



### **Ellsworth Kelly**

“Have you noticed, in any museum that has a Kelly, how everything else there looks sort of tacky?” So said one smitten viewer at the opening of what may be the American artist’s all-time most thrilling gallery show. Commanding four separate spaces, fourteen highly varied new paintings, reliefs, and wall-mounted sculptures make other art appear overdressed and ill groomed. Most of the works revisit and revive past formats (vertical polyptychs or shaped, sometimes layered canvases). The jumps from style to style continually reset your attention; it’s like speed-dating angels. The one recurrent form is a thick, backward-B shape in aluminum, painted black, blue, red, or yellow. (Depending on your approach, the shape seems to open or to close, like a mouth.) Everywhere dramatized are Kelly’s masteries of color, contour, proportion, and scale. What other artist, except Matisse, makes effulgent hues seem at one with cool intelligence? And in the art of what other, except Mondrian, does reductive design feel as passionate? Kelly knows what we like in abstraction—which we would not know, so profoundly, if not for him. Through June 20. (Marks, 502, 522 and 526 W. 22nd St.; 523 W. 24th St. 212-243-0200.)