

Craig Kauffman

Craig Kauffman is an American West Coast painter and sculptor, working mainly with acrylic and plastic. Born in 1932 in Los Angeles, Kauffman studied at the University of Southern California School of Architecture and the University of California at Los Angeles. Best known for his vacuum-formed plastic works, whose curving surfaces extend from the wall in vibrant hues, Kauffman was one of the most significant figures to emerge from the fertile art scene in the 1950s and 1960s in Los Angeles.

For almost sixty years, he experimented with form, colour, material and space and created a vast body of work, including painterly and sculptural objects. Influenced by his interest in twentieth-century modernism, Kauffman's work reflected the artistic trends of his times, from painterly abstraction to minimalism and post-minimalism, leading him to develop his distinctive, eclectic approach to form and colour.

Kauffman was part of the first generation of artists exhibited at the renowned Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles, where together with his contemporaries, including Billy Al Bengston, Ed Moses, Ed Ruscha, Robert Irwin, Larry Bell, Edward Kienholz, John Altoon and Ken Price, he founded the "Cool School" movement. There, Kauffman began experimenting with different materials and techniques and later, in the 1960s, he maintained his interest in the malleability and colour possibilities of industrial plastics. By the late 1960s, he advanced to his overlaying singular bulbous forms that generate atmospheric effects of light and reflection.

In the following thirty years, Kauffman's practice continued shifting between the two mediums, exploring the relationship between art and its environment, leading to his final return to sculpture in the 1990s and 2000s. Since then, his work has been exhibited worldwide with significant retrospectives in the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Other prominent collections include the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Tate, London, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, University of New Mexico Art Museum, Santa Fe and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

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Selected Artworks



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*Still Life With Electric Fan and
Respirator, 1958*

Oil on canvas

51 3/4 x 42 1/4 in

131.4 x 107.3 cm