

RICHARD SERRA

Casablanca

14 March – 30 April 2024

Opening on Thursday 14 March at 6pm

13 rue de Téhéran

75008 Paris



Casablanca #1, 2022

Oil stick, ink and silica, edition of 26. 152.4 x 167.6 cm.

© Richard Serra. Courtesy Galerie Lelong & Co. and Gemini G.E.L.

Since the 1980s, Galerie Lelong has regularly presented Richard Serra's etchings in its Paris space, building up a remarkable body of work over the years.

Casablanca (2022) is a suite of six graphic works produced in close collaboration with master printer Xavier Fumat at the Gemini G.E.L. workshop in Los Angeles. These prints are spectacular in their size and sculptural quality, which can only be appreciated by seeing them in person. The artist and the workshop have pushed the limits of what a large, thick sheet of paper, almost entirely covered in black matter, can bear. Playing with the idea of weight and balance on paper, these monumental etchings are presented in a frame designed by the artist, without glass or plexiglass; the first five of them measure 153 x 168 cm (roughly 5' x 6'), and the sixth 183 x 213 cm (roughly 6' x 7').

More than their size, it is their exceptional material that impresses and even fascinates. Highly textured, made with a mixture of hand-applied oil-based ink, etching ink and silica, they are, from a sculptor's perspective, another facet of the *outrenoir* ("beyond black") experiment conducted by the painter Pierre Soulages.

Serra began work on this project in early 2020, just before the first pandemic-induced lockdown, which seriously disrupted the workshop's activity. As the work was carried out intermittently, the trial prints were sent back and forth to the artist in New York until the final proof of each print was signed. Obtaining the quantities of ink and paper required for the project presented its own challenges. Consequently, from start to finish, this project took almost three years to complete. Here it is, shown in Paris for the first time.

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Richard Serra (born 1939 in San Francisco) is one of the most important sculptors of the 21st century. He has exhibited in major museums and created site-specific works for public and private spaces around the world. His work has been the subject of two retrospectives at MoMA, in 1986 and 2007. Other major recent exhibitions have been held at the Guggenheim in Bilbao (1999), the Museum of Art in Saint-Louis, Missouri (2003, 2014) and the National Archaeological Museum of Naples (2004). His drawings have been exhibited at the Kunsthaus Bregenz (2008), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2011-12). Those familiar with his work will remember the spectacular *Promenade*, as part of Monumenta at the Grand Palais, Paris (2008); his work *East-West/West-East* was permanently installed in 2014 in the desert, 70 km from Doha in Qatar. Serra has participated in Documenta four times (1972, 1977, 1982 and 1987), and in the Venice Biennale (1980, 1984, 2001, 2013). The artist lives and works in New York.

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