

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Ellsworth Kelly: Color Panels for a Large Wall**

November 3 – December 22, 2018

Opening: Saturday, November 3, 5:00 to 7:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Ellsworth Kelly: Color Panels for a Large Wall**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 522 West 22nd Street.

In 1978, Ellsworth Kelly was commissioned to create a painting for the lobby of a new building in Cincinnati. *Color Panels for a Large Wall*, the 30-by-125-foot painting that resulted, was the largest work he had ever made. Its trajectory would pass through not just Cincinnati but also Amsterdam, New York, and Munich. In 2003, Kelly reconfigured the painting's eighteen panels — from two rows of nine to three rows of six — when it was installed in its permanent home at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.

*Color Panels for a Large Wall II* (1978), painted simultaneously, is a 3½-by-31-foot version that Kelly kept for himself. It preserves the larger painting's original horizontal composition in two rows of nine panels, and it is being exhibited here for the first time.

Accompanying *Color Panels for a Large Wall II* are related works by Kelly spanning more than fifty years, including paintings, collages, and a scale model for a never-realized sculpture. A group of collages from the early 1950s present colored rectangles in grids that anticipate the precise intervals of *Color Panels for a Large Wall*.

In 1950, Kelly wrote to John Cage, "My collages are only ideas for things much larger — things to cover walls." *Color Panels for a Large Wall* was a breakthrough in his ambition to create art on the scale of architecture. For the commission, Kelly worked in close collaboration with the building's architects, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, to make a work that would not only reside in harmony with the space but also stand apart from it, holding the viewer's attention amid the distractions of a busy lobby. Today it performs a similar role in Washington, where Kelly reconfigured the eighteen panels for the soaring atrium of the National Gallery's East Building, and the painting once again offers an occasion for heightened reflection in an otherwise kinetic space.

*Color Panels for a Large Wall II* represents a chance to place Kelly's vision in dialogue with new architectural settings. "The visual might of Kelly's works assures they cannot escape visual attention and concentration," Christine Mehring writes in the exhibition catalogue. "Kelly's panel paintings summon us to pause and look, to seize his art in the way his eyes seize colors and forms amidst a saturated world. They effectively create gaps in whatever architectural contexts they enter."

**Ellsworth Kelly: Color Panels for a Large Wall** is on view at 522 West 22nd Street from November 3 to December 22, 2018, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For additional information, please contact Jacqueline Tran at 212-243-0200 or [jacqueline@matthewmarks.com](mailto:jacqueline@matthewmarks.com).