



FRED MITCHELL (b. 1923)

Untitled

Signed in paint, lower middle "FM 57"

oil on canvas

72 x 72 in.

1957

31470

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Washington

Fred Mitchell was born in 1923 in Meridian, Mississippi and studied art at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh and the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Soon after receiving his MFA, Mitchell won a cash award from Pepsi Cola and used it to sail to Rome, where he met artists John Heliker, Afro Basaldella, and Philip Guston. These three artists, Guston in particular, had a tremendous impact on Mitchell and his interest in abstract art.

Returning to the United States in 1951, Mitchell settled in lower Manhattan and co-founded Tanager Gallery, which was part of a network of artists-run spaces and small galleries that allowed artists more latitude to experiment than traditional uptown galleries. This collaborative downtown art scene was fundamental in the development of Abstract Expressionism as well as the work of Ellsworth Kelly, Agnes Martin, and Robert Indiana. In his own artmaking, Mitchell became a part of the New York School of Abstract Expressionism, creating completely abstracted canvases that included geometric forms and gestural brushwork.

Recent solo exhibitions of Mitchell's work include shows at the Joyce Goldstein Gallery, New York (2007); Noel Fine Art, New York (2005); David Findlay Jr. Gallery, New York (2003); Gallery X, New York (1998). His work has been featured as a part of the "New York Painting and Sculpture Annual" at the Stable Gallery in 1953 and 1954. He was also included in Young American Painters at the Guggenheim Museum in 1954 and in Nine Artists / Coenties Slip at the Whitney in 1974. In addition to his work as an artist and gallerist, Mitchell was a celebrated teacher, working at Cranbrook Academy of Art, New York University, Cornell University, Kingsborough College, and the Art Students League of New York.

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