

A B S T R A C T

P A I N T I N G S

P E R F O R M A N C E / M A S K S

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A R T I S T S S P A C E , N E W Y O R K

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W E L L S

A R T I S T S S P A C E , N E W Y O R K

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In 1983 Artists Space initiated a series of special exhibitions with the support of The Mark Rothko Foundation. Through what was then an informal arrangement between the two institutions Artists Space was able to present, on an annual basis, the work of serious artists with considerable experience in their chosen field who had not received the public recognition warranted by their work. In 1988, the Mark Rothko Foundation awarded a grant to Artists Space which will enable us to continue this series annually, through the end of this century.

Painters Tony Bechara, Carmen Herrera and Mac Wells, and performance artist Tom Murrin are each featured with comprehensive presentations of their recent work, as well as in the case of Tom Murrin, a series of public performances. While this exhibition is not thematic, these artists do share an obsession with color, a fascination with abstraction and a directness in their presentation. In addition, each artist has evolved a very specific, uniquely personal formal vocabulary. Herrera's geometric abstractions successfully play off rigidity of form with colorist ebullience; Bechara's obsessively sober black and white grid based paintings softly speak of an understanding of the possibility of riotous color, a tone which is beautifully underscored by the small mosaics in the exhibition; Well's fields of color float gloriously within thinly disguised rigid structures, as if hovering above and within the picture plane; and Murrin's masks, while sharing the painters concern for color and form, create a wonderful counterpoint to the formalism of the other artists, as they admit elements of figuration which suggest representation.

The depth and commitment, as well as the level of artistic achievement of these four artists

is indeed inspirational, and developing the exhibition with them has been a true joy. For this, and the opportunity to present their work, I would like to thank Tony Bechara, Carmen Herrera, Tom Murrin and Mac Wells. Additionally, I would like to thank the Mark Rothko Foundation for their farsighted support of these exhibitions.

I would also like to thank Gary Nickard for his assistance in selecting works and coordinating all aspects of this exhibition and catalogue, as well as the rest of the Artists Space staff for their continuing and invaluable support and assistance.

This exhibition has been sponsored by the Mark Rothko Foundation.

