

Julian Stanczak: The Light Inside

February 5 – April 9, 2022

Opening Saturday, February 5th | 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Diane Rosenstein Gallery is happy to announce our fourth solo exhibition of paintings by Polish-American artist Julian Stanczak. The exhibition opens on Saturday, February 5, 2022, with gallery hours from 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm. We will host a talk by art critic and journalist Hunter Drohojowska-Philp during Frieze Week, on Wednesday, February 16th.

The Light Inside explores Stanczak's intuitive use of color and geometric abstraction to create a sense of radiant light. This historic series of paintings — made in Cleveland between 1972-1987 — resonates with the themes of the California Light and Space movement. According to the artist (who died in 2017), his minimal compositions are emotional landscapes that express his desire to transcend the surface containment of the painting as object and connect with the viewer through perception.

The paintings in this exhibition date from the early 1970s, and most utilize a grid pattern of squares over a monochromatic field. Stanczak, who is recognized as a pioneer of optical painting (Op Art) in the 1960s, had evolved by the Seventies into a virtuoso of color and light; and these paintings are masterworks of geometric minimalism. The various hues and proximate colors are modified only slightly and create a beautiful and subtle experience. In *Aqueous* (1975), the viewer is drawn into a pool of blue squares -- peacock, turquoise, and teal -- outlined by a linear orange grid. The closer we look, it is not clear if the blue squares are instead outlined in green, on an orange field, or the reverse. The impact is sublime.

Julian Stanczak (1928 – 2017) was born in Poland, and during World War II was sent to a labor camp in Siberia. After his escape at the age of fourteen, he lived as a refugee in Uganda, where he learned to paint with his left hand (he lost the use of his right arm for good at the Siberian camp). He spoke about the impact of Uganda on him as a young man and traced his reverence for color came to a desire to translate the drama and power of nature into a universal impression. His process was complex – he used tape

masks in which colors were systematically added and unveiled in layers. While profoundly methodical, Stanczak did not use sketches or studies -- he relied on his intuitive understanding of color and balance when making his work.

The artist immigrated to the United States in 1950, received his BFA from the Cleveland Institute of Art (1954), and his MFA from Yale University (1956), where he studied with Josef Albers and Conrad Marca-Relli. His work has been widely included in exhibitions in the U.S. and internationally from 1948 to the present day. Important group shows include *The Responsive Eye* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1965; *Paintings in the White House* at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., 1966; and *Ghosts in the Machine* at the New Museum, New York, 2012. Significant surveys of his work include *Julian Stanczak: 50 Year Retrospective*, Cleveland Institute of Art, Ohio, 2001; and *Full Spectrum: Paintings, Drawings and Prints of Julian Stanczak; Wood and Stone Sculptures of Barbara Stanczak*, a retrospective at the Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Indiana.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Barbara Stanczak, Krzys Stanczak, Neil Rector, and Mitchell-Inness & Nash, NYC, in the organization of this exhibition.

The gallery is currently open by appointment only. Effective November 4, 2021, per the LA Mun. Code 187219, proof of full COVID-19 vaccination is required for visitors eligible for vaccination. All visitors to the gallery are required to wear a face mask for the duration of their visit.

For more information about this exhibition, or Julian Stanczak, please contact sales@dianeroseinstein.com.