

PAUL KASMIN GALLERY

Simon Hantai

8 May – 15 June, 2013

515 West 27th, New York

Opening Reception: Wednesday, May 8, 2013, 6 - 8pm



Paul Kasmin Gallery is pleased to present a selection of never before seen works by Simon Hantai, on view from **8 May - 15 June, 2013** at **515 West 27th Street, New York**, providing a rare opportunity to experience the work of this significant post war artist. Expansive explosions of color and inventive geometry, these works testify to Hantai's brilliance as a colorist and mastery of his own signature techniques. Born in 1922 in Bia, Hungary, Simon Hantai left his native country in 1948 and settled in France,

befriending the surrealist community of Andre Breton. He became known for his large, abstract canvasses, distinct from the gestural influences of both American Abstract Expressionism and European Art Informal, Hantai staked out a unique technique both automatic and expressive. Calling it "pliage," Hantai folded and tied un-stretched canvas to produce geometric patterns that guided his application of rich color. Throughout his career, Hantai devoted himself to developing these techniques, exemplified by such series as the *Etudes*, *Tabulas* and *Blancs*. They recall the towering cut-outs of Matisse as well as the impressive gesture of Pollock. Alongside the exhibition at Paul Kasmin Gallery in New York, and in memoriam of Hantai's life and significant contributions to the history of art, the **Centre Georges Pompidou**, Paris will also present a retrospective of his work from **22 May– 9 September, 2013**. The exhibition "will constitute the extraordinary rediscovery of a dazzling artist who is numbered amongst the most important figures of the second half of the 20th century." From his early explorations in surrealism to his forays into sign, gestural, miniature and text painting, the exhibition builds toward his singularly unique "folding as method" works of the 60s.

Major surveys of Hantai's work have been featured at the Centre Georges Pompidou, 1976 and at the Venice Biennale, 1982, where he represented France. Though significantly respected and exhibited, Hantai's work has been exhibited with relative rarity in America, largely due to his own resistance to embrace the ever-intensifying commerce of the post war art market. Hantai died in Paris in September 2008, during the same week the international community recognized it had entered a global financial crisis. Hantai's work is included in the permanent collections of the Centre Georges Pompidou, the Musée d'Art Moderne, the Tate Modern, the Vatican Museum, the National Gallery of Art, the Hishhorn Museum in Washington, D.C.; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Join the "Simon Hantai" conversation on social media by mentioning @KasminGallery and using the #HantaiKasmin hashtag when posting.

For more information, contact: Jen Lee, FITZ & CO: jen@fitzandco.com / Bethanie Brady, Paul Kasmin Gallery: bethanie@paulkasmingallery.com

Image: Simon Hantai, photograph by Edouard Boubat, 1976