

# Forever Young

Legendary artist Ed Moses just can't stop painting.

BY **MICHAEL SLENSKE** PORTRAIT BY **JEFF VESPA**

IF YOU ASK ED MOSES WHAT IS the most pressing thing on his agenda these days, you'll get a very frank one-word response: "Dying." But at 91, the *éminence grise* of L.A.'s Cool School—the outlaw group of local artists who formed the core of Walter Hopps's pioneering Ferus Gallery in the early '60s—is very much alive. Busier than ever, Moses still paints every day in his Venice studio (with brushes, mops, spray cans, even the tires of the motorized wheelchair that he's been using as a mobility aid since he had bypass surgery two years ago). On the occasion of crossing the nonagenarian threshold last year, the artist oversaw a two-venue exhibition, titled simply "Moses @ 90," with William Turner Gallery featuring his archival grid, monochrome and worm paintings and a series of new works. Now, a year later, he's back at Bergamot Station in Santa Monica with "Ed Moses: Chance and Circumstance," an impressive show of lively new abstractions that runs through May 27. "I never have anything replanned, whatever it is I just do it,"

says Moses, buzzing around the gallery in his chair. Never resting, or quite simply restless, Moses was actually arranging a stacked installation of canvases just minutes before the March opening. In fact, during our visit at the gallery, he directed Turner to space the three canvases in an astral triptych abstraction—"Those should be one inch apart"—that he made with black fields of acrylic flooded with water and finished with hard green borders. "I like the idea of framing the painting by putting a band around the outside. I've always been very conscious of location, and shape, and edge, and these are designating that, they go way back," says Moses, who began his career by making paintings of houses with a T-square. Even though he's now in a self-described "hell realm"—a Buddhist notion of constant torture—he does still manage to find some daily zen in the studio. "I love painting. It's my favorite thing to do—especially when I don't know what I'm doing because there's still the possibility you can discover new things."



Ed Moses in front of *Whirl Grid*  
(2017) at William Turner Gallery.