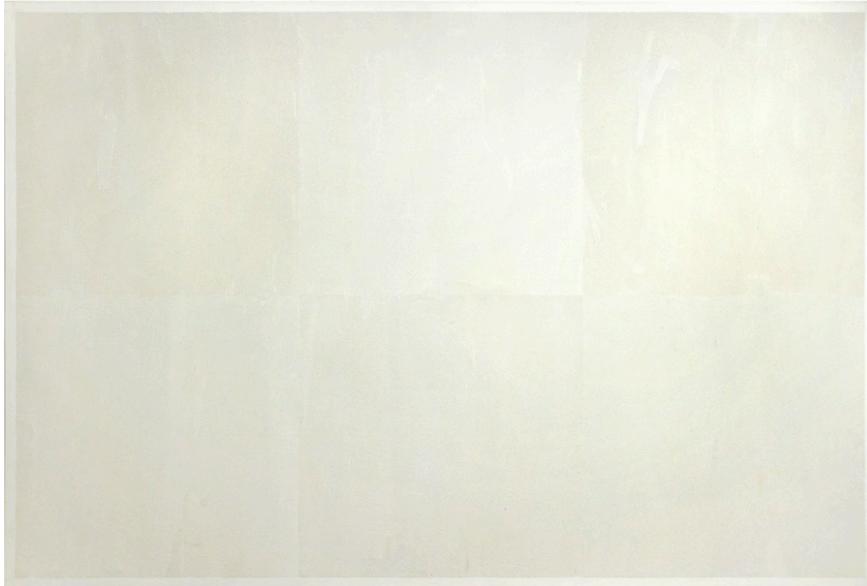


Kayne Griffin Corcoran



Mary Corse's Luminous Glass Microsphere Paintings Find New Light



Mary Corse, *Untitled (white painting)*, ca. 1990, Heather James Fine Art

In the past several years, the radiantly minimalistic paintings of Mary Corse have finally come back into the light. Featured in seminal group exhibitions at the J. Paul Getty Museum and the Guggenheim, and solo shows at White Cube and Lehmann Maupin—all within 2011 and 2012—the resurgence of Corse's work has come in a sudden and welcome burst.

In the 1960s and '70s, residing in Los Angeles with a brisk studio practice and ties to the Light and Space group, she was regarded as a prodigy—when she was just 26 years old, the Guggenheim purchased her large-scale *Light Painting*. However, several years later, as Pop art came into higher focus, dialogue surrounding Corse's work quieted.

Thanks to a recent wave of museum exhibitions confirming the importance of California Light and Space artists to the history of abstraction, Corse's work has finally become available to be experienced, in person, by a wide, international audience. This is an important point, for as numerous critics have duly noted, the magic of Corse's paintings cannot be captured in images.

Interested in the subjective nature of human perception, Corse has experimented with dressing and embedding her paintings with materials that both capture and emit light. Like a mercurial mood ring, the surfaces of the resulting works transform depending on the light source, the time of day, the geometry of the room, and the viewer's eye.



Mary Corse, *Untitled (black painting)*, 1987, Heather James Fine Art

Untitled (white painting) (circa 1990) and *Untitled (black painting)* (1987), two large-scale paintings, employ a light sensitive material that has become synonymous with Corse's practice—the glass microsphere. By combining acrylic with the miniature crystalline balls, Corse builds monochromatic, subtly geometric compositions that have an inexhaustible capacity for transformation. The longer you look at, move around, or live with them, the more facets are revealed—some meditative, others unexpected and wild. One might say that beholding Corse's work reveals new dimensions, not only of the painting but also of perception itself.

— Alexa Gotthardt