

**GILLIAN AYRES**  
**NEW PAINTINGS and PRINTS**  
**17 May – 16 June 2007**



*Piper at the Gates of Dawn*

Gillian Ayres RA OBE, one of Britain's most respected and best-loved painters, will show over thirty new paintings and prints at the Alan Cristea Gallery from 17 May. The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated catalogue, with an introduction by writer and broadcaster, Andrew Marr

Ayres is best known for her vibrant palette and the sheer physicality with which she applies paint to canvas. The works in this exhibition are classic examples and contain many familiar motifs but also represent a noticeable progression. Each work brims with her usual energy, however these new compositions are more distilled and exude the confidence of a painter at the height of her powers. The titles of these works – which include shipping forecast areas and sixties songs - are chosen by Ayres not as indicators or hints at content, but simply as words and phrases that please her.

Ayres was initially influenced by American Abstract Expressionism in the 1950s, but sees her work as part of a European tradition. Gillian Ayres said: 'Titian, Rubens and Matisse are the greatest painters, unashamedly, of sheer beauty but they also used the medium to the fullest in every sense before or since.'

Gillian Ayres was made an OBE in 1986, was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1989 and in 1991 became a Royal Academician. Her work has been shown in major national and international spaces during the course of the last six decades including exhibitions at Tate Britain, The Royal Academy and Southampton City Art Gallery and is the subject of a major monograph by Mel Gooding.

Ayres studied at Camberwell School of Art and had her first solo exhibition at Gallery One in 1956. She held a number of teaching posts through the 1960s and 1970s including Head of Painting at Winchester School of Art until 1981 and became friends with fellow artists like Howard Hodgkin, Robyn Denny and Roger Hilton.

**Visitor information:** Gallery open 10-5.30 weekdays, 10-1 on Saturdays. T. 020 7439 1866

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