

MARY BOONE GALLERY

745 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10151 . 212.752.2929

BARRY LE VA

On 2 April 2009 the Mary Boone Gallery will open at its Fifth Avenue location "Hands, Handles, Blades: Cleaver Configurations 1969-2009", an exhibition curated by Klaus Kertess of Cleaver sculptures by BARRY LE VA.

Le Va, whose pioneering scatter pieces on the floor, started in 1966, made him one of the first of the so-called "Process" artists, started, in 1969, to create works with cleavers embedded in the wall or the floor. Three wall pieces will be shown, each made by thrusting a cleaver into the wall at intervals equivalent to a large side step; if located at the top of the wall, the cleaver is propelled from the artist's right-side-up position, if on the bottom of the wall from the artist's downward-facing and back-to-the-wall position. The works are clear, direct, unadorned manifestations of a simple physical process, created without self-conscious aesthetic intention. Indeed, Le Va has said that these and other sculptures similarly fraught with danger and created between 1968 and 1971, such as *Within the Series of Layered Pattern Acts* created by shattering sheets of glass on the floor, were more about exploring mathematical givens in relation to time and space than about threat of danger. In the case of the Cleaver pieces, those givens are the artist's height and the fixed radius of the arc of his arm's thrust. Of course, these works were originally created during a time of great violence in our culture.

The configuration of the sculpture is dependent upon the space it is created in. Only two Cleaved pieces have previously been seen in New York, one at the exhibition space 112 Greene Street in 1969, and one at the Whitney Museum of American Art exhibition *Contemporary American Sculpture*, in 1970.

The exhibition, at 745 Fifth Avenue, will run through 16 May 2009. Please contact Ron Warren at the Gallery for further assistance, or visit our website: www.maryboonegallery.com .