

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 31, 2017

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Ellsworth Kelly
March 4 – April 15, 2017

Leslie Sacks Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of graphic work by renowned artist, Ellsworth Kelly. The gallery offers an elegant presentation of its collection of three Ellsworth Kelly's botanicals (1983-1985) and three curves (2002-2004). These lithographs are an impeccable representation of Kelly's mastery of minimal form and the contoured line.



Ellsworth Kelly's botanical images are both graceful and striking. The artist began drawing plants during his time spent in Paris in the 1940s and continued the practice when he returned to New York. In 1970 The Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibited 40 of his plant drawings in a landmark exhibition curated by Henry Geldzahler, cementing the importance of these botanical images in art history forever. Kelly used potted plants around his studio as studies for these lithographic images. Additionally, he found time to draw from nature during his extensive world travels. The contour line compositions are subtle yet extraordinary as they successfully toe the line between abstraction and representation. Kelly intentionally flattens shapes making no attempt for realism; yet the subjects are immediately recognizable. Though seemingly effortless, these botanicals are the result of arduous study and incredible attention to detail. These black and white stems, flowers, leaves and branches are natural objects captured in their purest form, their essence and nothing more.

Ellsworth Kelly is perhaps best known for his iconic, colored curves. Beginning in the late 1940s, Kelly spent years in Paris where his contemporaries (Surrealist and Dadaists) and the architecture surrounding him provided inspiration. As the forefather of minimalism, Kelly was perfecting the art of precise line-work, impeccable use of negative space and streamlined contouring before anyone else. Conversely, in the curve lithographs Kelly floats dense, single colored curvilinear shapes on a stark white background. The margins are just as important as the shape. In these works, as well as the rest of his oeuvre, everything is thought out and premeditated. His graphic work exhibits a delicacy, which is not always present in his larger scale wall-works. Ellsworth Kelly's works are held in the esteemed collections of nearly every modern and contemporary museum worldwide.

Roy Lichtenstein
March 4 – April 15, 2017

Leslie Sacks Gallery announces their forthcoming exhibition of graphic works by Roy Lichtenstein. On the heels of the acclaimed exhibition: *Pop for the People: Roy Lichtenstein in L.A.* at the Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, this gallery exhibition will present important editions by the artist from 1965-1996. Including iconic compositions across a variety of printing processes, the works presented in this show exemplify the remarkable experimentation and inventiveness of Roy Lichtenstein's graphic oeuvre.

Roy Lichtenstein's work is not merely the comic book inspired, oftentimes-superficial musings of Pop Art. In fact, the work is steeped in art history from Pablo Picasso to Andy Warhol and from Impressionism to German Expressionism. The references can be as overt as the inclusion of Chairman Mao's portrait hanging on the wall of *Modern Room*, 1990. Or more subtly presented as in the series *Bull Head*, 1973 where Lichtenstein reinterprets Picasso's famous bull series, *Le Taureau*, 1946, by gradually reducing the bull into complete abstraction across six separate images. After a visit to the Los Angeles County Museum (LACMA) in the late 1970s, Lichtenstein became interested in German Expressionism. In the *Expressionist Woodcut* series, which includes *The Couple*, 1980, he would forgo his iconic Ben-Day dots and instead employ diagonal, jagged lines in a flattened and highly stylized composition--a direct nod to the German Expressionist movement. The images from the *Brushstroke* series reference Willem de Kooning's famous paintings of women whose facial features were re-positioned in a cubist manner. In *Portrait*, from *Brushstroke* series, 1989, the handmade strokes, screenprint elements and waxtype process combine to create an abstract portrait that is unmistakably Lichtenstein.



Lichtenstein created over 350 prints and was a major contributor to the mid-century fine art print revival. His prolificacy combined with his technical prowess, sparkling sense of humor and art historical knowledge positioned him as one of the most important artists of all time. The works of Roy Lichtenstein are held in countless modern and contemporary art museums the world over.

Leslie Sacks Gallery is located in the Bergamot Station Arts Center in Santa Monica 2525 Michigan Avenue, B6. Gallery hours are Tues-Fri 10-6, Sat 11-6. The gallery is online at lesliesacks.com. Email gallery@lesliesacks.com or call 310 264 0640.

Hi resolution jpeg's available upon request.