Carlos Gutierrez-Solana
Artistic and Executive Director



TONY BECHARA

BIOGRAPHY

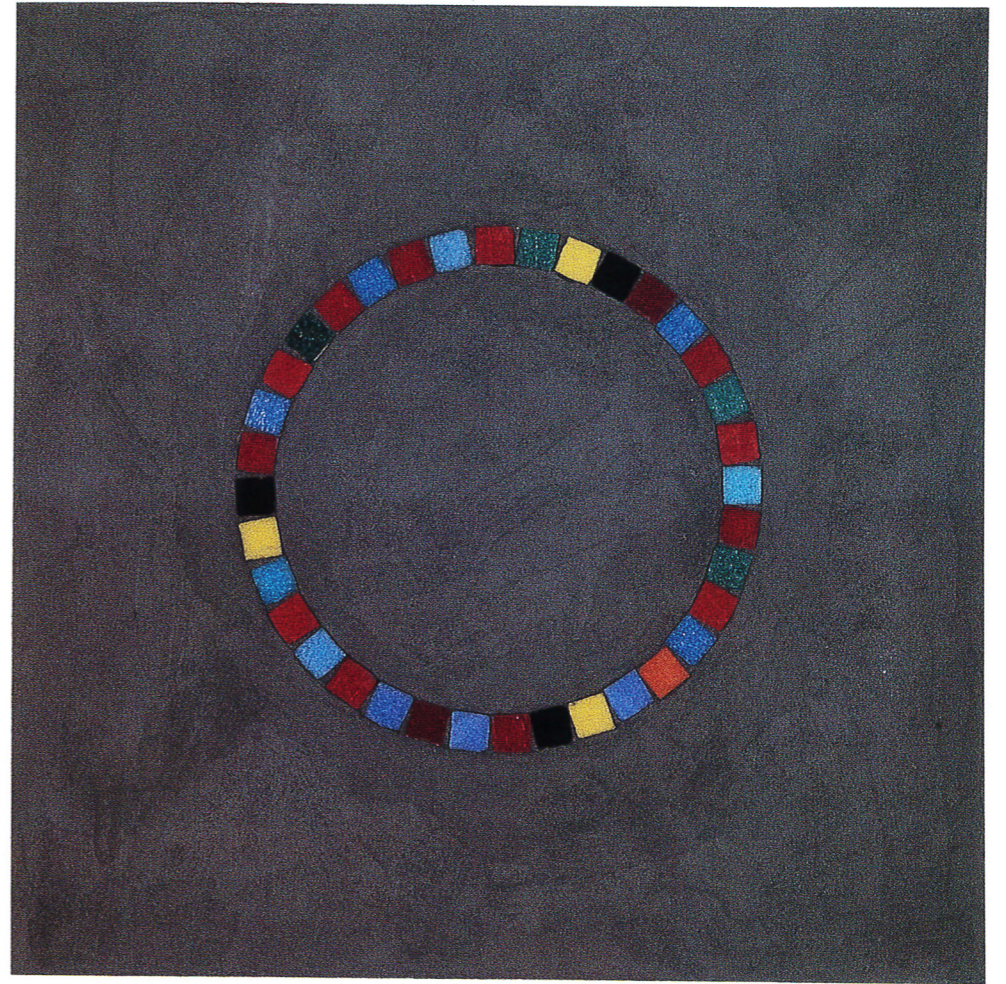
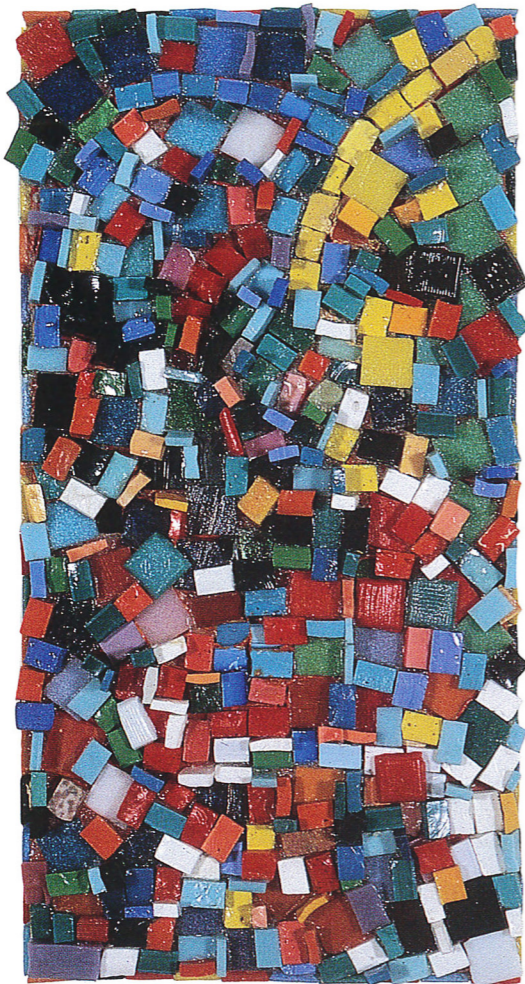
Studied at the University of Paris, Sorbonne, Paris, France; New York University, Graduate School of International Relations; School of Visual Arts, New York, NY; and the Georgetown University School of Law, Washington, DC

