

John M Armleder

Jan 18 — Feb 23, 2017 | New York, Upper East Side

Almine Rech Gallery New York is pleased to announce a solo exhibition by renowned multi-disciplinary artist John M Armleder (of American and Swiss origin, born in 1948 in Geneva, lives and works in Geneva and New York), organized with Nicolas Trembley. Marking his first exhibition in the gallery's New York space, Armleder will present a historic ensemble of drawings produced in the 1960s as well as his first wall paintings, a selection of notable Furniture Sculpture works from the 1980s, and a series of new paintings created in Brooklyn specifically for this exhibition.

Armleder has always maintained a close relationship with New York City. By the end of the 1960s, he had taken particular interest in the development of the international Fluxus movement, which inspired him to co-found the Ecart Group in Geneva in 1969, an influential collective doubling as a publishing house and exhibition space, which came to host leading figures of the day such as Andy Warhol. In the 1980s, Armleder began to exhibit in New York and established a dialogue between the artists associated with the local 'Neo-Geo' scene, including Haim Steinbach and Peter Halley, in addition to Olivier Mosset and Helmut Federle, both linked to Geneva—Armleder's home city. Most recently in New York, Armleder exhibited at Wade Guyton's former Brooklyn studio space, Burning Bridges, in 2014.

This survey exhibition of John M Armleder's diverse practice from the late 1960s until the present day will include examples of painting and sculpture, as well as a series of historic drawings and conceptual wall paintings. Using simple brush strokes, applied without visible effort, some works draw on several of Armleder's major influences: Zen Buddhism, the music of John Cage, and the work of Marcel Duchamp. Other drawings use geometric shapes in stark primary colors, celebrating the motifs of the Constructivists or Suprematists—movements that remain essential to the artist's practice.

In 1979, John M Armleder developed a series of works entitled *Furniture Sculpture*, which brought him international recognition. These works, composed of a domestic piece of furniture, such as a table or chair, are associated with an abstract canvas. Directly referencing the Duchampian ready-made, they endeavour to question the status of the work of art, the ideas of style and decoration, while freeing those from artistic categories and hierarchies. One of his first *Furniture Sculpture works (FS18)*, originally presented in 1980 at C Space in New York, will be reassembled for this exhibition. The piece is comprised of a coffee table nailed to the ceiling. Another piece from this series, *FS 230*, is made up of three faux Louis XV style chairs, placed on a painted pedestal, while *Blind Venetian Piece (FS)* juxtaposes a Venetian blind with a black and white painting. The exhibition will also include a new *Furniture Sculpture* produced in 2016, in reference to the stalls of flowers in New York's delis.

A series of new paintings produced in New York last summer will round out the exhibition. These new diptychs blend the artist's modernist distinctive stripe and polka-dot paintings, with a fluorescent, pop influenced aesthetic. These works are also associated with the now famous *Puddle* and *Pour Paintings*, which were created by randomly pouring paint on a vertical canvas or a canvas placed on the floor and gesturally mixing in a diverse range of experimental materials such as glitter or automotive lacquer.

Nicolas Trembley