MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY
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Ellsworth Kelly

Press Packet

Cooper, Harry. "The Whole Truth: Harry Cooper on Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, 2015." *Artforum*, May 2018, cover, pp. 170-78.

Miller, M.H. "Ellsworth Kelly's Temple for Light." *The New York Times*, February 8, 2018.

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ARTFORUM

Cooper, Harry. "The Whole Truth: Harry Cooper on Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, 2015." *Artforum*, May 2018, cover, pp. 170-78.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Austin*, 2015, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.

CLOSE-UP

THE WHOLE TRUTH

HARRY COOPER ON ELLSWORTH KELLY'S *AUSTIN*, 2015

WHEREVER YOU LOOK—the press release, the brochure, the fact sheet, the cornerstone—Ellsworth Kelly's new building at the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin insists on one thing, namely that it *is* one thing: a single work of art with a single name (*Austin*) and a single author (Kelly) conceived at a single time (1986) and finished at a single time (2015). Yes, it may have taken a team of architects and engineers, a small army of donors, and a handful of key players to bring it to life, or to bring it back from the dead and see it through to its public opening earlier this year. (The project was originally designed for a vineyard in Santa Barbara, California.) Yes, it may contain a multitude: three stained-glass windows with thirty-three discrete colored elements in total; fourteen marble panels of two units each, one black and one white; and one wooden sculpture.

But never mind. *Austin* insists that it is as simple and single as its title, as unitary as the tall sweep of redwood that presides over the area where "nave" and

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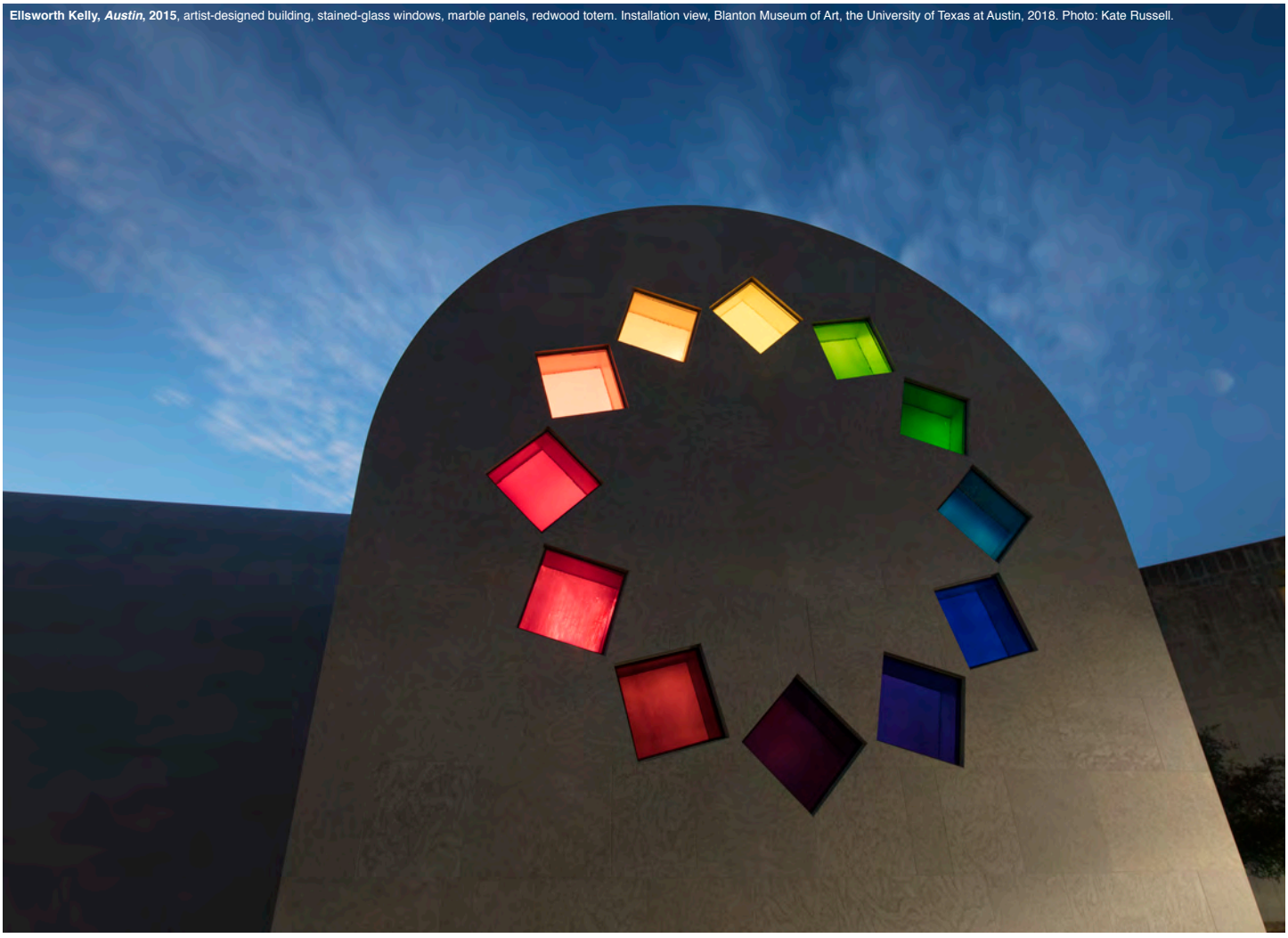
"transept" cross (Kelly's atheism necessitates these scare quotes)—a sculpture that is even simpler than the crucifix we expect to find there. Notably, this sculpture does not have a formal title. In fact, none of the elements in the building does and neither does the building itself. The name *Austin* applies to the whole.

This message of singular unity did not strike me at first. Perhaps, like many visitors, I thought of the building as a utilitarian if elegant device, a delivery system for the various works within it, especially those glorious windows—not unlike the way James Turrell's outdoor structures (and there is one just a quarter-mile away) are precise delivery systems for an experience of color, light, and sky. But Kelly worked his whole life against dichotomies of figure and ground, center and periphery, inside and outside, in whatever medium. He was mad about unity. And so we owe it to him to take the hint and work out the way in which *Austin* holds together.

Let's start with the pair of windows facing off on either side as we enter: to the right, or east, a circle of twelve squares, and to the left, or west, a circle of twelve radiating lines, called the "tumbling squares" and the "starburst," respectively. Taken together they are, for me, the best part of *Austin*. (Hey, it's OK for a unity to have its highlights.)

The squares, which Kelly abstracted, or extracted, from the famous rose window in the north transept of France's Chartres Cathedral, are mesmerizing. No longer locked into the complex formal and iconographic program of the original, they tumble around the white wall. The effect happens, I think, because it is not clear which mental rotation, clockwise or counterclockwise, gets us from one square to another, and this gives each square a strange quark-like energy, vibrating in place. This effect is inherent in the original Chartres geometry, which Kelly borrowed exactly, but it took his inspired act of paring away the rest of the window to set it loose. (He was always good with a scalpel.) And yet give it a minute, or a few seconds, and the squares settle down, the image stabilizes. You see the twelve-pointed star implied within the circle of squares. You figure out (if you are obsessive) that, far from being arranged willy-nilly, the squares are mutually aligned with perfect regularity along the thirty-degree angles (360 divided by twelve) of the star's twelve points. But blink and they start tumbling again.

Austin insists that it is as simple and single as its title, as unitary as the tall sweep of redwood that presides



Ellsworth Kelly, *Austin*, 2015, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.

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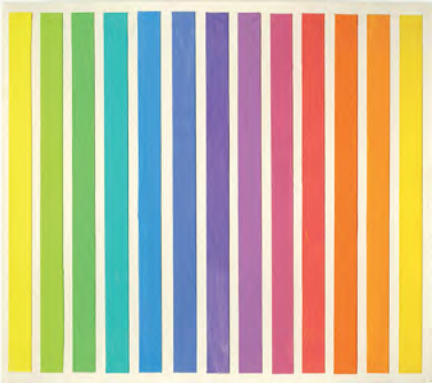
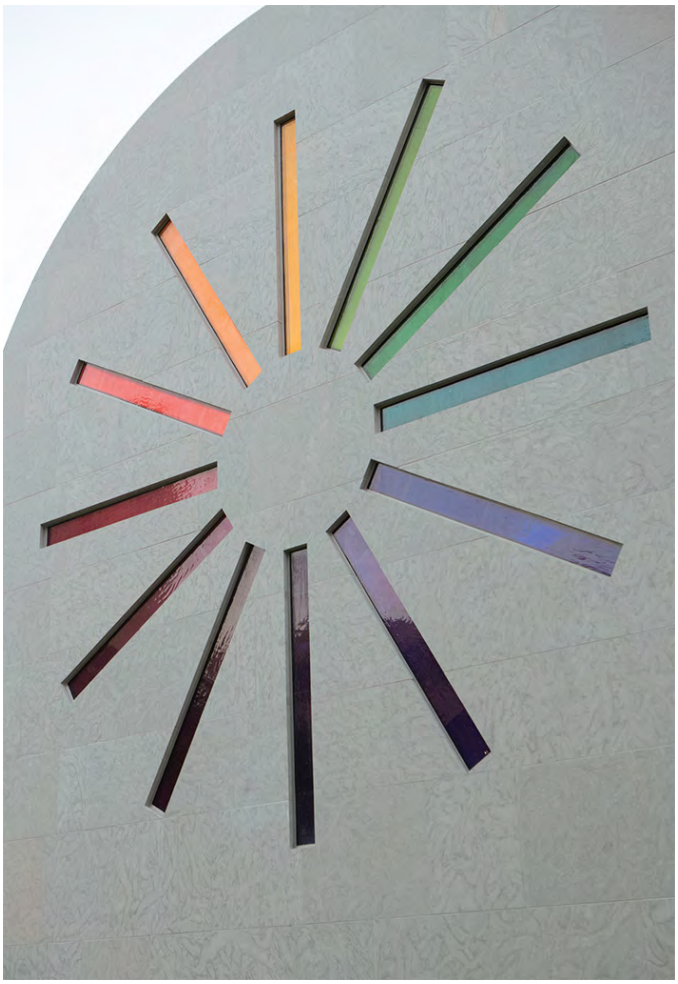


Left: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Study for Spectrum IV*, 1967**, oil and collage on paper, 11⅜ × 12⅝".

Right: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Austin*, 2015**, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.



Austin **insists that it is as simple and single as its title, as unitary as the tall sweep of redwood that presides over the area where "nave" and "transept" cross.**

over the area where "nave" and "transept" cross.
The starburst is simpler, composed of twelve thin rectangular units radiating from a common center. Whereas the tumbling squares create a porous periphery, focusing our attention within, these lines suggest an explosion outward. And while the squares seem to quiver and jostle in place, here a movement of the whole figure is strongly implied—recalling those spinning spokes that we know so well from waiting at our computers for something to happen.[1] This circularity, by the way, seems to be something Kelly tried to capture as early as 1953 in his "Spectrum" paintings, which tend to begin and end with yellow, suggesting a potential wrapping-around (a possibility also present in Jasper Johns's crosshatch works); but it took the occasion of *Austin* for him to realize the wrap.

For all their differences, the two windows are united in close counterpoint. First, they share the same spectrum of colors moving in the same progression, from yellow at top to purple at bottom and around again. This is not the spectrum of the color wheel, with complementaries facing each other, oh no: Kelly is never so systematic, and it seems that both his love for the darker part of the spectrum and his intuitive approach have thrown the usual color wheel slightly out of whack, so that while yellow opposes purple, red opposes blue. Second, they both imply an inscribed geometric form: Within the starburst there is a circle, smaller and more obvious than the star across from it, made from the space on the wall where the lines stop short of meeting. Third, the two windows can be mapped onto each other, with each radiating line transfixing each square to become one of the spines of a twelve-pointed star. This thought experiment, which occurred to me only after I left, collapses the width of the building into a single image, a completed, kaleidoscopic burst that recalls the Chartres window more strongly than either of Kelly's windows alone. How's that for unity?

The east and west windows, while made of rectangles, are basically circles, which are very rare in Kelly's work. He felt they were too static a form—a pitfall that he has certainly avoided with these two windows. In fact, they could use an anchor, and they get one in the south window, a simple grid of nine colored squares (known as the "color grid") above the big wooden doors of the entrance. Here, in contrast to the two spectral windows, the colors have been chosen and placed without any system, which gives the window a refreshing randomness.[2] But if there is an effect of randomness, or noncomposition, in the color composition, the configuration itself is utterly stable, a square grid of squares. Furthermore, in what seems a very deliberate choice, this window is organized around a white glass pane in the center, the only noncolored pane in the building. It reminds us of the "empty" centers of the two other windows, the star and the circle. And in a moment that seems almost religious (sorry, Ellsworth), this pane also suggests a point of origin, both because of its centrality in the main facade and because in nature, the spectrum of colors originates, prior to refraction, in uncolored light.

The redwood "totem," as Kelly called such sculp-

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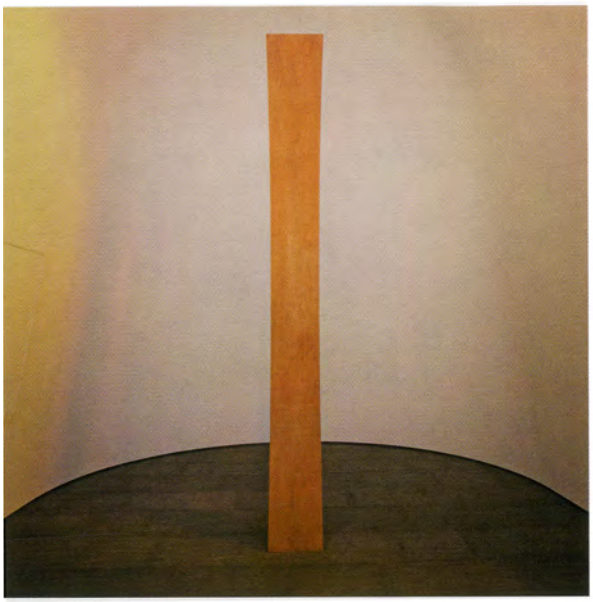
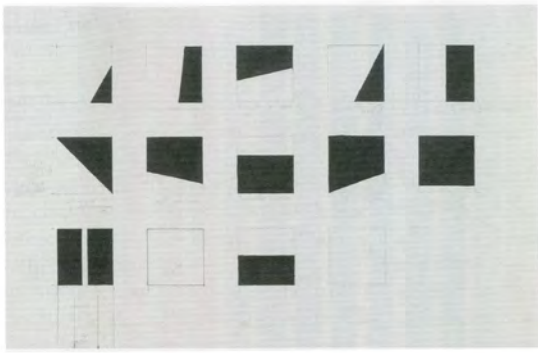


Left: **Redwood totem component of Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, 2015.** Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Gabriel C. Pérez.

Right: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Study for Stations of the Cross*, 1987**, ink and graphite on paper, 12½ × 19".

Opposite page: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Austin*, 2015**, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.



Kelly has brought the cathedral down to earth. He has left us with a human work.

tures, is just as central to the building's plan as this clear pane of glass is to the elevation. As the only sculpture, it embodies an evident singularity. What may not be so evident is the way it brings together the play of circularity and rectangularity in the windows themselves, and indeed in the whole architecture (which, I should have mentioned earlier, is derived from the orthogonal crossing of two semicircular barrel vaults). The totem is squared off at top and bottom but curves symmetrically inward and then again slightly outward as we look down along each side. And these two facing curves originate, like so many of Kelly's curves, from imaginary circles. They each have a radius of about 256 feet—huge circles that would cut deep underground if completed, of which we see only small segments. And so, near the center of *Austin*, the circle is stated, albeit in a way that is impossible to know without being told. Once we know it, maybe we can feel it.

That leaves a final element, the fourteen panels that "represent the Stations of the Cross" (as the fact sheet tells us), those fourteen key moments on Christ's path along the Via Dolorosa. Each made of a piece of flawless, unveined white marble from Carrara, Italy, and a piece of black marble from Belgium, they have a seductive, unpolished soft-hardness that lies somewhere between canvas and metal, Kelly's more common materials for panel supports. (I was pretty sure they were metal until I got close.) Of all the elements in the building, these panels seem least integrated with the whole, most entangled with the past. The stations are often presented, as they are here, at eye level, so viewers desiring communion with the sufferings of Jesus can experience them directly as they walk the interior periphery.[3] Also in keeping with tradition, Kelly's stations proceed in order, starting to the left of the entrance and ending to the right, although this is not indicated: We only know it from a 1987 sketch where they are numbered. Even their compositions, which divide black from white at different proportions and angles through the cycle, bear a relation to tradition, for the cross—which Kelly, wielding his scalpel, made the hero of the story, excising the human figure—typically assumes different angles as the narrative unfolds.[4]

True confession: The stations are, perhaps appropriately, the element of *Austin* that I struggle with. It isn't their traditionalism or literalism so much as their scale and placement. Relatively small and low, they risk being perceived as an additional element, and rumor has it that Kelly came up with them as a space-filling device to ensure that no foreign works were placed on his walls. And if they are additional, there goes the unity. Perhaps these little squares are precisely that supplement that, as Jacques Derrida proposed, every apparent unity requires, the frame or parergon that goes around the work just as these stations go around the interior, tying it hopefully together.

Such a Derridean dynamic may indeed be present, but it has more to do with scale than with framing. The intimate scale of the stations is a clever device to make the windows and totem seem bigger and more monumental than they are by throwing them into relief. The other way Kelly does this is to make the windows bigger in relation to the architectural envelope than they would be in any normal church or cathedral. The tumbling squares and the starburst have a satisfying, filling scale, a monumentality that is surprising given the modest size of the building. But it is—and I think this is key to the meaning of *Austin*—a

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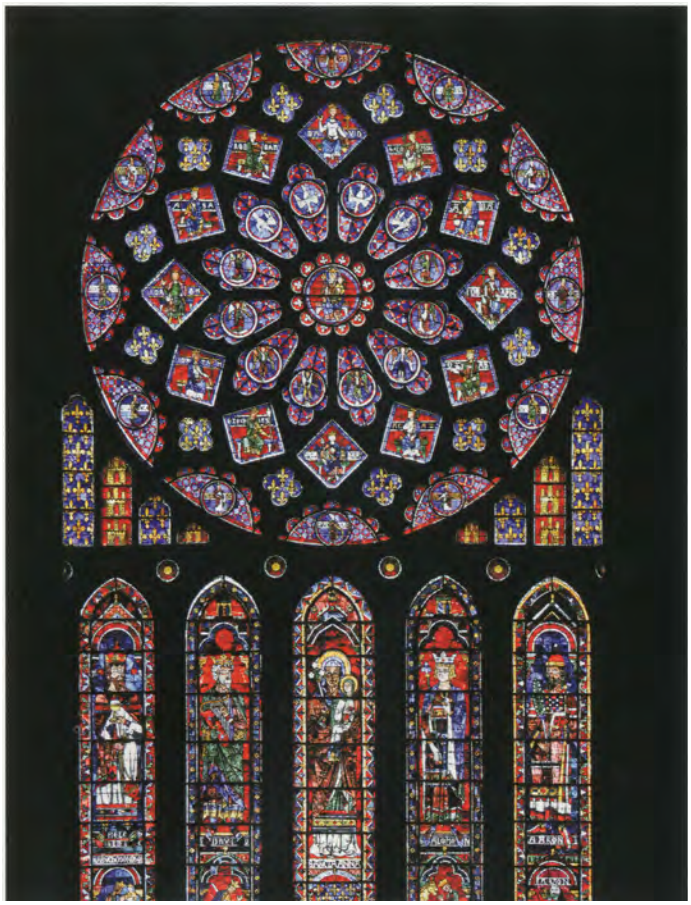

Top, and bottom: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Austin*, 2015**, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.

Left: **Chartres Cathedral, ca. 1220, France**. Rose window, ca. 1235, north transept. Photo: Guillaume Piolle/Wikicommons.

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Right: **Ellsworth Kelly**, ***Austin***, **2015**, artist-designed building, stained-glass windows, marble panels, redwood totem. Installation view, Blanton Museum of Art, the University of Texas at Austin, 2018. Photo: Kate Russell.

human monumentality. At Chartres we look up at the rose window in awe; at *Austin* we can almost touch it. Maybe we should think less of Chartres than of San Marco, in Florence, and in particular of those cells with their semicircular vaults that Fra Angelico filled with frescoes for the contemplation of his fellow monks. With the help of the stations as intermediaries or intercessors, Kelly has brought the cathedral down to earth. He has left us with a human work.

LET US STEP BACK—not to assess the building's exterior (there is no time for that) but rather to think briefly about the elephant in the room. What is a confirmed atheist doing making something that looks so much like a church? The question is not unique to Kelly. Just think of all the modern artists who have made stained-glass windows: Fernand Léger at Audincourt, Pierre Soulages at Conques, Gerhard Richter at Cologne, Brice Marden at Basel (unrealized), Sigmar Polke at Zurich, Imi Knoebel at Reims, David Rabinowitch at Digne, Shirley Jaffe at Perpignan, Christopher Wool at La Charité-sur-Loire, Robert Morris at Maguelone, Jennifer Bartlett at Houston, and David Hockney (coming soon) at Westminster Abbey in London. Louise Nevelson made sculptures for Saint Peter's Church in New York. Sean Scully made oil paintings and frescoes for a monastery near Barcelona. Robert Motherwell, Adolph Gottlieb, and Herbert Ferber made art for a synagogue in Millburn, New Jersey. Turrell let the sky into a Quaker meetinghouse in Houston that he helped design.

I doubt more than a few of these artists were believers. What is going on, apart from the lure of commissions? It is not a new question. One common answer points to the modern desire to compete with or assume the mantle of the art-historical past. A deeper version of this answer is, to put it starkly, that art has replaced religion: In a secular, modern, disenchanted world, art is as close as we can come to the divine. This helps explain Mark Rothko's chapel in Houston and Barnett Newman's "Stations of the Cross," 1958–66, two monumental, ostensibly Christian works by nonobservant Jews with strong spiritual inclinations. As Terry Eagleton recently put it, in a succulent phrase, "Perhaps culture can fill the God-shaped hole scooped out by secular modernity."[5]

I don't pretend to have the answer for Kelly, but the comparison I keep coming back to is one that I have not yet mentioned: Henri Matisse's Chapelle du Rosaire in Vence, France, a four-year labor of love (finished in 1951) that he considered his masterpiece and designed inside and out, from the building itself to the stained-glass windows, mosaics, furnishings, and even priestly vestments. It is the

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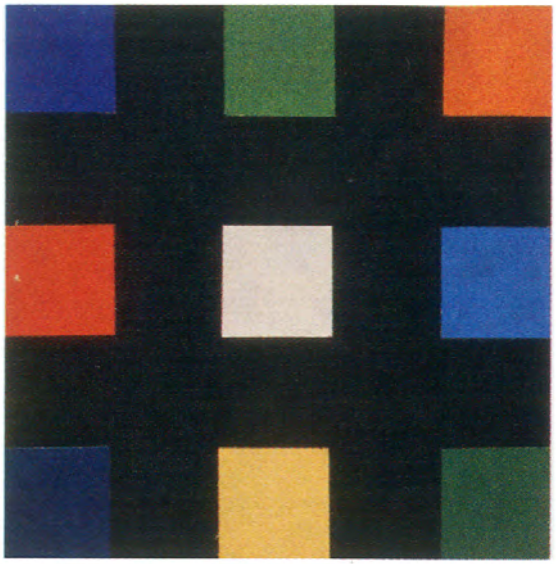

Ellsworth Kelly, *Colors on Black II*, 1954, collage on paper, 5⅞ × 5⅞".

gold standard of the modern chapel, a paragon of artistic control and aesthetic integration that few have been able to pull off, given the planning, logistics, financing, and dedication required. It seems to take the trigger of a rare passion, like Matisse's devotion to the young woman who nursed him back to health after cancer surgery. Rothko came close with his chapel in Houston but in the end did not quite govern the architectural program. *Austin* is more Matisse than Rothko: It backs away from the abstract sublime and inserts itself, more humbly, into traditions and precedents of religious art that inspired Kelly as a young man. As he tells us:

> *In Boston in 1947, as an art student at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, I discovered a 12th-century fresco in the museum's collection that made a tremendous impression on me. Later, when I was living and working in Paris, I would put my bike on a train and visit early architectural sites all over France. I was intrigued by Romanesque and Byzantine art and architecture. While the simplicity and purity of these forms had a great influence on my art, I conceived this project without a religious program. I hope visitors will experience* Austin *as a place of calm and light.*[6]

I would only add that Kelly's drive, it seems to me, was not to fill a God-shaped hole: The motivation of *Austin*, and of his art in general, was not any sense of lack. In taking his scalpel to the visual fabric of the world and finding those moments of beauty and singularity to be made into art, Kelly never distinguished between solid and void, presence and absence, figure and ground, object and shadow. There never was a hole.

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NOTES:

1. Kelly could not have seen these "throbbers," as they are called, when he designed the window, as they were not invented until the early 1990s, but today it is a hard association to avoid.

2. Let's recall, as Yve-Alain Bois has demonstrated, that chance and the grid were two strategies that Kelly discovered simultaneously during his formative years in France, between 1948 and 1954.

3. They are often rendered in relief, so that they may be touched as well as seen: If you drive to San Antonio after *Austin* and visit the Spanish missions along the river, you can see examples.

4. This may connect these panels to the original tumbling squares of Chartres, for each of those squares, behind its depiction of one of the kings of Judah, has a horizon line that necessarily hits its tilted square frame at a different height and angle. And Kelly's stations, at forty by forty inches each, are indeed squares.

5. Terry Eagleton, Culture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 140.

6. Blanton Museum of Art, "Blanton Museum of Art Announces Acquisition of Ellsworth Kelly's *Austin*, a Site for Art and Contemplation," press release, February 6, 2015, blantonmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/files/2015/PressReleases/KellyReleaseFINAL.pdf.

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The New York Times

Ellsworth Kelly's Temple for Light

By M.H. MILLER FEB. 8, 2018

Ellsworth Kelly's "Austin," the artist's final work and only building, which opens this month at the University of Texas's Blanton Museum of Art. Victoria Sambunaris

Miller, M.H. "Ellsworth Kelly's Temple for Light." *The New York Times*, February 8, 2018.

IN 1986, DOUGLAS S. Cramer — a producer of television shows including “Dynasty” and “The Love Boat” — asked the artist Ellsworth Kelly to design a free-standing structure on his vineyard near Santa Barbara, Calif. Cramer was a loyal collector of the artist, and wanted Kelly to make an original, large-scale artwork for his property. Kelly, who died in December 2015 at the age of 92 and whose career was defined by stripping painting and sculpture down to their elemental components of form and color, made designs for what appears from the outside to be a simple double-barrel-vaulted building, alluding to Romanesque and Cistercian religious architecture and resembling an igloo made of stucco. Inside, the artist had planned for a number of revelations. Colored-glass windows — arranged as a grid over the entrance, as a ring of tumbling squares on one side of the building, and a sunburst on the other — would bend the light in different ways. On the walls was Kelly’s take on the stations of the cross — 14 marble panels, variations on stark black-and-white abstractions. In the rear of this single-room structure, where one would expect to find the crucifix in a Christian church, would be one of Kelly’s totem sculptures — a thin column standing over the interior like a sentinel. The project eventually fell through; Kelly kept two models of the structure in his studio, though he never really believed the chapel would be built.

But in an unlikely end to this story, the artist’s building has now been constructed on the grounds of the Blanton Museum of Art, on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin, almost exactly as he had envisioned it 30 years ago. Kelly planned the piece, “Austin,” which is 2,715 square feet with a 26-foot ceiling, in the final three years of his life with the help of Simone Jamille Wicha, the Blanton’s director. (She was made aware of the project by Mickey and Jeanne Klein, who are collectors of Kelly’s, alumni of the University of Texas and members of the museum’s board.) Wicha helped raise the $23 million necessary for construction and the endowment, and sent renderings and sample materials — for everything from the glass panes to the granite floor to the limestone used for the building’s exterior (changed from the original plan’s stucco to better withstand the Texas climate) — to Kelly’s home in upstate New York, where he approved every aesthetic decision. Construction began two months before his death.

“Austin,” which opens to the public this month, is very much the culmination of Kelly’s oeuvre, not just a summation of his work’s themes but his masterpiece, the grandest exploration of pure color and form in a seven-decade career spent testing the boundaries of both. It is also the kind of ambitious fantasy that artists rarely get to execute, in the same category as Christo and Jean-Claude’s 20-year attempt to suspend six miles of fabric panels over the Arkansas River (a project he abandoned last year) or Michael Heizer’s colossal “City,” a mile-and-a-half-long sculpture in the Nevada desert that the artist has been building since 1972 and which the public has never seen and perhaps never will. There are precedents for “Austin” — for instance, Donald Judd’s sprawling Chinati Foundation complex, which he worked on from 1979 until his death in 1994 to showcase his large-scale artworks and those of his contemporaries in the desert of Marfa, Tex.; Barnett Newman’s 14-part abstract painting cycle from 1958 to 1966 interpreting the stations of the cross; the Chapelle du Rosaire de Vence on the French Riviera, completed

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A view of sunlight passing through Kelly's colored windowpanes inside "Austin." Victoria Sambunaris

Kelly's 18-foot totem sculpture in the rear of the building, where a cross would typically go in a church.
Victoria Sambunaris

The front entrance, with a door made from Texas live oak and a grid of stained glass windows.
Victoria Sambunaris

in 1951, which was designed by Henri Matisse and displays his work; and Le Corbusier's 1954 Notre-Dame du Haut, a Roman Catholic chapel in eastern France. But it's possible that no contemporary artwork of this scale by a major artist has matched its creator's initial ambitions so perfectly as Kelly's "Austin."

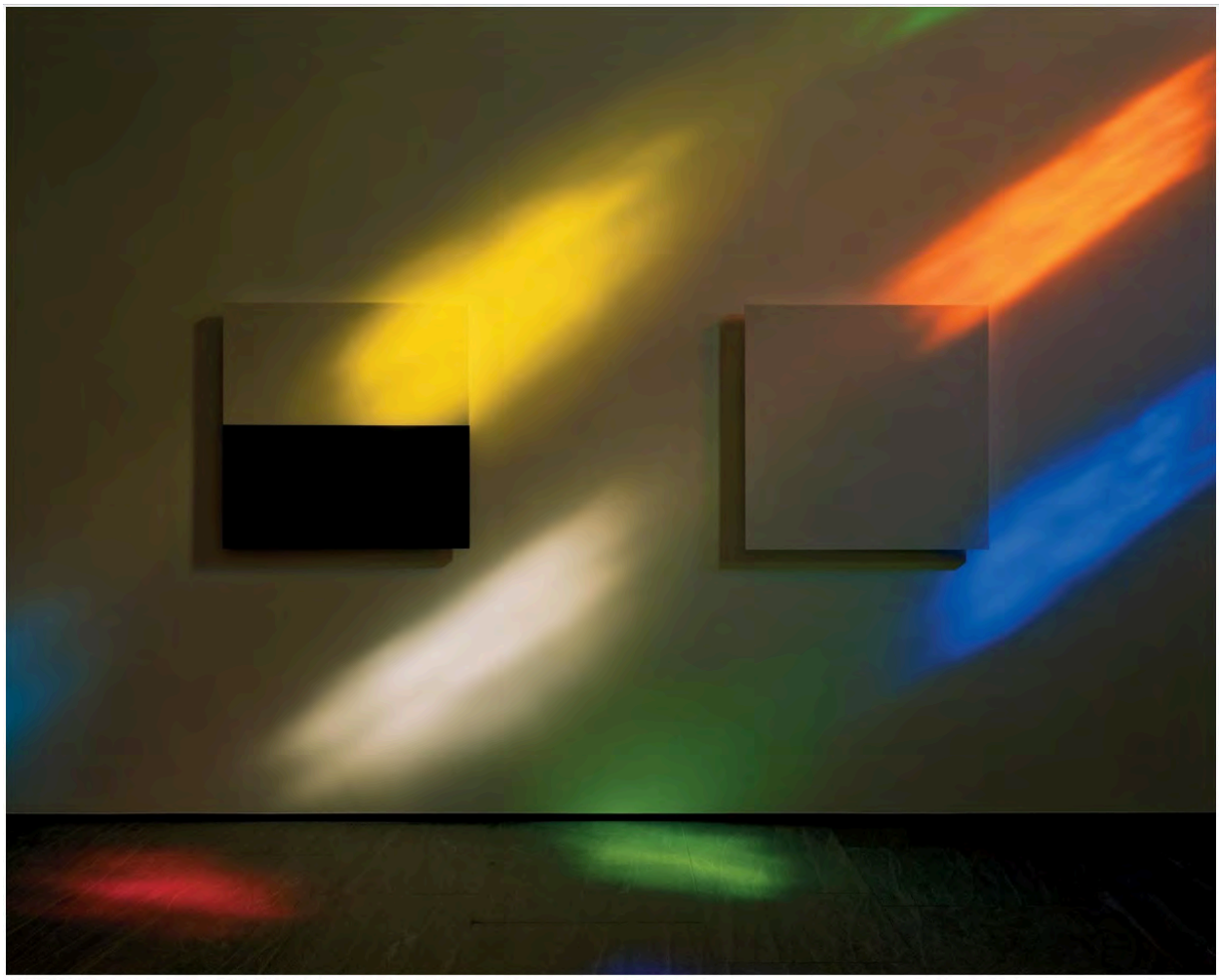
WHEN I VISITED Texas at the end of November to see the work, I was cautioned by various people that "Austin" is not, in any official sense, a chapel. The artist in fact turned down an offer to construct the work at a Catholic university because they asked that the building be consecrated, according to Kelly's partner of 32 years, Jack Shear, who described Kelly as "a nonbeliever" and "a transcendental anarchist."

"I mean, it's gonna be called a chapel whether anyone likes it or not," Shear told me. But, he says, "It's a chapel really dedicated to creativity. That's how I see it: It's a secular chapel." He compared this to the Rothko Chapel, the most inevitable analogue, a brick octagonal structure principally designed by the architect Philip Johnson, which features 14 moody, dark paintings by Rothko, who killed himself a year before the chapel opened in Houston, Tex. Since 1971, it has served as a nondenominational ecumenical center, with rotating texts from most of the world's major religions available on site for visitors to read.

Continue reading the main story

The roots of "Austin" lie in Kelly's travels through Europe in his 20s. He served there in World War II as part of the Ghost Army, a secret unit that staged decoy military operations to confuse the Germans. He returned after the war ended and lived in France from 1948 to 1954, a time spent visiting his idols like Brancusi (whose distillations of sculpture into simple geometric shapes provided a model for Kelly's later work) and befriending Alexander Calder (who once lent him rent money), as well as Merce Cunningham and John Cage (who briefly lived in the

same building as he did in Paris). He also developed his ideas about art that focused on pure form and color, though his work from this time is heavily indebted as well to the medieval architecture he was seeing. An early painting from 1949 — a kind of Cubist portrait that riffs on Picasso — is named after Poitiers, a medieval French village known for its Romanesque structures, in particular the church Notre-Dame La Grande; Kelly used a part of its facade as the basis for the head in his portrait.



The light shining across Kelly's 14 black-and-white marble panels. The artist conceived of the work decades ago, but only saw his plans set in motion in the final years before his death in 2015.
Victoria Sambunaris

If many of Kelly's influences can be traced to his years in France, he was still very much a New York artist — he grew up about an hour outside the city — and by the time he returned to New York from Europe he was a fully formed visionary, one who caught the tail end of Abstract Expressionism while witnessing the first appearance of Pop. (Kelly referenced both of these schools in his work, though he belonged to neither.) From 1970 until his death he worked upstate, in a studio outfitted with skylights so he could make use of natural light. Why, then, for all his history in and around New York, did he decide to install his most monumental work in a town to which he had no real connection?

Miller, M.H. "Ellsworth Kelly's Temple for Light." *The New York Times,* February 8, 2018.

One reason is the fact of Texas itself — there was something bewitching about the state for artists of Kelly's generation. Wicha, the Blanton's director, attributes this to the light, which, like everything in Texas, is a little more intense than it is elsewhere. "These skies and these huge clouds that we have up here — it's different," she said. Judd was drawn to Texas in part because he was weary of the superficial chatter of the New York art world — he countered this malaise by buying enough land outside Marfa that he eventually owned a parcel nearly three times the size of Manhattan. Rothko, too, increasingly isolated by his fame in New York, likely thought of his chapel in Texas as a kind of refuge.

Still, the University of Texas — which has 51,525 students and whose most significant architectural monument before the arrival of Kelly's piece was the Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium — is not the first place one would imagine to find a new icon of contemporary art. But in many ways the Blanton, which sits on the edge of campus, seems to have been a nearly fated home for the work. Part of this is simply because the university and museum were totally committed to Kelly's original vision and were willing to do the grueling work of fund-raising for the project. (And in a small but telling detail, Carter Foster, the museum's deputy director for curatorial affairs, has the world's only original Ellsworth Kelly tattoo, which the artist designed for him and took seriously enough as a work that he assigned it an inventory number.)

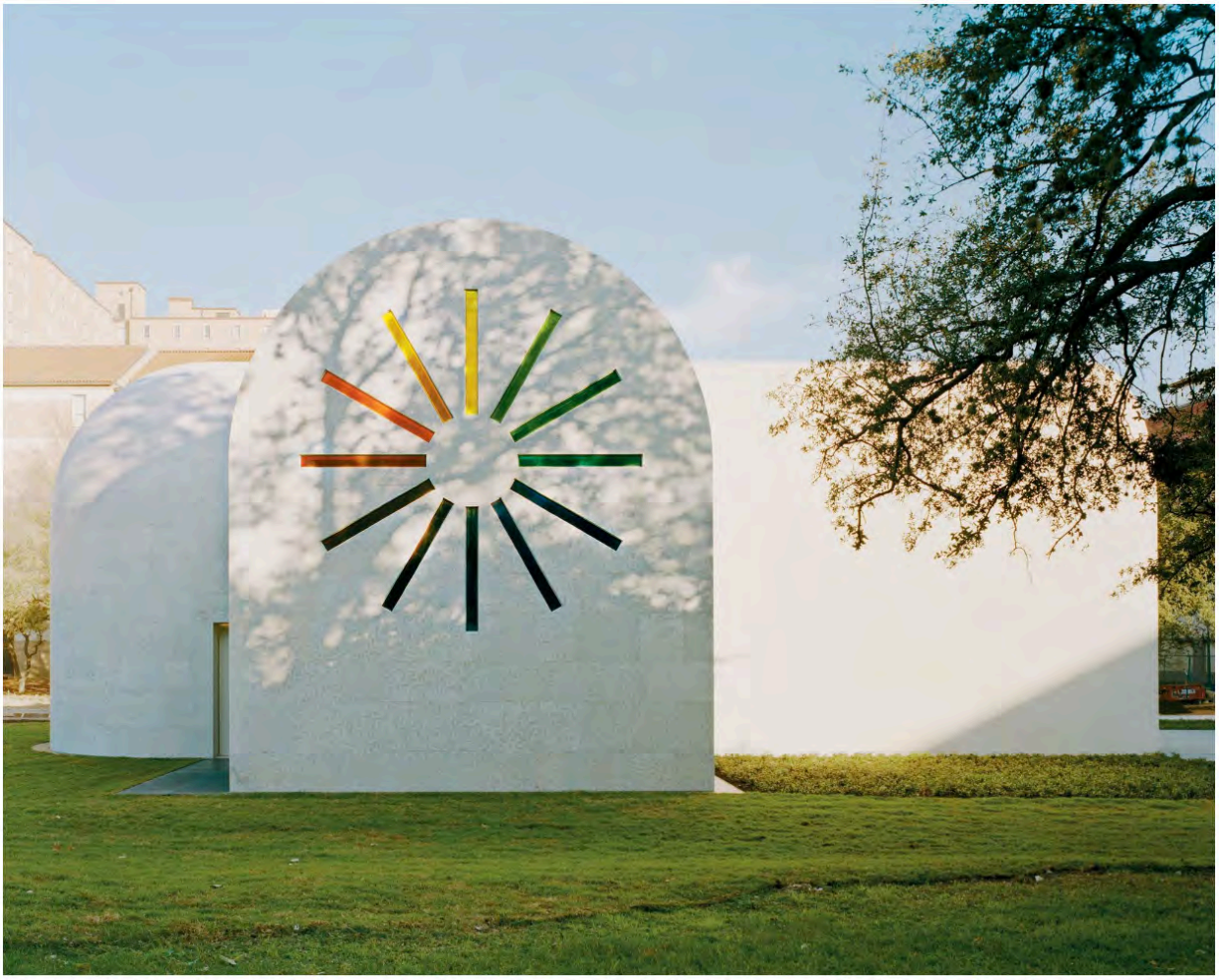
But "Austin" also fits here like a missing puzzle piece, situated so that it faces out toward the state capital building, as though staring down the entire city and yet blending into the landscape as if it had always been there. This city is known as a progressive beacon in an overwhelmingly conservative state. Long the music capital of the Southwest, it is now also a burgeoning outpost of the tech industry. But the presence of Kelly here almost instantaneously transforms it into an important art destination, the kind of place people make pilgrimages to.

THE CHINATI FOUNDATION and the Rothko Chapel are both testaments to the artists that created them — self-monuments that the public can participate in — but they also required a great deal of outside help. Judd refurbished most of the already constructed and abandoned military buildings of Fort D.A. Russell for the Marfa site, and Rothko enlisted three architects to design and build his chapel. Kelly and the Blanton worked with an architect to construct "Austin," but the overall design came from Kelly himself. Rarely has an artist blended art and architecture and painting and sculpture so seamlessly, in such a way that it memorializes not only his career, but also contains all aspects of it simultaneously. It was his final work, and it was planned in his final years of life, when he was on an oxygen tank and too sick with cancer to travel. And yet, unlike the Rothko Chapel, which is haunted by the suicide of its creator (in a 1958 commencement address at the Pratt Institute, Rothko said art must have "a clear preoccupation with death"), "Austin" is an unquestionably joyful space — a place where, as Kelly said in the months before his death, he wanted the viewer to be able to go and "rest your eyes, rest your mind."

Miller, M.H. "Ellsworth Kelly's Temple for Light." *The New York Times,* February 8, 2018.

“When Ellsworth died, I had never had anybody so close to me die,” Shear told me as we talked at the Blanton. “I realized that there’s no language for death in America. I would sit next to people at dinner and they would say, ‘Oh, I’m so sorry.’ But people’s idea about death is so weird in our culture. I say he’s still alive. He’s lucky. He’s an artist. His work is out there and it’s being shown. He’s still living in my book.”

A few minutes later we walked to the chapel and went inside. It was close to noon, and the sun poured through the glass panes above the entrance, flashes of green and orange and blue shimmering onto the granite floors. A full spectrum of light encircled the top arch of one wall, shadows bouncing off Kelly’s stations. In this setting, with the light from the panes slowly moving across their surfaces, the black and white patterns of the marble panels looked almost impossibly dramatic — they had become something primordial, like cave drawings, like the concept of black and white itself. Shear and I stood in silence for a time, watching the colors move around the room. When we left, Shear placed both hands on the front door and gave it a kiss, closing his eyes in a moment of brief fulfillment — as if he were kissing Kelly himself goodbye.



The exterior of the building, which is rendered in limestone. Victoria Sambunaris

Miller, M.H. “Ellsworth Kelly’s Temple for Light.” *The New York Times*, February 8, 2018.

The New York Times

ELLSWORTH KELLY, VIA MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

"Diptych: Green Blue" (2015), from "Ellsworth Kelly: Last Paintings."

Abstract to the End

Ellsworth Kelly's last works demonstrate his devotion to form, color and plane.

By HILARIE M. SHEETS

SPENCERTOWN, N.Y. — On the eve of his 90th birthday in 2013, Ellsworth Kelly told me that working in his studio in Columbia County was "as exciting for me as ever."

"I have had some physical challenges related to aging, though I accept it," the painter said. "But it has given me an added surge for continuing to create new work."

Though suffering from emphysema in his last several years — a result of longtime exposure to turpentine fumes — Kelly was still remarkably productive and immersed in his lifelong investigation of form, color and plane. He died in his home here on Dec. 27, 2015, two days after he and Jack Shear, his partner of 32 years, hosted Jasper Johns and Terry Winters, among others, for Christmas. Kelly had 10 paintings on his studio walls completed that year, with a freshly gessoed panel ready to work on.

These paintings, some reworkings of much earlier canvases, go on view for the first time on Friday in "Ellsworth Kelly: Last Paintings," at the Matthew Marks Gallery on West 22nd Street in Chelsea. A companion show next door, "Ellsworth Kelly: Plant Drawings," includes 25 images of flowers, fruit, vegetables and leaves dating from 1949 to 2008, most never before exhibited and often drawn without the pencil's ever leaving the page.

Last month, before the paintings were shipped to the gallery, Mr. Shear welcomed me to the expansive studio and offices here in Spencertown, from which he runs the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. On one wall are side-by-side portraits of the two men taken by Robert Mapplethorpe in the 1980s after they met in Los Angeles, where Mr. Shear, three decades Kelly's junior, worked as a photographer. Mr. Shear moved to Spencertown in 1984 in what the two men termed "an experiment," which became a lasting marriage.

In the studio, nary a paintbrush has been moved. A tall rolling library ladder remains in the corner, draped with Kelly's paint-splattered work clothes. On a well-ordered desk, a legal pad topped by a ruler and a pencil sits near the small device with which the artist measured his oxygen level throughout the day. (He referred to the oxygen tanks he needed as his "tail.")

In the artist's brilliantly illuminated studio hung a two-panel painting titled "White

Sheets, Hilarie M. "Abstract to the End." *The New York Times*, May 4, 2017, p. C1, p. C5.

FRED R. CONRAD/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, Kelly in his studio in Spencertown, N.Y., in 2012.

Over Black III," a white vertical rectangle overlapping a slightly larger black one. "It has this doorlike quality to it," said Mr. Shear, noting how the white shape perceptually "flips" between projecting forward and receding. "Ellsworth likes to play games with vision more than anything," said Mr. Shear, who still speaks of his partner in the present tense.

On another wall, a green rectangular panel hung beside a blue oval. The diptych recalls Kelly's 1963 canvas "Green Blue Red." By eliminating the red background, Kelly changed the dynamic and integrated the white wall as a compositional element.

Mr. Marks, the gallerist, traced the source of both paintings to a 1950 photograph that Kelly took, "Trapeze Swings, Meschers," showing a right-angled swing hanging in a jungle gym beside a curved swing. "It's a huge leap to get from that" to the paintings, Mr. Marks said, "but he saw things in nature that inspired his work."

Kelly had been an avid bird-watcher since his boyhood, and Mr. Marks connected the artist's recurring use of the arrow form with his early study of bird shapes in Audubon watercolors.

Kelly developed his rigorous approach to abstraction as a young artist in 1948, pivoting away from the psychologically charged paintings of the Abstract Expressionists who dominated the New York scene. He went to Paris for six years and began isolating interesting shapes he found in plants, buildings, shadows and reflections — which he then blew up in scale and painted in flat, monochromatic hues.

While artists, including Monet and Picasso, have often had a dramatic shift in their late work, Ann Temkin, the chief curator of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, was struck by how "remarkably true" Kelly remained to the vocabulary he had established seven decades earlier.

ELLSWORTH KELLY, VIA MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

"White Angle Over Black" (2015)

"You might think, at this point, he would have exhausted these formats or colors or ideas, but the answer with these last paintings is a resounding no," said Ms. Temkin, who was given a preview of the exhibition catalog.

Mr. Shear pointed to the artist's main work table, with a notebook open to thumbnail sketches of four joined-panel paintings. "He didn't really struggle with painting much, but towards the end, he was really going back and forth on these paintings," he said, showing the finished works in an adjacent room.

One has a large white arrow overlapping the edges of a black rectangle and slicing it into five triangles.

The sketches show that Kelly originally had the arrow completely contained within the border of a larger panel. "He didn't think there was enough tension," Mr. Shear said.

James Rondeau, the director of the Art Institute of Chicago, said that with a "lesser artist, returning to one's own past to revise it would represent the absence of creativity." Previewing the new paintings in the catalog, he added, "With Ellsworth, it's precisely the opposite."

Mr. Marks, who paid a work call to Spencertown six days before the artist died, said with affection, "He was just as tough as he had always been."

Kelly's confidence was pivotal to his dealer's career. In 1994, when Mr. Marks was trading his small drawings gallery on Madison Avenue for a huge space on West 22nd Street, naysayers questioned whether anyone would come over to 10th Avenue. "That's what they said about Soho," Kelly argued. "Do good shows; they'll go there."

