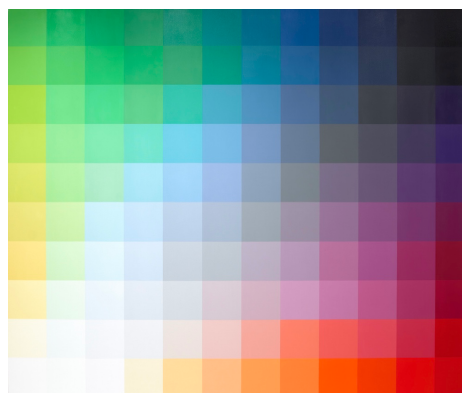


M - N U S S P A C E



ROBERT SWAIN *IMMERSIVE COLOR*

September 11 – November 20, 2021

Opening Day, Artist Present: Saturday, September 11, 2-5pm

Online Talk with Robert Swain: Thursday, Sept. 23, 7-8pm EST

MINUS SPACE

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Special COVID Hours: Saturdays, 11am-5pm + by appointment

DUMBO | corner of Main + Water

A or C to High Street | F to York Street | 2 or 3 to Clark Street

MINUS SPACE is delighted to present *Robert Swain: Immersive Color*. This is the renowned, NYC-based color painter's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery and it will feature a suite of three new large-format paintings produced during the past year.

Color has been the primary focus of Robert Swain's painting practice for more than 50+ years. It is both the content of his paintings and a relentless problem to be solved. In the late 1960s, he began to conceive his own singular color system organized around the characteristics of hue (a pure color), value (lightness / darkness of a color), and saturation (the intensity of a color). The color system Swain envisioned decades ago consisted of 30 distinct yet interrelated colors organized in incremental steps around a circle with no beginning or endpoint. He then ran each of those colors across the qualities of value and saturation yielding an exhaustive color library of 4,896 distinct hues, each calibrated by eye and mixed by hand.

Swain's three large paintings on view in his new exhibition, ranging in size from 9 x 9 to 10 x 12 feet, present us with hundreds of distinct colors organized into square grids which are subtly modulated by hue, value, and saturation. Modulation is the alchemical element that transforms the raw materials of flat acrylic paint on a smooth surface into what the artist describes as "*pure color sensation*", thereby creating an undulating pictorial space, a dynamic sense of movement, and a charged emotional experience.

Swain remarks, "*Perceptual psychologists believe that humans have the ability to see hundreds of thousands or even a million distinct colors, which in turn allows infinite relationships to be constructed and experienced. As such each color maintains its own unique identity, sensation, personality, or feeling. When combined with other colors, their sensations change to produce a complex range of emotional experiences.*"

He continues, "*In my new paintings on view in this exhibition, I'm pushing the extremes of human perception to its limits. There is a vast vocabulary of color sensations that have yet to be formalized and presented to the viewing public to be experienced or explored.*"

Available paintings by Robert Swain can be viewed on our website: www.minusspace.com/robert-swain

For further information about Robert Swain and his exhibition, please contact the gallery.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Robert Swain is one of the most influential color painters of his generation. He was born in Austin, Texas, in 1940, and grew up in Arlington, Virginia. During high school in the late 1950s, he spent his summers in Guatemala and Nicaragua working on the Pan-American Highway. He attended The American University in

Washington, DC, where he later received a BA in Fine Art in 1964. During his undergraduate studies, he spent two years in Madrid, Spain, studying at the University of Madrid. In 1964, he moved to Provincetown, Massachusetts, and worked as a studio assistant to the American Modernist painter Karl Knaths. Swain moved to NYC in 1965 where he permanently settled in Manhattan's Tribeca neighborhood.

In 1966, Swain began his first color-based work followed a year later by his first work utilizing the grid. He participated in his first group exhibition, *Light and Line*, organized by John Baldwin at the legendary Park Place Gallery in NYC in 1967. That same year he met sculptor Tony Smith who became his close friend and mentor for many years. In 1969, Swain began to develop his own color system, a project that continues until today.

Swain has exhibited his work nationally and internationally for more than 40 years. His paintings have been including in countless landmark exhibitions. He participated in the seminal exhibition *Art of the Real* curated by Eugene Goossen at the Museum of Modern Art, NYC, in 1968. The exhibition traveled for the next two years to the Grand Palais, Paris; Kunsthaus, Zurich; and The Tate Gallery, London. Swain exhibited in *The Structure of Color* curated by Marcia Tucker at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, in 1971.

In 1974, he mounted his first solo museum exhibition at The Everson Art Museum, Syracuse, New York. In 1974, he participated in *Color as Language* curated by Kynaston McShine and organized by the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art, which traveled throughout Central and South America, including to the Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogota; Museo de Arte Moderno de Sao Paulo; Museo de Arte Moderno, Rio de Janeiro; Museo de Bellas Artes, Caracas; and Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City. His work was also twice included in the *Corcoran Biennial* at The Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, DC (1969, 1998).

In 2010, Swain was the subject of a major 45-year survey exhibition entitled *Visual Sensations: The Paintings of Robert Swain* curated by Gabriele Evertz at Hunter College/Times Square Gallery, NYC. In 2014, he installed a major exhibition of large paintings entitled *The Form of Color* at the Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA, curated by Jeffrey Uslip.

Swain's work is represented in nearly 300 public and private collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Walker Art Center, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Milwaukee Art Museum, Denver Art Museum, Detroit Institute of Art, Everson Art Museum, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, among others. He has completed major commissions for IBM, Johnson & Johnson, American Republic Insurance Company, Schering Laboratories, Harris Bank, Travenol Laboratories, Tupperware World Headquarters, and the University of Buffalo. He has received awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts (1976, 1989), New York State Council on the Arts, and the City University of New York.

In addition to his artistic work, Swain taught in the Department of Art & Art History at Hunter College from 1968-2014, where he educated and mentored countless generations of artists. For his teaching, he was awarded the *Distinguished Teaching of Art Award* from the College Art Association in 1998.

ABOUT MINUS SPACE

Founded in 2003, MINUS SPACE presents the past, present, and future of reductive art on the international level. We launched our new website last fall to make learning about new art enriching and collecting rewarding. In addition to presenting engaging, available artworks by more than 20 international artists, the new website also features an Editions page, which highlights compelling limited edition prints and multiples by gallery and affiliated artists dating from the 1960s to today. The new Books page presents dozens of new and out-of-print publications about gallery artists and reductive art, including monographs, exhibition catalogues, writings, and ephemera.

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Image:

Robert Swain, *10 x 12 Green / Red*, 2021, Acrylic on aluminum panels, 10 x 12 feet / 305 x 366 cm