

ALEXANDRE

Post-Fair



Pat Adams

October 20 – October 24, 2026

Post-Fair

79 & 74 Rue de Temple, 75003, Paris

Opening Preview Day: Monday, October 19, 2026 6 PM – 8 PM

**Fair Hours: Tuesday, October 20 – Saturday, October 24,
2026, 11 AM – 7 PM**

ALEXANDRE is pleased to participate in the inaugural Paris edition of Post-Fair, with a presentation of works on paper by Pat Adams, spanning from the 1950s through 1980s.

"Pat Adams is something like the Jan van Eyck of postwar American abstraction," wrote Roberta Smith in *The New York Times*, 2022. "Her paintings have a fineness and excess of detail—and therefore of meticulous technique—that astound the eye. Thin precise lines of two or more colors—which imply a three-hair brush—bound, spiral or loop through fields of paint splatters and smears and geometric detritus. The resulting pictorial space is complicated and suggestive: simultaneously cartographical, microscopic and celestial."

Born in California in 1928 and schooled in art at the University of California, Berkeley, in the 1940s, Adams came East in 1950, and exhibited until 2008 with Zabriskie Gallery in Manhattan and Paris.

A pivotal period in Adams's career, the 1950s and 60s is marked by the birth of the artist's distinct visual language of "ur forms"—squares, circles, triangles, and S curves—which is essential to Adams's ongoing quest to seek out the "beginnings of things," an idea that continues to capture her fascination to this day.

In the vibrant landscape of 1950s and '60s New York, Adams—a California transplant to the city—charted her own course amidst the dominance of Abstract Expressionism, which oversaturated the New York art scene at the time. While there are "inescapable affinities with Abstract Expressionism in her paintings of the 1950s, perceivable in the looseness of touch, the shifting and overlapping of color areas, and the concept of the painting surface as a field of action," shared Martica Sawin in *Arts Magazine*, 1976, there are also "crystallizations of shape, bubbly concentric circles...and an imagery more visibly rooted in natural sources, suggestive of pebbles seen under water or cross-sections of geodes. These forms begin to cluster and drift, to differentiate themselves from the surrounding terrain."

Examining Adams's work throughout the 1950s, 70s and 80s, ALEXANDRE presents a selection of work created during the artist's time as a professor at Bennington College (1964–1993), a rich period of creation during which she held numerous teaching appointments and residencies across the country.

In her paintings, Pat Adams creates what critic Hilton Kramer described as "the most delicate, painstaking, exquisite images" which reflect upon the sum of everything. Working

with a core of geometric forms, or “ur forms,” including circles, curves, lines, squares, and various spherical variations, Adams’s work gradually exposes a deliberate poetic language. This language is also revealed in her titles, writings, and talks, describing the qualities she strives to achieve in her work: “quidity or whatness, richesse, towardness, involuntary affect, slowing, apparency, delayed closure, autogenous bursts.”

Gathering from a multitude of philosophical, scientific, and historical sources, Adams explores the glories of excess and the intricacies of restraint, demonstrated in lavish surfaces (often mixing sand, beads, shell, or mica into pigments to enhance their material vibrancy) alongside carefully orchestrated lines and a distinctive vocabulary of shape. Her meticulously calculated approach to the construction of form brings together seemingly unrelated visual elements to create a harmonious whole. Although her paintings have an immediate impact on the viewer, their greatest strength lies in their power to draw in viewers and keep them visually, mentally, and emotionally engaged over long periods of looking, thinking, and feeling.

Bio

Pat Adams (b. 1928) was raised in Stockton, California, and began painting at the age of ten. She studied painting at UC Berkeley from 1945–49, where she first encountered the ideas of Hans Hofmann as she studied under his former students—Worth Ryder and Margaret Peterson O’Hagan, who had arranged for Hofmann’s migration to the States in 1932, among them. During her summers at Berkeley she pursued programs at the California College of Arts and Crafts (1945), the College of the Pacific (1946), and the Art Institute of Chicago (1948). In 1950, following her graduation from Berkeley the previous year, she attended a summer session at Brooklyn Museum Art School, remaining in the city after its completion. She received her first solo exhibition in 1954 at the Korman Gallery—later to be renamed the Zabriskie Gallery, which would continue to represent her through 2018. In 1956 Adams was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study in Paris, where she came to know Joan Mitchell, Louise Bourgeois and Shirley Jaffe - and where some of the works in this presentation were created. During her time in Paris she traveled to Gavrinis to see the Neolithic tomb which is covered with Megalithic art. Her experience of the great curved wall and stone markings was one of the most significant influences on her work.

In the fall of 1964 she was invited by professor Paul Feeley to teach at Bennington College, where she joined the social circle of the famous “Green Mountain Boys,” including Kenneth Noland and Jules Olitski. In 1972 she married fellow Bennington professor R. Arnold Ricks, and they set off with her two sons on a four month journey through Egypt, Iran, Turkey, and all of Europe, which impacted her work significantly. She continued teaching at Bennington through 1993.

Her lengthy career has also included many teaching appointments at Yale, as both a visiting professor and artist, as well as the Rhode Island School of Design, among numerous other institutions across the country. She has received notable awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Academy of Arts and Letters, the National Academy of Design, and the College Art Association. Her work has been the subject of over sixty solo exhibitions. She lives in Bennington, Vermont.

Press Inquiries

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Image: Pat Adams, *Le Midi*, 1956, gouache on paper, 16 3/4 x 11 inches, courtesy ALEXANDRE, New York.