

# PRESS RELEASE

# MILTON RESNICK Boards

Reception Thursday February 22 from 6 to 8 pm

Exhibition continues through March 31, 2018



Untitled 1984 oil on board  
40 x 30 in 101.6 x 76.2 cm

Cheim & Read is pleased to present *Milton Resnick: Boards*, an exhibition of thickly painted, mostly monochromatic works that Resnick made during the 1980s on wax-impregnated, corrugated boards. The show will open on February 22 and run through March 31, accompanied by a catalogue with an essay by Geoffrey Dorfman. This is the third solo exhibition of Resnick's work at Cheim & Read since the gallery obtained exclusive representation of his estate in 2006.

In 1981, at the age of 64, Resnick purchased a stack of 140 boards, measuring 40 by 30 inches, after having finished three series of huge abstractions, *Planets*, *Elephants*, and *Straws in the Wind*, many of which took months to complete. Resnick's plan for these relatively small-format boards, as Geoffrey Dorfman states in his catalogue essay, was to use them as "a means of testing whether he finally understood something about what he had been doing all this time. If his suspicions were correct, they should arrive much more rapidly, perhaps in three — maybe even as little as two — working sessions."

The painter David Reed has written in his essay, "The Unsettling Mark," that Resnick used the term "studio paintings" for works that were meant "as experiments, attempts to break new ground." Done in earthy tones of green, ocher, brown, bronze, and black, the *Board* paintings are grouped in four evocatively titled series: *Straws*, *Burned O's*, *Scows*, and *Bark*. With their restless, raw energy and rich impastos, Resnick's *Boards* can be viewed as his quintessential studio paintings — arenas where his ideas could be worked out with speed and concision.

Dorfman writes in his essay, "he saw fit to title a number of them, and the names he chose — *Straws*, *Burned O's*, *Scows*, and *Bark* seem to loosely suggest detritus. A scow is a flat bottom boat that hauls ore, sand, or refuse; straw and bark suggest loose extraneous material, and *Burned O* summons up some kind of scorched emptiness that no longer serves any purpose. Altogether they perhaps do provide a measure of entry into his state of mind."

Milton Resnick was born in Bratslav, Ukraine, in 1917, and immigrated to the United States in 1922 as his family escaped the turmoil of the Russian Revolution and Civil War. He studied commercial art at Pratt Institute and transferred to the American Artists School to focus on painting. After a brief stint in the Works Progress Administration Art Project, he was drafted into the US Army, engaging in fierce combat in the European Theater of World War II. Following his discharge, he studied at the Académie Julian in Paris under the GI Bill. Considered the youngest member of the first-generation Abstract Expressionists, Resnick maintained friendships with Arshile Gorky and Willem de Kooning, and married the painter Pat Passlof (1928–2011) in 1961.

Resnick's work is represented in many American and international collections, including: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio; the National Gallery, Ottawa, Canada; the Australian National Gallery, Canberra, Australia; the Malmö Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden; and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas, among many others. Recent exhibitions include a large survey at Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ (2014), and solo shows at Gallery Paule Anglim, San Francisco (2012), and Cheim & Read, New York (2008 and 2011).

On April 28, the Milton Resnick and Pat Passlof Foundation will open to the public with their inaugural exhibition *Milton Resnick: Paintings 1937–1987*. The Foundation is located in Resnick's final studio, a former synagogue at 87 Eldridge Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where he died on March 12, 2004. This fifty-year survey is drawn primarily from the Foundation's holdings, with additional loans from public and private collections. Subsequent shows will include a survey of paintings by Pat Passlof and exhibitions from other painters working in the Abstract Expressionist tradition. A simultaneous exhibition of Resnick's work on paper will also be presented at Miguel Abreu Gallery, opening March 20.