

**Charlotte Posenenske***Line and Space*

June 6 - July 27, 2013

Opening June 6 at 6 p.m.

*The things I make are variable, as simple as possible, reproducible. They are components of a space, since they are like building elements, they can always be rearranged into new combinations or positions, thus, they alter the space. I leave this alteration to the consumer who thereby again and anew participates in the creation. The simplicity of basic geometric forms is beautiful and suited to the demonstration of the principles of rationalized modifications.* Charlotte Posenenske, *Artist's Manifesto*

Born to a German Jewish family in 1930 and active in the late 1950's and 60's, Charlotte Posenenske worked as an early German painter and minimal artist before leaving art to pursue sociology in 1968. Posthumously exhibited at *documenta 12* in 2007, interest in her work was recently revived in a very big way during the last decade, placing her among the leaders of German minimalism.

Before the conception of her serial, variable modular sculptures, the artist worked as a painter. Clearly impressed by Cézanne, she began with impressionistic painting before moving on to abstract gestural painting, stripe pictures, and structural sculptural pictures, reminiscent of Piet Mondrian in their colors and conception of spacing, or of Lucio Fontana in their irregular distribution of marks on the canvas and constant elusion of specific formation. Her "Spritzbilder" series, experimenting with the reproducible medium spray paint, provides another example of the artist striving to turn away from subject matter without focusing on individual expression to the degree of her Informel and Abstract contemporaries.

Speaking of her sculptural pictures, Posenenske explained, "They are reminiscent of impressions from our technical environment: Illumination effects, fast driving, spaces of roads or air that narrow, or bulge forward or bend backwards. At the same time, they are reminiscent of our technological environment – suggesting parts of automotive chassis, billboards, warning signs whose production is similar in terms of technology."

Sharing the constructivist vision, the artist often experimented with space as a rejection of art as autonomous practice. Exploring different techniques of applying paint with her striped pictures, using felt markers, adhesive strips, colored pencils, chalk, and spatulas, Posenenske realized a series of works with varied brushstrokes in differing orientations and relationships to one another. Like a diagram of spatial possibilities, these works' striking similarity to her later modular reliefs provide a window into her engagement with space before sculpture and a clear link to those sculptures' democratically manipulable modularity, reproducibility, and serialism.

Breaking with art in 1968 and working as a sociologist until her death in 1985, Posenenske explained in her *Artist's Manifesto*: "Art is a commodity of transient contemporary significance, yet, the market is minute, and prestige and prices rise the less topical the supply is. It is difficult for me to come to terms with the fact that art can contribute nothing to solving urgent social problems."

This is the artist's fourth exhibition at the gallery and the first of her earlier works. A full color catalogue will be published on the occasion.