

PETER FREEMAN, INC.

140 GRAND STREET

NEW YORK

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10013

212 966 5154 / fax: 212 966 5349

PRESS RELEASE

Mel Bochner, Paintings 1981-1984

exhibiting at ADAA: *The Art Show* (Park Avenue Armory, New York)
28 February – 4 March 2018

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to participate in ADAA: *The Art Show* with a booth dedicated to a rarely-exhibited group of paintings by Mel Bochner from the 1980s.

In the 1980s, Bochner was exploring the collision of geometric concepts with spontaneity. In these paintings, none of them rectangular, lines of heavily bodied paint radiate from fixed coordinates to indeterminate points. These zigzagging energies pile on top of each other until a critical mass is reached. The relevance of these early paintings to Bochner's recent work is especially strong, as his newest work (one of which will be on view) returns to his interest in spontaneous painterliness as it collides with language.

As the artist described in a 1985 interview with art historian Charles Stuckey, these paintings are not related to the tradition of shaped canvases. "Traditional shaped canvases begin with the shape. The shape comes first and painting it comes second. I realized that what I was doing was different, because first I paint the painting, then I decide on the shape. The shape of the painting becomes the last drawing decision." He continued, "Doubt becomes an issue whenever you have to make a choice that is not based on a pre-determined concept. Every decision branches off into an endless spiral of possibilities, including self-contradiction and indecision. But these are also a part of the process, and I don't want to lose them. I don't want to camouflage the doubts, the conflicts, the arguments I had with myself. My point is that just because there are thoughts and feelings that can't be verbalized, doesn't mean they don't exist. We mustn't confuse means and ends for the real content of painting, which is its ability to move people and make them think."

His 1980s paintings are represented in public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), and the Art Institute of Chicago.

For this presentation, Peter Freeman, Inc. has published an illustrated booklet accompanied by excerpts from the above-quoted interview between the artist and Charles Stuckey as well as a 1985 review of the artist's 1980s work, written by artist Stephen Westfall.

Mel Bochner was born in Pittsburgh in 1940, and earned a BFA in 1962 from the Carnegie Institute of Technology. His work is represented in many public collections around the world, including Tate Modern (London), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Whitney Museum of American Art (New York) and Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris). Recent solo museum exhibitions include The Jewish Museum (New York, 2014), Museu Serralves (Porto, 2013), Haus der Kunst in Munich (Munich, 2012), National Gallery of Art (Washington, 2011), Art Institute of Chicago (2006), MAMCO (Geneva, 2003).

During *The Art Show*, please find us at Booth A3. *The Art Show* opens with a Preview Gala on Tuesday, 27 February. General hours are Wednesday–Friday: 12 to 8 pm; Saturday 12 to 7 pm; Sunday 12 to 5 pm.

For reproduction requests, interviews with the artist, and general inquiries, please contact the gallery at 212-966-5154 or info@peterfreemaninc.com.