

## Peter Young, Outlaw

The New York art world that emerged in the late 1960s was intimate, and social circles were easily identifiable. The Kansas City crew was divided into smaller artist clusters; nightly ritual intergang drinking ignited regular discussions between the likes of John Chamberlain, Lawrence Weiner, and Brice Marden. The club, which closed its doors in 1981, was the nerve center for Peter Young and his contemporaries, the ideological backyard for a community of painters that included Dan Christensen, William Pettet, Larry Poons, and Ronnie Landfield, among others. Although today his presence within this environment is often understated, Peter was very much an active figure, engaging his peers while retaining his own painterly dialect.

Peter and his friends formed a close-knit alliance, but each artist has a very distinct undertaking. Indeed it is difficult to position a definitive "school". They were painters that cultivated the physicality of their Works and the gestures of their own bodies and hands. At the height of Minimalism, Peter's early compositions featured grids and geometric repetition, but his dreamlike recesses, formal imperfections, and planar transgressions broke the strict codes of that movement. His leanings toward poetic, limitless psychedelic and non-Western sensibilities made him an outlaw. Peter painted dots, bands, lines, and blots - hardly abstract expressionist, but certainly not devoid of personal style.

Peter also physically distanced himself by leaving New York in 1969. He spent several months with the Boruca tribe in Costa Rica, traveled to Spain, Morocco and the American Southwest, ultimately landing in Bisbee, Arizona, where he resides today. Peter's travels detached him from the scene, but he continued to exhibit in New York. After his first exhibition in a group show in 1967 at the Noah Goldowsky Gallery, he had a solo show there in 1970 and then at TribeCa's Oil and Steel Gallery in 1984. Richard Bellamy, a legendary Curator and one of my best friends, opened the Green Gallery in 1960 and showed the Work of Robert Morris, Claes Oldenburg, Donald Judd, and James Rosenquist, among other now-renowned artists. Bellamy's Oil & Steel Gallery was another incarnation of his typically prophetic, financially destructive mind for business, as well as an important gallery where many famously beautiful shows were exhibited. It was through Bellamy that I began admiring Peter's Work and included it in a 1980s painting show at P.S.1.

Founded in 1976, P.S.1. Contemporary Art Center is a Critical site Peter's homecoming and first retrospective exhibition held in New York. It is grounding to look at a man who's developed his ideas outside of the New York Corral.

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