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WASHINGTON—The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) presents Equilibrium: Fanny Sanín, on view July 14–October 29, 2017. This spotlight exhibition, featuring five paintings and more than 30 preliminary drawings by Fanny Sanín (b. 1938), invites viewers into the artist’s meticulous, intuitive process, as she creates compositions of geometric forms with precisely defined fields of color. Equilibrium explores Sanín’s methodical process through a selection of some of her earliest Abstract Expressionist-inspired works as well as two complete series of preliminary drawings and their associated, finished geometric compositions.

Sanín’s signature painting style is smooth and meticulous, yet her studies pulsate with visible gesture. She uses drawings, which she describes as the most important part of her process, to experiment with arrangements of form and color until reaching the desired visual equilibrium. She then commits the final composition to a large-scale painting on canvas or paper.
“For more than 40 years, Sanín has methodically pursued symmetry, harmony and equilibrium in her geometric abstractions,” said Associate Curator Virginia Treanor. “In the field of abstract art, women have too often been seen as imitators or followers of their male peers. The significant and dynamic contributions of women, like Fanny Sanín, to abstraction have only recently begun to be fully recognized.”

“Symmetry provides a sense of order, harmony and perhaps a peaceful image. My life and the world are not symmetrical,” said artist Fanny Sanín, “but since 1974 the orderliness, balance and repletion in my drawings and paintings gives them their presence and power.”

This relentless pursuit of balance within her compositions is the driving force behind Sanín’s artistic production. The intensity and duration of Sanín’s process is demonstrated in the exhibition by two recent, complete suites of drawings. In the 11 drawings she made to develop Acrylic No. 2, 2011 (2011), the oscillating color palette in the early iterations becomes steady by the eighth study, as does the application of pigment. Sanín pursues infinite combinations of color and form within the geometric parameters she has set for herself. Through her studies, she experiments with compositions, abruptly changing or eliminating forms, or sometimes subtly adjusting colors. Her freely drawn sketches stand in unexpected contrast to the smooth, flawless surfaces of her large-scale paintings.

Sanín was born in Bogotá, Colombia, where she began her artistic training, studying with noted Colombian modernists from 1956 to 1960. She developed her visual language during Colombia’s vibrant avant-garde art scene in the 1950s and ’60s. Her education continued at the University of Illinois (1962–63) and the Chelsea School of Art and the Central School of Art in London in 1967. In 1971, Sanín moved to New York City, where she lives to this day, although she travels regularly to Colombia, where her work is often exhibited.
*Equilibrium: Fanny Sanín*, presented in the Teresa Lozano Long Gallery of the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA), is organized by the museum and generously supported by the members of NMWA.

**National Museum of Women in the Arts**

The National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) is the world’s only major museum solely dedicated to celebrating the creative contributions of women. The museum champions women through the arts by collecting, exhibiting, researching and creating programs that advocate for equity and shine a light on excellence. NMWA highlights remarkable women artists of the past while also promoting the best women artists working today. The museum’s collection includes over 5,000 works by more than 1,000 women artists from the 16th century to the present, including Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo, Alma Thomas, Lee Krasner, Louise Bourgeois, Chakaia Booker and Nan Goldin.

NMWA is located at 1250 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., in a landmark building near the White House. It is open Monday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m., and Sunday, noon–5 p.m. For information, call 202-783-5000 or visit [nmwa.org](http://nmwa.org). Admission is $10 for adults, $8 for visitors 65 and over and students, and free for NMWA members and youths 18 and under. Free Community Days take place on the first Sunday of each month. For more information about NMWA, visit [nmwa.org](http://nmwa.org), *Broad Strokes* Blog, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

### Image credit lines:

Fanny Sanín, *Acrylic No. 2, 2011*, 2011; Acrylic on canvas, 62 x 60 in; Courtesy of the artist; Photo by Robert Lorenzson

Fanny Sanín, *Study for Painting No.2 (1)*, 2011, 2011; Color pencil on paper, 20 x 18 in.; Courtesy of the artist; Photo by Robert Lorenzson

Fanny Sanín, *Study for Painting No.2 (6)*, 2011, 2011; Color pencil and marker on paper, 20 x 18 in.; Courtesy of the artist; Photo by Robert Lorenzson