

AP



U.S. artist Frank Stella stands between his collages "Die Marquise von O..." (The Marchioness of O...), left, and "Die Verlobung in St. Domingo" (The Engagement in St. Domingo) at the Wuertembergischer Kunstverein Stuttgart, the gallery of the German Federal state of Baden-Wuerttemberg, in Stuttgart, southwestern Germany, Sept. 20, 2001. Stella, a painter, sculptor and printmaker whose constantly evolving works are hailed as landmarks of the minimalist and post-painterly abstraction art movements, died Saturday, May 4, 2024, at his home in Manhattan. He was 87.
Photo: Thomas Kienzle

FRANK STELLA, ARTIST RENOWNED FOR BLURRING THE LINES BETWEEN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE, DIES AT 87

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS STAFF
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Frank Stella, a painter, sculptor and printmaker whose constantly evolving works are hailed as landmarks of the minimalist and post-painterly abstraction art movements, died Saturday at his home in Manhattan. He was 87.

Gallery owner Jeffrey Deitch, who spoke with Stella's family, confirmed his death to The Associated Press. Stella's wife, Harriet McGurk, told the New York Times that he died of lymphoma.

Born May 12, 1936, in Malden, Massachusetts, Stella studied at Princeton University before moving to New York City in the late 1950s.

At that time many prominent American artists had embraced abstract expressionism, but Stella began exploring minimalism. By age 23 he had created a series of flat, black paintings with gridlike bands and stripes using house paint and exposed canvas that drew widespread critical acclaim.

Over the next decade, Stella's works retained his rigorous structure but began incorporating curved lines and bright colors, such as in his influential Protractor series, named after the geometry tool he used to create the curved shapes of the large-scale paintings.

In the late 1970s, Stella began adding three-dimensionality to his visual art, using metals and other mixed media to blur the boundary between painting and sculpture.

Stella continued to be productive well into his 80s, and his new work is currently on display at the Jeffrey Deitch Gallery in New York City. The colorful sculptures are massive and yet almost seem to float, made up of shining polychromatic bands that twist and coil through space.

"The current work is astonishing," Deitch told AP on Saturday. "He felt that the work that he showed was the culmination of a decades-long effort to create a new pictorial space and to fuse painting and sculpture."