

# SEAN SCULLY

EXHIBITION 14.03 — 06.07.2025

‘So, the task that I’ve set myself is to somehow reconnect abstraction, bring it out of isolation and make it possible for people to get a direct feeling about the real world in relation to an abstract painting that they’re looking at.’

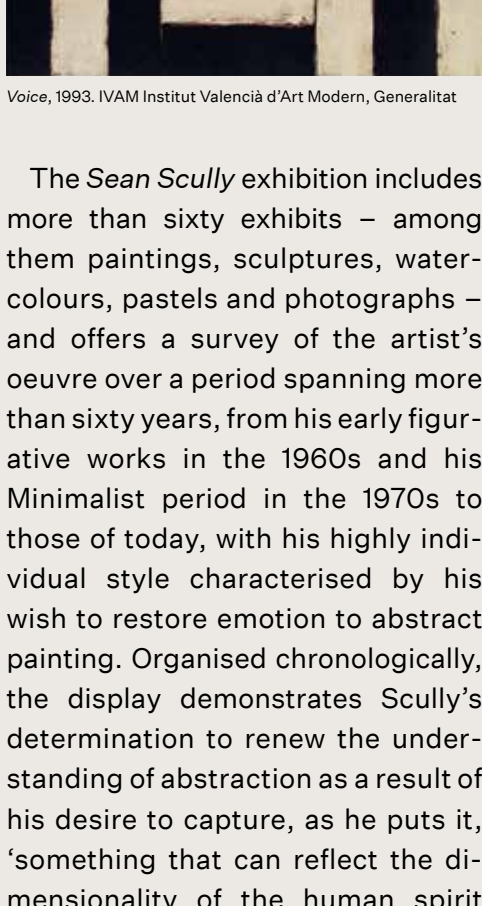
Sean Scully (Dublin, 1945) is one of the leading artists in contemporary abstraction. In the early 1980s, he succeeded in restoring to abstract painting a dimension it had lost: the ability to move our emotions.

Scully is a reflective artist whose work condenses his wide- ranging understanding of the history of art, from Titian’s command of colour and Piet Mondrian’s of rhythm to the emotionality of Mark Rothko. Scully’s work is noted above all for his method of painting, which involves an intuitive layering of paint, often wet on wet, the colours of which then combine and reveal themselves to present unique hues of great depth, thereby imbuing his abstract compositions with warmth. The more one looks at a Scully, the more tones appear, and an intimacy is created that at first sight goes unnoticed.

‘[...] I’d like my work also to speak through the universal language of rhythm. Rhythm communicates in a primal way, directly and through feeling. You look at all my paintings, and you see different rhythms: it goes fast, then it goes slow in different sections of a painting, and then the colour changes – from idea to body, and then back to idea or back to spirit.’

His work has changed the paradigm of abstraction and has travelled from American Minimalism and its reduced vocabulary to an emotional form of abstraction, for which he has reclaimed the spirituality characteristic of the European tradition of painting. Scully’s work is not confined to one specific meaning but is instead open to all kinds of interpretations and often inspires a profound state of introspection and contemplation. The simplicity and repetition in his compositions create a visual rhythm, and even though his iconographic repertoire is pared down to a series of lines, stripes and blocks, his works vibrate with life and emotion through his brushstrokes. A master of colour, he is capable of stirring the emotions of everyone who views his compositions.

‘I want my brushstrokes to be full of feeling; material feeling manifested in form and colour.’



Sean Scully in his studio on Duane Street. New York, 1985



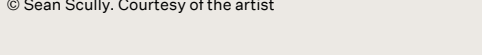
Voice, 1993. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

The *Sean Scully* exhibition includes more than sixty exhibits – among them paintings, sculptures, water-colours, pastels and photographs – and offers a survey of the artist’s oeuvre over a period spanning more than sixty years, from his early figurative works in the 1960s and his Minimalist period in the 1970s to those of today, with his highly individual style characterised by his wish to restore emotion to abstract painting. Organised chronologically, the display demonstrates Scully’s determination to renew the understanding of abstraction as a result of his desire to capture, as he puts it, ‘something that can reflect the dimensionality of the human spirit within the grid of our world’.



Tin Mal, 1997. IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, Generalitat

‘I try to make paintings that everybody can relate to in terms of their drawing, it’s a very simple kind of counting. It’s based on rhythm or simple architectural structures. You can also relate it to music, rhythmical musical structures or mathematical structures. [...] Within that the painting of them can be quite emotive. So the emotive painting is, in effect, rendering something; it’s attached to something that in fact takes the place of the object in figurative painting. That is why I believe people lock into my work so naturally.’



Barcelona Dark Wall, 2004. Private collection

## EXHIBITION

14 March to 6 July 2025

Monday to Sunday from 10.00 am to 7.30 pm

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## NEXT EXHIBITION

*Cristina Iglesias*

3 October 2025

to 25 January 2026

La Pedrera  
Passeig de Gràcia, 92.  
Barcelona

## Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera

Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera is fully committed to promoting art and culture with a carefully planned schedule of exhibitions. This reconfirms one of its core founding missions: to serve as a cultural driving force for society.

*Landline Pale Blue*, 2006. Private collection (cover)

© Sean Scully. Courtesy of the artist