

FLOWERS

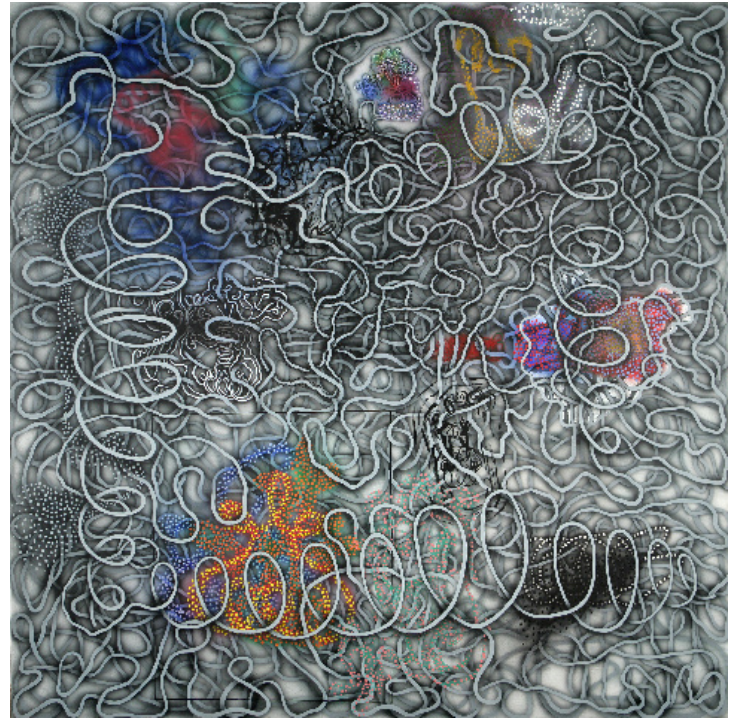
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

BERNARD COHEN *WORK OF SIX DECADES*

SEPTEMBER 16 - OCTOBER 22 2011

OPENING RECEPTION
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 15 6 - 8pm



Fable 1965 Acrylic on linen 244 x 244 cm / 96 x 96 in

Flowers Gallery is delighted to announce a survey exhibition of paintings by the renowned British painter **Bernard Cohen**. *Work of Six Decades* brings together an exceptional body of work from the 1950s to the present day to celebrate **Bernard Cohen's** enduring career in the arts. The exhibition will run from September 16th through October 22nd, with an opening reception for the artist on Thursday, September 15th, from 6-8pm.

Born in London in 1933, **Cohen** was educated in the post-war climate of change and cultural upheaval. This era, charged with the reverie of reconstruction, the ambiguity of lost identity and the playfulness of flux, would come to inform his work for the remainder of the century. On graduating from the Slade School of Fine Art in 1954, **Cohen** travelled to Paris, Madrid and Rome before arriving at the cusp of a new era in painting. The 1960s, for **Cohen**, "followed the 40s and 50s as years of light following years of darkness."

The metaphor of light is central to **Cohen's** understanding of his practice over this period: "during the 60s," he reveals, "I became consciously concerned with clarity and obscurity in painting, and what I call 'almost order' and 'almost chaos'." The artist's exploration of the borderland between order and chaos is evident in works that revel in fragmentation as decoration, and shun a definitive subject or genre.

Building on these themes, **Cohen's** later works evolved into compositions of textured applications of layers of paint and interwoven arrays of lines and forms, creating a complex and vibrating geography. The models for what **Cohen** calls his "pictorial theatre" are numerous, ranging from the black and white painted pottery of the ancient Mimbres of New Mexico, the Romanesque frescos at Berze-la-Ville, Velasquez' *Las Meninas*, and Monet's *Nymphaeas* rooms at the Orangerie in Paris.

Bernard Cohen's work came to prominence during the 1960s – five of his major paintings from this period were included in the 2005-2006 exhibition *Stroll On, Aspects of British Abstract Art in the 1960s* at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Geneva. He has exhibited regularly in the UK and abroad. From 1998-2000 he was the Director of the Slade School of Art in London. Ten of **Cohen's** paintings are in the permanent collection of the Tate Gallery, London, and his work is held in many other public collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; and the Mellon Collection at Yale University.

A comprehensive monograph, *Bernard Cohen: Work of Six Decades*, with essays by the late Norbert Lynton and Ian McKay, will accompany the exhibition.

For further information and images, please contact Brent Beamon: 212.439.1700 / brent@flowersgalleries.com

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