

Don Dudley | That '70s Show
May 2–5, 2024
Eric Firestone Loft

“Some primaries, some meditations on darkness, others a delicate mix of sublime white and lavenders...”
—Don Dudley

For the 2024 edition of That '70s Show, Magenta Plains presents a series of five airbrushed paintings on paper by Don Dudley made between 1972-75. Classically representative of Dudley's oeuvre, these historical works demonstrate his command of subtle transitions in color and shade, as well as his precise compositional acumen. These early minimalist works show Dudley's career-long commitment to formal intelligence expressed through serially organized shapes and shades.

Born in Los Angeles, California in 1930, Dudley's practice embraces drawing and painting by way of sculpture and installation—creating subtle and sophisticated wall works that stand out for both their elegance and formal intelligence. Throughout Don Dudley's seventy-year career he has challenged artistic conventions and the traditional concept of painting by incorporating industrial materials in his work such as aluminum, lacquer, homasote and plywood. Dudley's highly meticulous works on paper are an integral and crucial aspect of his practice featuring rows of vertical rectangles and color progressions. Classically representative of Dudley's oeuvre, these works demonstrate his command of subtle transitions in color as well as his precise compositional acumen. These early works show Dudley's career-long commitment to formal intelligence expressed through serially organized shapes and shades.

Dudley lived and worked on the West Coast for thirty-eight years before relocating to New York City in 1969. Settling first into a loft on Broome Street in SoHo, he later became one of the early pioneers in TriBeCa—where his studio remains to this day. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Dudley explored modular and serial structures with monochromatic color schemes as well as site-specific spatial installations, exhibiting in “Corners” at MIT Vera List Art Center in 1979 and mounting solo shows at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in 1982 and New Museum of Contemporary Art in 1984. Select group exhibitions at major institutions include Contemporary American Painting at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY (1972); Double Take at New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, NY (1978); and Activated Walls at the Queens Museum of Art, New York, NY (1984).

After a twenty-five year hiatus from exhibiting, Dudley's work was rediscovered in 2011 to great acclaim. Recent solo exhibitions include Don Dudley: New Work and Don Dudley: Early Work, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2022, 2019); Don Dudley: Activated Walls and Recent Works, Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne, DE (2018); Don Dudley: Recent Work, Magenta Plains, New York, NY (2017); Modular Spaces, Galerie Thomas Zander, Cologne, DE (2013); Don Dudley, I-20 Gallery, New York, NY (2011); and Don Dudley, Mendes Wood, São Paulo, BR (2011). The artist lives and works in New York, NY.