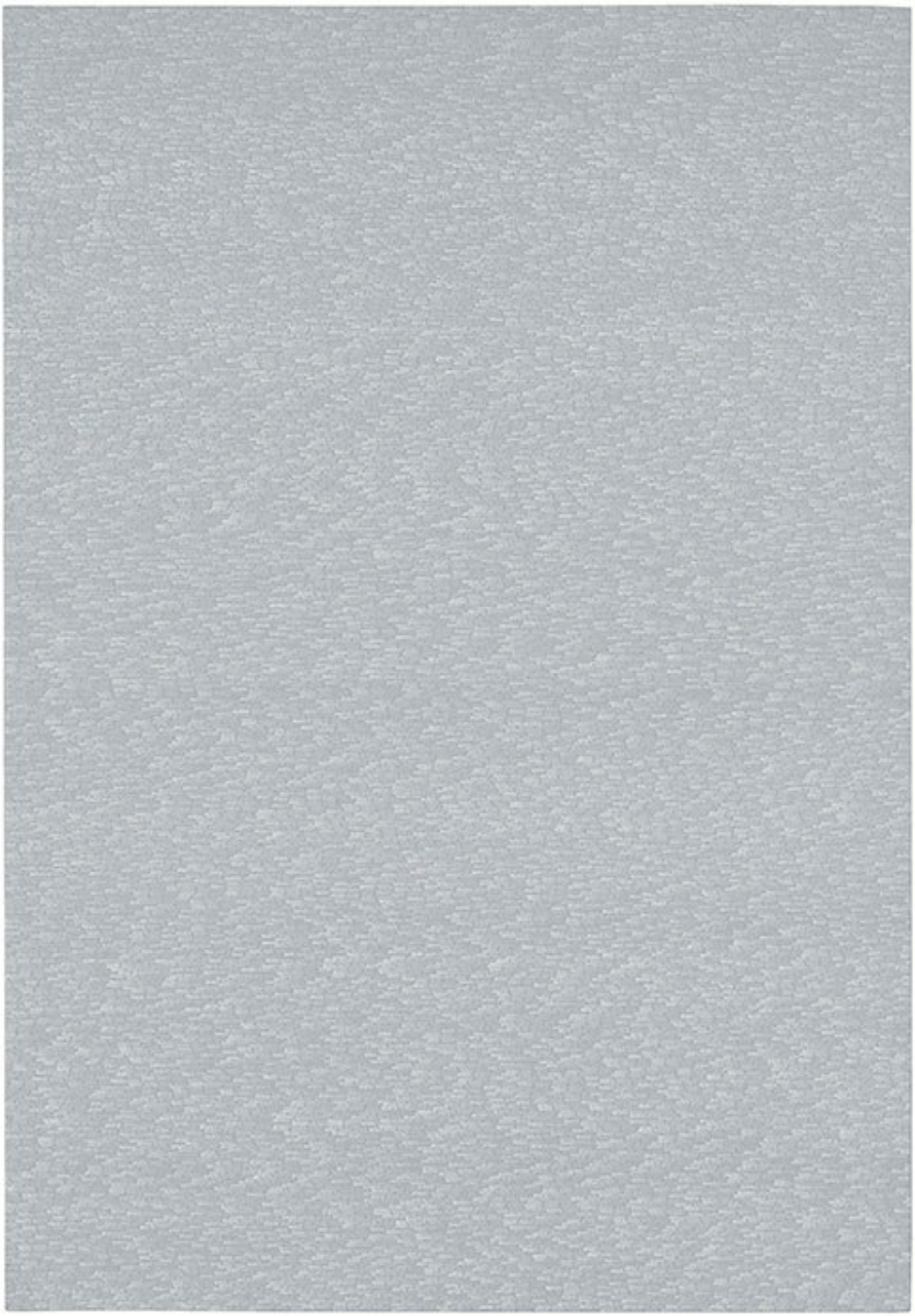
DAILY AD

LOOKING BACK AT ROMAN OPALKA'S ATTEMPT TO PAINT EVERY NUMBER

Text by Samuel Cochran | September 8, 2014



OPALKA 1965/1-∞, Détail 993460–1017875, Roman Opalka.

Photo: André Morin

Some people count sheep. Some, calories. Others, pennies. The French-born Polish artist Roman Opalka devoted his life to counting a single numerical sequence. From 1965 until 2011, he endeavored to paint every number from zero to infinity, using a delicate brush to render orderly rows of figures. (At the time of his death, he had realized more than five million on 233 canvases.) Selections from this impossible quest are now on view at New York's Dominique Lévy Gallery in a major survey titled "Roman Opalka: Painting ∞."

OPALKA 1965/1-∞, Détail – Photo 2787231, Roman Opalka; *OPALKA 1965/1–∞, Détail – Photo 5455634,* Roman Opalka.
Photos: Vincent Lespinasse

Included are 11 canvases, among them a diptych and a triptych, or what Opalka referred to as *Détails,* each being only part of a greater whole. Revealed in these works, as well as in the artist's complementary series of photographic self-portraits, is the poetic passage of hours, days, years. Far from somber, however, the paintings reveal the joyful, almost musical nature of Opalka's creative act. For a moment, time even seems to stand still.

Through October 18 at Dominique Lévy Gallery, 909 Madison Avenue, New York, New York; dominique-levy.com

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