

SPERONE WESTWATER
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Carla Accardi

8 January – 19 February

Sperone Westwater is pleased to announce an exhibition of works by Italian artist Carla Accardi. Comprised of paintings executed from 1955 to 2004, the exhibition is the artist's first in New York for several decades. A senior painter who played a vital role in the avant-garde in Italy and remains a notable presence in Italian art, Accardi is celebrated in her native country while remaining relatively unknown in ours.

Recognized for her graphic style and treatment of the canvas as an object, Accardi was an integral part of the foray into abstraction in Italian painting in the late 1940s. In 1947, she, along with future husband Antonion Sanfilippo and artists Giulio Turcato, Pietro Consagra, Piero Dorazio, among others, founded the group *Forma I* (Form), declaring themselves "formalists and Marxists" and announcing their intention to create art that emphasized "utility, harmonious beauty, [and] nonheaviness." Accardi, who recently turned eighty, is the only living member of this movement. She continues to create new and exciting work that incorporates materials such as transparent plastic ("sicofoil"), adding unique sculptural elements to the canvases filled with the flatly rendered colored signs that have characterized her work since the 1950s.

According to Germano Celant, author of the catalogue raisonné which was published in 1999, "{Accardi's] is rather a painting of unbridled signs, a painting in search of the extreme instance between rational and irrational, between positive and negative...Her labyrinths display a sensual magnetism, cultivating a ferment that tends toward an agglomeration of materials and colors—limitless, structural, and environmental."

Born in 1924 in Sicily, Accardi currently lives and works in Rome. Since her first show in 1945 in Trapani, her birthplace, Accardi has had numerous solo exhibitions in Italy and around the world. She had individual exhibitions at the Venice Biennale in 1964, 1988, and 1993 and was included in the "Arte Ambiente" section of the 1976 Biennale. Other notable exhibitions include a retrospective at the Castello di Rivoli Museo di Arte Contemporanea (1994), a group exhibition "The Italian Metamorphosis, 1943-68" at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York (1995), a solo exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Bonn (1999), and a major retrospective exhibition at the ARC Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2002). Most recently, the artist's work was featured in a survey exhibition curated by Danilo Eccher at the MACRO in Rome (2004).

A catalogue with color reproductions and an interview with the artist conducted by Stefano Chiodi accompanies the exhibition. A complementary exhibition of Accardi's gouaches will open on 10 January at the Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò at New York University, located at 24 West 12th Street.

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