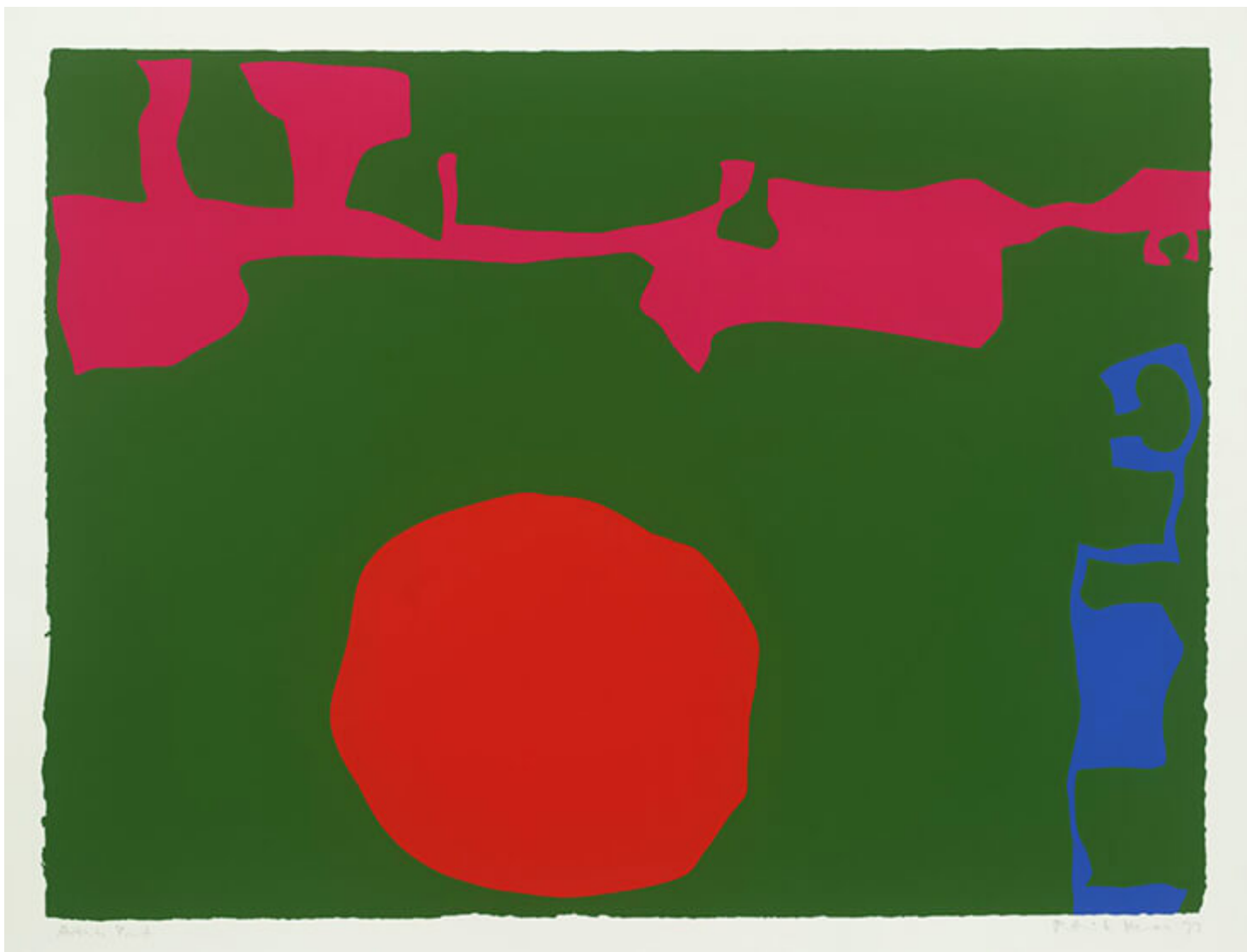


FS Colour Series: BOUGAINVILLEA Inspired by Patrick Heronâs Hot Pink

Description



January 1973 : 11, screen print on paper

Bright, hot pinks like [BOUGAINVILLEA](#) burst forth from the abstract art of post-war British artist Patrick Heron, illuminating space with the radiance of summer flowers. A true colourist, Heron dedicated much of his life to the exploration of how one tone could bounce off another, and create sonorous or discordant sensations. His compositions and colour combinations were daring, surprising and unexpected, pushing the boundaries of abstract art in exciting new directions that many artists would come to follow. He said, "I think this world is magical. Colour, form, space, relationships - these elevate life."



FS Bougainvillea Lightweight Linen

Heron was born in Leeds in 1920, but when he was 5 years old he spent the next 5 years of his childhood living in the St Ives area of Cornwall. Years later, after studying and working as an artist and art critic in London, Heron returned to Cornwall in the 1950s, where he became an active member of

the lively and spirited avant-garde St Ives School. It was while living in Cornwall in these years that Heron fully embraced pure abstraction, taking as much influence from the school of American Abstract Expressionism as the abstract artists working around him in Cornwall. Like many Cornish artists, Heron infused his abstract art with the fleeting sensations of the Cornish landscape, while taking liberty with his experimental patterns and colourways.

Heron was particularly fascinated by the 'all-over', decentralised effect of Abstract Expressionist art, and the *Taschisme* art of Europe – a quality he began emulating in his own paintings, drawings and prints with brushstrokes forming textured, rippled patterns of colour. Later he experimented with 'stripe' paintings, described by art critic Alan Bowness as 'full of a positive, life-enhancing quality.'



Interlocking Pink and Vermilion with Blue : April 1970, screen print on paper

In 1958 Heron moved into St Ives artist Ben Nicholson's old studio, which overlooked the Porthmeor beach. The larger space was liberating for Heron and his art became larger and more expansive. He also began working in a new, crisper style, with ambiguous, asymmetrical arrangements of brilliantly bright colour, an approach he called 'wobbly hard-edge painting.' Heron often played with curious and unlikely colour combinations in his artworks of this period, as can be seen in the screen print, *Interlocking Pink and Vermilion with Blue : April 1970*. Bright, ultramarine blue almost entirely fills the paper, except for a cluster of Matisse-like, cut-out shapes drifting on its surface. On the right, a shocking shade of hot pink overlaid with red

counteracts against Heron's blue, blazing with the intensity of fire. During this time Heron developed a habit of naming his artworks by the day and month in which they were created, emphasising their instantaneous spontaneity.



Pink in Ultramarine: Mini: April 25: 1981, gouache on paper

In the later screen print *January 1973 : 11*, Heron explores another even more unlikely arrangement of shape and colour, this time contrasting an earthy, warm shade of green with fuchsia pink, along with tomato red and bright blue. Heron made this painting in January, often the coldest month of the year in the UK, and his dark, sombre backdrop seems to capture its heavy, muted weight. Meanwhile, the jagged shapes across its surface carry

with them the encroaching sensations of spring, growth, movement, and life.



Four Blues with Pink: July 1983

In other artworks such as the gouache painting *Pink in Ultramarine: Mini: April 25: 1981*, Heron's pink is angrier and more expressive, forming a head-like shape with jagged teeth that floats on a dark blue backdrop. Here the hot pink is off-set against a smear of pale, minty turquoise on the right, forming a two-way conversation. Made just two years later, Heron's painting *Four Blues with Pink: July 1983* is even wilder, as Heron toys with the scrubbed and scratched marks he can create with thick, undiluted paint on a smooth

ground. His playful composition suggests a night sky lit up by round, celestial forms, while rivulets of bright pink and grass green reach out across it, like mysterious branches stretching out into its darkness.

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2. TEXTILES

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