

MICHAEL BOYD

That's How the Light Gets In: 1970 - 1972

May 4 - June 17, 2017

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 4th, 6-8 PM

NEW YORK, NY: Eric Firestone Loft is pleased to present *That's How the Light Gets In*, a solo exhibition of paintings by Michael Boyd from 1970 - 1972. Within these years, Boyd worked rigorously on a series of square canvases that explored space and light through the use of hard edges and contrasting gradients. At a time when abstraction had become further deconstructed, paving the way for conceptual art, Boyd focused on distilling his paintings down to their core structure. Yet in their sumptuous celebration of color and form, these canvases become timeless in their assertion of the primacy of paint. This body of work is presented together for the first time since Boyd's 1973 solo exhibition at Max Hutchinson Gallery in NYC.

Michael Boyd (b. 1936, d. 2015) began his career as an Abstract Expressionist in New York City and slowly moved toward pristine hard edges in reaction, partly, to the 'heavy breathing' of the New York School. And yet while his peers eventually explore what they thought would be the end of painting with avant-garde performances and minimalist works that functioned between art and object, Boyd moved forward with an obsessive painting practice. The result is a group of flawless minimalist canvases and works on paper that unite the reductive austerity and cool formalist attitude of the moment with a painterly approach.

The motif of the gradient in these works feels especially prescient as contemporary visual culture is dominated by this element of design that can signify anything from sunsets to seascapes or the fabricated landscapes of digital screens. However, Boyd's paintings are a testament to the artist's hand, accomplishing nuanced chromatic shifts and optical effects that are as cerebral as they are visceral. In his studies on paper, Boyd reveals his hand, providing insight into his process and confirming that, despite their perceived perfection, his paintings are laboriously handmade.

Boyd taught both design and ecology during his tenure at Cornell University. Following his studies at the University of Northern Iowa and a stint in Ajijic, Mexico, Boyd split his time between Ithaca and New York City, where he maintained a studio in his Soho loft. His work is in public collections such as The Albright Knox Gallery, The Everson Museum of Art, and The Chrysler Museum of Art.

In 2016, Eric Firestone Gallery opened its first New York City space, Eric Firestone Loft. Expanding upon the Gallery's commitment to exhibiting historic work with a strong emphasis on 1960's and 70's art movements, the Loft takes inspiration from the art spaces of old New York. Situated in an historic artist live/work building on Great Jones Street, Eric Firestone Loft, still in its relatively raw and unaltered form, evokes a sense of the neighborhood's legacy. Through a dynamic program, the mission of the Gallery is to encourage a dialogue between contemporary artists and major art movements of the 20th century.

The gallery is open Tuesday - Saturday, 11AM-6PM or by appointment.



Bustelo, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 78 x 78 in

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