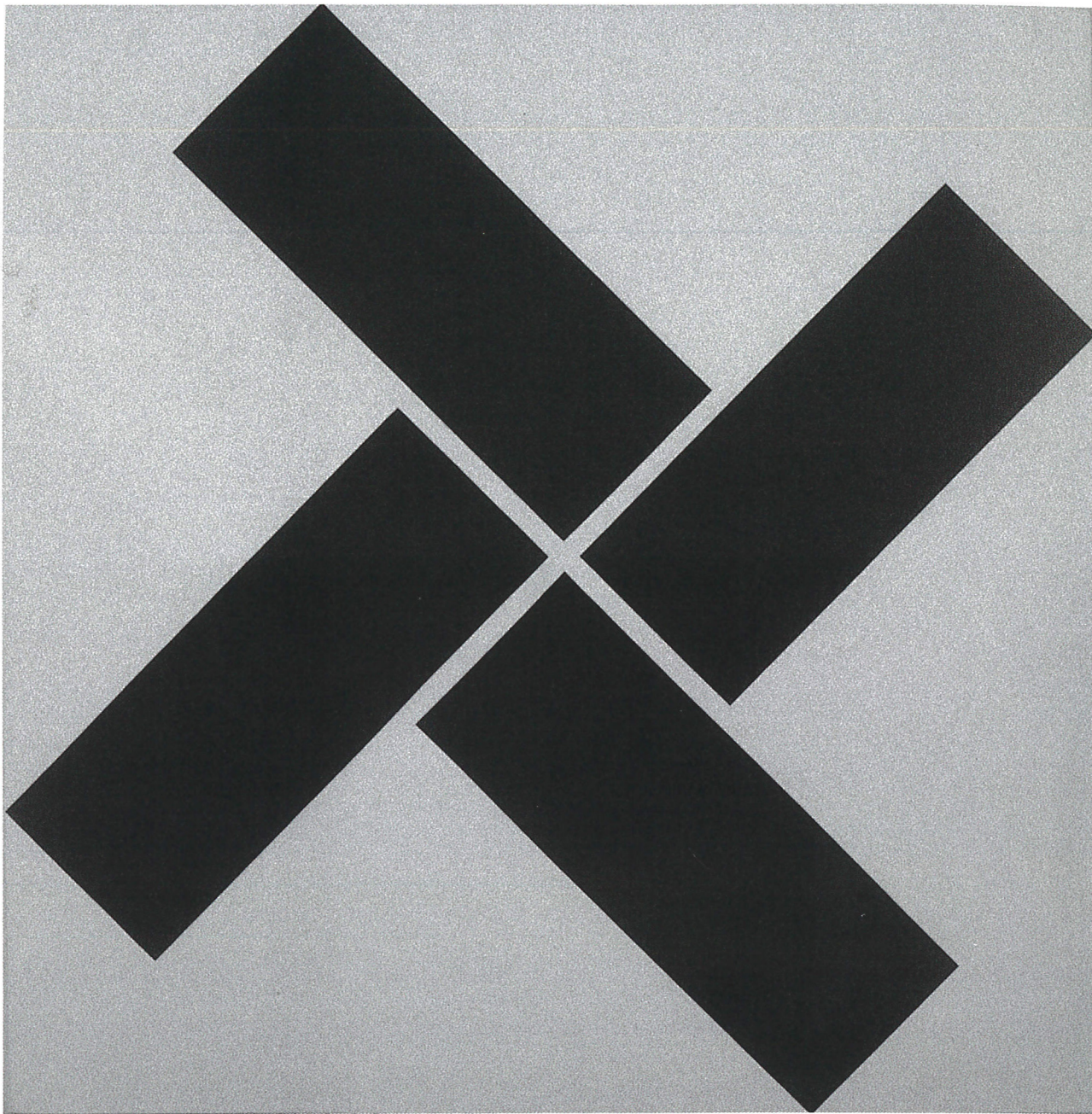
SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1989 Alternative Museum, New York, NY
- 1985 El Museo del Barrio, New York, NY
- 1984 Georgetown Artists Space, Washington, DC
- 1982 Gallery Yves Arman, New York, NY
- 1980 Bild & Rahmen Gallery, Munich, Germany
Cayman Gallery, New York, NY
- 1979 Apollon Gallery Die Insel, Munich, Germany
Andre Zarre Gallery, New York, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 Museo Cautino, Puerto Rico
- 1990 *A Force of Repetition*, New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, NJ
Gallery Marrozzini, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 1988 *Geometry and Structure*, Robeson Center Gallery, Rutgers University, NJ
Miral, Los Angeles Municipal Museum, Los Angeles, CA
- 1987 *Arte Abstracto*, Museo de la Universidad, San Juan, PR
- 1986 *Art, New York*, Sneed Gallery, Rockford, IL
- 1985 *Art of the 1970'S & 80'S*, Aldrich Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 1983 *Surfaces*, Creiger Sesen, Boston, MA
- 1981 *Patterns & Systems*, Yellowstone Art Center, Billings, MT
Recent Directions, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Shaped Field; Eccentric Format, PS1, Queens, NY
- 1980 *Dialects*, Franklin Furnace, New York, NY
- 1979 *Latin American Painters*, Queens Museum, NY
Fifteen New Talents, Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, CT
- 1977 *Biennial*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY





