

## Donald Judd and Kazimir Malevich square off at Galerie Gmurzynska's new Zurich space

ART / 26 JUN 2017 / BY CHARLOTTE JANSEN



Installation view of 'Judd/Malevich' at Galerie Gmurzynska, Zurich. *Courtesy of Galerie Gmurzynska*

### INFORMATION

'Judd/Malevich' is on view until 15 September. For more information, visit the Galerie Gmurzynska website (<http://www.gmurzynska.co...>)

### ADDRESS

Galerie Gmurzynska  
Talstrasse 37  
8001 Zurich

In 1994, Donald Judd (<https://www.wallpaper.com/tags/donald-judd>) was preparing for 'The Moscow Installation', an exhibition with Kazimir Malevich that would be the first to align the work of the two titans of 20th-century art. 'I would love it but what would Malevich say?' Judd had said when Galerie Gmurzynska had proposed the idea. Sadly, Judd passed away before the exhibition opened and now we're left wondering what the American artist would have thought of it too.

To inaugurate its new Zurich space at Talstrasse 37, Galerie Gmurzynska is revisiting that important exhibition from 23 years ago. This time it is working with Judd's son, Flavin, who has curated works by his late father and the Malevich to illustrate the parallels – but also the crucial differences – in their radical thinking.

Flavin has selected eight of his father's slickly painted aluminium and plywood works from the 1980s and 90s, and seven furniture items. Alongside this, he has installed a pair of oil on canvases by Malevich from 1915 and 1917 – representative of a time in which the artist veered more towards the abstract and suprematism in his painting – and drawings from various periods.

'I like the chartreuse aluminium work in the same view as the cadmium red wood piece,' explains Flavin. 'Those two colours are fabulous, as are the 20 Malevich drawings arranged in the way they are at Gmurzynska. When the show comes down, it will not be possible to see that juxtaposition anywhere else until we do it again somewhere.'



*The Moscow Installation, 1994, at Galerie Gmurzynska, Cologne. © Judd Foundation. Courtesy of Galerie Gmurzynska*

Though some are more than a century old, the works don't look dated – perhaps because they don't respond to time, but transform it. 'I think Don's work is really good as is Malevich's, and therefore time doesn't matter. It will always be good and the temporary styles are just that: temporary and just styles,' adds Flavin.

The most obvious visual connection between the two are their interest in squares. For the American artist, squares were a way to strip away at surface and go back to basics, to look at what exists, as it is.

'In Don's case it's not that there is a spiritual suggestion but that the art should replace things of the spirit,' Flavin explains. 'For Don, spiritual matters are just unrefined thought, ideas that if really considered would lead to science or art. For Malevich, it's the opposite: the spiritual is the opening to the future and the art is the entranceway.'

But for some people, aren't squares are just squares? 'There are always people who see both Malevich and Judd as "just squares", just as there are people who see sunsets as a reason to lower the shades,' Flavin muses. 'It's an absence of penneness. Not everybody is going to like Judd or Malevich

works, but one has to give them credit for each pushing the culture to one side to make room for their own.