

DAVID NOLAN **NEW YORK**

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MEL KENDRICK *Red Blocks*

October 4 – November 10, 2007

Opening reception: THURSDAY, October 4th, 6-8 pm

For his second exhibition at David Nolan Gallery, Mel Kendrick offers us a curious 3-foot tall, totemic metropolis of new mahogany woodcuts, whose geometric intricacies reward further investigation. While their rudimentary texture and bold color elicit attention, their balanced composition and line quietly admit the geometry of their form. Glazed in a Japan-color bulletin red and filled with secretive cuts and caverns, these new works are simultaneous right-brained extroverts and left-brained introverts. Their duality is the sum result of two things: Kendrick's minimalist approach, in which he mathematically deconstructs the organic form to relieve it from his preconceived notion, and Kendrick's intuitive constructivist process.

Each finished object is a testimony of its creation process. Chalked, clamped, cleaved, slit, de-bowled, amputated and then restructured, Kendrick puts his objects through a lot. Like his *Core Samples* series, these objects are aesthetic manipulations, inspired by the original wood pieces from which they are made. In *Red Block Series*, Kendrick intuits the grain of the mahogany well before making the first cut. A heavy chalk line is first applied to the exterior of the full block, delineating spaces for extraction and mapping routes for the blade to explore. If he were to stop here, the works would be drawings, but this is just his departure point. His working process is a thoughtful evolution: he considers the object, cuts, takes a step back, reconsiders the new-born object and then makes his next move, returning to either the chalk or the saw. In many cases he removes pieces just to rotate and reattach them to another side, essentially constructing 3D tessellations. So although his process is unedited, an organized, geometric appeal naturally emerges from the unrefined wood poised and balanced in a cornucopia of positive and negative shapes. As the scale increases, the pieces become an homage to the sweeping patterns of the grain. In *Untitled (Green Block)*, Kendrick allows us to indulge in the moments where heartwood innards meet.

Kendrick was born in 1949 and earned a BA from Trinity College in Hartford, CT and a MA from Hunter College. His works have been exhibited since the mid-1970s at many prestigious galleries and museums, including The Whitney Museum of American Art, MoMA, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, The Wadsworth Atheneum, and The Aldrich Museum. His work is part of several notable private collections, including The Philadelphia Museum of Art, The National Gallery of Art and The Art Institute of Chicago. He currently teaches a graduate studio art program at Hunter College in New York City.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday thru Friday 10-6; Saturday 11-6. Monday by appointment only.