CARMEN HERRERA

BIOGRAPHY

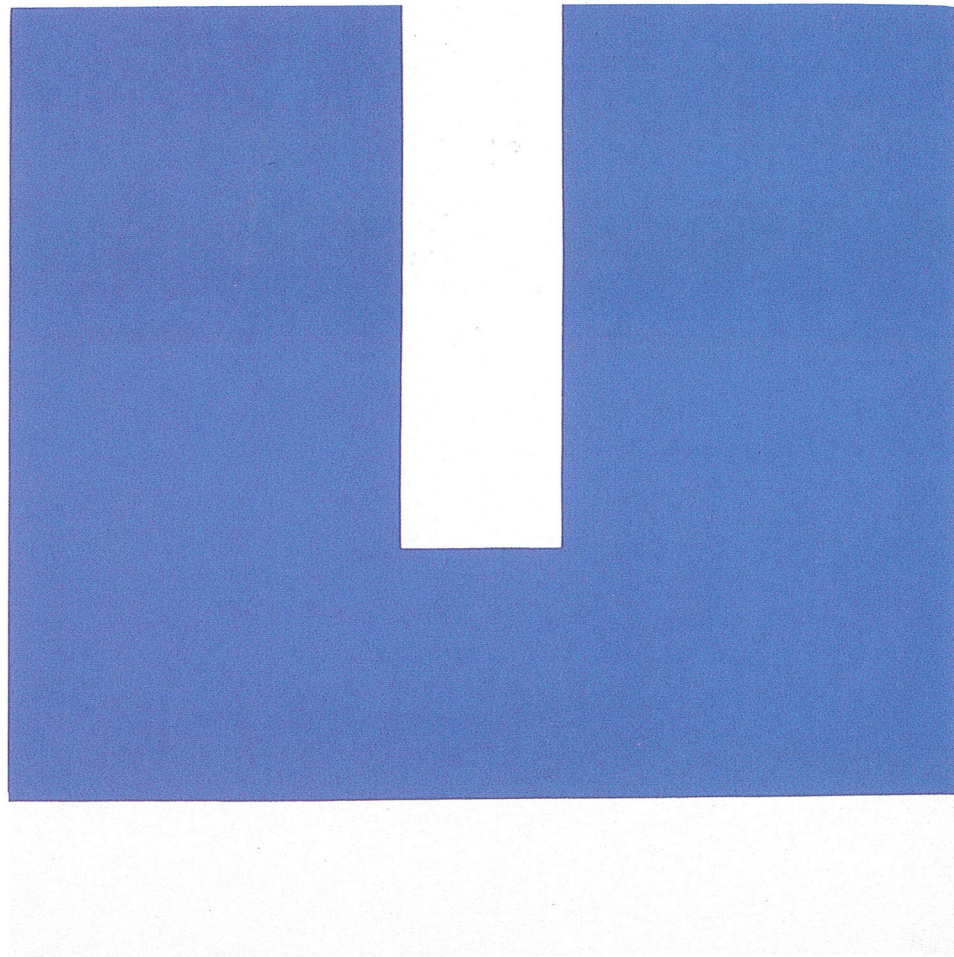
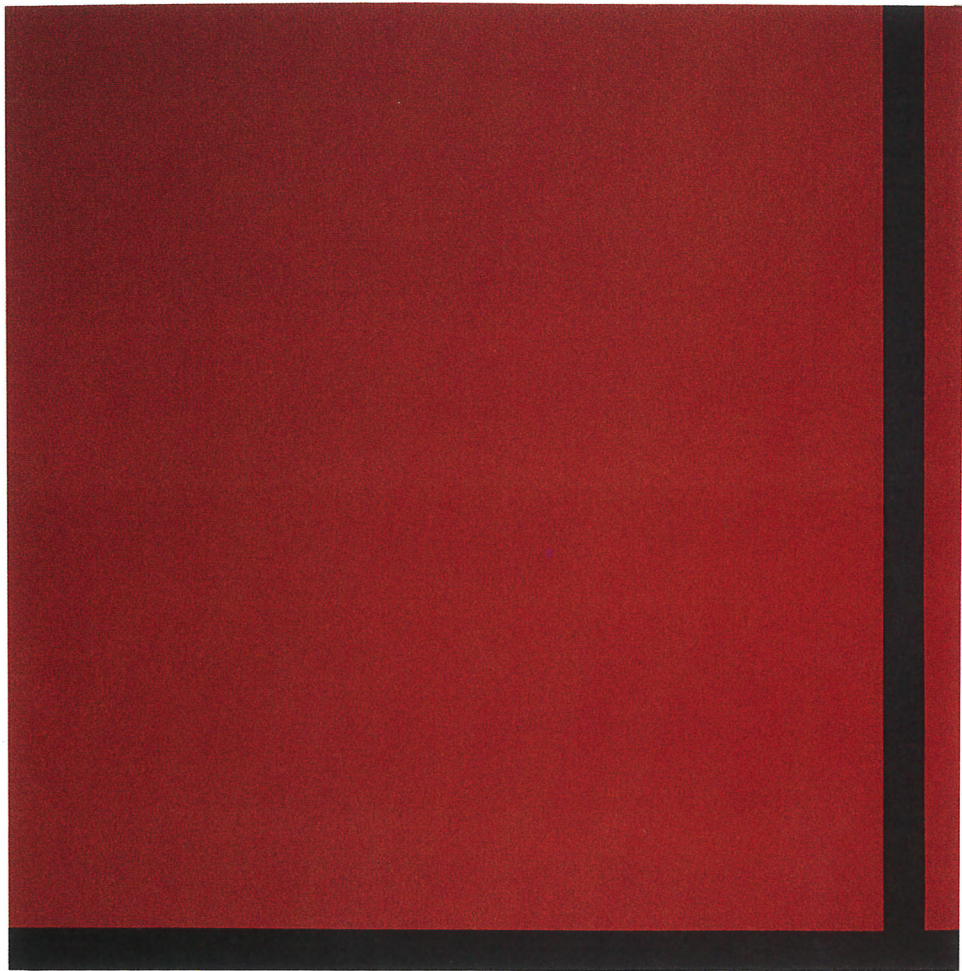
Carmen Herrera was born in Habana, Cuba, and lived and worked in Paris, France from 1948 through 1953. She has lived and worked in New York City since 1954. Ms. Herrera studied with J.F. Edelman, the director of the Academy of San Alejandro, and she studied painting and art history at Marymount College, Paris, France. In addition she has studied architecture at Habana University.

