

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm

ROY LICHTENSTEIN: *Early Black and White Paintings* Saturday, November 3 – Saturday, December 22, 2001

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce the first exhibition devoted exclusively to the early 1960s black and white paintings by Roy Lichtenstein.

A key figure in the Pop Art movement, Lichtenstein was inspired by images from comic books, newspaper advertisements, and mail order catalogues. Printed for mass circulation, these materials used cheap papers, a few standard colors, and relied heavily on hand-drawn black lines that delineated all the shapes and images.

Lichtenstein was attracted to the look of these printed images because they were as far from “art” as the average person could imagine. On the other hand, their basic hand drawn line, intending to captivate the eye and whet the desires of the viewer, made them about as archetypal as image making can get.

For this reason, Lichtenstein’s early black and white Pop paintings – which he began in 1961 and made simultaneously with the comic-strip paintings – are central to his entire Pop enterprise. The black line defines the forms, as well as the words, of his paintings made from comics. Lichtenstein also recognized that entirely black and white drawings were often used in mass media catalogues and newspapers to sell items like flowering plants and trees, even though their real appeal was their color.

In response to this dumb beauty of pulp imagery, and to the odd powers of simple black and white images to stimulate our appetite, Lichtenstein made some of his most essential, and enduring paintings. The apparently simple paintings of single objects – a tire, a curtain, a sock, a diamond brooch, a golf ball – project riveting clarity, simplicity, and astonishing newness that are the bedrock of his art, and of Pop Art itself.

A fully illustrated catalogue with essays by Robert Rosenblum and Frederic Tuten will accompany the exhibition.

For more information please contact the gallery.

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