

franklin parrasch gallery, inc.

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K E N
P R I C E
E G G S
MAY 6 - JUNE 24 1961 - 1970

*"Those eggs and dome-shaped ceramics were psycho-erotic.
They made you scratch your palms."* - Ed Ruscha, 2010

Franklin Parrasch Gallery is pleased to present *Ken Price Eggs, 1961-1970*, an exhibition of nine sculptures that represent the full span of time during which Price engaged the Egg form.

Ken Price (1935-2012) first exhibited his egg-shaped ceramic sculptures at the famed Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles in 1961. The artist's Eggs directly followed a series of dome-shaped, fired, and painted clay forms collectively referred to as Mounds, and signaled a profound leap both aesthetically and technically in Price's work and career. These moderately scaled, remarkably sensual, orbicular objects—with surfaces involving such technically diverse and complex treatments as low-fire glazing, sprayed auto enamels, and chatoyant acrylics—earned Price, then in his mid-twenties, immediate recognition among curators, historians, and critics, prompting late artist and *Artforum* editor John Coplans to assert in a 1964 essay for *Art International* that Price "re-proves all the assumptions of Brancusi, Arp and Miró, but with an introspective, totally new, personal vision."

Throughout the 1960s Price worked with a variety of amorphous, non-angular shapes, conjuring biomorphic forms, extraterrestrial life forces, and utterly mysterious uncharted energy. Price's immersion in zoology, Animalia, and pre-human life forms was central to his work from the outset of his practice. Sporadically

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throughout the decade Price revisited the Egg, exploring chromatic juxtapositions, textural nuances, surface treatments, orientation, scale, and presentation. By 1970 he had refined and altered technical approaches, pushed formal possibilities, and resolved what had become his most definitive body of work to date.

Perhaps more than with any other series in his career, Price's Eggs straddle a narrow precipice that divides the elegant from the abhorrent and the graceful from the crude. At once jewel-like and animal, alive and static, they mine familiar patterns—peeling their layers to expose unprecedented gestures—engaging clues to our existence. Sustained and suspended by both atmosphere and its gravity, each Egg in this show retains a visual identity completely unique to itself. As the late curator Henry Hopkins observed, “these objects announce their intent to survive.”

The lexicon surrounding Price's Eggs has varied widely, having included at times Mounds and Specimens, as well as the artist's later organically-shaped work. The Egg is exclusively defined in this show as spheroidal in shape; perched on a single point of an ellipse; and perforated by one or more apertures from which glazed or enameled tendril-like or biomorphic elements are revealed, and/or are thrusting out from inside the “shell”. Each Egg in this exhibition will be presented on a specifically proportioned plinth in accordance with design instructions provided by Ken Price to Franklin Parrasch Gallery in 2008 for the presentation of *Yellow*, 1968.

The nine works in this show represent a wide range of Price's use of chromatic and surface textural treatments, and have all been generously loaned to the gallery by private and public collections throughout North America. *Ken Price Eggs, 1961-1970* will be on view at Franklin Parrasch Gallery, 53 East 64th Street, New York, from May 6 – June 24, 2017. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10a – 6p. This show is for educational purposes only and none of the works on exhibition are for sale. Groups and tours of eight or more people will not be accommodated without a prior reservation. Please contact Claudine Elysee at info@franklinparrasch.com or 212-246-5360 during business hours to schedule, or for more information.