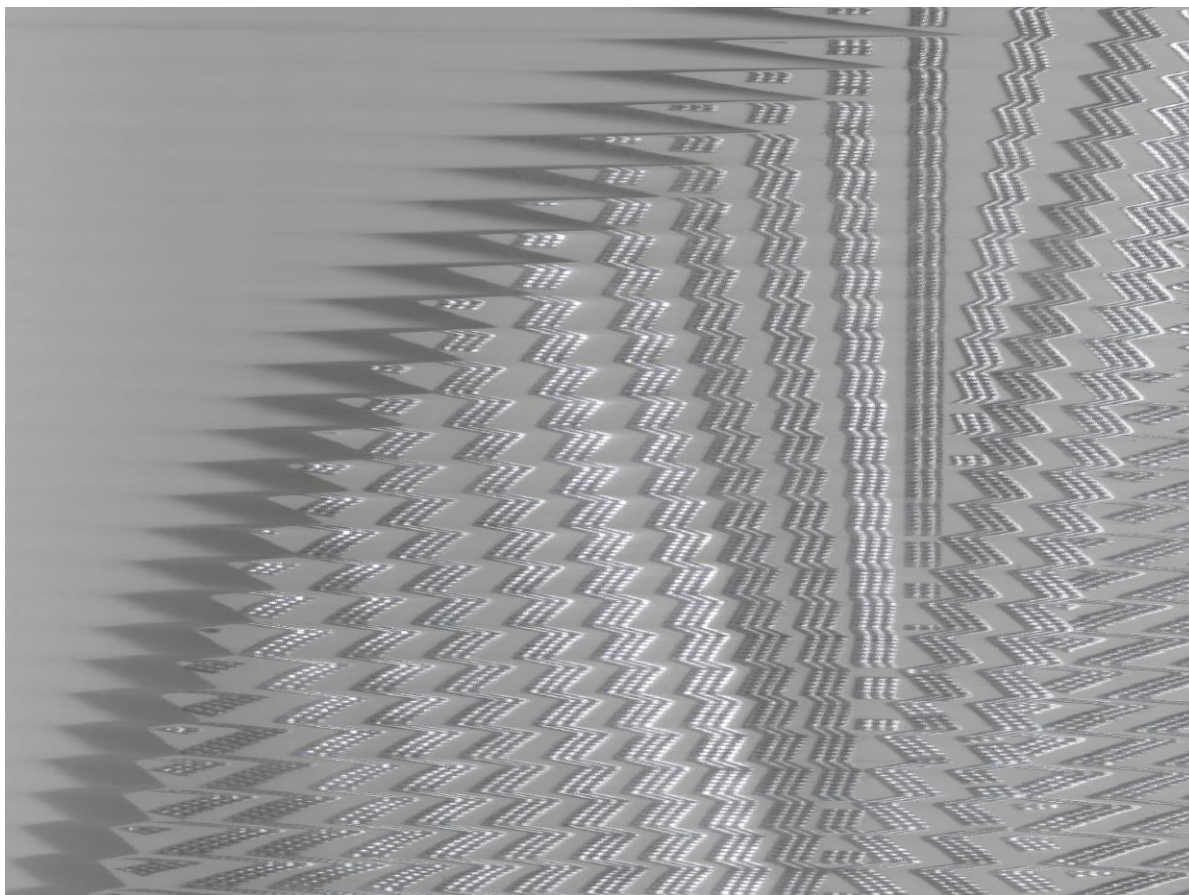


# BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Heinz Mack, *Silber-Rotor*, 1964-80 (detail), aluminium, Plexiglas, wood, electrical accessories, 154 x 154 x 24 cm. (60 5/8 x 60 5/8 x 9 1/2 in.)

# HEINZ MACK

## ZERO & MORE

6 FEBRUARY – 10 APRIL 2015

PRIVATE VIEW MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY, 6-8PM

Heinz Mack, co-founder of the ZERO movement and artist behind the striking *The Sky Over Nine Columns* installation shown in Venice in 2014, will be given a major solo exhibition at Ben Brown Fine Arts in London this winter. **ZERO & More** will feature a vibrant dialogue between iconic works from the artist's ZERO period (1950-60s), and new paintings and sculpture produced over the last five years.

