

DRAWING ROOM PROJECTS / NYC Victoria Munroe & Emily Goldstein

For Immediate Release

On view through April 1 at

VICTORIA MUNROE
fine art

67 EAST 80TH STREET #2 NEW YORK CITY
Open Wednesday-Saturday 11-5 & by appt

Antonio Asis

Paintings on Paper



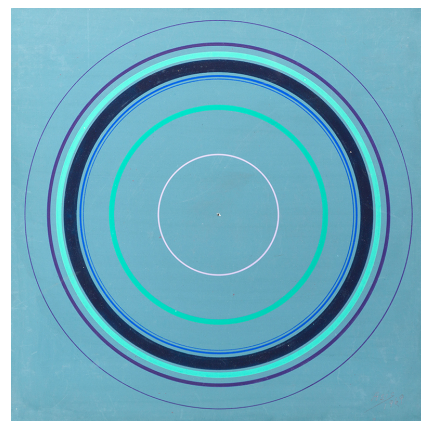
Cercles dans Space Jaune, #3048, 1962, acrylic, 24 x 24"

DRAWING ROOM PROJECTS / NYC is pleased to present two exhibitions at Victoria Munroe Fine Art. A separate press release is available for *COSTANTINO NIVOLA (1911-1988): The Modern Figure*. Both exhibitions will be on view through April 1, 2017.

Born in Buenos Aires in 1932, Antonio Asis studied at Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes with Hector Cartier when Buenos Aires was an important center for the development of post war abstraction. Of particular interest to Asis was the impact of the Asociación Arte Concreto-Invención, a group devoted to the aesthetic legacy of geometric abstraction developed by Piet Mondrian and Theo Van Doesburg. With this foundation and subsequent explorations in the vibration of color in geometric structure, Asis moved to Paris in 1956 joining many Argentine artists in time for the genesis of optical-kinetic art.

Invigorated by the Parisian art world, Asis aligned himself with an international community of artists that included Jean Tinguely, Yaacov Agam, Victor Vasarely and Jesús Rafael Soto- all central figures in the exploration of dynamic motion in the phenomenon of visual perception. Spurred by his European contemporaries, action painting in America, molecular biology, space exploration, and kinetic works by Marcel Duchamp, Vladimir Tatlin and Alexander Calder, Asis embraced the concept of an art that produced perceptual experiences, inviting interaction through real or illusory movement. With a masterful hand and keen sense of spatial and chromatic dynamics, Asis continued to explore a visual punch evocative of the 1960s Op aesthetics.

Antonio Asis's first solo exhibition in New York City features three of his most important series of gouache paintings on paper. In his *Cercles Concentriques*, small "target" compositions of concentric circles push the dynamic relationship between the density of contiguous hues, to create startling, contemplative visual objects. The color interactions vibrate within the tension of the 6-inch square field evoking contemporary mandalas. Begun in the 1960s this series continues to engage Asis who works on them daily at his drawing table in Paris.



Cercles concentriques (1455), 1969, gouache on paperboard, 11 ¼ x 11 ¼"

The larger paintings of the *Geométrie libre* series, also from the 1960s, liberate the small *Cercles Concentriques* “targets” into a vast space where they float and multiply in buoyant all over compositions. The wild energy let loose from the concentrated hues in circular dots and spheres seems to coalesce before our eyes like a brilliant sky of stars.

In his 1960s and 1970s *Carres rythmiques*, Asis filled graph paper with hundreds of tiny beautifully painted squares of gouache in simmering visual rhythms. These intensely precise compositions are part of the life-long research on the nature of visual perception that has inspired Antonio Asis for over 60 years of art making.

Antonio Asis has achieved an original oeuvre in painting and sculpture that has been exhibited across Europe, South America and the United States.

Asis is represented in the Cisneros- Fontanals Art Foundation (CIFO), Miami; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Latinoamericano (MACLA), La Plata, Argentina; Museo de Arte Moderno Jesús Soto, Ciudad Bolívar, Venezuela; Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende (MSSA), Santiago, Chile; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain; Museo Nacional de Nicaragua, Managua, Nicaragua; Museo Nacional Tres de Febrero (MUNTREF), Buenos Aires, Argentina; and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), Houston, Texas, USA.

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Costantino Nivola

The Modern Figure



M.01, 1969, concrete, paint, 19 x 9 1/2 x 3 3/4"

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COSTANTINO NIVOLA (1911-1988): The Modern Figure presents a selection of lyrical, small scale sculptures carved or cast from high and low materials into sensuous abstractions of the human form. Created between 1965 and 1984 in his East Hampton studio in concrete, marble, terra cotta or bronze, the intimate statues reveal Nivola's mythic vision for sculpture.

Born in 1911, Nivola's training as a Sardinian-born mason educated at the Istituto Superiore d'Arte in Monza, Italy, provided a unique foundation for the young artist once he settled in New York City in 1939. Surrounded in the 1940s and 50s by the AbEx community in New York City and East Hampton, his colleagues were other émigré artists who shared his passion for expressive materials for a new age. Nivola arrived at the epicenter of American mid-century modernism.

Standing proud as modern idols, the earliest works in the show are painted concrete and date to 1965. These commanding 20-inch-tall forms have a Mediterranean aura. Carved in wet concrete mixed with sand from the nearby Amagansett beaches and painted with triangles of archaic reds and orange, Nivola's sculptures evoke ritualistic masks and totems. Carving blocks of wet concrete with shims of wood, Nivola put a universal material to groundbreaking use for sculpture. Soon, his masonry techniques were noted by Eero Saarinen, José Luis Sert and Marcel Breuer, all of whom commissioned him to integrate his unique Arcadian sculpture into their concrete architecture of the 1960s and later.

In the following decades Nivola often worked on a monumental scale producing marble and concrete sculpture for public commissions of parks, corporate and university campuses, and museums in Europe and America. All along his studio practice allowed him to return to the intimate scale and direct techniques of working in wet clay, carving wax for the small bronzes he cast locally, and inventing iterative forms from



N31, 1980, marble, 5 3/8 x 5 3/8 3 3/4 "

the negative and positive molds and shapes his many methods required. During these years he made the dancing male figures in the show: one in clay and one in bronze. Side by side, one sees high and low artistic materials in a human comedy.

Nivola's expression of adoration of the female body in his sculpture is graceful and powerful. In the small black marble and bronze forms Nivola softens breasts and bellies into supple contours that become landscapes in the mind. Of particular note are the delicate, windswept female forms in pink terra cotta from 1982. Barely 7 inches high, their open vulnerability and attenuated forms recall Cycladic art.

Costantino Nivola fulfilled an artistic legacy that embraced a diverse range of mediums hard and soft, cast and fired, and most often carved in wax or wet concrete, ranging in scale from the diminutive to the monumental. Resourceful, prolific and tireless in his intellectual and artistic exploration of two and three-dimensional art forms, Nivola made a defining contribution to mid-century art and architecture.

Costantino Nivola's work is represented in noted international public collections including The National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, The Whitney Museum of American Art and the Parrish Art Museum. The Nivola Museum, founded in 1995 in his hometown of Orani, Sardinia, houses the most comprehensive collection of his oeuvre.

The estate of Costantino Nivola is represented by The Drawing Room gallery, which is located at 66H Newtown Lane in East Hampton, New York.

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