

**BERNARD COHEN**

ABOUT NOW: PAINTINGS AND PRINTS 2000-2015

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Private View: Thursday 15 October 6-8 PM

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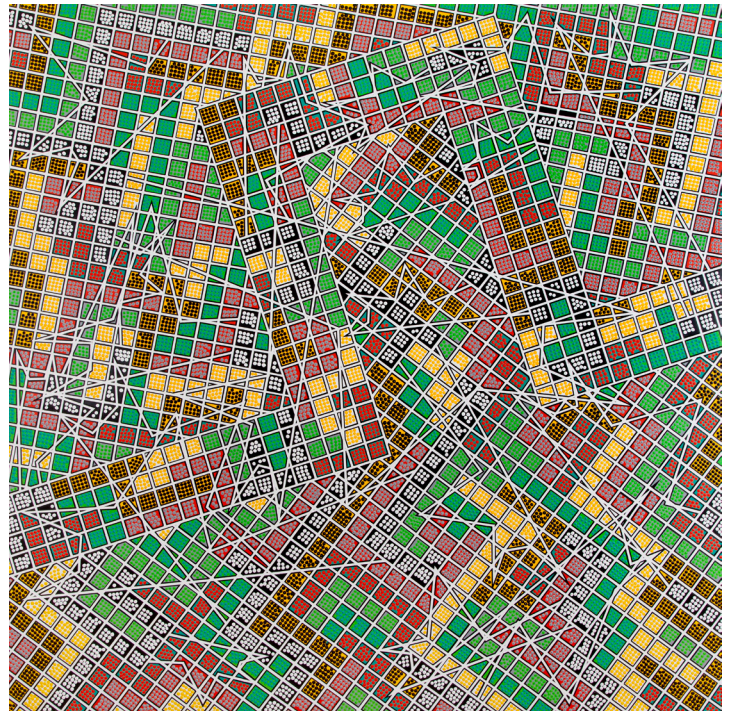
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*I will not begin the painting until something I have never seen or considered before comes into my mind's eye, and then I will focus on it and the means I shall use to bring it to life on the canvas.* – Bernard Cohen

Flowers Gallery is pleased to present a survey of works produced over the past fifteen years by Bernard Cohen. *About Now: Paintings and Prints 2000-2015* traces the continued progression of Cohen's complex pictorial language, in which densely interwoven lattices of line, shape, pattern and colour are explored as a way of processing and recording experience.

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive catalogue *About Now* written by Ian McKay, drawing attention to enduring and, in some cases, overlooked themes present throughout the artist's work.

Cohen's paintings take their starting point from simple underlying structural compositions, which divide the canvas into distinct linear pathways and segments, such as crossed bars or architectural elevations. Superimposing intricate networks of lines, dots and planes of colour, with recurring figurative motifs such as doors, windows, aeroplanes, railway tracks and fragments of the human form, Cohen creates dizzying arrangements, within which an internal sense of order is revealed to the viewer gradually over time.



*Middle Distance*, 2015, Acrylic on linen, 182.9 x 182.9 cm

In the painting entitled *Reflexus I*, 2002, lines are warped and fluid, forming organic matrices which fold in and back on themselves. Cohen describes the painting, whose title comes from the Latin, meaning 'a bending back', as "a looking back, turning back, going back and seeing, through what has been, to what went before." This sense of 'looking back' also appears in paintings such as *In Black and White Time*, 2004, in which an octagonal aperture or window provides a view of a preserved and unembellished first layer of paint. As Ian McKay proposes, the dense spatial complexity of Cohen's work causes time and memory to become conflated: "*In the sensory overload of the moment that we first encounter such a Cohen painting, time shifts, becomes elastic as it were, as we grasp a simultaneous multiplicity of spatio-temporal possibilities.*"

According to Cohen, his paintings can be seen to contain multiple paintings within their composition, held together by an overall organizing principle of rhythm. The painting *Pictures at an Exhibition*, 2003, takes its title from Mussorgsky's piano suite of the same name, in which the music follows the progress of a viewer around a gallery. Mussorgsky represented the viewer's experience of each artwork by variations of key, mood and tempo; similarly within Cohen's painting, the nuances of colour and line in each layer alter the flow and tonal balance of the whole.

The works presented in *About Now* reflect an unrelenting process of discovery, and an attempt to generate and unravel the full complexity of life, which McKay describes as an "ongoing search for meaning in its broadest, most human sense."

For further information and images please contact Hannah Hughes - Hannah@flowersgallery.com / 0207 920 7777

## ABOUT BERNARD COHEN

Bernard Cohen currently lives and works in London. Born in London in 1933, Bernard Cohen studied at the Slade School of Fine Art from 1951-1954. In 1988 he was appointed as Slade Professor and Director of the Slade School of Fine Art, University College, London.

Cohen came to prominence during the 1960s and has since exhibited widely. Ten of Cohen's paintings are in the Tate collection, and *Early Mutation Green No. II*, 1960 is currently on display at Tate Britain. His first solo exhibition with Flowers Gallery was in 1998, and in 2007 the gallery hosted *Bernard Cohen: Paintings from the Sixties*, focusing on an important period in Cohen's artistic development. In 2009, *Work of Six Decades* celebrated his career by bringing together a selection of key works. A comprehensive book accompanied this exhibition.

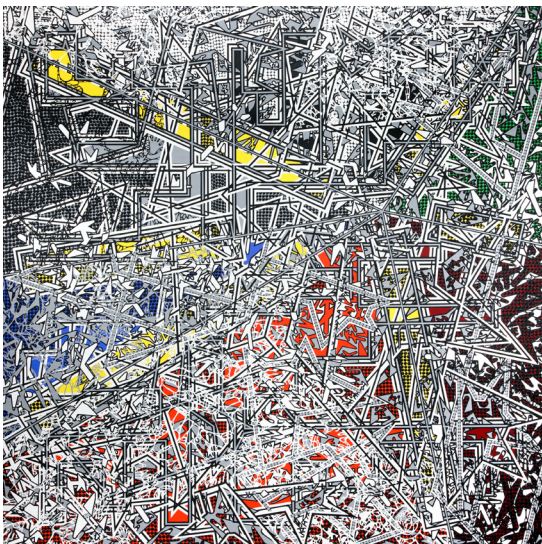
Other important shows include *Artist in Focus, Six Paintings from the Tate Gallery Collection*, The Tate Gallery, London in 1995; *Stroll on! Aspects of British Abstract Art in the Sixties*, Mamco, Musée d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva in 2006; and *Abstraction and the Human Figure* at CAM's British Art Collection, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon in 2010. Cohen was invited by Michael Craig-Martin to exhibit at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, 2015.



*Pictures at an Exhibition*, 2003, Acrylic on linen,  
65.5 x 65.5 cm



*Reflexus I*, 2002, Acrylic on linen,  
102 x 127 cm



*About Now*, 2005-2006, Acrylic on linen,  
183 x 183 cm



*Place Games*, 2013, Acrylic on linen,  
137 x 167.5 cm

## NOTESTO EDITORS

Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 6pm.

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