

SEYMOUR BOARDMAN

recensies



BOARDMAN exposeerde al in 1951 in de *Salon de Mai, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris* en in 1955 en 1966 bij de *Martha Jackson Gallery* in New York. HILTON KRAMER schreef in 1995 over de exposities bij *Martha Jackson Gallery*: 'The paintings which comprise BOARDMAN's first one-man show are executed in a style which draws its energies from a vision of landscapes and seascapes, yet so immersed are they in a nocturnal atmosphere that only some profound compositional - that is, a sense of abstraction - can retrieve them for the daylight eye. The recurring image here is a black canvas (incorporating many nuances in its blacks) out of which emerges a white-gray light which may be either the picture's central form or which lights whatever emergent forms are created.' Aan het eind van dit artikel schreef hij: 'And yet BOARDMAN's pictorial idea has no need to pursue them beyond the suggestion, and the result is a series of handsome canvases which are romantic and visionary without any straining after "Freudian" or symbolic effects.'

Al in 1959 verkocht BOARDMAN 6 schilderijen aan de nu nog steeds internationaal bekende *Galerie Beyeler* in Basel, Zwitserland.

BOARDMAN heeft deelgenomen aan tentoonstellingen in het *Whitney Museum of American Art*, New York City in 1961 en in 1967 en het *Guggenheim* in 1968. In datzelfde jaar exposeerde hij in *A. M. Sachs Gallery*. Verschillende critici hadden lovende kritieken over deze expositie: CHARLOTTE WILLARD in de *New York Post* 'SEYMOUR BOARDMAN shows several large minimal paintings of considerable brilliance.' C.T. concludeert in *Arts* van maart 1968: 'There is something very complete and satisfying about these works.' Ook in maart 1968 schrijft L.C. in *Art News*: 'SEYMOUR BOARDMAN has had his latest show of abstract paintings consisting of a few simple flat colors which have an air of intrigue because they seem to swing open like hinged doors, and there is an ambiguity between the image suggesting a door and the form surrounding it. In other works he offers puzzles of other kinds - for instance, a blue line speeds diagonally across the picture plane, and it is uncertain if this stands for the limiting edge of another plane, or if it is the color of the background. These perplexities made this show a hermetic one, but pleasing.'

In diezelfde *Art News* schrijft HARRIS ROSENSTEIN na een uitvoerige introductie: 'What it does do is to give him an arresting attack element, an underlying structure of interest to support and give point to his sensuous and preci-

sely weighted color. While BOARDMAN introduced this format in his 1967 show, his latest work surely brings it into dazzling fruition.'

In 1971 schrijft Dr. THOMAS W. LEAVITT, directeur van de *Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art at the Cornell University*, Ithaca, New York een introductie over het werk van SEYMOUR BOARDMAN: 'Initially painting in the freely-brushed manner of abstract expressionism, SEYMOUR BOARDMAN has gradually eliminated the arbitrary aspects of his work until only straight lines and two or three areas of flat, usually somber tones remain. The colors are stained, so that the only texture is that of the canvas itself. Within the narrow limits thus imposed, however, the artist has created a richly varied series of almost magical tension'. Aan het eind van het artikel concludeert hij: 'Strangely disturbing canvases result from the artist's explorations of mental expectations, and they are no less profound because they are quiet and beautiful'.

Arts Magazine, editie september/oktober 1972, bericht uitvoerig over de expositie van BOARDMAN in de *Dorsky Gallery*: 'The relationship between science and modern art has often been discussed. Only rarely, however, have art and science merged so perfectly as in the paintings of SY BOARDMAN. If this artist would put his discoveries into writing, he would be making a contribution to the psychology of perception. The secret of BOARDMAN's abstract-illusionism lies in his knowledgeable exploitation of mental expectations. For example, although he uses straight lines only, we somehow feel that he is defining planes. Furthermore, we expect these planes to be rectangles, because they are enclosing something like the rectangular pictures themselves. Actually, the rectangles are enclosing the black background, which lends itself to almost any spatial interpretation. The space is either coming forward, going backward or remaining on the surface of the canvas. This applies not only to the ambiguous black space but to the planes defined by the lines. A surprising effect occurs when the rectangular planes are seen, not in diminishing and receding perspective, but as lying on the surface and being squeezed so as to form a bulge. And of course there can be holes in BOARDMAN's space as well as bulges. The artist has a fine feeling for the division of space on a flat canvas and further emphasizes flatness by staining, which brings out the weave of the canvas.'

