

Brian O'Doherty Speaking in Lines

PRESENTED BY P! AND SIMONE SUBAL GALLERY
JANUARY 8 – FEBRUARY 19, 2016
131 BOWERY, 2ND FLOOR

P! and Simone Subal Gallery are thrilled to present their second solo exhibition by Brian O'Doherty (also known as Patrick Ireland). Featuring rarely-exhibited works from the 1960s and 1970s, the exhibition follows a strand of thinking that connects the artist's synthesis of embodied and encoded language with abstract form.

The show focuses on several distinct but related bodies of work. The exhibition's centerpiece is a set of mirrored, colored sculptures that employ "Ogham," an ancient linear Celtic code. Recurring in O'Doherty's work, Ogham is resonant with embedded significance and legible to the instructed eye. Through their incised texts, painted surfaces, and focus on the viewer's relationship to them, the sculptures evade easy classification among other minimal and conceptual works of the period. Several large unprimed canvasses from 1975 are based on a series of small "Hair Collages," in which the length of each randomly plucked hair (from the artist's own head) was measured and then crossed with a drawn straight line of the same dimension. On view for the first time in nearly forty years, these paintings register O'Doherty's performative tracing as an analytical yet light gesture. Complemented by a selection of the artist's drawings from 1969–1979, the exhibition offers an enduring investigation of line itself as a way to hold meaning.

Brian O'Doherty (b. 1928, Ireland) has led a remarkable and multifaceted career. After working and researching as a medical doctor, he relocated to the USA, where he hosted two television shows on art and culture. O'Doherty served as art critic for the *New York Times* and as editor of *Art in America* magazine. He edited and designed the groundbreaking "conceptual issue" of the multimedia magazine-in-a-box Aspen, as well as authored the seminal essay series *Inside the White Cube*. While part-time director of the NEA's visual arts and media program, he helped make Soho a magnet for artists, coined the term "alternative space," and championed early video art. From 1972 to 2008, he worked as an artist under the pseudonym Patrick Ireland. He has mounted over forty solo exhibitions, and was the subject of several career-spanning surveys, most recently at NYU's Grey Art Gallery (2007) and P! / Simone Subal Gallery (2014). O'Doherty is the author of several novels, including *The Deposition of Father McGreevy* (2000), which was nominated for the Booker Prize. He lives and works in New York with his wife, art historian Barbara Novak.