

MNUCHIN GALLERY



ROBERT MANGOLD: A SURVEY 1965 – 2003

February 14 – March 25, 2017

Mnuchin Gallery is proud to announce *Robert Mangold: A Survey 1965 – 2003*. The exhibition will trace the evolution of Mangold's painting across five decades, presenting examples from ten key series from the 1960s through the 2000s. This will be the first solo presentation of Mangold's work at Mnuchin Gallery, and follows in the gallery's tradition of presenting important examples of Minimalist painting and sculpture. The exhibition will be on view from February 14 to March 25, 2017, with an opening reception on Tuesday, February 14 from 6:00 – 8:00pm.

Since the mid-1960s, Robert Mangold's paintings of geometric forms inscribed on shaped canvases have explored tensions between the depicted and the literal, the interior and the exterior, the conceptual and the visual. While his palette, scale, supports, and influences have never stopped evolving, he has rigorously adhered to investigating the interplay between the same key elements of area, line, color, and surface structure. While at first glance Mangold's paintings can appear deceptively simple, closer examination reveals irregular geometries, subtle asymmetries, and sophisticated plays of perspective that inspire the viewer to slow down the act of looking and consider the nature of perception. As Mangold has explained, "I want the work to cause me to drop everything and then slowly pick up the pieces and enter into a dialogue with it."

The exhibition begins with a selection of early works from the 1960s in which the artist inaugurates his mode of tracing hand-drawn geometric figures within the outline of a shaped support. Included are three examples from his seminal W, V, X series from 1968, a sequence of paintings in which the artist deconstructed a semicircular form into fragmented shapes, systematically exploring the effects of varying combinations of outline, interior, and color. The W, V, X, series are representative of Mangold's paintings from the first mature decade of his career, in which he favored muted, everyday colors and industrial supports such as Masonite, and often conceived works with a rigid serial intent that he would later abandon.

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The exhibition continues through the 1970s, featuring examples of Mangold's Circle paintings and A Triangle Within Two Rectangles paintings. During this period, the artist maintained his commitment to working in monochrome on shaped supports, but transitioned from his earlier industrial materials to traditional painting on canvas. He also introduced his method of combining multiple canvases in a single painting, which he would go on to explore to increasingly complex ends in the following decades. In these multipart works, the physical lines formed by the edges of adjoining canvases both echo and interrupt the drawn lines of the interior composition, such as in *A Triangle Within Two Rectangles (Red)* (1977), complicating the viewer's visual understanding of the depicted and the literal.

In the early 1980s, the geometric forms of the paintings' interior compositions—in this case, Xs and +s—began to dictate the shapes of the canvases themselves. The exhibition includes examples from both the X and + series, in which Mangold's supports forego traditional planar qualities and take up a radical new relationship to the floor and to the wall on which they hang. This new relationship to the wall was pushed even further in the artist's Frame Paintings, begun in 1983, in which he joins four canvases to create a rectangular form with an empty center, literally framing the wall and making its blank space an integral component of the work. The exhibition includes Mangold's model for his first-ever Frame Painting, now in the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, among other examples. Across these series from the 1980s, Mangold introduces a new, livelier color palette and begins pairing multiple colors in the same work, experimenting with boldly contrasting tones as well as with varying densities and surface textures.

The exhibition continues with examples of Mangold's work from the 1990s and 2000s, including the Attic Paintings, the Plane / Figure Paintings, and the Column Paintings. The title of the Attic Paintings—a reference to a type of Greek vase produced in the 5th century BC—speaks to the evolution of Mangold's interest in art history. While as a young artist he was inspired primarily by contemporary American artists, particularly Barnett Newman and the Abstract Expressionists, the influence of classical art and pre-Giotto Italian frescoes takes on an increasing importance throughout his career. In the Plane / Figure paintings, Mangold creates trapezoidal works comprising two-panels of sharply contrasting colors, moving for the first time to a monumental scale. He continues his work on a large scale, with a further nod to classical motifs, in the latest painting in the exhibition: an important triptych from the Column Paintings series of 2003.

Robert Mangold: A Survey 1965 – 2003 will be accompanied by a fully-illustrated catalogue with an essay by Clayton Press. The exhibition is being organized with the generous support and full cooperation of the Pace Gallery, New York, and Galería Elvira González, Madrid.

Image: Robert Mangold, *1/2 V, W, X Series (Green, Orange, Blue)*, 1968, acrylic and black pencil on Masonite in three parts, each: 12 x 24 inches (30.5 x 61 cm). Private collection. © 2017 Robert Mangold/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.