

# PAULA COOPER GALLERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **ROBERT GROSVENOR**

521 W 21st Street

February 10 – March 17, 2018

Opening reception: February 10, 6–8 pm

NEW YORK – From February 10th through March 17th, 2018, Paula Cooper Gallery will present an exhibition of work by Robert Grosvenor at 521 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Known primarily as a sculptor, Grosvenor has eluded artistic categorization during his more than fifty-year career, producing diverse, singular works that explore the spatial dynamics between object, architecture, and viewer. The exhibition will include two large-scale sculptures as well as a selection of works on paper. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, February 10th from 6 to 8 pm.

On view in the main space of the gallery is the large-scale sculpture, *Untitled*, created in 2016. Comprised of two separate, freestanding constructions, the installation occupies one half of the room, drawing the viewer in to investigate its wide expanse. The larger element consists of two rectangular plywood bases supporting a pair of steel pipes laid horizontally so as to bridge their foundations. Projected upright from each end are aluminum poles, which erect elliptical-shaped planes of Plexiglas, sanded to a semiopaque milky white. A second structure consists of eight steel pipes welded at right angles to form an open box-frame. Stretched across the top, a sagging sheet of yellowed fiberglass falls with a downward concavity that counters the raised aeronautic trajectory of the installation's larger piece.

Assembled using common construction materials, the work evokes a sense of pragmatic utility and structural engineering—and yet on close inspection reveals labored, handmade elements. Covered with a painterly layer of pastel acrylic, the plywood bases have been veneered so as to smooth their seams and obscure material connotations. Their discernable gestural brushstrokes parallel other interventions such as coarse welding, irregular contours, and inscribed sanding marks—each indicating the artist's hand. Existing in this polysemic, ambiguous state, the work resists specific metaphorical readings, functioning instead as reflexive presentation of corresponding elements. Its resolute stillness counters an effective geometric dynamism that places the viewer in a shifting space that is at once both familiar and abstruse.

On view in the smaller room is a second sculpture, *Untitled*, 1991, which sits on four concrete blocks. At its base, a curved, rusted steel plane supports a six-foot long vertical rod. A formally related but smaller fiberglass panel rests atop the rod, its underside covered in plastic wrap. The work's contrasting colors, shapes and textures produce an effect in which the viewer's "eyes can never find purchase long enough to form a singular impression. Instead the piece works, despite its apparently simple construction, as an inexhaustibly interactive visual machine."<sup>1</sup>

Born in New York City in 1937, Robert Grosvenor studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the Ecole Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in France and the Università di Perugia in Italy. He began exhibiting

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<sup>1</sup> Will Heinrich, "Galleries," *The New York Times*, September 1, 2017, p. C14.

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in the 1960s and was a member of the artist collective Park Place. His work has been prominently included in important exhibitions such as “Primary Structures” (Jewish Museum, 1966) and “Minimal Art” (Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, 1968), which helped define minimalism—though he soon diverged to create challenging works that resist assimilation to any of the prevailing art movements. Important one-person exhibitions of Grosvenor’s work have been presented at the Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, (1992), the Fundação de Serralves, Porto, Portugal, (2005), and most recently at the Renaissance Society, Chicago, IL, in February 2017 for which a forthcoming monograph on the artist will be published in early 2018. Other recent important group exhibitions include “Los Angeles to New York: Dwan Gallery 1959-1971,” at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA (2017), “FORTY,” MoMA PS1, Long Island City, Queens, NY (2016), and the Whitney Biennial in 2010. Grosvenor’s work is included in the collections of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Storm King Art Center, New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the Serralves Museum, Porto.

For more information and images, please contact the gallery:  
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