

GAGOSIAN GALLERY



RICHARD SERRA
Grace Under Pressure



Richard Serra, NJ-1, 2015. Weatherproof steel. Six plates. Overall: 13 feet 9 inches × 51 feet 6 inches × 24 feet 6 inches. Plates: 2 inches thick. © Richard Serra. Photograph by Cristiano Mascaro.

NJ-1

One entrance
compressed between two feet. Polar coordinates,
vector physics, fluid paths in quasi-cardioids, quasi-epicycloids, semi-
major and minor axes. Trapping light on top, minimal airflow from below, in this
grand canonical ensemble I dreamt of the Grand Canyon in complete solitude. Sloping
symmetry, volumes of light breathe in and out. It's impossible to decipher void from
solid, and solid from void. Thought-forms, floating forms, "everything is form,
and life itself is form." I'm ice-skating on Balzac's enormous belly.
Here the life of forms begins.



Richard Serra, *Every Which Way*, 2015. Weatherproof steel. Sixteen slabs. Five: 11 feet x 6 feet x 11 inches; Six: 9 feet x 6 inches x 11 inches; Five: 7 feet x 6 feet x 11 inches; Overall: 11 feet x 53 feet 6 inches x 21 feet. © Richard Serra. Photograph by Cristiano Mascaro.

555 WEST 24TH STREET

Every Which Way, Silence (For John Cage) / Through

In an era of perturbation, and neomemory, the experience of space precedes time—even Earth—and man is conceived as a monumental function of form. In *Every Which Way*, standing in front of each of the vertical planes I see Malevich dreaming of becoming a sculptor. Sculptures standing on their sides, Newman’s infantry of zips, seem to cry out. Here, the nature of thought becomes form. “Say what you mean. Mean what you say,” he once said to a friend of mine. Elemental essence fortifies a certain robust fragility while beholding the mortal labyrinth. Form transfigures the movements of the mind while the body walks and shifts—attempts to keep up the pace. Mind and body are not separate from this specific journey. Edges were cut, slit in various speeds by invariable thunderous blades, as we walk between them. In the hours of *Silence*, vastness of aura, brevity of massive form reposes like a monumental tablet from Mount Sinai. It is defined by two ragged edges on both sides, cradled by a pair of impeccable lines on either end. In solemn graces I was blessed to have given this communion with his spirit. *Through* and through, my inability to measure length and height was prodded by those three distinct slabs that forged a mysterious space. You and I are forbidden to enter. Shall we say the invitation to see is marginally limited? Steel remains steel on one side. The other is the slab of a cave wall, filled with a torn surface that has survived endless monsoon seasons in Southeast Asia. And the final piece has endured the radiant sun of North African desert. Do you remember the last time he propped four equal black rectangles of labor and aroma against four equal rectangles of negative space? In this square configuration the whole offers an imminent democracy of light and dark, unified by mental body.