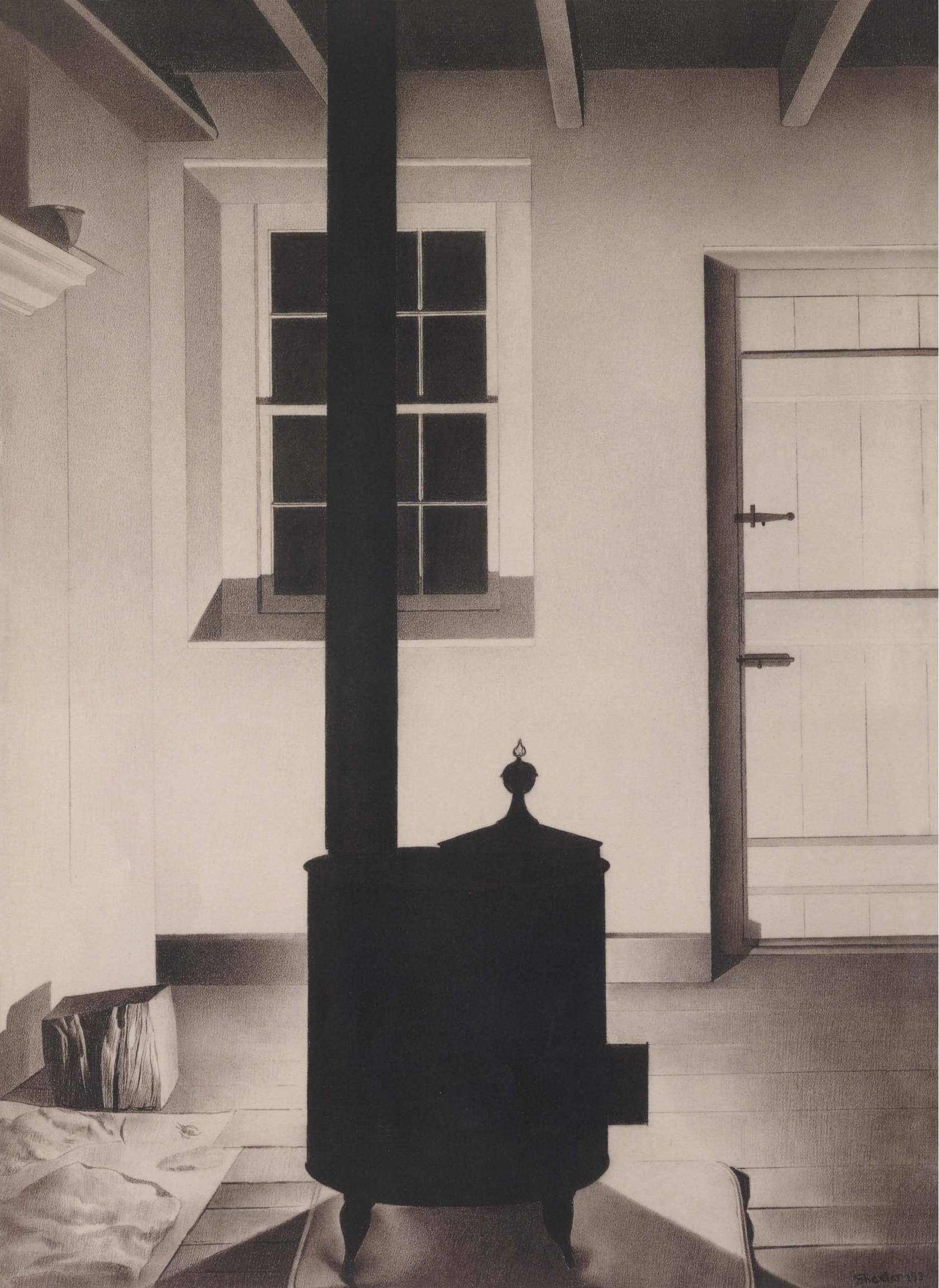


A Century of Drawing



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Works on Paper from Degas to LeWitt



A Century of Drawing

Works on Paper from Degas to LeWitt

Edited by
Judith Brodie and
Andrew Robison

National Gallery of Art
Washington

The exhibition was organized by the
National Gallery of Art, Washington

Exhibition dates

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Foreword

The National Gallery of Art has reason to be proud of its twentieth-century drawings. The collection is remarkable in both its range and distinction. *A Century of Drawing* celebrates this fact and also offers an overview of the medium during the past hundred years. From a glorious pastel by Degas and a rare color pastel portrait by Kollwitz to a ten-foot-high graphite drawing of a beanstalk by Ellsworth Kelly and an enormous colored gouache by Sol LeWitt, the selection chosen from the Gallery's substantial holdings underscores the richness and brilliance of this national collection.

Although many traditional art forms came into question in the twentieth century, drawing not only endured the period's upheavals but flourished. On the one hand it retained its links to the past, for example, in the graphite drawings of Matisse, whose sheets are exquisite yet conservative. Likewise artists continued to explore time-honored genres such as self-portraiture; in *A Century of Drawing* there are marvelous examples by Kollwitz, Picasso, Matisse, Campendonk, Schiele, Hartley, Kirchner, Joseph Stella, and Dine. On the other hand the medium was subject to significant change. Artists radically questioned traditions and led the way to entirely new kinds of drawings based on collage, photomontage, and even conceptual designs.

Works of art come to the National Gallery through the generous support of private donors, a tradition that began with Andrew Mellon, whose magnificent gift founded the institution in 1937. Since then, thousands of generous benefactors have contributed to our national collection.

From the outset the Gallery actively acquired twentieth-century drawings. Many donors, both collectors and artists, have added works in this field, especially during the past few decades, which have seen numerous beautiful and important acquisitions. To them—our indispensable donors—we extend our deepest gratitude for helping the National Gallery build a collection worthy of its founders' vision.

EARL A. POWELL III

Director, National Gallery of Art



1 FEMME
2 HOMME

Acknowledgments

A catalogue is a cooperative endeavor, especially so in the case of *A Century of Drawing*. We are deeply indebted to the thirty-six authors whose names are listed on page 11. They have given generously not only of their knowledge but also of their counsel and good will. The diversity of their critical approaches is reflected in this publication's varied points of view. Almost all the authors have past or present ties to the National Gallery of Art: as curators, guest curators, fellows of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, and museum professionals throughout the institution. We are most grateful to senior paper conservator Judith Walsh for her enlightening essay about artists' papers. It is a privilege to have so many accomplished scholars participating.

We are furthermore indebted to director Earl A. Powell III and deputy director Alan Shestack for their support of the concept and realization of this exhibition. In producing the catalogue, we have been fortunate to have the guidance of editor-in-chief Judy Metro. Tam Curry Bryfogle edited the text with her usual intelligence and a receptive ear to each author's voice. Concerning matters large and small, she always carried out her charge with uncommon grace. Ulrike Mills carefully edited Judith Walsh's essay and shepherded the publication to its completion. Chris Vogel is responsible for the catalogue's excellent design.

In the design and installation of an exhibition, presenting works of art to their best advantage is an art form in itself. Mark Leithauser brought his skills to bear on the handsome installation. Hugh Phibbs, Virginia Ritchie, and Elaine Vamos ensured that each work was suitably presented, invariably with an eye for telling detail.

Many others at the National Gallery also deserve special mention: Gordon Anson, Dean Beasom, Ricardo Blanc, Susanne Cook, Elizabeth A. Croog, Lorene Emerson, Shelley Fletcher, Sally Freitag, Isabelle Jain, Cyntia Karnes, Laura Neal, Nathan Peek, Ruth Philbrick, Ricardo Resende, Sara Sanders-Buell, Stacey Sell, Melissa Stegeman, Jamie Stout, Yoonjoo Strumfels, and D. Dodge Thompson.

Finally, our deepest gratitude goes to the generous private collectors and benefactors who have either donated or promised twentieth-century drawings to the collection. We likewise thank those individuals who have supported the National Gallery of Art by helping us purchase twentieth-century drawings. The strength of the collection is in large measure due to them, and without their support and conviction this exhibition and its accompanying catalogue would not have been possible.

J.B. AND A.R.

Abbreviations

Washington 1991

*Art for the Nation: Gifts in Honor of the
50th Anniversary of the National Gallery
of Art* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art]
(Washington, 1991).

Washington 1996

The Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Collection
[exh. cat., National Gallery of Art]
(Washington, 1996).

Washington 2000

*Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New
Century* [exh. cat., National Gallery of
Art] (Washington, 2000).

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cat. 91

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Judith Walsh

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A Century of Drawing

ANDREW ROBISON

For the twentieth century, drawing has been a fundamental art. Whether artists engaged in traditional media like painting and sculpture or newer, even anti-traditional expressions like environmental art or conceptual art, they often made drawings to work out their ideas, to offer formal presentations of their visual thoughts, or as artistic ends in themselves. Numerous artists exercised great facility in traditional draftsmanship, and many tested the limits of what could be called a drawing. We heard reports of the death of painting—premature it seems—but drawing flourished throughout. Reviewing the twentieth-century from its endpoint, it is thus no surprise that its artists produced some of the most visually compelling, intellectually fascinating, and aesthetically beautiful drawings, works of extraordinary quality in an extraordinary variety of styles and media.

Much more surprising to many who know the drawings at the National Gallery of Art primarily through works by old masters is that, especially in the past few decades and through gifts from numerous donors, the Gallery has also built a fine collection of twentieth-century drawings. It is impossible here to give adequate credit to all these donors, but a brief survey sketches the main lines of development. In fact, the history of twentieth-century drawings at the Gallery is older than that of any other drawings. The first important drawings to come to the new National Gallery of Art were a group of eight Rodins, given in the spring of 1942 by Mrs. John W. Simpson. Lessing J. Rosenwald's magnificent 1943 gift of his collection was noteworthy for its great old master prints, but it also included later works and even twentieth-century drawings. His frequent donation of excellent works on

paper over the next decades included modern drawings from Schiele to Matisse to Hayter. Through the 1960s major donors of paintings to the National Gallery, such as Ailsa Mellon Bruce, Chester Dale, and Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer, gave twentieth-century drawings as well. The Gallery's first purchase of a modern drawing occurred in 1971: Arshile Gorky's giant *Plow and the Song*. Twentieth-century drawings have been regularly purchased since then.

The turning point in the Gallery's collecting of post-World War II drawings came with the 1976 donation from the Woodward Foundation, including more than 160 important prints and thirty outstanding drawings, eight of which are in this exhibition. Superb drawings have been given by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon since 1982, among them some of the finest classic modern works. Throughout the 1980s numerous friends contributed notable individual gifts, culminating in widespread donations to celebrate the Gallery's 50th anniversary in 1991, eight of which reappear in this exhibition. In the same period the Gallery acquired several broad collections of drawings—from Armand Hammer, John Davis Hatch, Julius Held, and the Woodner Family—which ranged from old masters to modern and which added excellent twentieth-century works. From the Gallery's first decade, noteworthy donations have been made by artists, beginning with Georgia O'Keeffe's 1949 gift of Marin watercolors. Generous gifts of their own drawings have come from contemporary artists like Christo, Richard Diebenkorn, Jim Dine, Helen Frankenthaler, Jasper Johns, and Wayne Thiebaud, while artists' families and close associates have contributed works by Milton Avery, Richard Diebenkorn, Franz

Kline, Louis Lozowick, John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe, Mark Rothko, and David Smith.

In recent years the Gallery has actively pursued important individual twentieth-century drawings as well as broader groups representing a single artist's work. Guided in this by curator of modern prints and drawings Ruth E. Fine, the Gallery has also especially built its holdings of artists' sketchbooks. Many friends have helped over a wide range. For example, donations of a single artist's work in various media have included drawings, such as the Dubuffet works on paper from the Stephen Hahn family and the Calder drawings from Mr. and Mrs. Klaus Perls. Outstanding groups of drawings by various artists have recently been given from the collections of Herbert A. Goldstone, Werner and Sarah-Ann Kramarsky, and Dorothy and Herbert Vogel. Partial gifts and extraordinary promises of classic modern works have been made by Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Kainen, Aaron Fleishman, the Judith Rothschild Foundation, and donors who wish to remain anonymous. Robert and Jane Meyerhoff's gifts and promises of major contemporary drawings are crucial, ensuring that the collection will continue to grow with distinction.

This exhibition is intended to celebrate both the century and the National Gallery's collection by showing a comprehensive selection from the Gallery's finest twentieth-century drawings. That stated goal needs immediate qualification in several respects. We count as drawings virtually all unique works on paper, including those made with pencil or ink but also those made with watercolor, pastel, or collage, and even those created by experimental means. We define the twentieth century literally as extending from 1900 to 2000 and have not restricted our choice of drawings by notions of modern styles. Thus the exhibition begins with several artists normally considered nineteenth-century masters, such as Degas and Homer, who created many great works after 1900 that are perforce twentieth-century drawings.

Selected from works already owned by or promised to the Gallery, the exhibition

includes a rich variety of periods, artists, and styles. As exceptional as the collection is, however, it continues to grow and does not yet represent every significant artist or movement in the century. At the same time, the collection is particularly strong in certain areas. It emphasizes American art, in part because this is the National Gallery of the United States of America. Any great world collection needs works by Homer, Pollock, and Rothko, but we also highly value drawings by Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth, and Joseph Stella, among others, who have special significance in an American context. Likewise, the exhibition may seem unusually rich in drawings by particular artists, such as Charles Sheeler, but this reflects a remarkable number of superb works by these artists in the collection. A striking number of powerful self-portraits and other studies of heads punctuate the show. Further, the survey contains great examples of artists' works in their signature styles, but it is also peppered with surprises: works by artists who are not widely known, and extraordinarily fine drawings that are not in an artist's "standard" style.

To say these works are chosen from the Gallery's finest is not to neglect contrary views, both by relativists who doubt one can make objective judgments of quality at all or by partisans of artists or works in the collection but not in the exhibition. One may certainly make mistakes in judgment, especially about the newest works, without the benefit of historical distance and critical consensus, but relativism as a principle undercutting all judgment of quality is not convincing in either a theoretical or a practical context. The judgment here is a joint one, made by the co-curators, with all our efforts to be careful and sympathetic.

Not counting individual sketchbook pages, the National Gallery has more than four thousand twentieth-century drawings—and many more excellent drawings than we could possibly include in the exhibition. As co-curators, Judith Brodie and I set ourselves the task of studying every drawing, often several times, going through every box and drawer together to consider each

1. Max Beckmann, *Pandora's Box*, 1936 and 1947, ink and gouache, National Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Parkhurst, 1981



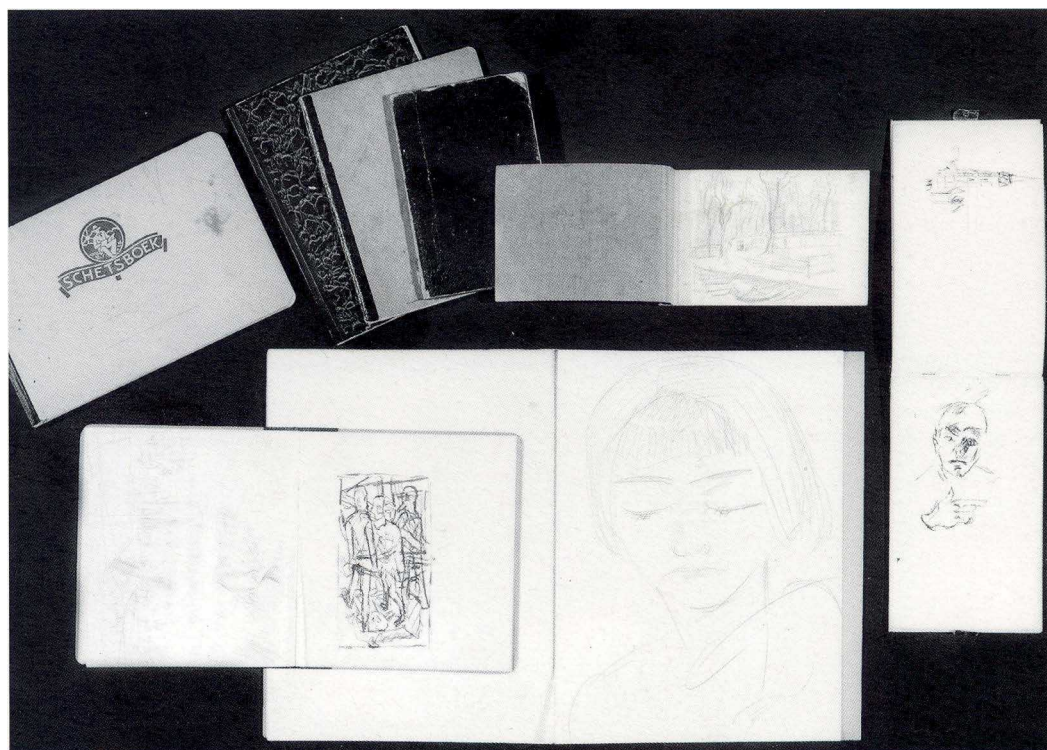
work, both on its own and as a representation of its artist, school, or type. Our initial selection was based not on a desire for comprehensiveness but on our judgment of the quality of each work. We solicited the views of other curators and greatly benefited from their recommendations but in the end made our own choices. Another knowledgeable and sympathetic judge, using quality as a primary guide and reviewing the same works, might have made some different selections but, we hope, would have agreed on the great majority.

After this preliminary survey, we arranged the drawings in the galleries, making further choices based on relationships among the works as well as on our desire to provide a rich visual experience. Viewing the drawings side by side in the public spaces, we wanted to allow for idiosyncratic styles, but sometimes a great drawing would have required a different context to be seen to best effect. For example, Beckmann's *Pandora's Box* (fig. 1) is so dark and dense that we believed it would be difficult to decipher and appreciate apart from similar works by Beckmann. The exhibition context also mitigated against works that are casual, very

small, or sketchy, even those of real quality. (This is not the same as being spare, open, or delicate—characteristics that are represented here.) To take a prominent example, although the Gallery has stressed the acquisition of artists' sketchbooks, and although one of the glories of our twentieth-century collection is the comprehensive lifetime series of forty-eight Beckmann sketchbooks (fig. 2), sketchbook pages are more effectively viewed in an intimate setting or one that develops a theme or compares sketches to finished works. Finally, the exhibition context encouraged the inclusion of a variety of artists and styles. Thus, for example, we chose only one of the Gallery's fourteen early O'Keeffe charcoals (cat. 33), whereas quality alone would easily justify more.

The question of what constitutes a drawing is delightfully complex in twentieth-century art and has led to some of the most stimulating discussions with colleagues. To pose the issue one need not go to such lengths as asking whether Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* is not really a drawing with unusual materials, similar to the prehistoric "drawings" of animals created on the sides of chalk hills in Berkshire and Dorset. More

2. Selection of Max Beckmann's sketchbooks, National Gallery of Art, Gift of Mrs. Max Beckmann, 1984

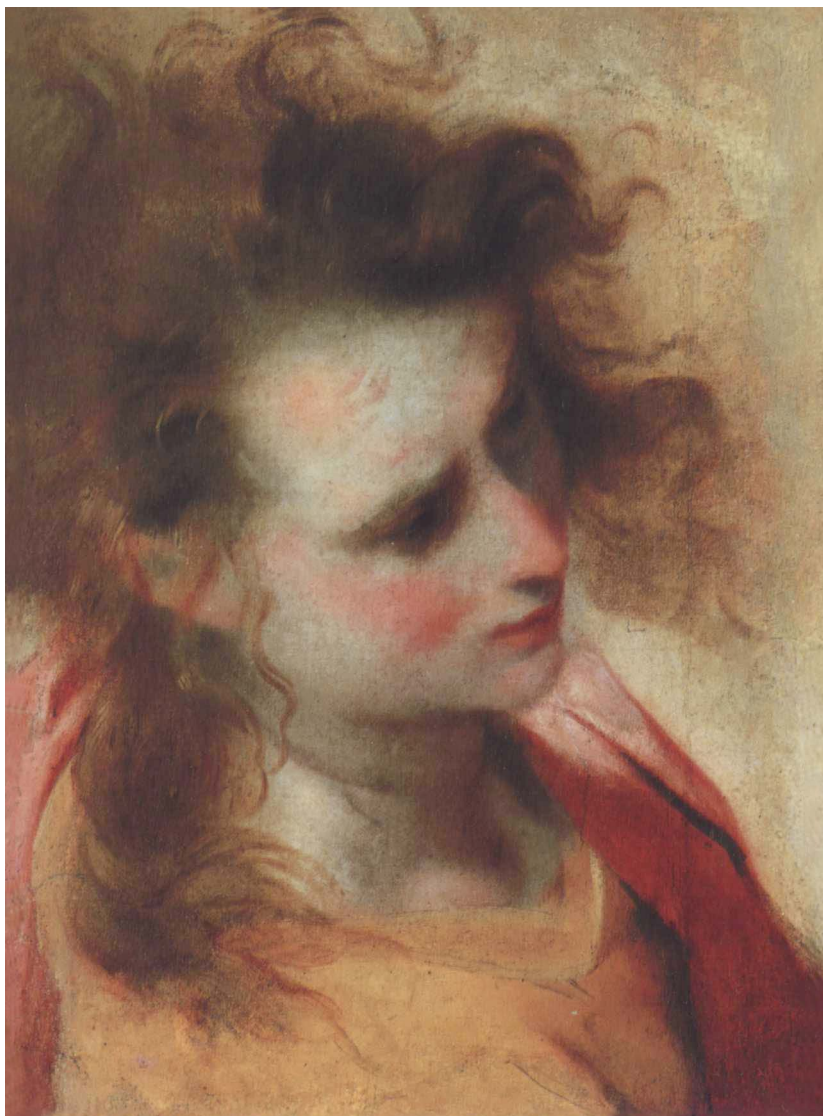


basically, are watercolors appropriately called drawings or, as they are frequently designated in England, paintings? Are the three 1969 acrylic on paper works by Rothko here (cats. 115–117) more properly considered drawings or paintings on paper? This kind of question has recently led to the increasing use of the neologism “works on paper” as a substitute for “drawings,” although that term is misleading when used alone, as prints and photographs are clearly also works on paper. In this discussion, one of the co-curators evoked Plato, the other Aristotle. One believed that there are quintessential drawings—works that emphasize line and mark-making—and that other works of art count as drawings as they approach these paradigms. The other saw it more as a practical issue of taxonomy in sorting between broad classical categories of paintings, drawings, sculpture, prints, and photographs.

At the National Gallery a drawing is defined primarily by support (paper as opposed to canvas or wood) combined with uniqueness (in contrast to the multiplicity of virtually all prints or photographs). The medium can be linear or liquid. But, as with most definitions, there are exceptions. If the

paper is completely covered with oil paint and the image highly finished, we most often call the work a painting (for example, Eastman Johnson's *The Brown Family* of 1869). Oil sketches which cover the paper are a special case: Barocci's *Saint John* (fig. 3) is called a drawing, but most of the Gallery's early nineteenth-century plein-air works are called paintings. Deciding how to categorize oil on paper is problematic for other institutions as well: the traveling exhibition *Master Drawings from the National Gallery of Scotland* includes a completely covered oil on paper by Cornelis Cornelisz. van Harlem; and a single auction house at the same time and place (Christie's, New York, January 2001) included completely covered oil on paper works of similar sizes both in its sale of “old master drawings” and in that of “important old master paintings.” At the National Gallery in true borderline cases—for example, Toulouse-Lautrec's or Picasso's works on carton—we most frequently base our designation on the major portion of the visible surface. If there is much paper showing, it is a drawing; if very little, a painting.

There are good reasons for classifying monotypes either as drawings or as prints. Because monotypes are almost all printed



3. Federico Barocci, *Head of Saint John the Evangelist*, c. 1580, oil on paper, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1979

and frequently, in spite of their name, in more than one impression, the Gallery calls them prints. Yet, consistent with our criterion of considering the degree of visible surface in works on carton, when a monotype is substantially covered by hand reworking—as is often the case with Degas—then it is considered a drawing.

Collage as a serious artistic expression is one of the most interesting new media of the twentieth century. At the Gallery collages composed entirely or largely of paper are usually called drawings. One of the strengths of the collection and of this exhibition is the wide range of major collages, from cubism (cats. 24, 25, 32) and orphism (cat. 27) through constructivism (cat. 47), surrealism (cat. 53), photomontage (cat. 60), art brut (cats. 93 and 94) and abstract expressionism (cat. 91) to contemporary

works (cats. 98, 113, 138). Sometimes, however, unusual considerations may influence a determination of category. For example, like other collages on paper, Matisse's cutouts are typically included in books or exhibitions on drawings. But when the Gallery acquired its group of five great cutouts in 1973, not only were two of them too large to be easily stored in a print room, but also the group of five was deemed too important a component of the publicly exhibited collection of modern art to be only occasionally on view, as are most drawings. They needed to be on permanent or semi-permanent display, like paintings, even though, ironically, the master's role was not the painting of the gouache on paper but the cutting and placement of pre-painted sheets, as he put it "drawing with scissors" or "drawing directly in color." Insofar as they are considered drawings, Matisse's cutouts provide another critical component in the Gallery's panoply of collages and offer striking individual comparisons, such as that between the similarly sized and dated *Venus* by Matisse (fig. 4) and *End of Dover Beach* by Motherwell (cat. 91).

In converse exception, not every one of the National Gallery's drawings is on paper. Occasionally the supports are vellum, mylar, and so forth. The question of category in that case is answered, again, by the degree of surface coverage. The Gallery considers Dürer's *Cowslips* on vellum a drawing, but his *Portrait of a Clergyman* on vellum a painting. Twentieth-century works vastly expand these questions of category. They not only continue traditional types of drawings but also challenge earlier conceptions of drawing to encompass new expressions: collages and frottages on paper, cutting a design in pre-printed paper (cat. 126), wall drawings (cat. 118), and even, perhaps, uncollectable "drawings" like environmental works or laser projections on architectural surfaces.

Finally, we celebrate the power and variety and independence of drawing as a fundamental artistic medium for the twentieth century. One of the most persistent myths, what we might call the "handmaiden myth,"

4. Henri Matisse, *Venus*, 1952, cutout, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1973



holds that drawing is primarily a preparatory medium. This notion seems to derive from accounts of Italian Renaissance practice, in which artists were said to use drawing as a way of working out visual ideas in order to translate them into paintings, sculpture, prints, tapestries, and architecture. Even today drawing lovers reinforce this myth when they esteem the works largely for their intensely personal or intimate nature, and base those characteristics on drawings being the first visual records by

artists best known for works in other media. However, intimacy relates to size rather than to preparatory intention; even granted numerous exceptions, many drawings are smaller than paintings, hand-sized instead of wall-sized. That drawings are personal, directly expressing an artist's vision and technique, is most frequently true. However, the modern focus on their personal nature is uncomfortably close to modern overemphasis on the attribution of drawings as determining their value (if it is by Picasso,

it is wonderful; if it is by an anonymous follower, or a copy after Picasso, it is uninteresting). In any case, neither the intimacy nor the directness of drawings requires that they be preparatory. From a broad historical perspective, the preparatory function of drawings, while significant in all schools and periods, was hardly ever dominant outside the Italian Renaissance, for example, not for many of the greatest Northern artists from the Renaissance to the present. Even in Italian art, it would be wrong to rate this function as primary for drawings by seventeenth-century artists such as Guercino or Castiglione, and quite false for Piazzetta, the Tiepolos, Canaletto, Piranesi, Francesco Guardi,^s and other virtuoso Italian artists of the eighteenth century.

Most great draftsmen in the twentieth century have used drawing as an independent medium to seize a vision. This includes not only the vast numbers of finished drawings made as ends in themselves, like portraits or topographical records, but also less “finished” unique works on paper. Drawing is often a private medium, not initially intended to be publicly displayed, and thus very useful for visual experimentation. Such exploration can frequently be characterized as complex, self-referential, and serial or progressive, as an artist attempts or refines composition or color or texture. Yet in this exploration drawing is most important for capturing a visual idea, whether a scene actually perceived by the artist or an idea conceived without direct perception. Such records may work their way eventually into other media but frequently do not, either because the artists engage in the exploration for its own sake or because they achieve a result they are happy to make public—transfer to patrons or collectors—just as it is. Indeed, even among the older as well as newer masters many of the drawings now called “preparatory” were not made with another work in mind but are so labeled because a later scholar recognized that the artist had recycled an image on paper in another work (for example, numerous Watteau figure studies) and anachronistically attributed that intention to the artist. While

many drawings through history were made in preparation for works in another medium, very many more, especially in the last century, were made primarily as ends in themselves.

For twentieth-century artists drawings have been fundamental not only in the sense of constant production, but also as major artistic expressions. It was a great century of drawing!



Catalogue

1

KÄTHE KOLLWITZ

German, 1867–1945

Self-Portrait as a Young Woman, c. 1900

pastel

470 × 365 mm

(18½ × 14½)

Gift of Robert and

Chris Petteys, 1995

Like Rembrandt and Picasso, Käthe Kollwitz made self-portraits throughout her life. In these works, both drawn and printed, one can trace her maturation from young student in Berlin to world-famous artist and advocate for the downtrodden. From an unusually rich selection of twenty-eight of her drawings in the National Gallery of Art collection, this exhibition includes three examples. Among these, the present sheet stands out for its beauty and impact.

Kollwitz usually worked in black and white, feeling that the absence of color suited the solemn content of her imagery, which focused on such topics as war, unemployment, starvation, and death. For this portrait, however, made when the artist was roughly thirty-three, she chose colored pastels, rubbing them across a heavily textured sheet to create a sense of warmth, movement, transparency, and atmosphere. Delineated in strict profile with set features, her face, touched with brick orange and green, with a highlight of white at the nape of her neck, emerges from an indeterminate background of subdued shades of brown, blue, and yellow, which blend into a forest green. Kollwitz interwove the strokes of the pastel stick to evoke the subtle light filtering across the planes of her magisterial head. In the end, the artist emphasized a tapestry-like surface pattern as much as three-dimensionality, resulting in a decorative, even sensuous, chromatic mood.

This frank love for the medium, for the making of art, and for the essentiality of the aesthetic — all evident in this very rare work in color — are matters that troubled Kollwitz over the course of her life. In her diaries and letters the artist struggled to reconcile an inner conflict between a desire to make beautiful images and the compelling sense of duty to use pictures to deliver a message. Her perception of this discrepancy seemed particularly acute during the disruptive period of the Weimar Republic, following Germany's defeat in World War I. In a diary entry of 1922 she affirmed that her art "has purpose. I want to have an effect on this era, in which human beings are so much at a loss and so in need of help."¹ Compared with the

demands of an image of the suffering working class (such as cat. 12), which Kollwitz believed should be as stark in style as the subject matter, it was easier to explore color and form for their own sake in the context of a self-portrait, as she did here.

That Kollwitz herself deeply valued this work is suggested by its provenance; according to one scholar, the sheet came from the collection of Ernst Heinrich, prince of Saxony.² Before his escape to Ireland via France, the prince provided the artist with rooms in a small house across the road from his country palace in Moritzburg bei Dresden when she fled Berlin in the wake of heavy Allied bombing in 1944. Perhaps she made the sheet a gift to him in gratitude for his generosity.

