

uffner & liu SEPTEMBER

Reginald Madison
SEPTEMBER and Uffner & Liu

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Independent 20th Century

Sotheby's New York
The Breuer
945 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10021

At this year's Independent 20th Century, SEPTEMBER and Uffner & Liu are pleased to present a solo booth of historical works by Reginald Madison (1941 - 2026). Bringing together paintings spanning nearly four decades, alongside a seminal sculpture completed in 2026, the presentation highlights the remarkable output of Madison's practice while reaffirming his place within postwar American art and the Chicago Black Arts Movement. In conjunction with Independent 20th Century, SEPTEMBER and Uffner & Liu will publish a 230-page hardcover monograph of Madison's practice.

A self-taught artist from an early age, Madison built his practice through curiosity, observation, and lived experience rather than formal artistic training. As a teenager, he discovered a discarded box of paints along Chicago's Lake Shore Drive—an unexpected encounter that sparked a lifelong commitment to artmaking. While supporting his young family through shifts at U.S. Steel's South Works plant, he saved enough to spend a year traveling through Europe, studying the collections of Paris, Munich, Madrid, Venice, and Copenhagen. The lessons of industrial labor, European modernism, and the improvisational spirit of free-form jazz became enduring influences on his work.

Applied with rough brushes, thick rags, and makeshift tools, the surfaces of Madison's paintings are a dense, matte texture that foregrounds the physical act of painting. Rather than working from preparatory sketches for either his sculpture or his paintings, Madison developed his compositions intuitively, allowing each gesture to determine the next.

Central to the presentation, *Red Top* (2000) exemplifies Madison's mature painting practice. Suspended between figuration and landscape, the work is built from a spare vocabulary and successive layers of oil paint. It is one of many compositions (including *Atonal Drift*, which is also presented here) wherein Madison positions an oval-shaped head turned on its side, resulting in a flat, mask-like form. In the case of *Red Top*, however, the delicately traced eyelashes and the forward gaze of the subject are emotively arresting. The arc of the landscape resembles the crest of a hilltop on which the disembodied head is cradled.

Acting as a sculptural counterpart to the paintings on view, *Ohmm* (2024 - 2026) demonstrates how Madison translated his visual vocabulary into three dimensions. Constructed from salvaged wood, the work combines geometric structure with his instinctive assembling of found parts. Importantly, Madison worked with the forms as he

found them, puzzling their existing shapes together rather than cutting them to impose a fit. Madison's sculptures are perhaps most directly drawn from his deep interest in boundary-pushing jazz music; Ohmm is one of a handful of three-dimensional sculptures he created as an homage to Sun Ra. Here, the totem of repeated forms resembles an ascending chorus of figures. Created during the final years of the artist's life, Ohmm underscores the sustained importance of Madison's material-driven process. Together, these works offer a focused survey of Madison's practice across nearly four decades, highlighting the richness of his visual language across painting and sculpture. At a moment of renewed attention to artists associated with the Chicago Black Arts Movement, the presentation offers an opportunity to reconsider Madison's distinctive contribution to postwar American art.

Editor's Note:

In conjunction with Independent 20th Century, SEPTEMBER and Uffner & Liu will publish a 234-page hardcover monograph of Madison's practice. The publication will feature an essay by art critic Seph Rodney and an interview with Chicago historian Rebecca Zorach.

About the Artist

Reginald Madison (b. 1941, Chicago, IL, d. 2026, Hudson, NY) was a self taught painter and sculptor who emerged from the Black Arts Movement in Chicago (1965 -1975). He studied independently in Paris, Venice, and Copenhagen in the 60's. After moving to Western Massachusetts in the 70's, Madison was represented by Phyllis Kind Gallery. After decades of working in relative obscurity, Madison held a solo exhibition at SEPTEMBER Gallery in Hudson, NY in 2021, shortly followed by his first New York solo exhibition at Rachel Uffner Gallery in 2024. His work is currently on view in solo presentations at SEPTEMBER Gallery and Hudson Hall. His work has been included in group exhibitions at Chateau La Coste, Aix-en-Provence, France (2026); Rachel Uffner Gallery, New York, NY (2025, 2022); False Flag Gallery, Long Island City, NY (2021); SEPTEMBER Gallery, Hudson, NY (2021); The Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, IL (2018); and Shelnutt Gallery, Troy, NY (2018) and the historic pop up exhibition, Art and Soul, juried by Richard Hunt (1970). Madison's work is in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection, Miami, FL; and the University of Santa Barbara Art, Design & Architecture Museum, Santa Barbara, CA. His work has been reviewed in The New York Times, and has been included in "Art for People's Sake: Artists and Community in Black Chicago, 1965-1975", Duke University Press, and "The Time Is Now! Art World's of Chicago's South Side, 1960-1980", The University of Chicago Press.

About SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER is an art gallery, an open space, and an on-going practice. We exhibit and support contemporary artists who are committed to their work for life. We believe that being receptive to change is essential to the creative process. We provide a platform for exceptional individuals who have not been historically centered with care because of their inherited, chosen or perceived identities. We engage our local community while exhibiting artists from other cities and countries. We concentrate on visual artists, and collaborate with curators, performers, activists, poets, chefs, writers and other creatives. We opened in Hudson, NY in 2016, and moved to Kinderhook, NY in 2022. Kristen Dodge, Founder/Director, has been running gallery programming for 20 years, from Boston, to the Lower East Side, to Upstate New York.

About Uffner & Liu

Uffner & Liu is a contemporary art gallery on New York City's Lower East Side. Founded by Rachel Uffner in September 2008 as Rachel Uffner Gallery, the space opened with a mission of supporting multi-generational artists working in a variety of media. Over the past 17 years, the gallery has established itself as a vital platform for introducing new artistic voices, championing female-identifying artists, and cultivating institutional relationships. The gallery began in a modest storefront on Orchard Street before relocating to a significantly larger space on Suffolk Street in March 2014, which was further expanded in the summer of 2019. Today, Uffner & Liu occupies a two-floor, 5,000 square-foot building featuring three exhibition spaces, abundant natural light, and 20-foot ceilings—an expansive setting that encourages artists to push the boundaries of their practices. In 2025, Gallery Director Lucy Liu joined as Partner, ushering in a new chapter under the name Uffner & Liu. Together, the partners continue the gallery's founding ethos while introducing new perspectives, deepening curatorial programming, and expanding its international reach.

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