

Sixties Flashback

The Survey sector stages a riveting revival of unsung pioneers in their prime era. by Margery Gordon

Discovering unfamiliar artists is one of the most exciting experiences at Art Basel in Miami Beach. While emerging talents abound throughout the fair, the newest sector—Survey—surprises by making the old fresh again.

“Increased interest across the art world in historical exhibitions that shine light on an artist or movement that may have been overlooked led to the launch of Survey last year,” says Noah Horowitz, Art Basel’s new director Americas. Tightly focused projects illuminate artists who “have shaped, influenced, or reflect on our visual culture.”

Survey’s second edition comprises 14 solo shows concentrating on crucial periods. Nearly half find fertile ground in an international array of conceptual experiments that revolutionized ways of making and experiencing art 50 years ago.

“In the ’60s, artists felt like they could do anything,” says Garth Greenan, a Chelsea gallerist bent on boosting underappreciated artists’ artists who arrived during the 1960s and ’70s. “Survey is a perfect platform for re-representation of important artists who fell through the cracks.”

After making a splash in the sector’s unveiling with 1962–1965 paintings by Paul Feeley, Greenan is doubling down with large works from 1961–65 that introduced Rosalyn Drexler. A prolific novelist and screenwriter, Drexler has been overshadowed in the visual field by successors whose appropriation tactics she presaged by painting magazine clips collaged on canvas as with her uncanny 1963 *Marilyn Pursued by Death*. Still painting at 89, she figures in global pop surveys currently at the Tate Modern and the Dallas Museum of Art, and she holds court in one of the fair’s annual Salon talk on Friday, December 4, 2–3 PM.

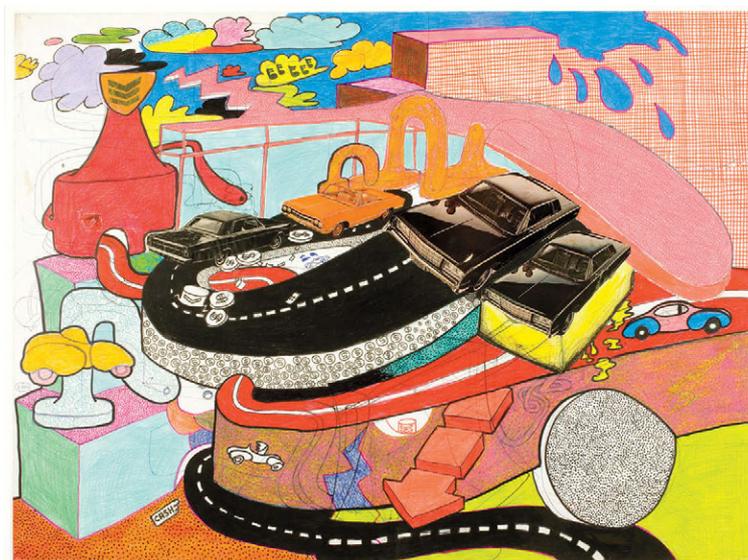
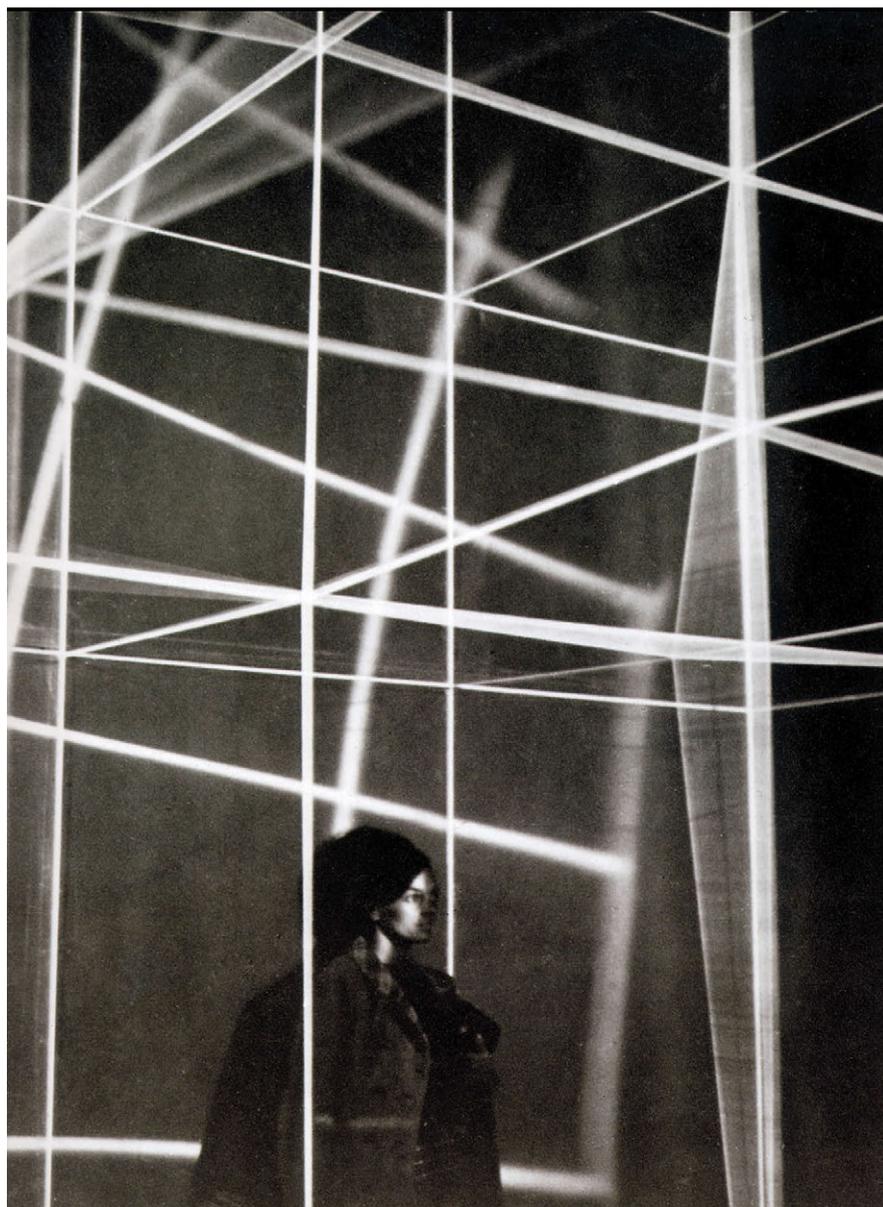
The raw, cartoonish imagery of fellow Pop provocateur Peter Saul has shed its shock value amid amped-up

