

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARTISTS ON THE BOWERY: PART 6

Reframing the Edge

Charles Hinman, Will Insley, Ron Janowich, Alan Steele

EXHIBITION DATES:
May 28 – August 1, 2026

OPENING RECEPTION:
Thursday, May 28 from 6:00–8:00PM

Curated by James Cavello

Westwood Gallery NYC is pleased to present *Artists on the Bowery, Part 6: Reframing the Edge*, the latest installment in the acclaimed exhibition series devoted to artists who have lived and worked downtown and in New York City's Bowery Arts District from the 1960s to the present. The exhibition gathers works that challenge conventional notions of painting, emphasizing the shaped canvas as a dynamic departure from the traditional rectangular support. Curated by James Cavello and featuring works by Charles Hinman, Will Insley, Ron Janowich, and Alan Steele, the exhibition highlights both formal innovations and the lasting influence of artists working in dimensional space.

Charles Hinman's illusionistic three-dimensional canvases and Ron Janowich's meditative geometric drawings and paintings explore dimensionality as an integral component of composition, positioning their work between painting and object. Alan Steele's algorithmic logic and Will Insley's systematic "Wall Fragments" extend beyond the formal limitations of the canvas, revealing the conceptual potential of the edge.

Across the exhibition, constructed spatial paintings resist the confining notion of painting as an illusionistic surface. Each shaped canvas asserts a tangible presence in space and unfolds over time. The artists deploy form, edge, and structure to shift visual tension from depicted depth to the literal contours of the work itself. Rooted in the experimental milieu of downtown New York and evolving across decades, these practices present the shaped canvas movement not as a closed historical episode, but as an ongoing inquiry into the conditions of painting.

Shaped painting in the 1960s was defined by radical reconfigurations of formal and conceptual limits. The 1964 exhibition *The Shaped Canvas* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Gallery challenged assumptions of pictorial space. Curated by Lawrence Alloway, it extended Clement Greenberg's modernist emphasis on medium specificity, flatness, and autonomy, while anticipating Michael Fried's concerns regarding a work's assertion as a literal object. The following year, *Shape and Structure: 1965* at Tibor de Nagy Gallery, featuring Insley's early paintings, continued pushing these boundaries. The artists not only rejected the neutrality of the rectangular support but foregrounded the literal edge as a generative element, collapsing distinctions between internal composition, external structure, and the materiality of display. As Lucy Lippard observed, such works "approach illusionism from a new angle," relocating tension to the perceptual experience of the object itself. Shaped painting sustains modernist concerns while moving into conceptual territory where painting, sculpture, and objecthood overlap.

About the Artists

Charles Hinman (b. 1932) is known for pioneering shaped canvases and redefining the relationship between painting and objecthood. His bold use of color and angular structures challenged conventional perceptions of depth and surface, extending painting beyond three-dimensional space. The exhibition features works from his last series created in his Bowery loft at 231A. His work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Smithsonian American Art Museum; and the Buffalo AKG Art Museum.

Will Insley (1929–2011) devoted his fifty-year practice to depicting the abstract architecture of a metaphysical world through schematic drawings, photomontage, and “Wall Fragments.” He was the subject of exhibitions worldwide, including solo shows at the Guggenheim Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. His work is held in the Brooklyn Museum, Smithsonian American Art Museum, MoMA, Whitney Museum, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and many others.

Ron Janowich (b. 1948) is an American painter whose experimental approach to surface and structure challenges the flatness of the traditional picture plane. Through geometric formats and intricate patterning, his paintings extend into real space, engaging questions of perception and spatial experience. His work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Cleveland Museum of Art, among others. He is a two-time recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship in Painting (1976, 1989).

Alan Steele (b. 1940) investigates geometric abstraction through system-based practices. His shaped paintings emphasize compositional clarity and spatial tension, reinforcing internal rhythms. His work is held in public and private collections, including the Brooklyn Museum.

About the Bowery

The Bowery has long served as a cultural hub within New York City, nurturing generations of artists pivotal to Minimalism, Conceptual Art, Abstract Expressionism, Feminist Art, and Hard-edge Painting. From the 1950s onward, it emerged as a concentrated site of artistic production, defined not by institutional prominence but by a dense ecosystem of creative exchange. Insulated from the commercial pressures of uptown galleries, the Bowery fostered experimental practices in which conventions of form and medium were actively reimagined. Its makeshift studios and social spaces allowed painting, sculpture, and conceptual strategies to develop in dialogue.

This development is inseparable from the Bowery’s broader history. Established in the seventeenth century as one of New York’s earliest thoroughfares, it was named for the Dutch *bouwerries*, or farms, that once lined its path. The street later functioned as a major nineteenth-century commercial and cultural corridor before declining due to postwar urban changes, including the Third Avenue Elevated line.

By the mid-twentieth century, lofts, factories, and storefronts were repurposed as sites of artistic production, where spatial conditions became integral to new modes of working. Westwood Gallery NYC has highlighted many of the artists who have intersected with the Bowery from the 1940s through the 1970s, including Arman, Jake Berthot, Carmen Cicero, David Diao, Martha Diamond, Brenda Goodman, Joanne Greenbaum, Harmony Hammond, Charles Hinman, Medrie MacPhee, Elizabeth Murray, Louise Nevelson, Harvey Quaytman, Dorothea Rockburne, Jack Tworkov, Mary Ann Unger, Carrie Yamaoka, Keith Haring, Will Insley, Larry Rivers, Robert Ryman, Kenny Scharf, John Giorno, Cy Twombly, Loretta Dunkelman, Louise Nevelson, Richard Smith, Gilda Pervin, Gerald Laing, John Willenbecher, Roger Welch, Alan Steele, Les Levine, Andrew Chin, and Robert Indiana. Other artists who have lived or worked on the Bowery have included Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Al Loving, Fernand Léger, Jean Dubuffet, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Eva

Hesse, Lynda Benglis, James Rosenquist, Sol LeWitt, Adrian Piper, Roy Lichtenstein, and Tom Wesselmann, forming a shifting framework for artistic production.

Westwood Gallery NYC is proud to call the Bowery its home and is committed to recontextualizing the Bowery Arts District as a major cultural hub for New York City and the United States.

For media inquiries and private viewings, contact info@westwoodgallery.com