



Above: Georg Karl Pfahler, (German, 1926–2002), *Untitled*, 1965, acrylic on cardboard, 21.7 x 19.7 in. Courtesy of Nino Mier. Below: Georg Karl Pfahler, *Cluff*, 1965-1975, acrylic on canvas, 78.75 x 74.75 in. Courtesy Archiv Pfahler and Nino Mier Gallery.

## THE ESTATE OF GEORG KARL PFAHLER AT NINO MIER

Georg Karl Pfahler will have his debut exhibition in Texas at the Dallas Art Fair, October 1–4. Though he passed away in 2002 at the age of 76, his work is as crisp and vibrant today as when it was created decades ago. This one-person exhibition will be the focus of Nino Mier Gallery's program at this year's fair.

"Pfahler was quite productive throughout his career, and as one of the few proponents of color field painting in Europe, there was significant interest in his work during his lifetime, particularly at the peak of his career from the early 1960s to the mid-1980s," says Nino Mier, whose galleries in Los Angeles and Cologne represent the artist's estate.

Pfahler was among a group of artists whose work became part of the effort to reweave the cultural fabric between Germany and the United States after World War II. Mier explains that Pfahler's then-gallerist, Hans-Jürgen Müller, was among the earliest to promote the work of American artists after the war. "As a result," Mier adds, "several of his artists exhibited in the US as part of an informal reciprocal cultural exchange meant to build bridges through art after a protracted and bitter global conflict."

Throughout the 1960s, Pfahler's reputation continued to grow as his work was being exhibited in museums and galleries on both sides of the Atlantic. "It is important to remember the context in which Pfahler's works were created in the early 1960s, at a time before modern technology such as the internet and social media existed. Even color photography and transatlantic travel weren't readily accessible," Mier explains.

Color field painting developed with different objectives on the opposite sides of the Atlantic. For some American artists, it represented an opportunity to re-envision the world reborn after years of war. For others, it offered a purely formalist approach to painting. Overseas, Mier says, "In post-war Germany especially, there was an outpouring of creativity after the stringent censorship of the Nazi dictatorship was lifted. All of a sudden, artistic styles that had previously been outlawed or disparaged were finally allowed to flourish again, including Pfahler's colorful abstractions."

The Kennedy assassination also played a key role in Mier's decision to bring Pfahler's work to Dallas. While it is a chapter that locals would like to see fade into the distant past, in the 1960s, it informed how the world viewed the city. "Like many people around the world, Pfahler was deeply moved by the assassination of John F. Kennedy," he says. In response, Pfahler began his seminal series, *Tex*, in 1962. Named explicitly in reference to this tragedy, he continued to work on it over the next 12 years. "Early versions of the series are even named *Dallas-Tex*," Mier adds.

"The estate still holds a representative portion of works across all mediums, from painting to gouache, drawings, sculptures, and architectural models." For Dallas viewers, this will present a unique opportunity to become part of an international set of collectors through whom Pfahler's legacy continues to live.

—Nancy Cohen Israel

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Archiv Pfahler. Courtesy of the estate of Georg Karl Pfahler and Nino Mier Gallery.