

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERINGER

McENERY

YOHE

# GENE DAVIS

5 September - 12 October 2013



*Look at the painting in terms of individual colors. In other words, instead of simply glancing at the work, select a specific color such as yellow or a lime green, and take the time to see how it operates across the painting.*

*Approached this way, something happens, I can't explain it. But one must enter the painting through a single color.*

*And then, you can understand what my painting is all about.*

*— Gene Davis*

**NEW YORK, NEW YORK - AMERINGER | McENERY | YOHE** is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Gene Davis. The exhibition will open 5 September and will remain on view through 12 October 2013. A public reception will be held 5 September from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. A fully illustrated catalogue will accompany the exhibition.

Fields of stripes comprised of single colors and chromatic groups unfold and overlap simultaneously in the work of Gene Davis. Like a jazz musician who plays by ear, Davis referred to his painting process as “playing by eye.” Though they appear calculated, Davis did not base his paintings on formulas or theories.

Davis’s work is generally viewed in the context of the Washington Color School, which received its name after the seminal exhibition of minimal and orderly paintings comprised of stripes, washes, and single fields of color, entitled, “Washington Color Painters,” in 1965.

Davis differed from other Color School practitioners, however. Rather than “one-shot,” symmetrical compositions that could be comprehended at a glance, Davis strove to paint color arrangements that allowed for, and even required, sustained consideration over a period of viewing.

Davis spoke of the importance of color as well as color interval. He was interested in the rhythmic effects caused by alternating colors and suggested that instead of simply looking at a work, select a color and consider how it operates throughout the painting.

Davis played his color stripes like notes on a piano: varying between soft, bright, strong, short, dominant, inharmonious, and harmonious chords. He alternated and repeated colors to create a sense of rhythm. The stripe was a continuous source of invention for Gene Davis.

**Gene Davis** was born in 1920 in Washington, D.C., where he lived most of his life. After starting a career as a sportswriter and later becoming a political journalist in the 1940s; Davis began to paint in 1949. His first art studio was his apartment on Scott Circle and later he worked out of a studio on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Davis’s first solo exhibition of drawings was at the Dupont Theatre Gallery in 1952 and his first exhibition of paintings was at Catholic University in 1953. Though he worked in a variety of media and styles, Davis is best known for his acrylic paintings mostly on canvas of colorful vertical stripes, which he began to paint in 1958.

In 1965, he participated in the “Washington Color Painters” exhibition at the Washington Gallery of Modern Art in Washington, D.C., which traveled around the U.S. and launched the recognition of the Washington Color School as a regional movement in which Davis was a central figure.

Davis began teaching in 1966 at the Corcoran School of Art, where he became a permanent member of the faculty. In 1974, Davis was awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. In 1984, he was appointed the commissioner of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

His work may be found in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art, New York, NY; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA.

Gene Davis died in April of 1985 in Washington, D.C.

**Ameringer | McEnergy | Yohe** is open Tuesday through Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM and by appointment.

Press contact: Thomas Quigley at [TQ@amy-nyc.com](mailto:TQ@amy-nyc.com)

Above Image: *Yellow Jacket*, 1969, Acrylic on canvas, 107 1/4 x 220 inches, 272.4 x 558.8 cm