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Agnes Martin: Recent Paintings

PaceWildenstein is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Agnes Martin on view January 10 through February 24, 2003 at 32 East 57th Street in New York City. The exhibition includes a series of acrylic and graphite paintings on canvas—all *Untitled*, 2002—whose dimensions measure 60" x 60." In her ninetieth year, Martin has produced a group of paintings that are radically different in their formal presentation; broad vertical bands of layered color in extremely simplified compositions characterize the works. For the first time, Martin creates complex color by painting one thin translucent film over the next. For example, a blue passage may be over-painted in yellow and result in an area of green. Color is mixed not on the canvas but rather in the eye of the viewer; a deliberate and essential simplification has overtaken the work.

Often described as meditative, Martin's paintings frequently incorporate thin, pencil lines and horizontal or vertical bands of pale, luminous color. The oldest surviving painter of the Abstract Expressionist generation, Martin has historically explored non-referential and transcendent themes of Beauty, Happiness, Innocence, Joy and Love. In her writings from 1976, Martin reflects on her role as an artist: "Works of art have successfully represented our response to reality from the beginning. The artist tries to live in a way that will make greater awareness of the sublimity of reality possible. Reality, the truth about life and the mystery of beauty are all the same and they are the first concern of everyone."

Agnes Martin (b. 1912, Maklin, Saskatchewan, Canada) studied at Western Washington College of Education, Bellingham, WA, prior to receiving her B.S. (1942) from Teachers College, Columbia University. A few years following graduation, Martin matriculated at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, where she also taught art courses before returning to Columbia University to earn her M.A. (1952). Since her first solo exhibition in 1958 Martin's work has been the subject of more than 80 solo shows and two retrospectives including "Agnes Martin: Paintings and Drawings 1974-1990" organized by the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, with subsequent venues in France and Germany

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(1991-92) and the survey "Agnes Martin" organized by Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, that later traveled to Milwaukee, Miami, Houston and Madrid (1992-94). Most recently, the Menil Collection, Houston, mounted "Agnes Martin: The Nineties and Beyond" (2002) and The Harwood Museum of Art at the University of New Mexico, Taos, organized "Agnes Martin Paintings from 2001" as well as a symposium honoring Martin on the occasion of her 90th birthday in June 2002.

In addition to participating in an international array of group exhibitions such as Documenta, Kassel, Germany (1972), the Venice Biennale (1976, 1980, 1997), and the Whitney Museum of American Art Biennial (1977, 1995), Martin has been the recipient of multiple honors including election to the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York (1989), the Alexej von Jawlensky Prize awarded by the city of Wiesbaden, Germany (1991), the Oskar Kokoschka Prize awarded by the Austrian government (1992), the Golden Lion for Contribution to Contemporary Art at the Venice Biennale (1997), the Distinguished Artist Award for Lifetime Achievement by the College Art Association (1998), the National Medal of Arts awarded by President Clinton and the National Endowment for the Arts (1998), and the Governor's Award for Excellence and Achievement in the Arts given by Governor Gary Johnson, Santa Fe, New Mexico (1998).

Agnes Martin's work can be found in over 50 public museum collections throughout the United States and abroad including: the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters (New York, NY); The Chinati Foundation/La Fundación Chinati (Marfa, TX); The Dia Center for the Arts (New York, NY); the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University (Cambridge, MA); the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC); the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Menil Collection (Houston, TX); The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY); the Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, France); The Museum of Modern Art (New York, NY); the National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York, NY); the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam, The Netherlands); the Stiftung Ludwig, Palais Lichtenstein (Vienna, Austria); the Tate Gallery (London, Great Britain); the Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, MN); and the Whitney Museum of Art (New York, NY), among others. In 1997 The Harwood Museum of Art at the University of New Mexico, Taos, inaugurated a permanent gallery of Martin's paintings.

Agnes Martin currently works and lives in New Mexico.

The logo for Pace Wildenstein, featuring a stylized 'PW' monogram in a light gray color, positioned behind the company name 'PACEWILDENSTEIN' which is written in a dark, serif, all-caps font.

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