Eight hundred people came to Mr. Marks's inaugural exhibition of Ellsworth Kelly paintings. The current two exhibitions, with works priced between $3 million and $5 million, bring the gallery's tally to 19 solo shows of the painter's work.

Mr. Winters, 67, was one of many young art students at the time who felt Kelly's influence in the way that he "rooted his abstraction in the real world."

He added that "the drive and the level of accomplishment in the last years is sort of remarkable."

Mr. Shear saw the struggle others didn't. "These last paintings took more time to do because of his health," he said. "In his last three months, Ellsworth started signing drawings from the '50s and '60s that he never signed."

It was a harbinger of his acceptance of the end. After Kelly had died, Mr. Marks said that his artist friends all told him the same thing: "You do know that is every artist's hope — basically dying with a paintbrush in your hand."

Sheets, Hilarie M. "Abstract to the End." *The New York Times*, May 4, 2017, p. C1, p. C5.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREN LANCASTER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jack Shear in Ellsworth Kelly's studio

Items in the studio left as they were the last time Kelly painted

Sheets, Hilarie M. "Abstract to the End." *The New York Times*, May 4, 2017, p. C1, p. C5.

The New York Times

Ellsworth Kelly's Studio, Just as He Left It

Jack Shear

Jack Shear

Photographs by JACK SHEAR
Interview by ALICIA DESANTIS MAY 5, 2017

Jack Shear lived with Ellsworth Kelly for 32 years, in a house adjacent to the studio where Mr. Kelly worked, in Spencertown, N.Y. After Mr. Kelly's death in 2015, Mr. Shear preserved the studio intact, occasionally photographing the space, until Mr. Kelly's last canvases were removed to be shown at the Matthew Marks Gallery in New York. I spoke to Mr. Shear about the images he made and his time with the artist.

Mr. Shear left Mr. Kelly's studio untouched for more than a year. "I know there are stories written and movies about a room that someone never goes into, because someone has died and they want to leave it exactly the same way," he said. "I'm not sure whether it's a way of holding onto the person for as long as possible or a way to try to memorialize them in a particular way that they don't feel is possible any other way."

"Somebody moved a pencil and I went by, and it was gone, and I yelled at everybody to find it and put it back," Mr. Shear said.

Mr. Kelly took meticulous notes. He kept a book with thumbnail diagrams for each painting, marking the number of layers of gesso and paint that had been applied.

"At the end, his studio became like where he was living," Mr. Shear said. "He was not only painting, but he was actually living in the studio. I mean, Ellsworth considered Spencertown — and probably the studio in Spencertown — the center of the world, the center of the universe. This is where he finally, toward the end of his life, really wanted to be."

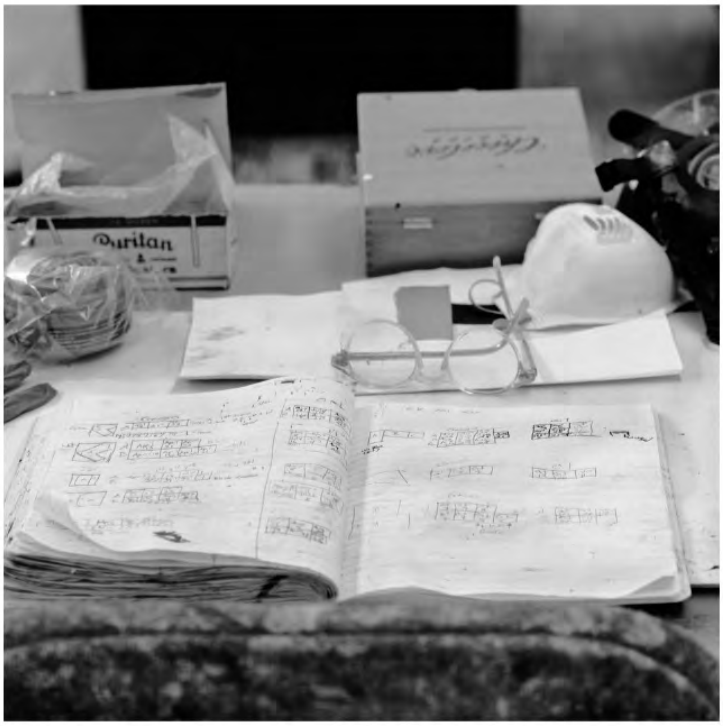
"Ellsworth would come to work in the morning, and if he was painting that particular day, he would actually change — literally strip down to his underwear," Mr. Shear said. "This was basically his uniform. He would put on a paint shirt, he would put on old paint pants, and he had these Tyvek paper suits that he would wear."

Mr. Kelly also wore a hat in the studio. "I think that might be, since '84 — that might be the fourth hat," Mr. Shear said. "His face would get splattered with paint, he was working really quickly."

DeSantis, Alicia, and Jack Shear. "Ellsworth Kelly's Studio, Just as He Left It." *The New York Times*, May 5, 2017.

Jack Shear

Jack Shear



Jack Shear

Jack Shear

DeSantis, Alicia, and Jack Shear. "Ellsworth Kelly's Studio, Just as He Left It." *The New York Times*, May 5, 2017.

Jack Shear

Jack Shear

Mr. Kelly painted fast, working methodically from one side of the canvas to the other as the paint dried. "The thing you'll notice, especially in the last probably five years, is that you see the brush strokes more. It's more difficult for him to be painting those large surfaces," Mr. Shear said. "But toward the end of his life he did embrace the texture — the brush stroke."

I asked Mr. Shear why he chose to photograph the space in black and white.

"I think color belonged to Ellsworth," he said. "I mean, I can see the colors, I can feel the textures. And I think it's a remove from reality, in a way."

In addition to skylights, Mr. Shear said, Mr. Kelly asked for a large, high window in the room: "Ellsworth said he wanted that big window there, that looks out onto pines."

"I don't ever think I ever remember him painting at night. He needed a lot of light," Mr. Shear said. "The light would be raking, so he could see where the overlaps were. When you paint a yellow on top of a yellow on top of a yellow, your eyes get really saturated and so you really need to see where that glossy paint is versus the paint what you had painted before."

He painted from filled pans. "Every yellow is different. Every red is different," Mr. Shear said. "I think he even mostly put either white or a color into his blacks when he used them. He never just wanted anything out of a tube — he always mixed his color."

"Sometimes he mixes for 15 minutes and sometimes he mixes for an hour," Mr. Shear said. "He actually understands what a color will do when it's wet. He understands it'll either get darker or lighter. He knew, by painting for so long, he knew exactly how a paint would dry."

Mr. Shear said, "I still talk about Ellsworth in the present, like we're doing projects together."

Mr. Kelly suffered from emphysema, the result of long exposure to turpentine and paint fumes. A small device was used to monitor his oxygen levels.

"His nose sort of dripped, his eyes watered, he was always looking for Kleenex," Mr. Shear said. "So there are Kleenex boxes in every room of the house."

Mr. Kelly's last, unfinished canvas had been gessoed, but not yet painted, when he died at the age of 92.

DeSantis, Alicia, and Jack Shear. "Ellsworth Kelly's Studio, Just as He Left It." *The New York Times*, May 5, 2017.

Jack Shear

Jack Shear

Jack Shear

DeSantis, Alicia, and Jack Shear. "Ellsworth Kelly's Studio, Just as He Left It." *The New York Times*, May 5, 2017.

The New York Times

ELLSWORTH KELLY, 1923-2015

Artist Who Shaped Geometries on a Bold Scale

By HOLLAND COTTER

Ellsworth Kelly, one of America's great 20th-century abstract artists, who in the years after World War II shaped a distinctive style of American painting by combining the solid shapes and brilliant colors of European abstraction with forms distilled from everyday life, died on Sunday at his home in Spencertown, N.Y. He was 92.

His death was announced by Matthew Marks of the Matthew Marks Gallery in Manhattan.

Mr. Kelly was a true original, forging his art equally from the observational exactitude he gained as a youthful bird-watching enthusiast; from skills he developed as a designer of camouflage patterns while in the Army; and from exercises in automatic drawing he picked up from European surrealism. Although his knowledge of, and love for, art history was profound, he was little affected by the contemporary art of his time and country. He was living in France during the heyday of Abstract Expressionism in New York and only distantly aware of art in the United States. When he returned to America in 1954, he settled on what was then an out-of-the-way section of Manhattan for art, the Financial District, and had little interaction with many of his contemporaries. The result was a art, one that subscribed to no deeply personal and exploratory ready orthodoxies, and that opened up wide the possibilities of abstraction for his own generation and those to come.

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Ellsworth Kelly's "Sculpture for a Large Wall" (1957) at the Museum of Modern Art, which held his first American retrospective.

Born in Newburgh, N.Y., on May 31, 1923, Mr. Kelly studied painting at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston after his discharge from the Army in 1945. But his formative years as an artist were in Paris, which he had visited briefly during World War II, and where he returned to

Continued on Page B8

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Ellsworth Kelly, Who Shaped Geometries on a Bold Scale, Dies

FRED R. CONRAD/THE NEW YORK TIMES

PAINTING TO SCULPTURE Ellsworth Kelly built a large studio and designed a garden to display his outdoor sculptures in Spencertown, N.Y.

From Page A1

live in 1948 with support from the G.I. Bill.

The seven years he subsequently spent there had continuing emotional resonance for him throughout his life. In a 1996 interview with The New York Times, he recalled his early days in the city:

"Paris was gray after the war. I liked being alone. I liked being a stranger. I didn't speak French very well, and I liked the silence."

The Influence of Paris

When he arrived, he was painting figures influenced by Picasso and Byzantine mosaics. But he quickly immersed himself in museums, adding both Asian art and Matisse to his eclectic store of influences.

He also spent time outside Paris visiting Romanesque churches, and the relationship between art and architecture remained important to him, evident in the many public commissions he completed late in his career.

As isolated as he may have felt in Paris, he met extraordinary people. Some of them, like John Cage and Merce Cunningham, were Americans passing through. Others were resident legends.

He visited the studio of the abstract sculptor Constantin Brancusi, whose simplification of natural shapes remained one of Mr. Kelly's formal ideals. He was introduced to the Surrealist Jean Arp, whose use of chance as a compositional device Mr. Kelly adopted. The sculptor Alexander Calder became a friend, as did the young American painter Jack Youngerman.

Within a year of his arrival, Mr. Kelly was painting his first abstract pictures using a mix of chance elements and references to nature, which he defined as everything seen in the real world.

"I started to look at the city around me, and that became my source," he said.

The early paintings and drawings were derived from patterns found in sidewalk grates, or configurations of pipes on the side of a building. A gridlike field of black and white squares was inspired by the play of light on the Seine. A painted wood cutout, "Window, Museum of Modern Art, Paris" (1949), corresponded in dimensions and form to the title object.

"I realized I didn't want to compose pictures," he told The Times in 1996. "I wanted to find them. I felt that my vision was choosing things out there in the world and presenting them. To me the investigation of perception was of the greatest interest. There was so much to see, and it all looked fantastic to me."

Mr. Kelly's use of found elements went beyond just letting his eyes wander. It led him to create purely abstract paintings composed of randomly arranged and joined colored panels, a radical move even for him.

"I wondered, 'Can I make a painting with just five panels of color in a row?' I loved it, but I didn't think the world would. They'd think, 'It's not enough.'"

It did take time for the art world to catch up with him. Although he had a one-person show in Paris in 1951, there was scant response and he was turned down for several group exhibitions. A piece he submitted for one exhibition, a relief painting, was rejected on the ground that it wasn't art. Meanwhile, his G.I. Bill support was coming to an end, forcing him to seek jobs as an art teacher, a textile designer and a custodian.

Although he had been away from America when the great tidal pull of Abstract Expressionism was in full force, he was aware of it enough to know that it wasn't temperamentally for him. "I didn't want an art that was so subjective," he said. "I wanted to get away from the cult of the personality."

Finding Favor Back Home

The anonymous role of the Roman-

Cotter, Holland. "Artist Who Shaped Geometries on a Bold Scale." *The New York Times,* December 28, 2015, p. A1, p. B8.

LIBRADO ROMERO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

COLOR WITH CONTRAST Mr. Kelly's simple shapes and flat colors, demonstrated in "Spectrum V" (1969), above, and "Colors for a Large Wall" (1951), below, were a departure from the geometric abstraction that most American abstract painters were pursuing at the end of the 1940s.

esque church artist remained a model. But in 1954, after reading a favorable review in ARTnews of an Ad Reinhardt show in New York City, he began to think that his own fairly spare abstract work might find favor there, and he returned to the United States.

Short on cash when he arrived, he ended up living in a half-deserted section of Lower Manhattan near South Street Seaport, in a 19th-century sailmaker's loft on Coenties Slip.

His neighbors there eventually included the artists Robert Indiana, Agnes Martin, James Rosenquist, Lenore Tawney and Mr. Youngerman, as well Mr. Youngerman's wife, the actress Delphine Seyrig. Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg had arrived in the area earlier; Barnett Newman had a studio on nearby Wall Street.

Their lofts were spartan. Few had kitchens or hot water, and there were constant threats of eviction. The rewards were abundant space and light, as well as removal from the Abstract Expressionist scene farther uptown.

For Mr. Kelly, the open skies of the harbor and the streets paved with stone blocks that had been whaling ships' ballast softened the culture shock of shifting from Old World to New. And just as he used the shapes of Parisian architecture in his earlier paintings, the grand arches of the nearby Brooklyn Bridge appeared in his New York City work.

Despite his remote location, the art world found him. The dealer Betty Parsons, who also represented Reinhardt, visited Mr. Kelly's studio and offered him a solo exhibition in 1956.

That same year he received his first sculptural commission, the mural-size "Sculpture for a Large Wall," for the lobby of the Transportation Building in Philadelphia. In 1957 the Whitney Museum of American Art bought a painting, "Atlantic," which depicted two white wave-like arcs against solid black. It was Mr. Kelly's first museum purchase.

In 1959 Dorothy C. Miller, the influential Museum of Modern Art curator, included Mr. Kelly's work in "Sixteen Americans," an important survey of emerging artists that included Johns, Rauschenberg and Youngerman, as well as Frank Stella, Louise Nevelson and Jay De Feo.

By the early 1960s, Mr. Kelly's career was firmly if quietly established, although it would be decades before he gained the high profile enjoyed by some of his contemporaries. This was partly because his work was basically contemplative in spirit, and partly because — during a period defined by movements like Pop, Op and Minimalism — he fit no ready category.

In addition, he worked in several media, experimentally combining at least two. Along with paintings, drawings and collages, he produced free-standing and relief sculptures. In addition to making cut-out wood and steel panels that functioned as monochromatic paintings, he composed works from two or more overlapping canvases, effectively creating a hybrid of painting and sculpture.

In doing so, he made some of the first shaped canvases of the postwar period. And stressing the object quality of his works led him almost seamlessly to free-standing sculpture. The simplicity, flat color, bold scale, and especially his cultivation of a geometry full of flexible organic undertones formed a crucial example for the Minimalists.

In 1965, after nearly a decade with Parsons, he began to show with the Sidney Janis Gallery. A year later he had work selected for the American pavilion at the Venice Biennale; in 1968 he was in Documenta IV in Kassel, Germany. He would subsequently be included in three more Venice Bienniales and in the 1977 and 1992 editions of Documenta, the international exhibition held every five years in Germany.

In 1970, after living for several years on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, he moved permanently to the upstate town of Spencertown, where he eventually built a large studio and designed a parklike garden to display his outdoor sculptures.

In 1973 he had his first American retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York; his second, in 1996 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, traveled to Los Angeles, London and Munich. His first major European retrospective was at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in 1979.

Other surveys focused on specific bodies of work. These included a sculpture retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1982; a retrospective of works on paper at the Fort Worth Art Museum and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in 1987; and a print retrospective at the Detroit Institute of Arts, also in 1987.

In 1992 "Ellsworth Kelly: The Years in France" was organized by the Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris and the National Gallery in Washington.

In recognition of his close early relationship to France, Mr. Kelly was given three awards by the French government: Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 1988, Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur in 1993 and Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres in 2002.

'Forever in the Present'

Mr. Kelly's importance in American postwar art was increasingly acknowledged from the late 1970s onward, in part thanks to strong gallery representation. In the 1970s and 1980s, his work was handled jointly by Leo Castelli and Blum Helman. In 1992, he joined the Matthew Marks Gallery in Manhattan and the Anthony d'Offay Gallery in London. Along with gallery and museum shows, those decades also brought numerous public and institutional commissions.

A characteristic permanent installation might consist of a series of large single-color painted canvases or steel panels in varying shapes — wedges, arcs, triangles, trapezoids — cartwheeling across an expanse of wall.

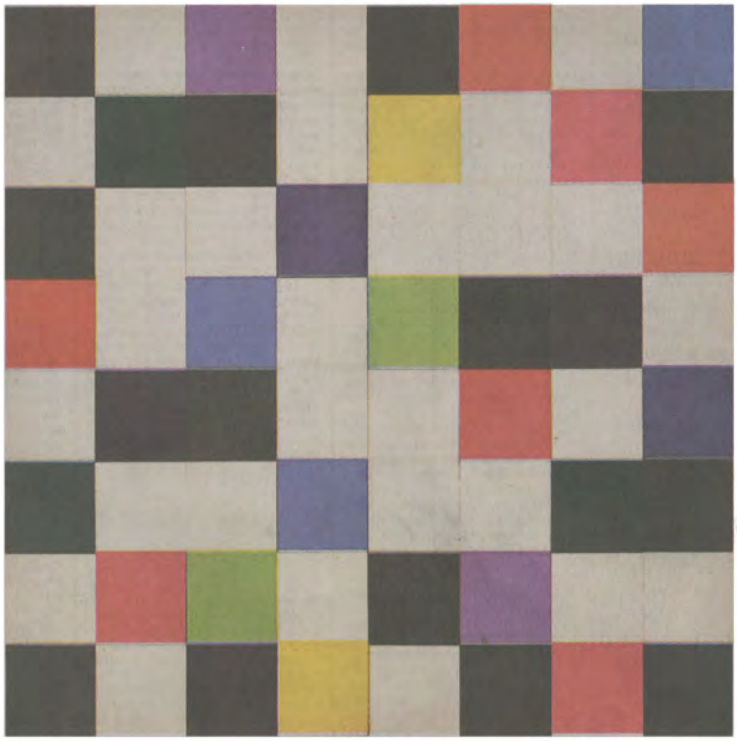
One of his most moving installations, though, was one of his quietest. Made for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, it consisted of a plain white fan-shaped form floating opposite a triptych of three rectangular white panels. Suggesting the image of a great bird lifting upward over closed windows, the piece distilled the rigorously refined visual vocabulary Mr. Kelly had developed over a long career.

In 2013, Mr. Kelly received the National Medal of Arts, considered the nation's highest honor for artistic excellence, from President Obama.

He is survived by his husband, Jack Shear, and a brother, David.

Mr. Kelly was as adamant about what his art was not as about what it was. Un-

Cotter, Holland. "Artist Who Shaped Geometries on a Bold Scale." *The New York Times*, December 28, 2015, p. A1, p. B8.



THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

like the work of the early European modernists he admired, it was not about social theory. It was not about geometry or abstraction as ends in themselves. And although he derived many of his shapes from the natural world, his art was not about nature.

"My paintings don't represent objects," he said in 1996. "They are objects themselves and fragmented perceptions of things."

Although he was interested in history and concerned about his place in it, he spoke of his own work as existing "forever in the present."

"I think what we all want from art is a sense of fixity, a sense of opposing the chaos of daily living," he said. "This is an illusion, of course. What I've tried to capture is the reality of flux, to keep art an open, incomplete situation, to get at the rapture of seeing."

Cotter, Holland. "Artist Who Shaped Geometries on a Bold Scale." *The New York Times*, December 28, 2015, p. A1, p. B8.

THE NEW YORKER

POSTSCRIPT: ELLSWORTH KELLY

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

The paintings of Ellsworth Kelly, who died on Sunday, at the age of ninety-two, have the suddenness of miracles, and the improbability. Their emphatic shapes and clarion colors, in myriad formats, are unreasonably rational and ascetically luxuriant. No modern movement or general style—not minimalism, Pop, or Op, not geometric or hard-edge or color-field abstraction—usefully contains them. You are on your own when you look at them. I think that their open secret is innocence, maintained at fantastic levels of talent, dedication, and savoir-faire.

The artist Ellsworth Kelly died on Sunday, at the age of ninety-two.
PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX MAJOLI AND DARIA BIRANG

Like a lot of people over the seven-decade course of Kelly's career, I came to appreciate his greatness slowly, even grudgingly, and then all at once, and permanently. His independence was a problem for me as a tyro aesthete in the sixties. It was hipness-proof. His paintings weren't a kind of art. They seemed to present themselves as art in essence, immaculately conceived. They made me feel, precisely, dumb, with nothing to say.

My epiphany occurred thirty-some years ago, in a now defunct uptown gallery, with a white, shaped canvas—an elongated fan shape, gently curved along the top. It was probably about ten or twelve feet long, though in my memory it feels very much longer. The unhurried curve got me. It was like the horizon of a world that made a non-world of all of the space outside it. While my eye was tracing it, I felt a brief, intense flash of something that I can't name: a perception of perception, perhaps. A short circuit in the brain. And yet the

Schjeldahl, Peter. "Postscript: Ellsworth Kelly." *The New Yorker*, December 30, 2015.

curve was just a contour of a wall-hung object. I wasn't surprised, though a little spooked and lonely, to observe the apparent obliviousness of other people in the gallery.

Who could make such a thing happen?

Kelly's story is now a legend: the art-smitten, bird-watching, shy, gay kid from Newburgh, New York, who served in the "Ghost Army"—camouflage experts who dissembled Allied military deployments before and after D-Day—and was staked by the G.I. Bill to six years in Paris, from 1948 to 1954. There he absorbed Matisse's mergers of drawing and color, Arp's methods of composing by chance, and other modern-art innovations. He distilled them into a mode of chaste abstraction based on observed fact: details of architecture, happenstances of light and shadow. Call it Ghost Art, a translation from reality into something fully real, itself, only different.

Being in Paris—where his chagrin at his bad French made him decline a chance to talk with Picasso—Kelly missed out on the glory years of Abstract Expressionism in New York. How lucky was that, for him and us? When finally he moved here, to indigent digs on the downtown waterfront, it was with faint hope of fitting into an art scene dominated by the painterly rhetoric of Pollock, de Kooning, and Rothko, which would surely have distracted him if he had encountered it earlier. Even when emerging Pop art and minimalism made him seem, retrospectively, a prophet of their audacious and reductive ways, he stood apart. He had French taste on the chassis of a pragmatic American soul.

Some great art enfolds us in sensuous pleasures, making us happier, and some snaps us to rigorous attention, making us better. Kelly's does both at once, if you let it.

Peter Schjeldahl has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1998 and is the magazine's art critic.

Schjeldahl, Peter. "Postscript: Ellsworth Kelly." *The New Yorker*, December 30, 2015.

The New York Times

An Artist and Storyteller Is Remembered

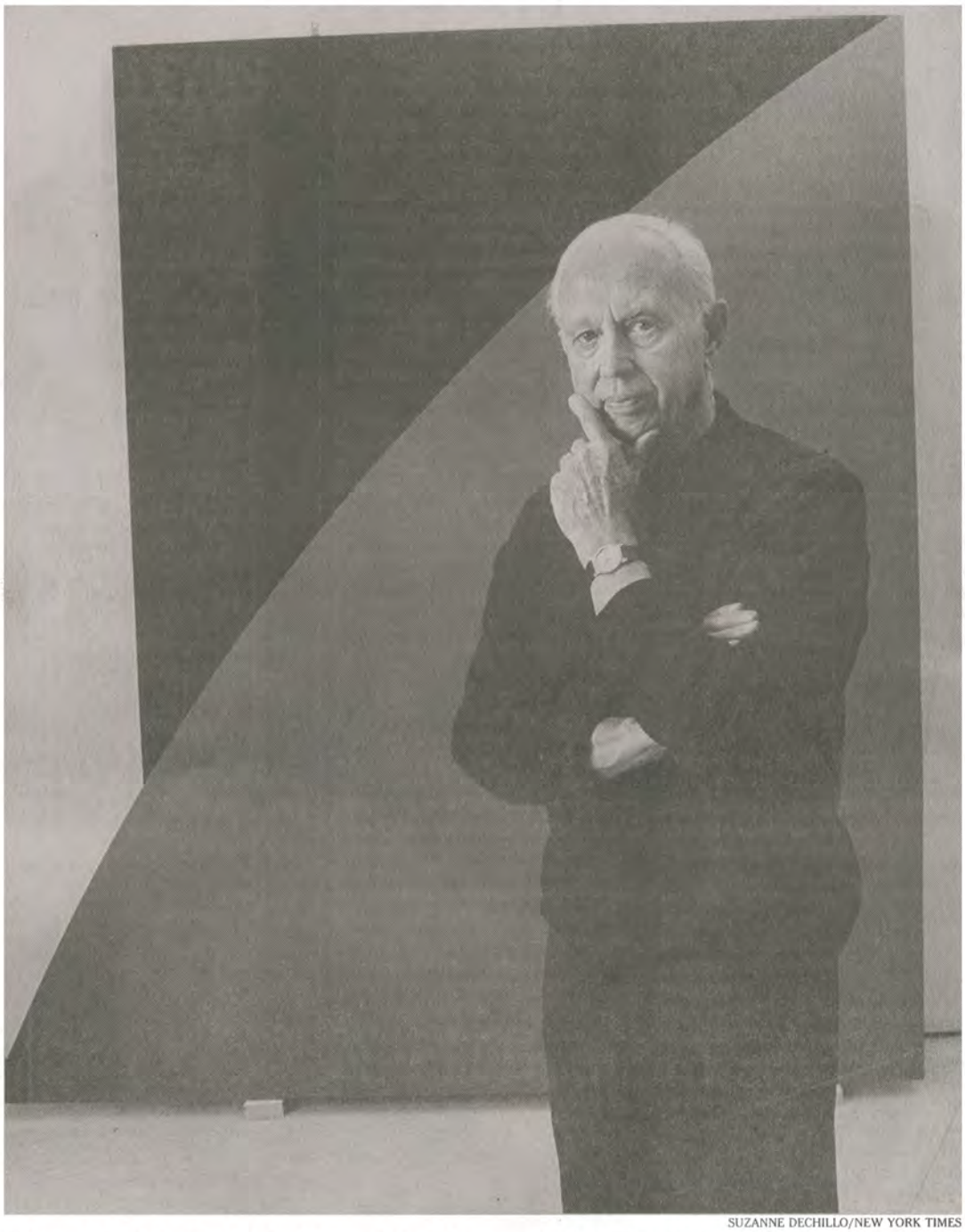
SCOTT ROTHKOPF

AN APPRAISAL

Words like joy, delight and wonder don't have a lot of currency in serious contemporary art criticism, which tends to prize skepticism and anxiety over supposedly easier pleasures. But it was precisely those former feelings that overcame me when I first encountered Ellsworth Kelly's work en masse as a college student at his staggering 1996 retrospective at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. The artist filled Frank Lloyd Wright's signature rotunda with a confetti explosion of jaunty yellow ovals, crisp blue rectangles and vivid red curves, delivering an effervescent jolt that changed the course of my life and my interest in art. His paintings were strict yet somehow sprightly, and they tended to arouse emotions that one would be hard-pressed to ascribe to Mr. Kelly's equally rigorous contemporaries in the field of abstraction.

Back at school, I sought out the courses taught by Mr. Kelly's greatest critical champion, Yve-Alain Bois, and was soon fortunate to meet the artist himself. In the days since his death at 92, I've been thinking more about his playful spirit than the generally esteemed intellectual qualities of his mind and work. There was, in both Mr. Kelly and his art, the thrill of discovery and the joy it could provoke.

The last time I visited his studio in Spencertown, N.Y., it was as a curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, on New Year's Day almost exactly one year ago. He was excited as ever to greet the new year, hurriedly ushering me from a model for an unfinished chapel in Texas he was designing, to a YouTube video of an adorable Oxford University a cappella group



SUZANNE DECHILLO/NEW YORK TIMES

Ellsworth Kelly in 1996 at the Guggenheim Museum with his "Blue Relief With Black" (1993).

Rothkopf, Scott. "An Artist and Storyteller is Remembered." *The New York Times,* December 30, 2015, p. C1, p. C4.

vamping it up to Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You." "What a great song!" he exclaimed, eyes flashing, fingers tapping along.

Our next stop was a pristine sky-lit space hung with a clutch of new paintings. Often in art, as in most things, elegance can be the enemy of feeling or vigor, but not so in Mr. Kelly's case. Here was a group of ineffably refined paintings that felt hard-won yet unstudied, perfectly poised yet bristling with life. A few harked back to collages he had made some 70 years before, while others looked to an unknown future. One particularly surprising canvas featured a sunny yellow field crowned by wobbly blue forms suggesting an infinity sign that seemed at once to vex and intrigue its maker. "Do you think I should show it?" he asked with an impish grin.

He did show it, in a group of astonishing exhibitions of all new work that opened in May, two weeks shy of his 92nd birthday, and filled the four Chelsea gallery spaces of Matthew Marks, his longtime dealer and unstinting supporter. Shortly thereafter came the exceptional first volume of a catalogue raisonné of his paintings by Mr. Bois.

Mr. Kelly was one of the true pioneers in the development of Abstract art, a relatively short history nearly spanned by the arc of his own long life. Most notably, he challenged the subjective nature of composition and forever changed our understanding of how artworks are not just windows to other worlds but sit squarely in the ones that they (and we) inhabit. The lilting cut-out planes and perspectival geometries of his paintings and sculptures generate delicate spatial illusions but insist on their status as things in real space open to our perception.

Mr. Kelly's achievements were vast, and he was so admired and adored by the big New York museums that each of us might be tempted to call him our own. At the Whitney we are proud to have been the first institution to acquire his work, while the Guggenheim granted him his most recent New York survey. The Museum of Modern Art can claim incomparable holdings, and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art you can always see his magisterial 1969 painting, "Spectrum V," unfurling across nearly 40 feet of wall.

Despite his renown, Mr. Kelly was an inveterate charmer who could make you believe the twinkle in his eye was only for you. I was surprised to learn from his obituary that as a young man he was drawn to the silence of postwar Paris, because I knew him as a real talker. He lit up at parties, especially those increasingly given in his honor, where he would momentarily feign abashment before seizing the mike and wooing the crowd.

Privately, he was especially generous to students, unspooling stories about his past like a Scheherazade for the art historian set. There was his early service as a camouflage designer during World War II, and the visit to the sculptor Constantin Brancusi's studio in the company of young female friends (whom the master insisted sit on his lap). There was the pilgrimage to discover Monet's last canvases in his pigeon-infested atelier in Giverny, France, and the quiet of a vanished New York where Mr. Kelly lived alongside the artists Robert Indiana, Agnes Martin and Jack Youngerman in airy old lofts along Coenties Slip.

Ellsworth Kelly was generous to students, unspooling stories about this past.

As he grew older he seemed intent on making known other, more difficult stories, whether about being a young gay man in the Army or fearing throughout long periods of his career that his work might be misunderstood. Always at his side was his beloved and devoted husband, the photographer Jack Shear, chiming in with a missing name or punctuating a tale he'd heard dozens of times with a tender eye roll.

But Mr. Kelly was far more interested in the present than in the past.

In the inaugural exhibition of the Whitney's new downtown home last spring, he was represented not only by his early works but also by one he completed at the age of 80. This stirring collage published in The New York Times in 2003 consisted of nothing more than an aerial image of ground zero affixed with a trapezoid of, what else, Kelly green.

Amid the roiling debates over towers and memorials, Mr. Kelly had imagined the site as a void of grassy parkland in the heart of Lower Manhattan. The forces of commercial real estate and politics destined his vision of a living memorial to be no more than a dream, but the point was that Mr. Kelly was still dreaming, late in his years, choosing to confront the shadow of death with new life. That spirit of affirmation remains among his greatest gifts.

Scott Rothkopf is deputy director of programs and chief curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Rothkopf, Scott. "An Artist and Storyteller is Remembered." *The New York Times,* December 30, 2015, p. C1, p. C4.

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ARTFORUM

ELLSWORTH KELLY
1923–2015

YVE-ALAIN BOIS
RICHARD SERRA
ANN TEMKIN
TERRY WINTERS
MARY HEILMANN
MOLLY WARNOCK

IN ELLSWORTH KELLY'S HANDS, an awning or an apple could be made to inspire euphoria—the most mundane things becoming the basis for the most destabilizing visual experience, and the most glorious. Over the course of eight decades, Kelly continually generated such moments of quiet cataclysm, changing not only the way we look but what we know, insisting on the irreducible specificity of every shape, every form, every experience, and giving himself over to it. This sustained investigation tantalizingly paralleled but could never quite be squared with Pop, Minimalism, or Conceptual art. In the pages that follow, six distinguished *Artforum* contributors pay homage to the artist and his inimitable eye.

Ellsworth Kelly, ***Dark Blue Curve*, 1995**, oil on canvas, 3' 10" × 15' 10".

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Tablet 3* (detail), 1955, found object, 4½ × 3¼".

YVE-ALAIN BOIS

MY FIRST THOUGHT, when I got the news of Ellsworth Kelly's death, was that the world had suddenly gone dimmer. I could no longer expect the gush of joy that always engulfed me when discovering his most recent works in Spencertown, New York. But while it is true that he is no longer here to surprise us with utterly new twists and turns in his practice—which became ever more playful as he grew older—I soon realized that I had been wrong to think that way. For the work remains, and it remains as a rock of optimism no matter how grim the world becomes around us. It is to this constant freshness that I would like to pay tribute.

Those of us who knew him well often heard Ellsworth lamenting about this or that, but his art always contradicted whatever gloomy mood he might be in. His work was, and will forever be, upbeat, and he himself was invariably upbeat when hard at work. Self-doubt very rarely troubled him, even though he was his own harshest critic. He could be hilariously funny, and he was quite a storyteller, but he kept irony at bay from his work. He had no distance from it. He was perhaps the last happy modernist.

I have often wondered about Ellsworth's consistent passion and energy—especially during the last years of his life, when his health was failing. Obsession was part of it, to be sure—and he was more obsessed with his own work than any other artist I have met—but that is not enough. A remark that Matisse made a few months before his death helped me understand where this was coming from: "The artist . . . has to look at everything as though he saw it for the first time: He has to look at life as he did when he was a child." In many ways, I think that's what Ellsworth achieved.

He was very fond of recalling childhood memories—and his memory was spectacular. One of the events he liked most to recollect happened when he was trick-or-treating with a group of friends. Approaching a house at night, he had marveled at the shapes and colors that he could see from afar, framed by a window, in a brightly lit room—only to discover, on moving closer and peeking through the window, that the interior in question was utterly banal, that nothing there could justify his interest. Any other child would have shrugged this off, but Ellsworth insisted (no doubt as his cohort was impatiently waving him back) on returning to the same exact spot where that initial magic encounter had sparked, so that he could verify it, so to speak.

"Finding the exact spot" could be the motto for how Ellsworth's vision operated. I think it explains, in large part, his extraordinary capacity to return to his past works as an endless cornucopia: to take a collage he had made twenty, thirty, even sixty years earlier and then realize it in painting—but without any editing or adaption, changing nothing except the size and the medium. That first spot, in other words, remained exactly right. He had no control over the spot itself—he was just immensely open to catching sight of it, eyes wide-open. He had no theoretical compass, no blinders of any sort. Paradoxically, for someone who always sought to expunge subjectivity from his work, his only guide was his intuition. He never knew why he was attracted to such-and-such a shape, why the particular curve of this particular shadow so struck him that he had to record it at once with whatever instrument on whatever support he had at hand, why he immediately perceived this piece of folded cardboard found in the street as fodder for his art. And when he was starting from scratch, as he did more often than one might think, he did not know why it felt absolutely necessary for him to trim, by just one degree, the radius of an ample, generous curve with a ten-foot span. He had no control over the spot, but he had full confidence in his visual radar, in the exactitude of what his radar let him see. As anyone who ever watched him install an exhibition could testify, he had what we could call "perfect visual pitch": He could eyeball in a split second the slightest discrepancy between what he had meticulously planned and what impatient art handlers or curators had made of his instructions.

Ellsworth often remarked that his visual accuracy was enhanced early on by his bird-watching in the

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Red with White Relief*, 2002, oil on canvas, two joined panels, 81 × 63 × 2⅜".

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum*, April 2016, pp. 190–205.

New Jersey countryside (he alluded to it again this past December, marveling at photographs of a colorful painted bunting that had made a rare appearance in Brooklyn's Prospect Park). And indeed, the skills required for bird-watching include an attention not only to the bird but to everything around it, to the ground as much as to the figure. Visiting an exhibition with Ellsworth was a lesson in perception: He was always pointing to details one would not otherwise notice, to interstitial spaces between figures, or to the juxtaposition of two color planes in a marginal area of a canvas. He would then inevitably relate those discoveries to his own work, past or recent. I vividly remember a visit to an exhibition of van Gogh's portraits at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, during which he kept signaling shapes or color chords in the Dutch painter's works and noting how much they recalled some of his own—to the point that I felt compelled to joke that if one could be sure of anything, it was that van Gogh had not copied him.

But if Ellsworth's visual proficiency allowed him to discern hidden similarities, it was even more attuned toward detecting minute differences—as I found out many times when, having compared two of his works that seemed to me very close morphologically, I was gently rebuked for not having identified their essential *dis*similarity. God, for him, was indeed in the details.

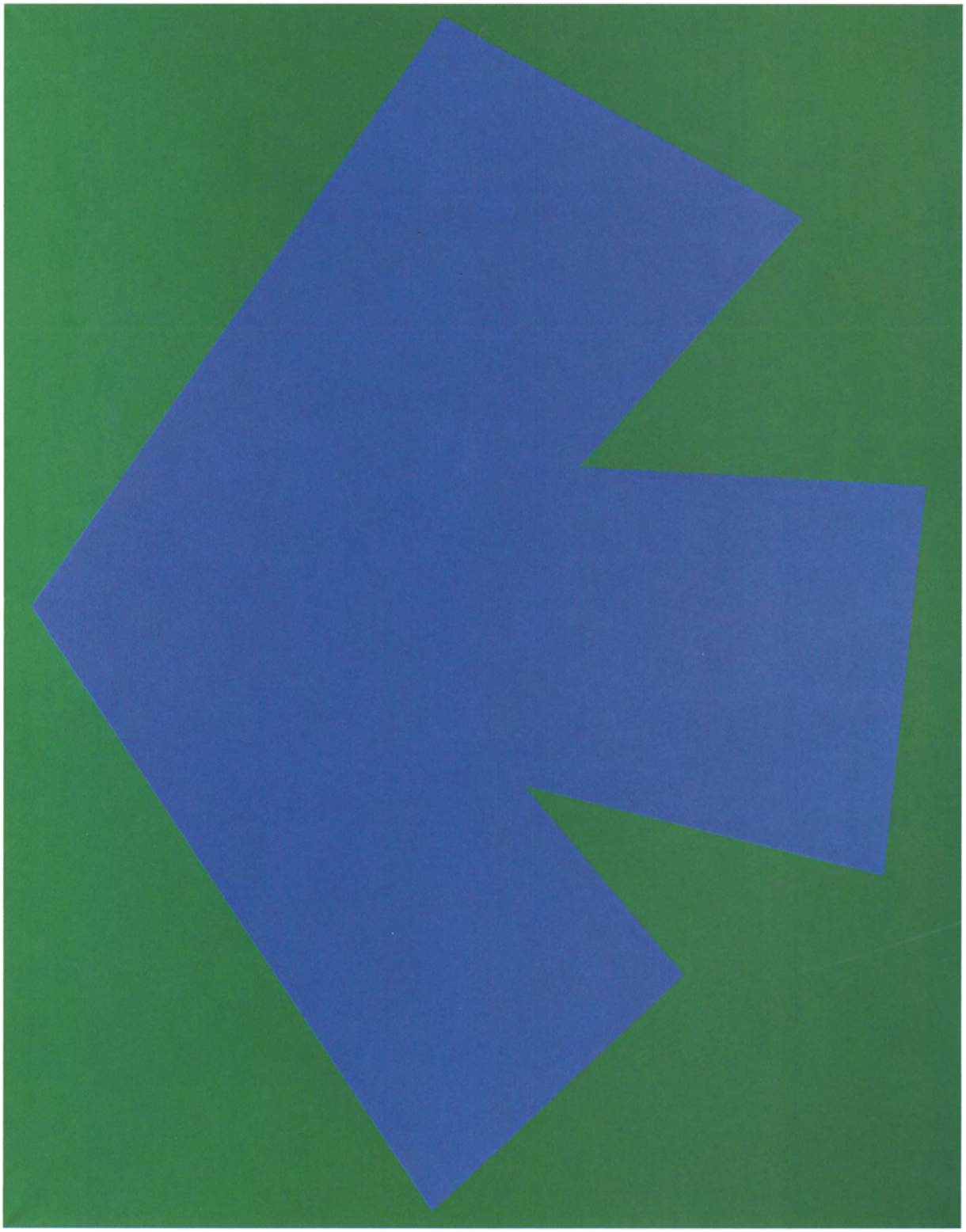
I was fortunate to be able to discuss with Ellsworth, at great length, the genesis of many of his works. He was particularly voluble when speaking of his French years, in part, perhaps, because there were things he did not need to spell out with a French native, but above all because he knew how important his stay in France at the beginning of his career had been in his formation—this is where and when he had discovered and developed the noncompositional strategies (what I have classified as chance, the transfer, grid, monochrome, and silhouette) that would sustain his life's work. He bore no grudge against the French for not having been any faster than the Americans in welcoming his work; and he enjoyed, late in life, the belated accolades he received from overseas. The only reproach he kept making against my compatriots concerned vichyssoise, the cold soup of leeks, potatoes, and crème fraîche, which he was convinced of having invented. I don't think I managed to persuade him to the contrary.

This was the least of Ellsworth's extremely strong core beliefs. He stuck to his guns all his life, never belonging to any group, never compromising, always proud of his singularity. Despite the experience of a certain solitude that this implies, he had many friends. And he was a generous friend, whom I'll miss dearly.

YVE-ALAIN BOIS IS PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY AT THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN PRINCETON, NJ, AND IS THE AUTHOR OF THE ELLSWORTH KELLY CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

Paradoxically, for someone who always sought to expunge subjectivity from his work, Ellsworth's only guide was his intuition.

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

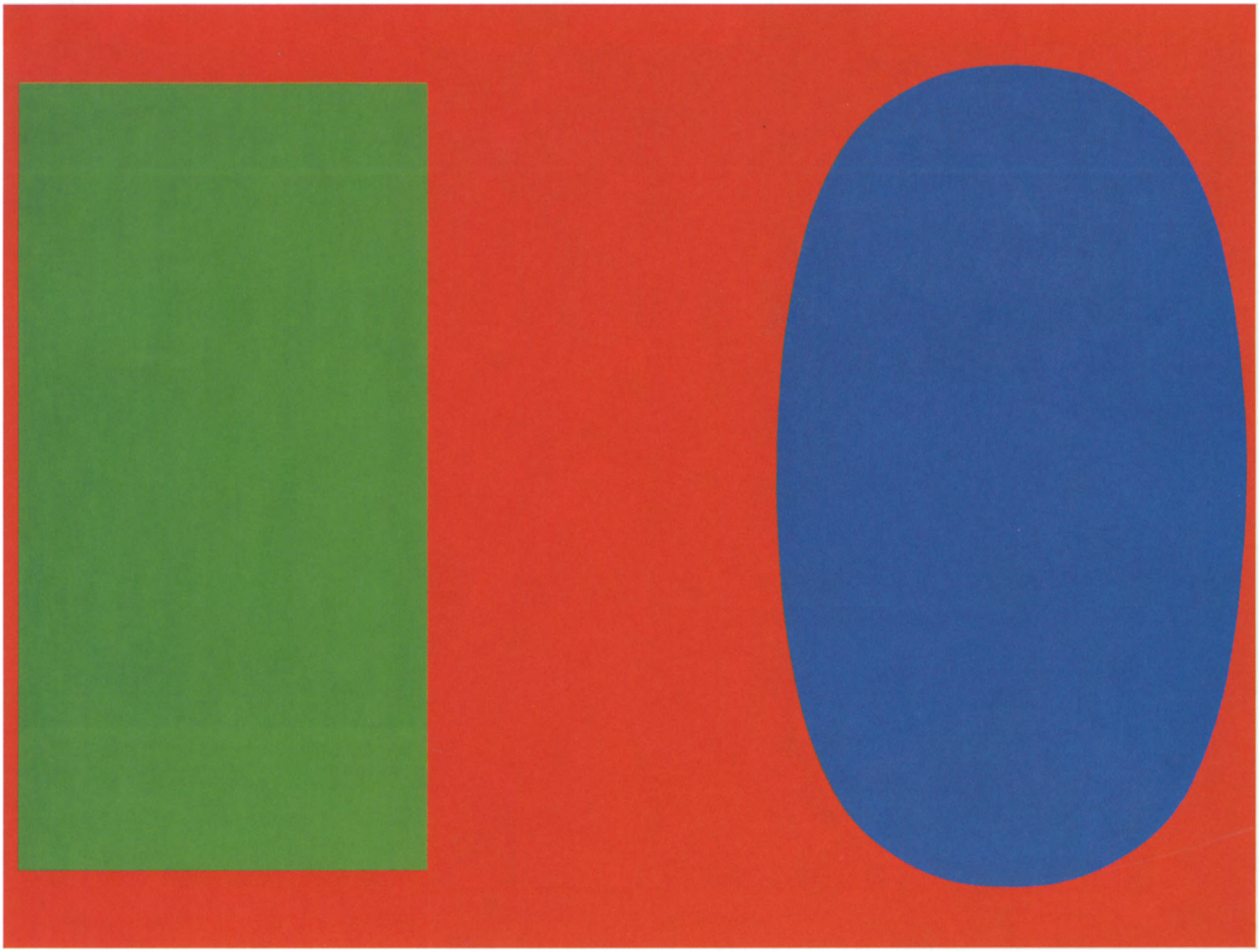


Opposite page: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Gold with Orange Reliefs*, 2013**, oil on canvas and wood, three joined panels, 79¼ × 72⅛ × 2⅛".

Above: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Orange Forms on Gold*, 1962**, collage, 8¼ × 7¾".

Right: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Blue Green*, 1962**, oil on canvas, 86½ × 68".

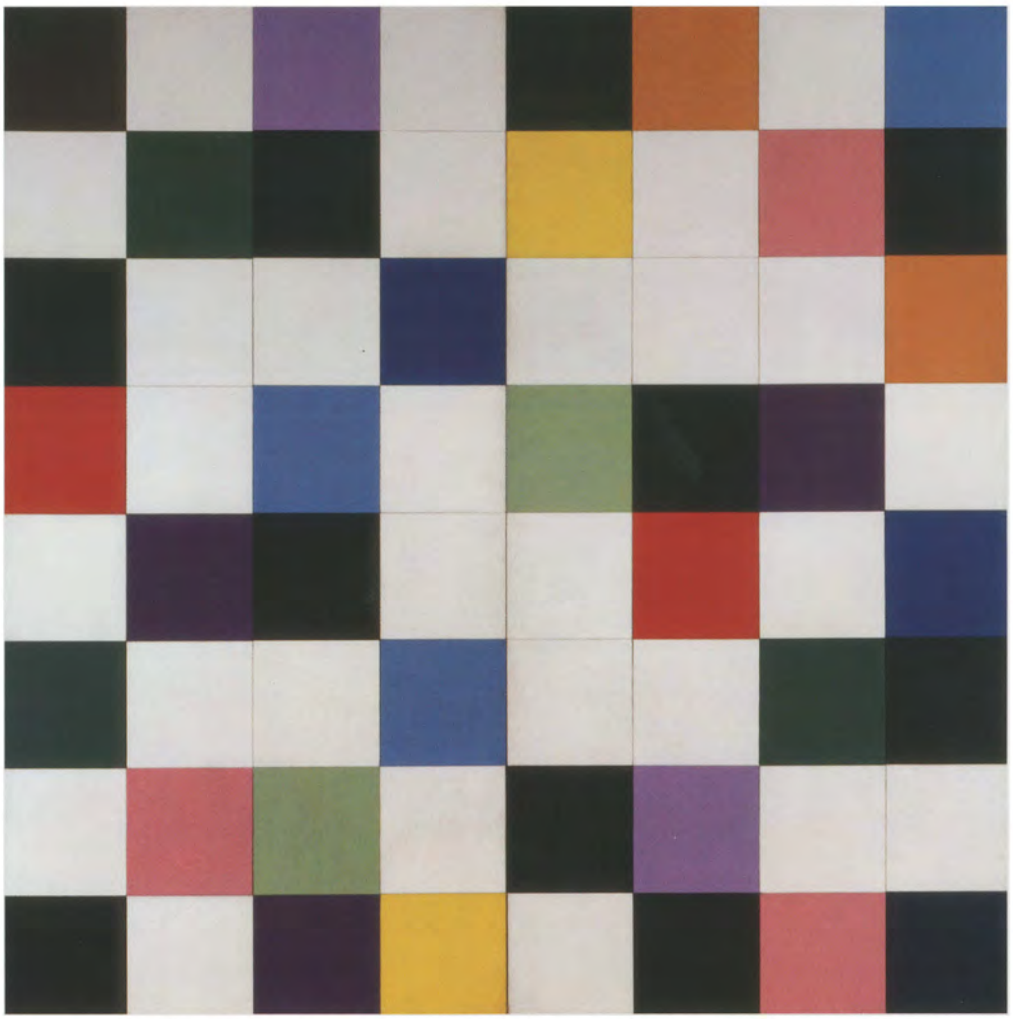
Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum*, April 2016, pp. 190–205.

