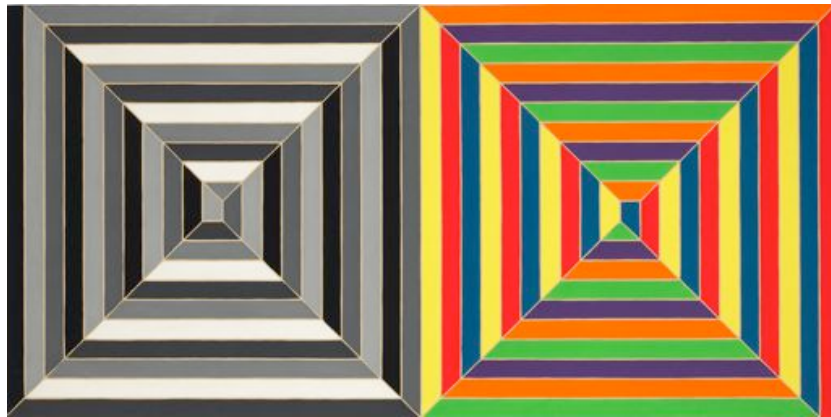


PAUL KASMIN GALLERY



Frank Stella, *Untitled*, 1966, acrylic and fluorescent alkyd on canvas, 63 7/8 x 128 inches, 162.2 x 325.1 cm

Frank Stella

Geometric Variations

September 22 – October 29, 2011 Private View: September 22, 6-8pm

Paul Kasmin Gallery is pleased to announce “Geometric Variations,” the first New York gallery exhibition to explore the historical importance of Frank Stella’s iconic square paintings from the 1960’s and 1970’s. The exhibition will include large single and double canvasses from Stella’s Concentric Square and Mitered Mazes series, as well as the seminal “New Madrid” painting from his Benjamin Moore series.

Stella began covering square canvases in alkyd house paint in 1961. Like his earlier Black, Aluminum and Copper paintings, these new square paintings articulated the relationship between the two-dimensional picture plane and its three-dimensional support. Unlike the previous works, they were characterized by a crisp regularity, rigid symmetry and all-over flatness. As the art historian and curator William S. Rubin wrote, “In their extreme simplicity, and the absolute evenness of their matte surface, these pictures have a kind of immediacy that was not to be found in the more complex structures, the more elusive and ambiguous light and the more painterly execution—relatively speaking—of the Black, Aluminum and Copper pictures.”

The squares played a pivotal role in the development of Stella’s work, where the ultimate goal was to make paintings whose pictorial force came from their materiality, and whose presence would be immediately available to the eye. “The Concentric Squares created a pretty high, pretty tough pictorial standard,” he said, “Their simple, rather humbling effect—almost a numbing power—became a sort of ‘control’ against which my increasing tendency in the seventies to be extravagant could be measured.” These systematic experimentations with color and value relationships provided Stella with a departure point for the more radically shaped canvasses and three-dimensional wall reliefs of his later works. As the French art historian Alfred Pacquement wrote, “Coming to grips with the use of color, he rediscovered without much difficulty how to appropriate the effects of illusionism. The multicolor Concentric Squares are, nevertheless, premonitions of his evolution toward volume.”

Frank Stella was born in 1936 in Malden, Massachusetts. Recent solo exhibitions include *Stella Sounds: The Scarlatti K Series* at The Phillips Collection in 2011, *Polychrome Relief* at Paul Kasmin Gallery in 2009, *Moby Dick: Frank Stella and Herman Melville* at the Grand Rapids Art Museum in 2009, and *Frank Stella on the Roof and Frank Stella: Painting into Architecture* at the Metropolitan Museum in 2007. A major five-decade retrospective of his career, organized by Michael Auping, chief curator of the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, is planned for 2013.

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