Formed in collaboration with Otto Piene, a fellow student at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, the ZERO movement departed from the gestural language of European abstract expressionism and sought to reclaim an artistic purity from the ravages of the Second World War. Characterised by a minimalist, monochromatic aesthetic and a reverence for the transformative power of light, Mack described the movement as 'the adventure of seeking out and discovering the still-white spaces on the map of art.' This openness of spirit gained ZERO the admiration of artists including Gerhard Richter, Robert Smithson and James Turrell, united in their desire to challenge the traditional dictums of art making.

The exhibition celebrates the range and depth of Mack's works. Termed 'instruments of light' by the artist himself, each explores the myriad values of colour and motion the medium makes possible.

In his early work, Mack brings a vibrating force to black and white through a tension of dynamic and static elements. Through this rhythmic chiaroscuro, the artist creates a remarkable colouristic impression, as in *Komposition I* (1957), where a jagged passage of black is offset a wash of grey. An effect of subtle undulation animates fine vertical lines in cloth work *Vibration* (1957-58), a delicate contrast to the textured optical spectacle of *Untitled* (1959).

This skilled rendering of movement is developed further in Mack's sculptures and reliefs. Rocket-shaped work *Stele* (1960) is an imposing manipulation of polished stainless steel, while in *Kleine Lichtstruktur* (1966) dented aluminium forms silver reliefs of reflected light. These works invite a contemplative state the artist has named 'ideal visualisation', a spiritual appreciation of luminous objects. Such luminosity is central to *Silber-Rotor* (1964-1980), where serrated Plexiglas draws light into multiple crosscurrents.

Mack returned to painting in the early 1990s after moving away from the medium for more than two decades. The iridescent Mediterranean surroundings of the island of Ibiza inspired a vast exploration of the colour spectrum and saw the beginning of his 'Chromatic Constellations' works. *Empire Couleur (Chromatic Constellation)* (2014) demonstrates the artist's investigation of prismatic refraction, allowing shade and colour transitions to create the illusion of movement on canvas. Mack uses this same elemental modulation in his most recent black and white works, *Untitled (Chromatic Constellation)* (2014), creating a dynamic play of patchwork.

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Heinz Mack was born in 1931 in Lollar, Germany, and attended the Düsseldorf State Academy of Arts during the 1950s. He subsequently earned a degree in philosophy at the University of Cologne. Together with Otto Piene, Mack founded the ZERO movement in 1957 in Düsseldorf, later joined by Günther Uecker. His works have been shown in nearly 300 solo exhibitions as well as a number of group shows, and are currently represented in 136 public collections.

He famously participated in Documenta II in 1959 and Documenta III in 1966 and represented The Federal Republic of Germany at the XXXVth Venice Biennale in 1970. In 2006-07 he was honoured at the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin's Pergamon Museum with an exhibition attracting 120,000 visitors. June 2014 witnessed the unveiling of Mack's sculpture ensemble *The Sky Over Nine Columns* in Venice. His work is currently being shown in the 2014-15 exhibition *ZERO: Countdown to Tomorrow, 1950s-60s* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. A related exhibition will be presented at Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin and Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam later in the year.

Mack has received numerous awards for his work, including the *Premio Marzotto* in 1963 and the 1st *Prix Arts Plastiques* at the 4<sup>th</sup> Paris Biennale in 1965. He also received the Grand Federal Cross of Merit with Star of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2011. The artist lives and works in Mönchengladbach, Germany, and Ibiza, Spain.

## **BEN BROWN FINE ARTS**

Founded in 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts is located on Brook's Mews in the heart of Mayfair. The gallery has prominently positioned itself on the contemporary art scene with the sole UK representation of artists such as Ron Arad, Tony Bevan, Candida Höfer, Claude and François-Xavier Lalanne, Gavin Turk, Not Vital and Heinz Mack. Also renowned for its strong expertise in 20th century Italian art, the gallery has been exhibiting the work of Lucio Fontana and Alighiero Boetti, amongst others, since its inception. In 2009 Ben Brown Fine Arts took their first step in an international expansion with the opening of an exhibition space in Hong Kong.

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Monday to Friday: 11am - 6pm

Saturdays: 10.30am - 2.30pm