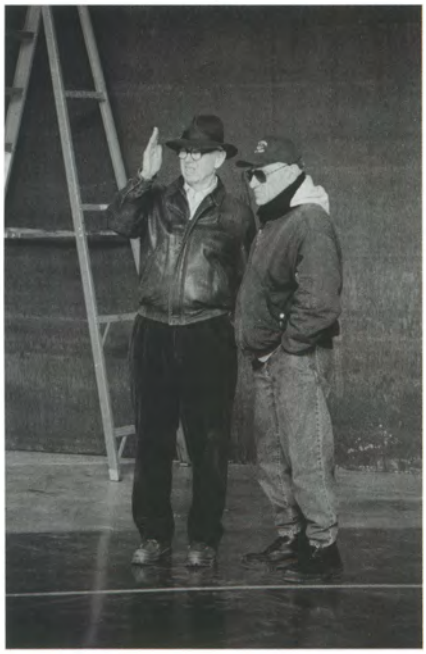


Ellsworth Kelly, *Green Blue Red*, 1963, oil on canvas, 67½ × 90".

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

RICHARD SERRA





Above: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Colors for a Large Wall*, 1951,** oil on canvas, sixty-four joined panels, 94½ × 94½". Left: **Ellsworth Kelly and Richard Serra, New York, 1999.** Photo: Rob McKeever.

IN 1964, I received a traveling fellowship from Yale to study painting in Paris. There I saw Phil Glass every day. He introduced me to the work of John Cage and together we would read *Silence* (1961) out loud. The potential for chance became for me an alternative, and I took it seriously.

The following year I received a Fulbright to study in Florence. I began working on a painting and stretched an eight-by-eight-foot canvas. I snapped grid lines across it to form sixty-four squares, opened up thirty or forty cans of colored paint, got a stopwatch, and decided to arbitrarily fill in each square, one every two minutes. There was a lot of unnecessary busy brushwork and the edges were not that tight. I was apprehensive but interested in pursuing the problem.

The day after I finished my painting, I went to the American Cultural Center to look at the latest art periodicals and saw a photo of Ellsworth Kelly's *Colors for a Large Wall*, painted in 1951. To put it mildly, I was shocked and deflated. This work closed off all options for continuing with my colored-grid folly.

Kelly had not laid out a grid on a canvas beforehand. Instead, he had juxtaposed separate panels, leaving no visible brushwork. It also appeared that the colored modules were arranged by chance—another zinger. This early work was a complete break from Mondrian, from European abstraction. This was not domestic picture making, not an enlarged easel painting. The ambition of the scale was architectural.

There was no precedent for this work.

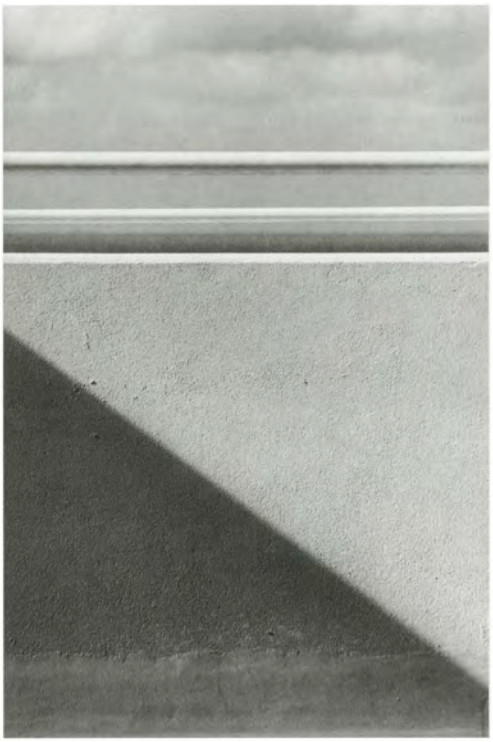
RICHARD SERRA IS AN ARTIST BASED IN NEW YORK. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

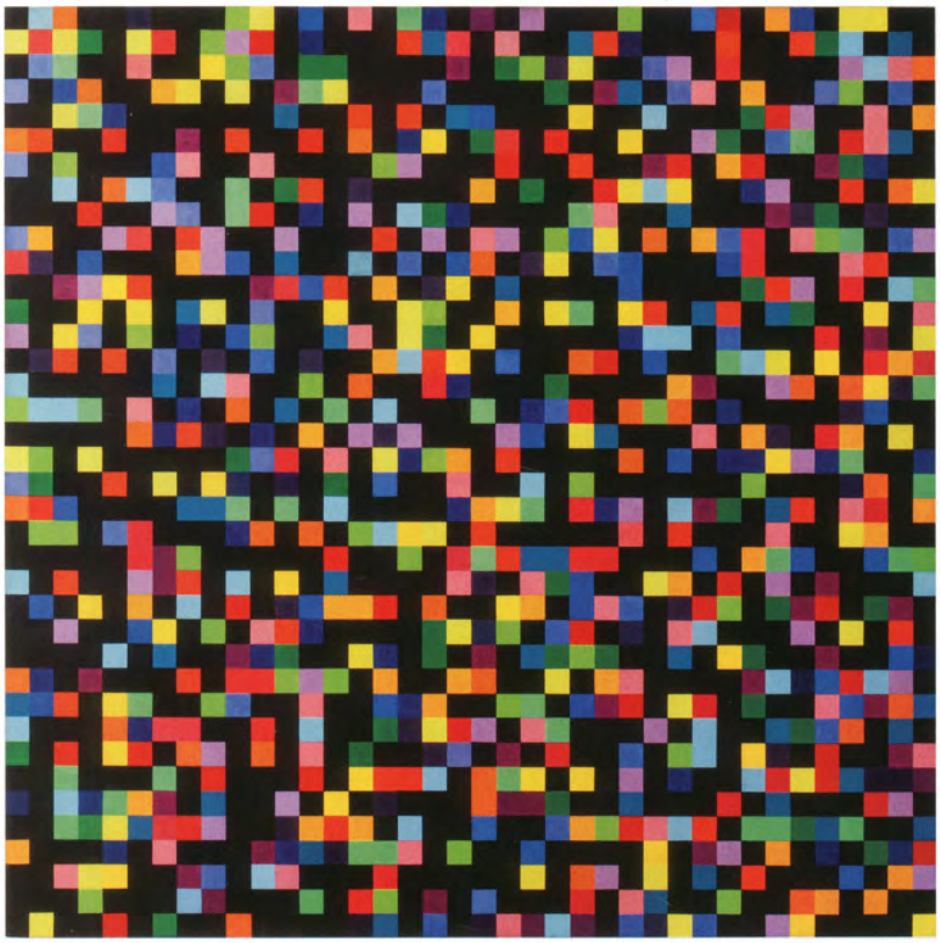
Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

Right: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Cherry Branch*, 1967**, ink on paper, 14 × 17".

Far right: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Balcony, Belle-Île-en-Mer*, 1977**, gelatin silver print, 12⅝ × 8⅜".

Below: **Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum Colors Arranged by Chance*, 1953**, oil on canvas, 60 × 60".





For Kelly, looking was serious work but also a kind of intoxication.

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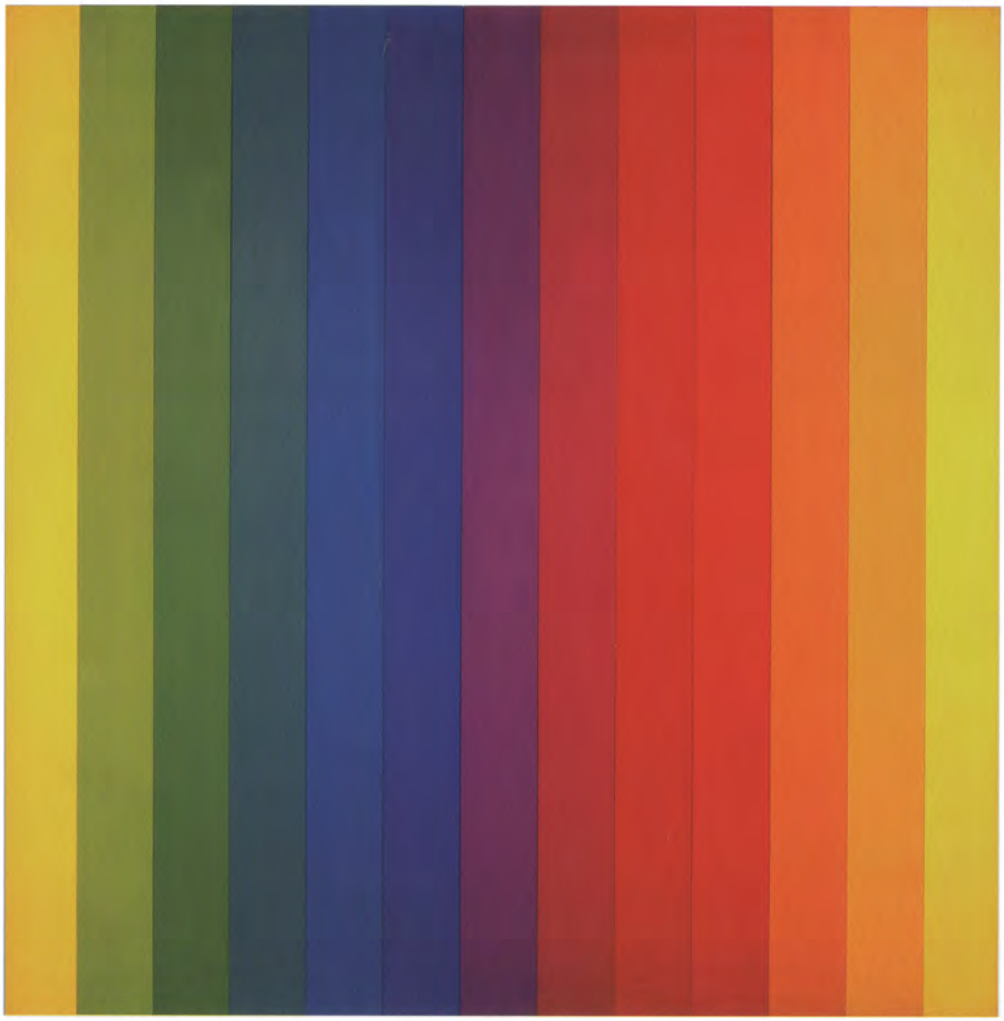
ANN TEMKIN



Ellsworth Kelly, ***Spectrum IV*, 1967**, oil on canvas, thirteen joined panels, 117 × 117".

ELLSWORTH KELLY was absorbed with the challenges and pleasures of looking. Indeed, the act of looking was of paramount importance to him. I believe he felt it to be *his* like nothing else. A common way of being in his company was watching him *observe*, through big round glasses that capitalized the activity they enabled. In conversation, he recalled with great pride a bird-watching outing in junior high school: The teacher praised him for his "good eye" when he spotted a far-off blue-winged warbler without the benefit of binoculars. In telling me the story some eighty years later, Kelly segued naturally to mention Cézanne's saying of Monet, "What an eye!"—the ultimate praise, as he saw it.

How to translate looking into artmaking was something that Kelly learned in a rigorous academic program at Boston's School of the Museum of Fine Arts in the 1940s. When he went to Paris because he had decided he wanted to be a "modern artist," he did not abandon those precious skills. But in Kelly's paintings and sculptures, the looking was so distilled that for most it was not evident as the foundation of the works. I think of the art he made as a way to get other people to do what he loved so much—to pay attention to the act of perception. "I want to give something that gives the person some eye-work," he said. For Kelly, looking was serious work but also a kind of intoxication. He would happily lose himself in the description of a painting such as *Spectrum IV*, 1967 (now in MoMA's collection), explaining the optical effects that result from the fact that ten feet's worth of yellows (at the painting's left and right edges) meet the white wall, while merely a few inches of the other colors do so.

This wasn't the kind of discussion that happened in late-twentieth-century art-history classes. For a long time this was very hurtful to Kelly, in part because he would have preferred his work to be in vogue among academics and critics, but more so because he truly *was* fascinated by how many inches of each color in a painting meet a white wall, and he couldn't understand why everyone else wasn't. I am deeply grateful that Kelly lived well into the twenty-first century—long enough to see everyone tire of thinking in terms of the isms and categories he never fit into, and finally venerate his work as, simply, that of a great modern artist.

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Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Ground Zero*, 2003, collage on newsprint, 11½ × 13½".

TERRY WINTERS

THE TRAJECTORY IS WELL KNOWN, from Newburgh to Spencertown, with some significant stops in between—rural Jersey, Boston and Paris, Coenties Slip and Chatham. Paintings are the signposts left along the way, color-coded markers of distance and direction. An abstract autobiography. Ellsworth Kelly sharpened his instinctive feeling for form with an exacting modernist sensibility. But despite the rigor and the reduced means, his work was essentially popular, made accessible through a selection of found sources: a shadow, a leaf, an architectural detail. Each familiar object is given an independent existence as a concrete force, the perfect product of Yankee invention and ingenuity.

In the 1970s, Kelly returned to the Hudson Valley, reanimating his boyhood fascination with nature and his ardor for bird-watching. This early passion for shape, color, and flight would become a foundational myth and find its fullest expression in the soaring chromatics of his later work. With an assist from Brancusi and a twist on Newman's ornithology, Kelly's aesthetics was appropriated through observation, bird-inspired. And as with the Shakers he so admired, Kelly's aesthetic was his ethic—Mount Matisse meets Mount Lebanon in an original and lasting union. Capable of activating a transformative space both sparse and full, his work is a location for lived experience: as sensation, logic, and poetic meaning. There was no more moving memorial than Kelly's proposal for 9/11—a green and open field on the Trade Center site—somehow a symbol both of nature's plenitude and of human loss. Now, as the loss of Kelly himself is felt, his work stands as a continuing gift—a positive and powerful presence.

TERRY WINTERS IS AN ARTIST LIVING IN NEW YORK. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

As with the Shakers he so admired, Kelly's aesthetic was his ethic.

Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

MARY HEILMANN

A PRIMARY ASPECT of my experience of art is the piece itself, and then what is going on around it, physically and culturally. And so to walk outside of a gallery and down the street is a powerful part of that looking. While I'm walking, I'm daydreaming about everything: criticism, theory, art history, pretty colors, the art world.

I remember seeing the Ellsworth Kelly show at Matthew Marks Gallery's four spaces in Chelsea this past May. I walked into the three galleries on Twenty-Second Street—first one, then the next, then the next—and then over to Twenty-Fourth for the last room. Then back to Twenty-Second again.

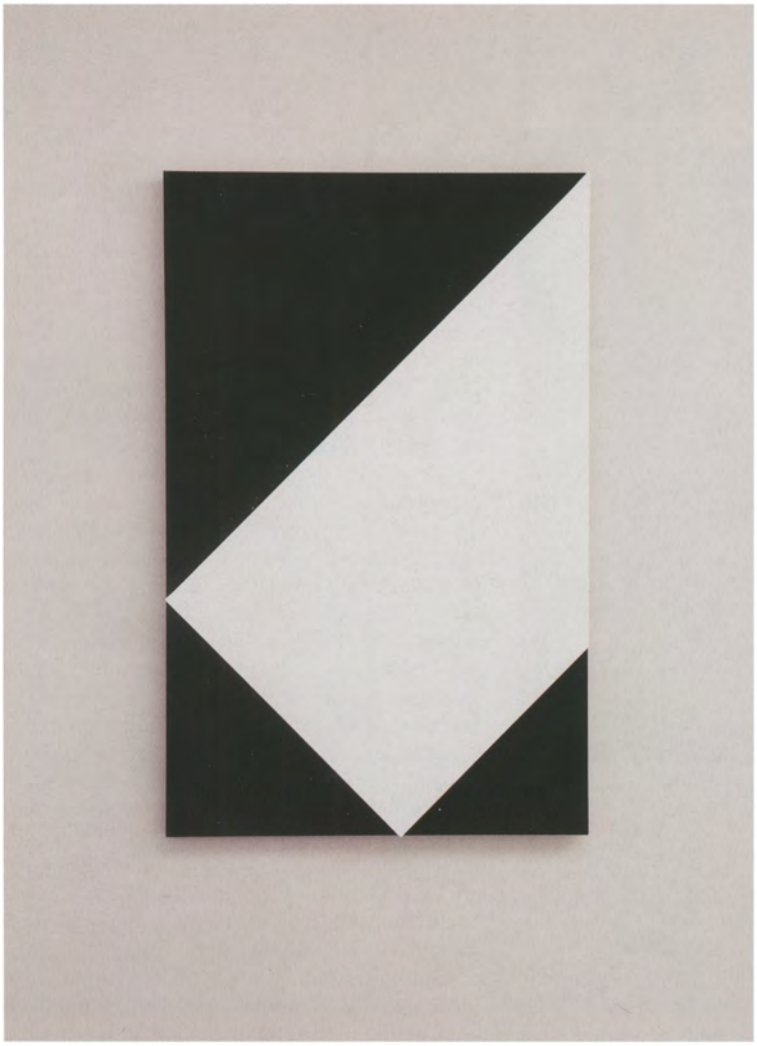
The content of Kelly's painting has always been the inside and the outside of the frame. In each gallery, I took in the wall, the space between, turned to look across the room, moved over to see the framing edge. I tried to see what was the white wall and what was the white ground in *White Relief over Black*, 2013, and whether the yellow in *Yellow with Black and White*, 2013, was on top of or beneath the black. The whole experience was like a walking meditation: actual physical steps and mind traveling. You could even say—as we used to—"tripping."

One thing I really like about art is that you can fall in love with the artist without even seeing him. And when I met Ellsworth, I liked him even more.

He will always be here. That's another thing that's great about art: The artist is always here.

MARY HEILMANN IS AN ARTIST BASED IN NEW YORK. (SEE CONTRIBUTORS.)

Below, from left: **Ellsworth Kelly, *White Relief over Black*, 2013,** oil on canvas, two joined panels, 70⅛ × 45 × 2⅜". **Ellsworth Kelly, *Yellow with Black and White*, 2013,** oil on canvas, three joined panels, 80½ × 50".



Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

MOLLY WARNOCK

Ellsworth Kelly, *Window, Museum of Modern Art, Paris*, 1949, oil on wood and canvas, two joined panels, 50½ × 19½".

Yve-Alain Bois, *Ellsworth Kelly: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Reliefs, and Sculpture, Volume One, 1940–1953*. Paris: Cahiers d'Art, 2015. 383 pages.

LIKE MOST READERS, presumably, I come to this impressive tome—Yve-Alain Bois's first installment in what promises to be a six-volume set—already in the author's debt. For nearly a quarter century, beginning with his 1992 essay "Ellsworth Kelly in France: Anti-Composition in Its Many Guises," the esteemed art historian has set the standard for scholarship on Kelly's expansive oeuvre. Focusing in particular on the artist's decisive early work abroad, he has ingeniously illuminated the system through which Kelly created his iconic abstractions for more than six decades. Now Bois brings us the definitive reference on the artist's beginnings, from his first forays into painting through his student years in Boston to his prodigious output in France during the years 1948–53, which make up the preponderance of this volume. Fine-grained, object-specific entries (sometimes combining two or more related works) address 141 paintings, sculptures, and reliefs and draw extensively on archival materials, including many never-before-published letters, photographs, and preliminary sketches and collages.

At the center of this account, as with Bois's previous writing on Kelly, is a claim about anti- or noncomposition (he uses the terms interchangeably): The artist comes into his own precisely by seeking to "efface" himself. Kelly, Bois argues, deliberately eradicates the traces of his hand and severely restricts his decision-making. These imperatives are seen as traversing virtually the whole of the artist's visually heterogeneous work in France, profoundly separating it from any number of contemporaneous or subsequent currents—whether the European paradigms of geometric abstraction or the reduced forms and commercial colors of American Minimalism and Pop—that its fruits might appear, superficially, to resemble.

Bois sets Kelly's commitment to noncomposition primarily within a context of art-historical rivalry, centered on Kelly's relationship to Picasso. The older artist appears in these pages as the consummate creator—a figure unsurpassed, if not in fact indomitable, in terms of sheer protean inventiveness. Unable to outdo the master on his own terrain, Bois suggests, the younger man opted to chart a radically different course, one predicated on the elimination of subjectivity as such: "If there was one thing Picasso did not know how to do, it was how to erase himself, how not to invent, how not to compose." Kelly would be most original where his involvement was least apparent: in the production of seemingly "impersonal" art.

As Bois underlines, this engagement is not just an aesthetic matter, but a broadly moral stance. As it appears in these pages, Kelly's ethos is highly singular—indeed, it is an ethos *of* singularity, of the bottomless distinctiveness of all things: "His art," Bois writes, "is paradoxically the least abstract: it is impervious to universals, it knows only of particulars." This character finds paradigmatic expression in Kelly's turn to discrete, clearly delimited panels—here arranged in a modular grid (*Colors for a Large Wall*, 1951), there

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1949, oil on wood, 18 × 14¾".

As it appears in these pages, Kelly's ethos is highly singular—indeed, it is an ethos *of* singularity, of the bottomless distinctiveness of all things.

arrayed in a serial row (*Painting for a White Wall*, 1952)—as well as in what Bois casts as a kind of chromatic nominalism, bound in the artist's conviction as to the absolute specificity of every hue. (This fundamentally atomistic conception is at times thwarted, as Bois describes brilliantly, by what he dubs the "gregarious" aspect of color—the tendency of nearby pigments to interact.) Along the way, strategies based on chance take the lead precisely because of this presumed absence of universals, determining the arrangement of otherwise sheer adjacencies and abutments.

Bois sees the justly celebrated *Window, Museum of Modern Art, Paris* as pivotal. Completed in November 1949, that *tableau-objet*—to use Kelly's term—follows from a suite of Picassoesque experiments in pictorial alchemy that transform, for example, a Turkish toilet into a stubby-armed Cyclops (*Toilette*) or a cluster of pebbles into a countenance (*Face of Stones* and *Yellow Face*; all 1949). Each painting takes a found element as its point of departure, and presents that motif in a frontal, rigorously centered fashion; but it also takes greater or lesser liberties with this given. *Window*, by contrast, marks the first mature instance of the artist's inaugural mode of anti-composition, what Bois calls the "transfer": the selection and replication of a specific, "already-made" structure—in this case, the distinctive window at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, presented in miniature and at slightly different proportions—whose image is now made wholly congruent with the support. That *Window* is actually a relief comprising two joined, vertically stacked canvases (one facing

Ellsworth Kelly, *Self-Portrait with Bugle*, 1947, oil on tar paper mounted on Masonite, 65 × 24⅛".

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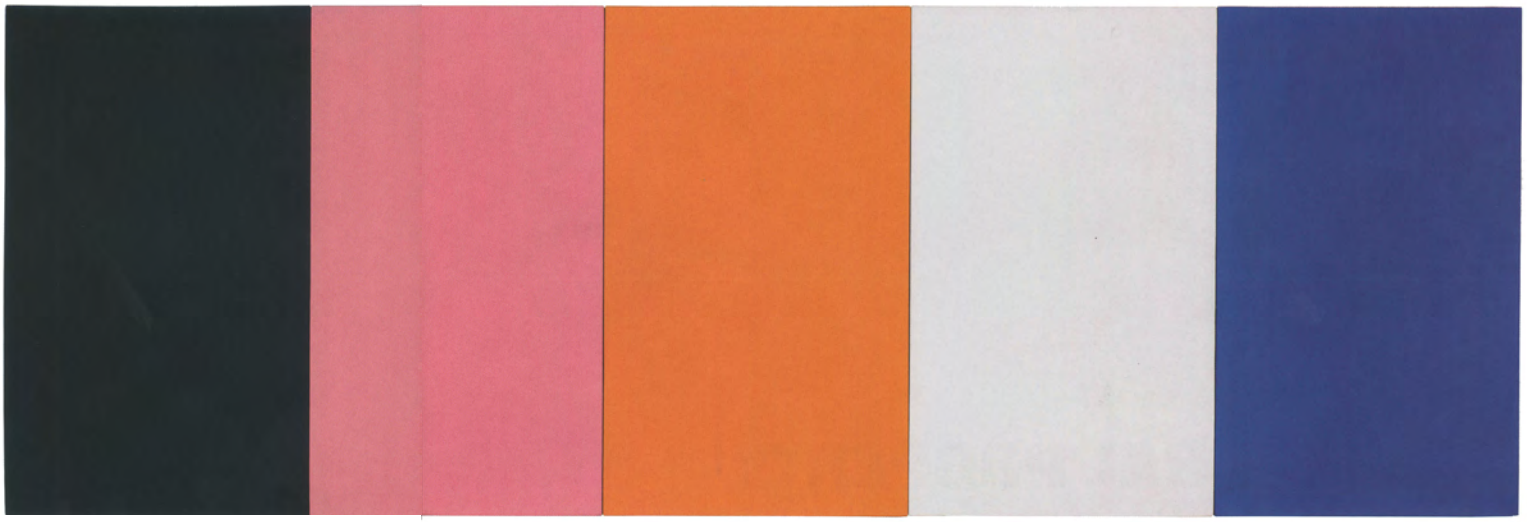

Kelly's inscrutable image is at once proffered and withheld.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Painting for a White Wall*, 1952, oil on canvas, five joined panels, 23½ × 71¼".

forward, the other backward) with wooden strips deployed to denote mullions further enhances the literal materiality of the whole. The result, Bois suggests, is a resolutely nonmetaphoric, anti-illusionistic mode of presentation—and Kelly's decisive liberation from the "anxieties" of composition.

For all the difference *Window* made, however, the volume also shows striking continuities between the artist's anticompositional abstraction and some of his very earliest works as, above all, a painter of single-figure compositions. *Self-Portrait with Bugle*, 1947—a roughly life-size, full-length depiction, completed while Kelly was still a student at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston—is the largest and arguably the most ambitious of these paintings, and clearly mattered to the artist: Kelly took a photograph of the work to Paris and showed it to Fernand Léger when considering whether to enter the latter's academy. It portrays the young man nearly head-on, with a forward-directed gaze: His powerfully corporeal presence appears largely trued to the narrow vertical format and almost flush with the picture plane. The arms hang; the somewhat ungainly feet are solidly planted. The overall impression is of static self-containment—both of the depicted painter and, as if through that figure, of the painting as a whole. Even the out-of-use instrument underscores the stillness, as if actively producing silence. (Léger's response, as Bois reports it, was to urge Kelly to "go back to Boston and blow his bugle"—as if in rejection of precisely this deliberate inexpressiveness.) And yet a sense of withdrawal is equally strong. The artist's hips angle back slightly into a shallow, penumbral space; the oblique floorboards accentuate his partial retreat; darkness veils the visage. Kelly's inscrutable image is at once proffered and withheld: He faces us, one might say, in effacement.

What would it mean, I find myself wondering, to see *Window* as a repetition and displacement of *Self-Portrait with Bugle*? The tight, upright formats encourage the comparison: The two works have near-identical proportions. (Indeed, the relationship

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between them is closer than the one between *Window* and its physical source.) Read against the earlier painting, the 1949 relief registers as rendering absolute much of what had remained equivocal: Just-off symmetry becomes rigorous bilateral mirroring; depicted corporeality gives way to unvarnished objecthood; dramatic chiaroscuro yields to flat, cleanly divided fields of gray and white. Even the black strips that stand in for mullions register as at once exacerbating and materializing the earlier painting's rhetorical stance, its simultaneous presentation and barring of access. Together, the two paintings raise a question about the nature of impersonality. Is it a matter of overcoming subjectivity or of deliberately evading it?

In this volume, Bois's analyses go "behind" the pictures; they are grounded in the patient excavation and reconstruction of the increasingly complex logic that drives the chance-based work in particular. In so doing, these texts differ notably from the art historian's indispensable accounts of Barnett Newman's abstraction—writing that turns fully on, and never ceases to return to, the experience of being in front of a painting, of finding oneself summoned and singled out by a given canvas. There is room to think that this difference in approach is itself attuned to a basic contrast between the two bodies of work, the ways in which they do or do not wish to face us. Newman wants us to become aware of "specific and separate embodiments of feeling" (to take up a phrase quoted in Bois's 1988 essay "Perceiving Newman"), whereas the young Kelly, as we encounter him in these pages, seems to want us to intuit, if not his exact procedure, then something like a *fact* of procedure: something that shows but does not quite make itself present. The rationale that Bois details with such precision and lucidity would then be a knot tied within the endless complexities of our mutual facing—the central difficulty with which any future writing on Kelly will have to reckon. For, as this masterful book makes clear, we are not yet finished either with Kelly or with the painterly stakes of impersonality. □

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Bois, Yve-Alain, Richard Serra, Ann Temkin, Terry Winter, Mary Heilmann, and Molly Warnock. "Ellsworth Kelly: 1923–2015." *Artforum,* April 2016, pp. 190–205.

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Art in America

KELLY'S LATE SHIFT

Formally consistent yet unflaggingly inventive as a painter, Ellsworth Kelly in his later years also explored photography, architecture, fabric design, installation, and curation.

by Elizabeth C. Baker

CURRENTLY ON VIEW
Works by Ellsworth Kelly in the newly installed "Approaching American Abstraction: The Fisher Collection," at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

ELIZABETH C. BAKER is *A.i.A.*'s editor-at-large for special projects. See Contributors page.

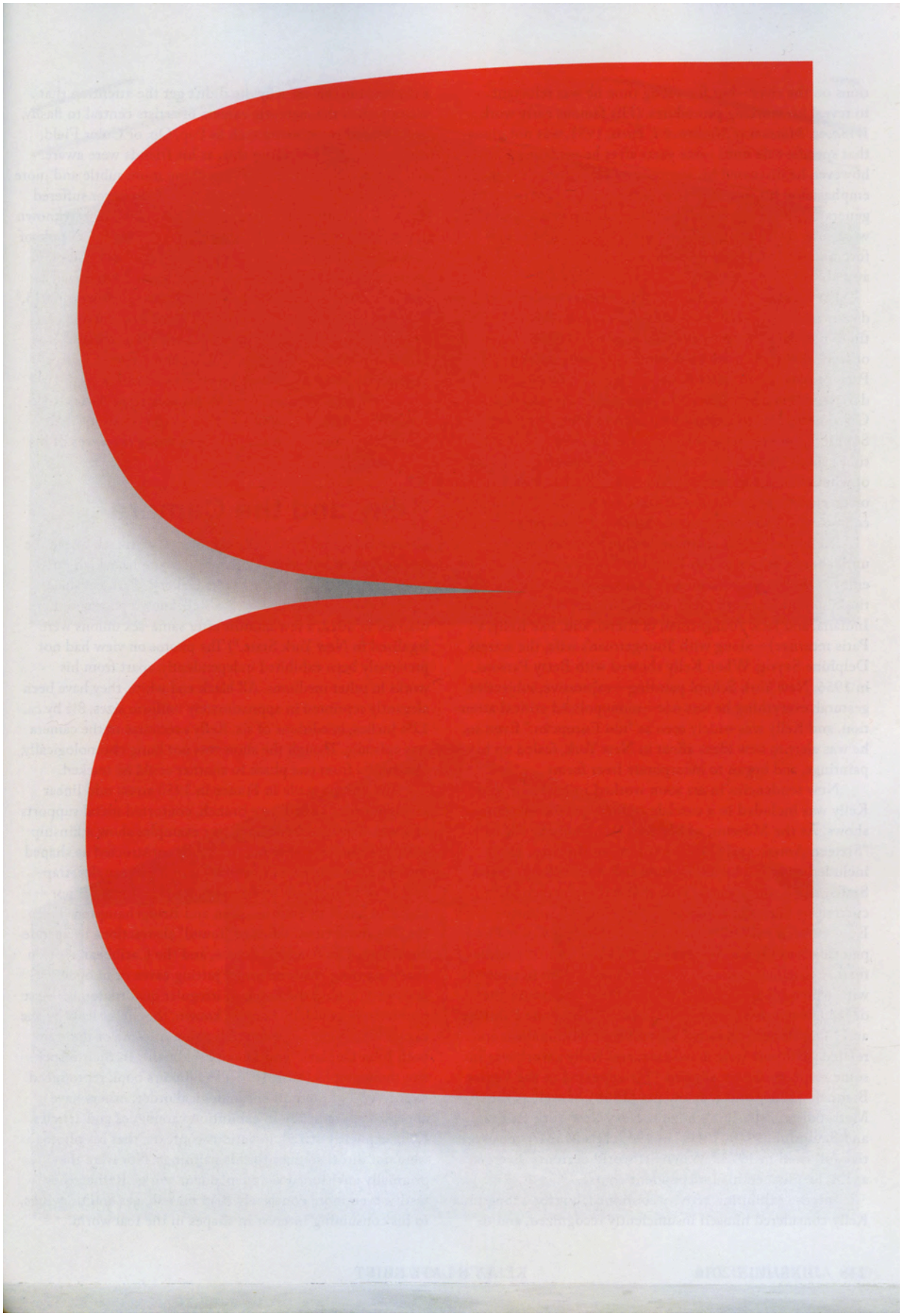
ELLSWORTH KELLY died last December at age 92 in the midst of a prolific late phase in his working life. In addition to new paintings and public commissions, there were ventures into new territory—two architectural designs and a pair of curatorial projects—along with the first stand-alone exhibition of his photographs. For several years, Kelly had been tethered to an oxygen bottle, his art-making and his daily life assisted by a long, thin, plastic breathing tube, its tip delicately clipped to his nose. This arrangement made long-distance travel difficult, but he took trips to Manhattan and elsewhere from his home in Spencertown, in upstate New York, to attend exhibition openings or various other events. He continued to work in the studio, where a new set of stretchers seemed to be perpetually on order. Even as his health started to fail, there was no lessening of creative energy or the sense of both joy and necessity that propelled him.

Over the course of nearly seven decades, Kelly became known for a distinctive mode of abstraction, ostensibly limited in means, yet capable of seemingly boundless variability. During six years in France at the beginning of his career, he devised a vocabulary of forms and a way of working that served him well for a lifetime. He valued his isolation as a stranger and a foreigner, and the independence that came with it. "When I got to Paris, I felt I had to think very seriously about what I wanted to do. And I decided that I wanted to make paintings that I hadn't seen before," Kelly said in a recent interview.[1] And indeed he did, ensuring that his work would not be readily understood, either in France or, for a considerable stretch, in the US following his return in the mid-1950s.

From the outset, his works incorporated shaped formats and low-relief layering of planes. There were also grids of squares or abutted rectangles, the color juxtapositions arrived at by chance procedures. Kelly developed strategies for abdicating (or displacing) aesthetic decisions in his quest for "impersonality" and "anonymity," concepts he referred to frequently. Flat, clean-edged shapes were meticulously painted in bright, solid colors, free of brushwork or other "subjective" surface activity. Sometimes he used commercially available colored fabrics or papers to further distance himself.

It's well known by now that Kelly's enigmatic abstract shapes derive from motifs and configurations in the world around him—in Paris, bridges, chimneys, shadows, reflec-

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America,* June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.



Ellsworth Kelly: *Red Curves*, 2014, painted aluminum, 90 by 63½ by 4⅛ inches. All images, unless otherwise noted, © Ellsworth Kelly, courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery.

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America*, June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.

tions on the river—but for a long time he was reluctant to reveal his working procedures. (His famous early work *Window, Museum of Modern Art, Paris*, 1951, was not given that specific title until some years after he made it.) Later, however, he discussed his sources and his approach in detail, emphasizing his singular focus on perception itself as a generating force. He developed an ability to speak about his work informatively and engagingly, even becoming comfortable in front of a movie camera, as is evident in videos available on YouTube.

For much of his working life, Kelly operated at a certain distance from the mainstream, sometimes by choice, sometimes not. As a foreigner in France, he developed a body of work that little resembled either then-current School of Paris production or older European abstraction. A self-described loner, he nevertheless managed to meet Brancusi, Giacometti, Miró, Georges Vantongerloo, Jean Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp, and Calder (he lived in Paris at the time), all of whom had an impact on his thinking and some of whom became his friends. While he was attentive to the older modernist generation, it's unclear whether he had contact with contemporaneous School of Paris artists.[2]

Kelly was largely unaware of developments in New York until shortly before he left Paris in 1954. Back in the US, he enjoyed the art world milieu in Manhattan, sharing a Coenties Slip building with other artists—Agnes Martin, Robert Indiana, and Jack Youngerman (a friend, and, like Kelly, a Paris returnee)—along with Youngerman's wife, the actress Delphine Seyrig. When Kelly showed with Betty Parsons in 1956, New York School painting—expressive, subjective, gestural, everything he was not—monopolized critical attention, and Kelly was widely seen as "too European." Even so, he was alert to new ideas afloat in New York, scaled up his paintings, and began to incorporate freer forms.

New tendencies in art soon worked in his favor, and Kelly was included in a cascade of high-profile museum shows. At the Museum of Modern Art, Dorothy Miller's "Sixteen Americans" (1959) put him on the map; also included were Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Stella, and Youngerman. "Post Painterly Abstraction," curated by Clement Greenberg, and "The Responsive Eye," curated by William Seitz (proselytizing Color Field painting and Op art, respectively, in 1964 and '65), while further enhancing Kelly's visibility, landed him in contexts with which his work had little in common. Later in the decade he was in "Primary Structures," "Systemic Painting," and "The Art of the Real." By this time Minimalism and related offshoots were ascendant, and Kelly's work was in some respects closely aligned.[3] He appeared in the Venice Biennale (1966) and Documenta (1968), as well as the Metropolitan Museum's huge survey "New York Painting and Sculpture, 1940–1970," in 1969. His MoMA retrospective followed in 1973.[4] When art world currents diverged again, he pursued his independent course.

Intense exhibiting activity continued, but for a long time Kelly considered himself insufficiently recognized, and to a degree, one can see why: he didn't get the attention that accompanied the meteoric careers of artists central to flashy, well-defined movements such as Pop, Op, or Color Field. Kelly was perturbed about this, as his friends were aware. But in his art, he was doing something more subtle and more difficult. Later, a bright side was evident: he never suffered the mid- or late-career slump that befell many better-known artists. His reputation grew steadily, and in his last couple of decades, it reached a level that even he could not complain about. Culminating his widespread acclaim, he received a National Medal of the Arts from President Obama in 2013.[5]

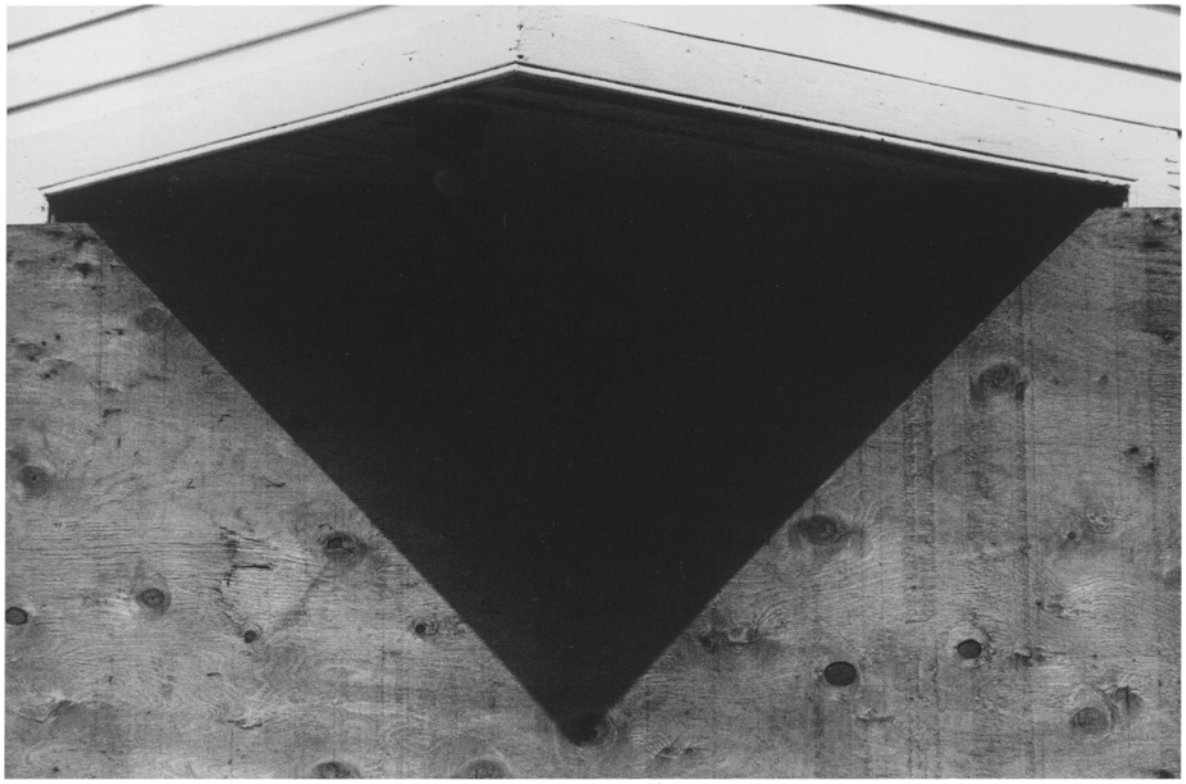
Two publications issued in 2015, the first volume of a catalogue raisonné[6] and a comprehensive monograph[7] (the first since 1971), brilliantly explicate the scope of Kelly's accomplishment. The new projects he undertook in the last couple of years were activated by his persistent desire to do something he had not done before; in the course of their realization, he made abundant use of many resources of his long working life.

Kelly and the Camera

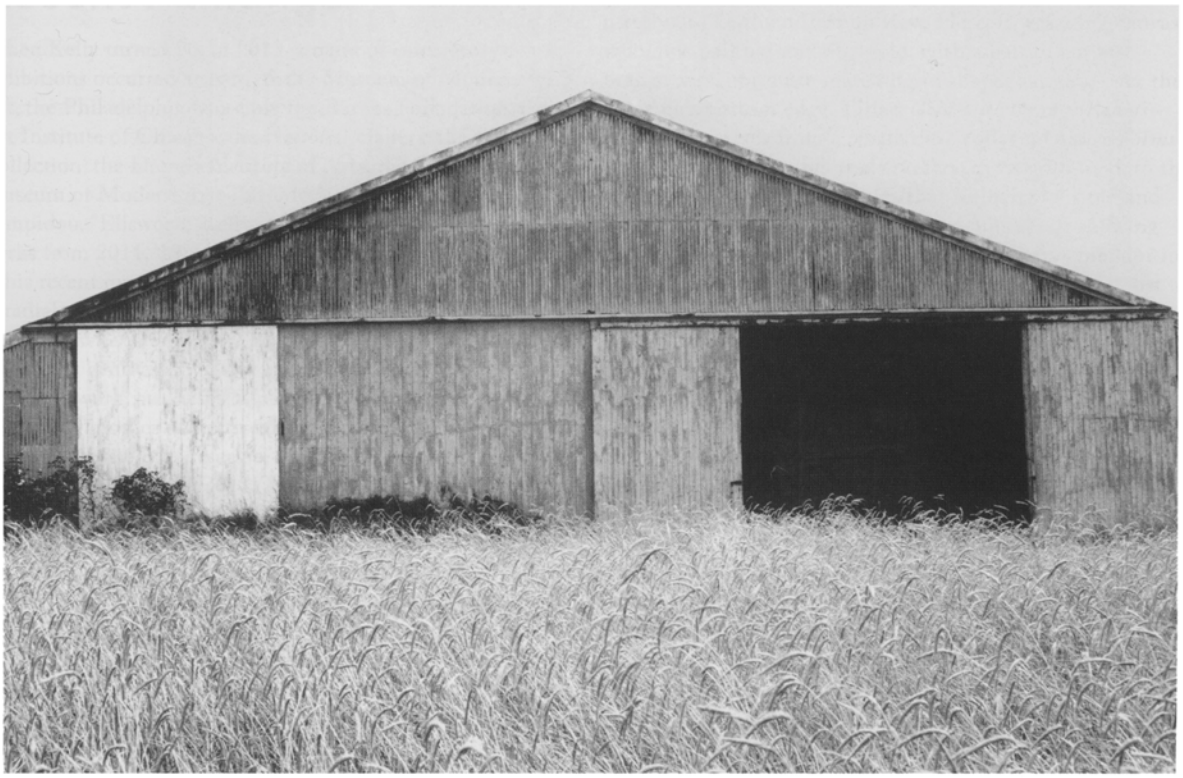
Shortly before he died, Kelly completed, with Jack Shear, the preparation of a show of his own photographs, which ran through April at Matthew Marks Gallery. (Partners since 1984, Kelly and Shear, himself a well-known photographer, married in 2012, a few months after same-sex unions were legalized in New York State.[8]) The photos on view had not previously been exhibited independently, apart from his works in other mediums. All black and white, they have been elegantly reprinted in approximately uniform sizes, 8½ by ca. 12⅝ inches, in editions of six. Kelly's recourse to the camera was episodic. Though the show was not hung chronologically, clear shifts from one phase to another could be tracked.

The photos made in France in 1950 stress odd linear configurations (a bare tree branch, contorted metal supports of a war-damaged bunker). Later examples show a kinship with the elusive shapes he painted or constructed as shaped formats. The '60s photos emphasize stark rectangles, trapezoids, or triangles in straight-on, middle-distance "portraits" of barns in Southampton and Bridgehampton. From the '70s come closer shots of "found" abstractions in upstate New York, Los Angeles, France, and the Caribbean—often sharp, slanting shadows under jutting eaves or in open doorways, taking the shape of irregular quadrilaterals. These photos only gradually became known, though at least by the early 1970s Kelly allowed publication of some of them by both John Coplans[9] and Diane Waldman[10] in their respective monographs (both 1971); Waldman's book reproduced twenty-two of them in chronological order; others have appeared sporadically in exhibition catalogues and articles. Kelly explicitly stated, in various contexts, that his photos were not direct sources for his paintings. Nor were they originally envisioned as independent works. Rather, they testify, even more concretely than his collages and drawings, to his consuming interest in shapes in the real world.

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America*, June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.



Doorway Shadow, Spencertown, 1977, gelatin silver print, 8⅜ by 12⅞ inches.



Barn, Southampton, 1968, gelatin silver print, 8½ by 13 inches.

