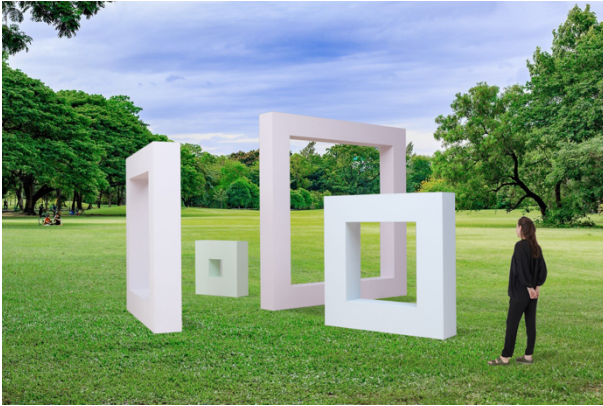


Judy Chicago: Human Geometries

Opens Saturday, August 28, 2021



Jessica Silverman is pleased to present "Human Geometries," an exhibition of works created by Judy Chicago between 1965 and the present. The show features both monumental pieces and potent gems that explore gendered aesthetics, human rights and social justice. Coinciding with the artist's first major retrospective at the de Young Museum, this exhibition opens Saturday, August 28th.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is *Sunset Squares*, a landmark in Feminist Minimalist sculpture, which consists of four structures in different sizes and subtle shades – pale pink, baby blue, lavender and mint. Framing and commenting on its surroundings, this quad of quads can be arranged and rearranged for maximum impact and interaction. Its freedom of movement, combined with its poly-chroma, challenges the rigid, dictatorial norms of much minimalist art. Conceived and created in 1965, but destroyed in the seventies, this outdoor rendition of *Sunset Squares* is made to original specifications in painted stainless steel.

Also from the mid-1960s are a range of circular trifectas – sculptures, paintings and drawings that investigate the curvaceous geometry of feminine flesh. Rendered in clear and colored acrylics, Chicago's "Dome" sculptures suggest bodily landscapes, bellies and chests, perhaps even an expectant mother in the bath. While the sculptures evoke sensual slumber, the artist's drawings and paintings of spinning orbs, sometimes called "whirling donuts," are infused with the electricity of female orgasm.

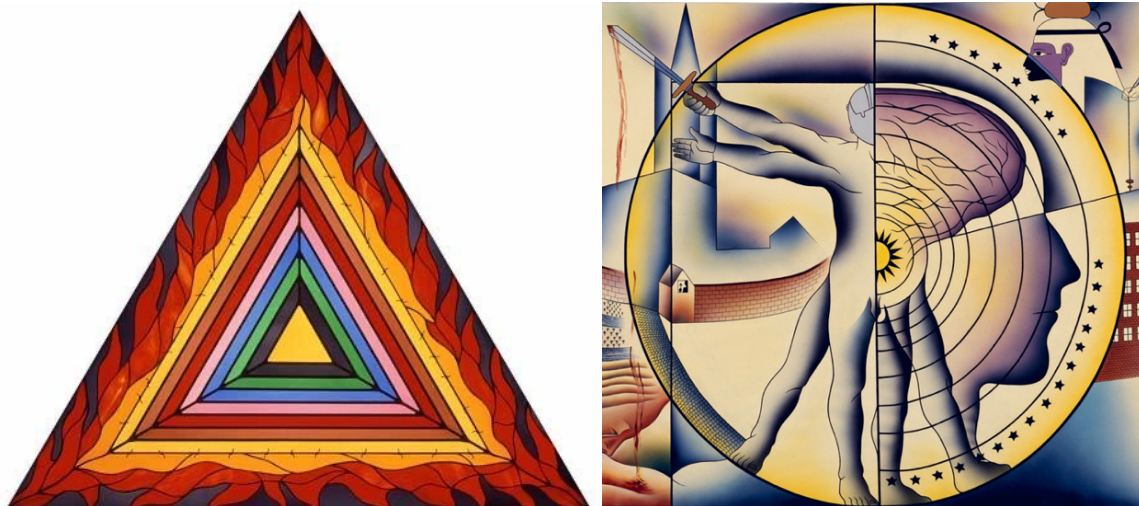
Triangles loom large in Chicago's oeuvre, taking on different meanings in different decades. While *Zig Zag* (1965-2018) carves up space with joyful, outlandish color, *Logo* (1994) takes the form of concentric triangles of stained glass not only to honor Holocaust victims, but to create an icon of community survival. Here color represents the

demographics targeted by the Nazis: yellow for Jews, pink for homosexuals, black for "anti-socials," blue for immigrants, red for political prisoners, brown for gypsies, and green for criminals.

Although Chicago is best-known for elevating and recognizing the lives of others (e.g. *The Dinner Party*, 1979), she has created a series of 140 raw, extempore drawings in watercolor and pencil on paper, laying out her innermost aspirations and insecurities. The unexpected intimacy of *Autobiography of a Year* (1993-94) invites empathy as the artist's struggle for self-worth and self-soothing is familiar to us all.

Finally, *Cartoon for the Fall* (1987) is an ambitious history painting, exploring power and powerlessness, gender and Jewish identity in civilizations past and present. Chicago and her husband Donald Woodman worked for eight years, pondering the horrific depths of the Holocaust. In 2021, a time of resurgent white supremacism, fascism, and anti-democratic dictatorships, their project is ever more relevant. The 18-foot-long canvas is meant to remind us of the necessity to work towards a more humane, peaceful and equitable world.

Judy Chicago (b. 1939, Chicago, IL) is best known for *The Dinner Party*, which premiered at SFMOMA in 1979 and toured thirteen cities in five countries before being permanently installed at the Brooklyn Museum, NY. Chicago's work is in many museum collections, including the Tate (London), Moderna Museet (Stockholm), Metropolitan Museum of Art (NY), National Gallery (DC), Art Institute of Chicago, Nasher Sculpture Center (Dallas), Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, MOCA Los Angeles, LACMA, the Getty Trust and Research Institute, and over 25 university art museums, including UCLA, Cornell, Harvard, Illinois, Michigan and Cambridge (UK). Over the past few years, Chicago has been enjoying a comeback, initiated by "Pacific Standard Time: Made in LA" and augmented by a number of European shows including "The World Goes Pop" at Tate Modern, London. In 2018, the artist enjoyed a selective survey at ICA Miami and, in January 2020, Maria Grazia Chiuri, creative director of Dior, announced Chicago as her muse, making a couture collection in her honor. San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum will have Chicago's "Cohanim" on display from August 5th while "Judy Chicago: A Retrospective" opens at the de Young Museum on August 28th. Chicago lives and works in Belen, New Mexico.



ABOVE: *Sunset Squares (outdoor version)*, 1965/2018, and *Three Circles*, 1968; BELOW: *Logo from the Holocaust Project*, 1992, and *Cartoon for The Fall*, 1987, detail.

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