



# MARK DI SUVERO

## PAINTING & SCULPTURE

1 May – 8 June 2019  
(no opening reception)

### SUMMER CELEBRATION

Honoring Mark di Suvero and the Venice Family Clinic

**Wednesday, 5 June, 6-8pm**

Free event. Open to the public.

left: Untitled, ca. 2016-2018, acrylic, metallic and phosphorescent paint on canvas, 40 x 30 in. (101.6 x 76.2 cm) / right: Untitled, 2019, steel and stainless steel, 64 x 72 x 58 in. (162.6 x 182.9 x 147.3 cm)

**Venice, CA -- L.A.** Louver is pleased to announce an exhibition of painting and sculpture by venerable artist Mark di Suvero. Known the world over for his monumental public works, the exhibition features a selection of the artist's smaller-scaled sculptures, made between 1990-2019, presented alongside a new series of colorful, abstract paintings.

Movement, both physical and implied, pervade the works on view in the first floor gallery. Comprised of steel, stainless steel and cor-ten steel, di Suvero conceives the sculptures to spin and sway with a slight touch of the hand. Curious and engaging, the sculptures convey a sense of grace and weightlessness that defies the rigid and dense materials of their making. In "Untitled" (2019), the largest and most recent work in the exhibition, a base structure made from angular cut-out pieces of raw steel rests on the floor. From its raised point, a large stainless steel pinion-like form is perfectly balanced, and when gently pushed, the silver shape pirouettes with a transcendent elegance. "After 60 years, I'm still doing it with my hands," says the 86-year-old artist. "I cut the steel. I weld it. I put it together." Only one sculpture, "Blue Flame" (1998-2011), is stationary. While its elements are fixed, the work breathes with fluidity and movement – its gnarled centerpiece, a striking blue "flame," is ablaze against the raw steel frame in which it sits.

A selection of brilliant abstract paintings by the artist accompanies the sculptures. Like the sculptures, his paintings are never still. Created with dazzling colors in dense layers of linear and freeform gestures, they project a swirling sensation akin to the twirling movement in his three-dimensional works. Accented with phosphorescent paints, the works luminesce and reverberate even in the absence of light (and are especially dazzling when activated by black lights installed throughout the gallery space). "The heart of art is the search for form that is electrifying, that gives life to our vision," explains di Suvero. "This is the language of emotion. Anesthetic is to kill feeling. Aesthetic is the opposite, aesthetic *is* feeling. The thing that is most important is the dream, the vision for what doesn't exist that could exist."

Born Marco Polo di Suvero in Shanghai, China in 1933 to Italian parents, di Suvero's family immigrated to the United States in 1941. Mark di Suvero studied philosophy and fine art at San Francisco City College, and the University of California in Santa Barbara and Berkeley. Following graduation, he moved to New York City in 1957, and immediately began exhibiting his wood sculptures. In 1960, New York's Green Gallery gave di Suvero his first solo exhibition, for which he received wide acclaim and instant renown as an important, groundbreaking artist. However, while preparing for this show, di Suvero suffered a nearly fatal elevator accident. Fearing that he would not be able to sculpt, far less

walk again, di Suvero began working with steel, which he could weld while sitting in a wheelchair. However, through perseverance and determination, di Suvero gradually re-learned to walk, and in 1967 he acquired a crane, which allowed him to work in a more improvisational way and on a larger scale. By this time, di Suvero's sculpture had been shown at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Jewish Museum in New York, the Rodin Museum in Paris, and in Los Angeles, where in 1966 he designed and installed the Peace Tower in criticism of US involvement in Vietnam.

Opposed to the war, di Suvero moved to Europe in 1972. There, he continued to work vigorously, with shows at the Stedelijk, Netherlands, 1972; City of Chalon-sur-Saône, France, 1972–74; the Jardin de Tuileries, Paris (where he was the first living artist to be awarded an exhibition); and the Venice Biennale, 1975 (also 1995). In 1975, the year di Suvero returned to the United States, he was honored with a solo museum show at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art, which included the exhibition of his sculpture citywide. Also in 1975, di Suvero co-founded the not-for-profit Athena Foundation that provided artists with working space and grants to create large-scale sculptures, and brought art to the community at large with the founding of Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City. Mark di Suvero's numerous exhibitions worldwide include the Sydney Biennale, 1976; Akira Ikeda Gallery in Yokosuka, Japan, 1987 and 1991; Valence and Nice, France in 1990 and 1991; Institut Valencia d'Art Modern, Spain in 1994; and in 1998, citywide expositions in Paris and Venice. In 2005-2007, Storm King Art Center in Montainville, New York presented more than 20 of di Suvero's sculptures in concert with over eighty photographs by Richard Bellamy that had documented the artist's work. In 2012, the Storm King Art Center staged an outdoor exhibition of his work at Governor's Island, a 172-acre island located off the coast of Manhattan, and in 2013, SFMOMA partnered with the National Park Serviced and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy to present a widespread installation of his works at historic Crissy Field.

The artist's sculpture may also be found in museum collections, private collections and public sites throughout the world, from the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art; to the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Chalon-sur-Saône, Brest, and Valence in France; and Stuttgart and Bonn in Germany. Among his many awards, he was the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Grant for Sculpture in 1967, and in 1986, was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was honored as a Commandeur d'Ordre des Art et Lettres by the French Government in 1997, and received the National Medal of Honor from President Barack Obama in 2010.

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Third Eye



Blue Flame, 1998-2011, raw and painted steel, two elements  
29 x 27 x 24 in. (73.7 x 68.6 x 61 cm)