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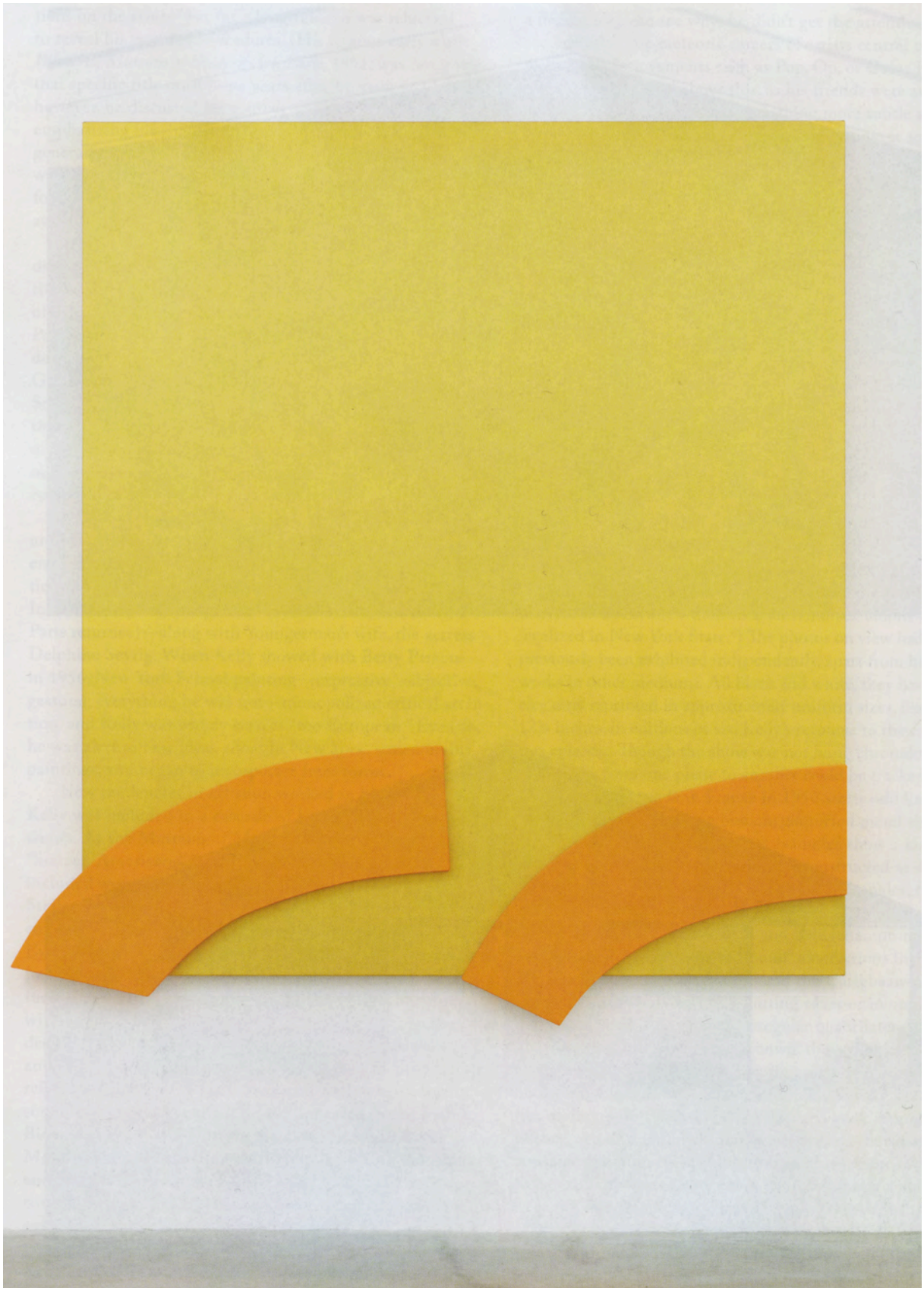

Opposite, *Gold with Orange Reliefs*, 2013, oil and canvas and wood, three joined panels, 79¼ by 72¾ by 2⅝ inches.

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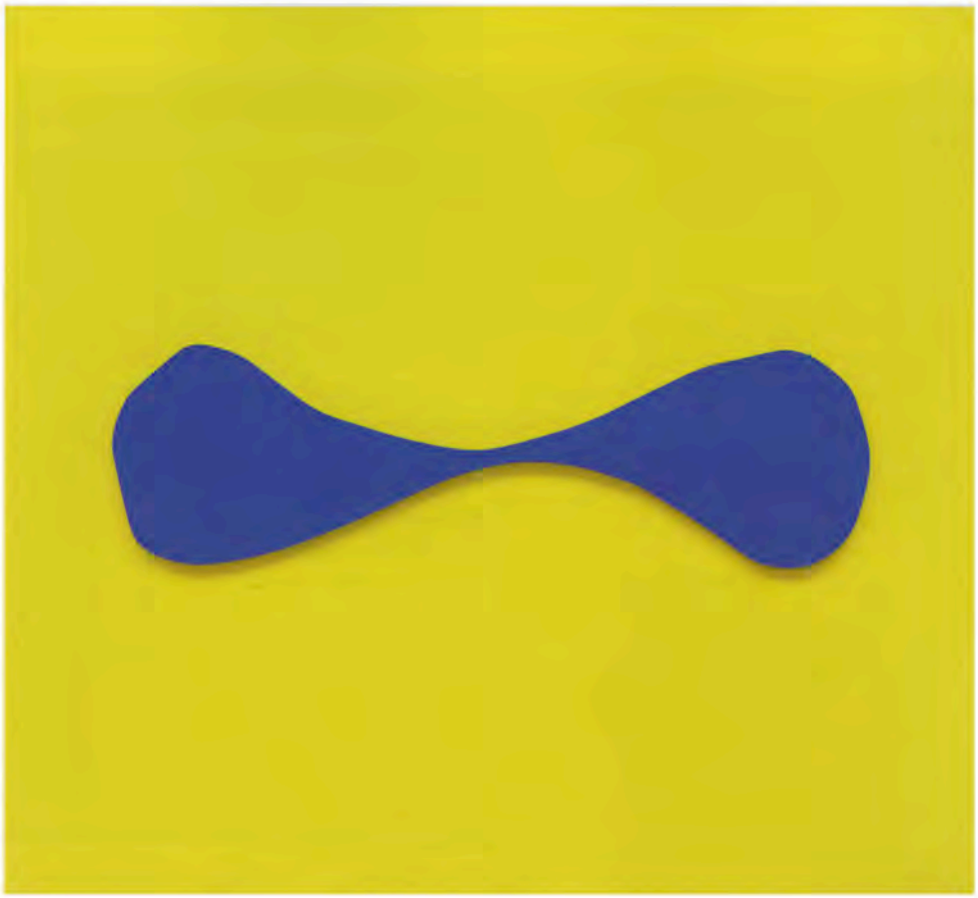


Blue Relief Over Yellow, 2014, oil on canvas, two joined panels, 60⅔ by 65½ inches.

Recent Paintings

When Kelly turned 90, in 2013, a burst of celebratory exhibitions occurred at New York's Museum of Modern Art, the Philadelphia Museum, the Barnes Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Gallery, the Phillips Collection, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Tate Modern, and the Centre Pompidou. "Ellsworth Kelly at 90," at Matthew Marks, with works from 2011, '12, and '13, gave New Yorkers a good look at his recent output. Much of the show was a study in curves. A radial curve—a section of a circle's circumference—is seen in *Yellow Relief Over Blue* (2012) as the top edge of a yellow plane rises gently into a field of blue. ("Relief," in reference to Kelly's work, means a flat plane, often shaped, that sits in front of another plane, usually rectangular.) Free curves, almost impossible to describe, are the components of *Curves on White (Four Panels)*, 2011. Two of the four curves hint at the human body—a breast, perhaps. A sensual implication recurs in the voluptuously biomorphic *Black Form II* (2012), a painted aluminum piece. Its near-twin, *Black Form I* (2011), had been shown a year earlier. The two pieces are finished differently; the earlier version has a matte surface, the newer one is glossy and reflective. (There were some straight-edged reliefs in the show, too; one of these is *White Relief Over Black*, 2012, a variant of which was the Kelly-designed cover for the May 2013 issue of *Art in America*, which did very well on the newsstand.)

Kelly sometimes included in a show an example utterly unlike the others on view. Here, it was a big canvas rectangle painted metallic gold, with a pair of cutout orange arcs, not quite matching in shape, hanging over the painting's bottom edge. Titled *Gold with Orange Reliefs* (2013), it derives from a small 1962 collage, *Orange Forms on Gold*. Quite possibly it also refers, in its gold field, to the Byzantine-influenced mosaics that Kelly had visited and admired in Ravenna. He expressed doubt about showing it—and then he showed it, installed in solitary splendor in a separate space with a big window facing the street, just to the east of the main 22nd Street gallery.

In May 2015, again coinciding with a birthday, a dazzling selection from 2013 and 2014 occupied all four of the New York gallery's spaces. Most of the works consist of large monochrome rectangles joined in one-, two-, or three-color structures. These stately paintings set off four 7½-foot-tall aluminum wall pieces in the shape of a big, backward "B," identical except in their colors (red, yellow, blue, and black). The anomaly in this show—for Kelly, a downright eccentric piece—was *Blue Relief Over Yellow* (2014), at the center of which is an unevenly cut blue shape resembling an infinity symbol—possibly Kelly's only assertively rough element to find its way into a finished work. (It directly transcribes an earlier, smaller prototype.)

Also present was a tall, narrow painting titled *Red White Black Blue* (2014), with an oddly human presence that may have an unusual, real-world counterpart. Subdivided hori-

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America*, June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.

zontally into four panels, its proportions and color scheme (with two of the colors in the sequence switched, however) brought to mind a sleeveless dress Kelly designed for a friend in 1952. It was composed of leftovers from a "painting" of the same year made with four colors of store-bought fabric (another early experiment in anti-subjectivity). In 2012, one of Calvin Klein's designers remade the dress; in 2013 it was displayed in the shop's Madison Avenue window. (Another real-world piece at a very different scale: Kelly designed a tattoo for Whitney curator Carter Foster in 2014, four squarish, diagonally oriented monochrome forms—blue, black, red-orange, and green—that march along the inside of Foster's right forearm.)

Art for Architecture

Architecture preoccupied Kelly throughout his career. In France, traveling by train and taking his bike along, he sought out the country's wealth of Romanesque churches. He liked the austere, geometric volumes of the buildings and their large-scale wall paintings and linear low-reliefs. The fusion of art and architecture impressed him. In September 1950, he wrote in a letter to John Cage, who was living in Paris at the time, "I am not interested in painting as it has been accepted for so long—to hang on the walls of houses as pictures. To hell with pictures—they should *be* the wall—even better—on the outside wall—of large buildings."[11] Reflecting this preoccupation, the word "wall" occurs in the titles of many of his 1950s paintings and collage studies.

In Paris, he produced *Colors for a Large Wall* (1951), in which sixty-four monochrome canvases in different hues, just under a foot square, are joined to form a nearly eight-foot-square grid. One reason for the compact individual components: his studio was a small hotel room. Back in the US, he was commissioned to make *Sculpture for a Large Wall* (1957), a vast grid of shaped metal elements in varying colors, for the Transportation Building in Philadelphia. Further public and institutional commissions gradually came his way, multiplying in the last couple of decades with installations at two US embassies, a federal court building, and a number of museums. One of the most recent and most spectacular installations encompasses *Color Panels (Red Yellow Blue Green Purple)* and *Spectrum VIII* (both 2014) at the new Louis Vuitton Foundation in Paris.[12]

When Matthew Marks was preparing to open a branch of his gallery in Los Angeles, Kelly was invited to make a piece for the new building's facade. He came up with *Black Bar for a Wall* (2011), an elongated horizontal relief sculpture crowning the slightly-wider-than-high front wall. The bar's position suggests a structural reading—a beam, roof component, cornice, or lintel—but it has no such function. The piece is a little over thirty-nine feet long; made of painted aluminum, it protrudes ten inches from the building's surface. The immaculate white plane below is interrupted only by a tall, narrow door. With this sculptural/quasi-architectural intervention, the entire facade became a Kelly work.

A group of new Kelly paintings inaugurated the gallery in January 2012; also included were small collages, dating from 1952, '54, and '65, plus a large two-panel painting, *Black Over White* (1966). These related pieces remarkably foreshadow Kelly's facade design. Despite the implied genealogy, Kelly said, "The idea for it actually came when I was looking at the architectural model [for the new gallery] and noticed that the model maker had used a strip of black tape along the inside of the model's roofline to hold it together."[13]

Austin: A Chapel

In addition to making art for existing architectural situations, Kelly designed a complete building—a chapel. He began the project in 1986, commissioned by a private collector for a site in California, but the venture stalled. In 2011 he picked it up again. Construction of the chapel, Kelly's only freestanding structure, began in 2015

Black Bar for a Wall, 2011, painted aluminum, installed on the facade of Matthew Marks Gallery, Los Angeles.

at the University of Texas at Austin, which received the plans as a gift from the artist. Titled *Austin* and situated near the university's Blanton Museum, the $15-million building will be part of that institution's permanent collection. Groundbreaking took place at the end of October.

The ambitious project comprises the building itself, the artworks inside it, and stained-glass windows providing a new vehicle for the artist's Spectrums—here, colored light cast onto walls and floor. The gray stone structure, white on the inside, consists of two intersecting barrel vaults, a traditional cruciform plan. Piercing three of the four arched end walls, the colored windows differ: two are "rose windows," one consisting of radiating lines of color like spokes of a wheel, the other formed by twelve squares of color, diagonally rotated, placed in a circle like numbers on a clock face; and there's a grid of nine squares. The interior will contain a tall totem of dark wood and fourteen black-and-white marble wall reliefs. Completion is expected in about a year.

Kelly is not alone in engaging with a contrarian subtheme in the predominantly secular history of twentieth-century art, a history enriched (and complicated) by artist-designed chapels, most famously Matisse's 1951 chapel in Vence, in the south of France, and the Rothko chapel in Houston, 1971. (There are many other churches for which artists have done stained-glass windows or other components.) The Matisse chapel is Catholic. Colored light coming through the artist's stained-glass windows washes over walls bearing religious imagery, black-outlined on white ceramic tile, including the Stations of the Cross. The Rothko chapel, designed with Philip Johnson, was conceived as Catholic, but is now nondenominational; it's been speculated that Rothko's fourteen dark, abstract canvases may also refer to the Stations.

Despite the ecclesiastical connotations of its form, *Austin* is a nondenominational building. Kelly's reliefs evolved from the Stations theme but are now referred to as abstract panels. (Barnett Newman's "Stations of the Cross" paintings, 1958–66, come to mind here, too, though they were never intended for a chapel or church setting.) When asked, many years before the chapel project, what role religion played in his admiration for Romanesque and Byzantine art, Kelly replied, "Romanesque and Byzantine art—there was a force it had. The work was more important than the artists' personalities."[14] Le Corbusier's church at Ronchamp in France, its austere white walls punctured by colored windows, may have played a part in Kelly's design as well.

Kelly's building brings to mind architectural forays by other abstract artists, among them Newman, who produced a model for a synagogue; Tony Smith, architect as well as sculptor, who designed a church, never built, for which Jackson Pollock was to have done the windows; and Pollock himself, who, along with Smith and the architect Peter Blake, designed a small museum to house his own works. That project got as far as a model shown at Betty Parsons. Then there's Donald Judd, whose architectural activities in Marfa, Texas, were extensive.

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America,* June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America*, June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.

The Artist as Curator

Kelly recently organized two exhibitions that grew out of his own history, but dealt with it indirectly, since the shows focused primarily on two other artists—Monet and Matisse. "Monet/Kelly" at the Clark Art Institute inaugurated the museum's new Tadao Ando building in November 2014. Invited by Clark director Michael Conforti (now retired), Kelly conceived the show, selected the works, and designed the installation. An homage to Monet, it recapitulated Kelly's encounter with Monet's late work in 1952. That year, he saw a couple of Monet's Nymphéas paintings at the Kunsthaus Zurich. (He had not seen the Nymphéas cycle at the Orangerie in Paris. "The museum was always closed," he complained.) The paintings excited Kelly with their depiction of water and blossoms as continuous, and horizonless, fields of paint.

A few months later, visiting Monet's studio in Giverny, he saw many more Nymphéas paintings, huge and wall-like. He also saw some canvases in which barely legible waterlily-pond motifs dissolve into densely impacted fields of arbitrary color. Dating from the late teens to 1924, these near-abstractions were long dismissed as failed efforts of an old man losing his sight. Kelly saw them stored in Monet's studio building; a window was broken and pigeons flew about inside. Kelly found them to be "beautiful impersonal statements."[15] (They are now in Paris's Musée Marmottan Monet.) Back in Paris the next day, he painted *Tableau Vert* (1952), his first single-panel monochrome work, in which dark green and dark blue intermingle in a subtly textured edge-to-edge field. *Tableau Vert* was in the Clark show, along with a Nymphéas sketch from 1907 (not one of the large works), as well as five of the very late Monets, three of them suffused with so much red and orange paint that they appear to be aflame.

The Clark's other Monet/Kelly pairing involved work by both artists made during visits to Belle-Ile, an island off Brittany's south coast. Two spectacular Monets from the mid-1880s, one depicting eccentric rock formations emerging from the sea, the other roiling storm waters, were juxtaposed with Kelly's pencil drawings of the same locale, made during visits in 1949, 1965, and 2005. Landscape drawings are rare in Kelly's oeuvre, the use of line describing distant terrain differing greatly from that in his plant drawings. The 1949 Belle-Ile drawings are spare and flat as Kelly traces intersecting shorelines. In 1965, he drew the craggy rock formations, consciously evoking Monet.

Somewhat puzzling in this context were Kelly's views of Mont Sainte-Victoire (2000), a subject associated with Cézanne rather than Monet and nowhere near Belle-Ile. Kelly's detailed shading of the mountain hints at three-dimensionality, however, leading to the last Belle-Ile group, seven works from 2005, in which the texture and overlap of rock formations approach realism. The exhibition's other Kelly painting, besides *Tableau Vert*, was a recent one, *White Curve in Relief over White (Belle-Ile)*, 2013. Here, a slice of a circle overlaps and juts above a right triangle, the hypotenuse of which is at the top and horizontal—the two elements perhaps a hieroglyph of rock jutting above ocean.

Since Matisse's and Kelly's plant drawings had been seen together in several recent exhibitions, Kelly was a logical choice as guest curator for a show of Matisse drawings at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in 2014. Though for many years Kelly evaded discussions of Matisse in connection with his work, that reluctance had faded. John Stomberg, then the museum's director (he is now at the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth), invited Kelly to curate the show—to choose the works, design the installation, determine the framing. Nine Kelly lithographs of plants occupied an adjacent gallery, emphasizing (as have other shows juxtaposing the two artists' drawings) differences as much as similarities. The project was initiated by the American Federation of Arts with the Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation, the Matisse drawings selected from the foundation's holdings.[16]

Painter, sculptor, printmaker, draftsman, photographer, and finally architect and curator, Ellsworth Kelly seemed to work in a perpetual present tense (there was no "late" or "old age" style for him). His works radiate clarity but are rife with perceptual, conceptual, and formal complexities and contradictions. Linda Nochlin spoke of "a strategy of depersonalization deployed in the creation of a recognizably unique style."[17] The paradox is that Kelly's anti-subjectivity—his dispassionate investigations of the appearance of things as they are—did, after all, produce a surpassingly individual body of work, one that offers an extended lease on life to abstraction, to modernism, and to painting. ○

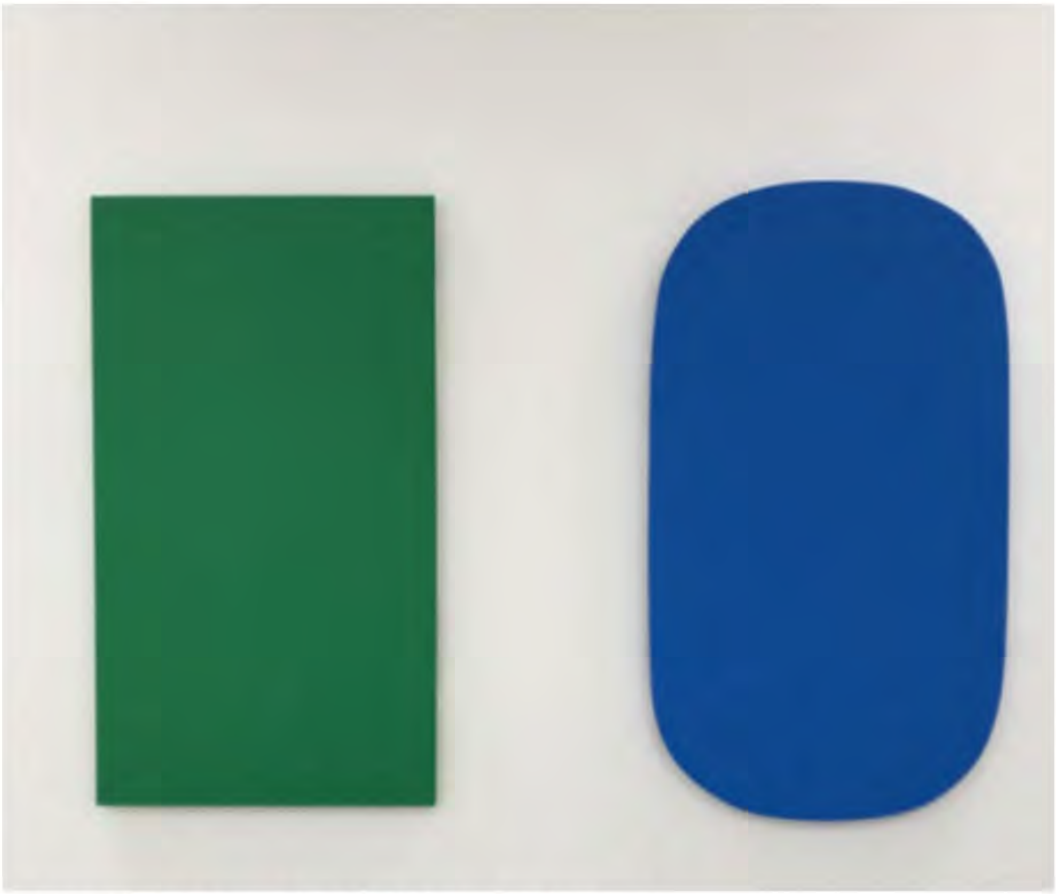
1. Ellsworth Kelly interviewed by John R. Stomberg, in *Matisse Drawings: Curated by Ellsworth Kelly from the Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation Collection*, South Hadley, Mass., Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 2014, p. 12.
2. A recent New York exhibition of Serge Poliakoff's paintings at Cheim & Read included a small (15 inches high) gouache on paper, *Bandes Colorées*, 1937, consisting of stacked horizontal strips of spectrum colors. Poliakoff's '50s works, frequently on view in Paris in those days, did not look like this. Could Kelly have seen this much earlier work, either exhibited or published, before painting his first Spectrum in 1953?
3. Consigning each color to a separate canvas had started much earlier, but it became Kelly's almost exclusive practice in the late '60s, continuing for the rest of his life.
4. Recent paintings and sculptures were exhibited at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1979, in a show initiated by Thomas B. Hess, newly appointed curator of twentieth-century art, who died before its completion. Kelly's sculpture was surveyed in 1982–83 at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the show curated by Patterson Sims and Emily Rauh Pulitzer.
5. Kelly had been invited to receive the award earlier, during the George W. Bush administration, but he declined it when the war in Iraq began.
6. Yve-Alain Bois and Ellsworth Kelly, *Ellsworth Kelly: Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Reliefs and Sculpture, Vol. 1, 1940–1953,* Paris, Cahiers d'Art.
7. Tricia Y. Paik, *Ellsworth Kelly*, with contributions from Gavin Delahunty, Gary Garrels, Richard Shiff, and Robert Storr, New York and London, Phaidon Press.
8. Jack Shear is director of the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation, established in 1991; it has endowed arts and humanities programs in all seven of the Columbia County public school districts and also helps support conservation and restoration programs in museums here and abroad.
9. John Coplans, *Ellsworth Kelly*, New York, Harry N. Abrams, 1971.
10. Diane Waldman, *Ellsworth Kelly, Drawings, Collages, Prints*, Greenwich, Conn., New York Graphic Society, 1971.
11. Quoted in Paik, p. 44.
12. The following is an abbreviated list of recent commissions: *Memorial* (1993–95), Holocaust Museum, Washington D.C.; *Boston Panels* (1996–98), Federal Courthouse, in that city; *Berlin Panels* (2000), for the Deutscher Bundestag; *Berlin Totem* (2008) and *Beijing Panels* (2011), for the US embassies in those cities, commissioned by FAPE (Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies); *Blue Black* (2000), Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, St. Louis; *Barnes Totem* (2012), for the newly relocated Barnes Museum in Philadelphia.
13. Quoted in Michael Duncan, "Ellsworth Kelly's Welcome to L.A.," in *Ellsworth Kelly Los Angeles*, Los Angeles, Matthew Marks Gallery, 2012. Unpaginated.
14. Ellsworth Kelly interviewed by David Robinson, August 1976, one of several untranscribed audiotape conversations, consulted Apr. 9, 2016.
15. Ellsworth Kelly, "Artist's Statement," in Yve-Alain Bois and Sarah Lees, *Monet/Kelly*, Williamstown, Mass., Clark Art Institute, and New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2014, p. 9.
16. The show will travel to the Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro, June 25–Sept. 18, 2016; the Katonah [N.Y.] Museum of Art, Oct.23, 2016–Jan. 29, 2017; and the Audain Art Museum, Whistler, BC, Canada, dates TBA.
17. Linda Nochlin, "Kelly: Making Abstraction Anew," *Art in America*, March 1997, p. 69.

Baker, Elizabeth. "Kelly's Late Shift." *Art in America,* June/July 2016, pp. 116-25.

AO

NEW YORK – ELLSWORTH KELLY: "LAST PAINTINGS" AND "PLANT DRAWINGS" AT MATTHEW MARKS THROUGH JUNE 24TH, 2017

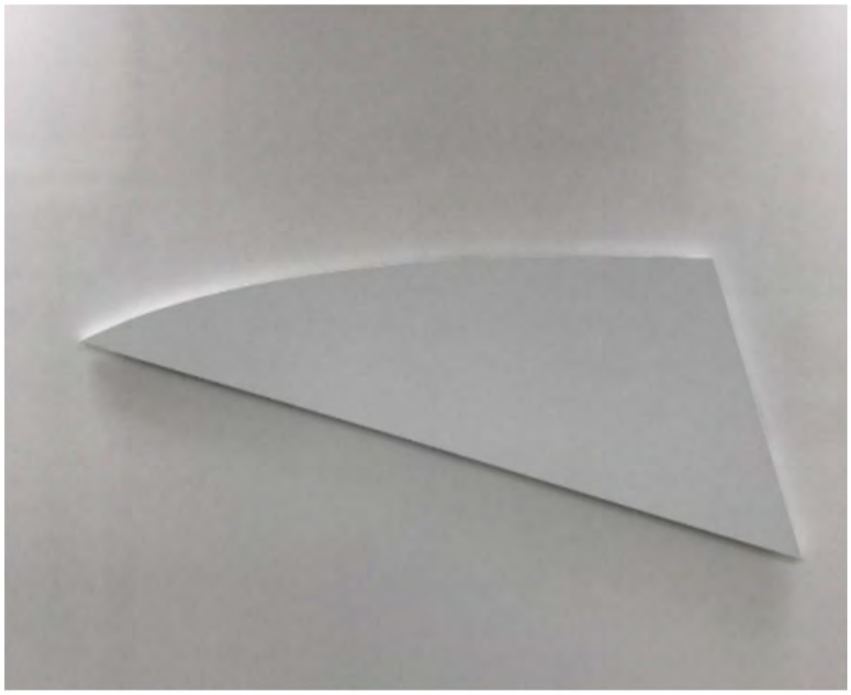
June 22nd, 2017



Ellsworth Kelly, *Diptych: Green Blue* (2015), via Art Observed

Since the passing of Ellsworth Kelly in December of 2015, the exhibition of the artists's final works has made for a sort of bittersweet anticipation. The show could be seen as a grand farewell to an artist who changed the landscape of American painting several times over during the course of his career, each time delving deeper into his clean, almost rhythmic approach to the shaped canvas that filled its confines with rich bounties of color. Presented this month at Matthew Marks, the artist's last body of work does not disappoint, and the series of pieces, culled from past sketches and concepts or completely new ideas, feels like a fitting look at the furthest points of the artist's exploration before he laid down his brush for the last time.

Creahan, Daniel. "Ellsworth Kelly: 'Last Paintings' and 'Plant Drawings'." *Art Observed*, June 22, 2017.



Ellsworth Kelly, *White Diagonal Curve* (2015), via Art Observed

Kelly's pieces, particularly in this exhibition are a joy to behold, bounding with an effortless mixture of spatial awareness and deep attention to color that often see his pieces exploding off the wall, or playing on the texture and nuance of the shadows cast in the gallery space. Running through a brief but expressive series of variations on the shaped canvas and his language of colored forms, the show sees the artist returning to familiar modes (some works make subtle reference to his famed *Chatham Series*) or delving deeper into styles of color contrast that hint at even more ideas and concepts left incomplete at the time of the artist's death.

Ellsworth Kelly, *Black Over Yellow* (2015), via Art Observed

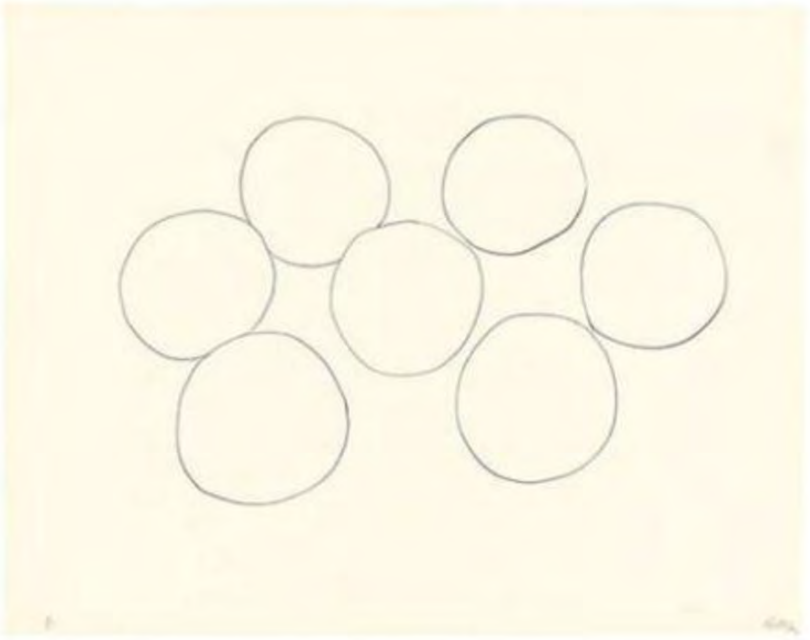
Creahan, Daniel. "Ellsworth Kelly: 'Last Paintings' and 'Plant Drawings'." *Art Observed*, June 22, 2017.

It's Kelly's joined panel compositions that perhaps command the most attention here, careful contrasts of both form and light that leave the viewer's sense of depth and space hovering in indeterminacy. In others, the clean, hard lines delineating each block of color run a similar effect on the walls around it, casting the full architectural layout of the gallery into a subtle exchange of form and content, each shape and line an elaboration on the walls around them. The works are given ample space to breathe, and their bright colors afforded equal room to surge out towards the viewer, seemingly breaking their bounds on the canvas with their deep hues and even application.

Ellsworth Kelly, *White Angle Over Black* (2015), via Art Observed

Alongside his body of paintings, Matthew Marks is also exhibiting a series of Kelly's *Plant Drawings*, a long-running series of graphite and ink drawings made as observations of the natural curves and lines of various plants and flowers. Moving between studious replication of the subject's graceful arcs and curving boughs to more fluid abstractions of its form, the artist's pieces trace a continued engagement with the natural world that feels like a perfect complement to his endlessly immersive pools of color and line on view merely footsteps away. In one, Kelly almost smears the ink across the page, creating heart-shaped forms that play on the natural image and the human response to both its empirical imagery and evocative iconographies. The result is a piece that pulls as much from the rich color of the image as it does from its own composition in two dimensional space.

Creahan, Daniel. "Ellsworth Kelly: 'Last Paintings' and 'Plant Drawings'." *Art Observed*, June 22, 2017.

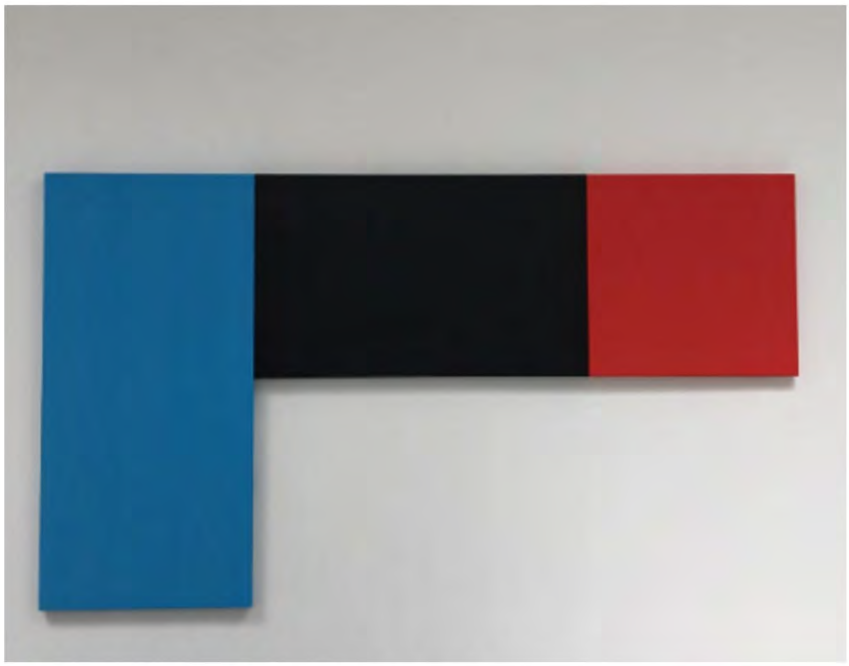


Ellsworth Kelly, *Seven Oranges* (1966), via Matthew Marks

Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum IX* (2014), via Art Observed

Kelly was a master artist in any sense of the word, and his impeccably rendered pieces here serve as a fitting farewell to a body of work that has helped to transform the state of American abstraction during the last 50 years. Much like the evolution of Kelly's own work during his lifetime, this show equally feels like a fittingly enthusiastic look forward, and relentless pursuit of his work until the end of his life. Even as the artist finished these pieces, his vision looks out to the future, and carries a glint of optimism for the future.

Creahan, Daniel. "Ellsworth Kelly: 'Last Paintings' and 'Plant Drawings'." *Art Observed*, June 22, 2017.



Ellsworth Kelly, *Blue Black Red* (2015), via Art Observed

Ellsworth Kelly, *Rubber Plant* (1957), via Matthew Marks

— D. Creahan

Creahan, Daniel. "Ellsworth Kelly: 'Last Paintings' and 'Plant Drawings'." *Art Observed*, June 22, 2017.

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY
523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

INTERNATIONAL EDITION
THE ART NEWSPAPER

Three to see: New York

Contemporary painting, from figuration to abstraction

by VICTORIA STAPLEY-BROWN | 22 June 2017

Head to the **Matthew Marks** gallery to catch Ellsworth Kelly: Last Paintings (until 24 June), which shows the artist's last nine works, completed before he died in December 2015, aged 92. The concise exhibition neatly reveals Kelly's unwavering commitment to his exploration of the power of colour and form across his entire career. Some works have many colours, like Spectrum IX (2014), made of twelve joined vertical panels; others are made of joined monochrome panels, like four works made in black and white. In a subtler contrast, the only work with a single panel, Diagonal Curve (2015), which is all white, stands out against the gallery's white walls, which reveal themselves to be a different colour—almost like Malevich's Suprematist Composition: White on White (1918).

Stapley-Brown, Victoria. "Three to see: New York." *The Art Newspaper*, June 22, 2017.

23 ART REVIEW
Ellsworth Kelly's photographs. BY PHILIP GEFTER

Fine Arts | Leisure

Weekend Arts II
The New York Times

FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 2016 C17

A Minimalist Painter's Love Affair With Photography

In 1862, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres led a group of French artists and intellectuals in a campaign against photography, signing an official petition denouncing the "industrial" method as anathema to the artist.

PHILIP GEFTER

ART REVIEW

A century later, the art world still looked down its nose at the medium. Yet the camera, with the ability to render the actual world in precise optical detail, has been a secret weapon for artists since photography's inception, from Thomas Eakins to Edgar Degas, Charles Sheeler, Robert Rauschenberg and Andy Warhol.

Ellsworth Kelly, who died in December, first picked up a camera in 1950 and began making pictures as "records of my vision, how I see things," he told an interviewer in 1991. Now, the first exhibition of Mr. Kelly's photographs is at the Matthew Marks gallery, more than 30 gelatin silver prints made over four decades. His straightforward pictures of houses, barns, brick walls and winter branches yield the same distinctive observation of perceptual phenomena so characteristic of his hard-edge paintings, sculpture and prints: Rectangles float; shadows fall into hard-edge shapes; surfaces reveal evenly mottled patterns and unlikely grids.

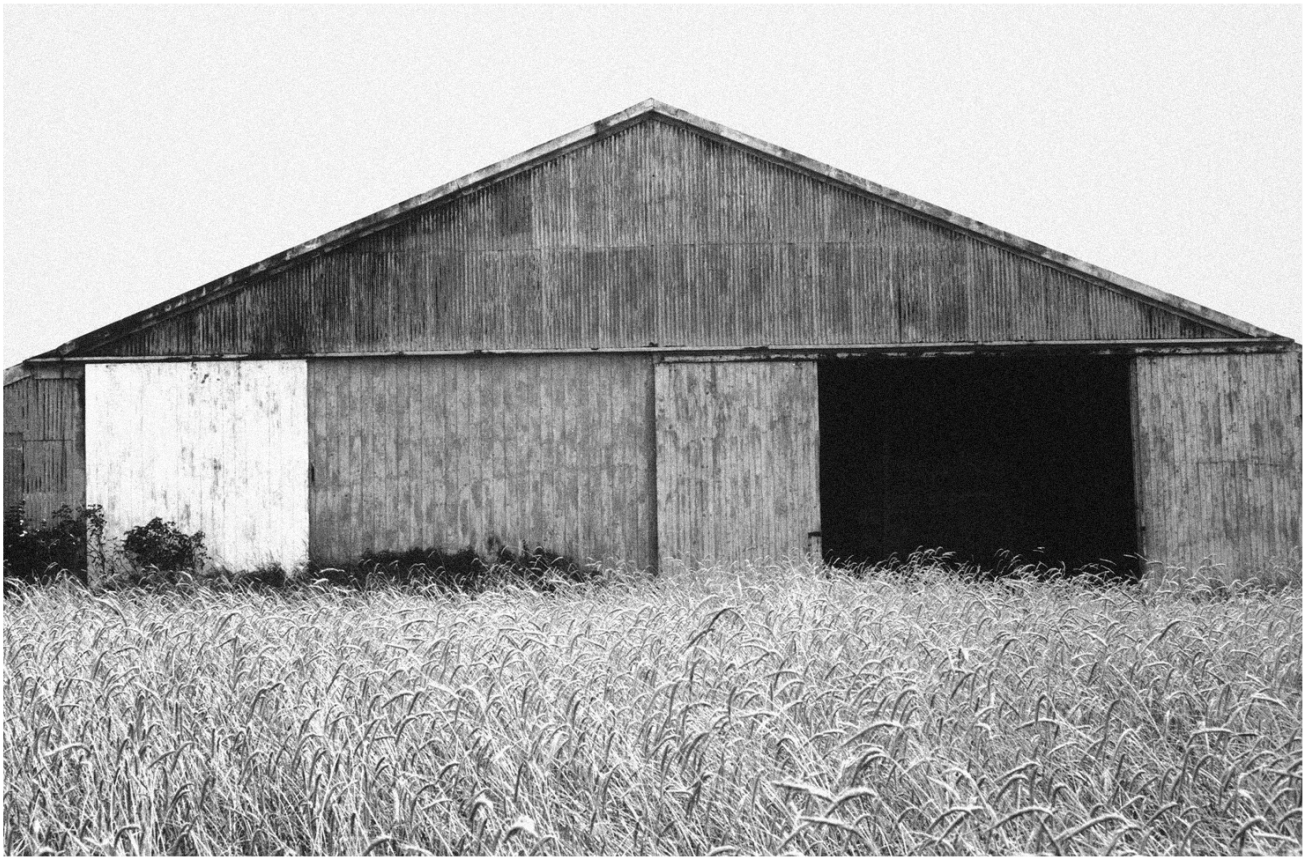
Black-and-white photography was tailor-made for these interests. His simple picture of a barn in Southampton, N.Y., for example, is a study in elementary geometry, underscored by the pure black, white and grayness of the photographic print. He divided the picture frame into three precise strips: On top, the gabled roof is a well-balanced triangle; underneath it is a wall composed of squares and rectangles, one painted white, and another a deep-black opening bookended by two gray doors; below is a lighter shade of evenly patterned grass.

Once you see the structural components and the geometric contours, the barn itself seems rather incidental.

His photographs show the layered planes of the three-dimensional world as seen by the eye before the mind can identify the objects within it. "Sidewalk, Los Angeles, 1978" is both a perceptual riddle and a lesson: The skinny shadow of a vertical signpost falls flat against the pavement and then turns abruptly up the wall. It may not have been his intent to identify a law of physics in everyday life, but shadows bend with their surroundings. This image is something of a found drawing: The black lines of the post and its shadow construct an incomplete square that defines the picture surface, while the receding sidewalk pulls the eye back and creates an optical illusion.

Mr. Kelly was interested in the 19th-century photographers Timothy O'Sullivan and Carleton Watkins, both of whom made pictures of vast landscapes that flattened into line and shape; he believed they were "doing things

Gefter, Philip. "A Minimalist Painter's Love Affair With Photography." *The New York Times,* March 25, 2016, p. C17, p. C23.



Ellsworth Kelly Photographs *"Barn, Southampton," a gelatin silver print from 1968, is part of the first exhibition of this painter's photographs, on view at the Matthew Marks gallery.*

with form that no one was doing in painting."

"Photography is for me a way of seeing things from another angle," he said, describing, for example, the way a scene viewed through the spindles of a chair is altered by moving perceptibly in one direction or another. In other words, everything is rearranged depending on how it is framed, and Mr. Kelly explored an endless variety of new arrangements to see how they might reside on the surface of the picture plane.

Throughout his career, Mr. Kelly was compelled by the interplay of two and three dimensions, and he investigated "how things look" in several mediums. His interest in taking pictures, though, was less about presenting them as fully resolved works; photography was simply another means for him to identify and examine the formal characteristics of visible reality.

Mr. Kelly is associated with Minimal art, not only because he first became known when the movement surfaced in the 1960s but also because his affinity for primary color and essential form adhered to Minimalist ideas about distilling the object to nothing but the thing itself, stripped to the essential facts, devoid of metaphor and pretense. The art object was less important than the experience of looking at it.

The shadows, outlines and juxtaposition of elements that preoccupied him are things, he noted, that early man would have seen. They are the visual building blocks that toddlers see as they try to comprehend the vicissitudes of the physical world.

The camera is a neutral device. Edward Weston, who photographed patterns and structures in nature, drew a distinction between making pictures to learn about the world and those that impose a vision upon it. It was his intention to make pictures, he once said, not as "an interpretation, a biased opinion of what nature should be, but a revelation — an absolute, impersonal recognition of the significance of facts."

It is edifying to look at Mr. Kelly's photographs with their deadpan fidelity to the actual world, and to be reminded of the purity of the camera in service of the artist trying to understand the perceptual building blocks of his own experience — and of ours. "I realized I didn't want to compose pictures," he told The New York Times in 1996. "I wanted to find them." And he did.

Gefter, Philip. "A Minimalist Painter's Love Affair With Photography." *The New York Times,* March 25, 2016, p. C17, p. C23.

THE NEW YORKER

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.)

"Ellsworth Kelly." *The New Yorker,* June 8 & 15, 2015, p. 22.

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY
523 West 24th Street, New York, New York 10011 Tel: 212-243-0200 Fax: 212-243-0047

Ellsworth Kelly: LOOKING BACKWARDS, MOVING FORWARDS

As he prepares to show new work in New York, the 91-year-old American painter reflects on artists past and present – from Monet to Calder, a "tough" Judd and the "kid's stuff" made by Koons – and explains why he still believes the future is bright. By **Pac Pobric**

Spencertown, New York, the hamlet two-and-a-half hours north of New York City, where the US artist Ellsworth Kelly has lived since 1970, is a quiet, simple place. Off a two-lane road, partly hidden by woods, is Kelly's sprawling studio, which is spare and clean, but still overflows with riches in books and art. (Among the works in Kelly's collection are pieces by Francis Picabia, Willem de Kooning and Blinky Palermo.) Inside, it is peaceful, yet it hums with discreet activity. This year, the artist and his staff are preparing for an exhibition of new work, which is due to open in May, at the Matthew Marks Gallery. At least some of the pictures in the show build on ideas Kelly conceived years ago: multiple panels, each painted a single colour, sit next to or atop one another. Kelly, who turns 92 in May, smiles while looking them over. "My work is meant to be enjoyed," he says. "If you can enjoy the colour and the relationship of forms, and what they do to you – that's it." Two new publications are also expected this year: the first volume of Kelly's long-awaited catalogue raisonné is due in the autumn (six additional volumes are expected to follow), and a monograph by the art historian Tricia Paik is due to be published in October.

The Art Newspaper: **You have recently been working on curatorial projects, including "Monet/Kelly" at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, which closed in February. How did that start?**
Ellsworth Kelly: I don't know how much you know about the last works Monet did, but I didn't know anything after his haystack paintings from the early 1890s. So I wrote a letter to his stepson and he invited me to Monet's studio in 1952. By then, of course, all the *Water Lilies* had already been painted for the Orangerie [the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, where they were installed in 1927], but the museum wasn't open so much then. And, anyway, the art colony in France thought that Monet had already lost it. But he did have two studios, and the smaller one was jam-packed with pictures. You couldn't get into the room. And the big studio was huge; there must have been 15 huge pictures there. When I went there with a friend in 1952, Monet's stepson showed us all the work and told us that he hadn't shown it to anybody else. We were the first artists to see it.

What drew you to Paris in the first place?
When I was in school in Boston [in the late 1940s], all we did was draw nudes. There was no abstraction at all; it was very backward. They didn't have any early American School influence, like Thomas Hart Benton, but some friends and I would hitchhike to the Museum of Modern Art in New York and look at the School of Paris artists. I got to know a lot about what was going on in Paris, and Picasso influenced me a great deal. He was all over everything.

How did France change your work?
I had been there for less than six months when I said: "I'm not going to be a figurative painter. Picasso is interesting to me, Brancusi is interesting, Mondrian is too." Malevich didn't come into the picture right away. But I didn't meet many artists in France, though I was very close to [the US painter] Jack Youngerman.

And you came back to the US in 1954?
Yes. Dorothy Miller, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art, came to see me because Alexander Calder had written to some people [telling them] to come to look at my paintings. Calder also paid my rent. I think it was $45 or $50. I knew him in France, and I guess I was the starving artist then. But I didn't know what was going on in New York when I was in Paris. When I came back in 1954, the Abstract Expressionists had taken over. They were the first American artists who became global.

Some critics said your work came out of Abstract Expressionism, but others associated you with Minimalism. How did you avoid being put into one category?
Donald Judd didn't like being called a Minimalist either. But what else are you going to call it? He was a tough character; mean sometimes. He was boss. We had a show, and we each had a picture in it. And my work was based on an idea I had in Europe that I started to make when I came back [to the US]. Judd called it a "fluke"; he said "it's good old European art". So I kind of ignored him.

Do you still get out to see contemporary art?
Well, I didn't feel a necessity to go to the Jeff Koons show ["Jeff Koons: a Retrospective", Whitney Museum of American Art, 27 June-19 October 2014]. I feel like I know what his subject is and how he makes it. I don't mind the *Puppy*, the big dog with the flowers, but I just got a Gagosian Gallery catalogue about the things Koons is doing now, and it's like he's making monsters. I'm thinking of the "Hulk" works. But, you know, that's kid's stuff, somehow. When I was growing up, there used to be things in the front yards of houses that were shiny. And there was a blue ball and young deer and all that. I feel like Koons is just a step away from that.

Ellsworth Kelly in his studio in Spencertown, New York, in 2012. Above, *Gold with Orange Reliefs*, 2013, for which he made a drawing in 1962, and below, a work from his new show—*Black Relief over Yellow*, 2014

Do you feel happy with your own place in the art-historical narrative?
I feel that art is changing, and I'm not satisfied with the auction situation. It's misleading, but it's natural too. New art has always been a little difficult, and abstraction has not been accepted by the masses. But I have some good collectors who support me. I think they wouldn't buy it otherwise.

The collector Bernard Arnault, the chair and chief executive of LVMH, is certainly interested in your work. You recently finished an installation for the auditorium in the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris.
I know [the architect] Frank [Gehry] quite well, so he called me. Because of the acoustics in the space, I couldn't do the work the way I usually do. We couldn't have anything solid, because the wall itself is acoustic, so we had to find a different material. My fabricator found something in Toronto; it's like metal with holes in it. Arnault and his wife [Hélène Mercier-Arnault] are both pianists, so it was especially important for the theatre to have good acoustics. When the seats are in, they hide part of the installation. I was talking to a critic from France, and he said: "Oh, you have something that disappears when the whole area is what it's supposed to be." So it's interesting to hide it and then reveal it.

