

Excelsior, from Kites Suite
Charles Hinman



Date : 2013
5 color screenprint
32 x 32 in.
Edition of 5
Pencil signed, dated, and numbered

Artist bio

Charles Hinman is an Abstract Minimalist painter who pioneered the concept of the three-dimensional shaped canvas in the mid-1960's. He explores the ambiguity between the illusion of perspective in painting and the physical space of sculpture, creating characteristic canvases that play with the perception of volume, color and light.

Since Charles Hinman moved to New York, he has lived and worked at the heart of the city's art scene. In the early 1960's he lived on Coenties Slip in Lower Manhattan where he shared an abandoned loft with James Rosenquist. It was an ideal art studio offering large open spaces to work at an affordable rent. Along with Robert Indiana, Ellsworth Kelly, Jack Youngerman and Agnes Martin who resided in the neighbouring buildings, they formed a small artistic community away from the Upper-East side and the Abstract Expressionists from whom they wished to differentiate themselves. Eventually, he was influenced by the works of all his friends-artists.

In the 1960's, Charles Hinman played a significant role in redefining the physical shape of paintings. The shaped canvas was born from the desire to break away from the traditional square or rectangular frame of painting. Rather than a formalized medium or window that contained the subject, the contours of the painting became part of the subject itself. In the mid-1960's several abstract minimalist painters were experimenting with its possibilities, the most famous of which is Frank Stella. Charles Hinman drove the concept further by pushing the canvas out from the wall; his works were a form of hybrid between painting and sculpture. This type of painting is known as a three-dimensional shaped canvas. As early as 1963 - 64 Charles Hinman created sculptural paintings with protruding geometric and undulating forms. In his canvases as well as in his works on paper, his main focus is on the illusion of space through subtly suggested volumes, embracing the use of color, embossing, shadow and reflection.

All his works seem simple but they are very well studied. This leads to an very personal characteristic of Charles Hinman work, which is an objective use of geometry in order to obtain a subjective and playful use of shadows, lights and colors.

Throughout his career, Hinman has continuously created works in series. His early works from the mid-1960's are voluptuous and organic with strongly contrasting hard-edge colors and projecting forms, others play with pure and minimal forms.

In most recent years, Charles Hinman's work has garnered increasing attention both for his contemporary as for his modern works. According to some critics, his latest series of "Gems" and "Black Paintings" are arguably amongst his most interesting works.