world of the merely 'visible'"

The titles of the works locate and extend the value of his paintings. The earliest pair in the exhibition, *Valetta, The First Cut* and *Valetta, The Final Tear* refer to Caravaggio's *Beheading of John the Baptist* in Malta; the last two paintings, *Sponge* and *Leporem*, are the culmination of a series titled *The Lyotard Suite* and allude to the French philosopher's *Commentaries on the Confessions of St Augustine*. The three paintings, from the series *The Toronto Cycle* highlight the great influence of the music by Canadian pianist Glenn Gould on Thompson's practice; they also refer to Ignatius Loyola in the phrase *Traer los Sentidos (bringing the senses to bear)*. Finally, the title of each includes, in parenthesis, some initials, in this case GdiB, PC, PG, citing artists who the viewer might consider in relation to each painting – Giotto di Bodone, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin.

This exhibition is #9 in a developing series of collaborations between Anthony Reynolds Gallery and close professional colleagues around the world. The gallery has represented the work of Jon Thompson since 1985. His work is included in major collections in Europe, the USA and the Far East.