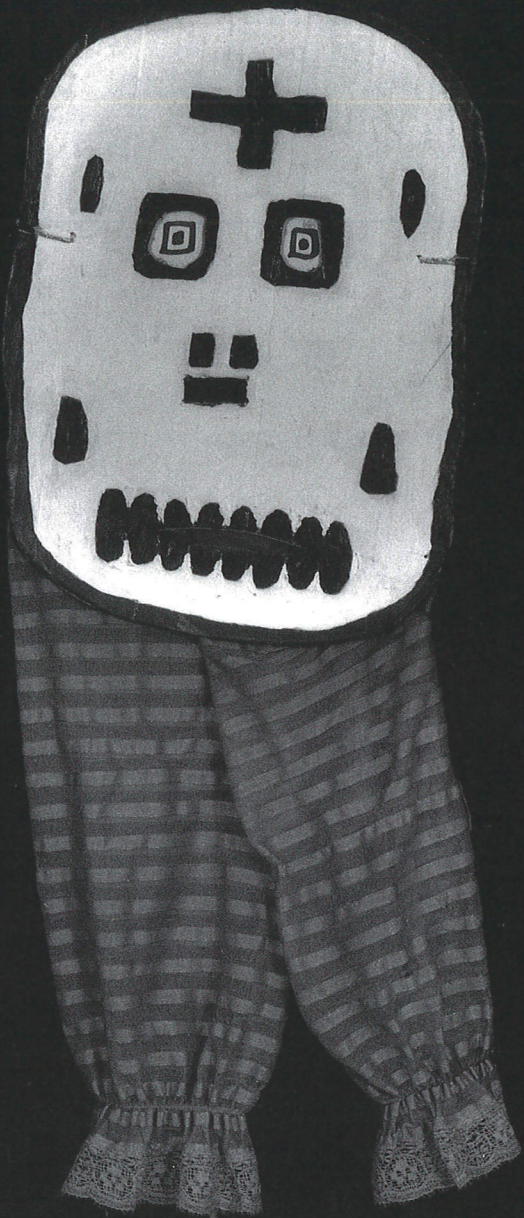
SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 *Duo Geo*, Jadite Galleries, New York, NY
- 1988 Rastovski Gallery, New York, NY
- 1987 Rastovski Gallery, New York, NY
- 1984 *Carmen Herrera Retrospective Exhibition*, Alternative Museum, New York, NY
- 1965 Cisneros Gallery, New York, NY
- 1963 Trabia Gallery, New York, NY
- 1956 Galeria Sudamericana, New York, NY
- 1955 Eglinton Gallery, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1989 *The Latin American Spirit*, Bronx Museum of the Arts, NY
- 1987 *Outside Cuba*, Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
- 1986 *Two Minimalists Four Decades Apart: Carmen Herrera-Elizabeth Poverono*, Rastovski Gallery, New York, NY
- 1981 *The Big Picture, Major Paintings*, Buecker and Harpsichords, New York, NY
- 1974 *Purism in New York*, Buecker and Harpsichords, New York, NY
- 1968 *Five Latin American Artists at Work in New York*, Center for Inter-American Relations, New York, NY
- 1965 *New York Cuban Group*, Cisneros Gallery, New York, NY
- 1962 *Geometric Painting, Classic and Romantic*, Jerrold Morris International Gallery, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- 1953 *Quelques Femmes Peintres*, Galerie Olga Bogroff, Paris, France
- 1951 *Art Cubain Contemporain*, Musée d'Art Modern, Paris, France





