

sculpture

**WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Fred Eversley**

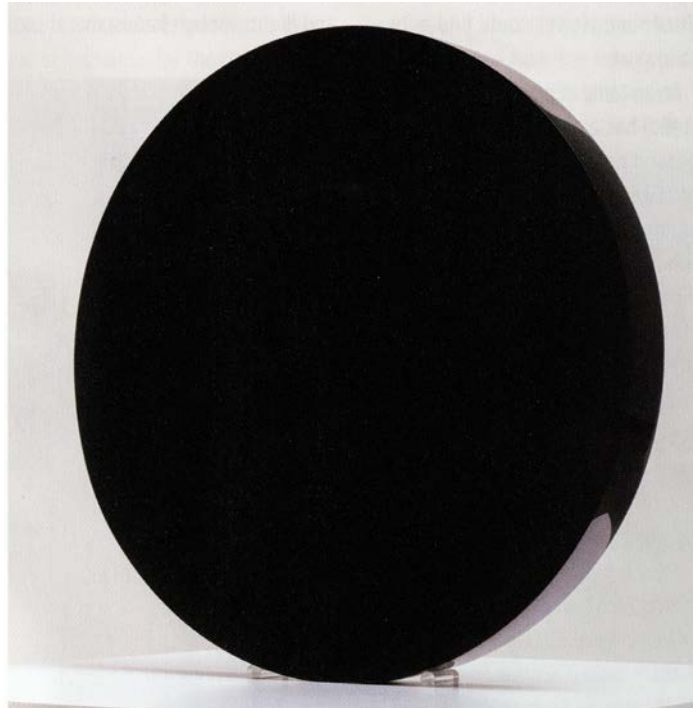
**Rose Art Museum**

However much Minimalism may be out of fashion, the products of that movement still retain the capacity to delight the eye. The 13 works in Fred Eversley's recent exhibition, "Black, White, Gray," date from the mid-1970s; they eschew chromatic qualities, yet they contain tricks and delights that on analysis produce a kind of optical circus. All but one are made of cast polyester resin, hand-polished to the perfection of an astronomical lens. Most are circular. Solid black, muted gray, or creamy white, their colors illustrate Eversley's investigations into monochrome. To our puzzlement, although they sink into parabolic shapes, few of them act as a lens.

Eversley has urged that these works be moved, handled, seen in different lights and from different angles. Their slick tactility cries out for such interaction. But here, as in any museum, staff members asked us to keep our distance. Even so, the discerning viewer could find a lot to look at.

An epitome of optical fun, *Untitled* (1980) has a glossy black surface ground down to clarity at the center. Like a wide-angle lens, the little window captures activity that should be beyond its scope: in one direction, the doorway with figures moving in and out; in the other, three sculptures in the room, two round pieces and one long arc on the wall, a stunt pulled off by a discerning installer's eye. At the same time, the black surface, shiny as a new Mercedes, reflects surrounding space and—upside down, as in a spoon—the viewer's own shadow.

White and gray *Untitled* experiments are extremely beautiful. A hint of yellow is introduced near the center of one, like a solar flare. Others are annular, their empty centers shifted off-center and formed by angled gradations. One 1974 piece evokes the idea of a solar eclipse.



*Untitled*, 1974. Polyester resin, dimensions variable.

Now in his 70s, Eversley still lives and works in Venice, California, and New York. Trained as an engineer, the Brooklyn native moved to the West Coast to work in the aerospace industry but quickly migrated to Venice Beach, where he began to experiment with plastics. (He casts his polyester resin circles on a centrifugal turntable that once cast casings for bombs.) Originally seduced by saturated magenta, amber, and blue hues, he abandoned color under the influence of fellow sculptors working with black resins. These works followed.

While the round works have cosmological connotations, wall-mounted pieces involve dozens of acute triangles, either all black or alternating black and white, layered into arcs that conjure wings, feathers, and flight. Though handsome, these works lack the emotive power of Eversley's circular ideas. This mini-retrospective offered a nibble to whet our appetites for a major Eversley survey planned for the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botan-

ical Gardens in San Marino, California, in March 2018.

—Marty Carlock



Above: Fred Eversley, *Untitled*, 1976. Polyester resin, dimensions variable. Right: Cercle d'Art des Travailleurs de Plantation Congolaise, view of exhibition, 2017.