



SP-XI

Date

1967

Primary Maker

Josef Albers

Medium

Color screenprint

Description

One of the longest-serving faculty members at the avant-garde Bauhaus art school in Weimar and Dessau, Germany, Josef Albers was appointed an instructor in 1925 and remained until the school's closing in 1933 amid political upheaval. Albers and his family left Europe and settled in North Carolina, where he taught for many years at the experimental Black Mountain College, near Asheville. Like many of the Bauhaus artists, he worked in multiple mediums, including painting, printmaking, glass, and graphic

design. Around 1950, the year he moved to Connecticut to teach at the Yale University School of Art, Albers made the first painting in his well-known series "Homage to the Square." Each composition features three or four nested squares of one color each. Albers's goal was not to explore the shape of the square, however—as the title of the series would suggest—but to experiment with perception and the properties of color. "For me," he wrote, "color is the means of my idiom. It's autonomic. I'm not paying 'homage to the square.' It's only the dish I serve my craziness about color in." He was drawn to the precise proportions of the square and its rational geometric order, which created a consistent environment in which his color theories could play out. Albers saw color as a universal means of expression and elaborated his theories in the influential monograph *Interaction of Color* (1963). His experimentation continued into printmaking, especially in the relatively new technique of screenprinting—to which he was probably attracted for its ability to depict a vibrant and continuous swath of color. SP-XI, one in a series of twelve, was published by Editions Domberger in an edition of 125. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, *INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS*, 2017) Four squares, one within another in two shades of brown and orange

Dimensions

Composition: 19 5/8 × 19 11/16 in. (49.8 × 50 cm) Sheet: 24 1/8 × 24 1/8 in. (61.3 × 61.3 cm) Frame: 24 3/4 × 24 7/8 × 2 in. (62.9 × 63.2 × 5.1 cm)