ELIZABETH PRELINGER

Provenance

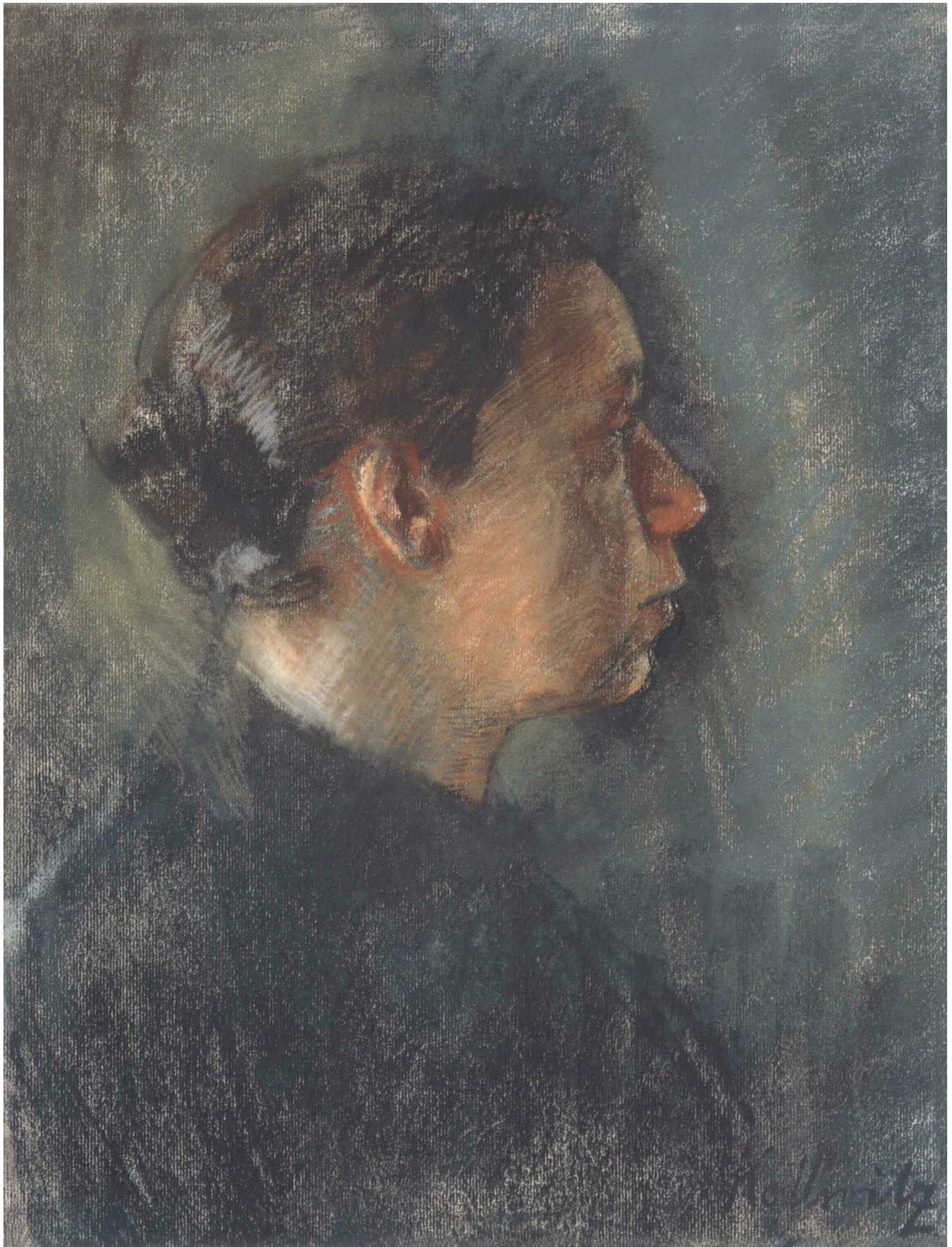
Probably Ernst Heinrich, prince of Saxony; C. G. Boerner, Düsseldorf; Robert and Chris Petteys, Sterling, CO, by 1982.

Notes

1. Entry of 4 December 1922, in Käthe Kollwitz, *Die Tagebücher*, ed. Jutta Bohnke-Kollwitz (Berlin,

1989), 542; quoted and translated in Elizabeth Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1992), 79.

2. Tom Fecht, ed., *Käthe Kollwitz: Works in Color*, trans. A. S. Wensinger and R. H. Wood (New York, 1988; German edition, 1987), 106.



2

PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

Two Fashionable Women, 1900 or 1901

charcoal

413 × 244 mm

(16 1/4 × 9 5/8)

Intended Gift of the Woodner Collections

In 1899, freed of the directives of the Spanish academies where he trained throughout the 1890s, Picasso rallied to the Catalan avant-garde group *Els Quatre Gats* and its *modernista* precepts.¹ Through 1904 his work was a sweeping exploration of the subjects and styles of the *bohèmes* of Barcelona and Paris. These two *élégantes* exemplify the demimonde characters populating Picasso's sketches, drawings, and paintings of 1899–1901.²

Indebted to Miguel Utrillo and to Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen's black-and-white graphic works, Picasso's drawing also recalls the gaslit scenes of *divertissement* by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Auguste Renoir. Yet unlike Lautrec's, Picasso's world is rarely seedy. And unlike Renoir's, his vignettes of sociability are not convivial. More, when Picasso appropriates modern subjects and techniques, he combines divergent tendencies and coerces them to his own ends. While in *Two Fashionable Women* his iconography might well be taken from George Bottini's lesbian scenes,³ Picasso empties the image of psychology. The faces of the women read as a pair, differentiated by the swell of a jaw, the pointed or bulbous tip of the nose. The formal treatment of these features resembles caricature, but, if at all, these *élégantes* are only caricatures of a larger social type. Ultimately, the manifest subject matter of this charcoal drawing serves to affirm Picasso's place in the avant-garde and exhibits the incontestable agility of his draftsmanship, the sensuality of his textures, his virtuoso sense of composition—all by an artist aged nineteen.

With Picasso's strong and steady pressure of charcoal to paper, the line is thick and containing, flattening the figures' form (left and bottom), a cloisonné effect devised by the French symbolists. But Picasso repeats and refines such a line in the right figure's hat, until the arcs together suggest folds in its fabric and structure. An even finer line suggests the precious stiffness of a collar spoked by sketchy segments (left), and the billow of another with a fluid set of curves (right). His nebulous shading, stumped or partly erased, conveys the feath-

eriness of fur or, when condensed, light-parched velvet. And beyond this mastery of charcoal's sensual versatility, Picasso constructs shapes that merge and transform around an arabesque's pinch and swell. One figure's dark cape, in tandem with the other's skirt, locks in the central white expanse, coquettishly insinuating a spiral. Witty variations on the flower motif, in the *élégantes'* hats, hair, and dress—pavonine in the cape's trim, stellar in its sleeve—enable the serpentine center to be the image's organizing principle. For the image to hold, Picasso knew to erase some of the charcoal hatchings in the top left and right corner of the sheet, as he has around the figures' hemlines, in a medium gray that doubles as the firm ground on which the women stand.

Though Picasso soon abandoned the taut decorative hedonism that attains a rare degree of formal prowess in this drawing, such dark flattening contours and tonal sensitivities ushered in the earliest of the “blue works,” as his interest in the demimonde soon metamorphosed into a fascination with figures of marginality. Picasso's line, however, throughout decades of incessant aesthetic revolutions, would remain, in the words of Guillaume Apollinaire, the *trait* that “flees changes and penetrates.”⁴

SARAH LINFORD

Provenance

Private collection, Switzerland; Galerie Nathan, Zurich; Ian Woodner, by 1986; Andrea and Dian Woodner, 1990.

Notes

1. On this topic, see Marilyn McCully, *Els Quatre Gats* (Princeton, 1978).
2. This work has generally been dated to 1900 and attributed to Picasso's residence in Barcelona or his earliest stay in Paris. But Jeffrey Weiss' proposal that the drawing might have been executed during Picasso's 1901 sojourn in Madrid is supported by its similarity to a series of

sketches done there that same year; see Josep Palau i Fabre, *Picasso* (Barcelona, 1981), nos. 551 and 552; and Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1957), 21:193.

3. See John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso* (New York, 1991), 1:173; and Jeffrey Weiss in *The Touch of the Artist: Master Drawings from the Woodner Collections* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1996), 391.

4. Guillaume Apollinaire in *La Plume* (15 May 1905); reprinted in *Chroniques d'art (1902–1918)*, ed. L. – C. Breunig (Paris, 1960), 31.



3

WINSLOW HOMER

American, 1836–1910

The Coming Storm, 1901

watercolor over graphite
369 × 535 mm
(14 ½ × 21 ¼)
Gift of Ruth K. Henschel
in Memory of Her
Husband, Charles R.
Henschel, 1975

During the summer of 1873, while working in Gloucester, Massachusetts, Winslow Homer began to paint in watercolors seriously for the first time in his career. In these early works Homer's use of colored washes to describe form and capture effects of light and atmosphere is remarkably confident. Over the next three decades he went on to create some of the most extraordinary watercolors ever made.

After settling permanently in Prout's Neck, Maine, in 1883, Homer regularly made trips to warmer climes during the winter months. His destinations included the Bahamas and Florida, then in 1899/1900 and 1901 the coral island of Bermuda. Like the Bahamas, Bermuda was easily accessible by steamship from New York and offered a pleasant climate and respite from "the disturbances of modern life."¹ The island was notable for its lovely scenery, combining vegetation characteristic of both northern and southern latitudes, sparkling beaches, and distinctive buildings constructed of white coral sandstone (figure). Homer was apparently much taken with the natural and man-made landscape of the island, for virtually all of his Bermuda watercolors concentrate on larger vistas; humans are rarely included, and when they are, their presence is minimized.² Most often he depicted the blue skies and white clouds typical of the island, but in *The Coming Storm* he chose more ominous weather to create what one scholar called "almost the peak of his work in [the] medium."³

Homer was proud of his Bermuda watercolors, believing them to be "as good

work... as I ever did."⁴ Certainly they reveal—especially in their fluid washes and large areas of reserved white paper—the consummate mastery of the medium that Homer had achieved by this point. Several Bermuda subjects were included in the group of twenty-one watercolors he sent to the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, pricing them as a group at \$4,000. The watercolors received a gold medal but did not sell, and Homer considered not offering them for sale again.⁵ Although he did again show several at Knoedler in 1902, he kept many of the best, along with some of his finest Nassau watercolors, apparently hoping the group might all be acquired by a public institution.⁶

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

George Easter Field;
Brooklyn Museum by
1936; Charles R. Henschel; his wife, Ruth K. Henschel.

Notes

1. William Dean Howells, "Editor's Study," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 89 (June 1894), 150; quoted in Helen Cooper, *Winslow Homer Watercolors* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1986), 218.
2. Washington 1986, 218, 223–225.
3. Philip C. Beam, *Winslow Homer at Prout's Neck* (Boston, 1966), 219.

4. Letter to O'Brien and Son, Chicago, 1902; quoted in Washington 1986, 226.

5. "I shall leave them boxed as they are until such a time as I see fit to put them out. The price will be \$400 each!! for choice if I ever put them out again." Letter to M. Knoedler & Company; quoted in Washington 1986, 226.

6. After the artist's death, Homer's brother Charles arranged for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Worcester Museum of Art, and the Brooklyn Museum to purchase the works.



Winslow Homer,
Salt Kettle, Bermuda, 1899,
watercolor over graphite,
National Gallery of Art,
Washington, Gift of Ruth
K. Henschel in Memory of
Her Husband, Charles R.
Henschel, 1975



4

PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

**Self-Portrait,
1901/1902**

black chalk with
watercolor
verso: charcoal drawing
of a Parisienne strolling
in a park, c. 1900
304 × 238 mm
(12 × 9 3/8)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce
Collection, 1970

The features that come to be emblematic of Pablo Picasso are all present in this *Self-Portrait*. “Small, dark, stocky, worried, worrying, with pitchy burrowing eyes, strange and almost immobile,” as wrote Picasso’s then companion, the “belle Fernande,” adding that his “thick lock of hair, black and brilliant, scarred the intelligent and stubborn forehead.”¹ The unblinking subject of this assertive self-portrait distinguishes itself from the brooding bohemian depicted two years earlier. There is a protean quality to Picasso’s physiognomy in his early self-portraits.² Compare this work with ones done in 1900: the high cheekbones and fine ossature are replaced by fleshier jowls; the smooth skin is now shaded by suggestion of facial hair; the nose is wider, less regular in shape; the hair no longer the slicked and side-parted mane of a “young premier.”³ Instead of a close-framed romantic creator, Picasso presents an established artist whose countenance conveys a *gravitas* beyond his twenty-one years of age—and, notably, one perhaps more stereotypically “Spanish.”

Formally, Picasso divides his face into two contrasting halves: one light, one dark, as he did in self-portraits of 1900.⁴ Yet here, unlike earlier images, the bisection of his face along a strong middle vertical—from the center part of the hair, down the strong nose, through the mouth to the goatee—serves to heighten the progressive and potent dissymmetry of the whole. The signature forelock is painted in a brown wash under a wave of hair that strangely prolongs the ear; on the other side the hair frames the face in an even semicircle. One eye sags, surmounted by an abrupted eyebrow; the other is a delicate almond shape, carefully shadowed above and below. One shoulder trails to the image’s left edge, while the other seems to drop to a slouch.

This dissymmetry results in a gradual impression of imbalance, stabilized in turn by recognition that the figure is ever so slightly rotated from a frontal perspective—an impression augmented by the vertical background hatchings and supported by the diagonally striped scarf. But the result of this torque is to make the face appear organ-

ized around the centrifugal force that is Picasso’s stare. Only the scarf’s brilliant blue compels the viewer to focus elsewhere for any length of time, yet still to feel the force of that gaze in peripheral vision. The blue itself complements the peach-colored wash with which Picasso has modulated his skin, and the sliver of white collar above the scarf inexorably returns attention to the white around the pupils.

Picasso’s willful gaze is not all confidence, however. Embedded in mute imbalance, it betrays a disarming fragility and acute self-awareness. The previous year Picasso had exhibited works in the Spanish pavilion of the Exposition Universelle; and he held his first solo exhibitions in Barcelona and Paris in 1901 and 1902. In 1901 he made at least a half dozen dissimilar images of himself, as though searching to establish a public persona.⁵ In this light it seems fitting that Picasso did not sign this self-portrait (the signature, top right, is not his) and that his sketchbooks of 1901–1902 reveal experiments with his own autograph. Despite inscribing self-portraits “Yo” or even “Yo, el rey” (I, the king) in this period, it is precisely in 1901–1902, around the time of his most prestigious exhibit yet, at Vollard’s, that Picasso leaves “P. Ruiz Picasso” and “P. R. Picasso” behind, definitively to become “Pablo Picasso.”

SARAH LINFORD

Provenance

Sir Hugh Walpole; Leicester Galleries, London, 1945; Edward H. Molyneux, 1955; Ailsa Mellon Bruce.

Notes

1. Fernande Olivier, “Le Bateau-Lavoir,” in *Picasso et ses amis* (Paris, c. 1933), 25.
2. See Kirk Varnedoe, “Picasso’s Self-Portraits,” in *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation*, ed. William Rubin [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1996), 114–117.

3. John Richardson, “The Significance of Picasso’s Self-Portraits,” in *Christie’s Review of the Year 1969/1970*, ed. John Herbert (London, 1970), 124.

4. Varnedoe in New York 1996, 117.

5. See, for instance, Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1957), 1:91 and 113 D.B. V, 1; 21:192, 250 D.B. IV, 23, and 251 D.B. V, 41.



5

ODILON REDON

French, 1840–1916

Pansies, c. 1905

pastel

557 × 471 mm

(21 7/8 × 18 5/16)

Rosenwald Collection,

Gift of Adele R. Levy

Fund, Inc., 1961

An unexpected yet delightful aspect of the oeuvre of the great symbolist and visionary painter Odilon Redon is the colorful series of floral still lifes he made during the last twenty years of his career. He executed nearly three hundred paintings and pastels of flowers, most of which were snapped up by collectors almost as soon as they left his easel. During his lifetime these are the works that earned him his greatest commercial and popular success and ensured his financial security.

Redon now enjoys an almost mythical stature as one of the most fascinating and individualistic artists of the turn of the century, but his success came slowly and only after considerable personal and emotional struggle. For the first thirty years of his career, he worked almost exclusively in black and white—in charcoal and lithography—giving shadowy life to intensely personal interpretations of the religious, mythological, and literary subjects that captured his imagination. In the early 1890s, however, Redon decided that without color his art lacked an important expressive dimension. He began to use it rather tentatively, adding touches of pastel to drawings he had already completed in charcoal (which he called *noirs*, or “blacks”).¹ But within a few years his confidence in using color and pastel had grown, and by 1902 he was completely immersed in color and could no longer work in black and white.²

With the dominance of color in Redon's later work came arrangements of flowers, both real and imaginary, as a favorite subject. These ranged from striking combinations of wildflowers and fantasy blossoms invented by the artist to simple posies, like these pansies, casually set into unusually shaped vases. On the surface, this unassuming still life appears to be nothing more than a decorative rendering of a pretty bouquet, but neither botanical accuracy nor simple decoration was Redon's goal. While he readily declared that nature served as the indispensable basis for works like this, he consciously removed it from the natural world by setting it adrift in the undefined, limitless space suggested by the blankness

of the surrounding page. As was his custom, Redon did not draw here exactly what he saw but filtered the forms through his imagination and intensified the colors to an unnatural brilliance. Thus did real flowers become in Redon's transformation “like the flowers one sees [in] dreams.”³

MARGARET MORGAN GRASSELLI

Provenance

Etienne Bignou Galleries, Paris; C. W. Kraushaar, New York; Jerome Stonborough, New York; Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, 17 October 1940, lot 67; Adele R. Levy, New York.

Notes

1. An excellent example of a *noir* touched with pastel in the National Gallery of Art's collection is *Saint George and the Dragon*;

reproduced in *Art for the Nation: Collecting for a New Century* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 2000), 216–217.

2. Letter from Redon to Maurice Fabre, 21 July 1902, in Marius-Ary Leblond, ed., *Lettres d'Odilon Redon, 1878–1916* (Paris and Brussels, 1923), 50.

3. A. Flament, Review of the Salon d'Automne, *La Presse* (18 October 1905).



AUGUSTE RODIN

French, 1840–1917

Dancing Figure, 1905

graphite with watercolor

326 × 250 mm

(12⁷/₈ × 9⁷/₈)

Gift of Mrs. John W.

Simpson, 1942

Auguste Rodin's late pencil sketches and watercolors of the female nude were parts of a two-step process.¹ Rodin began with a series of quick, spontaneous pencil drawings of figures moving freely about his studio, done while his eyes essentially never left the model; this ensured that nothing was "allowed to arrest the flow of my feelings... from my eye to my hand."² He would then choose the most salient outlines from these sketches, trace them singly onto other sheets of paper, and fill them with transparent watercolor washes. The result, exemplified by *Dancing Figure*, were refined images that effectively synthesized the complex, dynamic movements of his models.

The relationship of these works on paper to Rodin's late bronzes and marbles is complex. Sometimes their motifs, as here, are directly related to finished sculptures.³ More generally the quick sketches trained his hands when modeling in clay to feel "the lines of the human body... at the end of my finger tips," while the watercolors illuminated "the natural principles of sculpture made to be seen in open air, that is, the search for contour... a very precise silhouette, filled by a dark coloration, with indistinct details."⁴ Rodin, however, also believed that the drawings and watercolors should be understood as a distinct part of his oeuvre, capable of inspiring in their own right: "As my drawings are more free, they will give more liberty to artists who study them... showing them the enormous space in which they can develop."⁵

In addition to sculpture, the late drawings were related to the contemporary arts of dance and photography in important ways. Rodin was deeply impressed by the great innovators of modern dance such as Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan, and Vaslav Nijinsky, whom he saw perform in Paris and drew from life.⁶ In *Dancing Figure* the simplicity and spontaneity with which the exceptional pose is rendered, with the movements of head, torso, arm, and legs all perfectly isolated, poised, and counterbalanced, evince a palpable affinity with the dancers' expressive styles. Moreover, Rodin was intrigued by the way photographs, like his

watercolors, could so effectively convey his vision of the figure in space—a vision epitomized by Edward Steichen's iconic series depicting Rodin's monumental figure of Balzac outlined against the night sky.⁷

The influence of Rodin's late manner drawings cannot be overstated. By 1899 he was exhibiting them in large numbers throughout Europe, and in 1908 a collection of fifty-eight works was shown at Alfred Stieglitz's Little Galleries of the Photo-Secession in New York. Attacked for their informality, intimacy, sensuality, and often explicit eroticism, they represented a revolutionary challenge to conventional notions of idealized female beauty that profoundly affected artists as diverse as Charles Demuth, Gustav Klimt, Henri Matisse, and Egon Schiele.

Along with Steichen, Stieglitz, Fuller, and others, Kate Simpson, the daughter of a Brooklyn banker and wife of a New York lawyer, was one of Rodin's earliest supporters in America. She began forming her collection sometime after Rodin modeled her portrait in 1902 and was soon successfully urging the Metropolitan Museum of Art and other museums to acquire his works. In 1942 Mrs. Simpson donated twenty-nine sculptures and eleven drawings to the National Gallery of Art, including *Dancing Figure*. They were the first works by Rodin to enter the Gallery's collections.

CHARLES BROCK

Provenance

Mrs. John W. Simpson.

Notes

1. Kirk Varnedoe has brilliantly analyzed Rodin's drawings. See "Rodin as a Draftsman—A Chronological Perspective," in Albert Elsen and J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, *The Drawings of Rodin* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1971), 25–120; and "Rodin's Drawings," in *Rodin Rediscovered*, ed. Albert Elsen [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1981), 153–190.

2. Quoted in Washington 1981, 179.

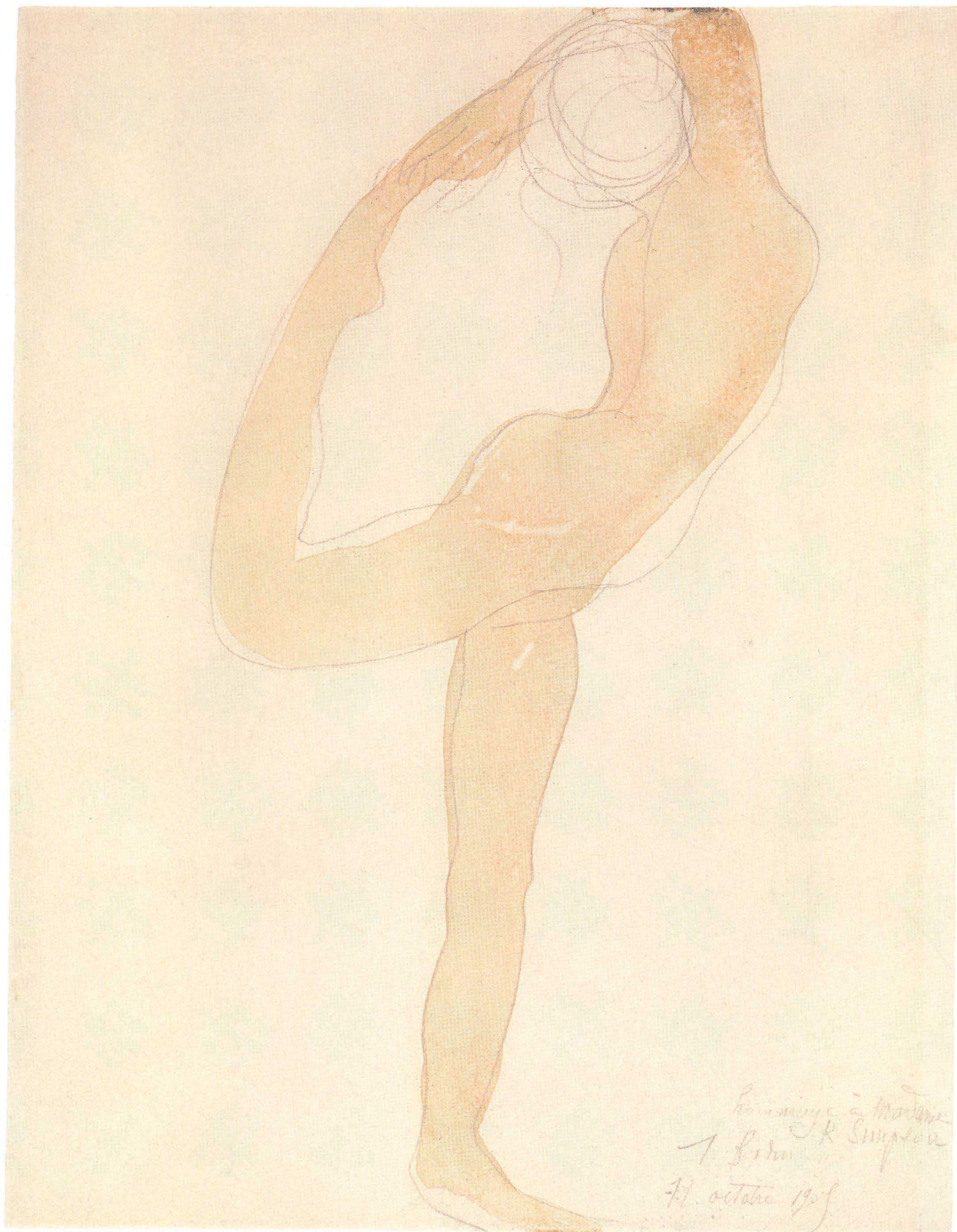
3. The pose of *Dancing Figure* is found in the bronze *Mouvement de Danse A*, c. 1911, Musée Rodin (Inv. S. 505).

4. Quoted in Washington 1981, 179.

5. Quoted in Washington 1981, 181.

6. On Rodin and dance see Robert Descharnes, *Auguste Rodin* (Lausanne, 1967), 244–257.

7. See Kirk Varnedoe, "Rodin and Photography," in Washington 1981, 203–248.



Homage to Matisse
J. B. S.
11. octobre 1909



7

PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

Juggler with Still Life, 1905gouache over graphite
on cardboard

1,000 × 699 mm

(39 3/8 × 27 1/2)

Chester Dale Collection,
1963

After the Blue period works of misfortune and despair, Picasso's so-called Rose period of mid-1904 to 1906 primarily figured saltimbanques, socially marginal circus acrobats who offered the artist an arena for self-projection and experimentation.¹ This gouache on cardboard adopts both figure and jug from the oil on canvas *Family of Saltimbanques* (National Gallery of Art) of the same year, yet Picasso's treatment of theatrical space, still life, and young *bateleur* make the work both dissonant and premonitory.

The integration of folkloric figure with the genre of still life resists anecdotal and visual coherence. The jug is too large to serve the juggler and too tall for the surface on which it stands. That surface eschews visual stability; neither clearly table nor tablecloth, it is strangely trapezoidal, one corner beveled against the picture plane, another flatly pushing up against it. The plate in turn is not round, nor is it parallel to the ground; the fruit it holds—almost but not wholly—citrus. In 1905, as today, these signs speak directly to that master of still life who was so central to Picasso's experiments, Paul Cézanne. Picasso borrows selectively, however, and the strokes are his own: alternately smooth or impastoed, continuous or broken, parallel or bent, abbreviated or long. Even the contradicted room corner to the left of the juggler and the large hatchings that color the chiasmic sweep of studio curtain read as deliberate departures from Cézanne's lessons.

As for the juggler himself, his drastically foreshortened feet are thickly painted within the approximate boundaries of a dark flat line. Ankles are implied by the use of flesh tone, but the tights' coloring interferes with the illusion of skin. By varying hue, saturation, and application of blue on the juggler's maillot, Picasso suggests legs' musculature, but the trespass of blue beyond charcoal-colored outline is overshadowed by the transgressions of academic rhetoric above. There, he not only uses a vertical stroke of white gouache to buttress the inner thigh, thus introducing a traditional means for representing light, he also traces the bottom of

the shirt in the same thickness and value of white, subverting the function in one place that he so self-consciously observes in another. The white hand on the boy's hip is gauntly misshapen but compositionally extends the terracotta diagonal in the background; it binds the boy to the still life by visual analogy. As for the figure's other hand, its very emptiness seems to hold hidden meaning. Perhaps most extraordinary is the juggler's face: from an exquisite combination of orange, white, and gray, Picasso has modeled a face of classical beauty. Yet, toying again with the rules of academic training, he refuses to make the juggler's porcelain visage continue to the hairline and turns the woolly hair into the cardboard's textural counterpoint.

The spatial games Picasso plays in this work foreshadow the revolution of his *Demoiselles d'Avignon* of 1906 (The Museum of Modern Art, New York). The classicizing treatment of the boy's face harks back to Greek art, Ingres' drawing, and symbolist painting but also looks forward to Picasso's work in Gogol the following summer. This figure is hybridic and hieratic—as is the work as a whole—and warrants Guillaume Apollinaire's injunction that the saltimbanques' spectator must be "pious" to witness their difficult, agile, and mute rituals.² Further, in the words of Francis Ponge, "blue of luck and unluck; rose, rather of flesh, of the faded leotards of the saltimbanques, these dandies of voluntary penitence and game"³ are the figures with which Picasso gambles the future of his painting.

SARAH LINFORD

Provenance

Purchased from the artist by Paul Guillaume, Paris, 1910; Chester Dale, 1928.

Notes

1. On the saltimbanques, see E. A. Carmean, *Picasso: The Saltimbanques* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1980); Theodore Reff, "Harlequins, Saltimbanques, Clowns, and Fools," *Artforum* 10 (October 1971),

30–43; and Jeffrey Weiss, in *Picasso: The Early Years* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1997), 197–210.

2. Guillaume Apollinaire in *La Plume* (15 May 1905); reprinted in *Chroniques d'art* (1902–1918); ed. L.–C. Breunig (Paris, 1960), 31.

3. Francis Ponge, *Dessins de Pablo Picasso: Epoques bleue et rose* (Lausanne, 1960), xv.

8

PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

The Death of Harlequin, 1905/1906

gouache over charcoal on cardboard

verso: *Seated Woman**in a Garden*, c. 1901

685 × 957 mm

(26 15/16 × 37 11/16)

Collection of Mr. and

Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1996

If *Family of Saltimbanques* (National Gallery of Art) is the apogee of Picasso's Rose period and *Juggler with Still Life* (cat. 7) is a hybridic image of things past and to come, *Death of Harlequin* is Picasso's farewell to a subject, a style, a universe of personal symbols.¹ On the speckled expanse of tawny cardboard, Picasso has laid down an emaciated Harlequin, eyes shut, hands clasped. Two mourning circus artists look on intently. Their made-up faces, one smoothly pomaded white for sculptural effect and the other permeated by the bed's tender blue iridescence, behold Harlequin's ashen and crumbling deathmask of thick and discontinuous patches of paint. The two standing figures breathe an animated haze of white that profiles their heads. Harlequin's face exudes a faint lavender vapor, his head at once raised and encased in a cloudy pillow. The mourners crane their taut necks; Harlequin's face and hands tend toward their curiosity with the petrification of rigor mortis. The gymnast's pink maillot mirrors the largest lozenge on Harlequin's, but what is left of the characteristic pattern has faded from the rest of his suit, now an etiolated blue gray. Harlequin's skeletal body, of scarcely sketched narrow hips and bony legs, barely covers the cardboard's textured brown surface.

