Bob’s art has made an impact in several countries outside the UK, most notably in Australia.

Bob wants to reach beyond the conventional art gallery, and donates his paintings freely to universities, libraries, hospitals and schools in many parts of the world where they can be appreciated by large numbers of people who may never visit an art gallery.

“How I see it is, I’m not giving anything away, I’m just finding a home for my work. I’m sharing it with other people. I’ve never been interested in money”.

Art Beyond The Art Gallery

Because the unspoken language of colour can be perceived and understood directly by everyone whatever their culture, language or gender, Bob believes that it is a truly universal medium.

“For me there is no other language quite so eloquent”.

Bob Brighton: A Life In Colour

University of Sheffield, Western Bank Library, Western Bank, Sheffield, S10 2TN
Tel: 0114 222 7231/7260 Email: exhibitions@sheffield.ac.uk
www.shef.ac.uk/library/exhibition

Cover image: Red + Orange 32.28 & 52, acrylic on canvas, 2008

San Jose Cultural Centre Exhibition, Santiago, Chile

Bob Brighton:
A Life In Colour

THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD HERITAGE COLLECTIONS
British artist Bob Brighton has devoted his life to colour.

"Colour speaks to emotions. Colour knows through emotions and understanding, not intellect".

Bob paints colour – sometimes in groups and sometimes as individual 'portraits' of a single colour. In his early work he often used form as well as colour but eventually realised that:

"It is very difficult to get to the point where you can say exactly what you want to say, you tend to want to hang yourself on props".

Because the unspoken language of colour can be perceived and understood directly by everyone whatever their culture, language or gender, Bob believes that it is a truly universal medium.

"For me there is no other language quite so eloquent".

So, by the late 1980s, colour became the single driving force behind his work.

"I went totally into colour... I didn't use colour as an adornment for an idea that I had... Colour is not something I use for effect, but more to enjoy a profound relationship with it".

A Life In Colour

In Bob's view, a spiritual individual has to reach a point of maturity before they can create meaningful art.

"My work didn't really begin as work that I could take some pride in 'til I was 50. I had then developed enough as a human being to have moved into abstract ways of thinking – taking on more difficult questions – and by that time I was ready. And once I was ready, nobody was going to stop me".

Bob selected 29 paintings for the IC, and they were installed in 2007. The response of visitors and regular users of the building has been enthusiastic, many of them assuming that the paintings had been commissioned specially for the spaces they now inhabit.

Bob's vocabulary of colour means that his paintings, and the building, talk to each other. It is hard now to imagine the building without them.

"It's a privilege and a pleasure for the University Library to have been entrusted with this important collection of Bob's paintings. We'll do our best to ensure that the fruits of Bob's profound relationship with colour can be enjoyed both within and beyond the University for future generations."

Martin Lewis
Director of Library Services & University Librarian
University of Sheffield

Bob and the University of Sheffield

In 2006, Bob approached the University to see if it might be interested in displaying some of his paintings.

At that point, the Information Commons was less than a year away from opening and our attention was on the internal design and fit out of the building. The IC's interior is about light, and space, and colour. It was clear that Bob's paintings would work well to animate the internal spaces of the new building.

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In October 2013 Bob made a further donation of paintings to the University, including his three final works.

It’s a privilege and a pleasure for the University Library to have been entrusted with this important collection of Bob’s paintings. We'll do our best to ensure that the fruits of Bob's profound relationship with colour can be enjoyed both within and beyond the University for future generations.

Martin Lewis
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A 50 Year Apprenticeship

In Bob's view, a spiritual individual has to reach a point of maturity before they can create meaningful art.

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He became a full-time artist in 1983 and held his first public show at Worthing Museum in 1987. In homage to his birthplace, Bob Meaton exhibited as Bob Brighton – which is the public name he has used ever since.

As health issues made it increasingly difficult for Bob to paint, he created three final works which sum up his life-journey both as a human being and as an artist and announced his retirement in 2012 aged 78.

Bob donated these final paintings: 'My Horizon', 'My Journey', 'My End; My Beginning' to the University of Sheffield in October 2013 with over 170 other paintings and his archive.

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