

# JAMES ROSENQUIST

## *Two Paintings*

509 WEST 27TH STREET

OCTOBER 17–NOVEMBER 16, 2019

OPENING RECEPTION THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 6–8PM



Kasmin in cooperation with the Estate of James Rosenquist and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (London, Paris, Salzburg), is pleased to announce an exhibition of two important paintings by James Rosenquist. On view at the gallery's flagship 509 West 27th Street location, both works—*Joystick* (2002) and *The Geometry of Fire* (2011)—reflect Rosenquist's lifelong fascination with space, real and imagined, and his turn in the last two decades of his career to a new kind of abstraction.

Measuring 46 feet across and spanning the length of the gallery's wall, the monumental *Joystick* is an ode to Rosenquist's love of flying. Based on reflections from a mirrored cylinder, packed with gyrating forms that move at incredible speed, the space of *Joystick* is invented, abstract, and wholly optical. "The priority for me is visual invention and, really, content is secondary," Rosenquist told the late art historian Robert Rosenblum. By contrast, the central expanse of *The Geometry of Fire* is a reflection of real space. Painted after a devastating fire destroyed the artist's Florida studio, the 25 foot long picture depicts the wildness of fire on the left and the destruction it causes, seen in the melting, exploding hub caps on the right. At the picture's center is the mysterious cosmos, populated with the galaxies, star showers and black holes that became the subject of Rosenquist's last paintings.

An essay by writer and curator, Judith Goldman, who has written extensively on James Rosenquist, will accompany the exhibition.

## ABOUT JAMES ROSENQUIST

One of the most important painters of post-war American Art, James Rosenquist (1933–2017) was born in Grand Forks, North Dakota. He studied painting at the University of Minnesota with Cameron Booth. In 1955, he moved to New York having won a scholarship to the Art Students League, where he studied with Will Barnet, Edwin Dickinson and Robert Beverly Hale, among others. In 1957, he took a job painting billboards, working on scaffolds in Brooklyn and, a year later, high above Times Square. Rosenquist's first solo exhibition at the Green Gallery in 1962 sold out and established Rosenquist's reputation as a founding member of the Pop art generation. In 1965, after working a year on the painting, Rosenquist exhibited his iconic *F-111*, now in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art.

James Rosenquist's work is included in major private and public collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art; the Museum Ludwig, Cologne; the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and the Moderna Museet, Stockholm. He has been the subject of retrospectives at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Guggenheim Museum. In 2017, the Ludwig Museum organized his most recent retrospective *James Rosenquist: Painting as Immersion* which traveled to the ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Denmark.

Image: James Rosenquist, *Joystick*, 2002, oil on canvas, with acrylic rod, rope, and mirrored Plexiglas, 205 x 552 inches, 520.7 x 1402.1 cm. © 2019 Estate of James Rosenquist/Licensed by VAGA at Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY.

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