

ARTISTS SPACE

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MODERNS IN MIND:

GEROME KAMROWSKI, LEE MULLICAN AND GORDON ONSLOW-FORD

An exhibition sponsored by the Mark Rothko Foundation

April 12 - May 10, 1986

Opening: April 12, 5-7pm

Curator's Talk: Valerie Smith, April 26, 4-5pm

MODERNS IN MIND: GEROME KAMROWSKI, LEE MULLICAN AND GORDON ONSLOW-FORD is Artists Space's third exhibition in a series of shows by mature artists sponsored by the Mark Rothko Foundation. This year's artists have been selected by Artists Space curator Valerie Smith, and for the first time, all three artists' work shares a similar origin. The title **MODERNS IN MIND** refers to the pioneering spirit of these three artists who were involved in founding modernism and continue to develop its tenets through their work. All three were also active participants in the Surrealist movement as it developed in this country in the late 30's and 40's. In addition, **MODERNS IN MIND**, presents the work of three artists who have been working for over forty years with styles and issues that have recently surfaced in the work of younger artists.

This series of exhibitions is intended to respond to the needs of those artists who have been working seriously for many years--outside current trends, yet in innovative styles--who deserve recognition for the quality of their work. The first highly successful series took place at Artists Space in 1983-84, and included Ernst Benkert, Sally Hazelet Drummond and Mowry Baden. The second series, in 1984-85, included Bert Carpenter, Charles Harbutt and Duane Zaloudek.

MODERNS IN MIND will be accompanied by an illustrated catalogue with four essays. Dan Cameron, Associate Editor of Arts Magazine and art critic, will discuss the work of all three artists and compare it to the work of younger artists. Evan M. Mauer, Director of the University of Michigan Art Museum, will address the work of Kamrowski; Susan C. Larsen, a freelance art critic in Los Angeles, has written about the work of Mullican; and Martica Sawin, art history professor at Parsons School of Design, will discuss the work of Onslow-Ford.

GEROME KAMROWSKI will be exhibiting a large geodesic dome and a bestiary of animal sculptures thickly impastoed with sequins, beads and gems. The animal sculptures are of varying size and complex forms made of assorted plastic treasures and found objects. Maintaining the Surrealist approach, Kamrowski adds materials to the surface, dematerializing the animal shapes and allowing these to enter into other configurations. Kamrowski's domes were influenced by R. Buckminster Fuller, who later wrote that "Kamrowski's painting employing the Geodesic structure as an instrument of his harmonic communication gratifies the desire that human beings might discover their hoped-for potential of Geodesic's invisible role."

In 1946, Kamrowski joined the faculty at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. In 1958 in Detroit, he organized the Hylozoist Group whose purpose was to explore the use of industrial materials in their work. Kamrowski's first solo exhibition was at Mortimer Brandt Gallery, New York in 1946. Since that time he has shown at galleries and museums across the country, with the most recent in New York, a group exhibition entitled, "Decades of American Modernism, 1901-49," Martin Diamond Fine Arts, New York (1982). Other group shows include The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1981); the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (1979); and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1978). Solo exhibitions include "Paintings and Works on Paper 40-47," Monique Knowlton Gallery, New York (1978); Gallery 2269, Chicago (1978); Scarab Club, Detroit (1966), Gallerie Creuze, Paris (1957); and many exhibitions at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of this Century Gallery, New York. Past exhibitions have focused on Kamrowski's early works, while Artists Space will show the first body of recent work to be seen in New York. Born in Warren, Minnesota in 1914, Kamrowski now lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

LEE MULLICAN's work is based on nature, ethnic and folk art forms. His paintings are very intricate in detail, involving a lengthy process of graphic accumulation as well as application of multiple layers of pigments. While his work may be compressed with forms, the paintings have a feeling of openness and express his inner vision. In "Four Musicians," (1984), Mullican observed the people of Nepal paying homage to their ubiquitous monkey deity by throwing red paint upon his images until these sculptures seemed to breathe with carnal energy.

Mullican was a co-founder of the Dynaton group in 1951. His most recent solo exhibitions include the Herbert Palmer Gallery, Los Angeles (1985); the Santa Barbara Museum of Art (1973 and 1976); the Willard Gallery, New York (1950-1967); the San Francisco Museum of Art (1945 and 1965); and the Pasadena Art Museum (1961). Group exhibitions include Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California; the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.; and the Museum of Modern Art, Paris. Mullican is represented by the Herbert Palmer Gallery, Los Angeles. Mullican has not shown in New York since 1967. Born in Chickasha, Oklahoma in 1919, Mullican now lives in Santa Monica, California.

GORDON ONSLOW-FORD's recent work is influenced by eastern religions. His technique, known as coulage, is achieved by stretching canvas on the floor and allowing the paint to fall or be thrown on the surface from above. This method not only changes the vantage point of the artist and viewer but also allows for a direct participation with the work. Extensive preliminary drawing is carried out, but the painting is done so fast, creating a deep space that is activated by many twisting calligraphic lines. According to Onslow-Ford, what is presented are "inner worlds," as in dreams and outer space. The paintings transcend specificity, revealing a meditative vision of the human spirit.

Onslow-Ford had his first group exhibition in 1942 at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, entitled "Artists in Exile." In 1951, he co-founded the Dynaton Group. His work has been featured in recent retrospective exhibitions at the Oakland Museum (1977); the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, British Columbia (1971); and the San Francisco Museum of Art (1948 and 1964); as well as group shows at the Newport Harbor Art Museum (1982); Arnold Herstand Gallery, New York (1984); and the Krakow Gallery, Boston (1985). His most recent work was shown at a one-man exhibition at Galerie Samy Kenge in Paris in September 1985. This recent work has not been seen in New York. He has written two books: CREATION, published by Galerie Schriener, Basel, and YVES TANGUY AND AUTOMATISM, Bishop Pine Press, 1983. Born in Wendover, England in 1912, Onslow-Ford lives in Inverness, California.

Artists Space activities are made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency; New York State Council on the Arts, Institute for Museum Services, and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; Art Matters, Inc., Equitable Real Estate Group, Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, Inc., Jerome Foundation, Leonhardt Foundation, Betty Parsons Foundation, Mark Rothko Foundation, Samuel Rubin Foundation, and The Wallace Funds; the American Express Company, AT&T Communications, Citibank, Consolidated Edison, EXXON, R.H. Macy Company, Mobil Foundation, Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, Paine Webber, and Philip Morris, as well as numerous friends.

Artists Space is a member of the National Association of Artists Organizations (NAAO).

Gallery hours are: Tuesday through Saturday, 11am to 6pm.

SAVE-A-DATE . . . Artists Space's Benefit Party, Tuesday, April 22, 7pm to 1am.