You're still quite busy. Would you say you still feel generally optimistic?
I was thinking just the other day about how humans have produced all this, and how serious people are afraid that we've had it, that we're done. Or that we haven't looked ahead into the future and now we're ruining the earth. But I feel like I can't live that way. I've got to not let it annoy me, because we have produced great art. I don't know if you read [the US author William] Faulkner, but when he won the Nobel prize [in 1949], he said: "I believe that man will not merely endure, he will prevail."

• *Ellsworth Kelly, Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, 13 May-27 June; www.matthewmarks.com*

Pobric, Pac. "Ellsworth Kelly: Looking Backwards, Moving Forwards." *The Art Newspaper*, April 2015, pp. 56-57.

Digest

Ellsworth Kelly

BACKGROUND

Born: 31 May 1923, Newburgh, New York
Early life: Kelly lives in nine different homes between the ages of six and 16. His family finally settles in Oradell, New Jersey, where Kelly attends junior high school. There, he draws cover illustrations for his school's literary magazine and begins to paint outdoors. Later, at Dwight Morrow High School, Kelly acts in school plays and earns a scholarship to study drama in college, but his parents do not approve, so he never enrols.
Education: Kelly enrols in art school at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in 1941, but leaves in 1943 to join the war effort. He is educated, in part, by the military and works for the 603rd Engineers Camouflage Battalion, designing propaganda posters and camouflage patterns. After the war, Kelly studies art briefly in Boston, but moves to Paris in 1948. He lives in the French capital for six years and takes classes at the École des Beaux-Arts, with support from the GI Bill for US veterans.
Lives: Spencertown, New York
Represented by: Matthew Marks Gallery, New York

MILESTONES

Sculpture for a Large Wall, 1957

Kelly was in the midst of his six-year sojourn in France when he wrote a letter in 1950 to the composer John Cage, saying: "My collages are only ideas for things much larger—things to cover walls." Kelly never realised a monumental work in France, but in 1957, when he was back in the US, he made his first large-scale, three-dimensional work. *Sculpture for a Large Wall*, 1957, which measures more than 11ft (3.3m) from top to bottom and is more than 65ft (19.8m) wide, was originally built for the Penn Center in Philadelphia at the invitation of the architect Vincent Kling. The experience left something to be desired (Kelly battled with the building's owner over the final design of the piece), but the opportunity to build a massive work was tremendous—"not merely because Kelly was broke", as the art historian James Meyer writes. When the building was sold in 1987, Kelly bought the sculpture back. The collectors Jo Carole and Ronald Lauder later acquired the piece, and it is now in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The "Chatham" series in Buffalo, 1971

One year after moving to Spencertown, Kelly began to work on 19 L-shaped multi-panel paintings, named the "Chatham" series after the town in which he opened his new studio (left). The idea for the shape came from the crossbeams in the workspace, and each picture was made of two joined monochrome panels. The series came at a critical point in Kelly's career. His previous few exhibitions had been poorly received by critics including Hilton Kramer, Donald Judd and John Canaday, but when the "Chatham" works went on display at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, in 1972, the reception was positive. Kramer, who one year earlier found it "very difficult to remain interested in [Kelly's work] for more than about three minutes", wrote a glowing review. Kelly was one of the "most audacious" abstract painters working at the time, Kramer wrote, and the paintings were "the very best pictures" the artist had produced.

Experiments with shape and space, 1984

In 1984, Kelly presented a group of 14 aluminium and steel works at the Leo Castelli and Margo Leavin galleries in New York and Los Angeles. Each piece was attached to the wall (right, *Untitled*, 1983), but each also had one edge on the ground. In a short statement for the exhibition catalogue, Kelly wrote that he wanted "to free shape from its ground, and then to work the shape so that it has a definite relationship to the space around it". Although Kelly considers the works to be sculptures ("they're heavy, so I call them sculptures", he says), they also owe a debt to his shaped canvases. More than any other works in his career, they speak of Kelly's interest in translating the forms of one medium into another. Today, one of these pieces sits at the front entrance to the artist's studio and office in Spencertown—a quiet acknowledgement of its importance in his development.

Guggenheim retrospective and tour, 1996-97

Diane Waldman was working at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York in 1968 when she became interested in Kelly's work. Her husband suggested that she call the artist and introduce herself. "So I did it cold," she later remembered. "I called him up, and I said, 'Ellsworth, you don't know me. I'm an assistant curator at the Guggenheim Museum. My name is Diane Waldman. I'd like to do an exhibition of your work.'" At the time, William Rubin was planning a show of Kelly's work for New York's Museum of Modern Art, which took place in 1973, but the artist's long friendship with Waldman finally led to a major retrospective at the Guggenheim in 1996. More than 40 private and institutional lenders contributed to the show, which included more than 160 works. It travelled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Tate in London and Munich's Haus der Kunst.

"Ellsworth Kelly at 90", 2013

In celebration of Kelly's 90th birthday in 2013, the Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, staged a show of 14 paintings and two sculptures made in the previous two years. Although the art was new, much of it sprang from ideas that Kelly had developed years earlier. A large painted aluminium sculpture, *Black Form II*, 2012, took its shape from a 1962 drawing. Also in 1962, Kelly made a small collage (22cm by 20cm) that became the basis for *Gold with Orange Reliefs*, 2013. But although the forms were old, their execution was new. Kelly's paintings tend to disguise the presence of his hand, but *Gold with Orange Reliefs* was uncharacteristically painterly; it was also the first time that he had ever painted with the colour gold. In the exhibition catalogue, the art historian Robert Storr asked: "What better way for Kelly to enter his tenth decade than poised to leap forward after a long look back?" P.P.

Pobric, Pac. "Ellsworth Kelly: Looking Backwards, Moving Forwards." *The Art Newspaper*, April 2015, pp. 56-57.

The New York Times

When an Abstract Artist Falls in Love With Monet

'Monet/Kelly' at Clark Art Institute, Ellsworth Kelly Falls for Monet

By HOLLAND COTTER FEB. 1, 2015

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — Love can be counterintuitive. If I were asked to pair up the artist Ellsworth Kelly with a historical soul mate, Claude Monet would not readily come to mind. The American painter of abstract pictures as clean as Shaker tables and the French Impressionist who piled on pigment as thick as mulch? I don't think so. Yet here they are together in a small, crystalline show called "Monet/Kelly" at the Clark Art Institute, and they make an utterly logical, and mind-stretching, match.

What do they have in common? France, for one thing. Mr. Kelly lived there for six years studying art on the G.I. Bill after World War II. He was mostly in Paris, but traveled around. In 1949, he spent a working vacation in a fisherman's cottage on Belle-Île, off the Brittany coast, where he produced, among other things, a series of spare pencil drawings of that island's cliffs and headlands jutting into the sea. Although he may not have been aware, some 60 years earlier Monet had spent four months in the same place painting the same terrain.

Monet's "Rocks at Port-Goulphar, Belle-Île." Claude Monet, The Art Institute of Chicago

An Ellsworth Kelly drawing. Ellsworth Kelly, Collection of the artist

Ellsworth Kelly's "Tableau Vert." Ellsworth Kelly, The Art Institute of Chicago

Mr. Kelly's interest in Monet began later, in 1952, when he chanced on some of the panoramic waterlily paintings called "Nympheas" in a museum in Zurich. Intrigued by the idea of near-abstract art done on so large a scale, he visited Monet's Giverny home. There was no one else there. Monet, who had died in 1926, was out of fashion in France. His beloved water gardens were overgrown; his studio was a ruin, with birds flitting in and out. A few waterlily paintings were still propped on easels; other, later garden pictures, done after Monet's eyesight had failed, stood stacked against the walls.

Although these passionately painted images of nature taken to the edge of legibility were at an opposite extreme from the art Mr. Kelly was developing — matte, monochromatic paintings that had sources in reality but left all trace of depiction out — he found himself moved by them. The next day, back in Paris, he painted an abstract picture that mingled green and blue, with strokes so subtly feathered that the blue looked like shadows under water. He had never done anything like it before, and never would again.

Cotter, Holland. "When an Abstract Artist Falls in Love With Monet." *The New York Times*, February 1, 2015.

Titled "Tableau Vert," it was a homage to the older artist. It hangs, along with another painting and 18 drawings by Mr. Kelly and nine paintings by Monet, at the center of an exhibition that is also a homage, and something more. With every work in it chosen and installed by Mr. Kelly, it's also a visual essay about his own art as personal response to other art and to the world.

Three of Monet's paintings at the Clark date from his 1886 stay on Belle-Île, where he was mesmerized by the wind-and-sea-carved rock formations that rose, like mini-islands, offshore. He returned to them repeatedly and their character changes from picture to picture. In one, the rocks are soft, squat, spongy mounds lapped by eddying water; in another, they're dark dorsal fins sticking up from storm-lashed waves. In a third they're almost peripheral objects, pushed aside to frame an expanse of cobalt-flecked green sea.

The colors, which swirled later through the Giverny water-garden series, bring "Tableau Vert" to mind. And though Mr. Kelly's painting was a one-off, his relationship with Monet continued and intensified. In 1965, he returned to Belle-Île and made landscape drawings, as he had in 1949, but now with a mission. The new images are of specific rock formations that Monet had painted, each done, as if with single stroke, in contour profile and set in sea-and-sky, a space defined by a horizon line.

Finally, in 2005, Mr. Kelly came back once more to the island and drew the same subjects, but in a changed style. The rocks are now more than traced shapes. They're fleshed out with shading that gives them volume. They seem organically planted in space. They look alive, charged with creaturely feelings, like mountains in a Taoist painting. Interestingly, this vivacity may come partly because Mr. Kelly's drawing hand in 2005, when he was in his early 80s, was less steady than it had been decades earlier, giving his lines a little shimmy. Also, he seemed to be less intent on distilling abstract essences from actual forms than in staying with the forms themselves, dwelling on their particularities, deliberating over their details.

We see a comparable dynamic in six glorious late Monet Giverny paintings that are in the show, dating from around 1907 to the year before his death at 86. Over their span Monet's eyesight is deteriorating, but his painting, far from growing vague or lightening up, becomes denser and more adamant. The less well he could see, the more his hand did, laying down strokes on top of tangles of strokes.

This is very tenacious, insistent art. In "The Path Under the Rose Arches," from around 1920-22, Monet is depicting reality almost entirely through touch. And he keeps touching, won't stop, won't let go. You can easily understand why, for Mr. Kelly, whose abstract art is so committed to and embedded in the world, that first Giverny visit was a kind of love-at-first-sight experience.

It's also not difficult to interpret the show — which includes drawings by Mr. Kelly of Cézanne's Mont Sainte-Victoire — as a meditation on age and how it can alter perception and practice, leading a realist like Monet toward what looks like abstraction and bringing an abstract artist like Mr. Kelly back to the material realities from which his art has always sprung. Lest a focus on age and aging prevail, however, Mr. Kelly, who is 91, rounds out the show with a recent painting, "White Curve in Relief Over White (Belle-Île)," from 2013.

In the context of what surrounds it, this piece — two white-painted joined canvases, one a semi-oval, the other a triangle pointed down — suggests a distillation of the island landscape that two artists, so alike and unalike, shared. More important, it confirms Mr. Kelly's status as a figure whose true breadth and depth have yet to be fully measured, and whose art continues to be what it has always been, the ever-ardent product of an old soul.

Cotter, Holland. "When an Abstract Artist Falls in Love With Monet." *The New York Times*, February 1, 2015.

The New York Times

Inside Art

Robin Pogrebin

Texas Museum to Build Ellsworth Kelly Design

In 1986, the painter and sculptor Ellsworth Kelly conceived his first free-standing building for a private collector, but it was never realized. Now, as Mr. Kelly prepares to turn 92 in May, the Blanton Museum of Art will acquire and construct his design for a 2,715-square-foot stone building, which will rise on the museum's grounds at the University of Texas, Austin.

"It's wonderful to have it done," Mr. Kelly said in a telephone interview.

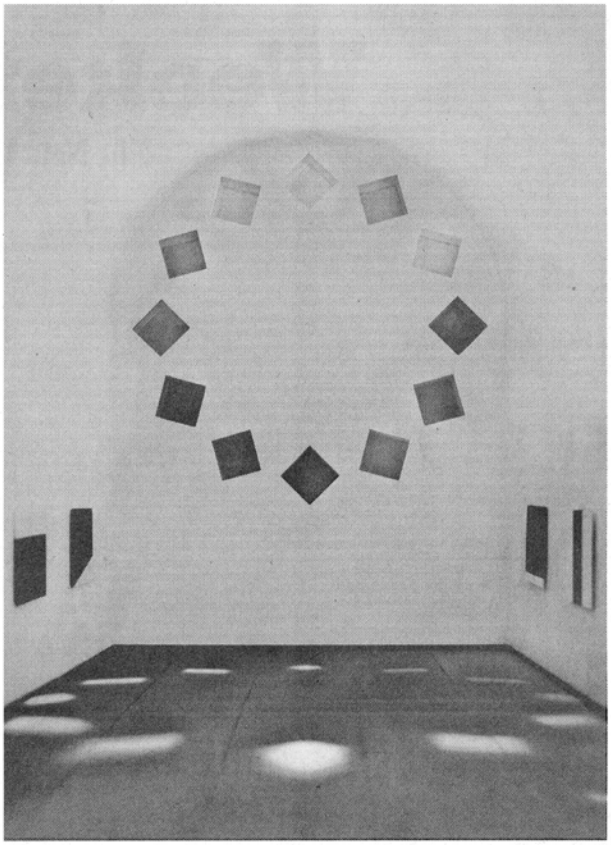
While not explicitly called a chapel — it's been titled "Austin" — the building echoes Modernist artist-commissioned buildings like the Rothko Chapel in Houston and Henri Matisse's Chapelle du Rosaire in Southern France. And Mr. Kelly said the building's 14 black-and-white marble panels were inspired in part by religious themes. The structure also features colored glass windows and a totemic rosewood sculpture as a symbolic altar.

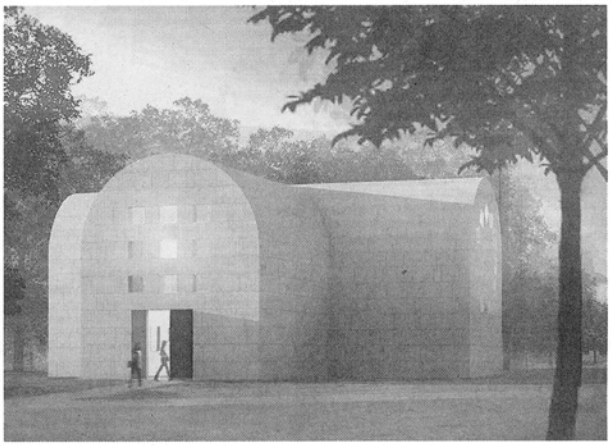
"I think people need some kind of spiritual thing because, as you can see, there are spots around the world that are blowing up and we don't want that," Mr. Kelly said. "No one wants that."

Mr. Kelly has gifted the project to the museum, and it will become part of its permanent collection. Construction is to begin after the museum has raised $15 million to realize the project; $7 million has been collected so far. "It really is a space that you walk into and experience," said Simone Wicha, the Blanton's director.

The university has committed a $1 million endowment for the care and conservation of "Austin" and for the research and study of the work.

Mr. Kelly said he just wanted it to be a place for contemplation. "Go there and rest your eyes, rest your mind," he said. "Enjoy it."





IMAGES BY 2015 ELLSWORTH KELLY, BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, AUSTIN

Renderings for a chapel-like stone building, first conceived by the artist Ellsworth Kelly in 1986, to be built at the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas, Austin.

Pogrebin, Robin. "Texas Museum to Build Ellsworth Kelly Design." *The New York Times,* February 6, 2015, p. C30.

The New York Times Magazine

Old Masters

After 80, some people don't retire. They reign.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK MADIGAN HECK

Essay by LEWIS H. LAPHAM Oct. 23, 2014

The portraits here are of men and women in their 80s and 90s, rich in the rewards of substantial and celebrated careers, and although I know none of them except by name and reputation, I'm asked why their love's labor is not lost but still to be found. Why do they persist, the old masters? To what end the unceasing effort to discover or create something new? Why not rest on the laurels and the oars?

The short answer is Dr. Samuel Johnson's, in a letter to James Boswell in 1777: "Depend upon it, sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully." A longer answer is that of the 19th-century Japanese artist Hokusai, who at 75 added a postscript to the first printing of his "One Hundred Views of Mount Fuji":

"From the time that I was 6 years old I had the mania of drawing the form of objects. As I came to be 50 I had published an infinity of designs; but all that I have produced before the age of 70 is not worth being counted. It is at the age of 73 that I have somewhat begun to understand the structure of true nature, of animals and grasses, and trees and birds, and fishes and insects; consequently at 80 years of age I shall have made still more progress; at 90 I hope to have penetrated into the mystery of things; at 100 years of age I should have reached decidedly a marvelous degree, and when I shall be 110, all that I do, every point and every line, shall be instinct with life — and I ask all those who shall live as long as I do to see if I have not kept my word."

Hokusai died in 1849 in his late 80s, by all reports still far from satisfied with his work then in progress. I'm not surprised. When I was 6, I delighted in the act of writing, at 12, in the expecting that by the time I turned 21, I would know how to make of it an art. The birthday came and went, and no dog showed up with the bird in its mouth. Before I was 30, I'd written seven drafts of a first novel mercifully unpublished; I consoled myself with the thought that by the time I was 40, I would know what I was doing. Another dream that didn't come true, and so when I was 45, I began to explore the uses of the essay, the term from the French *essayer* (to try, to embark upon, to attempt), the form experimental and provisional, amenable to multiple shifts of perspective and tone, and therefore the best of instruments on which to practice the playing with words. The essay proceeds from the question "What do I know?" and doesn't stay for an answer until the author finds out what he means to say by setting it up in a sentence, maybe catching it in the net of a metaphor.

On the way through my 50s I could see signs of progress, producing manuscripts that required only extensive rewriting, not the abandonment of the whole sorry mess of a dumb idea. Revisions pursued through six or seven drafts allowed for the chance to find the right word, to control the balance of a subordinate clause, to replace

the adjective with a noun. I didn't enlist the help of a computer because words so quickly dressed up in the costume of print can pretend to a meaning and weight they neither enjoy nor deserve. Writing with a pen on paper, I can feel the shape and sound of the words, and I'm better able to judge how and why one goes with another, and on approaching the age of 70 I toyed with the hope that success was maybe somewhere not far away in a manger or on the near side of a rainbow.

Now I am 79. I've written many hundreds of essays, 10 times that number of misbegotten drafts both early and late, and I begin to understand that failure is its own reward. It is in the effort to close the distance between the work imagined and the work achieved wherein it is to be found that the ceaseless labor is the freedom of play, that what's at stake isn't a reflection in the mirror of fame but the escape from the prison of the self.

T. H. White, the British naturalist turned novelist to write "The Once and Future King," calls upon the druid Merlyn to teach the lesson to the young prince Arthur:

"You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honour trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then — to learn. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting."

The lesson can also be drawn from the strength of the work done in the dying of the light by the octogenarian and nonagenarian students of the several and various arts — by, among others in a very long list, Michelangelo, Titian, Thomas Hardy, Claude Monet, Georgia O'Keeffe, Donatello, Pablo Casals, Jasper Johns, Giuseppe Verdi, Toni Morrison and Picasso.

John D. Rockefeller in his 80s was known to his business associates as a crazy old man possessed by the stubborn and ferocious will to know why the world wags and what wags it, less interested in money than in the solving of a problem in geography or corporate combination. By sources reliably informed I'm told that Warren Buffett, 84, and Rupert Murdoch, 83, never quit asking questions. Sophocles in his early 90s wrote "Oedipus at Colonus"; the American journalist I. F. Stone began the study of ancient Greek in his 70s in order that he might read the play in the language of its birth. Stone, the most relentless investigative reporter of his generation, had uncovered the truth known to both Hokusai and T. H. White, and the lesson I'm now almost old enough to learn: that the tree of knowledge and the fountain of youth are one and the same.

Lapham, Lewis H. "Old Masters." *The New York Times Magazine*, October 23, 2014.

Ellsworth Kelly, artist, 91, at his studio in Spencertown, N.Y. Last year, President Obama presented Kelly with the National Medal of Arts.

What's different about your life now that you're older?
When I was 79, I asked my doctor, "I'm 79 and you say I'm in good health, what should I expect from the 80s?" And he said: "If you haven't got any of the Mayo diseases, you're pretty good. You can slide right through." And I said, "What about the 90s?" And he said, "Well . . . we'll talk about that." But I didn't sail through exactly. What happened five years ago is I discovered that painting with turpentine, which I've been doing since the 1940s, had ruined my lungs. So I've been on oxygen ever since.

Any surprises?
I don't travel now. That's the big thing. But I'm here [in Columbia County, N.Y.], and I love it. Each year I'm very surprised by the color. . . . It's one thing about getting older, you see more. . . . Everyday I'm continuing to see new things. That's why there are new paintings.

What are your days like now?
I'm in the studio everyday. I draw a lot. . . . I chose plants because I knew I could draw plants forever. I want to work like nature works. I want to understand the growth of plants and the dead leaves falling. Oh, how I connect with that!

Lapham, Lewis H. "Old Masters." *The New York Times Magazine*, October 23, 2014.

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APOLLO

A Movement of Colour

At the grand age of 90, Ellsworth Kelly is still drawing, still a Francophile, and still pursuing a rigorously independent form of abstraction. He talks to Apollo about a life spent painting

WRITER LOUISE NICHOLSON

Tea, coffee, champagne?' is Ellsworth Kelly's greeting. As it was his 90th birthday on 31 May, continuing the celebration seems legitimate. But it is 10.30am on a hot, harshly lit August day in the rolling wooded hills of the Hudson Valley, two hours' train ride north of New York. We are on the terrace outside Kelly's studio and offices at Spencertown. A Kelly sculpture is mounted on each side wall; Kelly totems and tall pine trees define the deep perspective of the lawns ahead of us. I suggest we have tea now, champagne later. He chuckles, calls out to his staff for cushions and we settle ourselves into wicker chairs, beneath an umbrella.

While museums up and down the East Coast of the US have celebrated the nonagenarian with shows, I've come to seek out personal memories that he believes have defined his artistic journey, one that William Rubin described as 'inner-directed: neither a reaction to Abstract Expressionism nor the outcome of a dialogue with his contemporaries'.

'Remembering I can't get rid of,' says Kelly. And, despite the inconvenience of a plastic tube feeding him oxygen (the consequence of decades of working with turpentine), he embarks upon eloquent 'remembering' until we are called to lunch hours later.

'Living in France began it all. I'm a real Francophile.' His first visit was inauspicious, moving through Brittany and Normandy to Paris in 1944, in a camouflage unit. 'We were supposed to lure the Germans into our situation and then get out so the forces could come in.' Kelly arrived in war-torn Paris just after the celebrations. 'There were no cars, just bicycles, and people came up to us because they knew we had candy and cigarettes.' Things might have improved when a close army friend returned from dinner to say he'd met Picasso. 'He was called Griswold, a rich boy from an old family in Connecticut. He met Picasso at Gertrude Stein's. I said I'd like to meet him but Griswold said: "Oh no, you're just a country boy."' Kelly had to be content with Griswold's reports. 'Griswold looked like a Picasso blue period figure, and Picasso did draw him. I expect you'd like to see it.' He calls to Eva, his archivist, to bring down the 1944 volume of the Zervos *catalogue raisonné* of Picasso. She arrives with it in seconds, and together they find the portrait. Kelly also drew Griswold. 'It's good to know you drew the same model as Picasso. When I

Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.

Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.

went to study at Boston, I'd say: "Oh, I've seen Picasso." That's the main lie in my life – that I got away with,' he laughs. 'It made me popular. I was a shy kid.'

Back in the US, he took advantage of the government's GI Bill, a package of incentives for US war veterans that included education and training. 'It was fantastic,' he says emphatically. 'They should have it now. It removed anxiety; I was able to experiment. I thought: I'll go to Boston and learn about drawing the nude, painting the nude.'

He did just that, enrolling at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in 1946. 'Boston was very backward, not like New York City where abstract art was beginning.' Above all, he learned to draw and has drawn throughout his life, in particular plants and their leaves (Fig. 2). 'Leaves are planar, if you see what I mean. Most of my paintings are about planes.' He calls Eva to bring him several catalogues including a Betty Parsons show of 1963. 'All painting is about overlapping flat planes. Now, here,' he says pointing to a painting, 'is *Blue on Blue*, playing around with relief. The eye does the work [Fig. 4]. My recent paintings take this further.' He opens a more recent catalogue. 'See how the yellow overlaps the red. In all Renaissance painting there is overlap. I call it a lie – yes, it's a trick, a better word,' he says with a glint in his eye. He was pleased when the Metropolitan Museum of Art did a show in 1970 about New York painters and sculptors, and curator Henry Geldzahler 'chose Jasper, Claus and me for drawings. We're all natural drawers. He gave me a whole room of plant drawings.' The Met repeated the honour in 2012 with a one-man show of his plant drawings.

One Boston teacher knew Max Beckmann and invited him to lecture on Cézanne in 1948. The combination inspired Kelly to hasten back to Paris that year, changing his US-dollar grant on the black market to stretch it further.

Post-war Paris worked well for Kelly and he lived there for six years. 'I love the measure of France, the measure of the architecture, how it's built, the measure of the countryside, the villages. I was fascinated. I drew a lot.' He was also intrigued by the Paris art world. 'I was excited by Matisse, Derain and of course Picasso. The post-war School of Paris artists fascinated me, but I didn't like the geometric developments.' He also 'needed to get Picasso off my back. All the artists had to do this. He'd reigned in Europe for such a long time. So I stopped painting for a while but kept drawing. I think all my work begins with drawing, including portraits, which I've never shown.'

2

There was almost no information on American art in Paris. 'One day, at Brentano's bookstore on the avenue de l'Opéra, which occasionally had foreign magazines, I spotted a picture on the cover of *Art News*. It was by Ad Reinhardt.' It made him decide to return to New York. When he asked his parents for the $200 fare home and $200 more to ship his art, his mother sent him $200 with instructions to leave the art. 'So I went to Cunard, asked if I could pay my fare later and they let me. I thought my paintings were too important to use to pay for my fare. I know some artists do that.' Indeed, Kelly has numbered and catalogued his work throughout his life.

In Manhattan he lived at the south-eastern tip of the island. 'I worked on Broad Street, one big room with a terrace overlooking

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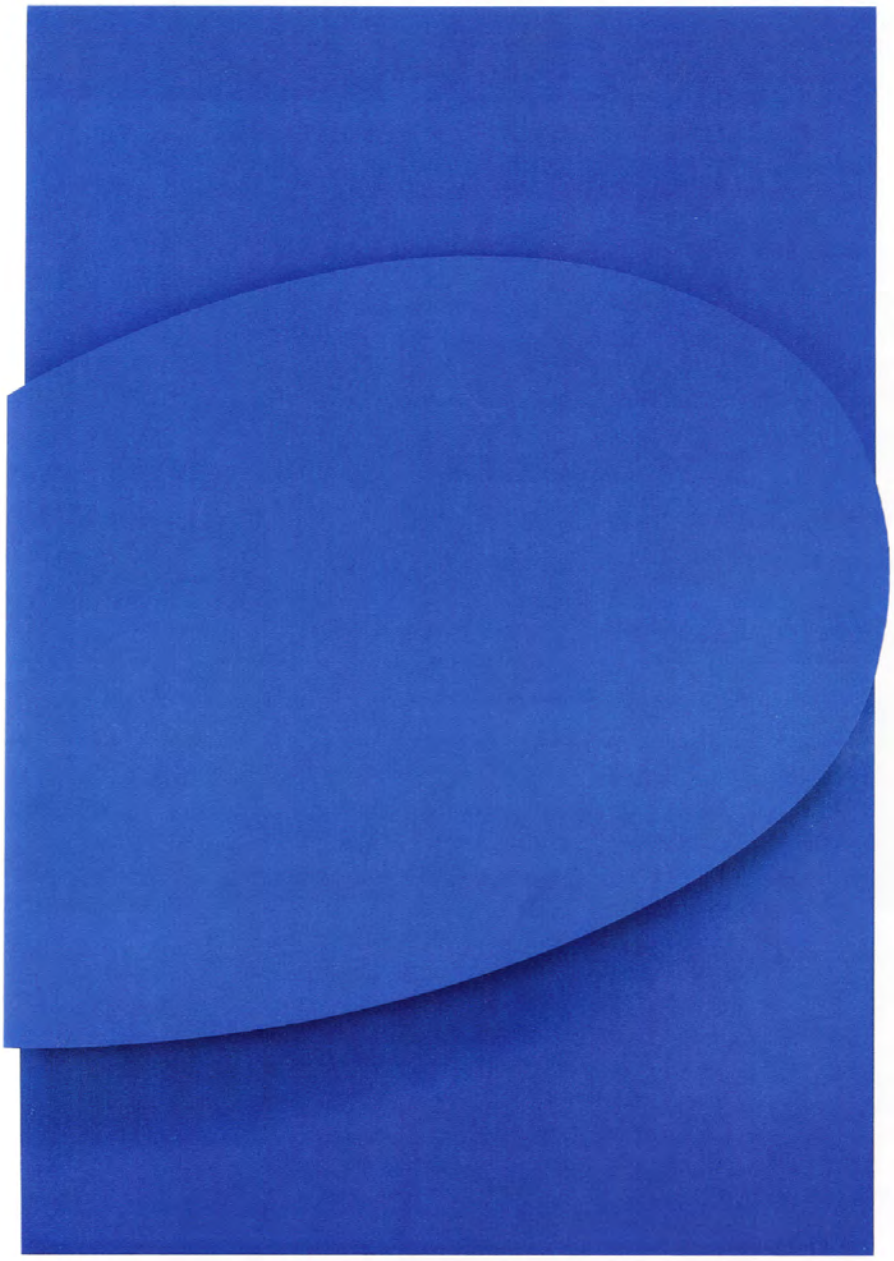
Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.



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1 Ellsworth Kelly photographed in his studio in Spencertown, New York
© Jack Shear

2 *Catalpa*, 1964
Ellsworth Kelly (b. 1923)
Pencil on paper
72.4×114.3cm
Private collection
© Ellsworth Kelly

3 *Curve XIV*, 1974
Ellsworth Kelly
Weathering steel
304.8×41.9×1.9cm
Collection of the artist
© Ellsworth Kelly

4 *Blue over Blue*, 1963
Ellsworth Kelly
Painted aluminium
203.2×152.4×19.1cm
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
© Ellsworth Kelly

5 *Slip*, 1959
Ellsworth Kelly
Oil on canvas
152.4×127cm
Private collection
© Ellsworth Kelly

the East River. Coenties Slip was the next block, and in '56 I moved there. The loft was $45 a month, and had two floors; the top one with a skylight was my studio. Agnes Martin sometimes shared the studio. Jasper Johns and Bob Rauschenberg were up the street. Roy Lichtenstein was my closest artist friend. That was a good time.' Betty Parsons was his dealer. '[She] took me straight away. Believed in my colour. In 1970 I went across the hallway to Sidney Janis who was always interested in what I was doing. He had the top artists: Pollock, De Kooning, Rothko, Barnett Newman, Clyfford Still.' Kelly pauses reflectively. 'They weren't selling much. There wasn't a big market for contemporary art then.'

In recalling this period of his life, Kelly addresses his artistic dilemma: being part of both European and American post-war art worlds when they were so radically different. 'On my return to America, I felt that my art had been influenced by the early 20th-century European artists, rather than the Abstract Expressionist art that was happening in New York before and during the length of my stay in Paris. I did feel for a number of years that my art was different than what was happening in New York. I remember when some of my work was exhibited in Europe during the

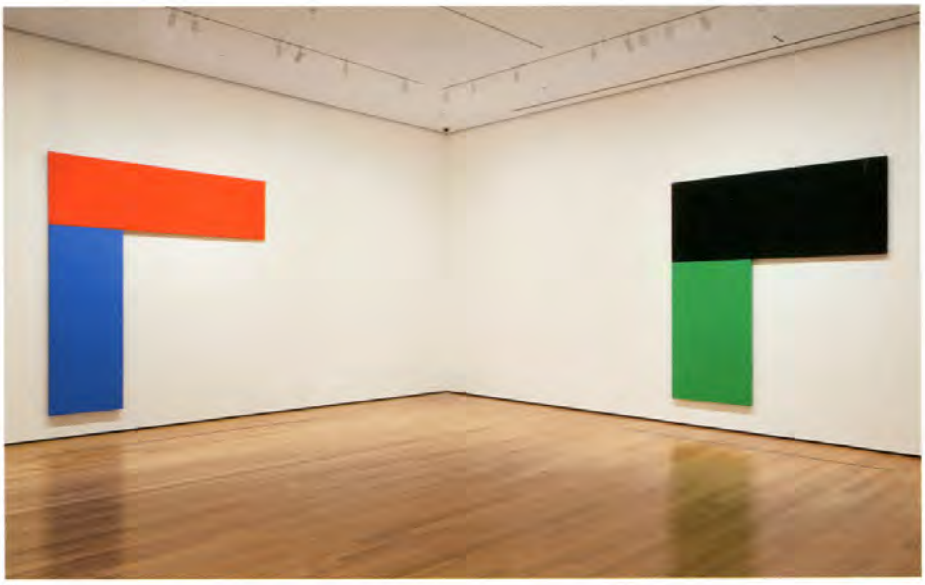
Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.

1960s, I felt a more favourable response, especially from London, and was accepted more easily than in New York.' Kelly believes specifically that his art 'is something that I began in 1949 in Paris [when he made his first abstract paintings] and that the main qualities of my work have continued to develop until the present. I have never considered myself exclusively an American artist, just an artist.'

But 'just an artist' with a strong French twist. As he cherry picks his memories, time and time again France is at the root of what follows. For instance, colour. 'There is a difference between European colour and American colour. America misunderstood my colour; [they] thought it was out of date, but in fact it was different. It was Matisse, Derain, the Fauves, Mondrian; how Kandinsky began as a figure painter and changed to Cubism around 1910.' But he was not immediately successful. He showed some of the colourful paintings he'd done in the South of France, where he'd wintered in 1951 and 'felt I'd done something important. But when they were shown in New York, people didn't catch on because it looked strange. They thought I was 30 years late.' He pauses. 'Abstract American art was very designy. I wasn't.' Nevertheless, the Museum of Modern Art included Kelly in its landmark 1959 show, 'Sixteen Americans', and it would give him a retrospective in 1973.

He is reminded of his own colour spectrum that starts and ends with yellow, 'each colour at its full strength. I don't like the timid, modish colours found in America.' As proof he refers to his bold, 14-painting Chatham Series made in 1971, reunited this year at MoMA (Fig. 6), as 'a movement of colour'.

But Kelly has sometimes stepped away from colour. After he moved to Leo Castelli's gallery in 1973, he did three grey shows (1975, 1975 and 1977). 'It frees you up. But of course none of them sold,' he says with a laugh. 'It was at the height of Vietnam. I stopped colour. I was embarrassed by it.' He looks out across the lawns and points to a totem sculpture. 'There's one over there [Fig. 3].' However, his current dealer Matthew



6

6 Installation view of 'Ellsworth Kelly: Chatham Series', Museum of Modern Art, New York (25 May–8 September 2013) Photo: John Wronn

Marks has sold some. 'Time changes, the work has time to evolve.'

France, too, was the birthplace of Kelly's fragmentation works. Again, he calls for a book and Eva whisks it to our table. He finds a black and white illustration. 'This is 1950. I saw the light reflected in the Seine at night, the fragmentation. I wanted to make a painting that catches that fragmentation.' He did this mathematically on squared paper, starting at either side to give each column one more colour than the last up to the middle, selecting the colours by randomly pulling pieces of coloured paper from a cup. 'The result is both extremely structured and random,' he says. 'I guess I got that from the Surrealists, drawing with eyes closed. Drawing not looking at the page.'

The most magnificent of Kelly's fragmentation pieces is *Sculpture for a Large Wall*, made in New York in 1956–57, and owned by MoMA (Fig. 7). 'I call this the sum of what I accomplished in Europe.' This summer it was exhibited at Philadelphia's Barnes Foundation. 'It has to be precisely lit from the top. And it is.' Eva produces the catalogue, but I'd also seen it *in situ* at the museum. The top lighting ensures the horizontal tubes holding the

'I needed to get Picasso off my back. He'd reigned in Europe for such a long time'

Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.

7 Installation view of Kelly's *Sculpture for a Large Wall* (1956–57) at the Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
© Ellsworth Kelly
Photo: Matthew Marks Gallery, New York

7

shapes are barely visible while the shapes themselves catch the light and seem to be tumbling and dancing.

Part of the continuous draw back to France was Picasso. 'You have to get over him, but he's always magnetic.' On one trip, he hoped to meet him at Vallauris and Mougins. 'Françoise came to the door and said "No way."' Even today, he feels the master's inspiration. 'When I look at a Picasso I want to paint. He makes painting so delicious.' Kelly's eyes sparkle at the thought. 'He's a master of composition and solves problems. He's a genius.' He seeks for a reason. 'I think it's the Spanish in him. There's Velázquez, Goya, Gaudí, too.'

It is also to France that Kelly traces his interest in relief and, with it, the development of his distinctive curve. 'It all started there, seeing Egyptian, Romanesque and Byzantine art.' He calls for another book, and opens it to show an Egyptian relief. 'This is one of the most important pieces I saw,' he says firmly, and then becomes almost elegiac. 'This relates to what I am doing even now. It's about the continuation of influences, desires. I'm really a visualist fascinated by nature. Look at nature, how it changes, slowly, over time – time is so important to art. I can go back and see things that were so important to me at the beginning, and still are. Europe has tradition and old buildings. I feel a lack of it here – it's all new and new and new. I think of permanence.'

He reckons his interest in curves came from Romanesque arches. 'The arch has its own measure. At Royan, in south-west France, I was using free curves, elliptical not radial. Then in 1959 I started doing sculptures with radial curves.' He points to the totems on the lawn. 'See the white totem? [It's] a masculine concave form, Apollo, as opposed to the Venus with two convex curves.' Closer to home, after years of responding to New York's verticality and compression, Kelly lives among open space, wide horizons, low houses. A piece he's working on now reflects this. 'I was driving through a village and noticed all the houses with pitched roofs. It's always a mystery to me how the idea appears. I can see a symbol and think "That's it!" I love the mystery.'

The move in 1970 from New York up into the Hudson Valley's bucolic countryside – with a studio first at Chatham, then at Spencertown – was really no surprise. 'At Coenties Slip, I looked over wide-open water with boats; the high buildings were behind me. Then, when I moved uptown it was necessary to be near Central Park.' He lived at Hotel des Artistes on West 67th Street, on the ninth floor. But his paintings were big. To move them out of the studio 'I had to balance myself and a picture on top of the elevator cab, holding on to the greasy cables'. Here, in his 20,000 square foot studio built in 2001, Kelly can go big with no problem. 'I like a certain scale, 20–40 feet. From a distance they carry.' He attributes his penchant for size to Paris visits to the Louvre. 'When I saw *The Wedding Feast at Cana* [Veronese; 1553] and *The Raft of the Medusa* [Géricault; 1818–19], I thought "Aren't those marvellous?" And everything from ancient times was large. I wanted to fill walls. But I lived in small rooms, so I used to do things in panels.'

Then he adds modestly: 'Now that I am older, my shoulder can give me trouble. I can't paint much bigger than seven foot.' He has two assistants to stretch canvases, order paints, and do other studio work. 'One assistant is with me when I paint because my eyesight is not as good as it used to be, especially with white on white. So, he is at my elbow telling me what I'm missing. But I do the painting. It makes me feel good, I get exhilarated.' Kelly has just reminded himself that there is an urgency to paint. And Eva has given us a third reminder that it is lunchtime. A

Louise Nicholson is an art historian and journalist.

Nicholson, Louise. "A Movement of Colour." *Apollo*, October 2013, pp. 58-64.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

KELLY'S COLORS ONLY GET BRIGHTER WITH TIME

May 20th, 2013

When you live to 90, you collect a lot of stories. And when you've lived the life of Ellsworth Kelly, your book can read like a who's-who in a modern-art museum collection.

"Do you know Bruce Nauman? Have you ridden horses with him?" asked Mr. Kelly, the painter and sculptor who turns 90 on May 31. He has, once. "I was with Agnes Martin when we visited. A little ski town, Taos."

Meeting for an interview at Mnuchin Gallery, on the Upper East Side, in advance of a show that opened there last month, Mr. Kelly took several welcome detours in conversation, though the task at hand was to talk about yet another show. "Chatham Series," opening May 25 at the Museum of Modern Art, features the series of joined two-panel, two-color paintings the artist made after leaving New York City for Spencertown, 125 miles up the Hudson River, in 1970. MoMA's exhibition is the first to

Chou, Kimberly. "Kelly's Colors Only Get Brighter With Time." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 2013, p. A24.

present the full series since its debut at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, in 1972.

"Chatham Series" is one of several shows scheduled during Mr. Kelly's 90th birthday year, and there is plenty of work to consider—six decades of paintings, prints and sculptures. But one can't help but encourage the artist to talk about, for instance, his brief encounter with Pablo Picasso in Paris after World War II, as Picasso's chauffeured car squeezed past him on a narrow street: "He saw me and smiled and said, 'Do we know each other?' And it was almost like, 'Come in.' And my French was so bad I said [to myself], 'If I get into that car, he'll throw me out in the next five minutes.' "

He looked wistful as he recalled that day. "If I had gotten into the car, my whole life would have been changed. You feel like every little decision you make changes your life forever."

Mr. Kelly has done just fine, even without Picasso's intervention. In a career going back nearly to his service in World War II, he has been lionized for his minimalist celebrations of form and color, his shaped canvases (the subject of the Mnuchin show, where the entire work is a single color on a canvas stretched into a particular shape, thus transforming the painting into an art object) and his sculptural and relief work. Recent and forthcoming shows and special installations also include the Tate Modern in London and the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. Some were prompted by the Mr. Kelly's foundation reaching out to friends, like the Tate's Nicholas Serota, at institutions that already included his work in their collections.

"Well, Jack says, 89 and 91 is not that big a thing," the artist said, referring to Jack Shear, his partner and the director of the foundation created to preserve and further his work. "'It's 90, it's important. You've got to do something.'"

But beyond exhibits with retrospective angles, Mr. Kelly is also presenting new work. His show at Matthew Marks, his longtime New York gallery, includes paintings made in the past two years. The work there—in a show called, simply, "Ellsworth Kelly at Ninety"—features large reliefs in his trademark rich hues (a deep sky-blue square with rounded corners), but also black and white.

"I think that one of the great things about Ellsworth is he established this vocabulary very early on his career by the late 1950s when he was in Paris," said Mr. Marks. "And he has stuck to it very consistently using the same forms, colors, shapes. Each series of paintings, every few years, through every decade, everything he makes, you never have to wonder is that a work by Ellsworth Kelly. And yet it somehow always looks new, always looks fresh."

Chou, Kimberly. "Kelly's Colors Only Get Brighter With Time." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 2013, p. A24.

Mr. Kelly still works out of a studio in Spencertown, where he has lived for more than 40 years. When he first moved there from the city, he was struck by the difference in the heights of buildings, which inspired the drawings that led to his "Chatham Series" of joined horizontal and vertical panels. "I think it must have been something with the difference in architecture, from a country town and the city—the city is so vertical," he said. "You don't really look up unless you're from out of town."

Each of the "Chatham" paintings features two joined rectangular panels of different color combinations and different heights and lengths. When joined, they make a reversed "L" shape.

"Drawing is really the engine of my work," he said. "I have these spurts in my mind and all of a sudden I feel like, 'Ah, that's the solution to something.' For a long time, I had these enough, constantly, and now as I get older I'm wearing it out, I think."

But those who know him continue to marvel at his output.

"I think one of the things that is great about being 90, he only feels his body. His sense of wonder, wanting to create more [are still there]," Mr. Shear said.

And the attention being paid to Mr. Kelly now, 90th birthday or no, has an extra poignancy. Though he had his first MoMA retrospective 40 years ago, his star has climbed more steadily in the last two decades. "Ellsworth was not a superstar," said MoMA curator Ann Temkin. "He was never unknown or unappreciated, but the stature he enjoys today is something that wasn't as widely acknowledged some years back. He's still making great paintings and sculptures and drawings. It's not just looking back but it's looking forward as well, and that's quite extraordinary."

Chou, Kimberly. "Kelly's Colors Only Get Brighter With Time." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 20, 2013, p. A24.

The New York Times

MICHAEL APPLETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ellsworth Kelly's "Chatham III: Black Blue" (1971), in a show devoted to the artist at the Museum of Modern Art.

At 90, Still Riveting The Mind's Eye

ROBERTA SMITH
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Ellsworth Kelly has been on earth for 90 years — his birthday was Friday — and he has been making abstract art for over 60 of them. Now the New York art world is treating him, and us, to a big party. His boldly colored, emblematic paintings and reliefs can be seen in five exhibitions around town. In unusually gorgeous terms, they attest to a lifelong fusion of austerity and high spirits, and a narrow yet deep exploration of pure colors and simple shapes.

The shows range from a mini-survey at the Mnuchin Gallery on East 78th Street, to an array of brand-new work at the Matthew Marks Gallery's three locations in Chelsea, to a radiant exhibition of Mr. Kelly's 1971 "Chatham Series" at the Museum of Modern Art. The 14 paintings in the series have not been exhibited together since they made their public debut in 1972 at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo.

All told, these exhibitions present 82 works produced from 1951 to 2013. They reveal an artist who is making some of his strongest work right now, at times with a decidedly erotic undercurrent.

Mr. Kelly has spent much of his career romancing the

Continued on Page 2

Smith, Roberta. "At 90, Still Riveting the Mind's Eye." *The New York Times,* June 3, 2013, pp. C1-C2.

At 90, Still Riveting the Mind's Eye: Ellsworth Kelly's Birthday Celebration

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

"Curves on White (Four Panels)," from 2011, in "Ellsworth Kelly at Ninety," at Matthew Marks's 24th Street gallery.

From First Arts Page

vaunted monochrome in Modernist painting. He has approached this absolute without reverence or irony; it is simply the main building block of his art. For him, the monochrome has been something to particularize through shape and color, render in metal, or combine with another monochrome of a contrasting color, whether they are side by side or overlapping. The results are not so much paintings as crisp, flat objects devoid of spatial illusion. Yet the best of them are so perfectly made that we tend to forget about their physical nature, concentrating solely on their visual effects instead. Their perfection creates an aura of eternal newness that can sometimes seem antiseptic but just as often is central to their power.

Whether by plan or not, these exhibitions outline the three basic ways that Mr. Kelly has used monochrome panels. Consistent with its title, "Singular Shapes 1966-2009," at Mnuchin, surveys his single-shape works. It starts with his first, "Yellow Piece of 1966," a fat yellow rectangle with two rounded corners at the lower left and upper right. It could be the daffodil-colored emblem of a fifth suit of playing cards — something between a diamond and a heart.

The show's most recent work is the declarative "Blue Curves" (2009). It instantly reads as a heart shape turned on its side with its point lopped off — and as breasts or buttocks. (The art historian Pepe Karmel notes in the show's catalog that the artist himself has said as much.) It also resembles, fittingly, a B.

For the "Chatham Series" at MoMA, Mr. Kelly made shaped paintings using a brilliantly obvious method: abutting two ordinary rectangles to form an inverted L. The looming vertical paintings evoke giant rulers, or details of architecture like posts or lintels.

Each rectangle is decisively colored — red, blue, yellow, green, black or white — and their combinations pack a punch. There is a white rectangle above a black, and black above white, as well as black above red, blue, yellow or green. Red above yellow or blue. No two works have exactly the same measurements.

Seen in a quadrant of spaces formed by two intersecting walls, the "Chatham" paintings encourage a dizzying process of compare-and-contrast that is less about shape than about the perception of color in terms of weight, balance and proportion. From the end of one wall, you can see one painting that is red-blue and, in the opposite direction, one that is blue-red. From another juncture, two red-blue works with completely different proportions are visible, along with a black-white and a yellow-

which he has repeatedly mined. Now he seems interested in circling back to translate them, almost verbatim, into larger sizes or heftier materials, or both.

That is the case with "Blue Curves" at Mnuchin, which is based on a 1956 collage pictured in the show's catalog. And such translations figure prominently in the shows at Matthew Marks. Here the third use of the monochrome — one laid on top another — often dominates, and the libidinous undercurrents continue.

At Mr. Marks's 24th Street gallery, four works from 2011 employ some abrupt curved shapes from the early collages and a green and orange painting from 1964. Now the shapes are separate canvases painted red, green, yellow, or blue, laid over white rectangles. More physically defined, these bulges suggest big, cartoonish tongues.

