Howardena Pindell

American, b. 1943, Philadelphia, PA, lives in New York, NY

In the 1970s Howardena Pindell’s work focused on process and surface. Post-Minimalist in orientation, she adopted a systems-based technique which employed the grid format and use of dots in repetition to produce surface-oriented works exploring the economy of mark. The artist used no stretchers to mount her work. Here, the work is installed with tiny metal tacks, which essentially integrate it into the surface of the wall.

In this case, prior to commencing painting, Pindell actually amassed hundreds of five-inch square pieces of canvas and then sewed them together creating a quilt-like surface which is entirely invisible in the finished work. The extraordinary labor inherent in such a process is indicative of the artist’s high regard of the relationship between work and value. The result, particularly in this work, epitomizes Pindell’s lightness of touch and the delicate balance between opacity and translucency which, in turn, produces a subtle shimmering staccato effect. In consequence, the painting appears to float and hover on the wall, heightening its distance from traditional stretcher-based paintings and their encumbered associations with twentieth-century modern art.



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