

# bernard jacobson gallery

Marc Vaux

Colour Edge to Edge

Paintings from the mid '60s

4<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007

London in the swinging '60s. A new confidence had come to British culture and exhibitions of the new American abstract painting had been held in London museums. These factors allowed the young British artists of the time to reject the landscape-based semi-abstraction of the older generation of British painters, such as Lanyon and Hitchens, and to work in a new, totally non-representational way. A now mythic exhibition of British abstract painting had been held in 1960, 'Situation' in which the work of Marc Vaux had been exhibited along with that of Robyn Denny, John Hoyland and the Cohen brothers.

In the mid '60s Marc Vaux became aware that his primary interest in painting was colour in its purest sense. Prior to this point, his work had been predominantly concerned with the structure of painting, combining hard edge and gestural paintwork in one canvas. Concerned that the forms should be as anonymous as possible so as to allow colour to speak for itself, Vaux embarked on a new strategy. Working with the then newly developed acrylic paints allowed him to stain the canvas creating saturated and pure colour. Typically the paintings of the period have two large areas of colour dividing the canvas horizontally on which horizontal bands of different colour sit. The arrangement of colours seems logical but as Norbert Lynton says 'Asymmetry rules surreptitiously', and the painting's apparent logic is undone by further examination. Later in the '60s Vaux used horizontal bands organised in a trapezoid form and then vertical isolated colour bands, which float on a field of a single colour. These hard edge paintings are hand painted, without the use of masking tape or other mechanical means of dividing the areas of colour, which allows the paint to abut without ridges or space between them and the colour reactions to be pure and unmediated.

We will be showing six paintings, most of which have not been seen since the '60s, along with a group of preparatory drawings in black and white and colour.