"Black Form II" (2012) in the big Marks space on West 22nd Street reiterates a double-lobed black motif from a 1962 collage. But now it is a funny, suggestive, magnificent wall relief, nearly 7 by 6 feet, and over 4 inches thick, in aluminum painted a high-gloss black. The satisfying fat C that results looks as if one of Myron Stout's meticulous black-on-white abstractions had been repurposed by Jeff Koons, only it's better.

Another standout in the big West 22nd Street showcase is "Yellow Relief Over Blue," from 2012. Basically it is a blue vertical rectangle whose bottom half is covered by a yellow almost-rectangle with a gently curved top edge. It's like sunrise from the sun's point of view. The blue and yellow are so intense and equal in strength that the physicality of the piece all but disappears. And the experience of pure, dense color is no less effective in the details. From the side, the continuation of the blue panel behind the yellow is breathtaking. It encapsulates, in miniature, the passion for color that fuels Mr. Kelly's singular art.

Smith, Roberta. "At 90, Still Riveting the Mind's Eye." *The New York Times,* June 3, 2013, pp. C1-C2.

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THE NEW YORKER

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN: ELLSWORTH KELLY
May 20th, 2013

Speaking recently about the burst of terrific new paintings by the artist, now in his ninetieth year, the Tate London's director, Nicholas Serota, bracketed Kelly with two other nonagenarians at the tops of their games: Matisse in 1949 and Picasso in 1971. The comparison is not strained. Works in the artist's late mode of two-layered canvases—a polygonal or curved unit, snug to the edges of a rectangular ground—deliver pictorial punches with sculptural heft, in rousing combinations of black or primary colors with white. There are morning-fresh surprises, including a lobed C shape in reflective enamel and a painting derived from a fifty-one-year-old paper collage: two small, squiggle-shaped canvases in orange, crossing the bottom edge of a lambent expanse of gold. These feel like trophies, awarded to us for being clever enough to have been born with eyes.

Through June 29. (Marks, 522 West 22nd St.; 523 West 24th St.)

"Ellsworth Kelly." *The New Yorker,* May 20, 2013.

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The Examiner WASHINGTON

BARNES FOUNDATION PRESENTING ELLSWORTH KELLY SHOW
April 29th, 2013

The Barnes Foundation is celebrating the first year in its new home by mounting its first-ever solo artist exhibition: a group of five large wall sculptures by celebrated American artist Ellsworth Kelly.

The Barnes' first contemporary art exhibition in 90 years and one of more than a dozen exhibits worldwide celebrating Kelly's 90th birthday, it also marks a homecoming of sorts for one of Kelly's earliest and most important works: "Sculpture for a Large Wall," which was commissioned for a downtown Philadelphia building and displayed for four decades after its 1957 installation.

The 65-foot-long sculpture of 104 anodized aluminum panels was removed during renovations and sold, much to the shock and dismay of the local arts community. It was purchased in 1998 by cosmetics magnate Ronald Lauder and promptly donated to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which has loaned the piece to the Barnes for the show "Ellsworth Kelly: Sculpture on the Wall," on view from May 4 to Sept. 2.

Kelly, at the Barnes on Tuesday for a preview of the exhibition, said he is pleased that "Sculpture for a Large Wall" still looks fresh more than 50 years after it was made.

"You don't have to ask what it means, you don't have to ask what it's for. It just looks right, and I think it glistens," he said. "I'm surprised how new it looks."

He said the work, comprised of four rows of syncopated panels in varying forms and colors, was inspired by his time in Paris.

"I was always struck by the lights on the bridges reflecting in the Seine," he said. "It sparkles."

Loviglio, JoAnn. "Barnes Foundation Presenting Ellsworth Kelly." *Washington Examiner,* April 29, 2013.

Originally given the simple title "Philadelphia Transportation Building Lobby Sculpture," the work was commissioned by architect Vincent Kling. The city's first piece of abstract public art as well as Kelly's first commission, the sculpture is "a manifesto work from the 1950s," said Barnes curator Judith Dolkart.

The sculpture was meant to be viewed at eye level but was installed above a bank of elevators so from the start, "it didn't work with the architecture very well," Kelly said.

He also believed the work wasn't treated with due care while the building was shuttered and awaiting a new tenant — it became a law firm's headquarters several years after Conrail left in 1993 — and he noted that a group of brass screens he made for the same building vanished in the 1960s.

"I'm sorry that it had to be taken away from Philadelphia but the building had changed," he said. "When it's public work, sometimes you have to fight for it."

Also in the exhibit are four other large Kelly wall sculptures dating from 1986 to 2012, as well several drawings that were studies for the Philadelphia work.

Kelly was commissioned to create a sculpture for The Barnes Foundation, which relocated its world-renowned collection a year ago from its longtime home in suburban Merion to a new building near the Philadelphia Museum of Art after a long legal battle. The 40-foot stainless steel sculpture called "The Barnes Totem" stands at the head of a reflecting pool on the north side of the building.

Loviglio, JoAnn. "Barnes Foundation Presenting Ellsworth Kelly." *Washington Examiner,* April 29, 2013.

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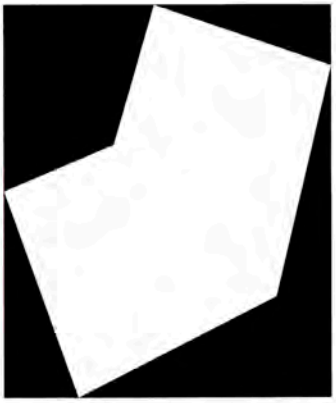
"White Form on Black." *Art in America,* May 2013, Cover Feature.

100 YEARS

Art in America



Cover: Ellsworth Kelly, *White Form on Black*, 2013, inspired by a new painting on view in his show at Matthew Marks Gallery in May. Courtesy the artist.

"White Form on Black." *Art in America,* May 2013, Cover Feature.

The New York Times

Inside Art

Carol Vogel

Galleries Celebrate Ellsworth Kelly at 90

"When you reach 90, 89 and 91 really aren't important," Ellsworth Kelly said cheerily. "It's just another year."

The artist was on the phone from his studio in Spencertown, N.Y., where he doesn't seem to have much time to bother about his birthday.

Few artists make it to 90 — for Mr. Kelly that would be on May 31 — and fewer still are actively producing work that is being bought and exhibited. It's little wonder then that the art world is already celebrating. Last week "Ellsworth Kelly: Singular Forms," a show of paintings and sculptures from 1966 to 2009, opened at the Mnuchin Gallery on the Upper East Side. And a window of Calvin Klein's shop on Madison Avenue features a sheath dress with horizontal bands of black, white, red and blue that is an updated version of one that Mr. Kelly designed in 1952 while living in the south of France.

Unlike Jeff Koons or Damien Hirst, Mr. Kelly has never created merchandise like T-shirts, jewelry or skateboards. Nor did he set out to design dresses. But on a shopping trip to the outdoor markets in Sanary-sur-Mer, a fishing village in Provence, he bought bolts of cotton that he used to make "Red Yellow Blue White," a five-panel painting in cloth now in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. "There was leftover material, so I gave it to Anne," he recalled, referring to Anne Weber, a school friend who was with him in France. His instructions were for her to make a dress connecting bands of color, each the same length. "She made it, but the bottom panel was longer than the rest," he said.

Disturbed that the symmetry wasn't right, he accused her of ruining the dress, even though she explained that this was "the new Dior length."

"Anne's mother burned the original," Mr. Kelly said.

But the dress was not forgotten. When Sharon Coplan Hurowitz, a Manhattan art adviser, was assembling a collection of Mr. Kelly's prints for a foundation and traveling exhibition, she happened on a photograph of Ms. Weber wearing the dress. "It was made in the same spirit as the painting," Ms. Hurowitz said. "I argue that the dress is a drawing if not a sculpture." Convinced that it needed to be reunited with the painting and recorded for fashion history, she asked Mr. Kelly if she could work with him to have it remade.

Once he consented, Ms. Hurowitz asked Harold Koda, who runs the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for advice about who might make it. Mr. Koda suggested Francisco Costa, the women's creative director at Calvin Klein. Mr. Costa ended up making the dress the way Mr. Kelly envisioned. Now one is going to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute and another to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. (Only 10 dresses were produced, and Ms. Hurowitz said the remaining 8 were probably destined for museum collections.)

Museums are also noting Mr. Kelly's birthday: the National Gallery of Art in Washington has an exhibition of his prints on view through Dec. 1; the Barnes Foun-

Vogel, Carol. "Galleries Celebrate Ellsworth Kelly at 90." *The New York Times,* April 26, 2013, p. C26.

LINDA ROSIER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Calvin Klein store on Madison Avenue features a version of a dress Ellsworth Kelly designed in France in 1952.

dation in Philadelphia has put together five sculptures in a show that opens on Thursday; the Phillips Collection in Washington will exhibit his panel paintings starting on June 22; and on May 25 the Museum of Modern Art will open a show of the "Chatham Series." The 14 paintings in that series are the first Mr. Kelly made after leaving New York for Spencertown in 1970. They have not been shown together for more than 40 years. Special installations at the Pompidou Center in Paris, the Tate Modern in London, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Philadelphia Museum of Art will open soon.

A show at the Matthew Marks Gallery in Chelsea, opening on May 11, will feature paintings and sculptures produced within the past two years.

Vogel, Carol. "Galleries Celebrate Ellsworth Kelly at 90." *The New York Times*, April 26, 2013, p. C26.

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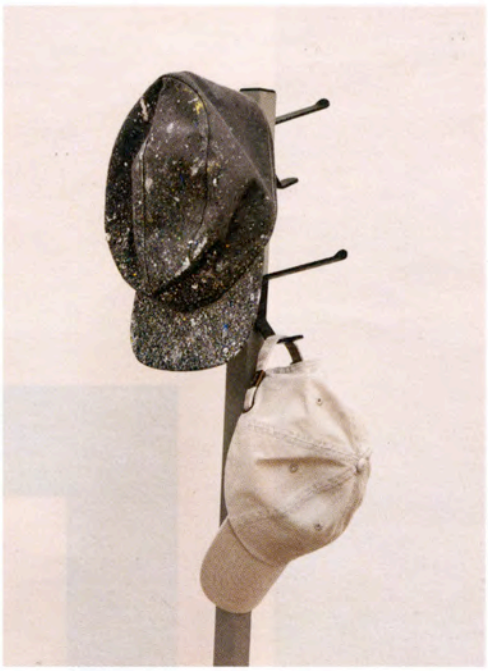
WITH A NEW SHOW AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 89-YEAR-OLD ARTIST ***ELLSWORTH KELLY*** SHOWS NO SIC SLOWING DOWN. ***A.M. HOMES*** VISITS AMERICA'S MOST PROLIFIC MASTER. PHOTOGRAPHS BY ***JACK SHEAR*** 75

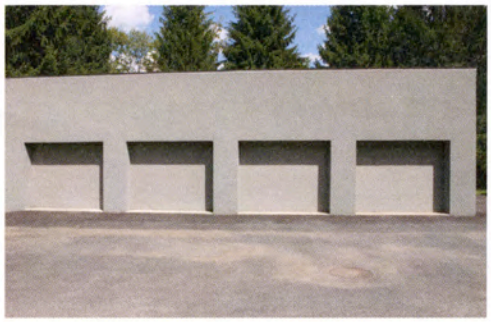
Homes, A.M., and Jack Shear. "True to Form." *W Magazine,* July 2012, pp. 76-77.

EVER SINCE HE LEFT NEW YORK CITY in 1970 for fear that his social life was impinging on his creativity, the artist Ellsworth Kelly has lived and worked in Spencertown, New York, in an austere complex of buildings. His studio, designed by the architect Richard Gluckman, and home are refined, understated, and pared down to the essentials—much like Kelly himself. "I have a good sense of scale," he told me on the bright day I visited, playfully showing off his new oat-colored Margiela sweater as he ushered me through his studio, an expansive series of large white-walled rooms, some with skylights, some with views of the rolling landscape outside. "I know how not to go too far or how not to go too small. I'm doing a sculpture now, a rather big one—and it's really waiting and waiting. I sometimes don't try to invent something. I wait for some kind of a direction—and it happens. I get an angle, for instance, and it just appears, and I say, 'Oh my God—that's it!'"

At 89, and feeling the pressure of time, Kelly seems preoccupied with producing his most refined work yet. In the past year alone he has juggled multiple commissions—among them the facade of Matthew Marks's recently opened gallery in Los Angeles, an exhibition of new paintings, and several traveling shows—while continuing to paint regularly in his studio. The day I dropped by, he was out of fresh canvases because his assistants had been in Europe helping to move a show of Kelly's black and white paintings from the Haus der Kunst in Munich to the Museum Wiesbaden. Kelly led me to a room deep within the studio, a kind of mission control. On long tables were models of museum galleries thousands of miles away, and covering the walls was his correspondence with museums, curators, and collectors from around the globe. A poet of the monochrome, Kelly has, over the past seven decades, produced paintings, drawings, and sculptures notable for their purity, containment, and graceful perfection. A show of the deftly rendered plant drawings long central to his work is now on display at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it will remain until September. (This past April, the

Homes, A.M., and Jack Shear. "True to Form." *W Magazine,* July 2012, pp. 76-77.





Clockwise, from top left: Ellsworth Kelly and Jack Shear's farmhouse in upstate New York; the artist's caps; Kelly's garage at his studio, designed by Richard Gluckman; a view of Kelly's studio and his 2010 work, *White Curve*.

Barnes Foundation installed Kelly's recent 40-foot-tall sculpture *The Barnes Totem* in the garden of its brand-new building in Philadelphia.)

As much as Kelly's forms are abstracted, there is always something familiar in them: a continuous, ever evolving exploration of color, line, and form. So much so, in fact, that they can sometimes appear simpler than they are. "The building out here looks like it's a black bar on top of white—as in, What's the big deal?" Kelly's dealer Matthew Marks remarked to me of the facade Kelly created for his Los Angeles gallery. "He's the great formalist of our time," said Michael Govan, director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. "No other artist has pursued color and form as relentlessly and purely as Ellsworth." As a young art historian at Williams College in the eighties, Govan was charged with installing a gallery of Assyrian reliefs and called Kelly one day to ask if he would contribute one of his sculptures. Kelly, who lived nearby, agreed. "I was looking at these thousands-of-years-old sculptures, and there was Ellsworth Kelly's simple form—and they stood up to each other perfectly," Govan recalled. "I didn't know what I was more impressed by—that Ellsworth Kelly could live up to the standards of ancient art or that the ancient art still seemed current."

At the studio, Kelly moved energetically from room to room. His one concession to age is the need for supplemental oxygen—a result of a life lived amid turpentine fumes. Clear plastic tubing trailed behind him for 40 feet, and like a relay racer handing off a baton, Kelly effortlessly traded his gear for another set as he moved into the next room, the subtle white noise of the oxygen concentrators in the background adding a meditative hush to the proceedings. "My eyes are always searching outside for clues," he said, scanning the room and stopping at a window that looked onto a green hill in the distance. "I keep investigating how the sun hits a building and the shadow that appears with it or the look of a field of bright green, the curve of green. I'm constantly investigating nature—nature, meaning everything." Kelly still paints everything himself, an anomaly in a world where sometimes even the assistants have assistants. His brushes, which were sitting on a nearby table, are singular in that each has been used only for a single color—the bristles permanently stained yellow, red, blue.

For the past 28 years, Kelly has shared his life with the photographer Jack Shear, the director of the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation. Theirs is a civilized country life: Kelly works a full day in the studio and returns to the house by seven. Dinner is served at eight, after which Kelly reads and watches a little television—especially *Downton Abbey*—or plays on the computer. (His favorite game is Spider Solitaire.) The intimate portrait of Kelly taken by Shear (on the previous page) is an insider's nod to Shear's 1985 book *Four Marines and Other Portraits*, which included images of shirtless men, among them a younger Kelly. Of the recent photos, Shear said, "I thought, What can I do that no one else can, and that's photograph him naked. I didn't really photograph him naked, he just had his shirt off. But I sensed his vulnerability." Kelly, he added, "has done self-portraits his whole life. He's investigated what he looks like and how he sees himself."

THE SON OF AN INSURANCE SALESMAN, Kelly grew up in northern New Jersey, where his love of nature took hold. "When I was a kid I was often sick, and my grandmother and my mother got me going on birds, so I started doing these abstractions," he said. "I was always outside in the woods. And I remember this bird, this redstart, a little blackbird with three or four red specks on its head, and it was the first bird that zeroed in on me. It was ahead of me, like it was leading me on, and I kept following it. I got fascinated by all the birds. I had a good eye in those days."

Drafted into the Army in 1943 at age 19, Kelly asked specifically to be placed in a camouflage unit. "It was a secret ghost army," he added as he leaned forward, whispering conspiratorially. "We painted rubber tanks, and we'd inflate them in fields in Normandy, and we counted on the spy planes to see them." (Later, wondering how covert this army was, I Googled it and learned that the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops—whose mission was to impersonate other U.S. Army units and deceive the enemy—were, in fact, a classified government

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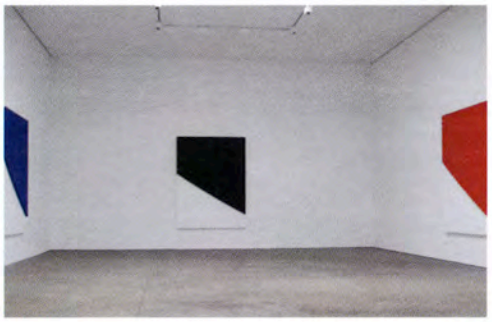

Clockwise, from top left: The couple's living room; Kelly's studio gallery installation of the "Curve in Relief" series, 2009; Kelly drawing in his garden; view of Kelly's collection with bow tie bannerstone (3000–5000 BC), *Yolk*, 1999, by Kiki Smith, and *Les Champs*, 1956, by Georges Braque; Kelly in his studio.

secret until 1996.) After the war, Kelly returned to the U.S. to attend Boston's School of the Museum of Fine Arts under the GI bill, but he soon went back to France—just as the focus of the international art world was shifting to New York.

In Paris, Kelly fell under the influence of the School of Paris artists: Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Piet Mondrian, Jean Arp, and Constantin Brancusi. "I went to museums a lot, which led to my vision of France and Paris itself," Kelly recalled. "I said, I don't want to paint things like Picasso's women and Matisse's odalisques lying on couches with pillows. I don't want to paint people. I want to paint something I have never seen before. I don't want to make what I'm looking at. I want the fragments." While in France, Kelly made a point of meeting as many artists as he could. The experience of visiting them in their studios—Brancusi, Alberto Magnelli, Francis Picabia, Alberto Giacometti, Georges Vantongerloo, among them—was transformative. From that moment on, Kelly proceeded to break life down into fragments—form and color became content. The result was the development of a hybrid European-American sensibility, combining a kind of high-modernist European style with an American sense of scale and form, which left Kelly belonging to no particular group or movement.

Though he became a key link between prewar-European and postwar-American art, Kelly returned to New York in 1954 only to be told by American painters and critics that his work was too French. And while his sensibility and painter's vocabulary were already in place, his art wasn't easily understood—Abstract Expression ruled the day. Kelly evaded classification and broad acceptance, so he remained singular, steadfastly refusing to be labeled a Minimalist while working parallel to his peers Merce Cunningham, John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns. "In the fifties and sixties, when I was up against Abstract Expressionism, I said, 'I have to continue doing what I want to do,'" he told me. "I'm not an Expressionist. I love to look at de Kooning, but I've got this kind of secret life, and that is something that pleases me. I have to try and make something out of it."

Nowadays, of course, Kelly's work is regarded as profoundly American—Yankee in its guileless insistence. Yet the language it speaks is international—as if Kelly long ago anticipated a time in which communication would cease to be written and instead become entirely visual. It amuses him that the recent resurgence of interest in abstraction—whether in Damien Hirst's dots or in the 2011 de Kooning exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art—has brought with it a renewed enthusiasm for his work. "I think people have recently warmed up to it," he said, half-joking.

Not that he's anywhere close to done. Kelly continues to experiment and is "still excited about things I haven't done," as he said cheerfully when I called him one day this past April to see what he had been up to. (He recently designed his first ever tattoo, for New York's Whitney Museum drawings curator Carter Foster.) "Who needs heaven? I only feel my best when I'm working." He had stretchers coming in a few weeks, he said, and was in the middle of about a half-dozen paintings in the studio. And did I know that a show of his new work was about to open at Marian Goodman's gallery in Paris? "They're color paintings," he explained, "a continuation of what I've been doing, but these are more voluptuous than my radial curves, which are very architectural. These new curves are free curves—more like our body curves, not fragments of a circle. I'm not fond of circles; they're too complete. I love the curves of the body."

Years ago, it annoyed Kelly that in order to meet collectors and curators he had to drive the three hours to New York City. But now, there's constant traffic up to Spencertown, as they flock to him from around the world. Still, Kelly laments the fact that younger artists no longer seek out the masters of the previous generation the way he and others so ardently did. I suspect they are intimidated and have no idea that Kelly actually longs for that interaction with the art world's less well-placed habitués.

"I always say I'm painting for the dead artists I like," Kelly told me during my visit. "The ones I think would understand what I'm doing. You put your paintings up against Matisse and Picasso and wonder, Am I producing art that is nourished by the past? I wouldn't be doing this if I hadn't looked at a lot of art. This is the mystery of it all: You have to look at art for a long time before you begin to understand." ◆

Homes, A.M., and Jack Shear. "True to Form." *W Magazine,* July 2012, pp. 76-77.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

AN ABSTRACT MASTER PUTS ON A PLANT SHOW

May 25th, 2013

Throughout his career, American abstract painter and sculptor Ellsworth Kelly—famed for panels of saturated color, grids of varying shades like organized confetti and shapes layered upon each other—has nurtured a second occupation: closely observed drawings of plants.

On June 5, 74 of these works—six decades' worth—will go on view at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

"When I see a white piece of paper, I feel I've got to draw," Mr. Kelly said. "And drawing for me is the beginning of everything."

Chou, Kimberly. "An Abstract Master Puts on a Plant Show." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 25, 2012.

"Plant Drawings" includes his first of the genre, made in Boston and Paris in the late 1940s, as well as others made as recently as last year in upstate New York. Mr. Kelly describes his earliest attempts as "a little brutal," and his later work, refined to contour lines and "voluptuous" shapes, as more sophisticated. "When I finish, when I compare it to what I looked at, it's never as good. Nature wins," he said. "But now, 40 years, 30 years, 20 years later, I see that I was pretty good."

Mr. Kelly, 89 years old this month, spoke to The Wall Street Journal this week. Below, an edited transcript.

Wall Street Journal: When did you begin to draw plants?

Ellsworth Kelly: "Ailanthus" [1948] is the first plant drawing that I did, in Boston. Later on you'll see a drawing of just the branch that I made, 40 years later. "Hyacinth" [1949] was the first one I did when I was in Paris. It was cold and the hotels were not very well heated, so I bought a flower in the flower market and brought it into the hotel room to think about spring.

In Paris, I continued drawing constantly, people, and then when I got back to New York, I drew plants, rather. In my studio down in Coenties Slip, I had a loft with a roof. I planted sunflowers and all kinds of things on the roof. From then on, in the summers, I would continue to draw.

My ideas come, and I draw. And I draw because I have to note down my ideas. Not so much in the plant drawings. I have to see my plants.

All my paintings are usually done in drawing form, very small. I make notations in drawings first, and then I make a collage for color. But drawing is always my notation. And I think artists all work that way really. I'm not special. But I like plants, and I don't think anyone else draws like this, today. I'm special in that way.

How do the plant drawings speak to your relationship to shapes?

The negative space is like one of my shapes, and when you look at a drawing of mine you can call off the number [of shapes]. Matisse draws what I call the essence of the plants. He leaves a shape open. He'll do a leaf and not close it. Everybody used to say, oh, I got it all from Matisse, and I said, "Not really."

Chou, Kimberly. "An Abstract Master Puts on a Plant Show." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 25, 2012.

[Mine] is a different kind of spirituality. It's more a portrait of a plant. I do the contours, and I make space by overlapping. I don't want to put shading in because they're about drawing, not about shading.

Shape and color are my two strong things. And by doing this, drawing plants has always led me into my paintings and my sculptures.

Chou, Kimberly. "An Abstract Master Puts on a Plant Show." *The Wall Street Journal,* May 25, 2012.

THE NEW YORKER

THE ARTISTIC LIFE
STUDIO VISIT

Ellsworth Kelly, the painter and sculptor of implacably beautiful abstractions, is, except for Jasper Johns, the last hero standing of the mighty American avant-garde that succeeded Abstract Expressionism. But, rather than rest on his laurels, Kelly, now eighty-eight, is reaping more of them. One cloudy morning not long ago, he bustled about his vast, museumlike studio, showing visitors works and plans for imminent shows and commissions. The studio's nobly proportioned, austere architecture, by Richard Gluckman, is set in luxuriant woodland south of Albany, where Kelly has been since 1970 and now shares a house with his partner, Jack Shear, the energetic director of Kelly's foundation. Carefully situated wooden chairs by Gerrit Rietveld and Antoni Gaudí greet visitors in the studio's entrance hall—a rare decorative touch in a building that trumpets functionality. Down the road a bit, the house is another, gemütlich matter, furnished by Shear with eclectic elegance: items both modern and antique and a dazzling, up-to-the-minute kitchen. "Jack has wonderful taste," Kelly enthused. Shear said, "Our deal is that I see to the household decisions, and Ellsworth does his work."

The artist looks younger than his years, though he suffers from a lung condition and must trail tubes from oxygen pumps as he moves from room to room. No, he never smoked. He blames "sixty years of breathing turpentine."

Tabletop models in the studio—tiny reproductions applied to little cardboard walls—prefigured two retrospectives: one of them, of works in unpainted wood, is on view at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts until March 4th; the other, of black-and-white paintings at the Haus der Kunst, in Munich, opened in tandem with a show, at that city's Pinakothek der Moderne, devoted to his efficiently lyrical line drawings and lithographs of plants. On July 4th, two large relief paintings were permanently installed at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing—none too soon, Kelly remarked. The works, sponsored by the nonprofit organization the Friends of Art and Preservation in Embassies, were unveiled at the White House by Laura Bush in 2003. But the Ambassador to China at the time deemed one—a white horizontal panel cantilevered across the junction of a red panel, at the top, and a blue one, below—"too French." (It was during the "freedom fries" phase of the Iraq war.)

Kelly served in Europe during the Second World War with an Army camouflage unit, known as the Ghost Army, which created inflatable tanks and planes and other enemy-fooling simulacra. Starting in 1946, the G.I. Bill staked him to study art in Boston and then in Paris, where he spent six years developing his acutely succinct aesthetic. At first, he imitated details of Parisian window frames, bridges, and shadows; the results are like Malevich or Mondrian, tinged with Dadaist effrontery. "I wanted something with less personality, for people to look at and not find a lot," he said. After moving to New York in 1954, he startled an art scene that was in thrall to the emotive cadenzas of Abstract Expressionism by showing monochrome panels, arrayed in grids or side by side. Later, on single canvases, he would paint two or three simple shapes dead flat, in clarion hues; and he began to fashion tall, slablike sculptures, their sides subtly curved. A forty-foot example of the latter, in gleaming stainless steel, stands sentinel over an immense lawn, formerly a baseball field, outside his house. A twin of it stands outside the U.S. Embassy in Berlin.

Kelly spoke wonderingly of the luck that made his career possible. He said, "If I didn't have those years in France, I don't know what I could have done," and recalled meetings with Constantin Brancusi, Francis Picabia, Georges Vantongerloo, and other eminent moderns. A collection of drawings, propped on a cabinet in the studio, bespeaks debts and affinities to Europeans including Corot, Picasso, Matisse, Kirchner, and the late German wunderkind Blinky Palermo. Kelly and Shear argued mildly over whether the striking bleed-through of glue in an abstract paper collage by Palermo was intentional: Kelly thought yes, Shear no. Among Americans, Kelly said, his best friend was the Pop perfectionist Roy Lichtenstein, whose death, in 1997, he still mourns.

"Painted divisions are lies," Kelly said, explaining why, since the sixties, he has overlaid separate canvases when using more than one color. He was looking at four new works: curved shapes atop rectangular ones, flush at the edges. The potent color combinations—blue/black, green/blue, orange/light blue, yellow/white—depart from an earlier series dominated by angular black shapes against white grounds. He said, "To keep finding things to do is hard. Rothko could go on forever with his format. Not me." The gestation of any new formal idea takes him a very long time, he said, and "time is closing in on me." He gestured dismissively. "But I can still paint."

—*Peter Schjeldahl*

Schjeldahl, Peter. "The Artistic Life." *The New Yorker,* February 6, 2012, p. 23.

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ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

NO SHADES OF GRAY

Ellsworth Kelly has been collaborating with architects since the 1950s. His latest project with Peter Zellner turns an L.A. gallery into public art. By Laura Raskin

WHEN ARCHITECT Peter Zellner first unveiled his design for the new Matthew Marks Gallery in West Hollywood, it was met with enthusiasm from the planning department and the mayor. But the city has strict design guidelines on the books: New buildings must have windows and architectural detail. The gallery was, well, an "ice cube," says Zellner, and Marks was in uncharted territory, choosing to make his West Coast debut in the scruffy neighborhood between La Brea and Fairfax Avenues rather than the established art scene in Culver City.

But Zellner was able to skirt the guidelines with the addition of Ellsworth Kelly's 40-foot-long, 5,000-pound, rectangular, black metal minimalist sculpture to the gallery's facade; now the entire building is considered a treasured piece of public art. "When the Kelly went on, it really felt like it was complete," said Zellner, founder of the Los Angeles–based firm ZELLNERPLUS. "Last week the building seemed naked to me." Far from feeling protective of his ego or output, the architect describes his afternoon discussing the design with Kelly, "the last standing modern master in the United States," as "one of the best moments of my life." Matthew Marks represents Kelly, 88, and he asked the artist for a contribution to his new outpost.

Kelly is no stranger to collaborations or contributing site-specific works to important buildings. His painted aluminum wall sculpture for Renzo Piano's 2009 addition to the Art Institute of Chicago and a wall sculpture in the lobby of Tadao Ando's 2001 Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts building in St. Louis are just two of many such commissions. In fact, his very first public commission and architectural collaboration, *Sculpture for a Large Wall* (1957), made the May 1957 cover of ARCHITECTURAL RECORD. This project originated when lighting designer Richard Kelly (no relation) commissioned Kelly to create a sculpture for the restaurant in Philadelphia's then-new Penn Center Transportation Building, but when the building's architect Vincent Kling saw the design, he requested the sculpture for the lobby instead. *Sculpture for a Large Wall* was the result. RECORD wrote about the building and chose a detail of the 64-foot-long artwork made of anodized aluminum panels for the cover.

Fast-forward to the late 1990s: Kelly learned that the Transportation Building had been sold. On a visit, he was alarmed at the condition of the building and his creation. "I said, 'Oh, my god, I'm going to try and get this back. They're going to destroy it,'" says Kelly. He arranged for its removal, and Marks displayed it in his New York gallery in 1998. That same year, Jo Carole and Ronald S. Lauder purchased *Sculpture for a Large Wall* and gave it to the Museum of Modern Art.

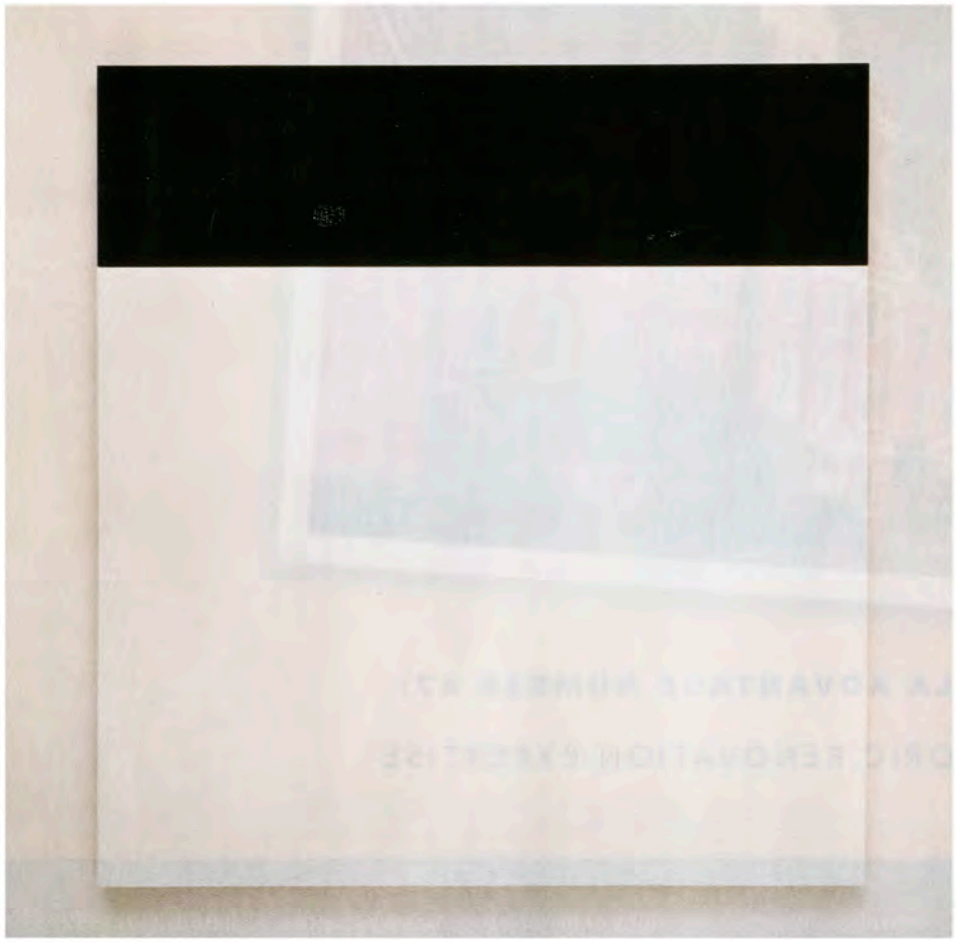
Raskin, Laura. "No Shades of Gray." *Architectural Record*, February 2012, pp. 38-39.

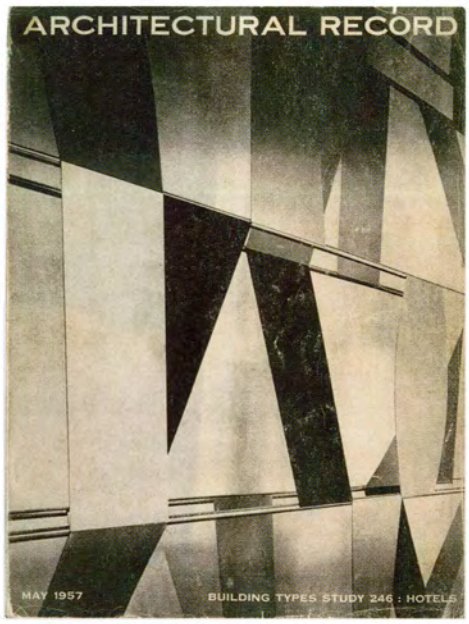
OPPOSITE: **The Los Angeles Matthew Marks Gallery in West Hollywood is a case study in minimalism, with an Ellsworth Kelly metal sculpture on the facade its only exterior detail.**

BELOW: **The gallery looks like a three-dimensional version of Kelly's 1966 painting *Black Over White*.**

RIGHT: **A detail of Kelly's *Sculpture for a Large Wall*, originally installed in Philadelphia's Penn Center Transportation Building, made the May 1957 cover of RECORD.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: **The artist at work.**





Speaking from his studio in Spencertown, New York, Kelly recalled looking intently at the model of Zellner's Los Angeles gallery design and then having a "flash" of inspiration: "In my work I wait for these flashes." He calls black and white the two "non-colors," but guesses that of the 1,000 or so paintings he's completed since 1949, a quarter of them have been black and white (about 50 were recently on display at the Haus der Kunst in Munich; the show will move to the Museum Wiesbaden in March). "It's always been very important for me, black. It's fundamental. It's like the opposite of a shadow," says Kelly. "If it was color [on the gallery] it would be too decorative for me." Zellner likes that the black bar can be misinterpreted as signage.

The gallery facade evokes two of Kelly's early works—a 1954 collage, *Study for Black and White Panels*, and a 1966 painting, *Black Over White*. "I've always wanted to design a building that doesn't have a use," says Kelly. "That's probably a definition of sculpture." ■

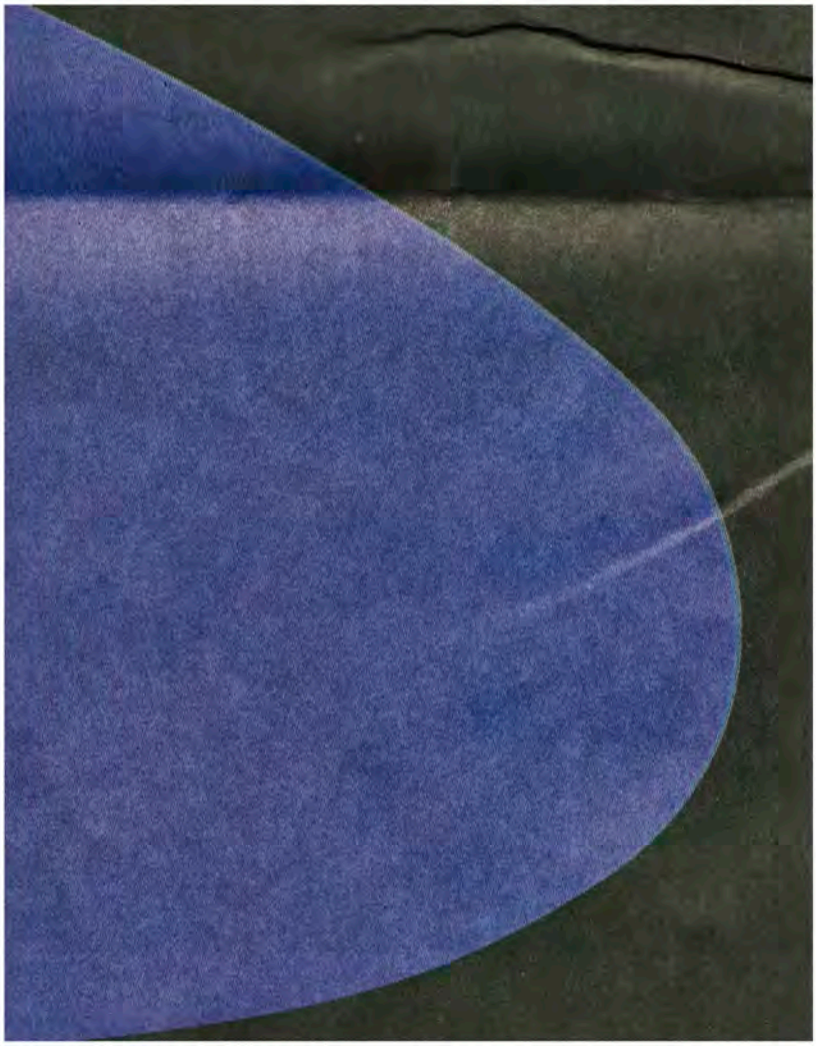
The Los Angeles Matthew Marks Gallery opened on January 19. Its inaugural show, Ellsworth Kelly: Los Angeles, *runs through April 7, 2012, and includes six new two-panel paintings by the artist.*

Raskin, Laura. "No Shades of Gray." *Architectural Record*, February 2012, pp. 38-39.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

A Western Outpost for Kelly, Johns

THE ART SCENE in Los Angeles is enjoying a resurgence, from the popularity of regional exhibits like "Pacific Standard Time" to the arrival of the powerhouse New York dealer Matthew Marks. This week, Mr. Marks, who has four spaces in New York and represents Jasper Johns, Brice Marden and Robert Gober, opened a new gallery in Los Angeles with a show of colorful abstract paintings by Ellsworth Kelly. Earlier this week, Mr. Marks spoke about how West Hollywood won him over and why the façade of his new space is literally a work of art. Below, an edited transcript.
—Kelly Crow



ELLSWORTH KELLY'S 'Blue Relief With Black' will be shown in L.A.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL: What triggered your interest in expanding to Los Angeles?
MATTHEW MARKS: I first thought about going to Europe, but I show a lot of European artists who like having an American dealer, so it seemed like the right thing to do, to stay in this country.

I also realized the artists I work with do not show here very much. Brice Marden has never had a one-person show in Los Angeles, for instance. Even Ellsworth Kelly, who has shown more widely than any of my artists, hasn't had a major show here in 15 years. So that means a whole generation of these younger artists who are growing up here haven't seen my artists' works up close unless they've traveled to New York or seen their works in a museum.

Same goes for local collectors?
Yes, but my artists are more interested in showing their work to other artists. That is the audience they care most about.

Their first impression will likely be Mr. Kelly's black-and-white work that covers the building's façade.
I took a model of the gallery to Ellsworth and asked if he'd ever consider making a sculpture for the outside. A couple months later, I went back and I saw the model and it had this piece of black cardboard going across the top. I was thinking, "Where's the sculpture?"

That's a dangerous question to ask an artist: "Is this a work in progress?"
Exactly, but then he brought out this collage he made in 1954...a white rectangle with a smaller black rectangle on top. The minute he brought that out, I looked at the model again and said, "Oh my God!" He saw the whole façade as his blank canvas, and he took control of the whole thing with this one simple, transforming gesture.

Crow, Kelly. "A Western Outpost for Kelly, Johns." *The Wall Street Journal,* January 21-22, 2012, p. C14.

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TRUE TO HIS ABSTRACTION

January 22nd, 2012

ELLSWORTH KELLY'S studio here is a sprawling labyrinth of white-walled rooms, some with skylights, some with large windows looking out onto the rolling landscape. The walls are either bare or impeccably hung with a selection of Mr. Kelly's striking painting reliefs. Everything is simple, spare and modern with one exception: at the entrance is a small mustard-yellow ladder-back chair with a multicolored woven straw seat inspired by van Gogh's paintings of his bedroom in Arles.

"I did this in shop class in sixth grade," Mr. Kelly said during a visit one recent win-

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *The New York Times,* January 22, 2012, Arts & Leisure, p. 1, p. 23.

try afternoon. "It was my first color spectrum."

"The negative," he went on, pointing to the spaces between the slats in the back, "is just as important as the positive."

A classic observation coming from this 88-year-old artist, whose seven-decade career has been an unwavering exploration of shape, line and color in their purest forms. While many other artists of his generation were appropriating images of American flags or movie stars or newspaper clippings, Mr. Kelly was relentlessly immersed in abstraction: creating color spectrums and panel paintings with nothing but a giant curve or rectangle, or making drawings depicting the simple outline of a leaf.

Refusing to be labeled a Minimalist or Abstract Expressionist, he spent decades fighting for attention, while others of his generation — Warhol, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns — were grabbing the spotlight.

"Ellsworth never tried to second-guess art history," said Robert Storr, dean of the Yale School of Art. Yet while Mr. Kelly's lifelong focus on abstraction in paintings, sculptures, collages, drawings and prints may not have been a smart career move — there were years, especially in the 1970s and '80s, when his work went ignored and unsold — now it appears that the tide has turned.

Abstraction is hot again, with canvases by Gerhard Richter fetching astronomical prices at auction and the recent Willem de Kooning retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art was a crowd pleaser. Reflecting on the multiple exhibitions of Damien Hirst's spot paintings that opened this month in Gagosian's 11 galleries around the world, Mr. Kelly said: "He's been able to get a lot of attention, making color and form stand alone. That's something that has taken me decades."

"Time has always been very important in my work," he added. "Tastes have changed recently, and although abstraction has been difficult, people are more open to it now." As a result Mr. Kelly finds himself more in demand than ever before. In July two 18-foot-high wall sculptures were installed on the facade of the American Embassy in Beijing. He is juggling several new sculpture commissions and has a full schedule of museum exhibitions, including one of his wood sculptures at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and a show of black-and-white works that closes this weekend at the Haus der Kunst in Munich and reopens on March 1 at the Museum Wiesbaden. Another exhibition of prints and paintings will open this weekend at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and in June the Metropolitan Museum of Art will offer a show of his plant drawings.

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *The New York Times,* January 22, 2012, Arts & Leisure, p. 1, p. 23.

Meanwhile the Chelsea art dealer Matthew Marks turned to Mr. Kelly for the opening of his first gallery in Los Angeles, a former garage in West Hollywood that has been turned into an all-white 3,500-square-foot space. Not only will it be filled with Mr. Kelly's works, but he has transformed the facade with a black sculpture in relief along the top, inspired by a collage and a painting he did in the '50s and '60s.

"Ellsworth has been fearless in his commitment to the limitless possibilities of abstraction," said James Cuno, chief executive and president of the J. Paul Getty Trust in Los Angeles, who first met Mr. Kelly in 1989 and has exhibited and commissioned his work in various museums where Mr. Cuno has been a director, including the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard and the Art Institute of Chicago. "With concentrated imaginative power he has made some of the most beautiful and important paintings of the Modernist era. And he is at the height of his powers, not elegiac but ecstatic, filled with the wonder of seeing the world afresh."

Tearing around his studio in gray flannel pants and sneakers, hampered only by long tubes for the oxygen machine that he is hooked up to because of a recent lung condition — possibly caused by years of inhaling turpentine, oil paint and other materials in his studio — Mr. Kelly was animated. With an almost boyish energy and laser-sharp memory that make him seem a lot younger than his years, he spoke about his work, his recent surge of popularity and his life in this secluded hamlet in upstate New York, a few miles west of Stockbridge, Mass.

In one of the largest rooms he pointed out a brightly splattered area he called his painting wall. Unlike younger artists, including Mr. Hirst and Jeff Koons, who often direct studio assistants, Mr. Kelly creates everything with his own hand. "I wouldn't feel right doing it any other way," he said. "Kids do anything these days, but I'm still an old-fashioned painter. Maybe in a few years when I'm too old, I'll need help, but what am I going to do, say to an assistant, put the yellow there?"

Mr. Kelly was staring at a group of painting reliefs — simple forms with dramatic combinations of orange and blue, dark blue and black, green and blue, black and white — that filled the adjacent walls. They were drying, each with long wood strips separating the background canvas from the colored relief panel in front. "I have to wait a week for each to dry," he said. "Oil takes that long, sometimes longer. I don't like acrylic because you can't get the density of color. And with each coat of oil paint the surface gets better and richer."

Creating these unframed relief paintings, he explained, is his way of "going into the viewer's space," adding, "If I painted it all on one canvas, it wouldn't have the depth.

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *The New York Times,* January 22, 2012, Arts & Leisure, p. 1, p. 23.

It would be flat."

"What I've made is real — underline the word real," he added. "It becomes more of an object, something between painting and sculpture."

Mr. Kelly has been experimenting with the notion of painted reliefs since he lived in Paris in 1949. "I began with cardboard painted reliefs," he said. "Some of them were all white. And I've continued this relief work ever since. I like the relief of Romanesque architecture."

He draws constantly, sometimes making tiny sketches on a scrap of paper, even a folded cigarette carton picked up on a New York City street because the shape caught his eye. Often he'll save these bits and use them years later as inspiration. Some start out as drawings and over time morph into a painting or a monumental sculpture. The lyrical, folded sculpture outside the Beyeler Foundation in Basel, Switzerland, for example, started out as a three-inch piece of cardboard that developed into a sketch, then a sculpture in wood, then aluminum, then steel, becoming refined with each incarnation. "A shape for a painting could come from the shadow a leaf casts on a branch," said Mr. Marks, his dealer. "He'll draw it over and over again and use it in a painting, a print, a sculpture."

The actress Gwyneth Paltrow is a big fan of Mr. Kelly's work and has been collecting his plant drawings since 1997, "as soon as I got my first paycheck," she said in a telephone interview. "There are certain artists you have a visceral reaction to, and Ellsworth is one of them." The two met when she was in a play in Williamstown, Mass. "He came backstage and introduced himself," she recalled.

Mr. Kelly grew up in Oradell, N.J., the second of three sons. His father was an insurance company executive. After serving in the Army during World War II he moved to Boston, where he qualified under the G.I. Bill for tuition at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. There he studied old master painting and drawing and taught night classes in art in the Roxbury neighborhood, in exchange for room and board.

He moved to Paris in 1948 and got to know John Cage, Merce Cunningham, the Surrealist artist Jean Arp and the abstract sculptor Constantin Brancusi, whose simplification of natural forms had a lasting effect on him.

He moved to New York in 1954, settling in a 19th-century loft on an old dock called Coenties Slip, near Wall Street. At the time artists living nearby — like Robert Indiana, Barnett Newman, Rauschenberg and Mr. Johns — were creating pioneering work that bridged Abstract Expressionist and the Pop and Minimalism of the 1960s.