The recent suicide of a neighbor at the Bateau Lavoir may have prompted Picasso to pay one last tribute to his departed friend Carles Casagemas, whose features are nearly perceptible in Harlequin's bumpy nose, upper lip, and choppy hair.² On another level, the precedent of Picasso's own identification with Harlequin—and the rarity of

this figure's return in his oeuvre—suggests too that this drawing elegized an entire period in Picasso's aesthetic.³ Related sketches picture figures not shown here as well as a nightstand, vase of flowers, and dog; narrative elements have also been reduced.⁴ The dog is merely adumbrated in the negative space below the bed; two standing figures alone remain, only to emphasize the large unprimed expanse of cardboard. As their whitish haze and Harlequin's lavender aura mediate the space that separates the dead from the living, color or its absence is invested with multiple types of affective meaning without yielding to the Fauve exuberance that had dominated the Salon d'Automne in 1905.

Ultimately, this image probes the mystery of withdrawal and absence and identity so fundamental to Picasso's fascination with the saltimbanques—for “who are they, these acrobats even a little / more fleeting than we ourselves?” *The Death of Harlequin*, in the words of Rainer Maria Rilke, sounds “this wearisome nowhere,” in which “all of a sudden, the ineffable spot where the pure too-little / incomprehensibly changes,—springs round / into that empty too-much.”⁵

SARAH LINFORD

Provenance

The artist to Wilhelm Uhde, 1906; private collection, Westphalia; J. K. Thannhauser, New York; W. Somerset Maugham, St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat; Sotheby's, London, 10 April 1962, lot 26; purchased via Hector Brame by Paul Mellon.

Notes

1. On the verso Picasso had already done an oil sketch in the style of his contemporaneous “café” paintings. In the left half, a seated woman is amply clothed in white and crowned by an elaborate hairstyle and hat, while heavily impastoed foliage in forest green and ultramarine blue dominate the image's vigorously painted right half.

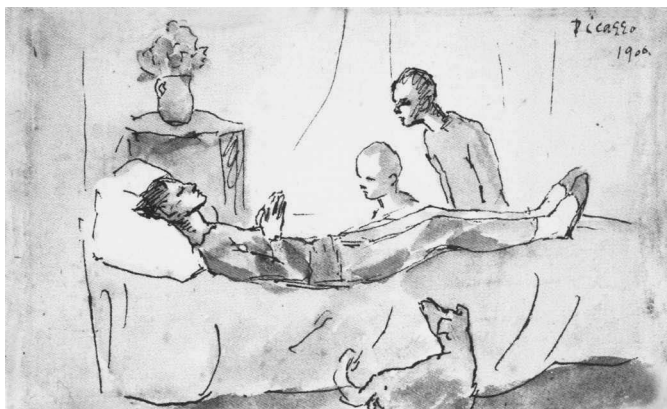
2. Picasso had already depicted Casagemas, who committed suicide, in a number of 1901 deathbed portraits; see *Picasso: The Early Years, 1892–1906* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1997), nos. 67–70.

3. Harlequin does reappear, briefly, in 1909, c. 1915, and in the 1920s.

4. At least four sketches are directly linked to *The Death of Harlequin*; the one closest is *Study for “The Death of Harlequin”* (see figure).

5. Rainer Maria Rilke, “The Fifth Elegy,” *Duino Elegies*; trans. J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender (New York, 1939), 47, 53. Rilke borrowed *The Death of Harlequin* from its first purchaser, Uhde, in 1907.

Pablo Picasso, *Study for “The Death of Harlequin,”* 1905/1906, pen and black ink with watercolor, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon





EDGAR DEGAS

French, 1834–1917

Ballet Scene, c. 1907

pastel and charcoal on tracing paper
 768 × 1,112 mm
 (30¼ × 43¾)
 Chester Dale Collection,
 1963

Among Degas' most glorious works are the large pastels that dominate the last decades of his career. Densely constructed of layer upon layer of brilliant, often jarring color, they are remarkably potent, indeed mesmerizing works, which treat in new and daring ways some of the subjects that had long been mainstays of Degas' repertoire. *Ballet Scene*, which may be one of Degas' last renditions of this favorite theme, is also one of the most impressive, not only because of its scale but also because of the complex texturing of the pastel strokes and the luminous and expressive juxtapositions of both harmonious and discordant colors. The range of hues is astonishing, from the delicate lavenders and blues of the tutus to the glowing pinks of the dancers' flesh to the startling greens and oranges of the scenery and stage.

Degas himself declared, "no art was ever less spontaneous than mine,"¹ and that is especially true of the late pastels, which were often the culmination of a complicated series of drawings, tracings, other pastels, and even oils in which he experimented with different compositional solutions based on related groupings and poses. This pastel, for example, may have had its roots in the painting *Group of Dancers* (National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh), whose composition then passed through a series of transformations in other drawings and tracings.² (Tracing for Degas was a simple means by which he could repeat again and again whole or partial compositions or individual figures, in the process adjusting a gesture, the tilt of a head, or the position of a leg; adding or subtracting figures; and then experimenting with radically different color combinations.) The present pastel, which is on tracing paper, may have been traced directly but with a few changes from another, sketchier charcoal and pastel version of the same composition, also on tracing paper, whose overall dimensions are only slightly smaller than this one.³

Throughout this process of transformation, during which Degas also seems to have incorporated at least one pose he had developed in his sculptures,⁴ he never abandoned

drawing as the firm foundation on which he built every composition from his earliest years onward. Pastel merely allowed him to fuse color and drawing, the two essential threads of his art, in every stroke. Reveling in the ability to stroke, scribble, jab, and even crush pure color so directly on his paper, Degas pushed the chromatic possibilities of pastel further and more aggressively than any artist before him.

MARGARET MORGAN GRASSELLI

Provenance

Estate of the artist (first atelier sale, Paris, 7 May 1918, lot 210); Jacques Seligmann; American Art Association, Hotel Plaza, New York, 27 January 1921, lot 210; Scott and Fowles, New York; American Art Association, New York, 19 November 1926, lot 41; Chester Dale, 1926.

Notes

1. George Moore, "Memoires of Degas," *Burlington Magazine* 32, no. 179 (February 1918), 64.
2. Reproduced in *Degas* [exh. cat., Galeries nationales du Grand Palais] (Paris, 1988), no. 362. This may then have been followed by a charcoal drawing (location unknown), reproduced in Lillian Browse, *Degas Dancers* (London, 1949), plate 254; a charcoal and red chalk drawing, now in a New York private collection (Paul-André Lemoisne, *Degas et son*

oeuvre, 4 vols, [Paris, 1946–1949], no. 1461), reproduced in Paris 1988, no. 363, and Browse 1949, plate 255; and another charcoal drawing of just the two foremost dancers at right, reproduced in Browse 1949, plate 233a.

3. Lemoisne 1460, reproduced in Paris 1988, no. 364, and Browse 1949, plate 233; Richard Kendall, *Degas beyond Impressionism* [exh. cat., National Gallery] (London, 1996), no. 74.

4. The dancer at right with her elbows jutting sharply behind her closely resembles the sculptures *Dancer at rest, hands behind her back, right leg forward*; and *Dressed dancer at rest, hands behind her back, right leg forward*, c. 1895–1905; London 1996, no. 76. There are also versions with left leg forward, as in the present pastel.



10

GEORGE BELLAWS

American, 1882–1925

Street Fight, 1907

conté crayon, pastel,
graphite, and ink
verso: *Society Ball*,
c. 1907, charcoal
and pastel

546 × 619 mm

(21½ × 24¾)

Eugene L. and Marie-
Louise Garbaty Fund,
1996

In the fall of 1904 George Bellows arrived in New York, having given up his studies at Ohio State University after three years. Determined to become a painter, he enrolled in William Merritt Chase's New York School of Art; while there he fell under the influence of the realist Robert Henri. Encouraged by Henri to find his subjects in the familiar reality of the world around him, Bellows discovered inspiration virtually everywhere he turned. As he observed: "I am always very much amused with people who talk about the lack of subject matter for painting. The great difficulty is that you cannot stop to sort them out enough. Wherever you go, they are waiting for you. The men of the docks, the children at the river's edge, polo crowds, prize fights, summer evenings and romance, village folk, young people, old people, the beautiful, the ugly."¹ During the first five or six years of his career Bellows created a remarkable body of work drawn from his observations of the rich tapestry of New York life. Like his mentor Henri, Bellows discovered that "there is beauty in everything if it looks beautiful in your eyes. You can find it anywhere."²

Street Fight is one of the earliest drawings listed in the artist's "Record Book," where it is described as "Children in park/two boys starting to fight in ring/of kids," and dated to summer 1907.³ Although Bellows would not create the first of his great oils depicting boxing matches, *Club*

Night (National Gallery of Art), until 1909, his earliest treatment of the subject, a dramatic drawing entitled *The Knockout* (private collection), dates to July 1907. *Street Fight*, even though it is not a boxing scene and is set outdoors, has a clear relationship to the boxing theme. Two antagonists stand near the center of the composition, closely surrounded by observers whose faces wear a variety of nearly caricatured expressions (Bellows' description of the figures being in a "ring" makes the association with boxing even more obvious). The drawing bristles with tense energy, both in the impending conflict it depicts and in the slashing and darting lines Bellows used to create it.

It is precisely these qualities of energy and animation that bind together all of Bellows' early works, no matter how diverse their subjects, and give them their great power. One sees it in this drawing, just as in famous masterpieces such as *Forty-two Kids* of 1907 (Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington) and *Blue Morning* and *Both Members of this Club*, both of 1909 (both National Gallery of Art). Through the creative act of painting and drawing George Bellows was able, as were very few other artists of his generation, to translate the vitality of modern life into images that are themselves vibrant with power.

FRANKLIN KELLY

George Bellows,
Society Ball
(verso of
Street Fight)



Provenance

Purchased from the artist by Joseph B. Thomas Jr., New York, 1911; Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Horowitz, Hopkins, MN, 1979–1987; Dr. Robert Nowinski, Seattle, 1987–1996; Hirschl & Adler, New York, 1996.

Notes

1. Quoted in Margaret C. S. Christman, *Portraits by George Bellows* [exh. cat., National Portrait Gallery] (Washington, 1981), 13.

2. Quoted in Charles H. Morgan, *George Bellows: Painter of America* (New York, 1965), 40.

3. "Record Book A," 43, no. 41; information courtesy of Glen Peck, Glen Peck Fine Arts. The verso, *Society Ball* (figure), probably preceded *Street Fight*, for it seems unlikely that the artist would have drawn on the verso of a work as successful and complete as the latter. Though Bellows drew *Society Ball* with characteristic vigor and expressiveness, he used more color than usual. Perhaps he was experimenting, or elaborating or developing a theme from one of his best-known early drawings, *Dance in a Madhouse* of 1907 (Art Institute of Chicago).



MARSDEN HARTLEY

American, 1877–1943

Self-Portrait, 1908

black crayon

30.3 × 22.6 mm

(11 15/16 × 8 7/8)

John Davis Hatch

Collection, Avalon Fund,

1983

This sketch is one of a group of at least five early self-portraits by Hartley done around 1908. Two show the artist in the act of drawing.¹ The other three focus solely on Hartley's distinctive face.² In the latter three a few overlapping lines suggest the shape of the head, while short curving and swirling marks define the nose, mouth, and, most dramatically, the eyes and hair. In the National Gallery's *Self-Portrait* broad ribbons of black made with the side of the crayon demarcate the neck and jaw.

Barbara Haskell has observed: "Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Hartley's new approach . . . is that it began in virtual isolation, with no direct exposure to developments which had taken place in Europe."³ Haskell refers primarily to Hartley's first mature Maine landscapes of 1908, done in a manner based in part on reproductions of neo-impressionist art he had seen in the German periodical *Jugend*. But her comments apply as well to works such as *Self-Portrait* in which Hartley spontaneously transformed his neo-impressionist vocabulary of densely woven marks into something more personal and original. Closely resembling the agitated, attenuated figures of contemporary young Austrian artists such as Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele, it demonstrates how Hartley, with his brooding, introspective nature, was predisposed to an art that explored the subjective representation of inner emotional states rather than the objective study of natural phenomena, even before he gained firsthand knowledge of expressionist movements abroad.

In 1912 Hartley visited Europe for the first time with the help of Alfred Stieglitz. After immersing himself in the art of Paris, he moved on to Munich and Berlin, where he met Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter, and Franz Marc. There Hartley discovered his natural affinity for expressionism and became a critical source for the Stieglitz circle in New York regarding the latest experiments of the German avant-garde. He wrote to Stieglitz that the "new German tendency is a force to be reckoned with — to my own taste far more earnest and effective than the French intellectual movements."⁴

Although Hartley's early proto-expressionist self-portraits proved to be seminal to the entire history of expressionism in twentieth-century American art, he rarely depicted himself after 1908. The powerful, turbulent mood of these drawings recurs instead in his landscape paintings of New Mexico (1919–1924) and Dogtown, Massachusetts (1931, 1934, 1936), and in his homages to artists and cultural icons such as Hart Crane (1933), Albert Pinkham Ryder (1938–1939), and Abraham Lincoln (1940).

CHARLES BROCK

Provenance

John Davis Hatch.

Notes

1. In the collections of the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College; and the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota.

2. Reproduced in Ann C. Van Devanter and Alfred Frankenstein, *American Self-Portraits, 1670–1973* [exh. cat., National Portrait Gallery] (Washington, 1974), 119; and Marsden Hartley, *Somehow a Past*:

The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley, ed. Susan Elizabeth Ryan (Cambridge and London, 1997), 31.

3. Barbara Haskell, *Marsden Hartley* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1980), 14.

4. February 1913, quoted in New York 1980, 30. On Hartley in Germany see Patricia McDonnell, *American Modernism and the German Avant-Garde* (New York, 1998).



12

KÄTHE KOLLWITZ

German, 1867–1945

Out of Work, 1909

charcoal and white wash
over graphite

295 × 445 mm

(11 7/16 × 17 1/2)

Rosenwald Collection,

1943

Much of Kollwitz's fame rests on her sympathetic yet searing depiction of the life of the urban industrial proletariat in Germany. She was well positioned to observe it directly, having moved from her native Königsberg in East Prussia to a modest section of Berlin, where she lived with her husband, a physician for the city's tailors and their families.¹ She sought models from among his clientele, and these interactions led to the realism and immediacy of such images as *Out of Work*.

Here an unemployed man, chin in hands, slumps in dejection at the bedside of his sick wife. The woman, gazing listlessly at the viewer, a tiny infant cradled on her breast, rests her hands on another sleeping child. The charcoal shading of the male figure, so expressive of his despair, contributes to an overall sense of hopelessness. This mood contrasts with the oddly lyrical areas of painted white wash that gracefully delineate the nightdress and comforter as well as the puff of pillows that rise like angel wings around the woman's face; one recalls Kollwitz's admission regarding proletarian life: "I simply found it beautiful."² The style of the black-and-white drawing is simplified because the work was intended for reproduction in *Simplicissimus*, the political-satirical journal copiously illustrated by the finest contemporary artists, and Kollwitz wanted to deliver as direct a message as possible.

The years 1908–1909, when Kollwitz made this drawing, mark a turning point in

the artist's career. At this time she abandoned the routine of making studies from life, allowing her to "work well and easily now."³ She concurrently embraced a style of greater simplicity and concentration of pictorial means and design. The artist especially welcomed the opportunity to apply her newly streamlined approach to images with overt contemporary political references, such as *Out of Work*. Making socially engaged illustrations for *Simplicissimus* permitted her, as she wrote, "to remain artistic, and in particular . . . to express repeatedly to a large public that which has always stimulated me and of which not enough has been said: the many silent and audible tragedies of life in the big city—which all together make this work extraordinarily dear to me."⁴ When this drawing was published in the magazine, the editors affixed a title, "The One Good Thing," with the bitter caption: "If they didn't need soldiers, they would also tax the children."⁵ Kollwitz then reworked this striking motif into a more elaborated etching (figure), to which she added another sleeping child at the upper right corner and darkened the shadows, intensifying the scene's pervasive misery.

ELIZABETH PRELINGER

Provenance

Dr. Alfred Rose; Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1942.

Notes

1. See Alessandra Comini, "Kollwitz in Context: The Formative Years," in Elizabeth Prelinger, *Käthe Kollwitz* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1992), 94.

2. Käthe Kollwitz, "Rückblick auf frühere Zeit," in *Die Tagebücher*, ed. Jutta Bohnke-Kollwitz (Berlin, 1989), 741; quoted and translated in Washington 1992, 76.

3. Entry of 18 September 1909 in Kollwitz 1989, 52.

4. Letter from Kollwitz to her friend Beate Bonus-Jeep, c. 1907–1909; quoted in Käthe Kollwitz, *Ich sah die Welt mit lieb-vollen Blicken: Käthe Kollwitz, Ein Leben in Selbstzeugnissen*, ed. Hans Kollwitz (Wiesbaden, 1988), 275; quoted and translated in Washington 1992, 50.

5. See Otto Nagel and Werner Timm, *Käthe Kollwitz. Die Handzeichnungen* (Berlin, 1972; repr. 1980), no. 545.

Käthe Kollwitz,
Out of Work,
1909, etching,
National
Gallery of Art,
Washington,
Rosenwald
Collection,
1943





13

EMIL NOLDE

German, 1867–1956

An Apostle Filled with the Holy Spirit, 1909

watercolor over pen
and ink on typewriting
paper

269 × 212 mm

(10⁵/₈ × 8⁵/₁₆)

William Nelson

Cromwell Fund, 1977

With its riveting, ecstatic stare and its exotic marbling of fluid colors, this is one of Nolde's finest early drawings.

In his autobiography Nolde locates the major crisis in his art in 1909: in his dissatisfaction with the strict imitation of nature, and even with the optically based impressionist imitation of nature. In contrast, Nolde attempted "to grasp something different and greater than formerly, that which lies most deeply...to revalue nature through adding one's soul and spirit."¹ After a deathly illness, he drew a number of heads of apostles and of Christ and began to work on four religious paintings, two of them especially meaningful, *The Last Supper* and *Pentecost*. Through these "most secret, most deeply inward events of the Christian religion" Nolde found his way "from optical external charm to felt inner worth."

At least ten of these compelling watercolors survive.² One or two appear to have been directly used for specific figures in Nolde's two paintings, but most are not so close; they are more like independent explorations in the artist's transition to a new, keenly felt inner value. This apostle's craggy cheeks, open mouth showing two upper teeth, and beard limited to his lower face resemble the head of Christ in *The Last Supper* as well as the second apostle on his right. The cheeks and mouth and wide open eyes are also close to the apostle at Peter's left in *Pentecost*, however; and the sense of a rapturous trance is more appropriate for that event, as Nolde says, "the ecstatic, transcendental reception of the Holy Spirit."

Of all these watercolors made while Nolde was plumbing the depths of his art, this *Apostle* achieves his most striking combination of colors, both natural and unnatural. The rugged face, wide eyes, broad nose, and slack mouth create a strong elemental visage, perhaps evoking the north German fishermen with whom Nolde was living; but the bright emerald green and flowing colors obviously have nothing to do with their skin, not even under strange optical conditions.

Yet there remains something about the interaction of colors here that is even more primitively natural than humanity. Around the stark blue and white eyes and the cherry red lips the colors flow and constantly shift irregularly into each other—like the reflected colors of an oil slick on water. Nolde has achieved a timeless moment of fiery spiritual intensity caught in stunned evanescent beauty.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

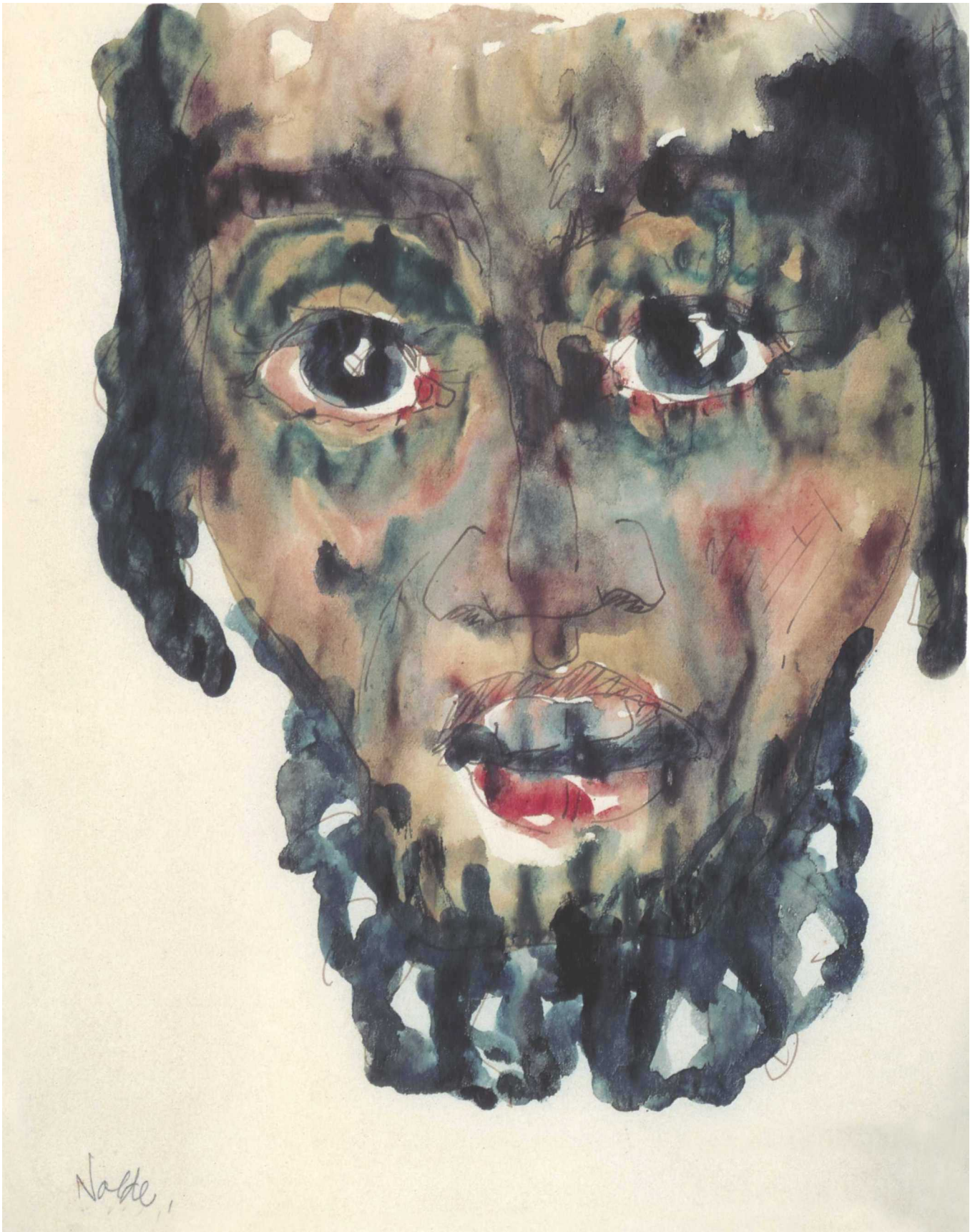
Kornfeld und Klipstein, Bern, 10 June 1976, lot 729; Fischer Fine Art, London; William H. Schab Gallery, New York.

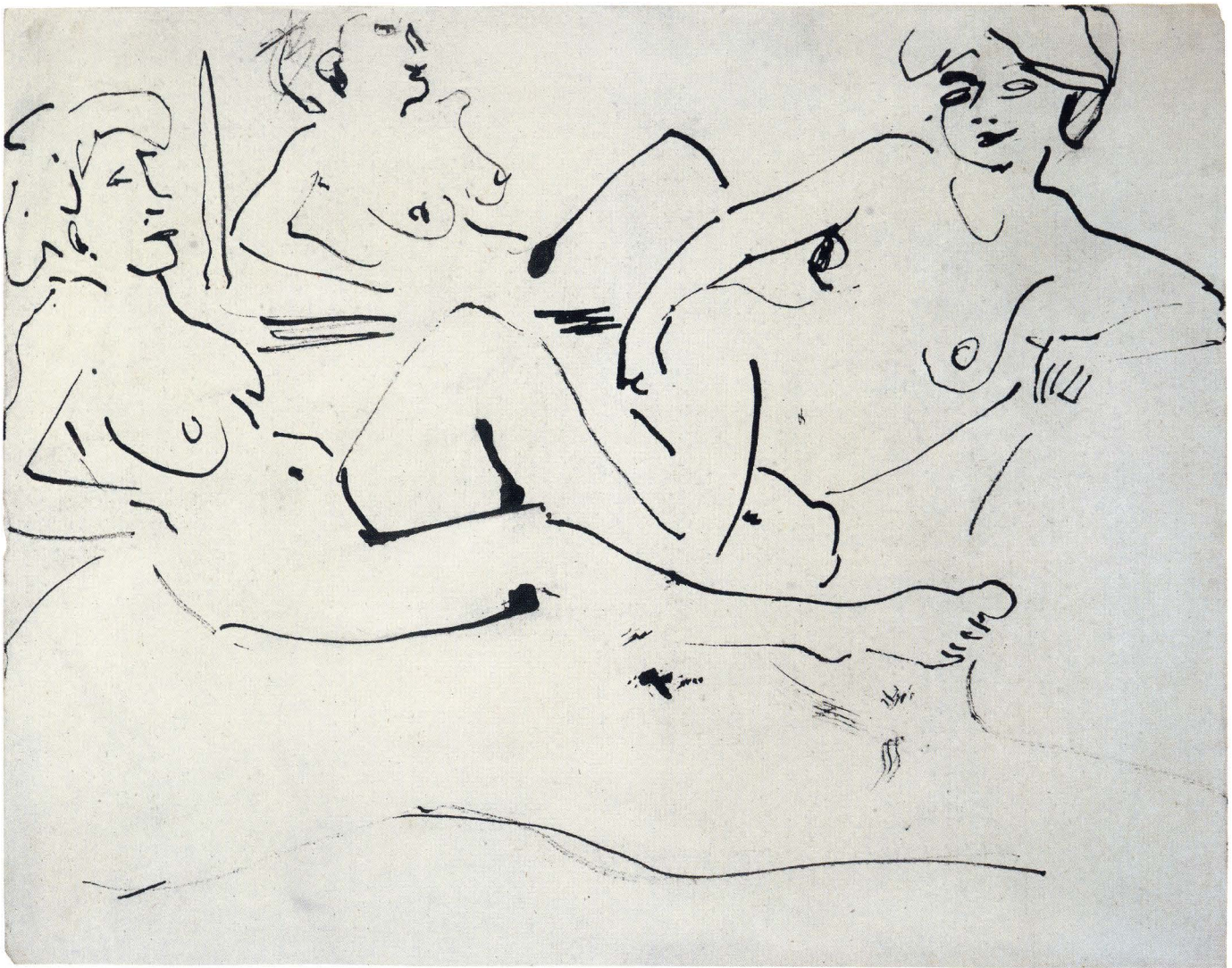
Notes

1. The four volumes of Nolde's autobiography are easily available in the paperback reprint, *Emil Nolde: Mein Leben* (Cologne, 1976). All quotes here are from pages 156–157.

2. Three, including this one, are reproduced in black and white in the Kornfeld and Klipstein auction catalogue, *Moderne Kunst*, Bern, 9–10 June

1976, plates 55–56; two more are reproduced in color in *Emil Nolde: Aquarelle und Zeichnungen* [exh. cat., Schloss Wolfsburg] (Wolfsburg, 1991), plates 15 and 16; two more (one in color) in *Emil Nolde* [exh. cat., Museo d'Arte Moderna] (Lugano, 1994), 163 and 246; two more in color in *Emil Nolde: Akvarely a grafika* [exh. cat., Egon Schiele Centrum] (Prague, 1994), 29 and 33 (incorrectly dated c. 1912); and the tenth in Martin Urban, *Emil Nolde: Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings* (London, 1987), 1:280.





ERNST LUDWIG

KIRCHNER

German, 1880–1938

**Two Women Reclining
before a Mirror, 1909**

pen and ink

342 × 433 mm

(13⁷/₁₆ × 17)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce

Fund, 1989

In 1935, recounting his early artistic development, Kirchner repeatedly referred to the practice of different types of drawing as the means by which he progressed. He also saw the crucial breakthrough in his art in terms of drawings, specifically his experience of those by Rembrandt: “I was seized by Rembrandt’s drawings very deeply. Stimulated by his sketches, I tried to draw freely after life in the streets, in cafes, and so came to something entirely new, the study of movement, which has guided my entire work until today and from which I recovered my own language of forms.”¹

These two women on a daybed or sofa exemplify Kirchner’s desire to seize an image as quickly and express it as directly as possible, to show the naturalness of subjects in relaxed poses with normal gestures. The drawing also radiates his early spirit of life, of play and humor, as well as his lifelong delight in the beauty of the female nude. On the right is his girlfriend in Dresden, nicknamed “Dodo.” With pure broken outlines Kirchner quickly captures her soft curves. Only four strokes and two dots create her gentle smile and her warm, inviting look. The older woman on the left undoubtedly springs from life but also invokes the ancient tradition of artistic allegory contrasting youth and age. Kirchner shows her flat nose, sharp chin, fallen breasts, and big foot not as ugly or grotesque—as in older art—but with good humor. Even her arms propped akimbo contrast with Dodo’s soft curves. Yet Kirchner cleverly and sympathetically uses the older woman’s mirrored reflection to firm, fill out, and soften her form—now spatially closer to Dodo—into more of what she used to be.

Kirchner produced a flood of drawings and visual ideas. Especially in his early years he constantly changed types of line and ways of capturing form as well as ways of composing subjects. Thus, having seen the compositional and iconographic possibilities

of the deliberately truncated mirrored reflection of a reclining nude model, Kirchner quickly explored it in just five drawings and one painting.² It was only decades later that Matisse elaborated numerous variations on the idea in a series of pen drawings in the mid-1930s.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Estate of the artist via
Galeria Henze, Lugano.

Notes

1. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, “Anfänge und Ziel,” in *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner aus Privatbesitz* [exh. cat., Kunsthalle] (Bielefeld, 1969), 3–4.

