

## Milton Resnick

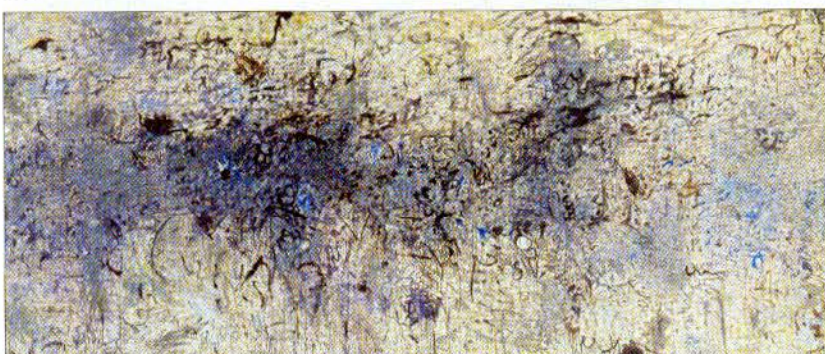
### Cheim & Read

During the pivotal period covered in this show, "A Question of Seeing: Paintings 1958–1963," Milton Resnick became the painter we know. While line, form, and even structure begin to take a backseat to brushstroke and color, the paintings experience some disorientation. Darker works, such as *Burning Bush* (1959) and *Y + R* (1958), which recall Soutine in their palette and paint handling, and even the cheerful *Genie* (1959), seem murky and indecisively rendered.

Resnick's switch to a much larger format—facilitated by his move to a 5,000-square-foot studio in 1959—resolved some of these problems. Counterintuitively, the act of painting on canvases measuring up to 10 by 25 feet gave his work the jolt it needed. Perhaps by limiting his palette to whites, blues, and black, Resnick was able to produce a masterpiece like *Swan* (1961). Monet's late work could be the unsung influence on the painting, from the brush gestures to the oceanic, enveloping format. In spite of the flurry of strokes at the painting's center, some of which could be taken for a swan's head, the center holds. Resnick may have been thinking of flight, or even the noisy takeoff of a swan from water, but the activity also evokes the commotion caused by Zeus in his appearance and actions as a swan. There is a transformational feeling in this rich sea of painted marks and curlicues.

A year later Resnick painted *Wedding* (1962), and here he is the painter we know. It is a prismatic gem of cohesive

allover strokes. The colors are each given their due yet form a unified whole. We feel we've experienced a bit of Resnick's own journey. —*Cynthia Nadelman*



Milton Resnick, *Swan*, 1961, oil on canvas, 116 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 273 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Cheim & Read.