

Al Held

Craig F. Starr

The exhibition featured more than a dozen small works that Al Held created in 1959, placing them in an Abstract Expressionist timeline after Jackson Pollock's death in a car crash and just before Mark Rothko's suicide. Though Held labored in abstraction throughout his career, he belonged to a subsequent generation of painters who practiced what is often referred to as Post-Painterly Abstraction. Held's stated goal was to do to Abstract Expressionism what Cézanne did to Impressionism.

The artist aimed to simplify forms using a more limited color palette, and made paintings with the then-new medium of acrylic. Each work in this exhibition captured an almost musical battle between color and black and white. Viewers could experience the ghosts of earlier shapes striving to be seen through the black expanses. In one work, a tilted blue box was encased in a muted orange cage-like structure with black edges, while in another, a bold orange triangle, created with just a few strokes of a large brush, struggled to dominate a black field as a tiny space of unpainted paper formed a smaller triangle.

Despite the fact that all the works on



Al Held, *Untitled #6*, 1959, acrylic on paper mounted on board, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Craig F. Starr.

display were pure abstraction, the simplicity of the shapes couldn't help evoking associations: a car tire, a fried egg, an ocean wave, spectacles. Drips in Held's work emphasize each painting's lasting sense of movement, produced by glimpses of layers of underpainting. The compositions seemed simultaneously contemplative and impulsive, not careful, but still deliberate. Motion was the dominant theme throughout the show, and the force of each work came from the confidence and certainty of the artist's brushstrokes. Held's bold, hard-edged experiments appeared as fresh as when he produced them.

—Doug McClellmont

'Accrochage'

Kouros

This large, lively show of works in a wide variety of media showcased several of the gallery's artists. Dominating the lobby of Kouros's

Upper East Side town house was a large bronze circular sculpture by Bruno Romeda from 2008 that served as a kind of gateway to the exhibition's nearly 70 works.

Featured paintings ranged from the abstract, including Guy Danella's memorable yellow, ochre, orange, and gray-blue boxes, titled *Sunday Afternoon* (1951), to the political, as in Peter Agrafiotis's *The Fall of Mubarak #2* (2011). The second-floor gallery space presented sculptural wonders such as Camilla Geary-Martin's *Shroud No. 18* (2011)—a striking and somehow tender work in bronze and stainless steel shaped like a hood or burka. Stealing the lion's share of attention here was the polished-aluminum *Septet* (2010), by Lin Emery. This majestic, kinetic group



Camilla Geary-Martin, *Shroud No. 18*, 2011, bronze and stainless steel, 20" x 12" x 7". Kouros.

of scythe-like shapes seemed to dance and fold in on itself as the silver surfaces reflected the room's ambient light.

Yo Yo Dreams (2001), by Varujan Boghosian, came off as playful and perfectly balanced, with its metal stars and wire hand emerging from the distressed, foxed canvas as if to maneuver the orange disc in the lower-right-hand corner of the painting. The signature of H. A. Sigg becomes an intriguing graphic element in the color-field acrylic-on-canvas painting *Small Sign II* (2007). Other highlights included Laura Dodson's manipulated photographic prints, Michael Esbin's twisted Belgian-marble helixes, and a small bronze female figure with long limbs and outsize hands—complete with the artist's fingerprints—by Curt Brill.

—Doug McClellmont

Grégoire Müller

Jason McCoy

Grégoire Müller has moved back to New York after a 17-year hiatus in Europe. The Swiss-born artist first came to the