

wexner center
for the arts

For immediate release: June 22, 2006 (updated September 13, 2006)

Media contacts: Karen Simonian, Director of Media and Public Relations, 614 292-9923 or ksimonian@wexarts.org;
Erik Pepple, Media Relations Coordinator, 614 688-3261 or epepple@wexarts.org

EXHIBITION FOCUSES ON FRANK STELLA'S 1958 PAINTINGS

NATIONALLY TOURING SHOW MAKES ONLY STOP IN THE MIDWEST

Columbus, OH—Zeroing in on a single year, 1958, in the career of influential American artist Frank Stella, the touring exhibition *Frank Stella 1958* will travel to the Wexner Center this fall. On view **September 16–December 31**, 2006, this tightly focused exhibition brings together 18 works from this period of tremendous experimentation and productivity, and provides new insight into Stella's career and his development as an artist in the year following his graduation from Princeton University. The paintings, with their radiant fields of stripes and color, preceded Stella's famous Black paintings that he began at the end of that year and set the course for much of what was to follow in his career (the show does include three of the early Black paintings). Also in the exhibition is one work owned by the Wexner Center.



Frank Stella
Grape Island
185.42 cm x 154.94 cm
Courtesy Mr. and Mrs. David
Mirvish, Toronto

Notes Helen Molesworth, the Wexner Center's chief curator of exhibitions, "Surprisingly colorful and gestural, Stella's dynamic paintings from 1958 show an artist in transition, exploring the very limits of his field. We're pleased to be the only Midwestern venue for this exhibition."

This exhibition was organized by the Harvard University Art Museums, where it premiered in February at the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, and was recently on view at The Menil Collection in Houston. Upon its premiere, *The Providence Journal* wrote that "the impact of Stella's breakthrough year is still with us." And *The Boston Globe* wrote that the exhibition "tears one page out of the great tome that is the history of modern art and illuminates a single moment with audacity and relish." The Wexner Center is its final stop.

Harry Cooper, cocurator of *Frank Stella 1958*, will offer an in-depth look at the artist's early years during a talk on **October 3** at 1 pm (admission is free).

The accompanying catalogue contains reproductions of all 37 known Stella works from 1958 as well as examples of works by his collaborators and major influences. The catalogue is available at the Wexner Center Store for \$34.95.

A PIVOTAL YEAR

By 1958, a tension was emerging between the advocates of abstract painting and those artists who were already making raw, minimal sculptures—the two artistic visions that would dominate the 1960s. Stella's work from this year reveals the influence of both of these artistic directions. His 1958 paintings are distinguished by their repetitive compositional elements and workmanlike paint application. At the same time, their brilliant and brushy fields of color stripes and blocks are closely related to the work of other painters at the time, both the abstract expressionists and the younger generation of color-field painters. But Stella's work of 1958 is already very much his own: its large scale, optical impact, dazzling patterns, sometimes garish color, and serial permutations set the course for much of what was to follow in his illustrious career.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Frank Stella 1958 was organized by the Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The exhibition is presented with support from the Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation.

Accommodations are provided by The Blackwell Inn.

VISITOR INFORMATION

THE EXHIBITION: *Frank Stella 1958*, featuring 18 works, highlights a pivotal year in revered American artist Frank Stella's career.

DATES: September 16–December 31, 2006. **Opening:** September 15 (7–9 pm). Also on view: *Shiny* and *Twice Untitled and Other Pictures (looking back)*

LOCATION: Wexner Center for the Arts (Gallery A), 1871 North High Street at 15th Avenue.

GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday–Wednesday and Sunday 11 am–6 pm; and Thursday–Saturday 11 am–8 pm. The galleries are closed on Mondays.

WALK-IN TOURS: Thursdays at 6 pm & Saturdays at 2 pm, no reservation required.

ADMISSION: Free.

PARKING: Ohio Union Garage, just south of the Wexner Center on High Street.

PUBLIC INFORMATION: wexarts.org/ex or 614 292-3535.

MEDIA CONTACT FOR IMAGES OR MORE INFORMATION: Erik Pepple, 614 688-3261 or epepple@wexarts.org

###30###