In 1978 toont de *Aaron Berman Gallery* recente tekeningen en witte schilderijen en schrijft daarover het volgende:

‘BOARDMAN creates rectangles and squares, all laid out in concise, yet rich patterns that produce a slab, table, obelisk, pillar and column effect. The brilliant white paintings have a pristine quality. They seem as if they were schematic plans for ancient architectural monuments.’

In 1994 exposeert BOARDMAN opnieuw in de *Anderson Gallery*, Martha Jackson Place in Buffalo en krijgt het volgende commentaar van RICHARD HUNTINGTON, recensent van de *Buffalo News*: ‘Pinks, blues and yellows - colors that might be merely aggressive - sound solitary chords that lend to the paintings an air of dignity and high seriousness. Some of the most moving BOARDMAN paintings, however, are practically colorless’.

In april 1995 werd BOARDMAN opgenomen in een tentoonstelling *Essence and Persuasion* in de *Anderson Gallery* in New York, samen met grote namen als JEAN ARP, BASQUIAT, LOUISE BOURGOIS, EDUARDO CHILLIDA, WILLEM DE KOONING, JASPER JOHNS, ELLSWORTH KELLY, FRANZ KLINE, SOL LEWITT, JACKSON POLLOCK, ROBERT RYMAN, RICHARD SERRA en FRANK STELLA.

In het commentaar van de catalogus zegt curator ANNE WAYSON: ‘In a career that is steady and determined, SEYMOUR BOARDMAN creates paintings that are unique, while avoiding current fashion and trends. Although most of his work is highly colored, BOARDMAN did a body of strictly black-and-white work from 1971 to 1972. The painting *Untitled*, 1971 is an elegant example from this period. While working on the series the artist observed: “In using only black acrylic on a white gesso ground, I found a compositional motive emerged as I reduced a complicated image to its essence. This was an important period in my development. The forms I use in my recent work are reminiscent of these earlier paintings, although the surface and materials

are now different.” ANNE WAYSON gaat verder: ‘By painting out drawn lines with a rich, matte black, BOARDMAN created images where the painted area becomes the negative space while the original white ground becomes bold jagged lines piercing the blackness.’ BOARDMAN stuurde deze schilderijen in voor de John Simson Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Award 1972-73. De jury, waaronder ROBERT MOTHERWELL, kende hem de prijs toe.

Sinds 1986 heeft BOARDMAN regelmatig tentoonstellingen gehad bij de *Anita Shapolsky Gallery* in New York, solotentoonstellingen in 1987 en 1991 en groepstentoonstellingen in 1986, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1998 en 2003.

In 1989 schrijft GERALD NORDLAND, kunsthistoricus en auteur van verschillende boeken over eigentijdse kunstenaars, een lang artikel over de expositie van BOARDMAN bij de *Anita Shapolsky Gallery* in New York. Zijn conclusie aan het einde van het artikel: ‘His expectations were not grand: only to buy himself the time and the space to work out his own expression of contemporary art and to show it from time to time. This is delectable work.’

PATRICIA ROSOFF, kunstcritica bij Arts schrijft in 1992 een paginalange kritiek over de expositie van SEYMOUR BOARDMAN bij de *Anita Shapolsky Gallery* in New York. Ze eindigt het artikel als volgt: ‘These pictures are the achievement of a career, and they celebrate the most basic human drives. In them are combined the child’s businesslike intensity of play and, at the same time, the oldtimer’s tenacity - as well as stubborn persistence of the aspiration of all aesthetic endeavour in a restless, memoryless cosmos.’

BOARDMAN is opgenomen in 15 openbare collecties (‘Public Collections’) waaronder de bekendste zijn het *Whitney Museum of American Art* en het *Solomon R. Guggenheim*, beide in New York.