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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: Mangelos: *Pythagoras*

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Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present its third solo exhibition of work from the Estate of the Croatian artist Mangelos. *Pythagoras* will include important works in all the key formats that Mangelos worked in: richly painted works on found paper, globes, panels, and books.

All of the works in this exhibition are linked in their geometric references and language to Mangelos's interest in the 6th-century B. C. E. Greek philosopher, and in focusing on the particular recurring theme of *Pythagoras* as it reappears in his work from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, the exhibition provides a clear path to understanding how Mangelos often used language, geometry, and symbol to explore layered and interlocking meanings. Whether from different series of works, such as *Alphabets*, *Negation de la peinture*, *Words-Images* and *Manifestos*, or painted in different formats, on paper, cardboard, panels, or booklets, all stress the rational component of Mangelos' endeavor to make works that stand in philosophical opposition to the often irrational and sensory elements of art for art's sake. For the inherent rational function that alphabets, sets of geometric forms, and defined sets of symbols have, the functional thought of Pythagoras had a special appeal to Mangelos, a theoretical and practical achievement that Mangelos strove to construct a visual equivalent of in his art. Following the traumatic experience of World War II, Mangelos believed that art should begin with something solid and reliable, something built into the foundation of science. By the 1970s, Mangelos developed a theory of functional thought in his manifestos on panels and on globes by using, in the manner of Pythagoras, a clear and concise thought. This led to an important opus in which the use of language redirects looking toward thinking, a stance that resonates with conceptual artists; however Mangelos's special genius was also to make such works that, however much founded on a philosophical pursuit, were made with an especially rich sense of color, material, and a painterly touch.

Mangelos [Dimitrije Bašičević (1921-1987)] lived and worked in Zagreb, Croatia, where he was an art historian, respected art critic, museum curator, and an artist who signed his works with the pseudonym Mangelos. Although he was a member of the internationally-known Croatian neo-avant garde art group Gorgona, active in Zagreb from 1959 to 1966, Mangelos was little known as an artist until the late 1960s when, encouraged by a younger generation of conceptual artists and critics, he gradually began to publicly exhibit his work.

Mangelos first exhibited his work in 1968 at Galerija 212 in Belgrade. Since then he has had numerous solo exhibitions and museum shows, including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb, and a retrospective organized by the Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, Porto (travelled to Neue Galerie, Graz; Fundació Antoni Tàpies, Barcelona; Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel). His work was also featured in The 54th Carnegie International.

A fully-illustrated catalogue with an essay by exhibition curator Branka Stipančić will be published by Peter Freeman, Inc., boxed together with a facsimile edition of a rare painted book, *Pythagora 2* (1953), a small art monograph which Mangelos randomly selected then obscured its contents with his own work painted in tempera.

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