

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition

Alan Shields
Maze

November 7 – December 21, 2012

Opening Reception and Performance, November 7, 6-8pm



Maze, 1981-82, Acrylic and thread on canvas, cotton belting, Velcro, aluminum pipe, 87 x 219 x 219 inches (221 x 556.3 x 556.3 cm)

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is pleased to present *Alan Shields: Maze*, a solo exhibition featuring Alan Shields' interactive installation *Maze* (1981-82) organized in cooperation with the Estate of Alan Shields. The exhibition will be on view from November 7th to December 21th, 2012. The opening will include a performance choreographed by Stephen Petronio titled *Into The Maze*.

Elements and motifs from Shields' canvases and hanging grid works resonate within *Maze*. Large, bright swathes of mottled color punctuated with multi-colored dots, triangles and stripes are strung together on an armature of painted poles. Two egresses encourage the viewer to enter and seek an exit, guided through the interior of painted canvas walls and webs of cotton belting. The interior is simultaneously opaque and transparent as some portions of the labyrinth are obscured and others revealed, presenting a new perspective with each turn. Creating a fully immersive viewing experience, Shields has combined many of his preferred materials, techniques and forms into his largest work. In a documentary film from 1986, he discusses the conception and construction of the piece: "If you walk around inside of it, you'll see that there are a lot of different canvases, again, you'll see that I use partially my theater background, and partially the painting aspect, but it's like a stage set. When you get inside of it, you've got a ceiling overhead, you've got walls, corridors, intersections, changes of direction, all directed by a type of architecture within architecture."

Into The Maze is an action event created by Stephen Petronio, in conjunction with eight of his dancers, for Alan Shields' work *Maze*. Conceived as a duet between the dancers and Shields' supernatural environmental installation, this event takes place in and around this architectural puzzle-in-form. Petronio heeds *Maze's* call for "entry" in order to complete its nature as a human and spiritual space for motion, contemplation and reflection. As the performance laces through the piece and the gallery space, the dancers wear body pieces created by Shields, not originally intended to be part of *Maze* but joined with it in spirit. A video of this performance will be installed in the gallery's viewing room along with a selection of Shields' wearable art objects for the duration of the exhibition.

Alan Shields was born in Herington, Kansas in 1944 and died in Shelter Island, New York in 2005. He was educated at Kansas State University and participated in Summer Theatre Workshops at the University of Maine. He was the recipient of a 1973 Guggenheim Fellowship. Solo museum exhibitions include *Alan Shields: Stirring up the Waters*, The Parrish Museum of Art, Southampton, NY (2007), *Alan Shields: A Survey*, The Beach Museum of Art, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS (1999), and *1968-1983: The Work of Alan Shields*, The Brooks Memorial Art Gallery, Memphis, TN (1983). His works are included in the collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Tate Collection, London, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art among many others.

Greenberg Van Doren Gallery is located at 730 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street, New York 10019.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10am - 6pm.

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