

# Waddington Galleries

PRESS RELEASE

## Josef Albers Homage to the Square Paintings and Photographs (1928–1938)

Exhibition dates: 28 March – 21 April 2001

Exhibition hours: Monday – Friday 10am – 5.30pm Saturday 10am – 1pm  
closed April 13 – 16 inclusive

*Art is the visual formulation of our relationship and of our reactions to the world, to the universe, to life.*

Josef Albers

Waddington Galleries will present an exhibition of *Homage to the Square* paintings by Josef Albers and a selection of his photographs taken between 1928 and 1938.

The *Homage to the Square* series of paintings for which Albers is best known were produced between 1950 and 1976. The format of these paintings consists of three or four nested squares placed weighted towards the base. The idea of the squares was to demonstrate the way solid colours visibly change according to the colour that surrounds them. Albers applied the paint straight from the tube with a palette knife on to masonite (hardboard) panels which he described as 'platters to serve colour'. He used colour as a metaphor for human relationships, wanting his work to be seen on an informal and intuitive level, not as rigid visual geometry.

The photographs and photo-collages include portraits of the artists Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky as well as records of his travels in Europe and Mexico. Not only do they capture biographical moments of Albers life but they also point to the same principles and lines of enquiry as his paintings: the exploration of the potential of tonal relationships, light and perception – what Albers called 'poetry through scientific means'.

Josef Albers was born in Bottrop, Germany in 1888. After training as an artist and teacher, Albers studied and then taught at the Bauhaus until its closure under Nazi pressure in 1933. After fleeing to America with his wife Anni, Albers taught at Black Mountain College, North Carolina and then at Yale University where he was Chairman of the Department of Design. Albers' treatise *Interaction of Colour* was published in 1963. In 1970 Albers moved to Orange, Connecticut where he lived until his death in 1976. That year, The Josef Albers Foundation became active, followed in 1983 by the opening of a museum dedicated to the artist in Bottrop, Germany. The many important exhibitions of Albers' work include 'The Responsive Eye' at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1965); a solo show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1971) – the first retrospective the museum had devoted to a living artist. In 1988, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum organised a major retrospective to mark the centennial year of Albers' birth.

The Directors of Waddington Galleries are extremely grateful to The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, Orange, Connecticut for their assistance with this exhibition.

For further information or photographs, please contact Elisabeth Rackham.

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