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *The New York Times,* January 22, 2012, Arts & Leisure, p. 1, p. 23.

The Abstract painter Agnes Martin lived in the same building, and the two became close friends and exchanged ideas about their work.

During these years Mr. Kelly created single canvases of hand-drawn shapes that were different from his Paris paintings, which were mostly panels, each canvas a separate color. He also joined several powerful galleries: Betty Parsons, then Sidney Janis and later Leo Castelli. Although he got some attention, he was eclipsed by bigger stars like Rauschenberg and Mr. Johns.

In 1970 he decided to abandon the city's flourishing art scene, putting down roots here, where he still lives with Jack Shear, a photographer. In the ensuing decades he has worked steadily, if quietly. Despite some ups and downs his art has been purchased by museums and collectors around the world. He has also had shows at numerous galleries and museums, including a giant retrospective in 1996 at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York that traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the Tate in London and the Haus der Kunst.

Mr. Marks, who has been his dealer for 20 years, recalled that when he first began representing Mr. Kelly, a German dealer said to him: "Why did you take on Ellsworth Kelly? He's so boring."

"I ignored it," Mr. Marks recalled.

An obsessive archivist, Mr. Kelly has kept examples of his work from every decade of his career, studying them continually for inspiration, as a way to move forward. "He's the last artist to repeat himself," Mr. Storr said. "But he always comes back to his basic vocabulary: surface, scale, color, image. And he always gets it as simple as he can."

The facade of Mr. Marks's new Los Angeles gallery, for instance, was inspired by "Study for Black and White Panels," a collage he made while living in Paris in 1954, and a painting, "Black Over White," created in New York 12 years later. Both are predominantly white with a black bar that floats in relief on the upper portion of the all-white stucco facade.

"He's making art as good as the art that inspired him when he was in Paris," Mr. Storr said. Comparing him to Mr. Johns, perhaps the only other major artist of his generation who is actively working today, Mr. Storr continued: "To a great extent Jasper is a literary artist. His work is coded with secret messages. Ellsworth is purely a visual artist. With Ellsworth there is no message, just an experience."

Vogel, Carol. "True to His Abstraction." *The New York Times,* January 22, 2012, Arts & Leisure, p. 1, p. 23.

MATTHEW MARKS ON LURE - AND CHALLENGES - OF SHOWING ART IN L.A.

January 19th, 2012

Knowing that New York art dealer Matthew Marks would be busy Thursday night with the debut of his L.A. gallery, which opens with a small but serious Ellsworth Kelly show (above), Culture Monster caught up with him during a calmer moment last week.

Despite a reputation for being a touch formal or reticent in person, Marks seemed talkative and relaxed. In fact, the dealer who helped start the art scene in Chelsea in the 1990s sounded happily, if temporarily, ensconced in Los Angeles. He has bought a 1920s Spanish house in the Hollywood Hills that he is decorating in part with finds from the Rose Bowl flea market, and he has chosen Adrian Rosenfeld from his New York gallery as the director of his new L.A. space.

A few L.A. galleries have reason to be nervous about the competition. (L.A. Louver

Finkel, Jori. "Matthew Marks on Lure - and Challenges - of Showing Art in LA." *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 2012.

for one, because it shows Ken Price, as does Marks.) But he says he is not following the footsteps of L&M Arts, whose L.A. operation has landed several artists who have not previously worked with the gallery. "That's not my plan, or my sensibility," Marks said.

Next up, after Kelly: a show of new work by Charley Ray, the L.A. sculptor who gave Marks reason to visit the city before he started spending several weeks here each winter.

--Jori Finkel

Jori Finkel: Why L.A., why now?

Matthew Marks: We considered London very seriously but my artists already show in Europe. One of the reasons to have a gallery here is that almost all my artists have either never shown here at all, or haven't shown here in a very, very long time. It was also a question of where my artists really wanted to show. They know that if they do a show in Los Angeles, it will be seen by a lot of other artists -- their peers and younger artists. And conversely, if they never show their work in Los Angeles, a lot of artists will never see their work or only see it from reproduction or on the Web, and that's not the same thing.

JF: You picked an odd, off-beat location in West Hollywood [1062 North Orange Grove], not part of a gallery neighborhood or high-end shopping area. Did you consider Culver City?

MM: I did, but it never seemed really charming to me. I liked the Blum & Poe space but what am I going to do: get a great big building right across the street? That's not my thing. . . . What I like about this is that it's not on the main streets, Santa Monica Boulevard or Fairfax. Here I'm the last commercial building on a residential street, a quiet little street. It was instinctual. I thought to myself I would like to live in this area. I asked a couple of clients who live in Beverly Hills and Bel Air if they would be able to drive here, and they said it's really easy, no problem. And that was it: I did it.

JF: Do you have visitor parking?

MM: We're working on that.

JF: A lot of people from the art world in New York are surprised to discover how shallow the collecting base in L.A. really is. Will you still be selling primarily to East

Coast and European clients?

MM: I sent out announcement cards for our exhibition of Ellsworth Kelly and took the ads out in the art magazines, and all the phones ring and everyone wants to buy all the paintings. And of course all those people calling are from New York, Europe, San Francisco. I am artificially trying to hold some pictures back, because I think for my first show in my Los Angeles gallery, it would be nice to have something left for Los Angeles collectors. Then I think: They're adults; they could call just as well as everyone else. So I'm not under any illusions, but on the other hand I think that if you show really good work consistently, there is the possibility that you will be educating people and a market could be developed.

JF: Were any of your artists or staff nervous about your expansion here?

MM: Everybody loves Los Angeles or the idea of Los Angeles. The only possible negative feeling was that I would get a little too excited about the city and move here. Every December, I'd call my artists to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and I'm going to Los Angeles for the month of January, and you know how to reach me if there are any issues. Everyone was always: I hope you're coming back.

JF: Could you ever see yourself moving here?

MM: Not really. My whole family is in New York, and I have a great big gallery in New York, with a lot of responsibility and 30 employees.

Finkel, Jori. "Matthew Marks on Lure - and Challenges - of Showing Art in LA." *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 2012.

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Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

IN THE Abstract

ELLSWORTH KELLY **hits town with dazzling displays of color, form and line** *by* SUZANNE MUCHNIC / *photographs by* HEDI SLIMANE

Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

Ellsworth Kelly is having an L.A. moment. This month, the East Coast master of pure color and crisp shape makes a big splash with a retrospective at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and, in a smaller exhibit, inaugurates the West Coast branch of the Matthew Marks Gallery, a prestigious New York showcase.

At LACMA starting January 22, *Ellsworth Kelly: Prints and Paintings* is a collection of the 88-year-old artist's prodigious printmaking activity, accompanied by paintings, drawings and ephemera. And in West Hollywood, Marks is featuring a Kelly sculpture on his gallery's facade as well as an exhibition of the artist's new relief paintings.

"I'm very happy about all of it," Kelly says, reached by phone at his studio in upstate New York. With an exhibition of wood sculptures at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and two traveling shows of black-and-white works and plant drawings currently lodged in Munich, he isn't exactly starved for attention. But the L.A. convergence pleases him because he has strong connections to the city.

"I did a show there as early as 1957," he says, fondly recalling the period when the fabled Ferus Gallery was founded by artist Ed Kienholz and curator Walter Hopps, then reshaped by dealer Irving Blum. "It was a group show. I don't remember what was in it, but Irving bought some paintings of mine around that time, which he still jokes about. He says he bought them for $75 and paid $5 a month."

Kelly's first one-man show of prints at Ferus in 1965 featured lithographs he created during a Paris sojourn. In 1970, he began making regular trips to Los Angeles to work at Gemini G.E.L., a fine-art publisher that produced many of the prints in LACMA's upcoming survey. "Through Gemini, I met Peter Carlson, my sculpture fabricator," Kelly says. "I've come out to Los Angeles a lot to see him. Peter made all my wood sculptures and the piece for the façade of Matthew's gallery. I'm looking forward to seeing a picture of it."

A photograph instead of taking in the real thing? "I'm on oxygen now, which makes traveling difficult," he says. "But I'm working and having a good time and enjoying showing. I didn't go to Europe [for the openings in Munich], but I really do want to come to Los Angeles for the gallery and the print show."

Kelly, whose work exudes joyous perfectionism while defying stylistic categories, studied at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn until 1943, when he was drafted into the army. He made his first visit to Paris in 1944, on a tour of duty. Museums were closed because of the war, but after attending Boston's School of the Museum of Fine Arts, he lived in France from 1948 to 1954.

With little affinity for the abstract-expressionist and pop-art work that prevailed in his early days as an artist, Kelly developed a vocabulary of pure, vibrant colors and impeccably designed shapes. "I've often said I want to do something I haven't done before—different shapes," says the artist, who has described himself not as an inventor but as a perceptive observer with an independent eye. "Each shape is like an idea, and I have to think of that seriously. I have to wait for the right shapes."

Though best known as a geometric abstractionist or color field painter, Kelly has made drawings since childhood. With a sensitive eye and a sure hand, he has produced a large body of work that renders plants and people with the sparest of outlines, distilling natural form to its essence. "I think all of my stuff starts from drawings," he says. "Prints are a different kind of drawing."

Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

The LACMA exhibition coincides with the publication of an updated catalogue raisonné of the artist's prints. In a nod to the complexity of his work, as well as his career-long pattern of revisiting ideas and motifs, the curators chose to present his work thematically. "There are through-lines, whether it's grids or black-and-white or pencil drawings or the more textural and gestural *River* lithographs or works that were done in series," says Stephanie Barron, senior curator of modern art, who organized the show with Britt Salvesen, head of the departments of photography and prints and drawings.

Kelly's power as a colorist will be apparent, but so will lesser-known aspects of his work, including small drawings that provide insight into his creative process. "Just to see how a small sheet of paper—in one case, a piece of Chateau Marmont stationery—can contain almost an index of three or four series of prints that he would execute over a long period of time is really quite wonderful," she says.

Salvesen is on the same wavelength. "The prints and the thoughts that led to them—it's interesting to consider them together," she says. "There are artists who enjoy the experimentation or messiness of the technical challenges of printmaking. With Kelly, it's not so much about the spectacular as the refinement and precision."

For Marks, establishing a presence in L.A. has been a five-year adventure. When he finally found a site, seismic issues forced him to tear down the existing building and start from scratch instead of undertaking the planned renovation. He hired local architect Peter Zellner to design the 3,500-square-foot building, which he calls a "super-fancy garage."

Kelly's outdoor sculpture satisfies a West Hollywood requirement that developers contribute a percentage of a project's valuation to public art. The law took Marks by surprise, but he knew what to do. Kelly had just done a sculpture for the Art Institute of Chicago's new wing. The artist's response to the WeHo gallery space is *Black over White*, an 8-by-40-foot rectangular construction of painted aluminum. It runs along the top of the building, capping the stark white structure with a black horizontal stripe.

Kelly says the idea appeared in "a flash of exuberance" after pondering the problem. "It came to me that what the building needed was a black bar," he says. "I thought I was doing something new, then much later, I realized I had done a painting like that in 1966 and two earlier drawings that look like the same thing. Artists, you know, have it all when they are born, and it just comes out at the right time."

The sculpture is distinctive, though, because a 10-inch space between the building and the artwork will give the black bar a shifting shadow. And that's precisely the point, Marks says. "People will walk by and not even notice. But it's amazing—this thing that kind of floats 36 feet up in the air and changes with the light."

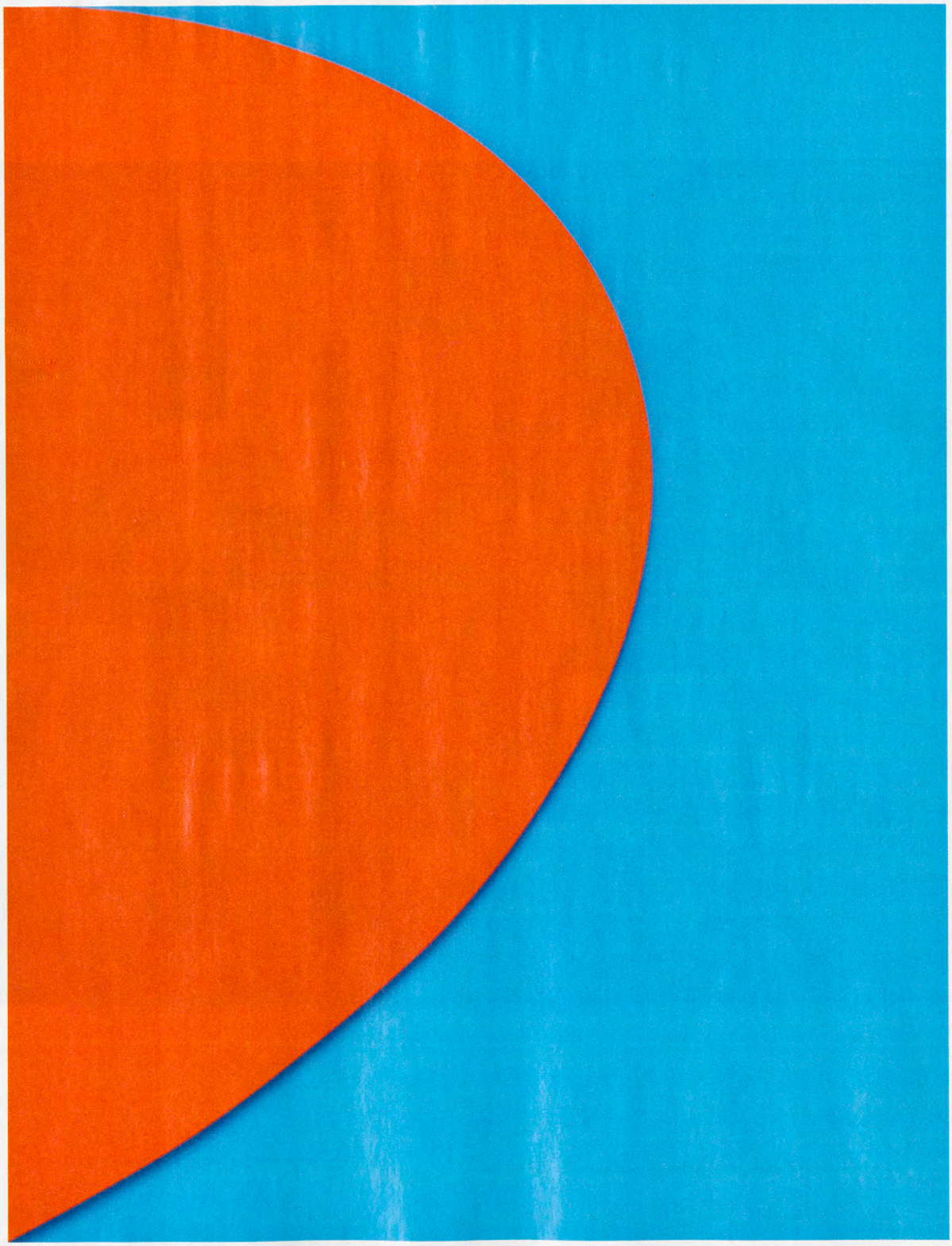
Inside the gallery, visitors will find the latest of Kelly's two-panel relief paintings. Big, bold, finely tuned combinations of yellow and white, blue and green or turquoise and orange, each is composed of a solid-color canvas with surprising contours overlapping a larger rectangular canvas of a contrasting hue. The artist, however, declines to talk about them.

"I want to leave those as a kind of surprise," he says.

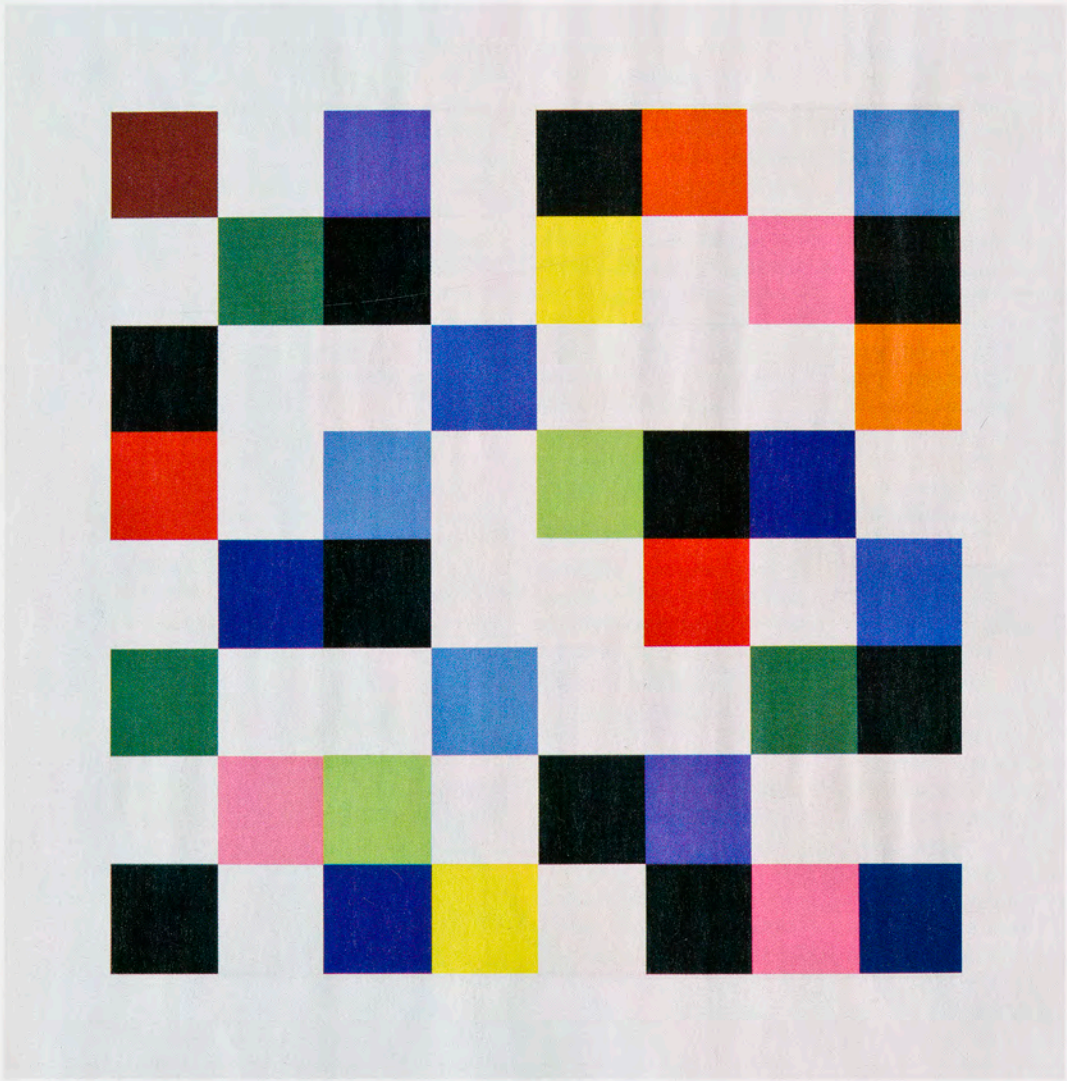
SUZANNE MUCHNIC, *a staff writer at the* Los Angeles Times *for more than three decades, now covers the art scene for many publications.*

Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

Orange Relief with Blue 2011, oil on canvas, at Matthew Marks Gallery



Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.



Colors on a Grid lithograph, 1976, LACMA, Collection of Jordon D. Schnitzer

Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

The hands that give shape to color and color to shape.

Muchnic, Suzanne. "In the Abstract: Ellsworth Kelly." *Los Angeles Times Magazine,* January 1, 2012, pp. 38-43.

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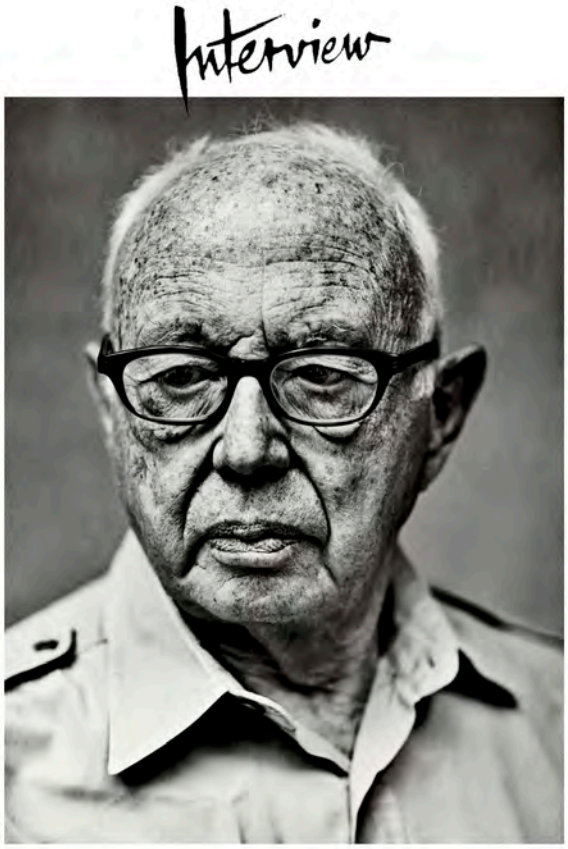
ELLSWORTH KELLY: AN INTERVIEW WITH GWYNETH PALTROW

October 2011



This fall, Ellsworth Kelly has two monumental shows in Munich—one museum retrospective of a lifetime of plant drawings, and another a collection of his black-and-white paintings and reliefs—as well as an one exhibition in Boston of his natural wood sculptures. These come on the heels of a number of other shows featuring Kelly in 2011, including a display of recent two-panel relief works at Matthew Marks Gallery this past spring (Kelly is also designing the facade of Matthew Marks' first Los Angeles gallery space, set to open in January.) That's a lot on the plate of any artist, let alone an 88-year-old one who has been pioneering abstraction since the 1940s.

Kelly is perhaps the only contemporary artist who has consistently produced great work for seven decades, and not just in one medium or one surface either. He is mostly known for his bold, charged, monochromatic color panels absent of a frame to emphasize their sculptural possibility—works that not only openly fought the popular "dance of dripping" of Abstract Expressionism when Kelly first created

Paltrow, Gwyneth. "Ellsworth Kelly." *Interview*, October 2011, pp. 122-31.

them in Paris after World War II, but works that have actually changed our aesthetic understanding of how color and shape penetrate the eye and inform the space around it. His artistic practice has also included figuration in black ink portraits, self-portraits, and nature studies, which he's sketched ever since he was a teenager; large-scale industrial sculptures that flare out and cleave the air, almost part flower petal, part space ship; and his most recent relief paintings, which stack panels of competing colors over one another to create planes, grounds, and explosive juxtapositions. But in whatever genre Kelly is working, there is an aura of poetry and mystery to his work—something that can't quite be pinned down, but suggests its foundations in observations of nature, personal relationships, religion, feelings about conflict and geopolitics (Kelly has, in the past, suggested that the Iraq War inspired some of his canvases and even famously proposed his own memorial to 9/11, in which he envisioned a mound of planted green grass at Ground Zero) or just a simple obsession with color waves. He is one of America's premiere masters of form. He's also a great storyteller. Having left New York City behind him in 1970 for fear his social life was overwhelming his creative life, Kelly moved three hours north to his current rolling-hilled compound in Spencertown, where he lives and works with his partner, photographer Jack Shear. Architect Richard Gluckman designed his current labyrinthian studio—it serves not only for painting, but as storage space, an office, library, and archive, and will eventually comprise the artist's foundation. Kelly hurries through the rooms with extraordinary energy, even though he is often on oxygen, with a clear cable trailing behind him. The sky was bright blue on the July afternoon that collector and admirer Gwyneth Paltrow visited Kelly to take a tour of his headquarters and ask him questions about his life in the arts.

ELLSWORTH KELLY: [standing in the exhibition room of his studio] Here are some new works I've done. The blue in front is the form and the black is the ground. [Blue Relief With Black, 2011] Except the wall is the ground. So it's a form on the ground on the wall. This way my paintings become more like objects. People are always trying to do something different, but I feel I've been doing this kind of work for quite awhile!

GWYNETH PALTROW: When did you first start making three-dimensional paintings?

KELLY: In Paris in the late '40s, I started making my first reliefs. They are separate panels. I wanted to do something coming out of the wall, almost like a collage. I did a lot of white reliefs when I started because I liked antique reliefs, really old stuff.

PALTROW: Like what?

KELLY: Roman and Greek reliefs. And then the Romanesque works in the 12th and 13th centuries, where they did a lot of relief sculptures of figures. I had liked Romanesque art from the very beginning of my studies . . . And here is another work [Black White Black, 2010]. It's three panels, black, white, and black. When you stand in the middle and look straight at the white, something happens to the black in your peripheral vision, something happens to the edge. If you look closely, it's not a painted edge, it's a real edge.

PALTROW: It's very sculptural, almost architectural.

KELLY: That's what I've done in my paintings mostly. I want each color to have its own area of itself.

PALTROW: Why did you start painting on panels in Paris?

KELLY: It meant I could move things easily! [laughs] I started in the South of France, and when I went back to Paris, I put them all in a box, like 64 panels. I don't remember how I did it, but I got them all in the back of my car with all of my other paintings and went back to Paris with them. [walks into studio, where a number of drawings are propped on the shelf] Here are some works from my own drawing collection. This is a little Matisse from 1913 in Morocco. And here is a Bonnard. And here is Picasso. And this is a little Jasper Johns.

PALTROW: Beautiful.

KELLY: Jasper gave it to me when he came for Thanksgiving. He said, "Here is a little present for you."

PALTROW: How is he doing?

KELLY: I just saw him the other night over at Aggie [Agnus] Gund's house. He always has a very interesting shirt on. This one was brown, orange, and black. Almost like a tapis from New Guineau. Oh, I want to show you the façade of Matthew [Marks]'s new gallery that I'm working on. [walks farther into studio] I haven't shown it to anyone. I haven't been allowed. [He removes a piece of fabric from a model of the L.A. gallery façade, white with a metal strip across the top of the edifice.] You're the first person who has seen it. Matthew suggested I do something for the wall. First I thought he wanted something like a medallion. Then I had this idea for this bronze sculpture. I think I may be the first artist who has actually done something like this, changed a building. But that's still an ornament. I suppose Frank Gehry did something close to it in Venice [California] when he installed the big binoculars by Claes

Oldenburg [and Coosje van Bruggen].

This isn't an ornament. It's part of the architecture. Renzo Piano told me, "You know, architects now are doing buildings like your paintings." Do you like it?

PALTROW: I love it. It's so you. Has Matthew already started building the new gallery?

KELLY: Yes, and he tore down the old building. Not only that, he got rid of the trees in front and the telephone poles. He paid to have the lines run underground. He's really dedicated to this idea. [moves into another room of the studio] And here is the work for a show I'm doing of my wood pieces in Boston. I don't put any veneer on the wood because I don't want to make it into furniture. These are from '87, I think. This wood is padauk, which is famous for being poisonous. And this is zebrawood.

PALTROW: Was it the quality of the wood that inspired you?

KELLY: Yes, and I wanted to do as little as possible to the wood. So there's this wonderful curve. When you're standing in front of it, the curve is swift, isn't it? The eye takes it in in a second. But the marks on the wood took a hundred years or more to be made. The marks are a given. The swiftness of the curve versus the marks that took so long to be made—I love it. I will never paint this way. It's like a chance situation. Anything that grows like this is chance. The markings look like fire sweeping up.

PALTROW: You are making this juxtaposition between the cleanliness of the line and the organic material. What do you think you are communicating?

KELLY: It's about perception, to feel it somehow. It's a special way of looking. I have trained my eye over and over ever since I was a kid. I was a bird watcher when I was a little boy. My grandmother gave me a bird book, and I got to like their colors. I said, "Jesus, a little blackbird with red wings." That was one of the first birds I saw in the pine tree behind my house, and I followed it as he flew into one of the trees—like he was leading me on. In a way, that little bird seems to be responsible for all of my paintings.

PALTROW: One of the things I've always loved so much about your art is the ruthless efficiency of your work—your color, your lines. But there is a tenderness to your work at the same time. It's pristine and efficient and yet deeply emotional. That's how I see them.

KELLY: I was taught to draw very well when I was in school at Boston. And I grew

to enjoy drawing so much that I never stopped. I think all of my work comes out of drawing. [turns to a table in his studio] Here are some studies I've done, drawings of rectangles. They are ways for me to see how structures work.

PALTROW: This is how you are able to find out the way in which one shape overlaps another and brings a sense of emotion.

KELLY: Yes. Like layering one hand on another, or anything to do with the body touching. We're always aware of it. It's something we as humans do a lot and it ends with kissing and then . . . going to bed. We're always conscious of the curves, and I want my works to be sexy or voluptuous. People will say, "Oh, well it isn't so voluptuous. Your work is very simple." They say, "You are taking too much away." But I say, "No, I don't put it in to begin with."

PALTROW: You edit before you begin. I see. Well, I find your work very sexy.

KELLY: Today before you arrived I thought, "What is she going to dress like? How do I see her?" I always foresee people. And I'm glad you wore gray. I was thinking, Oh, she won't want to wear color.

PALTROW: Gray is my favorite color. And I didn't want to compete with your work.

KELLY: Gray goes with gold. Gray goes with all colors. I've done gray-and-red paintings, and gray and orange go so well together. It takes a long time to make gray because gray has a little bit of color in it. I can't remember what I mixed in to my gray-and-orange painting. I keep a little source diary on my colors. I get so excited when I finish a painting that I forget about the work of doing it. And I have to wear a mask now when I paint, because my oxygen level is low. My lungs are not so hot. I'm not a smoker. The doctors said, "What the hell is going on?"

PALTROW: Is it from the chemicals from painting?

KELLY: Yes, I think it was 60 years of turpentine [in the paint] that messed up my lungs. But actually now I feel better than ever and I can paint. [returns to table, looking at drawings] Here are some plant drawings. This one is a banana leaf. See the way it overlaps? You don't have to put shading in. I don't like shading. Just the line. As I say, the line is the excuse. And it's fast. It's always fast. [turns to book of drawings] These are portraits I did in Paris. And this one was done in the war, in 1944. It was done in a tent with a candle.

PALTROW: Did you keep drawing supplies in your army bag with you?

KELLY: I bought them where I could. And I did a painting like this one, holding a bugle. I actually showed a photograph of that painting [Self Portrait with Bugle, 1947] to [Fernand] Léger when I went back to Paris after the war because he had a school there. When he saw the photograph, he said in front of his class "This guy should go back to America and blow his bugle." [laughs] I left. I never went to him again. [opens another book of drawings] Here are self-portraits. I was visiting a sculptor in Spain, and his bathroom was all mirrored. So I went in to take a shower and shave and I said, "Oh my god, I have to draw this." [turns page] And I drew this portrait of me at the Mayo Clinic, getting a heart treatment [Self Portrait at the Mayo Clinic, 1987]. I was very worried because they said there was a percentage of people who didn't make it through the operation. I was so upset. But what I did was take this little piece of paper that was in my wallet and drew this self-portrait and then I felt better.

PALTROW: I wanted to ask you about your time serving in the army. You went overseas for World War II. Did you volunteer?

KELLY: I went to Pratt [Institute] right after high school. I was there for a year, and I read an article in the paper about the Army working with camouflage in Fort Meade, Maryland. I didn't want to be in the infantry, so I wrote them saying, "I'm an artist and I'd love to be in your outfit." They said, "Get in the Army. We have your name. We'll find you." And that's what they did. Life had been peaceful up until high school, but the business of the Nazis and Pearl Harbor was very strong, and I guess I wanted to insist that I could live a man's life.

PALTROW: Did you design camouflage while in the army?

KELLY: I did posters. I was in what they called the camouflage secret army. This was in 1943. The people at Fort Meade got the idea to make rubber dummies of tanks, which we inflated on the spot and waited for Germans to see through their night photography or spies. We were in Normandy, for example, pretending to be a big, strong armored division which, in fact, was still in England. That way, even though the tanks were only inflated, the Germans would think there were a lot of them there, a lot of guns, a whole big infantry. We just blew them up and put them in a field. Then all of the German forces would move toward us, and we'd get the call to get out quick. So we had to whsssh [sound of deflating] package them up and get out of there in 20 minutes. Then our real forces, which were waiting, would attack from the rear.

PALTROW: So in a way, it was just like an art installation! That's amazing.

Paltrow, Gwyneth. "Ellsworth Kelly." *Interview*, October 2011, pp. 122-31.

KELLY: One time, we didn't get the call and our troops went right by us and met the Germans head on. Then they retreated, and they saw our blow-up tanks and thought they were real and said, "Why didn't you join us?" So, you see, we really did make-believe.

PALTROW: It's the perfect job for an artist in combat.

KELLY: We even had the tank sounds magnified because tanks would go all night long.

PALTROW: You must have loved France, to stay there like you did and study after the war.

KELLY: I loved Paris. My best friend in the army, Griswold, from an old Lyme, Connecticut, family, he met Picasso. This guy looked like one of Picasso's blue period models. In fact, there are a couple of drawings that Picasso did of Griswold. You see, we were stationed about 10 miles outside of Paris for a while. There was one train that took us in at four in the afternoon, and then we would have to walk back. We'd get back at five in the morning and have to go directly to work. But it was wonderful. Anyway, I went back to Boston after that and stayed for a while. I remember I went into the bar downstairs from where I was living. This was in 1946 or 1947. It's the bar where I'd have a beer with friends, and I saw this little box moving like a movie. I said, "Oh my god, what's that?" The guy said, "It's a television." I said, "I'd better go back to Paris."

PALTROW: So the invention of television made you return!

KELLY: Yes. But for an artist going to Paris was an old tradition by that point. I was so poor, and France was cheap, and I had a G.I. Bill. I didn't come back from Europe until I was 30, and by then I already figured out my style of painting. In France, they thought I was too American. And when I came back, people said, "You're too French." I just stuck to my guns and continued painting. I thought I had something really important that came to me in France. That was hard, though, because it was right at the moment of the breakthrough of the Abstract Expressionists.

PALTROW: I know you shared a studio with Agnes Martin for a while. Will you tell me a little bit about your friendship with her?

KELLY: We lived in the same building, two buildings right next to each other that had the same stairway. I was on the right, she was on the left. It was down by the Staten Island Ferry dock on Coenties Slip. She had a higher ceiling than my studio

because she was on lower floor, so sometimes I'd say, "I have a painting I want to do that's bigger than my room. Do you mind if I do it in yours and you can take off for a while?" We became friends almost immediately when we met. I remember I'd sit on the couch in her place, and in front of the couch was a wood plank, and Agnes would pick it up and you'd look down and see water.

PALTROW: Really?

KELLY: Yes, because we were on the East River, literally. We were one block away from it.

PALTROW: You and Agnes were really close?

KELLY: She was like an older sister, a buddy. When I was finally able to buy a car, a Volkswagen, we used to drive to the beach a lot together. We talked about poetry and reading and all of that. There were lots of artists down near Coenties Slip—Bob Rauschenberg and Cy Twombly, who used Rauschenberg's studio when he got started. This was in the '50s. Rauschenberg was something of a mentor to him.

PALTROW: I would have thought it might have been the other way around.

KELLY: No, Bob had a great influence on Cy. I eventually moved away from Coenties Slip up to Hotel des Artistes on 67th Street. I was on the ninth floor, the top floor. The elevator wasn't big enough, and I'd have to stand on the top of the elevator and get my paintings down that way. Finally, I thought, I'm not going to paint any more pictures here. It was just too much. And they were turning it all into a cooperative and wanted me to buy it.

PALTROW: Is that when you moved up here to the country?

KELLY: Yes, in 1970. And another reason I moved was that I was doing too much social stuff in New York. I wasn't painting anymore. Also in '69, Bill Rubin at the Modern [MoMA] had offered me a show and I thought, "Geez. I'd better get busy." I started doing sculptures up here. But when you go away, you miss New York. When I go down now, I feel the energy again. But it's like Bob [Rauschenberg] went to Captiva [Island], and Jasper Johns moved up near here a couple of years ago. He used to have a place in South Carolina. And Roy Lichtenstein was out in Long Island. You're out in Long Island now, in the Hamptons, but just for the summer, right?

PALTROW: Yes. I'm in London for most of the year. I married a British musician, so I live there for the most part now.

KELLY: I don't watch very much television, but Jack and I saw you on Glee. You were so good in that.

PALTROW: Oh . . . ? Thank you!

KELLY: You really looked like a teacher to those kids. You sang and danced like crazy, and you looked like you were having a lot of fun.

PALTROW: I had a great time. And I love picturing you two watching Glee.

KELLY: You also did a movie where you sang.

PALTROW: That's right. My father always used to tease me and say, "You can imitate everyone else's singing, but you don't know what you really sing like." This past year, I feel like I finally found my voice in a way—my own voice—just because I was doing so much singing, doing so many different styles, performing in public. It's a position I really didn't expect to be in. It's very vulnerable.

KELLY: It's like what Jasper is famous for saying. How do you explain your paintings? He said, "Well, you do one thing and then you add something else to it."

PALTROW: Yes, you just let the truth emerge.

KELLY: With painting, it's all in the eye. My eye is very impersonal. It can say what is good and what is bad right away.

PALTROW: I have always seen a lot of horizons in what you do. I wondered about that in connection to Agnes Martin.

KELLY: She's wide open. She painted the desert. She loved the desert.

PALTROW: When she moved to New Mexico, she brought her works down in size, five-feet-by-five-feet from six-by-six. But it's funny, she shares with you that sense of efficiency. But your work is more emotional, where hers is more spiritual. But it's interesting how much can be expressed in a single line.

KELLY: I came up against that a lot with people who don't think my content is visible. Or find it lacking. I always say, "It's not a Marilyn Monroe."

PALTROW: I think, for me . . . Obviously, everyone has different tastes, but I find your art the least kind of narcissistic because you're presenting something that a

person is able to feel. I get why Andy Warhol was a genius, but for me, it's a bit too self-aware. It's too all about him.

KELLY: Well, that's why he's so famous, I think. A lot of young painters even now love to incorporate celebrity. One idea of being a painter is to use what's happening at the time. Velázquez was painting of his time. And so was Rembrandt. And Francis Bacon was painting his time in London. He was a real mover, but he saw the insect in the rose. But yes, when I do a painting, I want to take the "I did this" out of it. That's why I started using chance, like the markings on the wood. I never wanted to compose. I didn't want to say, "I do curves this way, and make this a square, and that a rectangle." I remember when I was a little kid, the teacher gave us a piece of construction paper. It had bumps in it. She said, "Today we're going to do a drawing of springtime. Choose a drawing that you want to do of springtime." I decided to do a flower, a purple iris with green leaves. I drew it very quickly in a pale outline, and I noticed when you put your crayon on this paper, it only hit the top. It didn't go all the way down—or through. So I pressed down in order to get rid of the bumps in the paper. When I pressed down I realized I could get a really solid color. I couldn't stay within my lines. I thought, I'm just going to cut this out and glue it on another piece of paper, and I'll do the stem and leaves the same way. Then when my teacher came over she said, "Kelly, we're not here to make a mess. Go stand in the corner." You know, here was my first collage. But all kids probably do this, don't they?

PALTROW: Absolutely. Mine do.

KELLY: This was my first collage, building up blocks of solid color. And everyone else was drawing so palely. So I get up and I nervously got in the corner and said, "Jesus, adults just don't get it."

PALTROW: Weren't you right . . .

KELLY: I had that feeling with my parents, too. Especially about religion.

PALTROW: Are you very religious?

KELLY: I'm not even a doubter. I'm an atheist.

PALTROW: Do you believe in anything?

KELLY: Nature. What this is.

PALTROW: You're a pantheist then.

Paltrow, Gwyneth. "Ellsworth Kelly." *Interview*, October 2011, pp. 122-31.

KELLY: Yes. I want to paint in a way that trees grow, leaves come out—how things happen.

PALTROW: It's funny because I've always felt there was so much god in your work.

KELLY: I feel this earth is enough. It's so fantastic. Look up at the sun. It's millions of years old and still to be millions more. And there are all the spaces we can never see. But my parents sent me to Sunday school. I didn't like it. I didn't like the whole ceremony of church. One night, I remember I had to sleep in my parents' bedroom. I can't remember why. They had three boys, and I was the middle one, so maybe there wasn't room. Anyway, that night I wasn't asleep yet and I heard my mother say to my dad, "Ellsworth asked me a question today that I couldn't answer. He asked me, 'If heaven is so great, why don't we just kill ourselves?'" Of course, you've heard this kind of story. Kids think these things. She told him that she couldn't answer my question. At that moment I thought, "They don't know. They don't know it all." I think that's the moment that I became an atheist. Who wants heaven? I want another 10 or 15 years of being here. When you get to age 90, you have to accept it. This has been my life. It is what it was. I put everything into it that I could . . . Does it alarm you that I'm an atheist?

PALTROW: No, not at all.

KELLY: I think America should get rid of this fundamentalism in order to think straight.

PALTROW: My feeling is, if you're talking about something you believe, you can say, "This is what I feel" or "This is what it's like for me." But if you have any self-awareness, you can't say what you believe to be true is true. And in that respect, religion causes a lot of the problems in the world. I personally believe in some sort of divine order—or energy. I do believe that everything happens for a reason. I do think that when something bad happens to someone it's with the purpose of awakening them. I do think there is some force behind that. I don't think there are accidents. But it's interesting to have small children like I do who are starting to ask these kinds of questions.

KELLY: What do you tell them?

PALTROW: One thing I love so much is getting out of their way. I'm so aware of how powerful a parent's words are. I try to encourage them to think for themselves, and they are completely without prejudice. It's the most incredible thing. There is no difference between black people and white people. They see [Paltrow's friends] Mi-

chael and Thomas as a couple the same way they see their father and I as a couple. They have absolutely no sense of what is considered "normal." They're open and receptive.

KELLY: But there are outside influences coming in, aren't there? On television. I feel TV is only built on money, on advertising, what they are selling.

PALTROW: A lot of it is.

KELLY: I guess some of it isn't. PBS is good to watch. For example, I'm so interested now in what is going on with the Republicans. And I watch Rachel Maddow, who is really young and tough. She gets you worked up by telling you things that you didn't know about, and then says, "I'll be back in one minute." Suddenly you're watching a bunch of stuff you don't want to look at. You don't want to think about buying a car or about shaving cream. [Paltrow laughs] I mean, this is them trying to grab your brain, to sell you something, to hypnotize you with advertising. But, really, I just can't understand these politicians, especially Republicans. They want to not have Obama get anything done. I think it has something to do with race.

PALTROW: They were like that with Clinton as well.

KELLY: Yes, but now even Democrats are saying that he isn't strong enough. That he is acting like a Republican and they voted for a Democrat. He's strong enough for me. I can read an honest person and someone who really wants the best thing to get done. I look at Boehner and I say, "He's not straight."

PALTROW: Did you ever have a mentor or someone to guide you?

KELLY: I think those six years in Paris I had of freedom is really what allowed me to keep my original ideas. But before Paris, I did meet a woman who was a faith healer. I had a stammer as a child and she sort of took it out of me. My time in the Army was difficult because of my stammer—I sometimes felt inadequate. So I'd come down from Boston to see her in New York. She stayed in that all women's hotel, the Barbizon. She taught me to relax and self-hypnotize. I eventually had this catharsis, all this built-up emotion that I finally let out. But I continued to play with self-hypnosis after that. I could tune sounds in and out and control my blood flow. I probably entered some dangerous worlds. I tried to go back to this woman six months later for a "rejuvenation," but she had found religion. She was magic, though.

PALTROW: Have you ever taught art to a student or been a mentor to a younger painter?

KELLY: I knew a young painter who liked my work and wanted me to be his teacher. I said, "I can show you the way to do certain things that I know, but I don't want to be a teacher." Andy Warhol was a teacher without trying. He got a lot of young people interested in his way of life.

PALTROW: Sort of Svengali-ish.

KELLY: For me, I just want to make works that mean something. And I don't know where it comes from or what it means all the time. How can you know what abstraction means? So much abstraction that I see doesn't have any meaning. It looks like design, a set-up. I want something that continues over time.

PALTROW: But it isn't your job really to create theories for your work. It's the artist job to create from the purest point what they're doing. It's our job as an audience to go in and try to understand it or not understand it. I think I was about 16 years old when I fell in love with your drawings.

KELLY: Sixteen?

PALTROW: I went to school with Anne Bass's daughter. I was in her apartment, and she has a lot of your drawings. Her daughter was one of my best friends in high school. They had a dining room full of Monets and a giant Picasso. But I was obsessed with your drawings. They made me understand something about myself as a teenager and put me on a whole other road.

KELLY: You have to be open to it, I guess. I believe people have to be open to what's happening when they're alive.

PALTROW: I'm proud to say I have a couple of your plant drawings. I love them.

KELLY: Some fellow recently had taken one of my plant drawings with a whole bunch of leaves and made a tattoo out of it. He came to me and said, "Here." I said, "It's great, but you did it without me, so I can't number it among my paintings." But do you know Carter Foster? He's the curator of drawings at the Whitney. I created a tattoo for him, four panels—red, blue, black, green—going up his arm. At the dinner at Indochine after my last opening at Matthew Marks Gallery, I asked Carter to stand up and roll up his sleeve to show his new tattoo to everyone. I made him get in the light so they could really see it. It's even got a number, so it's just like a painting.

Gwyneth Paltrow is an Academy Award-winning actress.

Paltrow, Gwyneth. "Ellsworth Kelly." *Interview*, October 2011, pp. 122-31.

DIE WELT

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Zippert zappt

Eisschnellläuferin Claudia Pechstein hat sich erfreut über den Freispruch von Amanda Knox geäußert und erklärt, das sei auch „ein absoluter Sieg" für sie gewesen. Das kann man verstehen. Claudia Pechstein verbrachte viele Jahre in einer Art Gefängnis. Sie wurde wie Amanda Knox in einem Indizienprozess verurteilt, und auch sonst sind die Parallelen erschreckend. Man warf Pechstein vor, gemeinsam mit ihrem damaligen Freund eine Mitbewohnerin ermordet zu haben, weil diese sich weigerte, an einer Sex- und Drogenorgie teilzunehmen. In einer ersten Vernehmung hatte Pechstein einen afrikanischen Nachtklubbesitzer beschuldigt, der aber gar keine Schlittschuhe hatte. Der Internationale Eislaufverband verhängte daraufhin eine zweijährige Ausgangssperre gegen Pechstein, die in den Medien gerne als „Engel mit den Eisaugen" dargestellt wurde. Pechstein beteuerte immer wieder ihre Unschuld, sie habe nichts mit Drogen zu tun gehabt. Jetzt will sie den Deutschen Eisaugenverband auf eine astronomische Schadenersatzsumme verklagen. In einer Verfilmung von Claudia Pechsteins Sperre soll Amanda Knox die Hauptrolle spielen.

