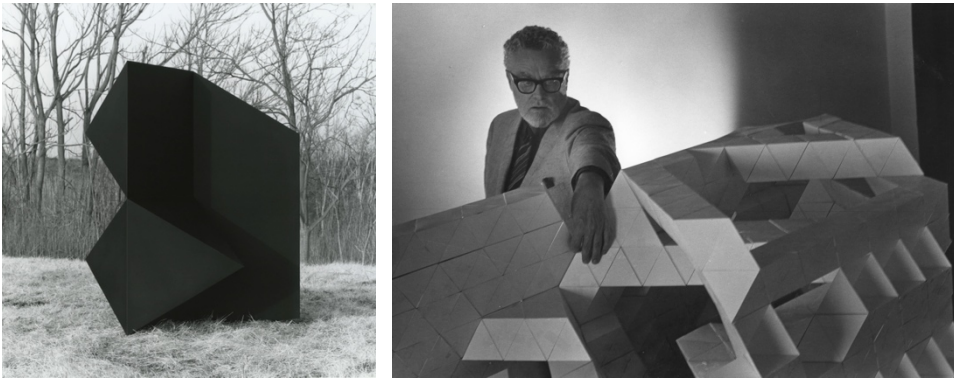


Tony Smith

June 4 – July 16, 2022
 1201 S La Brea Avenue
 Los Angeles



Left to right: Tony Smith, *For J.C.*, 1969 © Tony Smith/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York;
 Tony Smith with model for *Bat Cave* in Los Angeles, 1969 © Tony Smith/Artist Rights Society (ARS), New York, photography by Edmund Teske

Los Angeles – Pace is pleased to present an exhibition of work by American sculptor Tony Smith, who imbued minimalist structures with spiritual import, at its new West Coast flagship in Los Angeles. Marking the gallery’s second presentation at its recently opened space, the show will run from June 4 to July 16. Bringing together sculptures and paintings created over the course of two decades, the exhibition will focus on the organic forms that constitute much of Smith’s work.

Though he would become widely known for his sculptures, Smith began his career as an architect, working with Frank Lloyd Wright on Usonian homes and other projects in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The artist worked as an independent architectural designer before developing his prolific sculptural practice in the mid and late 1950s.

Smith often drew inspiration for his dynamic geometric abstractions from phenomena in the natural world. Through his artworks, Smith investigated the formal possibilities of crystalline structures, including octahedrons and tetrahedrons. Embracing the imaginative effects of chance and chaos, the artist produced sculptures that forged a new language of abstraction amid the rise of Minimalism. Deeply engaged with architecture, science, mathematics, and philosophy, Smith’s works propose new modes of understanding and experiencing their surrounding environments. “I view art as something vast,” Smith said in a 1966 interview with *Artforum*, adding, “I’m interested in the inscrutability and the mysteriousness of the thing.” Pace maintained a long relationship with Smith during his lifetime, and it began representing the Tony Smith Estate in 2017.

At Pace’s Los Angeles gallery, the architecture of which features a unique integration of natural light and indoor-outdoor space, Smith’s sculptures will take on new associations and meanings. The exhibition will showcase both small- and large-scale works, including four sculptures from the artist’s *For* series. Smith began work on the series while teaching at the University of Hawaii in summer 1969. He dedicated the nine welded bronze and black patina sculptures in this body of work to nine friends, several of whom were his colleagues in Hawaii. The titles of these works incorporate the initials of the individuals for whom they are named.

Art historian, critic, and curator Jean-Pierre Cricqui once wrote of the *For* series, “From the twin parallelepipeds of *For W.A.* to the complex, unpredictable, and nearly impossible to memorize structure of *For J.C.*, [Smith’s] entire method of formal elaboration can be retraced.”

As part of the exhibition at Pace in LA, Smith's cast bronze and black patina sculpture *Smug* (1973) will be on view in the gallery's expansive courtyard. With interlocking, layered abstractions that speak to miraculous dynamism and synergy present in natural forms, *Smug* reflects the compositional and technical virtuosity of the artist's practice. Like the other sculptures in the show, *Smug* is a work of transfiguration, revealing new geometries and structures to viewers as they walk around and experience the work. The paintings in the exhibition complement the sculptures on view, shedding light on the ways that the artist's two- and three-dimensional investigations of geometry and abstraction informed one another.

Beyond Pace's gallery in LA, Smith's monumental sculpture *Smoke* (1967) can be found in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The museum acquired the work in 2008 and mounted a major exhibition focused on Smith in 2017.

In 2023, a catalogue raisonné of Smith's sculptures will be released, with volumes dedicated to his work in architecture and drawing and painting to be published in the following years.

Tony Smith (b. 1912, New Jersey; d. 1980, New York) considered his process to be intuitive, his work resting close to the unconscious and exploring themes of spirituality and presence in a synthesis of geometric abstraction and expressionism. He studied painting at the Art Students League, New York (1934–36) and attended the New Bauhaus, Chicago (1937–38), before apprenticing with Frank Lloyd Wright (1938–39). For the following two decades, he worked professionally as an architect and held teaching positions at numerous institutions in New York and Vermont. In the early 1960s, Smith turned his focus to sculpture, with his architectural background informing one of his most radical innovations—having his work industrially fabricated. Widely recognized for his large-scale, modular works produced throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Smith was included in the seminal group exhibition *Primary Structures* at the Jewish Museum, New York, in 1966. His profound achievements in American sculpture have been honored with retrospectives of his work at The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1998); Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (2002); Menil Collection, Houston (2010); and Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2017).

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 technologically engaged artists within and beyond its program, Pace launched a hub for its Web3 activity, Pace Verso, in November 2021.

Today, Pace has ten locations worldwide including a European foothold in London and Geneva, 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 satellite exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis. In 2022, the gallery opened its West Coast flagship in Los Angeles, and continues to operate its gallery in Palo Alto.




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