

Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects is pleased to announce the gallery's fourth solo exhibition with conceptual artist Charles Gaines. The exhibition will present a group of large-scale works, collectively titled *Numbers and Trees: Central Park Series II*, as well as a new, related series of ink on paper drawings.

Over the last four decades Charles Gaines has employed system-based methodologies to critique the notion of artistic impulse in the creation process. After encountering Tantric Buddhist diagrams in the late 1960s, Gaines recognized how a system can generate an image and an image generate its system. Beginning with such early works as *Walnut Tree Orchard* (1975), he started creating and implementing his own logical systems. In that early sequence as in the ongoing *Numbers and Trees* series, the tree-object is collapsed within a gridded numerical order to introduce implicit paradoxes in perception as a way of criticizing the idea of the empirical object. The resulting work creates a tension between the organic outline of the trees and the numeric logic that manifests their image, where object and implementation are locked into an arbitrary relationship, each determining the other.

*Numbers and Trees: Central Park Series II* continues Gaines's 1986 initiated series *Numbers and Trees* at a monumental scale. Each work is composed of three gridded plexi-glass boxes over a divided black-and-white photograph of a tree. Centering the base of the trunk at zero, the shape of the tree is mapped onto the grid by painting and numbering each occupied cell. This process is repeated throughout the series as each sequential piece gains a new tree painted in a different color over the previously plotted trees, charting the relationship of the trees over the course of the series. By the last work in the sequence, one is left with a sense that the system could continue infinitely, moving further away from any singular tree as from the generalized 'tree' as signifier.

Also on view are eight new works that advance the *Numbers and Trees* series in a new medium, rather than scale. These ink on paper drawings continue Gaines's investigation into a system that serializes a set of related images. Employing the same photographic sources from *Numbers and Trees: Central Park Series II*, the drawings sequentially plot with numbers the silhouette of a tree, building layer upon layer as the drawings accumulate through the series. What was once a recognizable tree dissolves the image into a matrix of numbers. The reduction of the tree to a structure sets into place not a better understanding of the subject, but a relational consideration that deconstructs the tree within its own framework.

Charles Gaines received his MFA from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1967. In 2014 he was the subject of a survey exhibition at the Studio Museum in Harlem, traveling to the Hammer

Museum in 2015. In 2012, Gaines was the subject of a mid-career survey at the Pomona College Museum of Art and the Pitzer College Art Gallery in Claremont, CA. Recent significant group exhibitions include: the 2015 and 2007 Venice Biennale, Italy; *"America is Hard to See,"* Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (2015); *"The Freedom Principle: Experiments in Art and Music, 1965 to Now,"* Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL (2015); *Sites of Reason: A Selection of Recent Acquisitions,* Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY (2014); *"Blues for Smoke,"* The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2012); *"Under the Big Black Sun: California Art 1974-1981,"* The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA (2011); *"Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980"* UCLA Armand Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2011); and *"Double Consciousness: Black Conceptual Art Since 1970,"* Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, TX (2005). Gaines has published several essays on contemporary art including, "Theater of Refusal: Black Art and Mainstream Criticism," (Univ. of Calif., Irvine, 1973), "Reconsidering Metaphor/Metonymy: Art and the Suppression of Thought," Art Lies, (No. 64, Winter 2009) and "The New Cosmopolitanism," (California State University, Fullerton, 2008). Gaines has received many accolades, notably a 2013 Guggenheim Fellowship. His works are in the collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Lentos Kunstmuseum Linz, Austria; Galerie der Stadt Esslingen at Villa Merkel, Esslingen, Germany; the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA. He currently resides in Los Angeles, California and has taught at CalArts since 1989. The gallery has represented Charles Gaines since 2005.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*