

FREDERICK
HAMMERSLEY

Organics and Cut-ups, 1963-1965

12 September – 18 October 2014

Opening reception:
Friday, 12 September, 6-8 pm*Valet parking*

Bernice, #10c 1965
oil on cb panel, 21 5/8 x 17 5/8 in. (54.9 x 44.8 cm) framed

Venice, CA – L.A. Louver is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Frederick Hammersley (1919-2009). The exhibition includes organic abstractions, as well as rarely seen collage paintings, known as “cut-ups,” made by Hammersley between 1963 and 1965.

During the early 1960s, Hammersley primarily pursued an intuitive approach to his work, creating small-scale curvilinear abstractions that he painted in oil on linen, Masonite or chipboard. These organic paintings largely pre-date the planned formality of Hammersley’s geometric compositions that he painted with a palette knife, and with which he became identified in the 1970s. Concurrent with the organic paintings, Hammersley made collages, beginning 21 February 1964. He titled his first collage work *Cut-up*, and the title now serves to describe these works. To make a “cut-up,” Hammersley took a completed abstract painting, cut it into squares or oblong forms, rearranged the parts, and mounted it in its re-formed composition. Whereas the organic abstractions are primarily horizontal in orientation, the cut-ups have a vertical format. Hammersley pursued this collage activity during two brief periods, the first in February 1964, and the second almost exactly a year later. Only sixteen cut-ups are known to exist, of which eight are included in the exhibition, alongside a selection of organic paintings from the same period. Most of these works have not been exhibited since their inclusion in the artist’s solo show at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in 1965. Exuberant forms, and a lively, fresh palette are hallmarks of both the organic and cut-up paintings. All have wood frames, handmade by the artist and unique to each composition.

Born in Salt Lake City in 1919, Hammersley studied art at the Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles. In 1942, he was drafted into the army, but returned to the US in 1946 to resume his studies, subsidized by the GI Bill. Hammersley went on to teach (at Jepson, Pomona College, Pasadena Art Museum and Chouinard), and throughout the 1960s exhibited widely in California, with solo shows at the Pasadena Art Museum, 1961; the California Palace of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco, and Occidental College, Los Angeles, 1962; the La Jolla Museum of Art, 1963, and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in 1965. In 1968, Hammersley accepted a teaching post at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and while he stayed at the university for only three years, remained in Albuquerque until his death in 2009.



Before + after, #2 1964
oil on cb panel, 26 x 30 in. (66 x 76.2 cm) framed

From the 1970s through the 1990s, Hammersley's presence in L.A. was rare. However, with the exhibition *I've Been Here all the While* at L.A. Louver in 2000, coupled with a retrospective that traveled from the Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe to the University of New Mexico Art Museum, Albuquerque and the Laguna Art Museum, Laguna Beach, CA in 1999-2000, a national audience re-engaged with Hammersley's work. Hammersley's inclusion in *Beau Monde: Toward a Redeemed Cosmopolitanism at Site Santa Fe* in 2002, and *The Los Angeles School of Painting: Karl Benjamin, Lorser Feitelson, Frederick Hammersley, June Harwood, Helen Lundeberg and John McLaughlin*, 2004-2005 at the Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art and Design, both curated by Dave Hickey, further augmented his reputation. Pomona College Museum of Art's *Hunches, Geometrics, Organics: Paintings by Frederick Hammersley*, in 2007, was Hammersley's last solo museum exhibition before he died in 2009. Inclusion in more recent exhibitions have brought renewed critical attention to the artist, most notably *Pacific Standard Time: Crosscurrents in L.A. Paintings and Sculpture*, 1950-1970, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 2011 (traveled), *Frederick Hammersley: Portraits, Abstractions, and the In-Between* at Pomona Museum of Art, 2014 and *Four Abstract Classicists*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2014.

A 40-page catalogue entitled *Frederick Hammersley Organics and Cut-ups 1963-1965* is published in conjunction with L.A. Louver's exhibition. The catalogue includes the essay "Consequences of Method" by the modernist art historian and curator E. Luanne McKinnon, Ph.D., and a foreword by Elizabeth East, Director, L.A. Louver. The catalogue also includes full color reproductions of all the paintings in the exhibition, and is available free upon request. Learn more at www.lalouer.com/Hammersley.

Conversation Evening, Thursday, 18 September 2014, 7 p.m.

E. Luanne McKinnon and Alan Phenix, scientist, Getty Conservation Institute will join Hunter Drohojowska-Philp to discuss the work of Frederick Hammersley. Free to all, but with limited seating; reservations are requested. Please RSVP to 310-822-4955 or rsvp@lalouer.com.

Concurrently on view at L.A. Louver, 12 September - 18 October

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For more information and visuals, please contact Christina Carlos, L.A. Louver, 45 North Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, USA, www.lalouer.com
tel: 310-822-4955; fax: 310-821-7529; e-mail: Christina@lalouer.com Gallery Hours: Tues - Sat, 10 - 6 PM; Validated parking available

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