TOM MURRIN/ALIEN COMIC

BIOGRAPHY

Alien Comic (aka Tom Murrin) began performing in Seattle in 1974 with Para Troupe, toured the USA, Canada & Europe with Johanna Went, and performed solo around the world in 1977-78. He has been performing in New York City venues since 1978.

SELECTED PERFORMANCES

- 1992 *Full Moon Show*, PS122, New York, NY
Fashions for Defense, Walker's Point Art Center for the Arts, Milwaukee, WI
Fashions for Defense, Green Room, Manchester, England
- 1991 *Pope Dream*, La Mama, New York, NY
Alien Pottlach, XOXO Gallery, New York, NY
Full Moon Show, Highways, Los Angeles, CA
Full Moon Show, Sushi, San Diego, CA
- 1990 *Getting Ready for Halloween*, Cameo Theater, Miami Beach, FL
Halloween Show, La Mama, New York, NY
Cardboard City, Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY
April Fools Day Show, La Mama, New York, NY
Man with 1000 Faces, Highways, Los Angeles, CA
- 1989 *By the Bay*, Magic Theater, San Francisco, CA
Spring Fever, La Mama, New York, NY
Harvest Moon, Pyramid Arts Center, Rochester, NY
Urban Witchdoctor, PS122, New York, NY
- 1988 *March Hare Brained*, Hallwalls, Buffalo, NY
Detective Story Dream, Lightworks, Syracuse, NY
Election Day Show, Winter Garden, World Financial Center, New York, NY
- 1987 *Alien Tabloid*, L.A.C.E., Los Angeles, CA
Pope Dream, Franklin Furnace at Equitable Insurance, New York, NY
Spring has Sprung, Artists Space at Federal Hall, New York, NY
- 1986 *Trash Dreams*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA
Hot Enough for Ya?, Creative Time at Central Park, New York, NY
3 Shows for Abe Lincoln, The Great Hall, Cooper Union, New York, NY