THEMEN

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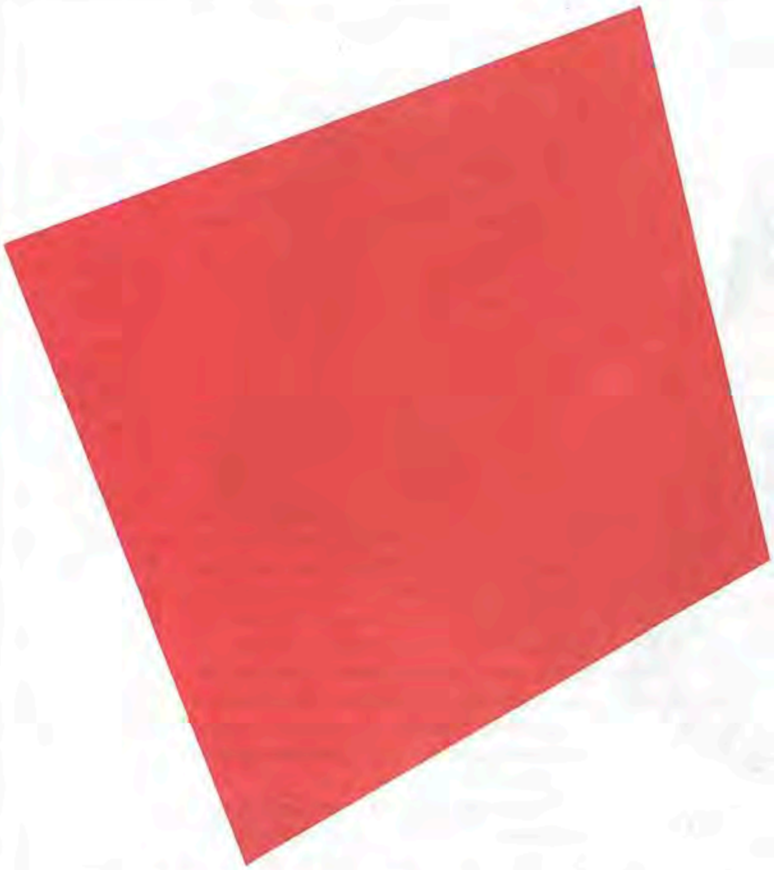

„Die Welt" des Ellsworth Kelly

Die Zeitung als Sammlerstück: Ein Jahr nach Georg Baselitz gestaltet erneut einer der international renommiertesten Gegenwartskünstler eine komplette Ausgabe der „Welt"

Als vor einem Jahr, zum 20. Jubiläum der deutschen Einheit, die „Welt" ohne ein einziges Foto erschien und sich stattdessen ein neuer Werkzyklus von Georg Baselitz durch die Seiten zog, sollte dies eigentlich ein einmaliges Experiment bleiben. Das Risiko war nicht unerheblich: Wie würden unsere Leser reagieren? Würde es Abo-Kündigungen und Protestbriefe hageln? Die gab es, jedoch in viel geringerem Maße als befürchtet. Die Begeisterung überwog bei Weitem. In fast allen deutschen Großstädten war die Ausgabe schon mittags ausverkauft, auch Abonnenten liefen zum Kiosk, um sich gleich fünf oder zehn Exemplare zu sichern – für sich, für Freunde, fürs Archiv. Die „Welt" als Sammlerstück wurde eine der erfolgreichsten Ausgaben seit Jahren, Glückwünsche trafen aus dem In- und Ausland ein, ein signiertes Exemplar wurde in London für 10 000 Pfund versteigert, und bei Georg Baselitz selbst meldeten sich einige der berühmtesten Künstlerkollegen mit dem Hinweis, sie stünden als Nachfolger gern bereit. Eine ganze Zeitung zu gestalten? Offenbar für viele Künstler ein Traum.

Schnell war klar, dass es eine Fortsetzung geben würde, mehr noch, dass von nun an jedes Jahr ein Künstler für einen Tag die „Welt"-Herrschaft übernehmen sollte. Dass wir ausgerechnet Ellsworth Kelly gewinnen konnten, ist eine kleine Sensation. Der 88-jährige Pionier der Farbfeldmalerei ist nicht nur einer der letzten verbliebenen Helden der Nachkriegsmoderne, er ist durch seine Lehrjahre in Paris, wo er Giganten wie Miró, Brancusi und Giacometti kennenlernte, auch die letzte Brücke in die Zeit der klassischen Moderne. Ein amerikanischer Klassiker mit europäischer Sensibilität, der als Kolorist und Zeichner nicht umsonst immer wieder mit Matisse verglichen wird. Kurz: Es ist kein Wunder, dass Georg Baselitz ein wenig stolz war, als er hörte, Ellsworth Kelly würde auf ihn folgen.

Ein Wunder hingegen ist es, dass Kelly überhaupt die Zeit fand, für die „Welt" einen Werkzyklus zu komponieren: Zehn Ausstellungen bereiten er und sein Team gerade vor, in so berühmten Museen wie dem Metropolitan Museum in New York, dem Los Angeles County Museum oder dem Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Und ab morgen zeigen gleich zwei Münchner Häuser Kelly-Retrospektiven. Das Haus der Kunst widmet sich seinen schwarz-weißen Werken, die Pinakothek der Moderne seinen Pflanzenzeichnungen. In der „Welt" hingegen zeigt sich Kelly als Meister der Farbe. Immer wieder ist er für diese Ausgabe sein Werk durchgegangen, hat eine Symphonie der Formen komponiert, hier eine Farbe geändert, dort einen Ausschnitt, hat aus Skulpturen zweidimensionale Bilder gemacht, wie sie nur hier und heute in der „Welt" zu sehen sind. Ob es ein Alphabet ist, eine Art visuelle Festmusik; wer will es so genau sagen? Fest steht nur: Kelly hat alle Formen, so abstrakt sie auch wirken mögen, der Welt da draußen abgeschaut – hier der Schatten eines Stuhls und dort – auch das muss erlaubt sein – ein wohlgeformter Hintern. Der Künstler selbst verrät nur so viel: „Ich möchte die Deutschen glücklich machen. Diese Zeitung soll meine *joie de vivre* zeigen, meine Lebensfreude, sie soll die Leser aufmuntern."

Wie schreibt unser Kunstkritiker Hans-Joachim Müller so treffend in seinem Kelly-Essay auf Seite 27: „Sein Werk träumt noch einmal den Traum des modernen Bildes, nicht mehr Medium sein zu müssen, sondern wieder selber sinnliches Objekt." Wir träumen heute mit. *Cornelius Tittel*

KOMMENTAR
THOMAS SCHMID

Unsere Welt soll besser werden

Die Bilder scheinen sich zu gleichen. Wie einst in den 60er-Jahren gehen auch heute wieder Jugendliche auf die Straße, um Nein zu sagen. Wieder geht es ums Ganze, wieder scheint es gegen das Ganze zu gehen: gegen die Reichen, gegen den Kapitalismus, gegen Banken und Banker und gegen den Umstand, dass nirgendwo die Demokratie eine vollkommen direkte ist. Von Tel Aviv bis New York reicht der Protest, der wie eine neue Internationale klingt. In Israel wollten Jugendliche mit einer Zeltstadt ihren Staat zur Umkehr zwingen, an der Wall Street versuchen Demonstranten hartnäckig, dem greisen Finanzherz der westlichen Welt Aussetzer zu verpassen. Erlebt der alte Antikapitalismus, der schon vor 40 Jahren aus der historischen Mottenkiste kam, eine Renaissance?

Eben nicht. Das ist das Schöne daran, das Hoffnung macht. Der alte Protest, der jahrzehntelang nachhallte und -schepperte, war so selbstbewusst und größenwahnsinnig wie irreal. Weg mit! – das war seine Welt. Er kam großspurig daher, hatte zu allem und jedem eine spitze, meist radikale Meinung, neigte zum Totalisieren und wusste fast immer fast alles besser. Er war auch eine Bewegung des Verdrusses, ja der Langeweile angesichts der recht ebenmäßigen Gangart der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft; es waren Wohlstandskinder, die das ganz andere wollten. Und noch in der späteren grünen Wendung und Erdung des Protestes schwang die tiefe Sehnsucht mit, eine einzige Idee – die der Umweltbewahrung – könne den Schlüssel zur Lösung aller Probleme enthalten.

Von diesen Gewissheiten sind die, die heute dem normalen Lauf der Dinge in die Speichen greifen wollen, weit entfernt. Sie sind keine Wiedergänger versunkener Protestkulturen. Das liegt daran, dass sie zwar wohl auch noch Wohlstandskinder, vor allem aber Krisenkinder sind. Auch wenn sie sorglos wirken, sie sind es nicht. Vor Jahrzehnten galt immerwährende Prosperität als sicher, die Zukunft war ein offenes Land. Das ist sie noch immer, aber Wolken und Nebel verschatten sie. Wer heute geboren wird, bekommt sogleich eine gewaltige Rechnung in die Wiege gelegt: Schulden, Schulden, Schulden – das Leben, das sich die Heutigen und Gestrigen auf Kosten der Morgigen geleistet haben. Der Karren der Gesellschaft kann wirklich im Dreck landen – diese Bedrohung ist denen, die heute jung sind, eine selbstverständliche Gewissheit.

Deswegen schlagen sie mit ihrem Protest einen neuen Ton an. In Belgien gingen Anfang des Jahres Zehntausende auf die Straße – nicht um die Regierung zu stürzen, sondern um endlich eine zu bekommen. Dieser Protest will nicht zerschlagen, er will aufbauen, ja helfen. Die Idee, Institutionen müssten zerschlagen werden, ist ihm meist fremd. Eher geht es darum, sie zu hegen, zu schützen, zu verbessern. Evolution lautet die Parole. War der grüne Protest mit seiner identitätsstiftenden Haltung zur Atomkraft noch tief in der Welt des Neins verwurzelt, verzichtet der heutige auf die große Geste der Abgrenzung. Noch an der bislang schemenhaften Piratenpartei ist das gut zu erkennen. So unbestimmt noch bleibt, was sie will – in jedem Fall hat sie die Links-rechts-Zuordnung hinter sich gelassen. Sie trägt einen spielerischen Ernst im Gesicht. Was frühere Protestbewegungen zu blockieren, zumindest zu behindern suchten, das will sie ausdrücklich fördern: den Fortschritt, die Moderne.

Die heute Protestierenden sagen: „Wir brauchen etwas Neues." Das sagen sie nicht anklagend, sondern forschend. Vielleicht nehmen sie die Fackel von Aufklärung, Fortschritt und fröhlichem Reformismus wieder in die Hand. Der Druck, der davon ausginge, täte den Parteien, nicht zuletzt den Grünen, aber auch den Institutionen und uns allen gut. Es braucht ihn, um der ganz großen Koalition der Schuldenmacher das Handwerk zu legen.

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DIE WELT, Axel-Springer-Straße 65, 10888 Berlin, Redaktion: Brieffach 2410 Täglich weltweit in über 130 Ländern verbreitet. Pflichtblatt an allen deutschen Wertpapierbörsen.
ISSN 0173-8437 ZKZ 7109

WIRTSCHAFT

MENSCHEN & MÄRKTE

STEFAN HEIDENREICH

Schwartau-Chef wechselt an Beiersdorf-Spitze

Beiersdorf wechselt mitten in der Restrukturierung den Chef aus: Der Aufsichtsrat des Hamburger Dax-Konzerns mit Marken wie Nivea, Eucerin und Labello berief **Stefan Heidenreich** zum 1. Januar in den Vorstand. Der 48-Jährige soll nach der Hauptversammlung am 26. April den Vorstandsvorsitz von **Thomas-Bernd Quaas** übernehmen, der dann in den Aufsichtsrat gewählt werden soll. Heidenreich ist seit 2002 Chef der Hero-Gruppe, dem auf Babynahrungsmittel und Konfitüren spezialisierten Schweizer Lebensmittelkonzern, unter anderem bekannt für die Marmeladen-Marke Schwartau.

NIELS STOLBERG

Ermittlungen gegen Ex-Beluga-Reeder

Die Bremer Staatsanwaltschaft hat gegen den ehemaligen Chef der Beluga-Reederei, **Niels Stolberg**, ein Ermittlungsverfahren wegen Untreue eingeleitet. Es bestehe der Verdacht, dass Stolberg eine 500 000-Euro-Spende, die für ein Schulprojekt in Thailand vorgesehen waren, auf ein Firmenkonto seiner Reederei umgeleitet habe, sagte der Sprecher der Bremer Staatsanwaltschaft, **Frank Passade**. Stolberg verwies dagegen auf ein Gutachten, in dem die ordnungsgemäße Verwendung des Geldes bestätigt werde. „Das ist eindeutig, ich bin mir keiner Schuld bewusst", sagte er. Stolberg hatte in Thailand eine Schule gegründet, um Waisenkindern nach dem Tsunami zu helfen.

ROLF BREUER

Betrugsprozess gegen Ex-Bankchef im November

Merkel springt den Banken bei

Deutschland dringt darauf, die Branche möglichst schnell mit Geld vom Staat zu stützen

- Einige Euro-Länder sind bei der Rettung ihrer Großbanken überfordert. Der EFSF oder die Europäische Investitionsbank könnten Aufgaben übernehmen

JAN DAMS, ANDREA REXER UND GESCHE WÜPPER
BERLIN/FRANKFURT/PARIS

Daher fordern sie europäische Lösungen. Der erweiterte Rettungsfonds EFSF und sein Nachfolger ESM sind dafür im Gespräch. Die Schweden wiederum haben die Europäische Investitionsbank (EIB) ins Spiel gebracht. Für Deutschland wäre diese Lösung annehmbar.

Die Stützung der Banken gilt als Voraussetzung für einen Schuldenschnitt Griechenlands, der das internationale Finanzsystem erschüttern könnte. Erst [illegible] auch der Internationale

bank mehr als 213 Mrd. Euro an, anstatt sie sich gegenseitig zu höheren Zinsen zu leihen. Das ist der höchste Stand seit Juli 2010.

Selbst die Sparer sind wieder verunsichert. Die belgisch-französische Dexia steht nach Medienberichten kurz vor dem „Bank-Run": Belgische Sparer sollen am Dienstag 300 Mio. Euro von ihren Konten abgezogen haben. Die Politik arbeitet fieberhaft an einer [illegible] das strauchelnde Kreditinstitut. Bis Donnerstag soll sie stehen. Eines gilt als sicher: Dexia soll aufgespalten werden.

KOMMENTAR
JAN DAMS

Der IWF hatte recht

Rückblickend war es eine Frechheit, mit welcher Verve Spitzenpolitiker der Euro-Zone auf dem Internationalen Währungsfonds (IWF) herumgehackt haben, weil der höhere Eigenkapitalquoten für Europas Banken gefordert hatte. Von falschen Zahlen und fehlendem Wissen war da die Rede. Man fühlte sich von der neuen Chefin des IWF – Frankreichs früherer Finanzministerin Christine Lagarde – auf den Schlips getreten. Inzwischen hat der Fall Dexia gezeigt, dass der IWF richtig lag – und die Europäer damit falsch.

Von einem Irrtum kann dabei jedoch nicht die Rede sein. Spätestens seit die Debatte um eine Umschuldung Griechenlands begonnen hat, ist klar, dass einige Banken Europas diese Maßnahme nicht ohne Staatshilfe überstehen können. Und weil niemand mit letzter Sicherheit sagen kann, ob diese für Athen so notwendige Maßnahme nicht auch andere Länder der Euro-Zone tiefer in den Strudel der Krise reißt, reicht es nicht, einige griechische Banken zu stützen. Große Institute in Frankreich und Italien könnten ebenfalls in die Bredouille geraten. Europa steht unmittelbar vor der Bankenkrise 2.0. Mit dem bisschen Geld, das der Rettungsfonds EFSF für diesen Notfall bereithält, ist die Lage wohl nicht beherrschbar.

Deshalb müssen sich Europas Staatslenker jetzt endlich zu der Einsicht durchringen, dass man die Banken stabilisieren muss, wenn man die Schuldenkrise Europas lösen will. Und zwar bevor der gesamte Währungsraum daran zerbricht. Eile tut Not. Denn schon jetzt hat die Politik durch Leugnen des Problems Monate kostbarer Zeit vergeudet.

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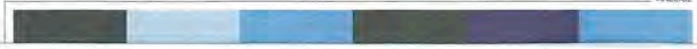


Tittel, Cornelius. "Die Welt des Ellsworth Kelly." *Die Welt,* October 6, 2011, pp. 1-32.

FINANZEN

Xetra-Kurse (Schluss)

Adidas: **45,36** (+ 3,21%)
Allianz Holding: **71,79** (+ 7,28%)
BASF: **46,815** (+ 6,40%)
Bayer: **40,10** (+ 1,54%)
Beiersdorf **41,115** (+ 4,50%)
BMW: **47,395** (+ 5,23%)
Commerzbank: **1,783** (+ 5,44%)
Daimler: **32,605** (+ 5,30%)
Deutsche Bank: **26,50** (+ 7,57%)
Deutsche Börse: **38,14** (+ 5,58%)
Deutsche Post: **9,567** (+ 4,56%)
Deutsche Lufthansa: **9,547** (+ 6,36%)
Deutsche Telekom: **9,112** (+ 5,03%)
Eon: **16,75** (+ 5,68%)
Fresenius Medical Care: **49,26** (– 0,06%)
Fresenius: **66,42** (+ 1,40%)
HeidelbergCement: **26,095** (+ 6,21%)
Henkel Vz.: **39,72** (+ 2,54%)
Infineon: **5,474** (+ 4,97%)
K+S: **38,585** (+ 8,32%)
Linde: **98,00** (+ 1,91%)
MAN: **54,89** (+ 3,94%)
Merck: **59,74** (+ 1,74%)
Metro: **31,01** (+ 1,86%)
Munich Re: **94,02** (+ 6,21%)
RWE: **28,64** (+ 6,10%)
SAP: **38,255** (+ 3,76%)
Siemens: **68,61** (+ 4,48%)
ThyssenKrupp: **18,01** (+ 6,54%)
VW Vz.: **95,38** (+ 7,73%)

Zinsen in Prozent	05.10. 17.30 Uhr	04.10. Schluss
Rendite 10-Jhr. Bundesanleihe	1,84	1,719
Bund-Future	137,08	138,24
1-Monats-Euribor	1,354	1,354
3-Monats-Euribor	1,558	1,557
Treasuries 10 Jahre	1,882	1,817
Treasuries 30 Jahre	2,863	2,799

KOMPAKT

BOMBENDROHUNG

Frankfurter Börse unterbricht den Handel

Der Handel an der alten Börse in Frankfurt ist am Mittwochnachmittag kurz vor Börsenschluss nach einer Bombendrohung unterbrochen worden. Nach Angaben der Polizei ging gegen 16.30 Uhr eine „recht vage" Drohung ein. Daraufhin wurde das vor allem durch die tägliche Fernsehberichterstattung bekannte Gebäude in der Frankfurter Innenstadt geräumt. Die evakuierten Mitarbeiter warteten gelassen vor dem Säulen-Bau. Der Handel über die elektonische Plattform Xetra lief die ganze Zeit weiter. Nur der vor allem für Privatanleger gedachte Spezialistenhandel war unterbrochen. Um kurz vor 18 Uhr gab die Polizei Entwarnung, gut eine halbe Stunde später startete der Abendhandel. *sei*

ANLAGEBETRUG

Erste Madoff-Opfer bekommen Geld zurück

Es ist nur ein Tropfen auf den heißen Stein: Im größten Betrugsfall der Finanzgeschichte bekommen nun die ersten Opfer des verurteilten Milliardenbetrügers Bernard Madoff Geld zurück. Groß ist die Summe angesichts der immensen Schäden nicht: Die erste Auszahlung an 1230 Kunden belaufe sich auf insgesamt 312 Mio. Dollar (234 Mio. Euro), wie der Vertreter der Geschädigten, Irving Picard, in New York mitteilte. Madoff hatte über Jahrzehnte hinweg ein Schneeballsystem betrieben. Die

Wenn das Dach nicht mehr schützt

Auch viel gepriesene ETF-Dachfonds sind in der Krise keine Wunderprodukte. Verluste von bis zu 20 Prozent

■ Fehlerquelle Mensch führt bei den vermeintlich passiven Produkten zu großen Qualitätsunterschieden

KARSTEN SEIBEL
UND HOLGER ZSCHÄPITZ
FRANKFURT/MAIN

Die Kursentwicklung der Deutsche Bank-Aktie halten. Offensichtlich sind auch viele dieser Fondsprofis überfordert. Denn auch ETF-Dachfonds schützen keineswegs vor den Unbilden der Märkte. Die Wertentwicklung der vergangenen Monate liegt weit auseinander: Nur der Parworld ETF Flexible Allocation konnte sich trotz aller Marktturbulenzen bislang in diesem Jahr in der Pluszone halten. Dies verdankt er seiner defensiven Ausrichtung, gut die Hälfte des Portfolios ist schon seit längerer Zeit an Geldmarkt in entsprechende lung der einzelnen Fonds können sich die Gewichte im Laufe eines Jahres verändern. Deshalb wird einmal im Jahr eingegriffen und das Fondsvolumen umgeschichtet, um wieder auf die Ursprungsverteilung zu kommen.

Diese Zurückhaltung schlägt sich in niedrigeren Kosten nieder. Der Arero gehört zu den günstigsten der ETF-Dachfonds. Hier fallen jährlich gerade einmal Kosten in Höhe on einem halben Prozent des Fondsvolumens an. Dagegen berechnen andere Gesellschaften drei Mal so hohe Gebühren. Hinzu können noch erfolgsabhängige Aufwendungen kommen. Dies ist beispielsweise beim Avana Europa Dynamic und beim Veritas ETF Dachfonds der Fall.

Tittel, Cornelius. "Die Welt des Ellsworth Kelly." *Die Welt,* October 6, 2011, pp. 1-32.

FEUILLETON

KOMPAKT

KINO I

Polizei ermittelt wegen von Triers Hitler-Äußerung

Lars von Trier ist von der dänischen Polizei im Zusammenhang mit seiner Sympathiebekundung für Adolf Hitler befragt worden. Dabei sei es um eine mögliche Anklage der französischen Staatsanwaltschaft wegen Kriegsverherrlichung gegangen, erklärte der Regisseur am Mittwoch in einer schriftlichen Mitteilung. Der dänische Filmemacher hatte im Mai bei der Vorstellung seines Films „Melancholia" (*Kritik Seite 28*) in Cannes gesagt, er sympathisiere „ein bisschen" mit Hitler. Der 55-Jährige wurde daraufhin von der Festivalleitung zur unerwünschten Person erklärt. Später entschuldigte er sich. Aus der Schwere der Vorwürfe folgere er, dass er offenbar nicht in der Lage sei, sich klar auszudrücken, schrieb von Trier in der Erklärung. Deshalb werde er künftig darauf verzichten, sich in der Öffentlichkeit zu äußern.

KINO II

Werner Herzog kämpft als Schurke gegen Tom Cruise

Der deutsche Regisseur Werner Herzog wird an der Seite von Tom Cruise zum Schurken. Er übernimmt im Thriller „One Shot" die Rolle des Bösewichts, wie das Branchenblatt „Variety" berichtet. In seiner ersten großen Kinorolle verkörpert Herzog einen ehemaligen Kriegsgefangenen, der zum Gangsterboss wird.

BIBLIOTHEKEN

Dessau bekommt 500 Jahre altes Buch zurück

Die Stadt Dessau-Roßlau hat ein verloren geglaubtes, fast 500 Jahre altes Buch zurück erhalten. Die Stadt präsentierte das 1 300 Seiten dicke Buch in der wissenschaftlichen Bibliothek. Bibliotheksleiterin Marti-

Sehen ist alles, die Idee nichts

Ein Künstler, bei dem es keine Deutungen und Bedeutungen gibt: Welt und Werk spielen sich bei Ellsworth Kelly im Sichtbaren ab. Annäherung an einen modernen Klassiker

HANS-JOACHIM MÜLLER

Gelb und rot und blau und grün – so voller Farbe war die Welt noch nie. Ein Blühen, als sei nicht schon Herbst, der nur noch ein bisschen schmeichelt, bis er den Farben das Licht auslöscht.

Es wäre missverstanden, wenn man Ellsworth Kellys Tagesbeitrag zum Tagesgeschehen als versöhnlichen Kommentar auslegen wollte, so als seien die Weltdinge nur zu ertragen, wenn man sie mit kräftigem Gelb und Rot und Blau und Grün aufmischt und den schönen Vorhang koloristischer Ordnung vor all der Unordnung des Lebens zuzieht. Vielleicht ist der Maler auch ein politischer Kopf. Politisch geäußert hat er sich in seinem langen Leben nicht viel. „Das Vergnüglichste auf der Welt", hat er einmal gesagt, „ist für mich, etwas zu sehen und anschließend zu übersetzen, wie ich es sehe." So gesehen war Kellys Kunst nie etwas anderes als ein eigenes Ressort des Sehens und Denkens neben all den anderen Ressorts, wie immer sie heißen mögen – Politik, Sport, Feuilleton.

Der achtundachtzigjährige Maler, ein Homo doctus mit kulturellen Wurzeln jenseits und diesseits des Atlantiks, erfüllt so gar nicht die klischierte Erwartung an den Künstler als somnambules Genie. Wach und gescheit hat er seine Arbeitsschritte begleitet und nie zulassen wollen, dass allzu viel Geheimnisse um Gelb und Rot und Blau und Grün gemacht werden. Was es zu sehen gibt, ist zu sehen. Lanzettartige, falterähnliche, spitzwinklige und sanftkurvige Bilder, die keiner Begradigung, keiner Übersetzung bedürfen. Alles spielt sich im sichtbaren Hier und Jetzt ab. Was Kelly vermittle, hat der Kunsthistoriker Gottfried Boehm einmal geschrieben, sei die Er-

KOMMENTAR
IRIS ALANYALI

Die Simpsons am Ende?

Es droht das Ende der berühmtesten, erfolgreichsten und am längsten laufenden Zeichentrickserie der Welt: der Simpsons. „Neiinn!", würde Homer dazu sagen. Oder besser „d'oh", wie der zum Markenzeichen gewordene Ausruf des gelben Familienoberhauptes im Original heißt. Den wiederum spricht Dan Castellaneta – und der hat jetzt zusammen mit seinen Kollegen „nein" gesagt. Nein zum Vorstoß des produzierenden Senders Fox, die Gagen der Sprecher ab der anstehenden 23. Staffel um 45 Prozent zu kürzen. Nun könnten Simpsons-Fans mit einem lässigen „pfhh" abwinken – schließlich ist es nicht der erste Lohnkrieg, den Studio und Ensemble seit Beginn der Serie 1989 führen. 1998 drohte Fox, alle Sprecher zu feuern, als diese mehr als die tatsächlich vergleichbar kargen 30 000 Dollar pro Folge forderten: Auf jedem Uni-Campus, hieß es damals hämisch, könne man schnellen Ersatz finden. Offenbar nicht: Der Sender gab nach.

Übrigens war „Old Money", Folge 17 der zweiten Staffel 1991, die erste Episode überhaupt, in der im Abspann neben den Figuren der zugehörige Sprecher aufgeführt wurde; davor gab es nur eine alphabetische Liste der Mitwirkenden. Man wolle, so lautete die Begründung, eine ganz eigene Springfield-Welt schaffen, ohne dass den markanten Simpson-Stimmen störende echte Menschen aus dem richtigen Leben zugeordnet werden könnten. Aber irgendwann ging den Machern die „Wer spricht denn...?"-Zuschauerfrage zu sehr auf die Nerven.

Als es zuletzt 2008 wieder Ärger gab, ging es immerhin schon um eine Erhöhung der 300 000 Dollar pro Episode. Mit Erfolg: Castellaneta und seine Kollegin Julie Kavner, die Homers Ehefrau Marge ihre Stimme leiht, stiegen zu den bestbezahlten Seriendarstellern Hollywoods auf. 2010 belegten sie mit 400 000 Dollar pro Folge Platz 3 und 4

Tittel, Cornelius. "Die Welt des Ellsworth Kelly." *Die Welt,* October 6, 2011, pp. 1-32.

BERLIN

KOMPAKT

ALKOHOL

Obdachloser mit vier Promille aufgegriffen

Die Polizei hat einen Obdachlosen im Berliner Hauptbahnhof aufgegriffen, als er in einem Geschäft eine Dose Bier stehlen wollte. Die Beamten stellten anschließend bei dem Mann einen Alkoholwert von 4,28 Promille fest. Sie brachten ihn zur Beobachtung in ein Berliner Krankenhaus. *dpa*

ARCHITEKTUR

Berliner Entwurf für neue Ernst & Young-Zentrale

Die neue Deutschland-Zentrale des Beratungsunternehmens Ernst & Young wird nach einem Entwurf des Berliner Architektenbüros Hascher + Jehle am Stuttgarter Flughafen gebaut. Laut Flughafen werden rund 100 Millionen Euro investiert. Die Ansiedlung von Ernst & Young bringe über 1500 Arbeitsplätze. Auf dem 16 500 Quadratmeter großen Grundstück soll ab 2013 gebaut. *dpa*

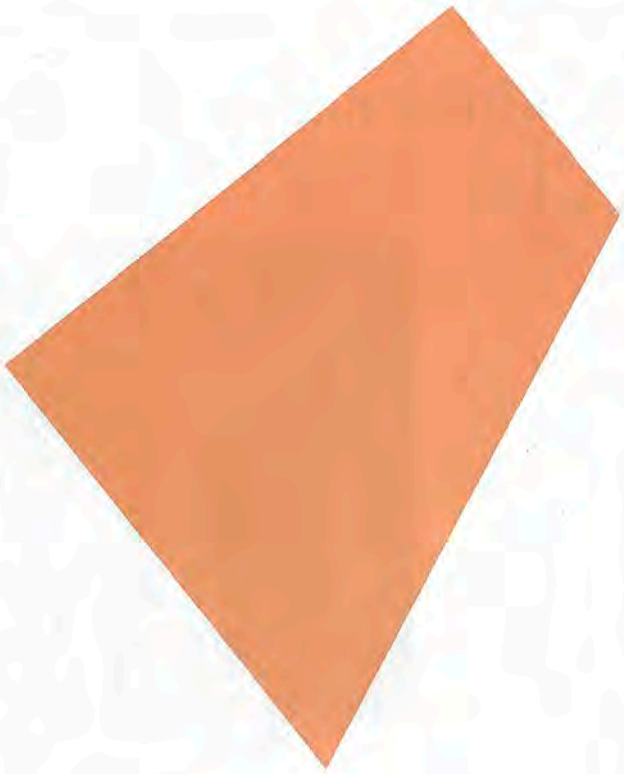
ERMITTLUNGEN

Zwei Einbrecherinnen in Lichtenberg festgenommen

Zwei jugendliche Einbrecherinnen sind in Lichtenberg festgenommen worden. Ein 50 Jahre alter Mieter hatte sie am Dienstag in seiner Wohnung in der Frankfurter Allee im Kinderzimmer seiner Tochter entdeckt, teilte die Polizei am Mittwoch mit. Mit einem Freund hielt er die Mädchen fest, bis die Polizei kam. Es handelt sich um eine 15-Jährige, die Identität der Komplizin ist noch nicht geklärt. *dpa*

Trüb, teils nass, 20 Grad

Es herrscht stark bewölktes Wetter, örtlich regnet es auch länger anhaltend. Die Temperaturen steigen von 14 Grad auf Höchstwerte um 20



„Berlin ist einer der Hauptumschlagsplätze“

- 25 Postsäcke mit falschen Tabletten vom Zoll sichergestellt, Marktwert rund 60 000 Euro
- Drehkreuz für den Schmuggel nach Skandinavien und Westeuropa

DOMINIK EHRENTRAUT
BERLIN

Es ist ein riesiger Berg von Postsäcken, der sich da auftürmt: Insgesamt 25 Stück mit mehreren Hunderttausend gefälschten Tabletten hat das Zollfahndungsamt Berlin-Brandenburg am Mittwoch der Öffentlichkeit präsentiert. Die Säcke sind das Ergebnis eines erfolgreichen Schlags gegen den organisierten Handel mit illegalen Arzneimitteln. Ein Zollfahnder am Leipziger Flughafen hatte während einer Routinekontrolle einen der Säcke geöffnet und war auf den brisanten Inhalt gestoßen. Die Tabletten, die in den rund 1000 Päckchen steckten, waren alle für den deutschen Markt bestimmt. Den Wert der sichergestellten Menge schätzen Zollfahnder auf rund 60 000 Euro.

Bundesweit wächst der Handel mit illegalen Arzneimitteln, der Großteil wird über das Internet vertrieben. Im Jahr 2010 stellte der deutsche Zoll mehr als zehn Millionen gefälschter Tabletten sicher, außerdem 14,5 Millionen Ampullen mit Anabolika. „Berlin ist dabei nach Frankfurt/Main einer der Hauptumschlagsplätze“, sagte der Sprecher des Zollfahndungsamtes Berlin-Brandenburg, Norbert Scheithauer.

Gefälscht wird alles, was Gewinn verspricht. In der Regel werden jedoch besonders häufig die Potenzmittel „Viagra“ von Pfizer, „Cialis“ von Lilly Pharma oder „Levitra“ von Bayer nachgemacht. Die Banden fälschen jedoch auch Schlankheitspräparate, Blutdrucksenker, Medikamente gegen Parkinson oder anabole Steroide. Die Fahnder davon aus, dass die Region Berlin/Brandenburg immer stärker ins Visier der organisierten Kriminalität gerät. Hinweise sind zum einen die sichergestellten Mengen an gefälschten Präparaten. Zum anderen wer-

100 000 Besucher im Bode-Museum

Renaissance-Schau zieht Berliner und Touristen an

JAKOB STRULLER

Über die Brücke vor dem Bode-Museum, um die Ecke, entlang des Flusslaufs. Bis weit in die angrenzende Straße stehen die Kunstinteressierten. Wie jeden Tag warteten am Mittwoch Hunderte, um die Ausstellung „Gesichter der Renaissance“ sehen zu dürfen. Eine Stunde harrten die Besucher in der Herbstsonne aus, bis sie beim Kassenhäuschen angekommen waren. Carolin Bartsch musste nicht warten. Sie wurde von den Kuratoren der Ausstellung persönlich mit einem Blumenstrauß aus der Warteschlange geholt – denn sie ist die 100 000. Besucherin der Ausstellung.

Die Porträt-Gemäldesammlung aus dem 15. Jahrhundert ist seit Wochen stark gefragt. Die VIP-Tickets, mit denen sich Besucher im Internet einen Zeitpunkt reservieren konnten, sind längst vergriffen. „27 000 Stück davon haben wir ungefähr verkauft“, sagt Sprecherin Theresa Lucius. Jetzt nutzen die Veranstalter ein System, das die Wartezeit so kurz wie möglich halten soll und gleichzeitig auch Kurzentschlossenen noch bis zum letzten Ausstellungstag die Möglichkeit gibt, zu kommen. An der Kasse kaufen die Besucher ein Ticket mit einer Nummer. Wenn diese Nummer auf einem Monitor angezeigt wird oder per SMS-Benachrichtigung kommt, ist man an der Reihe. „Dieses System ist effizienter als starre Zeitfenster, weil die Ausstellung dann immer gefüllt ist und niemand unnötig lange warten muss“, sagt Theresa Lucius. In die Räume passen nur 300 Personen gleichzeitig. Geht jemand raus, darf ein anderer hinein.

Tittel, Cornelius. “Die Welt des Ellsworth Kelly.” *Die Welt,* October 6, 2011, pp. 1-32.

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

Inside Art

Carol Vogel

That Gallery Facade Sure Looks Familiar

Matthew Marks arrived at Ellsworth Kelly's studio in Columbia County, N.Y., last year with an architectural model of his new Los Angeles-area gallery. It was meant as both visual aid and inspiration. Mr. Marks was hoping to entice Mr. Kelly into creating something for the building's facade.

"It was all white like a saltbox," Mr. Kelly recalled in a telephone interview this week. And while he may be 88, he still has an appetite for a challenge.

"At first I thought of creating a pin, like something a woman would put on her dress," Mr. Kelly went on. "But the more I thought about it, the more I didn't want it to look like a spot." Nor did he want to do the obvious: stick one of his signature curved or rectangular sculptures on the facade.

Then the solution came to him. "Suddenly I thought, 'All I have to do is a black bar,'" Mr. Kelly said.

Sounds simple, perhaps, but the black bar floating in relief on the upper portion of the all-white stucco building recalls two of the artist's seminal works — "Study for Black and White Panels," a collage he made while living in Paris in 1954, and a painting, "Black Over White," created in New York 12 years later. "I've done works that take up entire walls, but I'd never done the facade of a building before," Mr. Kelly said.

For Mr. Marks, approaching Mr. Kelly to put his mark on the building was his way of carrying on a tradition. "In 1994, when I opened my Chelsea gallery, Ellsworth was the first show," Mr. Marks said. (In addition to the facade, the gallery's inaugural exhibition will be devoted to Mr. Kelly's new relief paintings.)

The 3,000-square-foot gallery on North Orange Grove Avenue in West Hollywood is set to open in January. "The outside seems like the simplest possible design, and I imagine people walking down the street will not know what it is, at least not at first," Mr. Marks said. "But I hope they will take a second look and realize that it's something special."

An Ellsworth Kelly facade was not without its headaches for Mr. Marks. Among them, making sure the building was visible from far away. That involved clearing the sidewalk of unsightly telephone poles, a task that required permission from the telephone company to bury the lines.

"All of a sudden," Mr. Marks explained, "I have a building that is a work of art."

ELLSWORTH KELLY/MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

ZELLNERPLUS

Far left, Ellsworth Kelly's "Black Over White" (1966), and a rendering of the future Matthew Marks Gallery in West Hollywood with a facade embellished by Mr. Kelly.

Vogel, Carol. "The Gallery Facade Sure Looks Familiar." *The New York Times,* September 30, 2011, p. C29.

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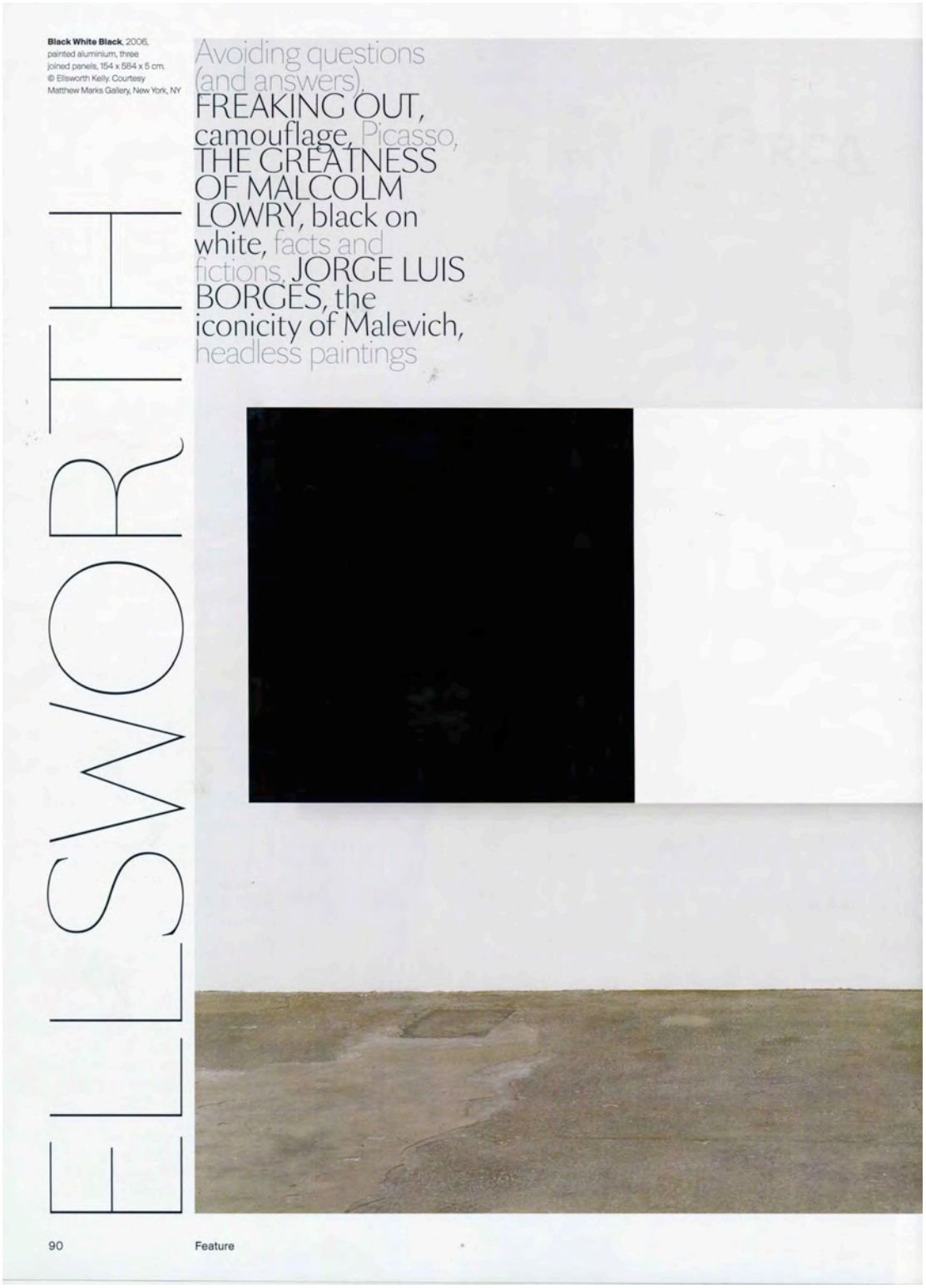
ArtReview



Rappolt, Mark. "Feature: Ellsworth Kelly." *Art Review,* September 2011, pp. 90-92.

KELLY

words **MARK RAPPOLT**

"You know, I don't want to do an interview," says Ellsworth Kelly just as we've sat down to do an interview. He has his oxygen tank and mask beside him and his health has been up and down recently. "All the questions – they're all the same, when you get to my age you've answered them so many times. Maybe it's more interesting for me to hear what you think about the paintings. What do you think?" I don't even bother turning on the recorder.

It's March. Kelly, who made his name in conjunction with the rise of colour-field and minimal art during the late 1950s and early 60s, is eighty-seven. We're sitting in the middle of his latest exhibition, which is spread across Matthew Marks Gallery's three spaces in New York. Two of the spaces house *Reliefs 2009–2010*, comprising 13 new paintings and a sculpture; the other houses a series of works on paper from the mid-1950s on which many of the paintings are based. And I'm a little freaked out that it's me and not Kelly who's on the spot.

What do I think? Even though Kelly and his latest work are right in front of me, he's also already in the history books – a sort of art-historical fact. And I hesitate to answer the question because I feel burdened. I'm suddenly conscious that I find it hard to look at these works without dragging all those historical 'facts' behind any opinion I might have. Which is, of course, ridiculous – pathetic, even. The first time you encounter any work of art you ought always to judge simply on what you see. But it's not always so easy to know your own mind. And Kelly's not one of those fashionable overlooked artists waiting to be 'rediscovered' (figures such as Alina Szapocznikow or Gianni Colombo spring to mind); he's been placed. If I think about his new work I find myself inevitably measuring it against the terms of his old. And not just the earlier work, but all the things I've read about the work as well. And there's plenty of material there. Which, of course, is one reason why the artist is resisting the interview format.

Kelly served in the US Army (like many artists, in the camouflage division) during the Second World War, after which he spent a couple of years studying art in Boston. Then, thanks to the provisions of the GI Bill, he completed his studies in Paris, where he remained, shaping the reductive practice – abstract paintings and sculptures that focused on colour, shape and mass – for which he would become known, until 1954. At which point he returned to America and began to make his name. All of this, however, you can look up for yourselves.

I first met Kelly four years ago at Art Basel. Back then, we did do an interview (I was preparing a profile for *The Times*) during which the artist, with a merry glint in his eye, had recounted a tale

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of the time when, during his Paris sojourn, he almost hung out with Pablo Picasso. The story went that Kelly had narrowly escaped being run over by a limousine. Picasso, it then turned out, was the passenger and, by way of recompense, offered Kelly a lift. The American turned it down out of shyness and nervousness. He made it feel like the anecdote was for me. And in a way it was. Because I'd never heard it before. The story is on the second page of Robert Storr's catalogue essay for Kelly's current exhibition. But after that interview four years ago I found it in many other places besides.

It all brings to mind one of Malcolm Lowry's great short stories, 'Elephant and Colosseum', in which the narrator describes his need to defeat the oppressive timelessness of Rome – to assert his status as a presence within it – by finding a uniquely contemporary experience in the Eternal City. After much fruitless searching, finally he encounters the traffic outside the Colosseum; it's almost impossible for him to cross the road. This, he thinks, is Rome today. But then he looks in his guidebook, only to find that even as far back as the second century Romans complained about the traffic at the site; indeed, it was so bad that deliveries had to be made at night. So, intensifying my sense of crisis is the question of what's unique about you meeting Kelly if he recounts the same story to different people? And can I think of anything 'original', new, or even simply personal to say about the works in his show?

I'm starting to think my hesitancy to respond (to a question that is both reasonable and ought not to be particularly demanding) is intimately linked to what I think of the works. The paintings at Matthew Marks have at their base an unframed white-painted rectangular canvas, onto which, in all but two coloured exceptions, he has placed a black canvas shaped, generally, in such a way as to articulate dramatic curves or diagonals. As much as they flatten, they expand; they're united and divided, they're almost sculptures (the overlaid canvases produce shadows) but remain paintings; as much as they assert, they deny. They are utterly precise (even the white canvases are the product of careful layerings of paint), utterly controlled and yet subject to changing light conditions. They have evident edges yet react, like so much of the artist's work, to the walls and environment around them; as the light or angle of viewing changes they seem to shift and move, although I know they are completely fixed and still. Ultimately they have something of the quality that a critic once observed of Borges's librarians of Babel, who look for the books that contain all the others and 'oscillate between the illusion of perfection and the vertigo of the unattainable'. Which is something like how I imagine answering Kelly's question. Although maybe now's the time to confess that, back at Matthew Marks, I didn't really answer it at all.

Perhaps part of my hesitancy then was due to the fact that Kelly's new works, inasmuch as they are reductions and (50-year) refinements, appear to be facts – to present themselves as self-evident. Consider their titles alone: *Black Curve Relief* (2010), *Red Curve Relief* (2010), *Black Curve Diagonal* (2010). But in the flesh they are not factual. They are easily defined in terms of colour and the clash of forms they set up, yet hard to describe in terms of how they make one feel.

Back in March, Kelly also had two works, *White Square* and *Black Square* (both 1953), in *Malevich and the American Legacy* at Gagosian Gallery over on Madison Avenue. The first is a white square with a black border, the second its negative. It would be hard to find many works that ought to relate more to the Russian's celebrated *Black Square* (1915) and *White on White* (1916). And yet, as the catalogue essay by Yve-Alain Bois (to which Kelly directs me) points out, Kelly was probably not aware of Malevich's work when he painted his squares. And it doesn't really matter if he was or wasn't. Rather, the American's squares (the last works he made in Paris) were inspired by the glass partitions separating a café from the pavement. Kelly measured the partitions and had panels constructed to the exact dimensions. (Many of Kelly's abstract paintings derive from responses to the people and architecture that he experiences.) These are what Bois calls Kelly's 'transfers' – a process of mechanically transcribing or recording flat surfaces that exist in the world around the artist (Jasper Johns's famous *Flag* (1954–5) is a slightly later example of the process). So it's even debatable as to what extent Kelly's works are abstract, in its pure sense, at all. When he thinks of Malevich's work, Kelly notes in a statement for the Gagosian catalogue, he thinks of Russian icons.

So here, finally, is the answer I never gave Kelly on that day in March. It's not the certainty, but the uncertainty that makes his work so special. If I say one thing about it, I immediately want to say its opposite. I think his works are not either/or, but both/and, to the point where I almost want to say nothing at all about them. And as I say that, I'm reminded of some of Kelly's parting comments to me four years ago in Basel. "I'm looking at you and behind your head is this red and I'm comparing it to your flesh and your eyebrows and the blue-black that you're wearing. I can look at you and not see you. I see that instead – it takes over your head. That's how I want my paintings to be – headless. Not thought but felt. I like to put the mind to rest." ⁝

Ellsworth Kelly: BLACK AND WHITE is on show at the Haus der Kunst, Munich 7 October – 22 January. Ellsworth Kelly: Plant Drawings is on show at the Staatliche Graphische Sammlung Munich, 7 October – 8 January

AS MUCH AS THEY FLATTEN, THEY EXPAND; THEY'RE UNITED AND DIVIDED, THEY'RE ALMOST SCULPTURES BUT REMAIN PAINTINGS; AS MUCH AS THEY ASSERT, THEY DENY.

Black Relief II, 2010, oil on canvas, two joined panels, 168 x 178 x 7 cm. © Ellsworth Kelly. Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery, New York, NY

Rappolt, Mark. "Feature: Ellsworth Kelly." *Art Review,* September 2011, pp. 90-92.

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ARTFORUM


The New York Times
Sunday, August 31, 2003
Arts & Leisure
Section 2
PICTURING THE NEW GROUND ZERO
Finding Comfort in the Safety of Names
Lists of the Dead Have Practically Become a Requirement of Memorials. But Really, What's in a Name?

"SEPTEMBER 11"

MoMA PS1 · September 11, 2011–January 9, 2012 · Curated by Peter Eleey · In 2003, the late *New York Times* critic Herbert Muschamp received a FedEx package from Ellsworth Kelly containing a belated proposal for Ground Zero: a green trapezoid collaged on an aerial shot of the site. "Like Piet Mondrian in the 1940s," Muschamp wrote, Kelly had "transformed Manhattan into the musical state of mind we intuitively know it to be." But the emotional pitch of that music, he noted, was perhaps "too high for the city to bear." Ten years removed from the horror of the attacks, "September 11" presumes an audience prepared to look on almost forty artists' works, including Kelly's, that frame—or have been reframed by—that traumatic moment, from Diane Arbus's 1956 photograph of a newspaper floating above a Manhattan street to Thomas Hirschhorn's 1997 sidewalk shrine to Mondrian. The works in this exhibition have everything and nothing to do with 9/11, obliquely shadowing an event that remains impossible to adequately picture.
—*Eric Banks*

Banks, Eric. "September 11." *Artforum,* September 2011, p. 141.