

LARRY POONS / FRANK STELLA

AS IT WAS, AS IT IS

EXHIBITION DATES: MARCH 20 – JULY 31, 2021

PREVIEW MARCH 20, 1 – 5 PM

YARES ART

745 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

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Frank Stella (left) and Larry Poons attend an exhibition of Stella's work at the Castelli Gallery, New York, March 5, 1966. Photo by Fred W. McDarrah/Getty Images.

YARES ART is pleased to present *Larry Poons / Frank Stella: As It Was, As It Is*, on view in New York, March 20–July 31, 2021. This show brings together important historical and recent works by two legendary figures in contemporary American art. Frank Stella (b.1936) and Larry Poons (b.1937) came to the forefront of the avant-garde art scene in the same place, and at approximately the same time—New York City in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Like-minded spirits, and longtime friends, the two went on to electrify the art world in the second half of the twentieth century with unique visions and profoundly original works. Both artists to this day continue to share a passion for speed and racing—Poons, a racer of vintage motorcycles, and Stella lauded in the sport of auto-racing for his car designs for BMW and other companies.

Abstract Expressionist Barnett Newman was a major inspiration for both artists and encouraged their early hard-edge abstractions. Compositions, such as Poons's *Orange Crush* (1963), and Stella's *Double Concentric Squares* (1974)—among the highlights of the exhibition—offer alternatives to the Ab Ex and European *art informel* movements, which had dominated the international art world throughout the 1940s and '50s. Eventually, the two artists moved away from hard-edge compositions toward more complex and fluid abstractions. Stella experimented with industrial materials, as he created dynamic painted-metal relief constructions throughout the 1970s and '80s. Poons, meanwhile, explored the possibilities of color with radically innovative, ever evolving painting techniques over the next five decades.

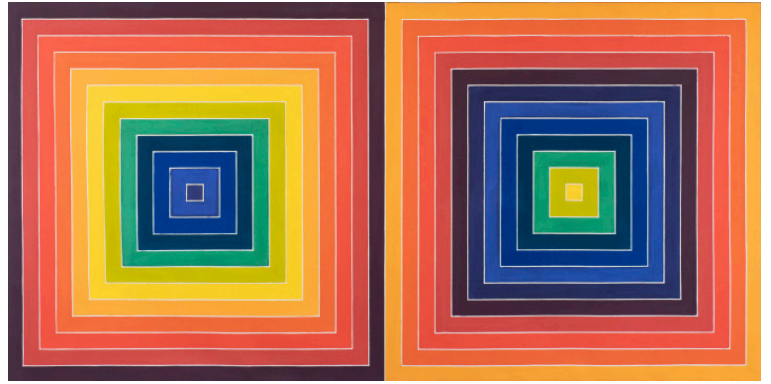
From the 1960s onwards, the two have continued to praise and support each other's art. In 1999, Stella wrote a complimentary catalogue essay, "Mr. Natural (Larry Poons)," and Poons has frequently expressed his admiration for Stella's achievements. *Larry Poons / Frank Stella: As It Was, As It Is* offers a rare opportunity to see the works of these two stalwarts of contemporary art. On view are some twenty-six works, including a selection of early paintings along with each artists' most recent works. Highlighted in the show are Stella's recent small-scale sculptural maquettes centered on the "star" motif, a reference to the Italian translation of the artist's last name. Some of these maquettes correspond to the large-scale works featured in the concurrent museum survey, *Frank Stella's Stars* at the Aldridge Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut (through May 9). A recent series of luminous square (24-by-24 inches) paintings by Poons, including *Quiet as Spaces* and *Jarett* (both 2019), are beautiful, concentrated compositions echoing his most recent large-scale paintings.



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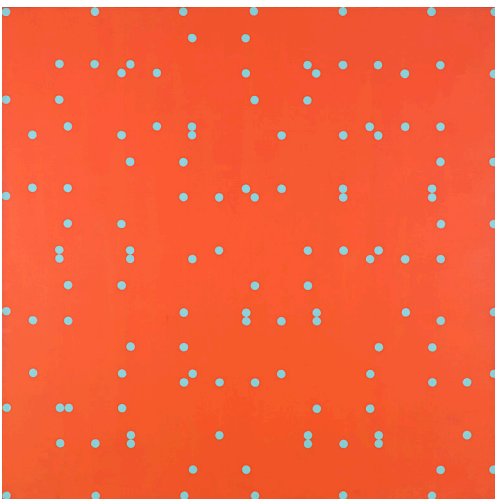
Frank Stella. *Double Concentric Squares*, 1974. Acrylic on canvas, 70 x 139 ¼ in. (177.8 x 353.7 cm). Private Collection

Frank Stella was born in Malden, Massachusetts. He studied at the Phillips Academy in Andover and graduated from Princeton University in 1958. He moved to New York soon after graduation, where he caused a stir with his proto-Minimalist “Black Paintings” that were shown at the Museum of Modern Art in 1959. He went on to develop his distinctive three-dimensional hybrid painted metal reliefs, which have been exhibited throughout the world. A major touring museum retrospective of his work, debuted at the Whitney Museum of American Art, October 30, 2015.

Larry Poons was born in Tokyo, Japan, to Anglo-American parents. He relocated with his family to the United States at a young age, and studied music composition at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Recognizing his greater talent for visual art, he transferred to the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where he studied painting. His career skyrocketed with the introduction of his originative “Dot paintings” soon after he moved to New York in the early 1960s.

Both artists are included in numerous prominent public and private art collections throughout the world, including the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Georges Pompidou Center, Paris; the Santa Barbara Museum of Art; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; the Tate Modern, London; the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, among other institutions.

Larry Poons / Frank Stella: As It Was, As It Is is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Alex Bacon.



Above: Larry Poons. *Orange Crush*, 1963. Acrylic on canvas, 80 x 80 in. (203.2 x 203.2 cm). Collection of the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York



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