

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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Land Artist Michael Heizer Takes the Spotlight at New York's Gagosian Gallery

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Altar 3, 2015, Michael Heizer. Photography by Robert McKeever/© Michael Heizer/Courtesy of the Gagosian Gallery

Artist Michael Heizer, long known for pushing the boundaries of scale in sculpture, just barely reined in his monumental tendencies for his new show at Gagosian's Chelsea gallery in New York, open through July 2.

Starting in the 1960s, as a pioneer of Land Art, Heizer constructed a series of enormous works across the American West, from holes in the Sierra Nevada mountains to his mall-sized earth sculpture, called *City*, in the desert. More recent history has seen him precariously balance a 340-ton granite boulder over a concrete trench at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. These ambitious undertakings are just a few examples from the artist's prodigious career, and at his Gagosian show, a series of new sculptures, a collection of rarely or never-before-seen paintings, and three of his signature negative wall sculptures will be sure to satisfy his many fans.

The three sculptures of the new "Altar" series—the largest measuring 40 by 40 feet—consist of curvilinear steel elements, buffed and shining, resting atop stepped pedestals of rust-brown steel. Sections of the smooth-coated surfaces are pasted over with silk-screened images from Heizer's drawings and photographs, giving the otherwise clean forms the look of gentle wear and tear.

The shaped canvases from the '60s and '70s beautifully demonstrate the artist's career-long infatuation with the duality of negative and positive forms, using color and line to denote presence and absence. And set inside rectangular cavities carved out of the gallery walls, three of his negative wall sculptures, dating from 1981 to 2015, prove that Heizer has always been cutting-edge; his work from five decades ago still resonates today.

Through July 2 at Gagosian Gallery, 555 West 24th Street, New York; gagosian.com