

**MNUCHIN GALLERY**

# The New Criterion

## The Critic's Notebook

*On Picasso & Orozco, Frank Stella, András Schiff, Gerald Russello & more from the world of culture.*



*Installation view of "Frank Stella: Indian Birds," at Mnuchin Gallery, New York. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging, © 2023 Frank Stella / Artists Rights Society, New York.*

**By Robert Erickson**

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"Frank Stella: Indian Birds," at Mnuchin Gallery, with a catalogue essay by Karen Wilkin (through December 9): The foam-core maquettes for Frank Stella's Indian Birds series, hodgepodes of interlocking shapes derived from drafting templates, read like a daydreaming architect's balsa-wood bagatelles; the scrap-metal versions, mounted on wire mesh, land somewhere between assemblage and machine. Only at their full, ten-foot size do these confected birds take flight: painted in eye-popping colors, each piece of corrugated metal commands its own space in three dimensions, and yet the kaleidoscopic whole coheres in the picture plane, frenetic yet serene. Up through December 9 at Mnuchin Gallery on the Upper East Side, "Frank Stella: Indian Birds" provides a rare chance to see six of these trophy specimens from the late 1970s at once, along with sketches and maquettes that show us how the pioneering artist went about reconciling the demands of sculpture and painting. An insightful essay by Karen Wilkin introduces the sumptuous catalogue.