

Louise Nevelson: Mirage

February 25 – April 9, 2022

229 Hamilton Avenue

Palo Alto

Opening Reception: February 24, 5 – 6:30 PM



Louise Nevelson, *Untitled*, 1969 © 2022 Estate of Louise Nevelson / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Pace is pleased to present *Louise Nevelson: Mirage*, an exhibition of rarely seen collages and sculptural wall reliefs created by Louise Nevelson between the 1950s and 1980s, at its Palo Alto gallery. Running from February 25 to April 9, the show highlights the dialogues between Nevelson’s masterful but little-known collage works and her sculptural wall reliefs in painted black wood. The exhibition, which marks the first Bay Area presentation of the artist’s work since a 2016 show at Pace in Palo Alto, brings together two aspects of the artist’s practice that have seldom been considered in relation to one another. Following Pace’s show in Palo Alto, Nevelson’s work will be included in the main exhibition of the 59th Venice Biennale.

Featuring 15 collages and three sculptural wall reliefs, including two works from the key 1966 series *Northern Shores*, *Louise Nevelson: Mirage* focuses on the artist’s approach to graphic wall-based objects. Works of this kind—which incorporate combinations of metallic foil, cardboard, sandpaper, tape, wood, spray paint, printed paper, and newspaper—reflect Nevelson’s intense interest in materiality. Her work in collage, which she kept mostly secret during her lifetime, provided a new avenue for explorations of light, shadow, reflection, and line. The daily act of creating abstractions in her collages was inextricably linked with Nevelson’s celebrated sculptural practice.

In the economy of Nevelson’s studio, the collage works emerged as extensions of the same creative gesture that gave rise to her monochromatic, painted sculptures. The artist used store-bought Krylon spray-paint to transform everyday objects and bits of wooden detritus into abstracted geometric forms—the negative traces these spray-painted objects left on scraps of paper and cardboard would become graphic elements in her collages. Singular and idiosyncratic, Nevelson’s collages draw from the rich legacy of modernist collage cultivated by Pablo Picasso, Kurt Schwitters, Jean Arp, and other figures.

Collage, for Nevelson, was a language of radical honesty in which materials laid bare the stories of their origins. Tearing and re-combining traces of the past to produce a raw, unfiltered beauty, Nevelson developed an aesthetic of fragmentation and re-assembly that animated the spirit of all her work as an artist. The constellations of varied materials and forms in Nevelson's collages shed light on the artist's process and engagement in rigorous formal experimentations.

Nevelson's collages were an intensely personal and private mode of expression for the artist. She began creating works of this kind in the early 1950s, but they were never intended for public exhibition. Aside from a few haphazard appearances and the occasional studio photograph, the collages remained mostly unknown until after the artist's death in 1988.

Pace's presentation in Palo Alto takes its title from a 1972 interview with Nevelson conducted by Pace Founder and Chairman Arne Glimcher. The artist said in the conversation, "For me black isn't black anyway, and color isn't color as such. Color is rainbow and is just as fleeting as anything on earth ... And every minute it's changing through light. So it's a mirage." While she is best known for her large-scale sculptures, Nevelson did not consider collage subsidiary in her practice. Rather, the medium offered her a way of working through ideas about composition, color, and form, exemplifying her insistence that "black isn't black." For Nevelson, collage was a way of being in the world—a prism into the truth of color as mirage.

Pace has represented Nevelson, with whom the gallery's Founder and Chairman Arne Glimcher maintained a decades-long friendship, since 1963. The artist's first solo exhibition with Pace in 1961 has been followed by numerous presentations dedicated to her expansive practice at the gallery's international outposts. In the decades following Nevelson's death in 1988, Pace has worked closely with the Nevelson estate and cultivated a fruitful relationship with the Louise Nevelson Foundation.

Louise Nevelson (b. 1899, Kiev; d. 1988, New York), a leading sculptor of the twentieth century, pioneered site-specific and installation art. She is recognized for her sculptures comprised of discarded furniture and other wood elements found in the area surrounding her studio. Composing these elements into nested, box-like structures, she would then paint them in monochromatic black, white, or gold—transforming disparate elements into a unified structure. She also experimented with bronze, terracotta, and Plexiglas, moving as well into collage, works on paper, and the realm of public art. With her compositions, Nevelson explored the relational possibilities of sculpture, summing up the objectification of the external world into a personal landscape. Although her practice is situated in lineage with Cubism and Constructivism, her sense of space and interest in the transcendence of the object reveal an affinity with Abstract Expressionism.

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 explorations into the intersection of art and technology through its new business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists cultivating advanced studio practices. Pace's presence in Silicon Valley since 2016 has bolstered its longstanding support of experimental practices and digital artmaking. As part of its commitment to innovative, technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace will launch its own dedicated NFT platform in November 2021. The gallery's past NFT projects have spotlighted digital works by Lucas Samaras, Simon Denny, Urs Fischer, John Gerrard, and other artists.



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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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