

Timothy Taylor Gallery

TONY SMITH: SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

3 September – 4 October 2014

Timothy Taylor Gallery is proud to present the first solo exhibition in the UK since 2004 by the great American artist and architect Tony Smith. Widely recognised as a pioneer of American contemporary art, Smith's influence spans Abstract Expressionism to Land Art and Conceptualism. His peers included Jackson Pollock, Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko who went on to redefine the possibilities of abstract art. Significantly, Smith's use of industrial manufacturing techniques anticipated Minimalism and, much later, the slacker attitude of the YBAs.

"I didn't make drawings. I just picked up the phone and ordered it." – Tony Smith, 1966

This exhibition, his third at the gallery, is an opportunity to re-examine Smith's rarely seen early paintings and intuitively composed sculptures cast in bronze.

The sculptures presented originate from cardboard and wooden maquettes. A refined selection of polyhedra models (cube, rhomboid, tetrahedron) were used as building blocks, before being reconfigured into the final forms. They are primary structures built with a harmony of balance and mass. The sculptures have figurative associations despite their pristine surfaces. For example, *Smog* (1969–70), could be a chemical molecule or a multi-legged insect. Its geometric rhythm wavers between austere, cerebral construction and animation. As Robert Storr comments:

[Smith taps] "into our innate pattern making capacities... [where] mathematical elegance is a function of procedural accuracy and economy."

Smith's paintings, which precede his sculptural works, similarly deal with equilibrium through intersecting bodies of vibrant colours. While these anticipate the sculptures with their instinctive arrangements of form in space, the artist eventually abandoned the organic and bright shapes for clean geometric lines and a uniform black finish.

Tony Smith (1912–1980, New Jersey) was included in *Primary Structures* at the Jewish Museum, New York, one of the seminal exhibitions of the 1960s, which helped launch his career. In 1998 the Museum of Modern Art, New York, mounted a major retrospective of his sculpture, architecture, and painting. A European retrospective followed in 2002, arranged by Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno in Spain, and in 2010 the Menil Collection, Houston, organised a retrospective of his works on paper. More recently, institutions around the world celebrated Smith's 100th birthday with special exhibitions, including an outdoor installation in New York's Bryant Park.

Smith's works are included in significant collections such as the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; the Menil Collection, Houston, USA; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, USA; the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark; and the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterloo, The Netherlands.

This exhibition is presented in collaboration with Matthew Marks Gallery, New York.

For further information, please contact Timothy Taylor Gallery, mail@timothytaylorgallery.com, or telephone +44 (0)20 7409 3344.

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'Smog', 1969–70
Cast bronze, black patina
12 x 113 x 79 in. /
31 x 287 x 201 cm
ed.5/6
TE003769



'The Fourth Sign', 1974
Cast bronze, black patina
22 1/2 x 55 1/2 x 38 in. /
57 x 141 x 96 cm
ed.3/6
TE003770



'Light Box', 1961
Cast bronze, black patina
26 1/4 x 20 x 22 in. /
67 x 51 x 56 cm
ed.6/9
TE003765



'Source', 1967
Cast bronze, black patina
12 1/2 x 31 x 30 1/2 in. /
32 x 79 x 77 cm
ed.4/9
TE003768



'Untitled', 1960
Oil on canvas
42 x 60 in. /
107 x 152 cm
T009621



'Untitled', 1956
Oil on canvas
48 x 42 in. /
122 x 107 cm
T009618



'Cross', 1960–62
Cast bronze, black patina
32 x 32 x 32 in. /
81 x 81 x 81 cm
ed.AP
TE003764



'Generation', 1965
Cast bronze, black patina
30 x 35 1/2 x 35 1/2 in. /
76 x 90 x 90 cm
ed.6/6
TE003767



'Wall', 1964
Cast bronze, black patina
16 x 36 x 5 1/4 in. /
41 x 91 x 13 cm
ed.3/9
TE003766



'Untitled', 1957
Oil on canvas
24 x 39 in. /
61 x 76 cm
T009619



'Untitled', 1960
Oil on canvas
30 1/8 x 24 in. /
77 x 61 cm
T009620