MAC WELLS

BIOGRAPHY

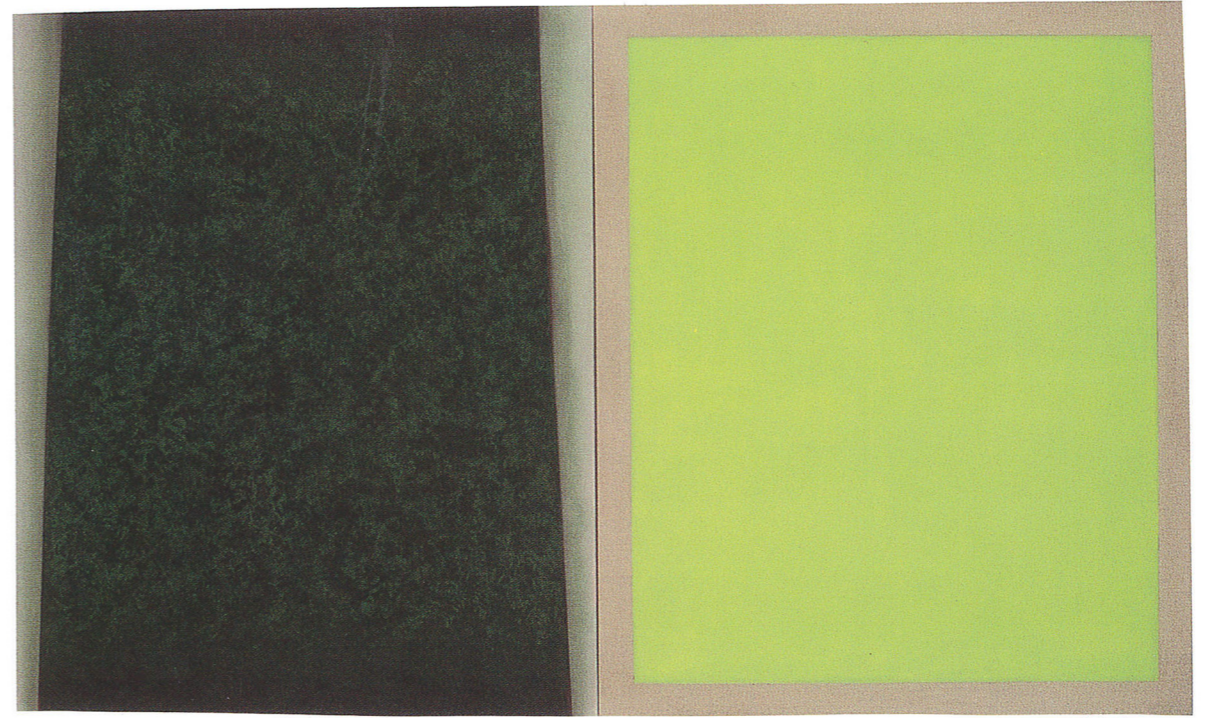
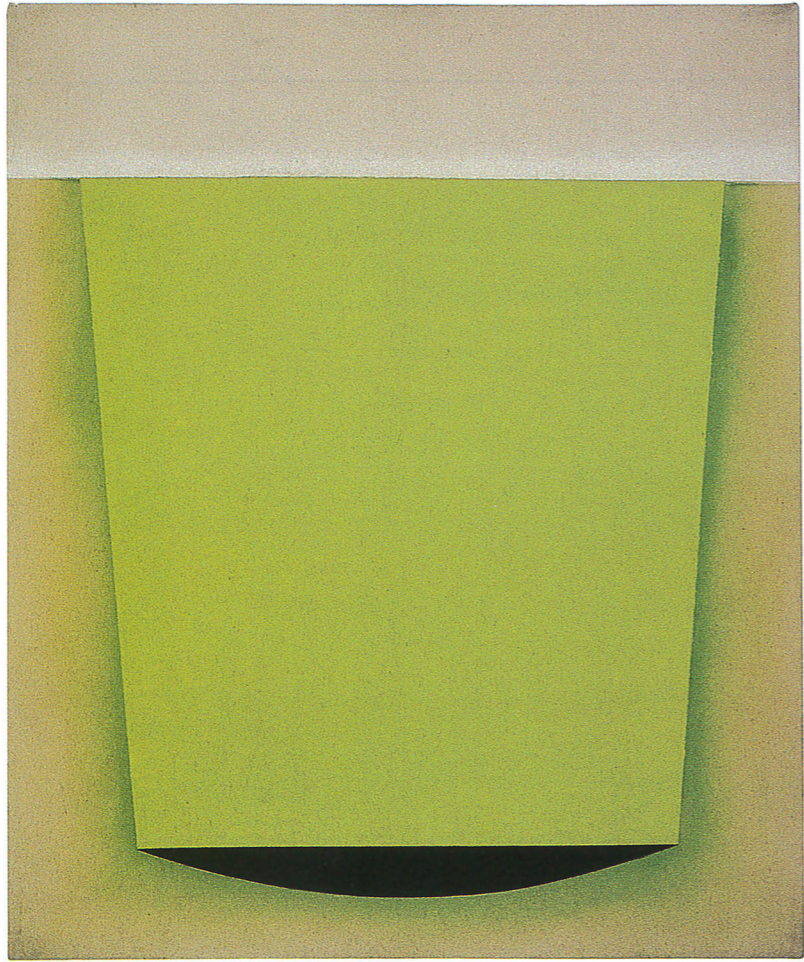
- 1948 BA Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH
1949 Cooper Union, New York, NY

