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Will Insley

1929-2011

Foundations ONECITY

Curated by James Cavello

Thru July 19, 2014

New York, NY – Westwood Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of New York artist, Will Insley (1929-2011). The exhibition includes drawings, paintings and photo-collage of ONECITY, a project Insley started in early 1960s.

ONECITY as envisioned by Insley is a 675 mile square architectural labyrinth, an imaginary city buried in the central North American plains, designed to house 400 million people, the entire population of the US in a time when the outer rim of the country is inhabitable, possibly due to environmental devastation. The concept of ONECITY was contemplated and created by Insley for over 40 years. He established not only an architectural layout consisting of over 14,000 outer city square buildings, each two and half miles wide, but an entire sociological order. On view are drawings [architectural renderings of abstract buildings which surround ONECITY as vacant ruins to be abandoned after they are built], wall fragments [large acrylic paintings on masonite representing remnants from the walls of ONECITY] and photo-collage depicting ONECITY from ground level. This abstract civilization was created line by line by Insley using logic, dimension and spatial theories in combination with interrelationship of people living in a futuristic environment. In 1984, Diane Waldman, Deputy Director, Guggenheim Museum, where ONECITY was exhibited in a solo exhibition, states *“By means of his geometric imagery he explores the potential of an architecture unlimited by the restrictions of reality; perhaps paradoxically, through the cool and rational appearance of his art he elaborates the myth of a dark and mysterious civilization outside of normal time”*.

Also on view are pre-ONECITY artworks, structural models, drawings and paintings. In the 2007 leading art publication, *The New American Abstraction 1950-1970*, Claudine Humblet writes the following on Will Insley's early series of paintings: *“The universe of fragments opened up between 1961 and 1963 with a multitude of cutout forms, flat shapes with four elements symmetrically arranged around a central opening [...] The shaping of the external form was to serve the path taken by art as “object”. Insley's personal concentration in isolating his “object” from its context (architectural and pictorial) was to lead him in gradually, during an enthralling investigation of the inner field of painting, to rediscover the hidden significance of the “fragment”. This became the sole tangible sign of the link between the “painting” (wall fragment) and architecture, the overall project of which was to be revealed only in the course of numerous stages inviting the viewer to decipher the secret meaning of the work presented.”*



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William Insley was born in Indianapolis, IN in 1929 and died in 2011 in New York City. He graduated from Amherst College with B.A. in 1951 and from Harvard Graduate School of Design, M.A. Architecture in 1955. His work is in the collection of numerous museums in the United States and internationally, including Museum of Modern Art, NYC, Solomon Guggenheim Museum, NYC, Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, Brooklyn Museum, Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as Kunsthalle Basel (Switzerland), Fondation Maeght, (France). Insley's artwork has been exhibited worldwide, including in dOCUMENTA (Kassel, Germany) and Venice Biennale (Italy). His artwork has been reviewed extensively in publications such as The New York Times, ARTnews, Art in America.