2. The painting is also from 1909; see no. 56 in the catalogue raisonné by Donald E. Gordon, *Ernst*

Ludwig Kirchner (Cambridge, MA, 1968). Thanks to Dr. Wolfgang Henze for calling attention to the other four drawings, all 1909: Von der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal; Karlheinz Gabler Collection; Hauswedell and Nolte auction, Hamburg, 26 June 1986, lot 575; and Galerie Nierendorf, Berlin, *Kunstblätter der Galerie Nierendorf*, no. 31, 1971, item 9.

EDOUARD VUILLARD

French, 1868–1940

The Square, 1910

brush and ink

646 × 500 mm

(25⁷/₁₆ × 19¹¹/₁₆)Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1985

For the painter and printmaker Edouard Vuillard, drawing was a lifelong activity and an indispensable part of his creative process, yet it remains to this day the least known aspect of his oeuvre. He drew constantly, not only in preparation for his paintings and prints, but also casually, as a pleasurable pastime. Most of his drawings were quick pencil sketches, but he was equally adept at a number of other media, including the fluid combination of brush and ink found here in *The Square*. More than six thousand of Vuillard's drawings have survived, mainly in the hands of his descendants, but relatively few of those have yet been published.¹ As a result, more than sixty years after his death, Vuillard's corpus of drawings is still largely unknown and unexplored.

That Vuillard was a gifted and highly original draftsman is amply demonstrated by this inviting glimpse of an unidentified Parisian park. The influence of Japanese calligraphy and ink painting is immediately apparent, though Vuillard wielded the brush in a manner that was entirely his own. Especially appealing is the effect he achieved, using only the light brown paper and the black ink, of the same kind of decorative play of color and pattern that was such an important part of works from his Nabi period. Just as he delighted there in the contrasting shapes and designs presented by wallpapers, textiles, and household objects, here he enjoyed the wealth of patterns found outdoors in both natural and man-made forms. With a remarkable economy of means he not only suggested the shapes and textures of the individual elements of the composition but also filled the scene with space, light, and atmosphere. As swift and spontaneous as the drawing may at first appear, it was probably made in the studio only after extensive study and reflection and with the help of sketches made from life, as was Vuillard's usual practice.²

For an artist who was known primarily as an "intimist" —referring both to the relatively small scale of many of Vuillard's works and to the scenes of ordinary household activities for which he is still best

known—*The Square* comes as something of a revelation. The size alone is quite astonishing, and indeed this is one of the artist's largest known drawings. The choice of an open-air subject may seem just as surprising at first, but Vuillard frequently sketched and painted gardens, cityscapes, and landscapes.³ Shortly after this drawing was made, he painted a monumental view of a different Parisian park, Place Vintimille, in a five-part screen measuring more than seven feet high by almost ten feet wide, now also in the National Gallery of Art's collection.⁴ Together, these two works show that the "intimist" label that is so often applied to Vuillard's oeuvre describes only a part of it and that he was as much a master of the world outside his apartment as he was of the world within it.

MARGARET MORGAN GRASSELLI

Provenance

Private collection, Paris;
Huguette Berès, Paris, by
1975; Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon, 1975.

Notes

1. One small exhibition has been devoted to Vuillard's drawings: *E. Vuillard Drawings, 1885–1930*, The American Federation of Arts, New York, 1978. Otherwise, broad selections of Vuillard's drawings have been reproduced in Jacques Salomon, *Auprès de Vuillard* (Paris, 1953); and *Vuillard* [exh. cat., Musée des Beaux-Arts] (Lyon, 1990).

2. Salomon 1953, 54–57.

One can easily imagine that the National Gallery drawing was preceded by sketches like the ones of Place Vintimille and Place Augustine reproduced in Salomon 1953, 31, 66, 102.

3. See, for example, the outdoor scenes reproduced in Guy Cogeval, *Vuillard, le temps détourné* (Paris, 1993), 72–79; and Jacques Salomon, *Vuillard* (Paris, 1961), 80–81, 109–111, 130–131, and 135.

4. The gift of Enid A. Haupt in 1998, this screen is reproduced in *Art for the Nation, Collecting for a New Century* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 2000), 96–97.



CONSTANTIN
BRANCUSI

Romanian, 1876–1957

Woman's Head,
c. 1910

charcoal over graphite
417 × 275 mm
(16 ⁷/₁₆ × 10 ¹³/₁₆)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce
Fund, 1971

The defining principle of the work of the great Romanian sculptor, Brancusi, was its reduction to the simplest and most basic geometric forms. By thus clarifying the essential structure of his subject, the artist believed he could best capture and express its inner meaning. To that end he developed a highly limited vocabulary of forms with which he created a uniquely purified version of reality, becoming in the process one of the most original and influential sculptors of the twentieth century.

As is frequently the case with sculptors, who generally prefer to think in three dimensions, Brancusi did not often make drawings, producing fewer than three hundred over the course of his long career. He was, nevertheless, a gifted draftsman, as this splendid portrait study of an unidentified woman bears witness. Made around the same time as such early abstract sculptures as *Sleeping Muse I* of 1909–1910 (The Art Institute of Chicago) and *Maïastra* of 1910 (National Gallery of Art),¹ it shows him—in a way those sculptures do not—in the very act of extracting the underlying geometry of his model's appearance. With boldly repeated strokes of the charcoal he has emphasized the near-perfect oval of the head and the columnar cylinder of the neck. At the same time, though, he has retained the facial features, stylized though they may be, and has even taken special interest in the woman's hairstyle and the shape of her nose. In just a few years he would eliminate altogether such distinctive details from his smoothly volumetric sculptures, but here he is still compromising between individuality and universality. In the same way, this young woman is not as completely impassive and transcendently calm as Brancusi's later figures would be, for her gaze is unusually direct and intense. In the end, however, her expression is somewhat blank, and she reveals nothing about her thoughts or emotions.

Brancusi's purpose in making this drawing is not known. It does not appear to be connected to any of his extant sculptures, and nothing at all has been determined about the model.² That the study held a special place in his oeuvre is suggested by the fact that it was one of the few drawings that Brancusi himself photographed as part of the record he kept of his works. The photograph remained in his studio until his death.

MARGARET MORGAN GRASSELLI

Provenance

World House Galleries;
Mr. and Mrs. Lester
Francis Avnet.

Notes

1. For these and other sculptures from around 1910, see Pontus Hulten, Natalia Dumitresco, and Alexandre Istatî, *Brancusi* (Paris, 1986), 77–85, 282–284.

2. A similar study of a young woman, possibly the same model but this time drawn in graphite instead of charcoal, was exhibited in *Brancusi + Mondrian*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, 1982, no. 18.



JOHN MARIN

American, 1870–1953

**Woolworth Building,
No. 31, 1912**

watercolor over graphite
470 × 398 mm
(18½ × 15⅞)
Gift of Eugene and
Agnes E. Meyer, 1967

Woolworth Building, No. 31, is the fourth in a series of five watercolors by Marin depicting what would remain the world's tallest skyscraper, at sixty stories high, until the completion of the Chrysler Building in 1930. The watercolors were first exhibited in New York in early 1913 at Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery. Grouped together, they demonstrated a progression from relatively straightforward realism to nearly total abstraction (figure).

Stieglitz presented Marin's watercolors just prior to the opening of the Armory Show, the milestone exhibition of avant-garde art held in New York in February 1913. Anticipating that European artists would get the lion's share of attention there, he set out to demonstrate that an American artist like Marin, who had so innovatively rendered one of the great icons of contemporary American life, the New York skyscraper, had to be counted among the leading lights of the international modernist movement.

The Woolworth Building images generated enormous publicity and firmly established Marin's reputation in the United States. Twelve articles appeared in newspapers and art publications, including three with elaborate layouts that featured reproductions of the works, sometimes in color.¹ Some critics poked fun: "[the] buildings look as though some inebriated giant had gone swinging down Broadway putting buildings out of plumb.... No one but absolute

teetotalers should go to see this show."

Charles Caffin's comments in the *New York American* were more typical: "these New York pictures... reinforce one another as the rhythms of movement leap from picture to picture, coursing through the series in a resistless exultation." And J. N. Lauvrik of the *Boston Transcript* proclaimed that "they convey a greater sense of architectural mass, of structure and of the general bulk and volume of New York than the work of any other man who has yet assayed this difficult task."²

Given Marin's presence in Paris from 1905 to 1910 and his exposure to exhibitions by Cézanne, Picasso, and Matisse at 291, his claim that works like *Woolworth Building, No. 31*, were essentially American and had little to do with the innovations of European modernist movements must be seen as a bit misleading.³ Nevertheless, Marin's open, exuberant, improvisational method, and especially his mastery of the watercolor medium, distinguish the Woolworth series from its cubist and futurist antecedents. Landmark works in the history of American modernism, they heralded the advent of Marin's distinctive signature style.

Four of the five Woolworth watercolors, including this sheet, were featured at the Armory Show and later purchased by Eugene and Agnes Meyer, important patrons of 291.⁴

CHARLES BROCK

John Marin, *Woolworth Building, No. 32*, 1913, watercolor, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer, 1967

**Provenance**

The artist to the 291 gallery; Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer.

Notes

1. See Charles Brock, "A Diabolical Test," in Sarah Greenough et al., *Modern Art and America: Alfred Stieglitz and His New York Galleries* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 2001), 126–143.

2. Reviews reprinted in *Camera Work* 42–43 (April–July 1913), 24, 41, 43.

3. See Ruth Fine, *John Marin* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), 75–79, 128.

4. *Woolworth Building, No. 30*, was not exhibited and is apparently no longer extant.



**ERNST LUDWIG
KIRCHNER**
German, 1880–1938

**Erna Lying on the
Beach among Rocks,**
1912

reed pen and ink
461 × 591 mm
(18 1/8 × 23 3/16)
Ailsa Mellon Bruce
Fund, 1984

To say that Kirchner was a prolific draftsman hardly begins to express the fact. He started to draw at age three and never stopped, creating more than 20,000 drawings in all media.¹ This monumental production is that much more impressive in that he almost never drew small vignettes or individual studies of single objects or forms. Instead, he envisioned and made full compositions—simple or complex, small or large, but completely seen and formed in the visual field.

In 1911, as Kirchner made his transition from Dresden to Berlin, and especially in 1912, his line became so swift and sharp, and his hatching such a flurry of zigzags, that one senses his hand could hardly keep up with his visual ideas. In his drawings he did not erase; he just kept going: “I have to draw until a fury, just draw. Then after a certain time seek out the good.”² The swiftness of his strokes evokes the movement, the flux of life he was seeking, even in an idyllic moment of calm such as that depicted in this scene. Judging from her distinctive hairstyle, the figure in this drawing is undoubtedly Erna, Kirchner’s new companion in Berlin, who eventually became his wife. She reclines on the shore of the Baltic island of Fehmarn, where the artist liked to go in summer to observe the uninhibited interaction between nudes and nature.

In Kirchner’s notes sent to Wilhelm Valentiner, who gave the artist his first one-man show in America, Kirchner reveals that one of his desires in his beach scenes was to relate the figures to the rocks in such a way that each appeared totally integrated with the other.³ He has certainly achieved that here. Even more extraordinary is how, with the brilliant placement of the composition on this large sheet and with his shorthand for forms (what he called “hieroglyphs”), Kirchner plays summary distortion against complete rightness of feeling. There is not a mark to indicate the foreground beach, yet one clearly feels its flatness and support for

the figure. The softness of the woman’s flesh in the curves of her neck and shoulder and in the extruded flesh of her bent right knee alleviates the abruptly rigid lines of her left leg. Most striking is the twist of perspective in the double curve of her buttocks, placed so deftly that they are seen simultaneously from above along the line of her back, and also from the side leading in depth to her soft but rocklike hip.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Dr. Rüdiger Graf von der Goltz, Düsseldorf; Kornfeld und Klipstein, Bern, 20–21 June 1973, lot 362; D. Thomas Bergen, London; Carus Gallery, New York.

Notes

1. The current estimate was kindly provided by Dr. Wolfgang Henze at the Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Archiv, Wichtach/Bern, Switzerland, 28 January 2001.

2. From Kirchner’s diary for 4 August 1919, quoted in Roman Norbert Ketterer and Claus Zöge von Manteuffel, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Zeichnungen und Pastelle* (Stuttgart and Zurich, 1979), 13.

3. *German Expressionist Drawings from the Collection of D. Thomas Bergen* [exh. cat., University of Notre Dame Art Gallery] (South Bend, 1977), 21.



HEINRICH

CAMPENDONK

German, 1889–1957

Self-Portrait, c. 1912**verso: Adda
Deichmann Reclining
in a Chair, c. 1912**

watercolor over graphite
on Japanese paper
532 × 428 mm
(20 15/16 × 16 7/8)
Anonymous Promised
Gift

Heinrich Campendonk executed this stunning double-sided watercolor soon after being asked to join *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider) by the group's founders, Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc. He was known to them through August Macke, whose cousin Helmut shared his studio.¹ Campendonk had three works in the first public exhibition of *Der Blaue Reiter*, which opened in December 1911 at the Galerie Thannhäuser in Munich.² By mid-May 1912 he had met Herwarth Walden, founder of the periodical *Der Sturm* and the Sturm-Galerie in Berlin, who was a major promoter of leading German artists and writers before World War I and soon carried Campendonk's work, including the present watercolor.

This *Self-Portrait* relates to a painting of the same date in the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague.³ While the watercolor portrays the artist in bust length, dressed in formal attire, with a high collar and polka-dotted bow tie, the oil painting shows only his head, with his body disappearing in a series of geometric forms. Both works depict the figure holding a palette in one hand, though the other hand is also represented in the canvas. The watercolor contains several mysterious forms that recur in other works by Campendonk from this time: two spheres topped by cylinders to the right of his head; floating serpentine lines in the lower left corner and above his shoulder; and the ladder-like rendering at the bottom right. The oil painting also includes floating spheres around the artist's arm. Finally, the painting shows a pear, absent in the watercolor, seemingly placed on a dish to the left of his head.

In the course of removing an old cardboard backing for the present exhibition, a beautifully preserved, fully finished watercolor was found on the sheet's verso. This exciting discovery shows a woman reclining in a Wiener Werkstätte-style chair with a tassled seat cushion or blanket. A dog sits at her feet. The woman is probably Campendonk's lover, Adda Deichmann.⁴ The setting is ambiguous, though certain details suggest it might be outdoors, possibly near a beach. These include the wavelike forms in the background together with what may be

clouds and rays of sun. The figure is barefoot and holds what looks like a ball, perhaps a beach ball, high above her head. In addition, a flower seems to grow directly out of the ground at the lower left. The elegant, modern chair seems out of place in this environment, as if Campendonk pictured Adda existing in various places simultaneously.

Both the self-portrait and the representation of Adda reflect influences that were coming together in Campendonk's work at the time. The use of abstract forms and multiple viewpoints demonstrates his new interest in cubism. The use of pure, intense color to express emotion suggests that Campendonk was inspired by the paintings of Van Gogh and by Kandinsky's theory on the purity of color. The remarkable luminosity of these watercolors calls to mind stained glass, a medium in which Campendonk worked throughout his career. And the lyrical rhythm of the self-portrait, with its serpentine lines and sharp angles resembling musical notations, is reminiscent of Kandinsky's explorations of the relationship between music and painting, an interest shared with other members of *Der Blaue Reiter*.⁵

GREGORY JECMEN

Provenance

Sturm-Galerie, Berlin;
Hedwig and Wilhelm
Buller, Duisburg, 1917;
Sotheby's, Berlin, 30 May
1991, lot 9; present owner.

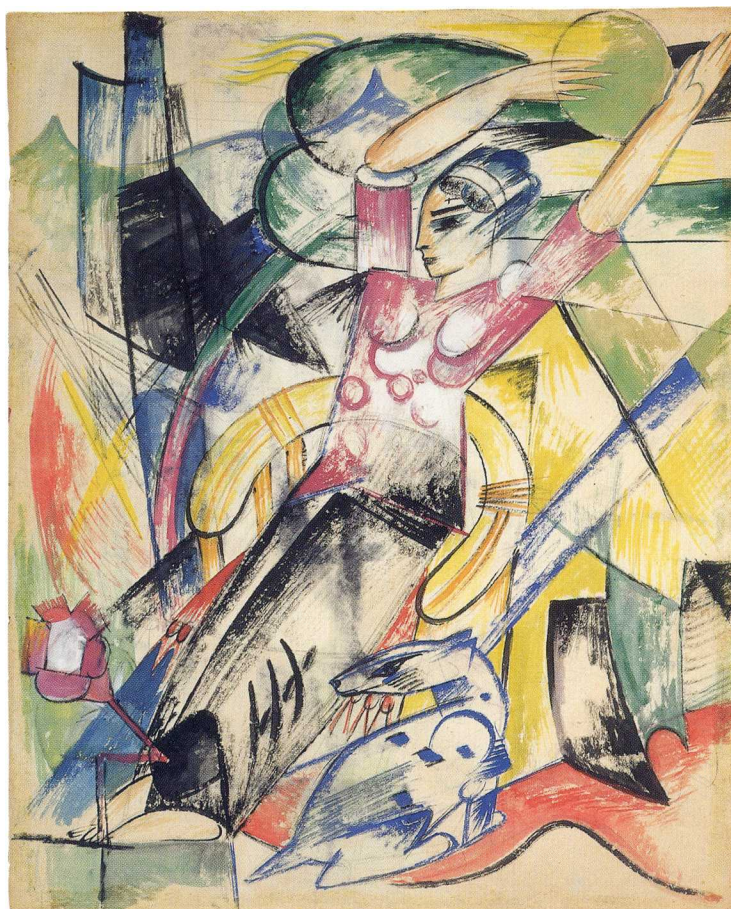
Notes

1. *Heinrich Campendonk: Ein Maler des Blauen Reiter* [exh. cat., Kaiser Wilhelm Museum] (Krefeld, 1989).
2. Krefeld 1989, 20.
3. For the drawing see Paul Wember, *Heinrich Campendonk: Krefeld 1889–1957 Amsterdam* [exh. cat., Museum Haus Lange] (Krefeld, 1960), no. 13; and Andrea Firmenich, *Heinrich Campendonk, 1880–1957. Leben und Expressionistisches Werk* (Recklinghausen, 1989), no. 147A. For the

painting, see Krefeld 1960, no. 12; Firmenich 1989, no. 142 Ö; and Krefeld 1989, no. 15 (reproduced on p. 59).

4. Adda's distinctive features, including dark, almond-shaped eyes, pointed nose, and pulled-back hair, are seen in other drawings of the same time that identify her explicitly. See especially the watercolor *Lovers (Adda and Heinrich)* in Firmenich 1989, no. 158AD. The couple was married in the summer of 1913.

5. Paul Vogt, "The *Blaue Reiter*," in *Expressionism: A German Intuition, 1905–1920* [exh. cat., Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum] (New York, 1980), 196.





20

EGON SCHIELE

Austrian, 1890–1918

Self-Portrait, 1912

watercolor over graphite
verso: graphite sketch
of a face

349 × 254 mm

(13 ¾ × 10)

Gift (Partial and
Promised) of Hildegard
Bachert in memory of
Otto Kallir, 1997

On 13 April 1912 Egon Schiele was arrested and imprisoned in the small Austrian town of Neulengbach on charges of immorality and seduction. He was tried and sentenced, then released on 7 May, having spent twenty-four days in jail.¹ The experience so devastated him that he refused to talk about it.

Self-Portrait was created in the months following his release. It is a tour de force of expressive draftsmanship. With an economy of line and color, Schiele has conjured up a virtuoso representation of the pain, anger, confusion, and defiance that his incarceration produced. Only his eyes look straight and fixedly out of the composition. Every other element is awry: his tousled hair, furrowed brow, contorted mouth, even the collar of his shirt.

All of this has been orchestrated with a few sure strokes. The swirling, dynamic lines are applied with vehemence, yet with a mastery that conveys a striking portrayal of penetrating honesty. This depiction is intensified by the dramatic application of the watercolor medium, which mimics and overlays the linear contours. The bold colors and sweeping lines also lift the figure from the surrounding space and forcefully direct attention to the technical skill of the artist as well as to his psychological state.

This dual intent derives from Schiele's perception of art as the vehicle to explore life to its fullest and to report his findings unabashedly. Driven by a compulsion to plumb all aspects of life, Schiele investigated subjects that ranged from eros and sexuality to death and decay, replicating his "discoveries" in watercolor, drawing, and oil with brutal directness. He applied the same honesty to delineations of his own emotions, as is mercilessly evident in this as well as his other self-portraits.

Throughout his early career Schiele was convinced that artists stood above the rest of humanity. They were free to do and say what they wished because they were society's oracles, whose insights would—if heeded—result in the improvement of life. He considered any attempt to thwart artists from expressing themselves to be the most hein-

ous of crimes.² This imperious attitude and unbridled egotism placed Schiele in various difficulties, and it was the chief reason for his imprisonment in 1912. The creation of art became the means for conveying ideas and morals. Line and color had to be applied in a manner calculated to elicit the appropriate responses. Art was at the service of morality and was a force for social change.

The collision between this attitude and the reality of small-town mores in Neulengbach fostered new insights and a greater self-realization. This experience was the impetus behind the present *Self-Portrait*. On the last of various watercolors completed while in jail, Schiele wrote: "for my art and for my loved ones, I will endure to the end."³

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Leopold Hauer, Vienna;
Otto Kallir; Hildegard
Bachert, New York, 1950.

Notes

1. For a discussion of Schiele's imprisonment, see Alessandra Comini, "Egon Schiele in Prison," in *Albertina Studien* 2, no. 4 (1964), 135.

2. On one of the watercolors painted while he was in jail, Schiele wrote: "Hindering the artist is a crime, it is murdering life in the bud!" Quoted in Jane Kallir, *Egon Schiele: The Complete Works* (New York, 1990), 138.

3. Kallir 1990, 138.

ERICH HECKEL

German, 1883–1970

Siddi in Bed, 1912

crayon

verso: **Landscape, 1913**,
black chalk

497 × 392 mm

(19 ½ × 15 ⅜)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce
Fund, 1980

This powerful image of a woman lying in bed brilliantly demonstrates Erich Heckel's view that line, as a conveyor of emotion, was the most essential aspect of drawing. Although his technique had been criticized by his early teachers as lacking discipline, Heckel, like his colleagues in the Dresden artists group *Die Brücke* (The Bridge), deeply believed that it was the artist's obligation to depict an honest, spontaneous expression of feeling.

The woman in this drawing is shown with one arm raised over her head, which is propped up on pillows, and her features defined in bold outline. Such sharp contrasts of black and white can also be found in Heckel's prints and show the influence of woodcuts by Felix Vallotton.¹ The extreme angularity of form, so prominent in Heckel's works from this period, might have been inspired by African sculpture then on public display at the Museum of Ethnology in Dresden.²

The subject is probably Heckel's long-time companion, Siddi Riha. Born Hilda Frieda Georgi, she took the stage name "Siddi" when she became a dancer. Heckel and Siddi met in 1910 and were married in June 1915. In the years following their move from Dresden to Berlin in 1911, Heckel created a series of works depicting tired, sleeping, and sick women, several of which can be identified as images of Siddi.³ Heckel follows a long art historical tradition in which the artist reveals an intimate moment

in the life of a close companion. In this drawing a striking juxtaposition exists between the personal, tender subject matter and the severe reduction of the figure's form.

The verso of this sheet, dated a year later, shows a hilly landscape drawn briskly in black chalk (figure). In the summer of 1913 Heckel spent time outside Hamburg at Osterholz and at the home of his friend Gustav Schiefler.⁴ This work might have been executed at one of these two places.

GREGORY JECMEN

ProvenanceSerge Sabarsky Gallery,
New York.**Notes**

1. Heckel produced more than one thousand etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs. See Annemarie and Wolf-Dieter Dube, *Erich Heckel: Das Graphische Werk*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1964).

2. Herbert Barry, *German Expressionism: "Die Brücke" and "Der Blaue Reiter"* (London, 1983), 56.

3. Magdalena M. Moeller, *Erich Heckel. Meisterwerke des Expressionismus: Aquarelle und Zeichnungen aus der Sammlung des Brücke-Museums Berlin* [exh. cat., Kunsthalle, Kiel] (Munich,

1999), 44. Heckel titled many of these works *müde* (tired), *krank* (sick), and *liegende* (reclining), but the inscription on the National Gallery drawing, *ruhende* (resting), is in a later hand. For paintings of this theme, see particularly Paul Vogt, *Erich Heckel* (Recklinghausen, 1965), nos. 1911/2, 1912/10, 1912/17, 1913/3, and 1913/5. For several other drawings on the theme, see *Erich Heckel: Handzeichnungen* (New York and Berlin, 1973), nos. 19, 20, 22, 23, 42.

4. *Erich Heckel, 1883–1970. Gemälde, Aquarelle, Zeichnungen, und Graphik* [exh. cat., Museum Folkwang, Essen] (Munich, 1983), 212.

Landscape (verso of *Siddi in Bed*)





-Ruhenda-
Hakel 12

ERNST LUDWIG
KIRCHNER

German, 1880–1938

Erna Bathing in a Tub, 1912–1913

pen and ink over water
washes over crayons

524 × 362 mm

(20 5/8 × 14 1/4)

Promised Gift of Mr.
and Mrs. Jacob Kainen

The subject of a woman at her bath dates back to antiquity, as one of the most widespread artistic excuses for portraying the beauty and endless compositional possibilities of the female nude. Nonetheless, Kirchner makes the subject distinctively his own in this phantasmagoric image. He was among the century's most adventurous in exploring graphic techniques, and sometimes one can only guess at the likely combination of intention and accident—and artistic capitalization on accident—that led to the results.

Traditional color drawings start with a more or less complete linear outline of forms to which areas of color are then added. Kirchner certainly made such drawings, though his colors are usually not fillers of form but electrifying layers of pure color along the original outlines, within which he adds nervous strokes or zigzags that balance light and shadow with bold harlequin effects on the surfaces of his forms.¹ Sometimes after finishing such a drawing, he might return to it and use an emphatic application of black wash or charcoal to solidify certain edges or objects.² In his constant search for speed in grasping and portraying a subject, Kirchner sometimes forgot any preliminary outline and simply applied blocks and strokes of color to create forms, as if painting *alla prima*.³

In an extraordinary experiment this drawing reverses the customary procedure—and with a unique variation—casting this peaceful domestic scene into wildly fused and flowing colors and lines.⁴ The drawing was originally made with no preliminary outline but with pure color. The edges of the bather changed hue from part to part, and her surfaces were indicated by stumped and hatched colors brightly contrasting with those of the edges. After finishing the image, Kirchner came back to add black pen lines, putting the outline on top of the color, as if making a chiaroscuro woodcut and printing the key block last. Yet instead of using the lines only to clarify the edges of forms, Kirchner gave them a more complex function. Before using the pen, he brushed water onto the surface of the drawing in varying

amounts, so that when he drew with his pen the ink ran and feathered outward in natural watery patterns that merge outline and color, bather and bath and background, into a kaleidoscopic rainbow. Knowing Kirchner's habit of creative experiment with whatever was at hand, one can imagine that he could have dipped his hand or rag or brush right into Erna's bathwater to create this fusion!⁵

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Estate of the artist via
Roman Norbert Ketterer,
Lugano; Mr. and Mrs.
Jacob Kainen.

Notes

1. For example, see Roman Norbert Ketterer and Claus Zoege von Manteuffel, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: Zeichnungen und Pastelle* (Stuttgart and Zurich, 1979), no. 7.

2. For example, see Ketterer and von Manteuffel 1979, nos. 9 and 11.

3. See Ketterer and von Manteuffel 1979, no. 20.

4. This drawing was for many years thought to date from 1923, because it was so listed by Roman Norbert Ketterer, but it must in fact date from a decade earlier. The application of color (before the

pen lines) is closest to three color crayon and pastel *Nudes*, two in Stuttgart, one in Wuppertal, all datable 1912–1914; see *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner: 1880–1938* [exh. cat., Nationalgalerie] (Berlin, 1979), nos. 155–156; and Ketterer and von Manteuffel 1979, no. 48. Likewise, the patterns of pen lines (absent the bleeding) are characteristic of drawings from the period 1911–1913 (for a condensed survey, see Berlin 1979, nos. 131–170).

5. Although by now Kirchner's line had become furiously swift, he did not neglect individual characteristics. Here the woman's hairstyle and wide hips clearly identify her as Erna; compare cat. 18 in the present exhibition and Berlin 1979, no. 136.



EGON SCHIELE

Austrian, 1890–1918

Dancer, 1913watercolor and gouache
over graphite

470 × 304 mm

(18½ × 12)

Gift (Partial and
Promised) of Liselotte
Millard, in Honor of the
50th Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1990

Egon Schiele is best known for his portraits and figure compositions, although he also executed landscapes and cityscapes. When he died from influenza during an epidemic in 1918, he was only twenty-eight years old, but he had already produced approximately three hundred oil paintings and several thousand watercolors and drawings.¹

Dancer is one of Schiele's most elegant, serene, and discreet likenesses. It depicts the artist's model and mistress Valerie Neuzil, who was called "Wally." She is readily identifiable by her red hair, bangs, high cheekbones, and long nose.² Wally had also posed for Klimt, who in 1911 introduced her to Schiele, with whom she lived until his marriage to Edith Harms in 1915. The energized, jagged angularity of the drawing and the delicate passages of color—in the subject's reddish brown hair and orange headband and the purplish blue shading along the edges and folds of her garment—are closely related to Schiele's other watercolors of the period.

Many of the artist's portraits and self-portraits are nudes, frequently in agitated, provocative, or even overtly erotic poses. Wally was the model for numerous drawings of this type; indeed the position she adopts here, seated with her knees drawn up against her chest, often provided Schiele an opportunity to focus on the female genitalia. In this portrait, however, Wally is decorously dressed in a simple shift that envelops her from shoulders to feet. Her monumental pyramidal form fills almost the entire sheet. The blank background concentrates attention on her introspective expression and on her indolent gesture of raising—or lowering—her shoulder strap.

ELIZABETH PENDLETON STREICHER

Provenance

Hans Ankwitz-Kleehoven;
Rudolf Leopold; Serge
Sabarsky Gallery; Sotheby
Parke-Bernet, New York,
16 May 1979, lot 72; Mr.
and Mrs. Mark J. Millard.

Notes

An earlier version of this
text was published in
Washington 1991.

1. See Jane Kallir et al.,
*Egon Schiele: The Com-
plete Works, Including a
Biography and Catalogue
Raisonné* (New York,
1990), 495, no. D1264;
Rudolf Leopold, *Egon
Schiele: Paintings, Water-
colors, Drawings* (New
York, 1972), 298, plate
133; Serge Sabarsky, *Egon
Schiele: Erotische Zeichnun-
gen*, ed. Muni de Smechia
(Cologne, 1981), plate 19.
According to Leopold, the
title "Dancer" originated

with Otto Benesch, a
champion of Schiele's art,
who may have gotten it
from Schiele himself
(Leopold 1972, 298).