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1992 Dwight Frederick Boyden Gallery, St. Mary's College of Maryland
1981 55 Mercer Gallery, New York, NY
1979 Landmark Gallery, New York, NY
1975 Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York, NY
1972 Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York, NY
1970 Max Hutchinson Gallery, New York, NY
1967 A.M. Sachs Gallery, New York, NY
1966 Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
1963 Aegis Gallery, New York, NY

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 1993 *Faculty Artists Exhibition*, Hunter College Art Gallery, New York, NY
1992 *Persistence of Abstraction*, Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University, KS
1991 *Physicality*, Hunter College Art Gallery, New York, NY
1988 *A Living Tradition, American Abstract Artists*, USIA exhibition touring Europe & Canada until 1991
1986 *Art From CUNY: Approaches to Abstraction*, University of Shanghai, China
50th Anniversary of American Abstract Artists, Bronx Museum, NY
1985 *Works on Paper*, Arbitrage Gallery, New York, NY
1983 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC
1982 *American Abstract Artists*, New York City Gallery, New York, NY
1979 Betty Parsons Gallery, New York, NY
1976 Maine State Museum, Augusta, ME
1972 *Paintings on Paper*, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson NY
1971 The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, OH
Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, PA



I L L U S T R A T I O N S

Dimensions are in inches. Height precedes width precedes depth. All works are lent by the artists.

TONY BECHARA

PAGE 3:

BLIZZARD (detail)

1993

acrylic on linen

50 x 50

PAGE 5:

LA FENICE

1993

glass mosaics, epoxy, wood

16 x 8

PAGE 6:

CIRCLE

1993

cement, glass, canvas

20 x 20

Photos: Craig Chesek

CARMEN HERRERA

PAGE 7:

GREEN'S WAY

1988

acrylic on canvas

42 x 42

PAGE 9:

P. M.

1990

acrylic on canvas

42 x 42

PAGE 10:

SOME BLUE, SOME WHITE

1992

acrylic on canvas

42 x 42

Photos: John Gregory

TOM MURRIN/ALIEN COMIC

PAGE 11:

SKULL WITH RED KNICKERS

1988

acrylic on cardboard with lingerie

28 x 12

PAGE 13:

JOHANNA WENT

1985

14 3/4 x 20

acrylic on foam core

Photos: Patty Wallace

PAGE 14:

URBAN WARRIOR

1986

mixed media

life sized

Photo: John Eder

MAC WELLS

PAGE 15:

KHAGA (DETAIL)

1985

acrylic on canvas

72 x 120

PAGE 17:

TIRTHA

1980

acrylic on canvas

24 x 20

PAGE 18:

VANASPATI

1990

acrylic on canvas

60 x 100

Photos: Patty Wallace

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C R E D I T S

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