

Press Release

Pat Steir: Mirage 1975

9 July – 15 August 2025

Hauser & Wirth New York, Wooster Street



New York... On the 50th Anniversary of her first site-specific installation, Pat Steir will present 'Mirage 1975' at Hauser & Wirth's Wooster Street location. The work reinterprets formal elements from Steir's first installations in 1975 and 1976. Shifting perspective from canvas to space, Steir has remarked, 'allows the artist to paint out of the painting and into the space and the viewer to move from space into a painting.'

Installation has been an integral facet of Steir's practice since the mid 1970s when she began painting and drawing directly onto the walls, defining spaces through color and line so that the viewer could stand in the very middle of her work. In 1975, Steir began this installation practice to serve as a means of 'understand[ing] the first steps toward acquiring consciousness,' which she investigated alongside studying early childhood development. 'If you can draw a diamond you are already beginning to think in perspective.'

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'Mirage 1975' is comprised of simple geometric shapes painted in primary colors and situated within an all-over grid pattern rendered directly onto the walls. As with the artist's renowned canvases—such as those currently on view in the exhibition of new paintings 'Pat Steir: Song' at Hauser & Wirth Zurich—these gridlines take the act of mark-making as the subject. By defining the planar field and subsequently using geometric elements to cut through the grid's axes, Steir transforms familiar iconography, like hearts and flowers, into physically constructed shapes. By analyzing the additive process through which meaning is made, Steir deftly explores the place where a mark becomes a line and a line becomes a word or an image. Borrowing and transposing elements from previous installations, 'Mirage 1975' offers a procession of familiar lines, colors and shapes to create a kind of semiotics of art that has been at the heart of Steir's work for over 50 years now.

Pat Steir has made more than 50 installations for public spaces and institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York NY (2011); MoMA P.S.1, New York NY (1998); The Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Providence RI (2010); Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Montreal, Canada (1989); Musee d'Art Contemporain de Lyon, Lyon, France (1990); New Castle Biennale, New Castle, England (1990); Centre Nationale d'Arte Contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble, France (1992); Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany (1992); The New Museum, New York NY (1987).

'Pat Steir: Mirage 1975' coincides with the artist's solo presentation of new paintings, 'Pat Steir: Song' at Hauser & Wirth Zurich, on view through 13 September, 2025. This fall, Hauser & Wirth Publishers will release a new artist monograph, 'Pat Steir: Paintings 2018–2025.' Designed in close collaboration with the artist, the publication combines rich illustrations with a new essay from Colm Toibin and a previously unpublished conversation between Steir and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden curator Evelyn C. Hankins, illuminating visual and emotional resonances across her paintings from the last eight years.

About the artist

Among the great innovators of contemporary painting, Pat Steir first came to prominence in the late 1970s and early 1980s for her iconographic canvases and immersive installations. By the late 1980s, her inventive approach to painting—the rigorous pouring technique seen in her Waterfall works, in which she harnessed the forces of gravity and gesture to achieve works of astonishing lyricism—attracted substantial critical acclaim. Informed by a deep engagement with art history and Eastern philosophy, and a passion for artistic advocacy in the both the visual and literary realms, Steir's storied five-decade career continues to reach new heights through an intrepid commitment to material exploration and experimentation.

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Caption and courtesy information:

Pat Steir, Installation view of 'Pat Steir', State University of New York, Oneonta NY, 1975 with collaged digital elements (2025)
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