2. For Schiele's relation-
ship with Wally, and his
biography during these
years, see Kallir 1990,
108–192; Alessandra
Comini, *Egon Schiele's
Portraits* (Berkeley, 1974),
89–90, 92, 99–101, 105–
107, 136–140, 144–145.
See also Otto Kallir, *Egon
Schiele: Oeuvre-Katalog
der Gemälde* (Vienna,
1966), 19–35; Alessandra
Comini, *Egon Schiele* (New
York, 1976), 7–27; and
Christian M. Nebehay,
*Egon Schiele 1890–1918:
Leben, Briefe, Gedichte*
(Vienna, 1979), 147–190,
also 191–236, 437–496.





GEORGES BRAQUE

French, 1882–1963

Aria de Bach, 1913

papier collé with charcoal
and white chalk
621 × 469 mm
(24 ½ × 18 ½)
Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1982

By the summer of 1912 Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque reached a juncture in their collaborative exploration of cubist form, volume, and shape.¹ In the process of analyzing and reducing objects into flat planes with multiple viewpoints, both artists gradually came to see a picture as being a *tableau-objet*, or “picture object,” with emphasis placed on surface realism and on the tactile qualities of painting.

In May 1912 Picasso made the first cubist collage, introducing a length of rope and a piece of cloth printed with a chair-caning pattern. In September of that year, when both artists were living in Sorgues, near Avignon, Braque bought a roll of wall-paper made to resemble oak paneling and soon began to cut strips from the roll and arrange them on paper to form the basis of a composition. By drawing over these affixed shapes and fashioning the details of a still life, Braque created the first cubist *papier collé* (literally “pasted paper”).² According to some scholars, this invention differed from collage in that there was a more arbitrary relationship between the cutout pieces of paper and the object represented. For instance, the wood-grain paper could allude to the surface of a musical instrument without being cut in the shape of the object.³

Braque made fifty-seven *papiers collés* between 1912 and 1918, and *Aria de Bach* of 1913 is one of the finest of this group.⁴ The glued pieces of paper, two being black and the third being the now-famous simulated wood-grain paper,⁵ suggest the materials of a musical instrument but do not literally depict it. In turn they are punctuated and joined by the delicate chalk and charcoal outlines of a guitar and of the cover of a musical score by one of Braque’s favorite composers, Johann Sebastian Bach. Braque called his pasted pieces of paper “certainties,” specific elements taken directly out of the real world.⁶

At the end of his life Braque remarked on the importance of the *papier collé* in the evolution of cubism: “With that [the *papier collé*] we arrived at dissociating cleanly color from form and at seeing its independence in relation to form, because that was the main concern. Color acts simultaneously with form, but has nothing to do with it.”⁷

GREGORY JECMEN

Provenance

Marie Cuttoli, Paris, until 1970; Galerie Beyeler, Basel, 1970; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1971.

Notes

1. See Douglas Cooper and Gary Tinterow, *The Essential Cubism: Braque, Picasso, and Their Friends, 1907–1920* [exh. cat., Tate Gallery, London] (London, 1983); and William Rubin, *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1989).

2. Picasso nicknamed Braque “Wilbur,” in reference to Wilbur Wright, whose inventions were being celebrated in the press of the day (New York 1989, 33).

3. Douglas Cooper, “Braque as Innovator:

The First *Papier Collé*,” in *Braque: The Papiers Collés* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1982), 18.

4. See Washington 1982, no. 24.

5. Braque’s use of the faux wood-grain paper is ironic, since he had learned how to imitate in paint various building materials, including wood, during his early experience as a house decorator (Washington 1982, 53).

6. London 1983, 84. In addition to the wood-grain paper and colored paper, Braque used newspaper, patterned wallpaper, corrugated cardboard, and cigarette packets.

7. Quoted in Washington 1982, 35.

PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1975

The Cup of Coffee,
1913collage with charcoal
and white chalk

630 × 369 mm

(24 13/16 × 14 1/2)

Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1985

One of the most visually intriguing aspects of cubism, and most pregnant for later developments in twentieth-century art, was the evolution of collage as a serious medium for artistic expression.¹ Cubist collages made with cut papers are frequently called by the French term *papiers collés*, even though many early ones—like this—were originally held together not with paste but with straight pins, which often rusted and were removed. *The Cup of Coffee* still shows its original pinholes and the raised edges of its collaged parts. The bent or lifted edges enhance the individual character of the pieces so that they appear to float on the image rather than being glued or pressed into a flat plane.

The Cup of Coffee was dated spring 1912 in its first publication by Christian Zervos—probably based on dating by Picasso himself, since the artist still owned the work—and in frequent reproductions since then.² Yet William Rubin's magisterial *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism* has enormously facilitated the careful dating of specific works. Its extensive selection of materials makes clear that the blue and brown wall-paper used here first appeared in a collage datable—from its newspaper fragment—after 15 March 1913; and that date is confirmed by the particular hatching used here for the tablecloth folds, which first appeared in a collage dated spring 1913.³

This image of a guitar and cup of coffee on a café table is an especially fine example of Picasso's extraordinary visual intelligence, elegance, and wit. Such collages were pivotal in the transformation of analytic into synthetic cubism but also demonstrate the symmetrical continuities of these styles. While synthetic cubism is often called an enrichment or even an "adulteration" of earlier cubism, collages like this show a major simplification: the radical reduction of hand-work. The meshes of extensively drawn small hatchings characteristic of analytic cubism have given way to flat expanses of monochrome and preexisting decorative patterns, with the hand-drawing much more limited and open. The multiple points of view of analytic cubism continue here; but

instead of the parts of objects being dissected to vibrate in a shallow space, they now become flat geometric forms, just as the drawn flat facets of earlier cubism are transformed into cut flat layers of paper. And a striking continuity is Picasso's visual wit. The hilarious realistic elements swimming in analytic hatchings, such as Kahnweiler's dapper mustache, are transformed into other visual puns, such as the combination of positive and negative definitions of the same form. Here the left edge of the guitar is negatively formed by the background yellow showing through a rectilinear cutout of the blue, while the right edge is positively drawn with curves of charcoal. And Picasso cuts the black paper so the coffee refuses to stay in the white cup but overflows, only to be restrained by white chalk hatching that recreates a top edge and a rounded front for the cup.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Pierre Gaut, Paris, after 1942; Heinz Berggruen, Paris, by 1959; Sotheby's, London, 23 April 1968, lot 24; purchased via Hector Brame by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon.

Notes

1. As opposed to innumerable "precedents," such as assembled and pasted pictures by folk artists, greeting-card makers, and so on; see Herta Wescher, *Collage* (New York, 1972; German ed. 1968), chap. 1.

2. See Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso*, vol. 2: *Oeuvres de 1906 à 1912* (Paris, 1942), no. 344.

Similarly, Picasso had predated the first cubist collage, *Still Life with Chair Caning*, to 1911; see Alfred H. Barr Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art* (New York, 1946), 79. Apparently only Douglas Cooper redated *The Cup of Coffee* to 1913, but with no evidence given; see *Picasso* [exh. cat., Musée Cantini] (Marseille, 1959), no. 22.

3. William Rubin, *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1989), 276, 286.



LOVIS CORINTH

German, 1858–1925

Hermann Struck in Uniform, 1914

gouache

368 × 275 mm

(14 ½ × 10 ⅜)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce

Fund, 1999

Seated erect in a chair and looking at the viewer over his left shoulder is Hermann Struck, a painter, printmaker, and writer. Struck met Corinth sometime around 1908, and a close friendship developed between the two. Corinth depicted Struck four other times from 1911 to 1915, twice in oil, and twice in etching. *Hermann Struck in Uniform* is the only portrayal in gouache.

A significant aspect of their friendship was Struck's influence on Corinth's development as a printmaker.¹ Corinth, known primarily as a painter, had begun making prints in 1891, but his involvement was only lukewarm. He rarely produced more than one or two prints a year between 1891 and 1910. Struck awakened Corinth's interest through personal encouragement and assistance as well as through his gift of an expensive diamond stylus for creating drypoints. After this, one of Corinth's favorite media was drypoint.

In this gouache Struck wears the uniform of a Prussian grenadier. As a soldier on the Eastern Front during World War I, he quickly rose through the ranks to become lieutenant in 1917. He survived the conflict unharmed, but Corinth seems to have been anxious for his friend at the outset of hostilities. Although the red on the hat accurately replicates one part of the uniform, it can also be interpreted as a bloody bandage. The red blotches on Struck's shoulder, not part of any uniform, give a more powerful impression of wounds. These elements, along with the mottled red spots at the eye and nose and the frozen immobility of the expression, suggest an almost ghostlike apparition of a bleeding, suffering, and perhaps dying—or dead—friend.

The overall impact is enhanced by the artist's bravura control of color using a wetter or drier brush. The browns, yellows, and reds spread across the page and seep into one another, yet their flow has been carefully directed. There are few contour lines, yet the clothes, face and hands, and chair are all identifiable and in proper proportion. The delicate and rich areas of pooled color, along with Corinth's concern for his friend, produce a truly affecting portrait.

Hermann Struck in Uniform demonstrates a high degree of artistic inventiveness, revealing Corinth's lifelong effort to reinvent his art through newer means of visual expression (see also cat. 48). In his own words, "art has no boundaries, except, that is, for those that one can transgress. Everyone is allowed to be happy according to his own fashion."²

Corinth's work in gouache and watercolor grew yearly, allowing him to note his ideas and observations with a degree of freedom and speed unattainable in oil. In addition, it compelled him to focus less on detail and direct his gaze toward a more generalized representation of form. *Hermann Struck in Uniform* sums up Corinth's mature realization that "drawing means leaving things out."³ In 1922 Struck emigrated to Palestine, but Corinth carried on a voluminous and lifelong correspondence with his friend.

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Private collection,
Innsbruck; Kunsthandel
Wolfgang Werner,
KG, Bremen.

2. Karl Schwartz, "Lovis
Corinth—Berlin," in
*Deutsche Kunst und Deko-
ration* 21, no. 1 (October
1917), 31.

Notes

1. Struck was the author
of an influential book on
intaglio printmaking, *Die
Kunst des Radierens* (The
Art of Etching).

3. Quoted in Thomas
Corinth, *Lovis Corinth,
Eine Dokumentation*
(Tübingen, 1979), 157.





SONIA

DELAUNAY-TERK

French, born Ukrainian,
1885–1979

Solar Prism, 1914

collage with watercolor,
crayon, and ink

495 × 330 mm

(19 ½ × 13)

Promised Gift of the
Judith Rothschild
Foundation

Born in the Ukraine, raised in St. Petersburg, and educated in Karlsruhe, Sonia Delaunay-Terk moved to Paris in 1905 and quickly established a reputation as a talented and unconventional painter. In 1908 she held her first solo exhibition, and in 1910 she married fellow artist Robert Delaunay, with whom she maintained a lifelong creative partnership. Between 1910 and 1912 the Delaunays developed a form of painting they called “simultaneism.” Based on the theory that juxtapositions of colors could express the spatial and temporal flux of modern perceptual experience without resorting to literal description, simultaneism was central to the development of abstraction in the prewar period.

While Robert explored simultaneity primarily in painting, Sonia’s artistic production encompassed a vast range of media, including collage, book illustration, book-binding, theater design, posters, furniture, textiles, and a line of “simultaneous” clothing. Across this diversity of media, Delaunay-Terk’s works are consistent in their manipulation of vibrant and rhythmic color contrasts as both a technique of abstraction and an expression of the dynamism of modern experience.

Solar Prism forms part of a series of drawings, paintings, and collages in which Delaunay-Terk explored the prismatic effects of light. In this work—which combines collage with crayon, ink, and watercolor—jaggedly cut and torn pieces of stridently colored paper collide and intersect to evoke the blazing brilliance of midday sun. The shattered forms that proliferate across the collage are striking not only in their visual boldness but also in their tactile immediacy. The torn and serrated edges of colored paper, the visible glue stains, and the subtle passages of crayon and ink markings enhance the work’s textural density, while the various paper materials employed, including thick and glossy industrial paper and a metallic copper strip, create reflective patterns across the work’s surface.

Although the bands of brightly colored arcs in the upper right of the image suggest concentric rays of the sun, the collage as a

whole hovers on the edge of radical abstraction. In this vein *Solar Prism* differs from cubist explorations of collage. Whereas in *The Cup of Coffee* (cat. 25) Picasso juxtaposes collage elements with painted and drawn representations as a means of investigating the nature of pictorial illusionism, Delaunay-Terk manipulates collage alone as a method of composition, which indicates form and depth and creates pictorial dynamism solely through the contrast of colors. This additive, highly physical method of composition thus maintains a dialogue with the abstract designs for bookbindings and textiles that Delaunay-Terk produced in the years 1912–1914.

Although *Solar Prism* eschews definitive figuration, the presence of a C in bold black on the left side of the collage followed by an H indicated in pencil suggests that the collage evolved on top of a study for a series of posters advertising “Chocolat.”¹ This transformation from a study for a commercial poster to a nearly abstract collage suggests that Delaunay-Terk, who claimed that her decorative work served as an expansion upon and extension of her painterly practice, moved between the categories of fine and applied art as easily as she did among different media.

SARAH KENNEL

Provenance

Rose Fried Gallery, New York; Herbert and Nanette Rothschild, 1956; Judith Rothschild; The Judith Rothschild Foundation.

Note

1. Sherry Buckberrough, *Sonia Delaunay: A Retrospective* [exh. cat., Albright Knox Art Gallery] (Buffalo, 1980), 40.

STANTON

MACDONALD-WRIGHT

American, 1890–1973

Generation, 1914

watercolor and ink

over graphite

493 × 316 mm

(19 3/8 × 12 7/16)

Eugene L. and Marie-

Louise Garbaty Fund,

1998

The explosion of artistic ideas and debates in Paris in the second decade of this century included, in the popular nomenclature of “isms,” synchromism, created by the American emigrés Morgan Russell and Stanton Macdonald-Wright. Synchromism burst on the European scene in 1913 with a quick succession of exhibitions in Munich, Paris, Milan, London, and Warsaw, followed by New York in 1914. Though visually related to the Delaunays and orphism as well as to futurism, the synchromists distinguished themselves sharply in origin and effect.¹

In 1912 Macdonald-Wright continued to paint recognizable forms but developed the structures of his art into broadly brushed passages organized primarily in circular patterns, and he moved beyond local color to employ colors in purely visual and theoretical relationships. By 1914 his circular patterns became abstract, dynamic compositions of color relationships, frequently described as being like tones and melodies in musical compositions, with similar harmonies and producing similar aesthetic effects.²

Generation is a superb example of Macdonald-Wright’s finest work. The general composition is a delicate yet dynamic balance of intersecting arcs from at least eight different circular patterns resembling color wheels, their rounded shape emphasized by the broad arcs of ink at both sides. The range of color hues is unusually broad, as is their range of intensity; and both scales are enhanced by variations in texture through superimposed ink hatching. The composition of reversing curves reinforces the clever location of colors so that repeated pools of bright yellows and reds, with associated oranges, insistently pull the eye back and forth, zigzagging through the drawing across the cooler blues and greens, purples and blacks. This work beautifully realizes a primary synchromist aim: to create images that inherently cause the eye and mind to move energetically, giving the sense that they are developing through time, as does music.³

Generation is also provocative in terms of the development from representation to pure abstraction. In spite of its evident abstraction, one can intuit a hint of human

form behind the vertical composition, a standing but relaxed figure that echoes the elegant reversing curves or contrapposto of Italian sculpture. Among Macdonald-Wright’s favorite works of art in his early life were Michelangelo’s *Bound Slaves* in the Louvre.⁴

In spite of the artist’s inscribing this work, “Tinted sketch for Synchromie in Red,” no painting by that name has been found; this watercolor was, however, clearly used for the painting *Conception Synchromy*.⁵ The change of title from watercolor to painting is intriguing, because *Generation* was the first work in a planned series on the cycle of life. Only two works in this cycle have been found: this one, which the artist called “*Generation*” *Life-Cycle Serie No. I*, and a similar-sized watercolor titled “*Conception*” *Life-Cycle Serie No. II*, both signed by Macdonald-Wright using his mother’s maiden name, Van Vranken.⁶ Macdonald-Wright must have abandoned the projected series and transferred the title for his second image to his first. He apparently used his second image to create the painting *Abstraction on Spectrum* (*Organization No. 5*),⁷ thus moving away from any traditional content, even in denomination, and embracing pure abstraction.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Private collection, Bayside, NY (estate sale, 1988); private collection, U.S.; Sotheby’s, New York, 23 September 1993, lot 272; Robert Nowinski, Seattle, until 1998; Hirsch & Adler, New York.

Notes

1. The complex relationship to Robert and Sonia Delaunay receives good treatment in Gail Levin, *Synchromism and American Color Abstraction, 1910–1925* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1978), 18–20, 27.
2. See Macdonald-Wright’s 1924 “A Treatise on Color,” reprinted in *The Art of Stanton Macdonald-Wright* [exh. cat., National Collection of Fine Arts] (Washington, DC, 1967).

3. Compare Macdonald-Wright’s remarks of 1916 (excerpted in Washington 1967, 12) and New York 1978, 20 and note 19, as well as Morgan Russell’s introduction to his 1913 Paris exhibition with Macdonald-Wright (New York 1978, 130).

4. See New York 1978, figs. 19 and 24; and compare his brother’s remarks on Morgan Russell’s first abstract painting (New York 1978, 23).

5. New York 1978, fig. 11.

6. The latter reproduced in color in Victoria Thorson, ed., *Great Drawings of All Time: The Twentieth Century* (New York, 1979), no. 201.

7. New York 1978, plate 10, now in the Des Moines Art Center.



LUDWIG MEIDNER

German, 1884–1966

Hans Freimark, 1915

graphite

530 × 400 mm

(20 7/8 × 15 3/4)

Epstein Family Fund,

1983

Critics consistently rank Meidner's portraits among his best works, and some consider him "one of the major portraitists of the twentieth-century."¹ For others he was "among the best draughtsmen of his generation."² Meidner's portraits—rarely commissioned—depict some of the leading artists, writers, intellectuals, actors, and directors in Germany between 1912 and about 1925. The majority of them are heads or busts. Because the portraits were done informally, they do not have a self-conscious, affected, or staged quality. Many were drawn at cafés that Meidner frequented seeking fellowship and the human relationships that were his only "protection from despair."³

Like many progressive artists of his generation, Meidner did not depict sitters objectively but sought to convey their inner psychic and psychological makeup as mediated through his own perception. He wrote in 1918 "we will no longer follow deadly reason, the old church dogmas, a political goal or current fad—rather we shall create a spiritual, transcendental realm on our canvases out of primeval depths of feeling; out of elemental, immediate visions; yes, right out of our own spiritual being."⁴

Hans Freimark was an obscure historian and writer. In addition to pursuing interests in ancient and modern mysticism, magic, religion, and theosophy, he was the author of at least twelve publications. These range from novels about Marie Antoinette and a historical/psychological study of Robespierre to a treatise on sexuality in Africa and the psychic arts. In Meidner's portrayal Freimark looks intently down and to the side, as if he was not aware of being depicted. The intensity of his gaze, his furrowed brow, the strong contours of his face, and his pursed lips all convey the impression of an individual deep in thought or attentively listening to someone's comments. They also suggest a person of active intelligence and a commanding presence. People like this attracted Meidner's interest, as he "required powerful stimulus in order to act."⁵

Freimark's intensity is underscored by graphite lines that are applied with palpable force. Meidner was well aware of the impact

of his incisive lines—rendered not with a T-square but by hand and varying from darker to lighter tones. These marks come alive on the page and energize Freimark with an internal vigor unrelated to his actual physical appearance.

Meidner's fascination with Freimark's physiognomy can literally be seen in the way the pencil digs into the paper and in the rapidity and fervor of the execution. This is entirely in keeping with Meidner's concept of portraiture: "Do not be afraid of the face of a human being.... It is the reflection of divine glory although it is more often like a slaughterhouse, bloody rags and all. Press together wrinkled brow, root of nose and eyes. Dig like a mole down into the mysterious deep of the pupils and into the white of the eye and don't let your pen stop until the soul of that one opposite you is wedded to yours in a convent of pathos."⁶

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

D. Thomas Bergen, London; Christie's, London, 2 December 1980, lot 245; William H. Schab Gallery, New York.

Notes

1. Quoted in Victor H. Miesel, *Ludwig Meidner: An Expressionist Master* [exh. cat., University of Michigan Museum of Art] (Ann Arbor, 1978), 65.
2. Frank Whitford, "The Work of Ludwig Meidner," *Studio International* 183 (February 1972), 54.

3. Jane Glaubinger, "A Double-Sided Drawing by Ludwig Meidner," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 69 (1982), 301.

4. Ludwig Meidner, "Aschaffenburg Journal" (1918); quoted in Ann Arbor 1978, 32.

5. Ann Arbor 1978, 16.

6. Glaubinger 1982, 305–306.



MARC CHAGALL

Russian, 1887–1985

Féla and Odilon, 1915gouache and watercolor
over black chalk

426 × 337 mm

(16 ¾ × 13 ¼)

Gift of Evelyn Stefansson Nef in Memory of John U. Nef and in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1989

Féla and Odilon is a splendid gouache from early in Chagall's career. More naturalistic than most of his work from this period, there are no flying people and no dreamy visions. Also unusual, Chagall has employed the exceptional technique of imprinting the design of a piece of lace around the shoulders of the mother to create the lacy shawl that is an important part of this especially free and playful composition.

This drawing is the same size and basically the same image as the 1914 painting *Maternity* (private collection)¹ but a much livelier and more colorful work. Several suggestions have been offered as to the subject of these two works. One was that they portray Bella Rosenfeld, Chagall's future wife; but their first child, Ida, was not born until the spring of 1916.² Another was that the subject is Chagall's sister Lisa, who had recently married; but she had not had a child at that point either.³ The third and most likely possibility is that the painting and gouache are portraits of Féla Poznanska Cendrars, the first wife of the poet and novelist Blaise Cendrars.⁴ Supporting this proposal, Féla was the model for the 1913 painting *Pregnant Woman* (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam), and she became a mother the following year.⁵ Féla's son Odilon, named after Odilon Redon, was born in April 1914, and Chagall dated the painting 1914 and this gouache 1915. Moreover, there is a strong resemblance between known images of Féla and the mother in both the painting and the gouache. The woman has straight hair that falls forward on her low forehead toward her round face, not only in paintings and drawings but also in photographs.⁶ By contrast, Bella's forehead was high, and her hair, which looks wavy in photographs and paintings, grew away from her narrow face.⁷

Chagall knew the Cendrars well when he lived in Paris, and when asked about the most important events in his life, Chagall answered, "my meeting with Blaise Cendrars and the Russian Revolution."⁸ Cendrars also provided the titles for some of

Chagall's paintings, and the artist inscribed Cendrars' name as one of four names surrounding a heart in his 1911–1912 painting *Homage to Apollinaire* (Stedelijk van Abbe-Museum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands). Unfortunately, the friendship was a stormy one. Chagall returned to Paris with Bella after the war and discovered that paintings he had stored with the dealer Ambroise Vollard had been sold.⁹ He may have believed that Cendrars was partly to blame for this unwanted sale, since Cendrars had authenticated the paintings for Vollard. Chagall rarely spoke with his friend after this, until reconciling when Cendrars was dying in 1961.¹⁰

BARBARA READ-STAUBS

Provenance

Phillip Loeb; John U. Nef, 1920s.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

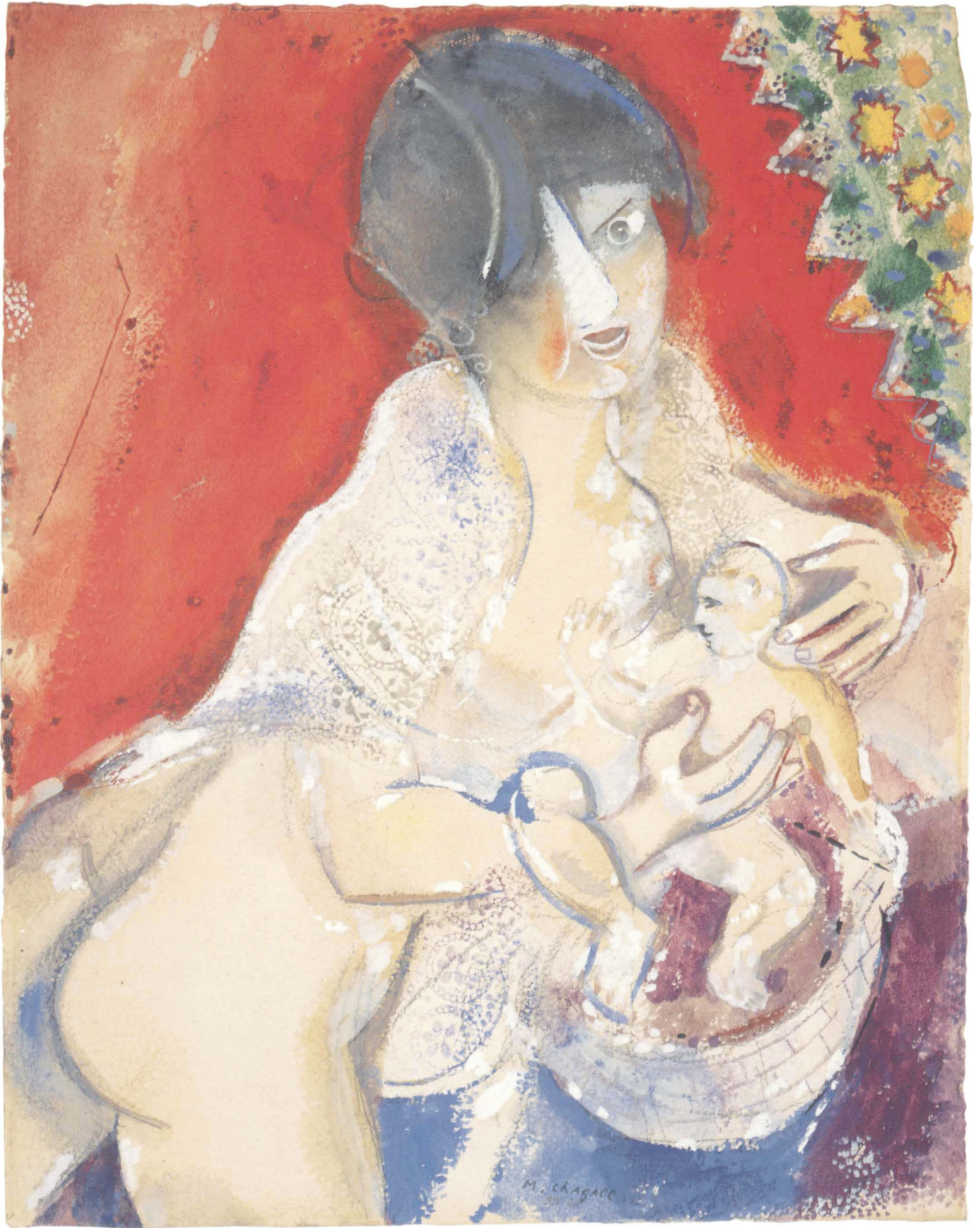
1. Franz Meyer, *Marc Chagall: Life and Work* (New York, 1964).2. Sidney Alexander, *Marc Chagall: A Biography* (New York, 1978), 362.3. Aleksandr Kamensky, *Chagall: The Russian Years 1907–1922* (New York, 1989), 81.4. Jay Bochner, *Blaise Cendrars: Discovery and Recreation* (Toronto, 1978), 52–55.5. Susan Compton, *Chagall* [exh. cat., Royal Academy of Arts] (London, 1985), 24–25.6. Miriam Cendrars, *Blaise Cendrars* (Paris, 1984); see the section of photographs.

7. Cendrars 1984, 275.

8. Cendrars 1984, 264–265; and Alexander 1978, pt. 3. Chagall first lived in Paris in 1910–1914, returning to Russia via Germany in June 1914.

9. Alexander 1978, 261. Cendrars had written to Chagall to tell him that Vollard wanted him to return for a commission.

10. Bochner 1978, 52.



JACQUES LIPCHITZ

French, 1891–1973

Pierrot, 1916

brush and ink with

colored chalk

558 × 373 mm

(21 ¹⁵/₁₆ × 14 ¹/₁₆)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Burton Tremaine, 1973

Lipchitz was among the first to transform the pictorial developments of cubism pioneered by Picasso and Braque into three dimensions.¹ Arriving in Paris from Lithuania in 1909, he joined a burgeoning community of avant-garde artists. Introduced to Picasso in 1913, he immediately recognized an affinity between the structural nature of Picasso's cubist paintings and the architectural qualities of his own work. Lipchitz went on to invent a groundbreaking form of cubist sculpture. *Pierrot* was created as the artist was entering his mature cubist phase.

Lipchitz made very few paintings, but drawings were integral to his working process as a sculptor. Some were preparatory to clay maquettes; others—such as *Pierrot*—were executed after the finished sculpture. Lipchitz maintained that he never made drawings as independent works.² Rather, they were a means to formulate ideas for projected sculptures or to continue his investigation of a form. Yet the finished quality of *Pierrot* and the thoughtful manner in which Lipchitz employed colors and media suggest that this drawing was more than an exercise—and closer to the experiments with collage by Braque and Picasso.

Pierrot relates to a group of sculptures the artist referred to as “demountables” or

“detachables,” works that could be conceptually taken apart and fit back together. He made the drawing soon after completing the sculpture *Detachable Figure: Pierrot* in 1915 (figure): “In the drawing... the planes are tilted at angles to the surface to create a limited sense of depth.... In the free-standing sculpture it was necessary to emphasize the three-dimensional quality; and for this reason I organized the planes at right angles.”⁴

Rather than aiming for the illusion of three-dimensionality, the drawing is constructed of geometric shapes that stress the two-dimensionality of the picture plane. Lipchitz accentuates the lack of depth by placing the circular base at an almost vertical angle. He also avoids the use of shadows. The artist playfully repeats and reverses forms throughout, including the pie-slice shapes of the belt and collar that echo the circle below. Although he never applied paint to his sculptures, Lipchitz uses color to great effect in this drawing—and in a manner similar to collage. The opaque black of the head, torso, and limbs stands in vivid contrast to the chalky, matte shades of gray and burnt sienna used for overlapping forms. Each shape is carefully outlined with black or white chalk or edged with a line of reserved white paper; a small bit of white chalk punctuates the uppermost rectangle and whimsically indicates an eye.

Pierrot and his friend Harlequin, familiar figures from the commedia dell'arte, were popular subjects among cubists, especially Picasso. Lipchitz, no doubt influenced by the older master, represented *Pierrot* in several of his later sculptures.

PHOEBE AVERY

Jacques Lipchitz, *Detachable Figure: Pierrot*, 1915, bronze, Mrs. Andrea Bollt, New York



Provenance
Buchholz Gallery, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Burton G. Tremaine Sr.

Essential Cubism: Braque, Picasso and Their Friends 1907–1920 [exh. cat., Tate Gallery] (London, 1973), 11.

