

Mary Corse

November 4, 2021 – January 29, 2022
229 Hamilton Avenue
Palo Alto



Mary Corse, *Untitled (Electric Light)*, 2021. Courtesy of the artist and Kayne Griffin, Los Angeles. Photo by Flying Studio.

Palo Alto – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Mary Corse in Palo Alto. Marking the artist's first presentation at the gallery's Palo Alto space, the exhibition will feature three large paintings and four electric light boxes of different sizes in conversation with one another. Throughout her innovative practice, Corse has challenged viewers' perception and created paintings of light, and her debut at Pace's Palo Alto space will resonate with the gallery's location in Silicon Valley. The presentation will run from November 4, 2021 to January 29, 2022, with an opening reception taking place on November 3, 2021.

Over the course of her six-decade career, Corse, who is based in Los Angeles and was born in Berkeley, California, has explored the nuances of light, space, and perception. The artist is widely known for her dynamic, subtly gestural, and precisely geometric paintings and inventive light boxes. The light boxes enabled the artist to explore new frontiers in illuminating her artworks. The result of Corse's experimentations with electricity, plexiglass, glass microspheres, and traditional painting techniques is a singular language of light and abstraction, which is on full view in Pace's Palo Alto presentation.

Pace's exhibition in Palo Alto comprises three large-scale paintings, two freestanding light boxes situated on pedestals, and two hanging light boxes installed against the gallery's walls. Suspended from the ceiling using monofilaments, these works are powered by Tesla coils that wirelessly transfer electromagnetic fields through the walls and allow the light boxes to hover in the exhibition space. Similarly, Corse's use of microspheres in her paintings give viewers the impression that the canvases are lit from within as they refract light from different angles depending on the viewer's position. The *Inner Band* and *Multiband* paintings in Pace's exhibition shapeshift as viewers move around them, with vertical bands disappearing and reappearing from various points of view.

Corse has described her iconic argon light boxes as "light paintings," and she first created works of this kind in the mid-1960s. It was in this period that Corse began studying physics, an endeavor that deeply informed her artistic production. Corse's light boxes have long complemented her painting practice, which the artist has described as "a conversation with abstraction." She has said that the light boxes were part of her efforts to "put the light into the painting," an aim that also informed her return to painting in the following years.

“At that time I was really looking for an objective truth, an objective reality,” Corse said in an interview with *Apollo Magazine* on the occasion of her first solo museum survey, *Mary Corse: A Survey in Light*, which opened at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York in 2018 and traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. “I wanted to make an object that was its own, that was on its own.” This search for an objective truth epitomized in the lightboxes shifts for Corse in her studies of quantum physics and she turns back to painting in the late 1960s, deliberately introducing the subjective brushstroke.

In a 2017 interview with art historian Alex Bacon, Corse said, “Works of different scales relate to the body differently. I like to see different configurations and sizes and see how they feel ... With my work, which changes as you walk around it, what one person sees from one side is different from what another person sees from the other. The art is not on the wall, it’s in the viewer’s perception.”

In 2021, Corse was the subject of a major solo exhibition at the Long Museum, Shanghai—the presentation will travel to the Amorepacific Museum of Art in Seoul in early November. A focused presentation of Corse’s work is currently on long-term view at Dia Beacon in New York. *Mary Corse: A Survey in Light*, the artist’s first solo museum survey, was presented at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2018 and 2019, respectively. Corse was also included in the major presentation *Pacific Standard Time: Crosscurrents in L.A., Painting and Sculpture, 1950-1970* at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in 2011. The artist’s work can be found in the permanent collections of the San José Museum of Art; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego; the Seattle Art Museum; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Long Museum, Shanghai; and other institutions.

Mary Corse (b. 1945, Berkeley, California) has pursued a sustained investigation of abstraction, materiality, and perception through subtly gestural and precisely geometric paintings made over a six-decade career. After receiving early acclaim in the 1960s for works ranging from shaped-canvas paintings to argon lightboxes, Mary Corse has dedicated the succeeding decades to establishing a unique painting practice and highly refined vocabulary with traits normally thought to be irreconcilable: gestural brushstrokes reminiscent of early influences like Willem de Kooning and Hans Hofmann; precise geometric compositions, most often featuring the vertical band; and a palette rigorously reduced to white, black, and the primary colors. Yet these characteristics take on an exceptional quality through Corse’s innovative handling of materials that both capture and refract light, ensuring that our perceptions of her paintings change as the lighting shifts or we move about the space. Corse makes the inherent abstractness of human perception felt instead of merely seen.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon. The gallery has also spearheaded exploration into the intersection of art and technology through new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists engaging with technology.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including London, Geneva, a strong foothold in Palo Alto, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened temporary exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis.



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