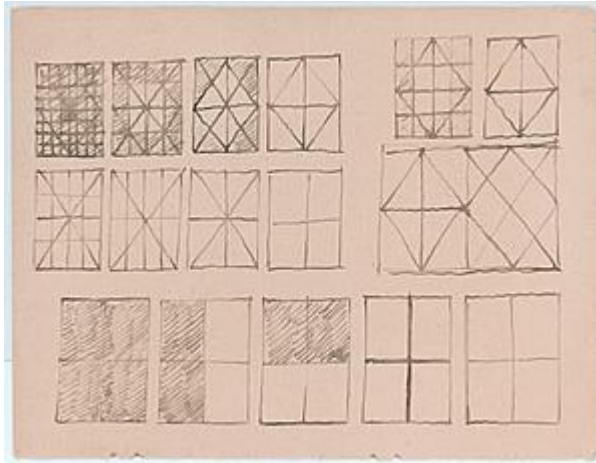


RONNY VAN DE VELDE



Dan Van Severen (Lokeren 1927 - Gent 2009)

2 studies, 1973

Inkt op papier
225 x 290 mm

Both signed and dated on the reverse

For Dan Van Severen, everything is part of a quest for the essential: unpretentious compositions based on a few motifs – circle, rectangle, square, rhombus – that become purified into the central cross as a near-obsessional starting point and terminus. The slow maturation process, further reinforced by choosing to work with ‘palpable’ materials like artisanal paper, pencil and tempera; the limited color-range with refined nuances of whites and grays. Van Severen is more a romantic or symbolist than an abstract artist. He does not make art that is based on pure calculation, that enthusiastically wishes to ally itself with the ‘scientific’ spirit of the age, as with the geometric abstract painters. And when he works in series, as well – like with these drawings – it is not a question of quantity. In an interview with Yves Gevaert in 1974, he comments about this: ‘For me the works in series are not a response to purely serial searches. In my work ‘the serial’ should be thought of in terms of pure exercise, a test of possibilities. It helps keep me awake. One always runs the perpetual risk of falling into a system and losing the essence.’ Van Severen’s work testifies to a great nostalgia for simplicity and authenticity, silence and restraint. Though in the middle of the modern age, he wants to evoke a sacral atmosphere, translating the unsayable of mystic experience into images. From the same interview in 1974: ‘I have the impression that in the current mental mess, a kernel of the essential still exists and remains preserved. And like a worldly monk I try to work with it. I believe in it, and that’s the only thing that drives my work.’

Provenance:

Van Severen, Gent

Exhibitions

Bruxelles, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Dan Van Severen 1959-1974, 1974
Knokke, Galerie Ronny Van de Velde, 2013

Literature:

Yves Gevaert, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Dan Van Severen 1959-1974, Bruxelles 1974, p.44 ill.

Artist description:

Abstract painter, his abstraction was based on simple geometric forms: squares, rectangles, rhombs and ovals. His drawings often consisting of only one line. Combining squares and rectangles led him to distillate the cross, the universal sign and key to all his compositions and omnipresent in all his later work.

He was a founding member of the mouvement G58.

His work was exhibited and is represented in SMAK Ghent, M hka Antwerp and MuZee Ostend.

Dan Van Severen was een Belgisch kunstschilder. Van Severen was een vertegenwoordiger van de abstracte schilderkunst. Zijn abstracte kunst was gebouwd op eenvoudige geometrische motieven: vierkant, rechthoek, ruit, cirkel en ovaal. Zijn tekeningen bestonden soms uit een enkele lijn. Uit de combinatie van vierkant en rechthoek distilleerde hij later de kruisvorm, het universele teken, dat de uiteindelijke sleutel van al zijn composities vormde. Het kruis is in zijn latere werk altijd aanwezig. Tijdens Expo 58 verenigde hij zich met vrienden en kennissen uit het avant-garde-milieu tot de groep G58. Zijn schilderijen worden onder meer tentoongesteld in het SMAK, het Muhka en Mu.ZEE