Notes

1. See Deborah Stott, *Jacques Lipchitz and Cubism* (New York, 1978), ii; and Douglas Cooper and Gary Tinterow, *The*

2. Jacques Lipchitz with H. H. Arnason, *My Life in Sculpture* (New York, 1972), 31.

3. Lipchitz 1972, 29.



HENRI LAURENS

French, 1885–1954

L'Instrument de Musique, 1916

papier collé with charcoal and white chalk on paperboard
 365 × 560 mm
 (14 3/8 × 22 1/16)
 Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, 1981

The art of Henri Laurens took a new direction when he began a lifelong friendship with Georges Braque in 1911. Laurens, who started his training as an ornamental sculptor, soon encountered the cubism of Braque and Picasso.¹ His early sculptures from this time explore the revolutionary principles of analytical cubism, with figures constructed of spheres, cones, and cylinders.

Though better known for his pioneering sculptures, Laurens did create an important body of works on paper. From 1915 to 1918 he made ninety-eight *papiers collés*, treating the themes of figures, heads, bottles, and musical instruments, including *L'Instrument de Musique* of 1916.² Though Laurens' *papiers collés* were inspired by Braque's invention of the technique (see cat. 24), his approach reflects the sensibilities of a sculptor.³ He chose his materials for their tactile qualities, always precisely layering and arranging them around a central, diagonal axis. The primary support for the present work is part of a rough-textured cardboard box from the Parisian department store Galeries Lafayette (complete with the establishment's label still on the verso). The subtle chalk marks give the impression of modeling or three-dimensionality and contribute to the cohesion of the composition. That is to say, drawing plays a descriptive role while also increasing the sense of relief. Like Braque and Picasso, Laurens often inserted words and phrases into his pictures and used musical imagery, particularly references to the violin and guitar. As recalled by his dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Laurens had a passion for music, frequently attending the opera and concerts with his wife.⁴

Though Kahnweiler called Laurens' lyrical and charming *papiers collés* "the flowering of cubism,"⁵ the artist abandoned the medium in 1918 and focused on carving in wood and stone. Yet in their exploration

of ways to represent dissociated space, these works on paper had an important impact on the development of the artist's later sculpture.⁶

GREGORY JECMEN

Provenance

Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris; J.P.L. Fine Arts, London, 1979; Galerie Beyeler, 1980.

Notes

1. Laurens met Picasso in 1915. Three important catalogues were published on Laurens in conjunction with exhibitions celebrating the centennial of the artist's birth: Sandor Kuthy, et al., *Henri Laurens, 1885–1954* [exh. cat., Kunstmuseum Bern] (Bern, 1985); *Henri Laurens (1885–1954): Skulpturen, Collagen, Zeichnungen, Aquarelle, Druckgraphik* [exh. cat., Sprengel Museum] (Hannover, 1985); and *Henri Laurens: Le cubisme constructions et papiers collés, 1915–1919* [exh. cat., Centre Georges Pompidou] (Paris, 1985).

2. A full catalogue raisonné of Laurens' *papiers collés* appears in Paris 1985. *L'Instrument de Musique* is no. 44.

3. Margit Roswell, *The Planar Dimension: Europe, 1912–1932* [exh. cat., Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum] (New York, 1979), 12.

4. Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, "Recollections of Henri Laurens," in Werner Hofmann, *The Sculpture of Henri Laurens* (New York, 1970), 49.

5. Kahnweiler 1970, 50.

6. Laurens also executed around two hundred prints, including etchings, lithographs, and linocuts, between 1917 and his death in 1953. See Jürgen Schultze, "Zur Druckgraphik des Bildhauers," in Hannover 1985, 192–199, with a catalogue raisonné following, 201–321.



GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

American, 1887–1986

I — *Special*, 1916

charcoal

629 × 476 mm

(24 ¾ × 18 ¾)

Alfred Stieglitz

Collection, Gift of the

Georgia O'Keeffe

Foundation, 1992

Georgia O'Keeffe arrived in South Carolina in the fall of 1915, having accepted a teaching position at Columbia College. Filled with the exuberance of her unfolding personal discoveries, the twenty-seven-year-old artist created a body of commanding charcoal drawings between 1915 and 1916, including *I—Special*, which have an authority that marks a departure from everything she had made before.

Although O'Keeffe claimed that she had put aside all she had been taught in order to free herself creatively, in truth she arrived in South Carolina steeped in the artistic theories of her day. She had spent the previous year studying with the influential Arthur Wesley Dow in New York and was reading extensively, including the magazine *Camera Work*, Arthur Jerome Eddy's *Cubism and Post-Impressionism*, and Wassily Kandinsky's *On the Spiritual in Art*.¹ Armed with considerable artistic training and exposure to the aesthetic avant-garde, O'Keeffe took all she had absorbed, digested it, and embarked on a process to make it her own.

Her method was as straightforward as the works themselves. Purposefully limiting herself to the most fundamental of materials, O'Keeffe used only charcoal and eraser on paper for the 1915–1916 series. In *I—Special* she rendered the image in a limited range of tones. Working against an overall middle gray, the artist lightened certain areas with an eraser and deepened the cavernous center with a layer of dense black. A cluster of arching shapes, like budding fronds, curls toward the central oval, and a tall reedlike pedestal rises from the opening. The thin quivering line, a fragile stalk, hardly seems able to support the dark stone balanced on top.

O'Keeffe referred to the exploration of her inner states as her “music.” In contrast to the fervent expressions of the previous year, as exemplified by *No. 2—Special* (also in the collection of the National Gallery of Art), *I—Special* appears dark and brooding. O'Keeffe had left South Carolina for New York in March 1916, and in May of that year her mother died. If *No. 2—Special* can be said to represent the joyful vitality of 1915,

I—Special could be its corollary: a requiem for her mother. The smooth stone, an object she later paints with the title “My Heart,” is presented here as an offering at an altar.²

Although there is no doubt that the specific imagery of *I—Special* is highly inventive, it also reveals O'Keeffe's debt to Dow, for example, in the use of a limited range of tones (the Japanese system of *notan*) and an overall flat picture plane. Even more prominent are the elements of art nouveau, seen in the configuration of lines, the use of phallic and uterine shapes, and the references to organic forms, reflecting the doctrine of vitalism, a concept popular in the late nineteenth century concerning growth and regeneration.³ That O'Keeffe would seize upon art nouveau's interest in the symbolism of interior states is certainly apt, but she invests the image with her own particular energy.

O'Keeffe said that the images she produced in 1915 and 1916 represented personal expressions, but she was consistently vague as to their precise interpretation. Nevertheless, we see in these drawings an emerging codification of O'Keeffe's aesthetic vocabulary. This period of intense creativity remained an enduring touchstone for the artist. Perhaps because these works were the first mature expression of her artistic vision, or because the large charcoals were what garnered the attention of Alfred Stieglitz, O'Keeffe guarded and indeed retained them throughout her life.

ELIZABETH GLASSMAN

Provenance

Estate of the artist, 1986;
The Georgia O'Keeffe
Foundation, Abiquiú, New
Mexico, 1991.

Notes

1. See Ruth E. Fine, Elizabeth Glassman, and Juan Hamilton, with Sarah L. Burt, *The Book Room: Georgia O'Keeffe's Library in Abiquiú* [exh. cat., Grolier Club] (Abiquiú and New York, 1997).

2. The black stone appeared in O'Keeffe's work throughout her career. See Sharyn Rohlfen Udall, *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven, 2000).

3. Sarah Whitaker Peters devotes a lengthy discussion to O'Keeffe's art nouveau sources in *Becoming O'Keeffe: The Early Years* (New York, 1991), 29–61.



FRANCIS PICABIA

French, 1879–1953

**Machine tournez vite,
1916/1918**brush and ink with
watercolor and shell
gold

496 × 327 mm

(19 ½ × 12 7⁄8)

Patrons' Permanent
Fund, 1989

Machine tournez vite (Machine Turn Quickly) was designed by Picabia to mimic the look of a mechanical drawing. The numbered legend and parts, the use of sans serif lettering and metallic paint, the dark background, and the ruled lines and arcs superimposed on the gears recall the graphic conventions of blueprints. The drawing describes the meshing of a number 2 “homme” or male gear with a smaller number 1 “femme” or female gear. Its title instructs that these interlocking parts are designed to operate quickly with their male and female teeth moving rapidly in and out of each other in ways that are analogous to a human sexual encounter.

In his 1903 text *Physique de l'amour: Essai sur l'instinct sexuel* the French writer Remy de Gourmont had described the mechanical metaphor for sexual activity found in *Machine tournez vite*: “[The sexual organs] are rigorously made the one for the other, and the accord in this case must be not only harmonic, but mechanical and mathematical. They are gears that must fit one in the other with exactitude.”¹ Gourmont's ideas informed Marcel Duchamp's revolutionary proto-dada experiments in mechanomorphic imagery—such as *The Bride of 1912*, *Chocolate Grinder* of 1913, as well as his initial 1913 notes for *The Large Glass* of 1915–1923—which in turn greatly influenced Picabia's paintings from this time, like *Star Dancer on a Transatlantic Liner* and *Physical Culture*, both of 1913, and *I See Again in Memory My Dear Udnie* of 1914.

In 1915, during his second stay in the United States, Picabia had an epiphany concerning the machine's relation to modern art: “Almost immediately upon coming to America it flashed on me. . . . The machine has become more than a mere adjunct of human life. It is really a part of human life—perhaps the very soul.”² Picabia had previously believed that a new visual synthesis needed to be forged from antithetical human and machine forms, but he now realized that machine imagery explicitly expressed human needs and desires. The obscure hybrid imagery of 1913 and 1914 gave way to a series of portraits in 1915 of

friends and colleagues in which his subjects are depicted literally—for instance, as a camera (Alfred Stieglitz) or a spark plug (Agnes Meyer).³ These images, two-dimensional analogues for Duchamp's famous found objects or ready-mades, were superseded by more inventive designs for sex machines that were “engineered” by Picabia himself like *Machine tournez vite*.

In its time the international dada movement represented an iconoclastic, irrational, and blasphemous attack on traditional notions of aesthetics and art. But as Duchamp and Picabia foresaw, their revolutionary machine imagery inevitably evolved into an accepted, recognizable style. While Duchamp and Picabia went on to subvert standards of art in many new ways over the course of their long careers, their early investigations into machine forms continued to inspire contemporary American movements from precisionism to pop art. Today *Machine tournez vite*, like any great masterwork, can be appreciated for its invention, richly layered meanings, and finely calibrated formal beauty.

CHARLES BROCK

Provenance

Galleria Schwarz, Milan;
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Shore,
New York; Frank Kolodny,
New Jersey; Steven Mazoh
& Co., Inc., New York.

Notes

1. Remy de Gourmont,
*Physique de l'amour: Essai
sur l'instinct sexuel* (Paris,
1924), 13; quoted in Fran-

cis Naumann, *Making Mis-
chief: Dada Invades New
York* [exh. cat., Whitney
Museum of American Art]
(New York, 1996), 232.

2. “French Artists Spur on
an American Art,” *New
York Tribune*, 24 October
1915.

3. These images were pub-
lished in 291 5–6 (July–
August 1915).



PAUL KLEE

Swiss, 1879–1940

**Persische
Nachtigallen, 1917**

gouache and watercolor
with pen and ink over
graphite, bordered at top
with colored paper
228 × 181 mm
(9 × 7 1/8)

Gift (Partial and
Promised) from an
Anonymous Donor,
1990

Paul Klee was a discerning reader, and literary references permeate his art. *Persische Nachtigallen* (Persian Nightingales) most likely alludes to the sensuous verses of the fourteenth-century poet Hafiz.

Mortal never won to view thee,
Yet a thousand lovers woo thee;
Not a nightingale but knows
In the rose-bud sleeps the rose.¹

Goethe introduced the Persian writer to German-speaking audiences in his *West-östlicher Divan*, and it was probably here that Klee first learned of Hafiz's work.² In poetic images that shine like jewels, the Persian master celebrates the joys of love, wine, and the natural world. Two of his recurring motifs are the nightingale and the rose: the former symbolizing earthly yearning, and the latter divine beauty and glory.

A pink rose appears in the lower left quadrant of Klee's watercolor, cradled by two sharply pointed leaves whose forms mirror the nightingales' heads. Above and to the left of the flower is the letter R (for *Rose*). Three nightingales occupy center stage: one inverted and drunk with desire, its beak pointing toward the letter N (for *Nachtigallen*). Celestial bodies float across the sheet, enlivening it with circles, half-moons, and stars, while on the N's right stem Klee capriciously hoists a bright red pennant.

Klee further alludes to Persian miniature painting in the drawing's gemlike delicacy, ornamentation, and lustrous color—as well as its disregard for scale and perspective. Even the structure of the composition, which one seems to enter through an arched niche or parted curtains, recalls the format of many Persian miniatures. While Klee was living in Germany from 1898 to 1933, he would have had ample opportunity to see Persian art in public collections, such as the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum in Berlin and the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum and Hof und Staatsbibliothek in Munich. He no doubt also saw an important 1910 exhibition of Islamic art in Munich that featured more than 3,500 objects, including, as Klee's friend and colleague Kandinsky wrote in a published review, “carpets, majolica,

weapons, ceramics, textiles, and finally—the most arresting and closest to us today—Persian miniatures.”³

This radiant watercolor reflects in miniature a wondrous and microcosmic universe, one that even grants status to lowly consonants. Indeed the letters R and N are fully integrated within the composition: scaled to the size of the nightingales and juxtaposed in the same indeterminate space. As is often the case in Persian art and particularly in Hafiz's poetry, the earthly and the divine are poised in a delicate and ambiguous balance. Individual shapes shift one against the other; each within the confines of Klee's wiry line and each flooded with thin washes of color. Although perfectly balanced for the moment, one senses that a tiny slip of a line in one direction or another might set the whole creation tumbling.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Hughes(?); Heinz Berggruen, Paris; Walter Feilchenfeldt, Zurich; present owner, by 1973.

Notes

1. Hafiz, translated by R. A. Nicholson in Peter Washington, ed., *Persian Poets* (New York and Toronto, 2000), 178.
2. Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan* (West-Eastern divan) (Stuttgart, 1819) is a collection of poetry inspired by the work of Hafiz.

3. See Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo, eds., *Kandinsky: Complete Writings on Art* (New York, 1994), 73. For an excellent study of the influence of Persian art on Kandinsky and an overview of where one could see Persian art in Germany in the early years of the twentieth century, see Fereshteh Daftari, *The Influence of Persian Art on Gauguin, Matisse, and Kandinsky* (New York and London, 1991), 253–327.



OTTO DIX

German, 1891–1969

Homunkulus, 1918

pen and brush and ink

399 × 394 mm

(15 11/16 × 15 5/16)

Gift of Richard A.

Simms and Ailsa Mellon

Bruce Fund, 1995

Even while serving in the army at the front in the First World War, Dix drew incessantly. From 1915 to 1918 he created more than six hundred drawings,¹ of which this is one of his most intense. A powerful whirlwind of jagged shapes recalls prismatic forms of cubism and expressionism, while repeated curved black strokes of pen and brush evoke the dynamic patterns of futurism.

Here a central mandorla surrounds an infant child with furrowed brow. From the shattered forms around him, phantasms surge into view then submerge into a flurry of strokes. On the left are clearly houses and a church with a cross, but what are the spiky pyramids thrusting toward a giant helmeted face? The roofline of one house becomes the base of another, transformed into the forehead of an enormous serpent with pointed teeth that reaches from the lower corner toward the child. At the top the patterns of curves almost coalesce into the wings and body of a black bird. A boat tossed by the violent waves at lower right bears Dix's name. Beyond its bow leaps a giant fish with open mouth. Between the two rears the hook-beaked head of a bird of prey. Above them, splintered houses? One struggles to see but cannot make out clear objects.

This turbulent sea is, of course, the tempest of the Great War. While the forces of violence are brute and gigantic and mysterious, Dix saw them as natural and even welcomed them. He volunteered for hazardous duty and carried two books, the Bible and Nietzsche.² He relished the intensity of war, the overwhelming forces in constant turmoil that revealed the essence of man and showed life stripped of all nicety and pretense.³ At the center of this maelstrom is the man-child; and from the title Dix gave the drawing, a reference to Goethe's *Faust*,⁴ the viewer knows the infant may be threatened but is also being created or born in the chaos. The mandorla is a reference not only to Homunculus' glass vial but also to the placenta and to the end of the birth canal.⁵ This Nietzschean conjunction of violence and death and erotic love corresponds to the excitement of many that the war would lead to new life, a new society, and even a new humanity.⁶

Dix's title inscribed on the verso of this drawing—"zum Zyklus: Homunkulus [sic]"—raises the question whether he had planned a cycle of works. Was *Homunkulus* to be one image in a series on the war? Or was the entire cycle to be on the theme of Homunculus? A search of published works on Dix reveals dozens of drawings very similar in paper, size, media, and style, and even many inscribed with titles on the verso. But apparently none, not even those with closest visual relationships,⁷ has a title that contains the word "Zyklus" or "Homunkulus." The question remains temptingly open.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Philip Sills, New York; Sotheby's, New York; 23 February 1993, lot 62; Carol Selle, New York.

Notes

1. Otto Conzelmann, *Otto Dix: Handzeichnungen* (Hannover, 1968), 17.

2. Nietzsche was more fundamental to Dix's views. See Sarah O'Brien Twohig, "Dix and Nietzsche," in *Otto Dix* [exh. cat., Tate Gallery] (London, 1992), 40–48.

3. Frank Whitford, "The Revolutionary Reactionary," in London 1992, esp. 16–18.

4. In *Faust*, part 2, the scientist Wagner artificially creates Homunculus, a little man with penetrating intellect who radiates

bright white light but is only halfway in the world, complete in spirit but without any embodiment, so he cannot live outside the scientist's glass vial.

5. The same form is explicit in another 1918 drawing, *Geburt*, formerly in the Marvin and Janet Fishman Collection; reproduced in their auction catalogue, Sotheby's, 18 October 2000, lot 14.

6. Iain Boyd Whyte, "Otto Dix's Germany: From Wilhelmine Reich to East/West Divide," in London 1992, esp. 27.

7. In addition to the Fishman drawing (see note 5 above), the other primary one is *Das göttliche Dreieck* in Stuttgart; reproduced in *Otto Dix: Bestandskatalog*, Galerie der Stadt (Stuttgart, 1989), no. 77.



EGON SCHIELE

Austrian, 1890–1918

Dr. Koller, c. 1918

charcoal

472 × 298 mm

(18 5/8 × 11 3/4)

Rosenwald Collection,

1964

A great deal had changed for Schiele, both professionally and personally, between the period when he did his *Self-Portrait* of 1912 (cat. 20) and the time he drew this portrait. One difference was the growing recognition of his talents within Austria and a corresponding rise in the number of exhibitions and sales of his work. Another was his importance within the Viennese art world. This is reflected most significantly in his agreement to organize the forty-ninth exhibition of the Vienna Secession, which opened in March 1918. A third change was Schiele's marriage to Edith Harms—the daughter of a machinist with the Austrian railway—in 1915.

These developments gradually softened Schiele's earlier headstrong impetuosity and promoted a greater maturity and diplomacy. Instead of struggling to sell his art, he now accepted abundant commissions and had to hire an assistant to keep track of the inevitable paperwork. Among his last paintings, a significant number were portraits, recalling the time around 1910 when this genre occupied a similarly prominent place in his oeuvre. The majority of his sitters were men. Some he knew, while others were drawn to Schiele by his reputation.

One of the latter was the industrialist Hugo Koller. Schiele completed a full-length oil portrait of Koller in 1918. Emphasizing his scholarly interests, it shows him seated in his library surrounded by books, a volume open on his lap. This charcoal image of Dr. Koller is one of nine known preparatory studies. Unlike Schiele's *Self-Portrait*, this drawing is characterized by precise and fluid contour lines. Absent are the agitated, jagged lines and bold, slashing color daubs that conveyed the emotional intensity of the earlier work. This is not surprising in a preparatory drawing, but it does reflect the artist's newfound maturity. Schiele no longer regarded people through the lens of his own psychological makeup. He observed them with sympathetic understanding, intent upon capturing their individuality.

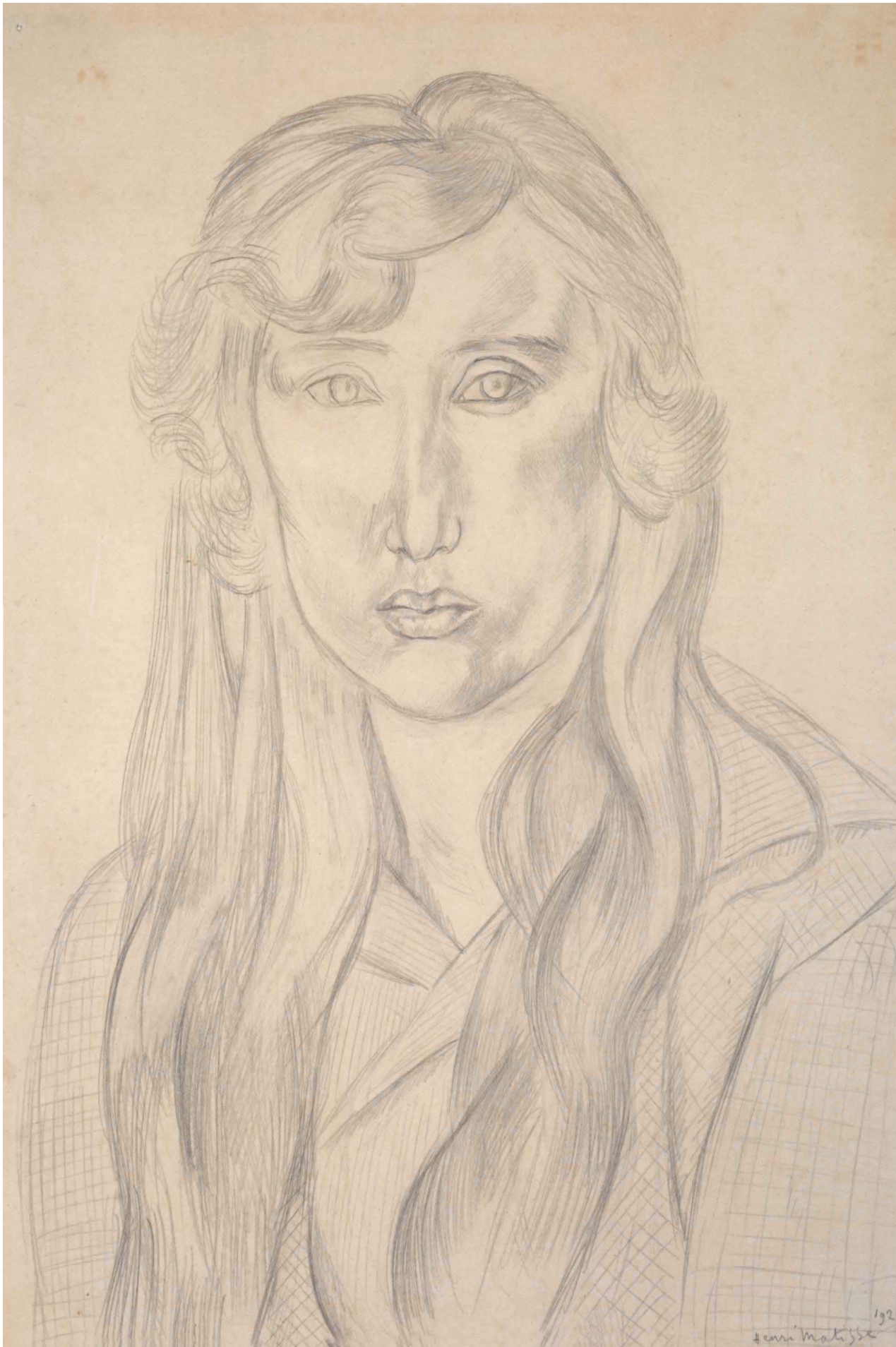
What remained constant throughout was Schiele's mastery as a draftsman. He defined Dr. Koller's upper torso with a minimum of lines, filling the page and deftly using the blank areas of paper to suggest the volume of the figure. Even the dangling, unattached hand—which clasps the edge of the book in the finished portrait—seems so precisely placed that the viewer “sees” the missing connection between the shoulder and wrist. *Dr. Koller* is a striking example of Schiele's ability to suggest more than is explicitly shown.

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Hugo Koller; Dorotheum,
18 March 1961, lot 299;
Christian M. Nebehay;
Lessing J. Rosenwald,
after 1961.





HENRI MATISSE

French, 1869–1954

Antoinette with Long Hair, c. 1919

graphite

541 × 370 mm

(21 ¼ × 14 ⅞)

Rosenwald Collection,

1948

One of Matisse's favorite models during his early years at Nice was a young woman known as Antoinette, who frequently sat for the artist around 1918–1920. She is most familiar from the paintings and drawings of her wearing an extravagantly decorated hat (see cat. 39). But here she has put the hat aside, and her thick, luxuriant hair falls forward over her shoulders.

The drawings of Antoinette mark an unexpected stylistic change in the artist's draftsmanship. Never before had Matisse so openly delighted in his fluent command of his materials, nor had he previously taken such pleasure in the youthful freshness of his models. Here Antoinette's features are delineated with utmost care, as light brings into relief her full, slightly pouting lips and sculpts the left side of her face. In this drawing, and many other Nice period sheets, Matisse works with the most refined nuances of pencil lines. He attached great importance to these drawings, choosing fifty of them, including *Antoinette with Long Hair*, to be reproduced in a book he published at his own expense in 1920.¹

Matisse had left Paris for Nice in the winter of 1917, to escape the cold, dreary weather and the oppressive atmosphere of the capital during the final months of World War I. The artist was soon captivated by the silvery winter light of the Côte d'Azur and decided to divide his time between Paris and Nice, working in the south from October until May, a pattern that continued until 1939.

The paintings and drawings Matisse created during his first season in Nice broke sharply with his reputation as one of the leading avant-garde artists in France. His compositions of young models and exotic odalisques languidly at rest or occupied by innocent amusements, often posed against richly patterned fabrics, were executed with keen attention to realistic detail and local color. It was as if he were rejecting the daring experiments of his Fauve period and the struggle—not successfully resolved—to apply the cubists' analysis of form to his own art. During Matisse's first sojourn in Nice he visited Renoir at Cagnes; the next

year, 1920, he met Renoir again and visited Bonnard at Antibes. One can interpret Matisse's visits to Renoir as a gesture of respect toward the older artist, but also as an attempt to judge his own position within the history of French painting.

With the conclusion of World War I, many artists who had been closely identified with the avant-garde stepped back and adopted a more conservative manner of working. Matisse's early Nice period paintings and drawings appear to reflect his desire to locate a place for himself within the classic heritage of French art. Respect for tradition was widespread at this moment, with names such as Ingres, Corot, and Courbet frequently used by critics to invoke past achievement.² Drawings like *Antoinette with Long Hair* were among Matisse's most successful responses to the weight of this patrimony.

VICTOR CARLSON

Provenance

Pierre Matisse Gallery,
New York; Lessing J.
Rosenwald.

Notes

1. *Cinquante dessins par Henri-Matisse*, edited under the artist's supervision (Paris, 1920), 28.

2. For an extensive survey of the resurgence of interest in the classical tradition at this time, see *On*

Classic Ground: Picasso, Léger, de Chirico, and the New Classicism 1910–1920 [exh. cat., Tate Gallery] (London, 1990) (for Matisse, see pp. 178–179). Matisse owned a figure painting by Courbet, seen hanging in his Nice studio in a photograph taken around 1926; reproduced in John Elderfield, *Drawings of Henri Matisse* [exh. cat., Hayward Gallery] (London, 1984), 32.

HENRI MATISSE

French, 1869–1954

The Plumed Hat, 1919

graphite

489 × 370 mm

(19 1/4 × 14 5/16)

Collection of Mr. and

Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1995

During the early months of 1919 Matisse executed a number of drawings of his model Antoinette wearing a hat that the artist devised from a straw foundation, an ostrich plume, and loops of ribbon, arranged in such a way that it could be worn front to back or back to front.¹ The drawings themselves vary from elaborately detailed sheets such as the present work to pen studies where the model and her costume are represented by a few lines rapidly set to paper.² This drawing and another in Baltimore show Antoinette dressed in a loose-fitting gown, richly embroidered at the neck.³ In both works Matisse lingered over the complex pattern of the embroidery, and in the present sheet lavished attention on the curling feathers of the ostrich plume, with the result that the model's face, its expression rather bland and perhaps impatient, is surrounded by a meticulous description of her finery. Such emphasis on detail is not a quality that one expects to find in Matisse's mature drawings, but in a 1920 conversation with a Swedish visitor, Ragnar Hoppe, the artist opened a portfolio of about fifty drawings and observed:

You see here a whole series of drawings I did after a single detail: the lace collar around the young woman's neck. The first ones are meticulously rendered, each network, almost each thread, then I simplified more and more; in this last one, where I, so to speak, know the lace by heart, I use only a few rapid strokes to make it look like an ornament, an arabesque, without losing its character of being lace and this particular lace. And at the same time it is still a Matisse, isn't it? I did just the same with the face, the hands, and all the other details, and I have naturally also made a number of sketches for the movements and the composition.⁴

As Matisse's statement notes, in a general way he proceeded from a study of specific details to a simplified representation of his motif, but there is no evidence to indicate more precisely the sequence in which these masterful drawings were made.

Matisse's interest in the details of Antoinette's plumed hat and embroidered dress is not surprising, since he was attracted by printed or embroidered textiles, which he collected and used as props in his works. As a child he grew up in the textile manufacturing town of Bohain in northern France, where the major product was luxury fabrics for the Parisian fashion market, a trade in which Matisse's father, Hippolyte Henri, was employed.⁵ Textiles were a part of Matisse's upbringing, and his use of them in his art transcends their origins; they become, as here, indispensable elements of the artist's creative imagination.

VICTOR CARLSON

Provenance

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York; T. Edward Hanley, Bradford, PA, 1944; E. V. Thaw & Co., New York; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, by 1975.

Notes

1. John Elderfield with William S. Lieberman and Riva Castleman, *Matisse in the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art* (New York, 1978), 121.
2. Elderfield 1978, 120, 214; and *Antoinette au Chapeau à Plumes* (private collection), reproduced in

Henri Matisse. Dessins et Sculpture [exh. cat., Musée National d'Art Moderne] (Paris, 1975), 63.

3. John Elderfield, *Drawings of Henri Matisse* [exh. cat., Hayward Gallery] (London, 1984), 85, 171.

4. Hoppe's account of the meeting is translated in Elderfield 1978, 121–122.

5. For an excellent account of the Matisse family's involvement in the textile industry, see Hilary Sperling, *The Unknown Matisse* (London, 1998), 25–27.



OTTO MÜLLER

German, 1874–1930

Two Bathers, c. 1920

crayon with watercolor

687 × 528 mm

(27 1/16 × 20 13/16)

Rosenwald Collection,

1950

Nudes in landscapes are the most prevalent subjects among Otto Müller's limited but inventive range of images. In this drawing two slender female nudes stand amid lush vegetation on a sandy promontory. Behind them is a body of water. Their brown and yellow skin tones meld with the landscape and with the overall coloration of the composition. They are very much a part of the scene, and their unselfconscious poses reinforce this impression.

