

David Zwirner
525 and 533 W 19 Street
New York, NY 10011
Tel 212.727.2070
Fax 212.727.2072
information@davidzwirner.com
www.davidzwirner.com

Zwirner & Wirth
32 E 69 Street
New York, NY 10021
Tel 212.517.8677
Fax 212.517.8959
info@zwirnerandwirth.com
www.zwirnerandwirth.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 15, 2006

EXHIBITION:

FRED SANDBACK

DATES:

Early Work
Zwirner & Wirth
November 22, 2006-January 20, 2007

Large Scale Sculpture
David Zwirner
November 22-December 22, 2006

Opening on November 22, 2006, Zwirner & Wirth and David Zwirner will present concurrent exhibitions of sculptures and drawings by the American artist Fred Sandback (1943-2003). Surveying the artist's uniquely focused career, this will be the first large-scale exhibition of Sandback's work organized in the United States since it was presented at Dia Center for the Arts, New York in 1996-1997. Known for sculptures that outline imaginary planes and volumes in space with colored yarn, Sandback's work is informed by a rigorously minimal artistic vocabulary. This two-part exhibition will trace the development of his practice, with works dating from 1967 to 2003.

Though Sandback employed metal and elastic cord in his earliest works, the artist would soon dispense almost entirely with the mass and weight of materials by using acrylic yarn to create sculptures that produce perceptual illusions while also addressing their physical surroundings and the "pedestrian space," as Sandback called it, of everyday life. Throughout the course of his career, yarn would enable the artist to elaborate on the phenomenological experience of space and volumes with unwavering consistency and ingenuity. As Thomas McEvilley notes, "like a patient and conscientious researcher Sandback made his way through the world of art and space by careful and precise steps—yet found a route that was peculiarly his own and has a certain claim to uniqueness in his overall idea of a sculpture with no inside, no relationship between surface and interior."¹ The exhibition will examine the broad scope of formal invention that the artist was able to achieve with this restricted idiom of yarn lines in space. Sandback's sculptural compositions are comprised of lengths of yarn stretched horizontally, vertically, or diagonally in a variety of configurations that include rectangles, triangles, U-shapes, and floor-to-ceiling vertical lines. The works on view range from smaller-sized wood wall reliefs to constructions that encompass entire rooms, thus demonstrating how the artist was able to create this signature vocabulary of forms in different combinations and scales.

Zwirner & Wirth will present work by the artist from the 1960s and 70s. These include a selection of Sandback's earliest sculptures made with metal and elastic cord. These works not only describe the outlines of imaginary solid forms, but also emphasize the structural and architectural components of the gallery space. Among them, *Untitled*, 1967, traces a three-dimensional shape determined by the intersection of two walls and the floor at a corner and *Untitled*, 1969 outlines a curved plane that protrudes from the wall to extend into the space of the viewer. The gallery will also present constructions that further exemplify the artist's interest in activating the viewer's perceptive, phenomenological experience of space. These include an *Untitled* work from ca. 1970, which comprises four parallel lengths of black elastic cord stretched diagonally from the floor to the wall; and an

¹ Thomas McEvilley, "Fred Sandback: Nothing Outside Factuality," *Fred Sandback* (Vaduz: Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, 2005), p. 56.

early, larger-scale *Untitled* sculpture, conceived ca.1974 and shown here for the first time, made up of eight overlapping lines of red yarn that occupy an entire room in the gallery. Also on view will be a rare group of the artist's *Conceptual Constructions* from 1969, which are "sculptures" comprised of typed text. Moreover, the gallery will present an extensive selection of drawings that span four decades of the artist's career. These exquisitely rendered works on paper vary in technique and medium and explore the development of the artist's thematic and formal concerns.

David Zwirner will exhibit a selection of Sandback's large-scale sculptures. These works range from wall reliefs to installations that inhabit and activate entire rooms. These include two impressive works that will be on public view for the first time: *Untitled (Sculptural Study, Seventeen-part Right-angled Construction)* (conceived in 1985), which consists of 17 parallel L-shaped lines of red yarn; and *Broadway Boogie Woogie (Sculptural Study, Twenty-eight Part Vertical Construction)* (conceived in 1991), named after Mondrian's well-known painting and composed of 28 vertical lengths of acrylic yarn in red, yellow, and blue that extend from floor to ceiling. These constructions create unexpected perceptual shifts as they facilitate a three-dimensional experience of planes and colors. Pamela M. Lee has noted how this work "effectively divides and multiplies the viewer's field of vision through the logic of parallax; and the body's coordination in space hence dramatizes the ambivalent relation to interior and exterior Sandback claimed for his work."² The large-scale sculptures thus exemplify the artist's own description of his work as "...less a thing-in-itself, more of a diffuse interface between myself, my environment, and others peopling that environment, built on thin lines that left enough room to move through and around. Still sculpture, though less dense, with an ambivalence between exterior and interior. A drawing that is habitable."³

The work of Fred Sandback has been exhibited extensively in Europe and United States since the late 1960s. His first one-person exhibitions were at the Galerie Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf, and the Galerie Heiner Friedrich, Munich, both in 1968, while the artist was still a graduate student pursuing his MFA at the Yale School of Art and Architecture. Through the patronage of the Dia Art Foundation, Sandback was able to create a museum of his work in Winchendon, Massachusetts, which was open to the public between 1981 and 1996. His work is on permanent display at the Dia:Beacon, NY and was the subject of a recent extensive survey exhibition organized by the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, Vaduz (which traveled to the Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh and the Neue Galerie am Joanneum, Graz).

On the occasion of the exhibition, the gallery is publishing a hardcover, fully illustrated monograph on the artist, which will include an interview with Fred Sandback and an essay by art historian Pamela M. Lee and will be available in early 2007.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT ZWIRNER & WIRTH AT 212.517.8677

²Pamela M. Lee, "The Materialist," in *Fred Sandback* (New York: Zwirner & Wirth/David Zwirner, forthcoming)

³Fred Sandback, "Untitled," *Fred Sandback* (Vaduz: Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein, 2005), p. 152.