

## DIANE ROSENSTEIN GALLERY

Joe Ray: Fifteen Columns  
September 16 - October 28, 2023

Opening reception: Saturday, September 16 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Diane Rosenstein is pleased to present *Fifteen Columns*, a solo exhibition by Joe Ray. For his third exhibition with our gallery, Ray will present an environmental installation of cast resin sculpture and a single painting. Drawing on the ideals of Minimalism and the California Light and Space movements, Ray has cast triangular spectral columns that will each stand throughout the gallery.

*Initially, my first thought of it was that you might walk into the space and wonder where the art is, you may not see it. You could miss it. But that's part of the experiment.*

*Fifteen Columns* will include one single painting which Ray describes as a tribute to Miles Davis' great ballad, 'Blue In Green,' the third tune from Davis' legendary 1959 album 'Kind of Blue.' This monumental painting – which Ray calls *Cupcake* – is a fourteen-foot triptych, the latest (and largest) in his ongoing series of abstract "Nebula" skiescapes.

Positioned on the floor, in the middle of the open gallery, will be a *Lunar Kart* – a sculpture of steel, cast resin, and plexiglass. This astro-vehicle will transport a resin object the artist calls a "Whatnot," a remnant of his plastic castings.

Joe Ray (USA, b. 1944) is an American artist based in Los Angeles. His work has moved between abstraction and representation and mediums that include painting, sculpture, performance art and photography. Ray received a fifty-year survey, *Complexion Constellation* in 2017; a solo exhibition, *I Can Hear The Scream* (2020); and a solo presentation at Independent 20th Century, NYC (2022), all with Diane Rosenstein Gallery. Recently, he received a solo exhibition, *Inside Out*, at Bortolami Gallery, in New York City (2023). This fall, his work is included in *Desire, Knowledge, And Hope (With Smog)*, at The Broad in Los Angeles.

Ray began his career as a painter in Alexandria, Louisiana and arrived in Los Angeles in 1963. He showed early work in the *1969 4th Annual Watts Summer Festival Art Exhibition*. Ray quickly received recognition through group exhibitions at SFMOMA,

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Oakland Museum of California, Long Beach Museum of Art, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (in *24 Young Los Angeles Artists*, 1971; and *10 Years of Contemporary Art Council Acquisitions*, 1973). After receiving a Young Talent Award from LACMA in 1970, he enrolled in the first class at the new California Institute of the Arts, where he studied with John Baldessari, Allan Kaprow and Nam June Paik. At CalArts, he experimented with performance, photography and video art and graduated with a BFA in their inaugural class of 1973.

Joe Ray has belonged to several notable art communities in L.A., including the Light and Space movement (he also assisted artist Larry Bell in Venice). He was then a founding member of the influential 1970s African American collective, Studio Z, with artists such as David Hammons, Senga Nengudi, Maren Hassenger, and Houston Conwill. Between 1978 and 1980, he was one of fifteen original members of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) Los Angeles Artists Advisory Council, alongside Vija Celmins and Robert Irwin.

Critic Catherine Wagley described Ray as "an artist far more committed to understanding all kinds of light and space (cosmic, psychic, spiritual, and geographical) than to any specific material or strategy" — a tendency that she and others have suggested led to his being under-recognized.

Ray's paintings, sculpture, and photographs have been exhibited at MOCA, LACMA, SFMOMA, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, (CAMH), the Contemporary Art Center New Orleans (CACNO), and the Museum of African American Art in Los Angeles, among others. His artwork is in the permanent collections of LACMA, The Eli and Edyth Broad Foundation, The AĪSHTI Foundation, and the Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art. He lives and works in Los Angeles.