Like other German artists of the time, Müller tried to use his art to convey moral or didactic messages. In his case, it was a wish for a simple way of life in which man and nature were in perfect harmony.¹ This desire was not his alone. Industrialization, urbanization, and capitalism had transformed society and, in the opinion of many, estranged humanity from the natural world, posing a major threat to individual autonomy and personal freedom.

Within the German artistic community *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) was founded in 1905 to combat uniformity and the rationalism of human existence through a radical approach to art that stressed personal expression over tradition. Stylistically, this meant vivid, frequently discordant, colors; imperfect execution; and jagged, angular shapes. In subject matter the group favored the nude—male and female—in nature.²

Müller joined *Die Brücke* in 1910 and remained a member until it disbanded on the eve of World War I. He adopted from his colleagues a certain angularity of forms and adherence to a resolute flatness of design. In addition, his delineation of subjects became more fluid and spontaneous. But he never embraced their stridency. His colors were muted and stayed within the outlines of forms. His nudes conveyed a gentle lyricism that was not present in the works of other *Die Brücke* members.³

Of even greater importance for Müller's artistic development was his lifelong fascination with the art of ancient Egypt.⁴ This interest helped him visualize art as a two-dimensional creation and aided in his simplification of forms and their decorative arrangement across a surface, as evident

here. In addition, the Egyptian influence in *Two Bathers* is most noticeable in the figures' hairstyles, elongated eyes, and stylized poses, as well as in the sheet's mattelike finish. The combination of watercolor and color crayons gives the appearance of a fresco. The mixed media also attest to Müller's mastery as a draftsman. Because these media do not allow for any pentimenti, the artist had to have a fully realized conception of the image before he set to work.

Despite the pervasive mood of tranquility in *Two Bathers*, one might detect a hint of discord. Although the composition integrates the nude figures with the natural forms around them, the women have almost no faces and thus could be seen as completely self-absorbed.

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Claude Schaefer, Montevideo, Uruguay; Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1950.

Notes

1. See Peter Selz, *German Expressionist Painting*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974), 247.

2. Each summer group members traveled to the Moritzburg lakes to sketch and paint models—and each other—cavorting in the wilderness.

3. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938), one of the founding members of *Die Brücke*, once said “Müller went his own way, maintaining the sensual harmony of his life and his art.” See Wolf-Dieter Dube, *Expressionism*, trans. Mary Whittall (New York and Toronto, 1972), 93.

4. In Müller's words, “my model in purely technical matters also was and still is the art of the ancient Egyptians.” See Selz 1974, 247.



PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

Pierrot and Harlequin, 1920

pen and ink with
gouache
verso: graphite sketches
of reclining figure and
two profile heads
274 × 214 mm
(10¾ × 8⅞)
Gift of Mrs. Gilbert
W. Chapman, 1981

After meeting Serge Diaghilev in 1916 and becoming involved with his Ballets Russes, Picasso's interests in the theater became more practical, focused on creating designs for use in actual sets and costumes. His 1918 marriage to the ballerina Olga Koklova cemented his relationship with the Russian ballet. During the winter and spring of 1919/1920 Picasso collaborated with Diaghilev on *Pulcinella*, based on rediscovered baroque texts for the commedia dell'arte.¹ At Diaghilev's urging, Picasso's final designs for both set and costumes were rather realistic, but other drawings show that he clearly preferred to develop them in his late cubist vocabulary: large geometric surfaces of flat color, which were not modeled into the illusion of three dimensions but decorated internally by small repeated geometric forms of equally flat color.

Perhaps even more than oil on canvas, gouache on paper lends itself to broad areas of matte color. This may be a primary reason Picasso chose this medium for so many of his *Pulcinella* designs and, in the summer of 1920, for a further series on characters from the commedia dell'arte. Of the latter, *Pierrot and Harlequin* is one of the most brilliant.

The conjunction of these two figures through flat, overlapping planes is enhanced by subtle echoes of form and color across the two costumes. The figures also share a common and witty alternation of flat and abstract left arms with more naturalistic right ones (Harlequin's right hand shows all the creases of his knuckles, and the back of Pierrot's right hand even has delicate hairs). This compositional conjunction culminates naturalistically in the casual and friendly gesture of Harlequin draping his right arm around Pierrot's shoulder. More intense is the abstract conjunction of both heads sharing a single blue plane, further tied together by the organic brown curve that flows like a carotid artery inside and between their necks and brains.

Pierrot and Harlequin is obviously an important stage on the way to Picasso's famous 1921 paintings of *The Three Musicians* (Philadelphia Museum of Art and

The Museum of Modern Art, New York), and it is closely linked to them in subject and style. Theodore Reff persuasively interprets those paintings as allegorical portraits of Picasso (Harlequin), Guillaume Apollinaire (Pierrot), and Max Jacob (the monk).² In fact, as early as 1905 Picasso began his frequent self-identification with Harlequin as well as a repeated association of Apollinaire with the mature circus/theater figure dressed in plain costume and floppy collar who is sometimes a jester and sometimes Pierrot.³ The specific overlapped pairing of Picasso as Harlequin and Apollinaire as jester/Pierrot begins already in the National Gallery of Art's painting *Family of Saltimbanques*.⁴ A similar interpretation of this work makes its intimate artistic conjunction between Pierrot and Harlequin even more poignant. One of Picasso's closest friends for over a decade, Apollinaire died of Spanish influenza on 9 November 1918. *Pierrot and Harlequin* gives beautiful expression—in Picasso's own artistic language—to his feelings of tenderness and an almost organic connection with his lost friend.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Mrs. Charles B. Goodspeed, Chicago (later Mrs. Gilbert W. Chapman, New York), by 1934.

Notes

1. Douglas Cooper, *Picasso Theatre* (New York, 1968), 43–49.

2. Theodore Reff, "Picasso's Three Musicians: Maskers, Artists, and Friends," *Art in America* (December 1980), 124–142.

3. Obviously, not every Picasso image of Harlequin has to stand for Picasso, nor does every

Pierrot stand for Apollinaire (for instance, a 1918 Pierrot has the features of Léonide Massine, two 1923 Harlequins are Jacinto Salvado in costume, and two 1924 paintings show Picasso's son Pablo dressed as both); see Reff 1980, 132.

4. E. A. Carmean, *Picasso: The Saltimbanques* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1980), 50ff.





PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

**Young Woman Seated
in an Armchair,
1921/1922**

brush and ink with
white heightening on
prepared paper
271 × 237 mm
(10⁵/₈ × 9³/₈)
Promised Gift of Evelyn
Stefansson Nef, in
Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art

Young Woman Seated in an Armchair has generally been believed to be either a stylized neoclassical figure or an idealized portrait of Olga Koklova, Picasso's first wife. Comparing this drawing to other works known to be of Sara Murphy, however, it now appears certain that this portrait is of the same woman.¹ The Murphys were expatriate Americans, and Sara's husband, Gerald, was an artist. The Picassos met the Murphys in the fall of 1921 or early 1922, and the two couples became very close.

Picasso seldom used the term "portrait" to describe his work and did not generally identify his sitters by name, but it seems that some of the subjects once assumed to be idealized neoclassical figures were real people.² It was common for Picasso to combine the characteristics of various women in his work. As William Rubin has observed, "it little mattered if an image of one person began looking like someone else, or both, or several people. . . . The fluctuant identities were not usually conceived in advance, but emerged by association, as it were, in the process of painting. . . . the figure could metamorphose into someone else or be conflated with other identities."³ But that was not the case with the present drawing.

When comparing photographs and portraits known to be of Olga with those of Sara, one notes the differences in their facial characteristics and hairstyles. Olga's mouth appears to have been wider and her lips thinner, for instance, whereas Sara Murphy had the rosebud mouth evident in this likeness. Olga's straight hair was generally pulled back into a bun, while Sara's long, wavy hair was pulled away from her face and hung down her back, just as it appears in this drawing.

Although this is undoubtedly a portrait of Sara Murphy, it is also clear that Picasso conceived it in the style of neoclassicism. As he transformed the features of others in his work from this period, he has also changed Sara's turned-up nose into a straight, classical one.

BARBARA READ-STAUBS

Provenance

Paul Rosenberg Gallery,
New York, c. 1928; John
U. Nef.

Notes

An earlier version of this
text was published in
Washington 1991.

1. William Rubin, ed.,
*Picasso and Portraiture:
Representation and Trans-
formation* [exh. cat.,
Museum of Modern Art]
(New York, 1996), 46
(portrait of Sara Murphy)
and 53 (photographs). See
also Pierre Daix, *Picasso:
Life and Art*, trans. Olivia
Emmet (New York, 1993;
French edition, 1987), 183:
"It seems impossible not
to recognize Sara in most
of the female heads done
that summer."

2. New York 1996, 14.
According to Rubin,
Picasso chose to be dis-
creet concerning who
some of his models were
but eventually told Pierre
Daix their names after
refusing to divulge them
for the Christian Zervos
catalogue raisonné, *Pablo
Picasso*, 33 vols. (Paris,
1932–1978).

3. New York 1996, 21–22.

STUART DAVIS

American, 1892–1964

**Abstract
Composition, c. 1921**watercolor over graphite
608 × 458 mm

(23 15/16 × 18 1/16)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Frederick R. Mayer, in

Honor of the 50th

Anniversary of the

National Gallery of Art,

1991

Although *Abstract Composition* is signed and dated 1927, the work was probably completed during a period of rigorous experimentation that Davis undertook following the Armory Show in February 1913.¹ The International Exhibition of Modern Art, held in the Armory of the Sixty-ninth Infantry in New York City, was, according to Davis, the pivotal event of his early career: “I was enormously excited by the show . . . and I resolved that I would quite definitely have to become a ‘modern’ artist.”²

In coming to terms with what he had seen of European modernism at the Armory Show and subsequently in New York galleries and avant-garde journals, Davis spent more than a decade exploring the vocabulary of modernism and working through the styles of such European masters as Gauguin, Van Gogh, Matisse, Léger, Braque, and Picasso. By the early 1920s Davis had focused his attention on the pictorial issues raised by cubism. In such works as *Abstract Composition* he began to forge the personal style that would mark him as one of the most innovative abstract artists working in America during the early decades of the twentieth century.

Stuart Davis was born in Philadelphia in 1892, the son of Edward W. Davis, art editor of the *Philadelphia Press*, and Helen Stuart Foulke, a sculptor. In an autobiographical essay published in 1945, Davis acknowledged his familial good fortune by noting that, unlike many other artists, he had encountered no parental resistance when he declared that he wished to study art. On the contrary, Edward Davis, who employed John Sloan, George Luks, William Glackens, and Everett Shinn as illustrators, allowed his son to leave high school to enroll in Robert Henri’s art school. Although Davis later abandoned the urban realism championed by Henri, he repeatedly credited his teacher with providing the guidance and encouragement that later allowed him to create paintings that were not factual reports on the natural world but independent objects.

Abstract Composition, a rare and important work from what has been described as the artist’s breakthrough period, documents

Davis’ early engagement with the elements of cubism and foreshadows the spatially sophisticated compositions of his maturity. The subdued colors and sharp linear quality of the picture reflect Davis’ concern with planar and spatial relationships.

In an essay on the artist’s early paintings, William Agee noted that between 1920 and 1922, the period during which *Abstract Composition* was completed, Davis “posed for himself the most fundamental questions about the art of painting, as if he was starting from the very beginning.”³ In 1920, for example, he proposed using only circles and squares to produce works whose simplicity would allow him to explore the purely formal character of art. The compositions that resulted from these experiments have been described as “in some ways radical works, unprecedented in American art.”⁴ Pictorially rooted in the 1913–1914 collages of Picasso and Braque, at least two works from the series seemed to echo “the suprematist and constructivist geometries of Malevich, El Lissitzky, and Moholy-Nagy.”⁵

The deceptively spare *Abstract Composition* reflects Davis’ thorough investigation of the language of modernism. Though nonrepresentational in character, it already displays the same surface energy that quickly became the hallmark of the artist’s mature style.

NANCY K. ANDERSON

Provenance

Estate of the artist; Roselle Springer Davis, until 1979; private collection, New York, until 1986; Hirschl & Adler, New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

1. Robert Hunter, coauthor with William C. Agee of the Stuart Davis catalogue raisonné, believes this work was actually completed in 1921 and later exhibited at the Downtown

Gallery, perhaps under the title “Coving” (no. 11) in *Stuart Davis Exhibition: Recent Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings, Tempera*, 26 Nov.–9 Dec. 1927. Hunter cited other works (in private collections) similar in style and materials that are signed and dated 1921.

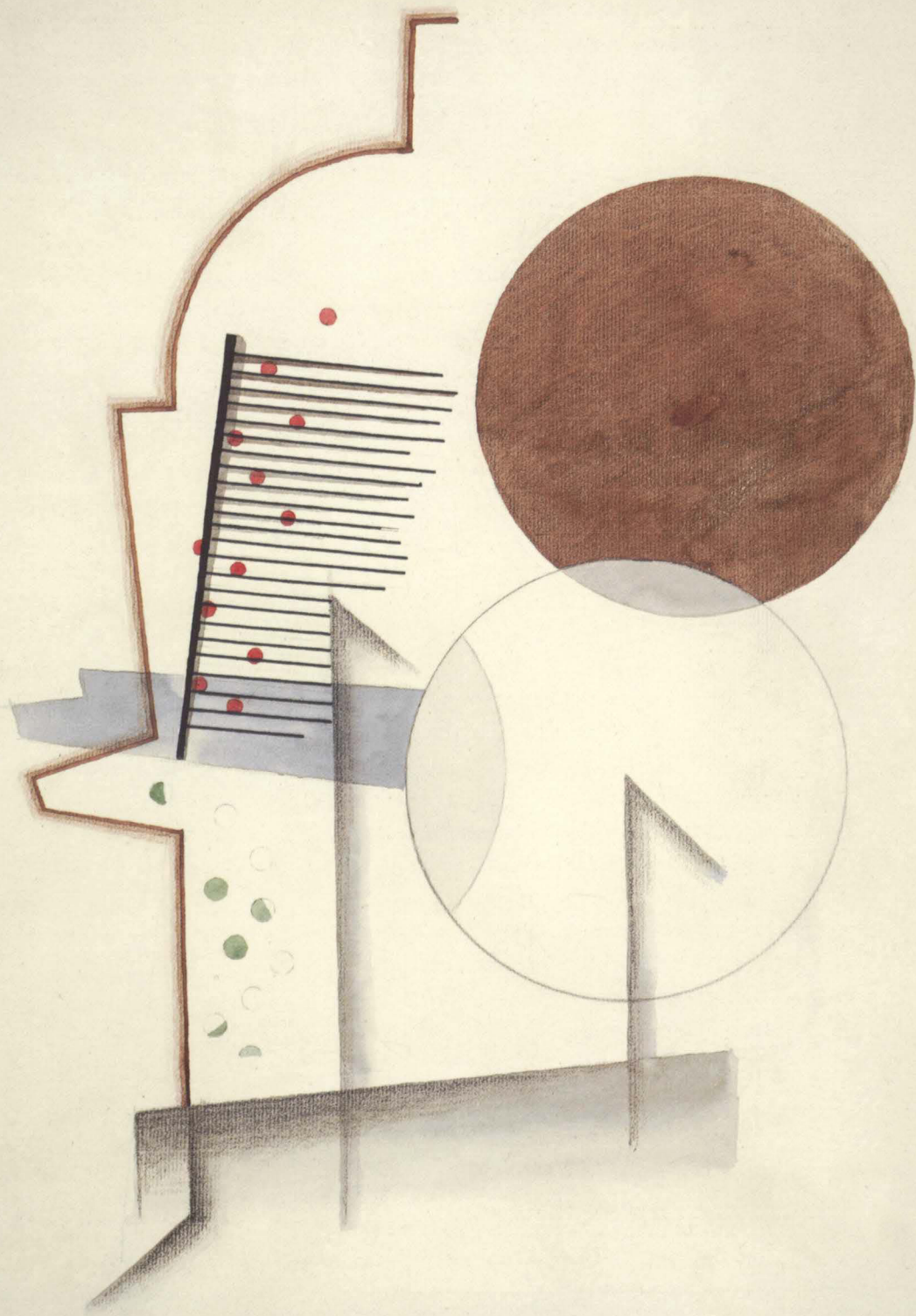
2. Stuart Davis, *Stuart Davis* (New York, 1945), n.p.

3. William C. Agee, *Stuart Davis: The Breakthrough Years, 1922–1924* (New York, 1987), n.p.

4. Agee 1987.

5. Agee 1987.

STUART DAVIS 1927



GEORGE GROSZ

German, 1893–1959

Sportsmann, 1922pen and ink with
watercolor

403 × 282 mm

(15 7/8 × 11 1/8)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce

Fund, 1974

Sportsmann was produced during a unique period both in the career of George Grosz and in the historical development of Germany. Faceless automatons occupied Grosz's creative interest for only a brief time between 1920 and 1922. In these same years Germany was compelled to confront several dramatic reversals in its fortunes. The loss of World War I led to the abdication of the German kaiser, Wilhelm II; establishment of the Weimar Republic; loss of territories; payment of reparations; and demobilization of most of the German army. In addition, Germany was plagued by crippling inflation, which lasted till 1925.

In this era of flux German art and society underwent massive changes. The widely held belief in the moral component of art politicized the entire discipline and transformed a painter's choice of style into a political statement. A pronounced commitment to art's didactic function and its ability to reinvigorate society underlies all of Grosz's German creations through early 1933, when he emigrated to the United States.

Sportsmann and other works like it extoll the virtues of a classless, collectivist, utopian society. In a 1921 essay entitled "Zu Meinen Neuen Bildern" (On My New Works of Art) Grosz stated that man "is no longer shown as an individual with psychological subtleties, but as a collectivistic, almost mechanistic concept. The fate of the individual no longer counts."¹ The virtues of such a society were already encapsulated in sports, which involved universally acknowledged rules, rigorous training, and single-minded dedication to success. Again, according to Grosz's 1921 essay: "I would also like to show quiet, simple sporting symbols—as in ancient Greece—which everyone might understand and enjoy without added explanation."²

The belief in a universalist society and a new humanity was widespread during the Weimar Republic. Developments in technology helped fuel this belief, and theories of factory organization provided numerous models for the reorganization of human society. This structured outlook was also in

keeping with Grosz's political ideals. In 1918 he had joined the German Communist Party and regularly provided illustrations for left-wing satirical journals and broadsheets. He also served as chairman of the German Communist Artists Association in 1924.

Grosz's advocacy of a classless society extended beyond the faceless automaton and the punching bags, medicine balls, and other sporting paraphernalia visible in *Sportsmann* to the very manner of its execution: washes of pale color applied with such evenness that no brush marks are visible; precise contour lines drawn with pen, ruler, and protractor; and a commercially manufactured rubber stamp instead of a signature. This dispassionate treatment was intentional. It lends the work the appearance of universal truth, and it reflects the ideal of how art would be created in the new society, eliminating subjectivity from the creative process.

The philosophy promulgated by the *Sportsmann* was impossible for Grosz to support for long. He hated conformity and one-dimensional thinking. He was fiercely individualistic, and his dedication to radical politics and hatred of the military set him in opposition to many elements within bourgeois German society. The tension between the message of *Sportsmann* and Grosz's complex psychological makeup explains the short duration of this chapter in his overall artistic production. Aware of his own quixotic nature, Grosz had printed on the back of his calling cards the phrase: "Wie denke ich morgen?" (What will I think tomorrow?).

CHRISTOPHER WITH

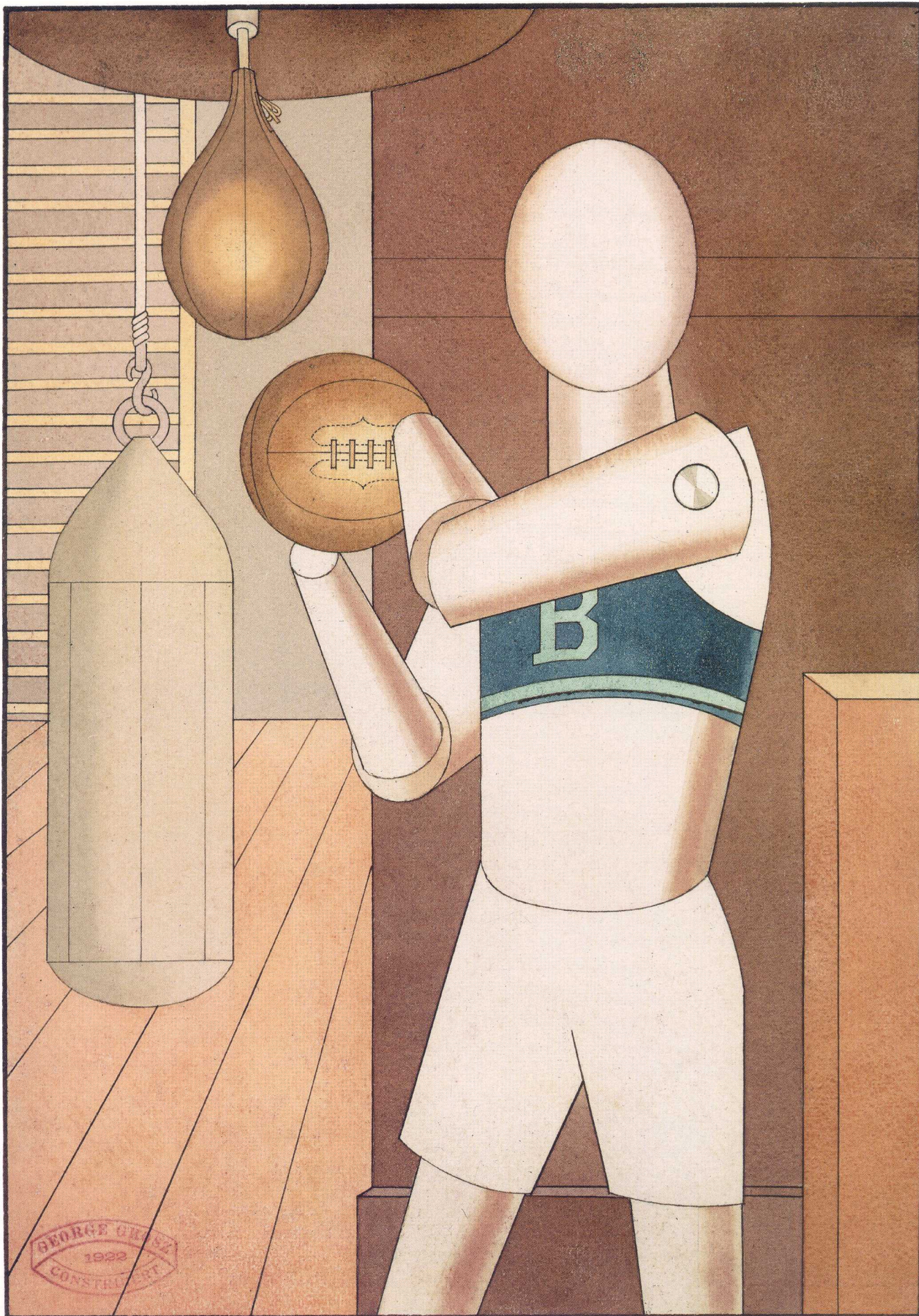
Provenance

Estate of the artist
(no. 1–48–2); Harry Lunn
Gallery, Washington, DC.

Notes

1. Quoted in Frank Whitford, *The Berlin of George Grosz: Drawings, Watercolors and Prints 1912–1930* [exh. cat., Royal Academy of Arts] (London, 1997), 36.

2. London 1997, 36.



45

HENRI MATISSE

French, 1869–1954

Henriette as an Odalisque, 1922

pen and ink

285 × 386 mm

(11 3/16 × 15 3/16)

Gift (Partial and Promised) of Lili-Charlotte Sarnoff in Memory of Robert and Martha von Hirsch, 1981

When Matisse returned to Nice in the autumn of 1921, he executed several painstakingly realized pen-and-ink drawings of his new model, Henriette Darricarrère, in the guise of an odalisque. In this drawing the woman's frank nudity and Matisse's delight in her ripe, nubile form overwhelm the decorative flourishes of the setting, with its richly embroidered cushions and a boldly patterned backdrop.

Henriette's pose is one the artist frequently used for his studies of reclining nudes: the model stretched out with one leg tucked under the other, her left hip tipped forward, and her arms clasped behind her head. This position creates an arabesque that runs through the figure, as her legs jut forward while her upper torso is supported by a cushion placed parallel to the picture plane. Matisse often mentioned his fascination with the arabesque,¹ and its appearance in his Nice work at this moment is surely connected with the studies he made after the figure of *Night* from Michelangelo's Medici tomb, which he knew from a plaster cast in the Musée des Arts Decoratifs at Nice.² The muscular tensions that run through Michelangelo's semirecumbent figure clearly captivated Matisse and were a guide when he worked with models such as Henriette.

Another full-length pen-and-ink study of Henriette nude is known, with only slight variations in the pose of her outstretched figure, placed against exactly the same background as that used in the present study.³ The two drawings are identical in style and must have been done within a few days of one another. A third pen-and-ink study of Henriette shows her dressed as an odalisque, wearing loose-fitting culottes and a filmy embroidered jacket left open to reveal her right breast.⁴ The third sheet is more obviously related to the concerns of Matisse's painting at the time, as the pen flourishes that define the bold, decorative details of the costume and background also create an active pattern across the surface of the paper.

In the National Gallery of Art's drawing the most striking aspect of Matisse's draftsmanship is his realization of the volume and weight of the figure. Parallel hatchings in pen follow the rounded forms of the model's body and create a shimmering play of light that brings its solidity into relief. Matisse's paintings and drawings from his early years at Nice are often concerned foremost with the disposition of decorative pattern across a surface, thus the sculptural realization of form in a drawing like this is unexpected.

VICTOR CARLSON

Provenance

The Leicester Galleries, London, 1936; Mr. and Mrs. W. Rees Jeffreys, Wilvelsfield Hall, Sussex; Marlborough Fine Arts, London, 1955; Robert von Hirsch; Lili-Charlotte Sarnoff.

Notes

1. For Matisse's comments on the arabesque, see *Henri Matisse. Ecrits et propos sur l'art*, ed. Dominique Fourcade (Paris, 1972), 336.

2. One of Matisse's drawings after Michelangelo is reproduced in Pierre Schneider, *Matisse* (New York, 1984), 524.

3. Private collection, Los Angeles; reproduced in Waldemar George, *Dessins de Henri Matisse* (Paris, 1925), 40.

4. Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, gift of the artist; reproduced in John Elderfield, *Drawings of Henri Matisse* [exh. cat., Hayward Gallery] (London, 1984), 28.



PABLO PICASSO

Spanish, 1881–1973

Ruth Dangler, 1922

graphite

642 × 493 mm

(25 ¼ × 19 ⅜)

Collection of Mr. and

Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1985

Ruth Dangler is one of the largest and most beautiful of Picasso's portrait drawings in his classic linear style, works he began as early as 1914.¹ Several of the earliest show a clear interest in the forms or lighting or frontality of Cézanne's portraits.² Yet most, especially the three-quarter views of seated figures, drawn primarily in outline, invoke as well as challenge the acknowledged master of formal graphite portraits, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres.

While Ingres frequently left his sitters' costumes and chairs in outline, he always used some internal shading at least to model their faces.³ By contrast, Picasso, with modernist bravura, creates the entire image with spare and broken outlines, alternating in sophisticated variation between complete and incomplete edges, positive and negative spaces. He has filled in with multiple lines only Dangler's strong eyebrows and thick, wavy hair; yet even with the sparest of outlines Picasso has sensitively caught his sitter's fresh, open, youthful face, as well as her direct and unflinching gaze. His amusing shorthand for Dangler's necklace culminates in leaving half of the heavy pendant—right at the center of the composition—to be completed in imagination, like the undrawn edges of her bracelet. Although Picasso was obviously smitten by Dangler's beauty and spared her face the witty caricature so frequent in his other graphite portraits,⁴ he did not resist a comment on her too-typical fox stole by including the poor creature's face, with lively eyes and whiskers, discreetly at the bottom of the composition.

The maiden name of the sitter was Ruth Davis. She came from a prominent Chicago medical family. Her grandfather, Dr. Nathan S. Davis, was the founder of Northwestern Medical School and one of the founders of the American Medical Association and the Chicago Academy of Sciences. Ruth Davis married a Chicago architect named Howard Dangler. She liked to travel, and it was on a trip to the Riviera in 1922 that she met Picasso. According to family tradition, she

decided to have her portrait painted. She was, however, an impatient woman and was not at all pleased when she heard how long a painting would take. So she decided to have a portrait drawing done instead but wanted it to be of monumental size.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Ruth Davis Dangler; her children, Marie La Farge and Menso Boissevain; purchased via Paul Weiss by Paul Mellon as a promised gift for the National Gallery of Art.

Notes

1. Alfred H. Barr Jr., *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art* (New York, 1946), 94–96, 111, 261.

2. Gary Tinterow, *Master Drawings by Picasso* [exh. cat., Fogg Art Museum] (Cambridge, MA, 1981), 18–20 (nos. 52, 56, 60) and 241–242.

3. Gary Tinterow and Philip Conisbee, *Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch* [exh. cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art] (New York, 1999–2000).

4. Such as Diaghilev's enormous head and heavy jowls, or Stravinsky's unequal and overlarge eyeglass lens (Barr 1946, 96, 111).



LÁSZLÓ

MOHOLY-NAGY

American, born
Hungary, 1895–1946

Q, 1922/1923

collage with watercolor
and pen and ink over
graphite on carbon
paper

589 × 463 mm
(23 3/16 × 18 1/4)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce
Fund, 1982

László Moholy-Nagy had a boyhood interest in literature and poetry but turned to drawing while serving in the army. After his discharge in late 1919 Moholy left his native Hungary and lived briefly in Vienna before settling in Berlin. In April 1920 he wrote to a friend, “At the latest exhibition of Der Sturm, a man called Kurt Schwitters is exhibiting pictures made from newspaper articles, luggage labels, hair and hoops. What’s the point?”¹ Within months, however, Schwitters’ work would become a major influence on Moholy, who was led to explore new media and techniques, including collage, and constructed compositions from machine parts, letters, and numerals. “They were not projections of reality rendered with photographic eyes, but rather new structures, built up as my own version of machine technology, reassembled from the dismantled parts.”² He assigned these pictures neither objective nor symbolic titles, but rather simple letters and numerals.

By 1922 the components in Moholy’s works became more simplified, the letters and numerals disappeared, and the forms seemed to be freed from gravity. He explained: “I discovered that composition is directed by an unconscious sense of order in regard to the relations of color, shape, position, and often by a geometrical correspondence of elements.... I eliminated the perspective employed in my former paintings. I simplified everything to geometrical shapes, flat unbroken colors: lemon yellow, vermilion, black, white—polar contrasts.... Color, which so far I had considered mainly for its illustrative possibilities, was transformed into a force loaded with potential space articulation, and full of emotional qualities.”³

Made during this transitional period, this collage illustrates the way Moholy describes space through overlapping forms and communicates emotion through color. Some of the elements retain a three-dimensional quality: a thick vertical line looks like a tube because of the circles drawn at either end; and a vertical line on which more lines are drawn forms what could be construed as a fluted column or a stringed instrument.