imitations by freshly minted art school grads, says New York dealer George Adams. His gallery’s first foray in the Miami show traces Saul’s evolution from 1956 to 1976 through works on paper and canvas that are “seemingly childish and very angry and very skilled.”

The flipside of wartime turbulence, free love is graphically illustrated by Dorothy Iannone, an octogenarian American expat whose current output at Peres Projects’s booth in Nova last year prompted its prequel in Survey. Nick Koenigsknecht, the gallery director in Berlin (Iannone’s longtime base), notes that recent solo shows in Europe and emerging artists’ references to her have piqued collectors’ curiosity.

Beck & Eggeling is making an entrance with Heinz Mack’s efforts to reset the trajectory of art history in the decade after starting Zero in Düsseldorf in 1957. Mack’s microcosm in Survey dazzles with metallic rotating sculptures and reflective reliefs; even linear paintings convey vibrations.

Zero’s original members shared ideas and exhibitions with Milan’s Gruppo T, whose cofounder Gianni Colombo also incorporated kinetic elements activated either mechanically via electric motors or manually via the direct participation of the viewer. Both types of works will be on show at Robilant + Voena’s Miami debut, all engendered by Colombo’s first environment in 1967, strung with glowing bands, and spanning the next 15 years of this “Spazio elastico” cycle. “They still compel us to change our point of view,” observes Francesca Pola, cocurator of Colombo’s first solo show at the gallery’s London flagship this fall. “The elements of environment, self-performance, participation and social relations characterizing his practice are all seminal issues today.” **ABMB**



TOP: Gianni Colombo’s *Spazio elastico* (*Elastic Space*), (1967) shown here during the 1967 exhibition “Trigon 67” in Graz.
 BOTTOM: Peter Saul, *Cash*, 1965.