Tony Robbin: Braiding Space

August 27-December 4, 2022 Opening Reception Saturday August 27, 4-6pm



People will be frustrated in their desire for certainty, but maybe they will get something more after the first frustration passes. –Tony Robbin, 1969

LIBERAL ARTS ROXBURY is pleased to present a solo exhibition of recent work by Gilboa/New York artist Tony Robbin. *Braiding Space*, featuring large-scale paintings, sculpture, and a selection of decorative objects from the artist's personal collection, opens Saturday August 27, 2022, with a reception at the gallery from 4-6pm.

Starting with a solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum in 1974 and continuing throughout a long career, Robbin has developed a singular painting style within the broad field of geometric abstraction that explores the concept of "many spaces in the same space." Informed by a deep knowledge of math theory and the visualization of four-dimensional space in particular, early modernist painting, and pattern-making in non-Western cultures, Robbin makes paintings that seek not to instruct but to encourage, in his own words, "a taste for, even a giddy joy in, spatial complexity." Similar to fugal music, which forms melodic symmetries through layered instruments and voices, Robbin's lush, often lyrical paintings flirt with the edges of comprehensible perspectival systems, delighting in destabilized pictorial—and certainly cultural, temporal and historical—space. In an essay titled "An Appreciation," art historian David Brody has observed, "For Robbin, the uses of geometry are open-ended and dynamic—in a word, Baroque."

Also featured in the exhibition is a selection of decorative objects from the artist's personal collection, ranging from Seminole textiles to Islamic lacquerware and Japanese woodblock prints, offering context for Robbin's complex vision of global aesthetics and historic time. A founding member of the Pattern and Decoration movement, Robbin's work also intersects early 1970s discourses centered on non-Western, feminist approaches to abstract art. A group exhibition titled *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985*, which included works by Robbin as well as founding P + D artists Joyce Kozloff, Robert Kushner and others, was on view last year at the Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College.



Tony Robbin (b. 1943) has had over 25 solo exhibitions of his painting and sculpture since his debut at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1974, and has been included in over 100 group exhibitions in 12 countries. *Tony Robbin: A Retrospective* was shown at the Orlando Museum, in 2011, and traveled to the Foosaner Art Museum in Melbourne, FL, in 2018. Recently, Robbin was featured in the multi-venue retrospective of the Pattern and Decoration movement titled *With Pleasure: Pattern and Decoration in American Art 1972-1985* (catalogue Yale University Press, 2019), which was shown at MOCA, LA, and the Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College. And in 2020, Robbin's work was included in the catalogue and exhibition *Pattern, Crime & Decoration*, which was shown at le Consortium, Dijon, and MAMCO, Geneva.

Robbin is also a pioneer in the computer visualization of four-dimensional geometry. Since 1981, his real-time rotation programs of four-dimensional figures have been useful for obtaining an intuitive feel for four-dimensional and quasicrystal space. Robbin was granted the patent for the application of Quasicrystal geometry to architecture, and has realized this geometry in a large-scale architectural sculpture at the Danish Technical University in Lyngby, Denmark, and in Jacksonville, Florida.

A prolific writer, Robbin's book *Shadows of Reality* was published by Yale University Press in 2006. Here he argues that four-dimensional projective geometry is the mathematical system best suited to describe reality. He is also the author of *Engineering a New Architecture* (Yale University Press, 1996), and *Fourfield: Computers, Art & the*

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Fourth Dimension, published by Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown & Company in 1992. His 2011 memoir *Mood Swings, a Painter's Life*, is available on Kindle as well as *Essays 1969-2016*. He has written 28 papers and articles, mostly for peer review publications, and lectured for professional organizations and university departments on art, physics, mathematics, computer science, architecture, and engineering in the United States, Europe and Asia.

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