

ANTHONY CARO: first drawings last sculptures

December 8, 2016 – February 4, 2017

1018 Madison Avenue & 534 West 26th Street, New York

Opening Reception: Thursday, December 8, 6 to 8 pm at 534 West 26th Street



NEW YORK, October 19, 2016 - Mitchell-Innes & Nash is pleased to present two simultaneous exhibitions of sculptures and works on paper by the late British artist **Sir Anthony Caro** (1924 – 2013), staged across the gallery's Chelsea and Madison Avenue locations. On view starting December 8, 2016, this is the artist's first exhibition in the US since his death in 2013 and his sixth with Mitchell-Innes & Nash, who has exclusively represented Caro in New York for 14 years.

The exhibition features work spanning Caro's sixty-year career and highlights the artist's fearless and constant innovation throughout his lifetime. In Chelsea, six large-scale steel and Plexiglas sculptures from 2011 through 2013 will be juxtaposed against four colored paintings on paper from the 1950s, on view for the first time in the US. In the Madison Avenue gallery, four steel, bronze, and brass sculptures will be on view alongside a selection of gestural black-and-white ink works on paper from the 1950s. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with a new essay

by Julius Bryant, curator of *Caro: Close Up* at the Yale Center for British Art (2012) and *Celebration of the Life and Achievements of Sir Anthony Caro* at the Tate Britain (2014).

In an interview with the *New York Times* in 2007, Caro said, "I'm not interested in doing old things. I'm always trying to push it and see what happens."ⁱ True to these words, Caro constantly pushed himself to experiment with different sculptural materials until his death in 2013.

Widely recognized as one of the most significant sculptors of the 20th century, Caro first rose to prominence in the 1960s with imposing painted steel sculptures freed from the pedestal, exhibited directly on the floor. In a tribute to the artist, Sir Nicholas Serota, former director of the Tate, writes, "In the sixties [Caro] established a new language for sculpture in a series of elegant, arresting, abstract steel sculptures placed directly on the ground. His development of this vocabulary, building on the legacy of Picasso, but introducing brilliant color and a refined use of shape and line, was enormously influential in Europe and America."ⁱⁱ

Throughout the 80s and 90s, Caro continued to introduce new materials into his work including silver, iron, bronze, brass, ceramic, terracotta, and wood. In 2010 at the age of 87, Caro introduced yet another new material: Plexiglas. Frustrated by the fragility of glass, Caro turned to Plexiglas as a means to incorporate color and transparency in his

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sculptures. In *Terminus* (2013), part of the exhibition at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, a bright red piece of frosted Plexiglas bisects a steel and wood composition. The artificially colored red Plexiglas highlights the natural red of the rusted steel. *Autumn Rhapsody* (2011/12), in which Caro uses a striking yellow Plexiglas to cover and complement the painted yellow steel structure beneath, will also be on view.

These colorful steel and Plexiglas sculptures will be displayed alongside equally colorful brush, ink, and paint works on newsprint. In these little known works on paper, black outlines of figures are filled in with blocks of color like stained-glass windows. Despite having been created more than 50 years apart, the formal and conceptual link between the colored works on paper from the 1950s and the recent Plexiglas sculptures is undeniable.

In his catalogue essay for the exhibition, Bryant recounts visiting Caro's studio in 2010 and studying the colored works on paper together. Caro, not having seen the works in years, was taken aback by his own early, and previously forgotten, drawings, and immediately remarked that he would use them as inspiration going forward. He began work on the Plexiglas series the following year.

A similar dialogue between Caro's works on paper and sculptures is examined at Mitchell-Innes & Nash's Madison Ave gallery, with a focus on line. A selection of black-and-white drawings featuring expressionistically painted images of bulls and men, which were exhibited in Caro's retrospectives at the Museo Correr, Venice (2013) and the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven (2012), highlight the linear qualities of the steel, bronze and brass sculptures on view.

Ms. Mitchell-Innes first met Caro as a student when she worked in his studio in the 1970s and maintained a life-long relationship with him up until his death in 2013. The gallery's first exhibition with the artist, in 2002, featured the Barbarians series, consisting of 6 large-scale sculptures of riders on horseback made from wood, steel and vaulting horses. She last visited him the week before his death when he was concluding the current body of Plexiglas work.

About the Artist:

Sir Anthony Caro's (1924-2013) prestigious career spanned six decades, during which he received numerous honors, critical acclaim, and widespread renown as one of Britain's most important sculptors. Knighted by the Queen of England in 1987, Caro was appointed to the Order of Merit (OM) in 2000. Caro's work is represented in over 150 museums and other public collections worldwide, and he received a lifetime achievement award from the International Sculpture Center in 1997.

After working as an assistant to Henry Moore and teaching art in London from the 1950s onwards, Caro first came to international recognition in the 1960s with his large-scale, abstract sculptures. These early works were among the first freestanding sculptures to be set directly on the ground. The series was revolutionary for confronting viewers head-on at a time when most monumental sculpture was still displayed on pedestals. It was during this period when Caro began his strong associations with the United States. In the 1960s Caro taught at Vermont's Bennington College, and in 1982 he founded Triangle Artists' Workshop in Pine Plains, New York, where he provided a working environment for painters and sculptors from around the world.

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Caro is the only contemporary sculptor to have exhibited at The National Gallery, London (1998). Other major exhibitions include retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1975); the Trajan Markets, Rome (1992); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (1995); Tate Britain, London (2005); three museums in Pas-de-Calais, France (2008) to accompany the opening of his Chapel of Light at Bourbourg; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2011); The Yale Center for British Art, New Haven (2012); the Museo Correr, Venice (2013) and again at the Tate Britain, London (2014). His work has been collected by museums around the world.

About Mitchell-Innes & Nash

Founded by Lucy Mitchell-Innes and David Nash, who previously headed the worldwide Contemporary and Impressionist & Modern Art divisions of Sotheby's, Mitchell-Innes & Nash places exemplary contemporary artists within a historical context, revealing a continuity of ideas and aesthetic virtuosity from the Modern era through the present day.

Mitchell-Innes & Nash's renowned exhibition program, in both their Madison Avenue and Chelsea locations, fosters excellence within artistic practice, while forging an informed dialogue between emerging and established internationally recognized artists. From acclaimed surveys of 20th century masters, such as Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Jay DeFeo, Willem de Kooning, Leon Kossoff, Kenneth Noland, Roy Lichtenstein, and Nicolas de Stael, to solo exhibitions of Sarah Braman, Keltie Ferris, Daniel Lefcourt, William Pope.L, Martha Rosler, and Jessica Stockholder, Mitchell-Innes & Nash has proven expertise in both advancing the careers of emerging artists and maintaining the superior standard set by established artists.

Caption: ANTHONY CARO, *Alpine*, 2012, Steel and yellow Perspex, 59 1/2 by 49 1/4 by 26 in.

Listings Information:

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ⁱ Vogel, Caro. "A Passage for the Master of Heavy Metal" *The New York Times* July 25, 2007: Art & Design. Nytimes.com

ⁱⁱ Serota, Nicholas. "Nicholas Serota's tribute to Anthony Caro". *The Tate* October 24, 2013. Tate.org.uk