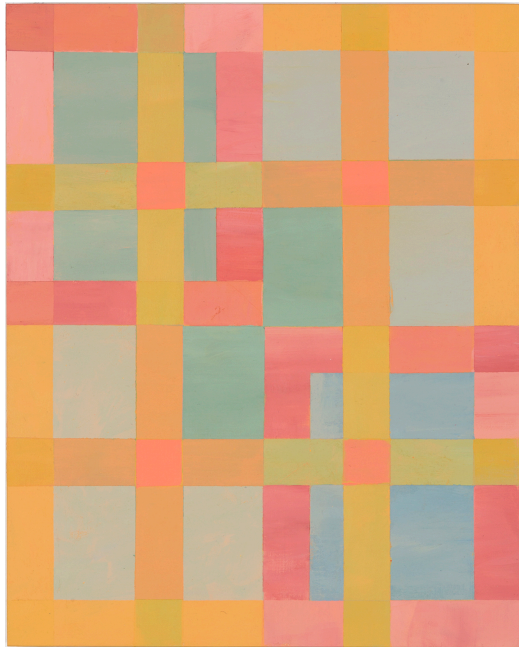


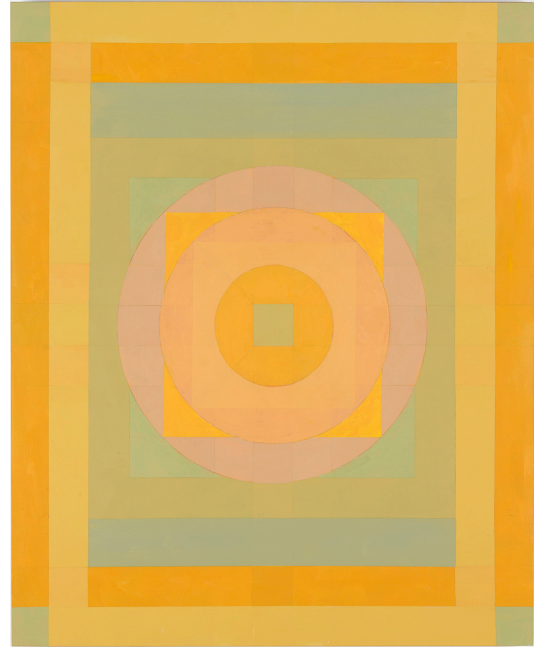
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2015

VINCENT LONGO paintings



Corner Point, 2014, acrylic on panel, 10 x 8 in



Yantra: Square Point, 2014, acrylic on wood, 23 ¾ x 19 ¾ in

Opening March 14 and on view through April 27, 2015 The Drawing Room is pleased to present two shows; **ELAINE GROVE sculpture** and **VINCENT LONGO paintings**. Both artists are longtime members of the vibrant community of creative artists on the East End. A separate press release is available for Elaine Grove's exhibition.

Vincent Longo grew up in an orphanage and went to St. Agatha's School where the principal, Sister Agatha, took him aside one day and, as she held his hands together, asked him what he thought they were meant for. They were both stunned when he answered at age twelve, "I am going to be an artist." When he was fourteen, his aunt adopted him into her large Italian family, and with her encouragement Vincent began taking art classes. In 1946, while attending Cooper Union, his instructor announced to the class that Vincent was already an artist.

Teaching at Bennington College from 1957 to 1967, and then at Hunter College, C.U.N.Y. until 2001, Longo influenced generations of artists while producing groundbreaking woodcuts and radiant paintings that have been exhibited over five decades in galleries and museums in New York and Europe. At age 92, Longo continues to mine his inspirations in his devoted daily painting practice. He has said, "I always feel that it's done for my own sense of finding something."

An early admirer and friend of the Abstract Expressionists with whom he shared New York City's dynamic mid-century art world, Longo chose a different path. "Mondrian had a more dominant influence on me than anyone else," he has noted.

Although his work reflects pictorial shifts made in the mid to late 20th century development of American art, Longo evolved a unique and purist instinct about painting. His dedication to geometric structure as a vehicle to

release lyrical, intuitive color sensations has taken many forms. Gene Baro, curator of Longo's exhibition at the Corcoran Museum of Art in 1970 observed, "Longo's work has the force of a primary engagement with the issues of perception."

His search for an understanding of the roots of abstraction began in 1951 when he won a Fulbright to spend a year in Florence. Traveling to meet his grandfather in a medieval town in southern Italy, Longo was discovering the roots of his heritage while exploring monuments of art and architecture. The conflation of experiences in Italy honed his sensibilities and focused his intellectual and artistic research on the syntax of ornament and abstract form in the Romanesque and Gothic environments. Later, in 1956, he traveled to France to seek out Neolithic sites in Brittany where the vitality of prehistoric signs and symbols sparked a lifelong passion to understand the archetypal roots of abstract forms. Imagining himself in a lineage of mark makers, Longo has noted, "Abstraction is a powerful means of symbol making."

After traveling extensively to prehistoric sites in Ireland, Malta and Brittany and examining tumuli and barrows for what he refers to as "the urgency to carve signs," Longo realized, "the idea that an enclosed center, leaving a trace that had some kind of significance that wasn't figural, became very developed in Neolithic art." The power of geometry in the ornament, art and architecture of these early civilizations inspired Longo's imaginative and painterly investigation of color and line going forward. His paintings became vessels of energy and light in shimmering linear structures.

Longo's current exhibition presents paintings from the past decade in which he has distilled his exploration of the quadrant and the power of the center in a ravishing series of rectilinear "lattices." These are Western mandalas, planned in concentric geometries and complementary hues that vibrate and glow. Bands of color overlap and intersect one another in paths evocative of labyrinthine meditations. The vitality of Longo's painted gestures belies the overall calm of these luminous spectacles.

Recalling stained glass windows he has experienced, Longo remembers the strong pattern of shadows on his New York studio walls cast by the latticed mullions of his skylight. Informed by a lifelong search for the origins of geometric abstraction, Longo's faith in the act of painting to resolve personal, intellectual and spiritual concerns is a gift to us all.

Vincent Longo's work is represented in significant public and private collections including the Whitney Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., Victoria and Albert Museum in London, National Museum in Stockholm and the Biblioteque Nationale in Paris.

Gallery hours: Monday, Friday and Saturday 10-5; Sunday 11-5

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