

L | A | LOUVER |  
30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



Grey Wall Blue, 2005, oil on linen, 55 1/8 x 39 1/4 in. [140 x 100.5 cm]

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Sean Scully**

**12 May - 30 June, 2006**

**Opening reception:**

**Friday, 12 May, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

L.A. Louver is pleased to present an exhibition of recent work by internationally renowned artist Sean Scully. The exhibition features both paintings and works on paper (pastel and watercolor).

*In Scully's paintings there is a brooding assertiveness, as well as an inherent awkwardness, that conveys a state of defiance tinged with vulnerability.*

— — John Yau

Since the early 1980s, Sean Scully has made work comprised of blocks and bands of color laid down in grid structures that are mediated through an intuitive organic response to the medium. The hand of the artist is strongly present in surfaces that are rich, luminous, and infused with an essence of humanity, sensuality and intimacy that embraces their materiality. The painted surfaces are applied in numerous layers, which through their translucency reveal the history of their making. In recent years, Scully has felt the need to disrupt and subvert evidence of an all-over pattern, which has led to the establishment of a disordered geometry in a palette that is both gloomy and fiery. As John Yau has observed, by superimposing different grid patterns upon each other, Scully not only evokes urban life, but also arrives at an illusionistic space without utilizing devices associated with illusionism.

Included in this exhibition are several paintings from the artist's ongoing *Wall of Light* series. In these works, Scully rotates different sets of bands (either pairs or groups of three) across the entire picture plane. Other colors glow from beneath the bands, as if seething through the crevices where the large blocks of color abut each other. There is no overall design, but the viewer's gaze is engaged by the rich and contrasting palette, coloristic shifts, broad brushwork and surface tension and texture, which ranges from the viscous to the scumbled. The palette is broad in scope, extending from the deeply resonant, warm tonalities of *Wall of Light Roma*, 2005 and *Wall of Light Summer 8.05*, 2005, in which brick and orange-colored blocks are offset by bands of black and earthy beige; to the cool grey and blue tones of *Wall of Light Grey Light 9:05*, 2005 and *Grey Wall Blue*, 2005, in which somber colors are ignited by a fiery halo.

*(continued)*



*Wall of Light Roma*, 2005, oil on linen, 83 7/8 x 71 5/8 in.  
[213 x 182 cm]

Wall of Light Horizon, 2005, oil on linen, Overall 96 x 144 in.  
[244 x 366 cm] (two panels)



The seminal painting in the exhibition is *Wall of Light Horizon*, 2005. In this painting, earthy colored bands of black, gray and umber, of varying proportion, are lit from behind by a vibrant red hue. This powerful work is open to many modes of interpretation. Illusionistically, the viewer might see an intense fire forestalled by an ancient wall. *Wall of Light Horizon*, 2005 exemplifies Yau's observation that "by making his paintings synonymous with awkwardness, defiance, disruption, and precariousness, Scully reveals the inherent torment of being human."

Born in Dublin in 1945, Sean Scully immigrated to London with his family at age four. At 18, he entered the Central School of Art and

continued his education at Croydon College of Art and Newcastle University, England before studying at Harvard University's Carpenter Center for the Arts under a Knox Graduate Fellowship. He has taught at the Chelsea School of Art and Goldsmiths College, London, and at Princeton University, New Jersey. Scully has lived in New York City since 1975, and in 1983 became a U.S. citizen. In addition to New York, the artist maintains residences in Barcelona, Spain and Germany, where he is currently professor of painting at the Munich Art Academy.

Since 1969, Sean Scully has enjoyed an extensive and distinguished exhibition history. In recent years, solo shows have included two large-scale museum exhibitions: *Sean Scully: Paintings, Pastels, Watercolors, Photographs*, curated by Armin Zweite, at the Kunstammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf (traveled to the Haus de Kunst, Munich, and the IVAM Centre Julio González, Valencia), and *Wall of Light*, curated by Michael Auping, at the Museo D'Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey, Mexico (traveled to the Museo de Arte Moderno in Mexico City and the Centro de Arte Hélio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro), both in 2001. In 2002, Scully was awarded a special project room at the 25th Bienal de São Paulo, and in 2004, enjoyed his first solo museum exhibition in Australia at the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

The museum exhibition *Wall of Light* that originated at the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., in October 2005, is now on view at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (through May 28), and will travel to the Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio, June 24 – September 3, 2006, before completing its tour at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, October 25 – January 14, 2007.

Scully's work may be found in numerous public collections throughout the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, MOMA and the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the National Gallery of Art and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Caracas, Venezuela and in Monterrey, Mexico; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Spain; Gallerie D'Arte Moderne, Bologna, Italy; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland; Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek, Denmark; Museum Moderner Kunst, Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna, Austria; Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, Germany; Tate Gallery, London, England; and the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

L.A. Louver's exhibition is accompanied by a 64-page, full-color catalogue that includes an essay by poet and critic John Yau and a foreword by Peter Goulds.



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