

## REVIEW OF EXHIBITIONS

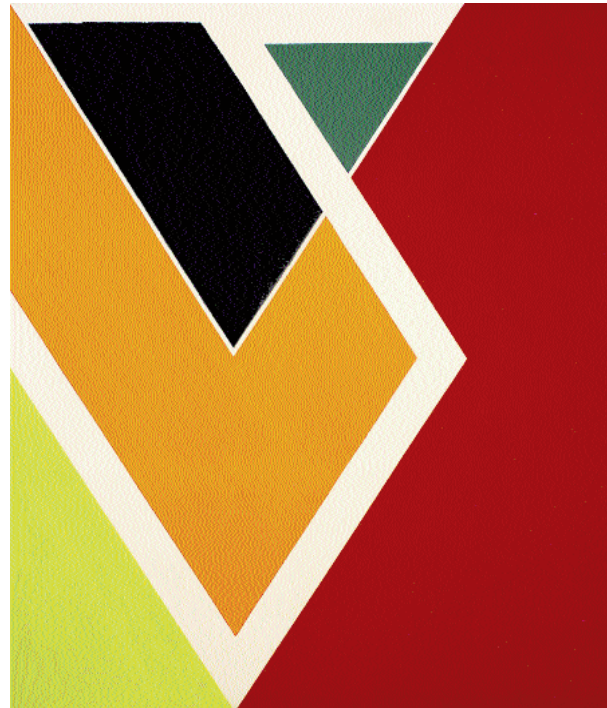
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### Larry Zox at Stephen Haller

Zox's geometric abstractions of the 1960's are as probing and engaging today as they ever were. While charged with interpenetrating planes, dynamic shapes and a strong palette, they are also free of expressive facture, the surfaces resolutely flat and clear. The implication of movement and the possibility of repetition and extension are part of their effect. Included here were more than a dozen of examples from series completed in the 1960's: "Scissors Jack," "Rotation," "Diamond Cut," "Diamond Drill" and "Gemini."

*Scissors Jack "For Jean"* (1965) is a striding confident acrylic on canvas of almost 8 by 12 feet. The painting, divided in half vertically, resembles a diptych. Each half consists of two right triangles traversed by horizontal bars of purple, yellow, black, and orange. Triangular areas of white enter the color fields from the top and bottom edges, causing the painting to resemble a shaped canvas, without the complex architecture of that exercise. Typifying Zox's paintings of the time, the geometric composition is scored with pencil lines. In an adjacent gallery was a smaller painting of the same series and year, worked out in grays. There was also a formally related colored-pencil drawing on graph paper.

The flattened patterns of *Diamond Drill: Keokuk* (1968)



Larry Zox: *Green Diamond Drill: Keokuk*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, 80 by 64 inches; at Stephen Haller.

appear as though abstracted from the spiraling bit of a drill. The painting, about 7 by 5 feet, is a vivid exercise in intersecting planes of color, with a single, inverted chevron of intense orange balancing a red field with which it collides. In both works from the late '60s "Gemini" series included here, Zox employs obtuse triangular shapes on each side of not-quite square fields of color: the resulting configurations resemble reductive, flattened stars.

Zox's most recent work, *Algonkin I* (2004), shows more painterly manipulation of his medium. The lyrical work consists of vertical bands of color underscored by lines of white. Intersections of geometrics forms and planes are

no longer evident. In their freedom and assurance, the recent paintings seem not so distant from two expressive collages of 1962 included here, never before exhibited. At 6 feet square, *Banner* is composed of cut scraps of paper painted white, red and black, carefully positioned and rudely stapled to plywood panels. Intelligent, brash and gestural the collages are on the verge of anticipating the shifting, intersecting planes of color that soon follow, yet they evidence Zox's keen interest in the gestural qualities of the Abstract Expressionists who preceded him.

—Edward Leffingwell