

THE WILLS LANE GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE MAY 2011

Margaret Mellis: Structure and Colour
Selected by Andrew Lambirth
13th May – 28th August 2011

A departure for the gallery but an irresistible idea suggested by Telfer Stokes – the artist's son – timed to coincide with a display of Mellis' works in Tate St. Ives' exhibition *Summer 2011* (14th May – 25th September).

On show at The Wills Lane Gallery will be 27 works direct from the artist's Estate: 2 driftwood constructions, one painted collage, envelope drawings of flowers, and paintings - including 11 tiny unstretched canvases – some of which are illustrated in Andrew Lambirth's recent monograph *Margaret Mellis*, and others which have not been exhibited or photographed before.

An appropriate exhibition for the town as Margaret Mellis and her husband Adrian Stokes left London for St. Ives in the late 1930's, and when war was declared Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and triplets came to stay. They also had Naum Gabo and his wife Miriam living in a bungalow at the bottom of their garden.

Biographical note:

Margaret Mellis was born in 1914 of Scottish parents. She was educated in Edinburgh, and from 1929 to 1934 attended Edinburgh College of Art where her fellow pupils included William Gear and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham. Her teachers there were S.J. Peploe and William Gillies. From 1939 she and Adrian Stokes, her first husband, lived in Carbis Bay, St. Ives. Whilst in Cornwall Mellis was encouraged by Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo to produce small abstract compositions. In 1946 when her first marriage came to an end she moved to France and then to Suffolk. Towards the end of the 70s she started to make constructions out of found driftwood. She died in Southwold in 2009.

Her work is represented in the collections of major art museums including Tate Gallery, London; V&A, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, Arts Council of Great Britain, Government Art Collection, Contemporary Art Society, London.

Illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Andrew Lambirth available on <http://www.willslanegallery.co.uk/exhibitions.htm>
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Opening times:

Wednesday – Saturday 10.30 am – 5.30 pm
Sunday 11 am – 4.00 pm
Closed Monday and Tuesday
Or by appointment