

F o r I m m e d i a t e R e l e a s e

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MIT List Visual Arts Center

Alan Uglow: Standards and Portraits
May 9–July 14, 2013

Opening Reception:
Wednesday, May 8, 6-8 p.m.

March, 2013 (Cambridge, MA)—The MIT List Visual Arts Center presents *Alan Uglow: Standards and Portraits* an exhibition of the work of Alan Uglow (1941-2011). The exhibition is comprised of two of Uglow's most important series, his *Standard(s)* paintings and *Portrait(s) of a Standard*, both centered on his decades-long investigation into the medium of painting.

Uglow's work is marked by a keen sense of proportion, structure, form, and surface. Working in series that evolved gradually over decades, Uglow maintained an abiding focus on formal economy, using simple geometrical shapes to structure the surface of his canvases and emphasizing the materiality of painting rather than direct pictorial content. Perhaps his two best-known series, *Standards* and *Portraits of a Standard* reflect the artist's commitment to exploring the formal and affective conditions of abstract painting.

Although seemingly reductive in form, Uglow's *Standards*, each measuring seven by six feet, are executed with up to forty layers of paint. This slow and determined process creates delicate nuances of surface, the paintings subtly playing with light, reflection, and the viewer's own presence in space. These perceptual distinctions, revealed by the meticulously textured, warmer or cooler surface of each canvas, make use of both precision and simplicity to produce a sense of pictorial space without traditional perspective or illusion. Uglow's paintings also confront the problem of the edge, a motif running throughout the history of 20th century abstraction, by making the support—the literal frame of the painting—their organizing element. Installed on blocks and sited in precise relation to the wall and surrounding space, the *Standards* assert the physicality of the medium—a painting as both an object and an image—even as their surfaces draw the viewer in with their refinement of shape, texture, and ground.

Uglow's *Portraits of a Standard*, photographic silkscreened prints on canvas, capture his *Standard* paintings at an oblique angle, making them recede into physical space. Furthering Uglow's interest in repetition, difference, and objecthood, the *Portraits* are of identical dimension as the paintings and similarly displayed on blocks. While the structural elements of color and edge are blurred through the mechanical process of printing, the *Portraits* also suggest another edge, that between painting, photography, and sculpture.

About the Artist

Alan Uglow was born in Luton, England in 1941 and died in New York in 2011. He earned a degree in painting and printmaking from the Central School of Art in London in 1962. After finishing his studies Uglow moved to New York in 1969, motivated by “the energy of New York” and his feeling that abstract art was less appreciated in Britain than in the United States. Uglow was a fixture in the New York City art community until his death. He participated in his first group show at Bykert Gallery in 1974 and in 1978 he made his solo debut in simultaneous shows at the galleries of Mary Boone (paintings) and Susan Caldwell (drawings).

Work by Alan Uglow has been featured in a number of solo and group exhibitions worldwide. A solo show of Uglow’s work, curated by Bob Nickas, is on view at David Zwirner, New York through March 23, 2013. Uglow’s work was also shown in a 2012 group summer show, *Standard Operating Procedures* at Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, organized by Piper Marshall. He was also exhibited in 2012 in the group show *Stand still like the hummingbird* at David Zwirner. In 2010, his work was the subject of two large exhibitions concurrently on view in Germany at the Museum Wiesbaden and the Museum Haus Esters in Krefeld. Other recent solo exhibitions include the CCNOA – Center for Contemporary Non-Objective Art, Brussels (2006) and the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (2004). His first museum solo exhibition was held in 1992 at the Kölnischer Kunstverein in Cologne.

Uglow’s work is represented in private and public collections internationally, including the Cincinnati Art Museum; Gemeentemuseum, The Hague; High Museum, Atlanta; Le Consortium, Dijon, France; Musée des Beaux-Arts, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland; Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld, Germany; Museum Wiesbaden, Germany; National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik; Sammlung Goetz, Munich; Sammlung Lafrenz, Hamburg; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

Alan Uglow: Standards and Portraits is curated by List Center curator João Ribas.

Support for this exhibition has been generously provided by the Council for the Arts at MIT, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Office of the Associate Provost at MIT, the MIT List Visual Arts Center Advisory Committee, and the Friends of the List.



About the MIT List Visual Arts Center

In 1950 MIT established the Hayden Gallery that was located in the Charles Hayden Memorial Library. The gallery served as a venue for a program of changing exhibitions. In 1985 the Hayden Gallery was renamed the List Visual Arts Center in recognition of a gift from Vera and Albert List that relocated the gallery to its current location on the ground floor of the Wiesner Building which was designed by MIT alumnus I.M. Pei (B.S. Architecture, 1940), and Partners Architects.

Over the years the MIT List Visual Arts Center has become highly respected as one of the most significant university art galleries in the country for its innovative, provocative, and scholarly exhibitions and publications. Just as MIT pushes at the frontiers of scientific inquiry, it is the mission of the List Visual Arts Center to explore challenging, intellectually inquisitive, contemporary art making in all media. In addition to presenting 6-9 exhibitions annually, the List Center presents a broad range of education programs in conjunction with its exhibition programming. The Center maintains and adds to MIT’s permanent collection of over 3,500 artworks that includes dozens of

publicly sited sculptures and hundreds of paintings, prints, photographs, drawings, and sculptures located throughout MIT's campus. The List Center is also responsible for commissioning new works for the MIT Public Art Collection through the MIT Percent-for-Art program, and organizing and managing the Student Loan Art Program, which lends over 500 works of art annually to MIT undergraduate and graduate students.

Directions: The MIT List Visual Arts Center is located in the Wiesner Building, 20 Ames Street, at the eastern edge of the MIT campus. It is in close proximity to Kendall Square, Memorial Drive, and the Longfellow Bridge.

By T, take the Red Line to the Kendall/MIT stop, follow Main Street west to Ames Street, turn left, and walk one block to the crosswalk. The MIT List Visual Arts Center, housed in a building identifiable by its white gridded exterior, will be on your left. Signage is on the building.

By car, coming across the Longfellow Bridge or from Memorial Drive, follow signs for Kendall Square. Limited metered parking is available on Ames Street. A parking garage is located at the Cambridge Center complex (entrance on Ames between Main and Broadway). Paid public parking is also available at the Marriott Hotel on Broadway.

Gallery Hours: Tues-Wed: 12-6PM; Thurs: 12-8PM; Fri-Sun: 12-6PM; closed Mondays and major holidays.

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Additional Information: 617.253.4680 or <http://listart.mit.edu>

All exhibitions and programming at the MIT List Visual Arts Center are free and open to the public.