But others such as the floating red disk appear flat. The minimal palette of red and yellow, intensified by the deep, enveloping black field, becomes almost auditory. The combined effect of the rhythmic shapes with the notes of rich color signifies a harmonic or poetic sensation.

Moholy continued to find expression in collage as well as painting, photography, film, sculpture, graphic design, writing, and teaching, first at the Bauhaus and later at the New Bauhaus and the School of Design in Chicago. It was his steadfast belief that art should be liberated from its role of recording the natural world in order to create abstract effects.

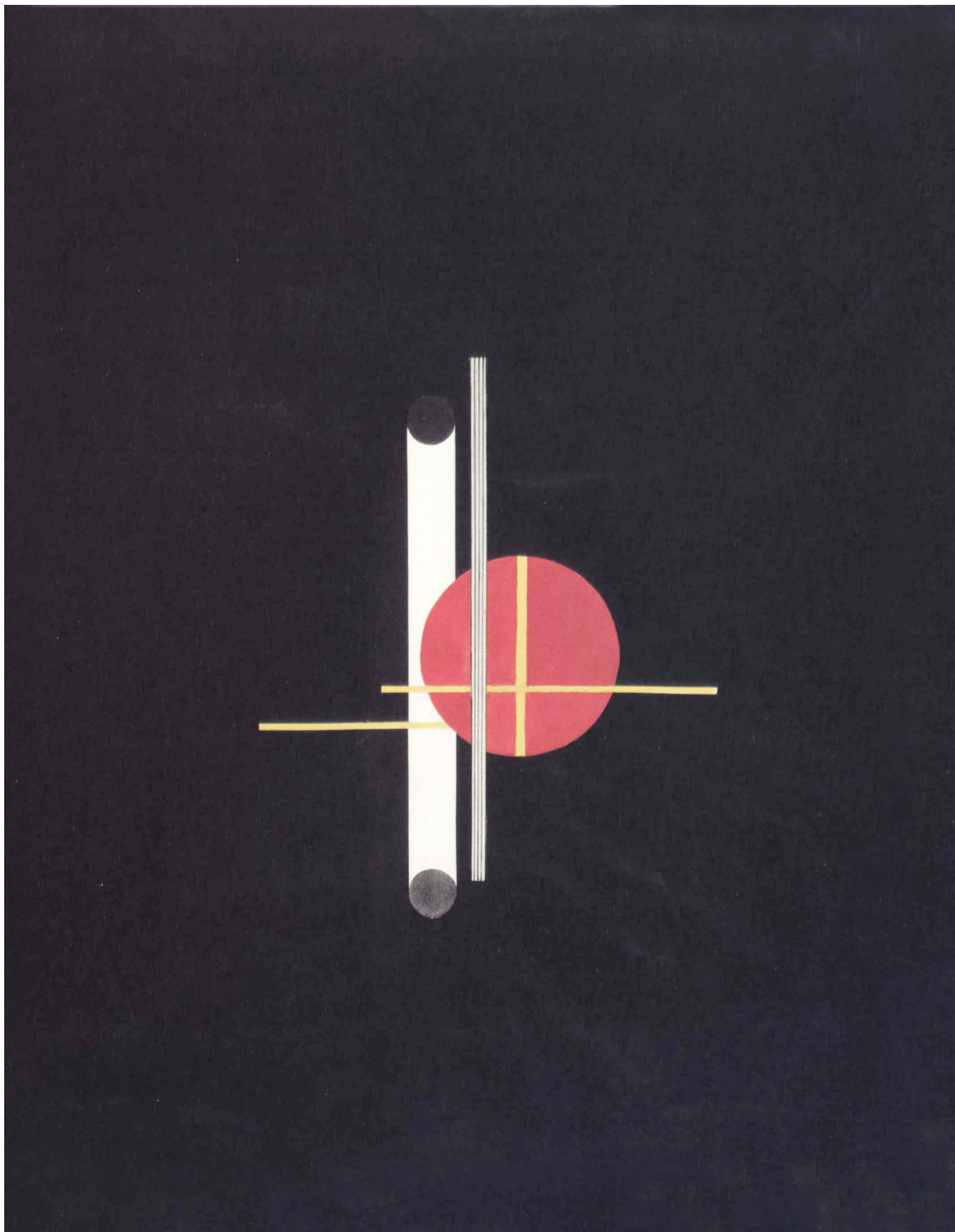
JULIA THOMPSON

Provenance
Tommy Noonan,
Kensington, MD.

2. László Moholy-Nagy,
*The New Vision and
Abstract of an Artist*
(New York, 1949), 72.

Notes
1. From Moholy-Nagy to
Iván Hevesy, 5 April 1920;
reprinted in Krisztina
Passuth, *Moholy-Nagy*
(Budapest, 1982), 388.

3. Moholy-Nagy 1949,
71–72.



LOVIS CORINTH

German, 1858–1925

Mrs. Hedwig Berend,
1923

black chalk

316 × 254 mm

(12⁷/₁₆ × 10)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce

Fund, 1974

Two days after Corinth settled in Berlin, on 3 October 1901, a notice appeared in the newspapers that he would open a private art school in his studio on 15 October. This was the old studio that his close friend Walter Leistikow had vacated when moving into a newer, more spacious atelier. One of Corinth's first students was Charlotte Berend, who was twenty-one and thus half his age; they were married on 26 March 1903.

Hedwig Berend was Charlotte's mother and only five years Corinth's senior. Hedwig and Corinth were extremely fond of each other. He called her "Belle-Mère" and she called him "Meister." She regularly came on Sundays to Corinth's home, often talking with him in great detail after a meal about art and politics. As Charlotte Berend-Corinth later recalled, "Corinth and my mother used to sit in the evenings and chatter for hours."¹

Corinth portrayed Hedwig Berend numerous times in paintings, prints, and drawings. This especially fine black chalk drawing was completed two years before his death. She looks directly at the viewer, her face and posture suggesting both advanced age and perhaps some self-consciousness or awareness that she is being sketched. Corinth's rapid, masterful delineation of Mrs. Berend, using dramatic swirls and loops of chalk, amply attest to his love of drawing, his self-assurance as a draftsman, and the verve typical of many of his works on paper. Subtly graded black and gray tones dance across her face, hair, body, and arms, as well as the back of the chair at the upper right. The shading defines the sitter's volume and spatial placement, but it also creates an aesthetically determined pattern of marks on the paper unrelated to observable reality. Light, shadow, and form have been manipulated to produce an artistically controlled interplay of lines.

Corinth's intent was to reach a level of comprehension beyond the tangible. As he wrote in 1925, "I have discovered something new...true art means seeking to capture unreality. This is the highest goal....Art is bad if it allows one to see at once absolutely everything that it has to tell one."² Corinth's

art was a meditation on aging, dying, and how life shaped a person's appearance and outlook. As he grew older, these themes assumed ever greater importance. His late writings are full of expressions of fear of senility and death,³ a preoccupation after he suffered a stroke on 19 December 1911. For the rest of his life his left hand was partly paralyzed and his right hand was subject to intermittent tremors. Undaunted, Corinth explored these themes and expressed his observations in numerous intimate depictions of his family and friends. Among these, this drawing of Hedwig Berend is one of the most touching.

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Ms. Mine Corinth Klopfer.

2. Entry for 31 March 1925 in Lovis Corinth, *Selbstbiographie* (Leipzig, 1926), 216.

Notes

1. Charlotte Berend-Corinth, *Lovis* (Munich, 1958), 146.

3. Corinth 1926, 185.

my Caricature

11 February 1923.



OTTO DIX

German, 1891–1969

Zwei Weiber, 1923

brush and ink

476 × 598 mm

(18 3/4 × 23 9/16)

Eugene L. and Marie-

Louise Garbaty Fund,

2001

After turning to a new realism about 1920, Dix usually heightened any physical faults of the women in his paintings and finished watercolors of prostitutes, producing images of ugliness—perhaps, as the artist claimed, “to depict the whole ghastly dehumanizing effect of prostitution.”¹ Yet his black-and-white drawings of individual prostitutes often show a softer portrayal of and real sympathy for his subjects.² Such is the case with these two women.

The young woman on the left is European, with a classical profile, elaborately permed hair, and a braided bun. The woman on the right is older and appears to be Asian in both the shape of her eyes and her hairstyle. Dix, who was always sophisticated in manipulating techniques, enhances the differences between the two by changing his brushwork from the tight curves on the left to a looser, straighter, and drier—more Asian—brush stroke on the right. The older woman’s darkened eyes, sunken cheeks, and flaccid lips may indicate disease as well as age, which justifies the tender way the young woman supports her. The younger woman appears to be helping her companion down from some height, where the older woman’s left hand is still attached. The position of the limbs and the relation of the faces are strikingly close to images of Jesus’ Deposition from the Cross by Rubens and Rembrandt, which gives intense poignancy to the social meaning of the life of the older woman.³

Amazingly enough, this image was actually drawn with the paper rotated 90 degrees clockwise. As soon as the sheet is turned, the young woman’s forearm, the fall of both women’s breasts, and the crook of the older woman’s elbow around the young woman’s neck make complete sense in terms of gravity and form. The women were portrayed lying on a bed engaged in an amorous embrace. This version of the subject is much more traditional in art, including famous examples by Courbet and Toulouse-Lautrec. It was a stroke of genius for Dix to see the possibility of the image, rotate it,

and thus give it new meaning, a change confirmed not only by his signature on the recto but also by the placement of his inscription of the title on the verso.

One of Dix’s primary themes in the 1920s was painting contemporary scenes so that the persons echoed figures or compositions in famous old master works.⁴ Beside his love for the old masters and their variety of sophisticated techniques for drawing and painting, Dix saw this conjunction of images as adding universal humanistic meaning to contemporary subjects. This theme came together with his portrayals of prostitutes, apparently for the first time in paintings in 1925.⁵ Given the dates, it may well be that the deliberate alteration of composition and meaning in this drawing was the beginning of that major conjunction.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Dr. Hans Hellmut Klihm (Dix’s friend and dealer in his later years); Ketterer Kunst, Munich, 6 May 2000, lot 710; Jörg Maas Kunsthandel, Berlin.

Notes

1. Quoted in *Otto Dix* [exh. cat., Tate Gallery] (London, 1992), 110.

2. Otto Conzelmann, *Otto Dix: Handzeichnungen* (Hannover, 1968), nos. 60–65.

3. Compare especially the Rubens Depositions in the Antwerp Cathedral and in Lille, which Dix could easily have known; reproduced in the standard book on Rubens by Rudolf Oldenbourg in the *Klassiker der Kunst* series, published two years earlier in 1921, 52 and 89.

4. Many thanks to Matt Biro for recalling this theme in relation to the present drawing. See also London 1992, 116–117.

5. The *Ungleiches Liebespaar*, 1925 (Galerie der Stadt, Stuttgart), where not only the subject but also the woman’s face and hair are a clear reference to Hans Baldung Grien, especially his 1523 *Weather Witches* in Frankfurt. Compare Dix’s *Drei Weiber*, 1926 (also Stuttgart), which quotes both Dürer and Cranach; see Rita Täuber, “Drei Weiber—Vom Götterhimmel in die Gosse,” *Dix* [exh. cat., Galerie der Stadt] (Stuttgart, 1991), 209–213.



CHARLES DEMUTH

American, 1883–1935

Zinnias and a Blue Dish with Lemons,
1924

watercolor over graphite

303 × 458 mm

(11 15/16 × 18 1/16)

Gift of Herbert A.

Goldstone, 1996

In Charles Demuth's first important floral watercolors of 1915, such as *Zinnias* (Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, New York) and *Yellow and Blue* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), the entire working surface was saturated with color.¹ Hues and tints seeped into the paper support and bled together, blurring distinctions between the flowers and their backgrounds. Demuth evoked an amorphous, subaqueous world that recalled the dream-like flower pastels of the French symbolist artist Odilon Redon, whom he greatly admired.

In early 1917 Demuth began to experiment with cubism when he visited Bermuda with Marsden Hartley and soon invented a distinctive type of organic, undulating cubist structure for his watercolors. By the time of *Zinnias and a Blue Dish with Lemons*, this structure was very well articulated, and his methods more studied and economical. This is evident in the way the white of the paper itself is skillfully integrated into the overall design, defining the interstices around the petals as well as the background forms. The use of white also suffuses the work with bright light and heightens the effect of its subtly modulated reds, oranges, greens, yellows, and blues. In addition, Demuth's draftsmanship is more rigorous, with light graphite lines deftly used to describe accurately the zinnias, lemons, dish, and glass.

The cumulative effect of these changes was an engaging, dynamic, and accomplished style. Like nature itself, Demuth uses water and light to bring the flowers to life, and by leaving the zinnias on the left unfinished, he places the viewer in the midst of the artist's creative act; the image unfolds before one's eyes. This work also demonstrates a masterful degree of control and an economy of means that call to mind Demuth's comparison of himself with John Marin, who drew his "inspiration . . . in buckets and spilled much along the way. . . . I dipped mine out with a teaspoon and I never spilled a drop."²

Demuth spent a great deal of his early career in Paris, but by the early 1920s he had been diagnosed with diabetes and no longer entertained ideas of living abroad. Following his last visit to France in 1921, Demuth wrote to Alfred Stieglitz: "What work I do will be done here; terrible as it is to work in this 'our land of the free.' . . . Together we will add to the American scene."³ For the remainder of his life Demuth resided in his hometown of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. There he created a series of brilliant watercolors and paintings, such as *Zinnias and a Blue Dish with Lemons*, inspired by subjects near at hand. These final works, primarily still lifes and cityscapes, secured his reputation as one of America's leading early modernists.

CHARLES BROCK

Provenance

Senator George Frelinghuysen; Mrs. Fredrica Frelinghuysen Emert, Wickersham, New York; Herbert A. Goldstone, New York.

2. Quoted in New York 1987, 51.

3. Demuth to Stieglitz, 28 August 1921, quoted in *Letters of Charles Demuth: American Artist, 1883–1935*, ed. Bruce Kellner (Philadelphia, 2000), 38.

Notes

1. Reproduced in Barbara Haskell, *Charles Demuth* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1987), 68, 73.



EDWARD HOPPER

American, 1882–1967

Haskell's House, 1924

watercolor over graphite

343 × 495 mm

(13 ½ × 19 ½)

Gift of Herbert A.

Goldstone, 1996

Between the years 1912 and 1928 Edward Hopper made five visits to the fishing village and resort of Gloucester, Massachusetts, on Cape Ann. The third of these trips was during his 1924 honeymoon with his new wife, Josephine Nivison Hopper. While in Gloucester the previous summer, Hopper had made important advances in painting from nature in watercolor, and he built on those lessons in 1924, creating the first great examples of what would become his signature style in the medium. Of those, *Haskell's House* is one of the most beautiful; frequently mentioned and illustrated in discussions of Hopper ever since it was painted, it can fairly be ranked among the most successful of all his watercolors.

In his record book Hopper noted of this work: "Haskell's House. Front View, terraces, lamp post. The Wedding Cake House." The view he chose is from the street below, looking up at the house as framed between two telephone poles. The watercolor is at once precise in its rendering of specific architectural details (which are often neatly outlined in graphite) and broad in its use of fluid washes of color to capture the appearance of brightly lit and deeply shadowed areas. Much of the lower third of the sheet, depicting terraces and fences, is more freely and quickly brushed, making these forms seem less substantial in contrast to the great bulk of the house.

Hopper's use of the term "Wedding Cake House" could have been inspired by his own recent marriage, but it also might reflect a typical attitude of the time toward the complex massing and rich ornamentation of Victorian buildings.¹ Although from the perspective of the early twenty-first century such buildings tend to elicit admiration, many in Hopper's era considered them grotesquely ugly, especially in comparison with the more clean-cut forms of contemporary modernist architecture.² Yet Hopper's opinion of this particular example of Second Empire style, at least in the terms he chose to portray it visually, seems anything but negative or condescending. The play of advancing and receding planes and the contrasts of richly colored dark areas to the

almost purely white areas of paper give the image remarkable vitality and spontaneity, endowing this house with its own individual personality. Hopper was likely inspired by the watercolors of his contemporary Charles Burchfield, whom he very much admired. Although the darker tones and more somber moods (and greater sense of anthropomorphism) of Burchfield's houses (as in *The Bleak Houses*, 1917, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Barney A. Ebsworth) are quite different from Hopper's imagery, the use of a low vantage point to give the structures a looming character is similar.

Haskell's House was purchased in 1924 by Hopper's contemporary and friend George Bellows (see cat. 10) as a present for his wife, Emma. It had only one other owner before coming to the National Gallery, and has remained in an especially fine state, with little fading or other damage.

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

Frank K. Rehn Gallery, New York; Emma S. (Mrs. George) Bellows, New York, by 1924; H. V. Allison Gallery, New York; Herbert A. Goldstone, New York.

Notes

1. Perhaps the best-known "Wedding Cake House" today is the one in Kennebunk, Maine, where elaborate Gothic revival woodwork was added around 1850 to the exterior of a rather plain early Federal structure. See photograph in Wayne Craven, *American Art, History, and Culture* (Madison, WI, 1994), 185.

2. See, for example, Alfred H. Barr Jr. in *Edward Hopper Retrospective Exhibition* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1933), 14: "Hopper's use of grotesque Victorian houses has been overemphasized, yet it is an important contribution to the subject matter of American painting.... perhaps mansard roofs and cast zinc cornices are subconsciously related to his boyhood in Nyack [New York], but whatever his motive, formal or romantic, he has succeeded in revealing not so much the ugliness as the dignity and valor of such buildings as those in *House by the Railroad*, *Haskell's House*, and *Lonely House*."



GEORGE GROSZ

German, 1893–1959

Tanz Kaffee, c. 1925

pen and ink

650 × 510 mm

(25 5/8 × 20 1/16)

Rosenwald Collection,

1951

It is astonishing to what extent George Grosz's depictions of Weimar society have shaped contemporary opinion of that tumultuous period in German history. The quick strokes of the pen, incisive characterizations, and graffiti-like style in *Tanz Kaffee* (Tea Dance) contrast markedly with the handling in his *Sportsmann* (cat. 44) of a few years earlier. But these images both spring from Grosz's belief that the purpose of art was to instruct (*Sportsmann*) or to uncover society's foibles and inequalities (*Tanz Kaffee*).

The compact jumble of figures, the incline of the floor (suggested by a single line), the angular contours of figures defined without shading, and the lockstep wall of dancers at the back of the room all suggest Grosz's awareness, and integration, of the lessons of cubism. But his calculatingly "unemotional" assessment of contemporary life allied him with the artistic movement known as "Neue Sachlichkeit" (New Objectivity), which arose around 1925—the date of *Tanz Kaffee*—and corresponded to the years of German economic stabilization and political normalcy, which lasted until the depression of 1929.

Entering the scene from the lower left, the viewer is led toward the upper right then horizontally back across the page, traversing the tearoom. Along the way one encounters a variety of standing or seated figures—not realistically observed individuals but readily identifiable character types. Grouped together here, they make a statement about the moral decline, even depravity, of German society as reflected in the daily lives of its citizens.

At the lower right corner of the composition Grosz employed a clever device: the side of a woman's head and shoulder that insistently involves the viewer in the scene. But her steely gaze, sharp features, and clenched teeth give her a hardened, predatory appearance. Directly across from her is the proverbial "dirty old man," dressed in a coat and hat, holding a cane, and scratching his back. His face mirrors hers but in a nastier way. At the same table a younger man smokes a cigarette with nonchalance.

His haughty expression, well-tailored clothes, posture, and gestures identify him as a member of the upper classes, whose lives were far removed from the travails then facing Germany. Behind him a small, rotund man in dark-rimmed glasses slumps in his chair. He is the midlevel bureaucrat or small business owner who struggles to make a living and can only dream about entering the "elegant" world of the tea dance. The last recognizable person, a woman, sits with a man who places a bottle of wine or champagne into a cooler. With her hat, piggish face, and squat body, she is either a prostitute or a dance hall employee whose job was to entice men to spend money.

Grosz's sober, precise, and immediately recognizable vignette is offered as simple truth. The characterizations are understated, and less vitriolic than one usually finds in his oeuvre. But this seemingly dispassionate exterior hides Grosz's perennially critical attitude and remorselessly judgmental opinion. Despite his attempts to influence society through his art, he harbored no illusions. Writing in about 1927, he mused: "I always used to think there were infernal tyrants up there on top, who enslaved us poor mortals—well, shit, this mindless crowd doesn't want it any other way."¹

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Claude Schaefer, Montevideo, Uruguay; Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1950.

Note

1. Quoted in Matthais Eberle, *World War I and the Weimar Artists: Dix, Grosz, Beckmann, Schlemmer*, trans. John Gabriel (New Haven, 1985), 72.



RENÉ MAGRITTE

Belgian, 1898–1967

**The Murderous Sky,
1927**

pen and brush and ink
over graphite with collage
503 × 652 mm
(19 1/16 × 25 1/16)
Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1995

For the French surrealists the purpose of art was to advance social and psychic revolution. Accordingly, they emphasized contradiction and the conjunction of incongruous opposites in order to shock their audiences and to inspire them to recognize powerful and unknown forces hidden beneath the mundane surfaces of the everyday world.

For René Magritte, who moved toward a surrealist style between 1924 and 1927, such shock was best produced through paradoxical word and text combinations or through carefully rendered visual contradictions. Clearly delineated, even academic in style, Magritte's works did not provoke questions as to what objects were portrayed. But the contradictions these easily recognizable images represented and the questions they evoked could not be resolved; thus Magritte's works tend to promote disturbing chains of association as to both how and why such conjunctions could come to be.

One of nearly thirty works made between 1925 and 1927 in which Magritte adapted the technique of *papier collé* developed by Picasso and Braque to surrealist ends, *The Murderous Sky* comes from a moment in the artist's career when he was still developing his surrealist style. Related to an oil painting of the same title and year, this ink and collage study suggests that Magritte used *papier collé* to test different juxtapositions and, because of its reliance on mass-produced imagery, to develop a more impersonal and less aesthetic style.¹

Here, four identical birds, all cut from the same score of the English musical comedy, *The Girls of Gottenberg* by George Gros-Smith Jr. and L. E. Berman, fly toward the right against an ominous sky composed of gesturally painted gray and black ink washes. Partly occluding the cutout birds, dark and jagged ink lines traverse the threatening firmament, forms that suggest both an unnatural type of lightning and the outlines of some strange map.

In addition to its ambiguous play between flatness and depth—established by the contrast between the two-dimensional ink outlines and printed sheet music on the one hand, and the alternately flowing and

grainy ink washes on the other—much of the mystery of Magritte's drawing is created through the strategy of formal doubling. Why, the viewer is prompted to ask, are there four birds with exactly the same outline? *Doppelgängers* as well as mechanical constructs are thereby evoked. The folkloric interpretation of birds as intermediaries between the living and the dead adds another disquieting undertone to the image. Are the birds about to be murdered, the image seems to ask, or do they bring ill tidings to someone else?

Finally, the strange play between image and text adds another disturbing association. Although the form of a bird in no way resembles a musical text, Magritte's conjunction recalls the relationship between birds and song. In this way Magritte makes a not-entirely-flattering connection between music, one of the highest achievements of human culture, and the activity of animals. Against a murderous sky, one perhaps witnesses the end of human achievement.

MATTHEW BIRO

Provenance

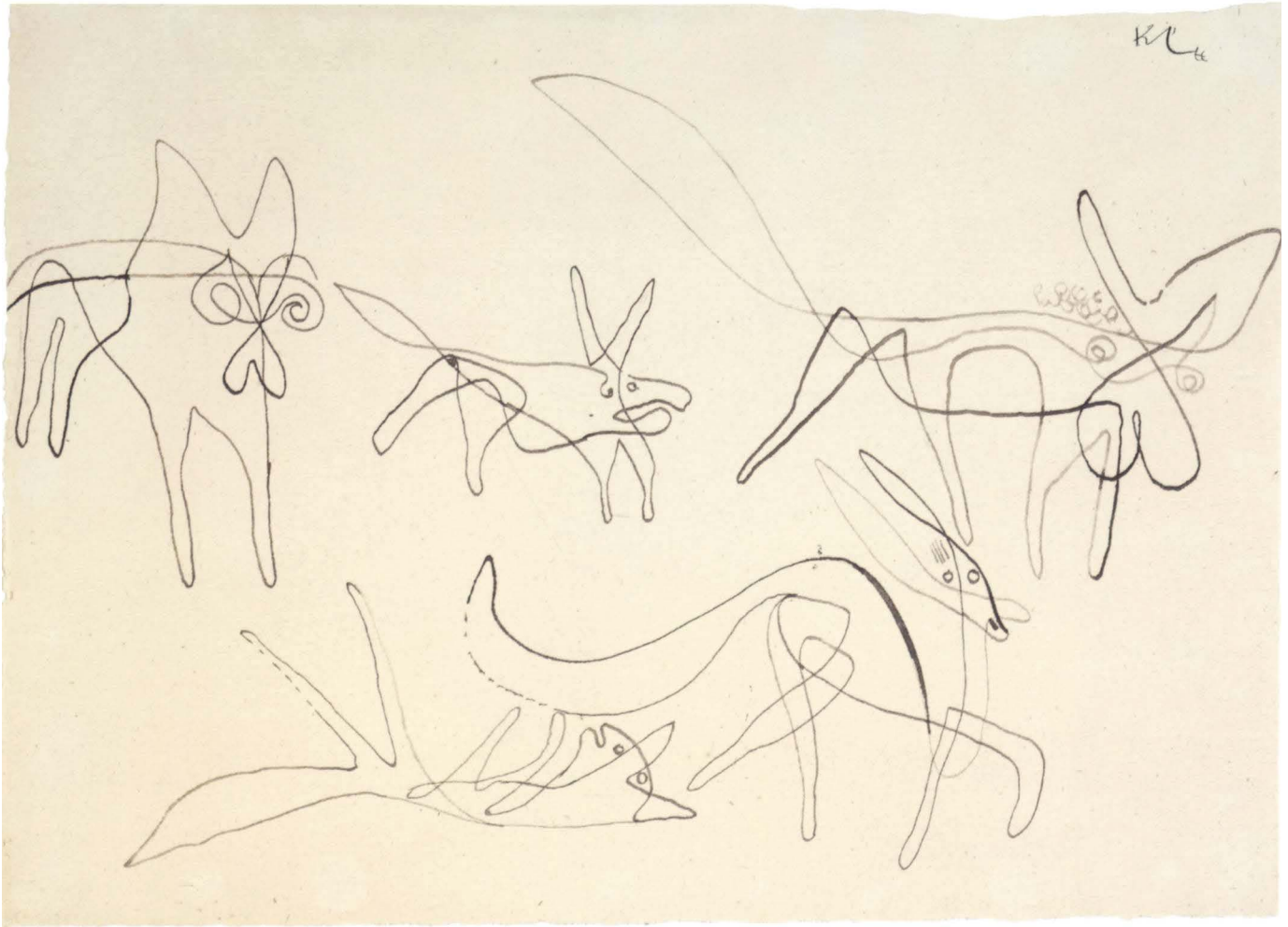
Galerie L'Epoque, Brussels;
E.L.T. Messens, London;
Sotheby's, London,
12 April 1972, lot 110; Bas-
kett and Day, London; Mr.
and Mrs. Paul Mellon.

Note

1. Describing his conversion to surrealism, Magritte notes his development of a less subjective and painterly manner: "I had in fact replaced the formal qualities which the critics had not failed to note with an objective representation of objects,

clearly grasped and understood by those whose taste had not been adulterated by all the literature written around painting. This detached way of representing objects seems to me related to a universal style, in which the idiosyncrasies and minor predilections of an individual no longer count." Magritte, *La Ligne de vie*, cited in David Sylvester, *Magritte: The Silence of the World* (New York, 1992), 90.





54

PAUL KLEE

Swiss, 1879–1940

Gemischt, 1927

reed pen and ink over
graphite

295 × 418 mm

(11 11/16 × 16 1/2)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund,
1988

Klee's deceptively simple compositions are often more tangled than they look. *Gemischt* provokes two questions: what nature of beast or beasts has the artist fashioned? And why has he chosen the title *Gemischt* (Mixed)?

Klee's creatures are temptingly self-evident, so much so that one cannot resist assigning them identities. The squat and muscular animals seem like canines, while those with long slender bodies appear more like felines.¹ The strutting creature at the lower right has the pointed muzzle and long bushy tail of a fox but also suggests a domesticated cat. Like a Rorschach test, the drawing elicits multiple interpretations that play on the viewer's imagination.

What gives rise to the ambiguity is Klee's purposeful homogenization and even outright disregard for fundamental distinctions. Forelegs and hindquarters are treated the same, and none, with the possible exception of the animal at the upper right, sports a coat—shaggy, short, or otherwise. In conflating species, mischievously cross-breeding felines with canines, the artist speaks not only of their individuality but also their commonality. In general terms he has “mixed” cats and dogs. He also gives no explicit indication of gender, essentially neutering the pack. Genetic intervention has gone terribly awry in this fusion of male and female in which one sex seems to have canceled out the other. This was not the first time Klee had tampered with the natural order of things. Throughout his career he contrived hybrid life forms, and his pedagogical writings include sections on the “Analysis and synthesis of differences” and “The Genesis of composite forms.”²

The title of the work itself is a double entendre. It implies a mixing of species but is also a geometrical term that describes a form composed of a “mixture” of lines: straight, bent, elliptical, etc. And what could be more fundamental to Klee's invention than its animating mix of lines? Spirals unwind into attenuated curves that back-track into hairpin bends that gather speed to form loops. Perhaps more than any other artist, Klee devoted exhaustive attention to

the theoretical subject of line, writing hundreds of pages on the subject while at the Bauhaus from 1921 to 1930.

In the year this work was made, Klee adopted use of the reed pen. A favorite tool of Rembrandt's, the reed is capable of modeling lines of varying width, depending on how it is held and the amount of pressure exerted on the nib. Reeds tend to shed their reserve of ink quickly and are apt to produce short, broken lines rather than meandering swirls. Rembrandt took advantage of this fact by using them to fashion broad, forceful strokes. Klee adapted the pen for other purposes, notably in *Gemischt*. Although he utilized its ability to produce lines that swell and taper, he generally held the instrument lightly so the nib responded to the slightest texture of the paper. Thus instead of a taut and muscular line, Klee's is somewhat tentative, pursuing the twists and turns of a questioning mind.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Paul Prouté, Paris.

Notes

1. In an informal survey assumptions ranged from cats and dogs to lions and jackals—even a squirrel. The only agreement was that the animal in the top center is a dog. The creature below, lying on its back, appears in two related works with the title *Sie brüllt, wir spielen*

(*She Howls, We Play*); see Jürgen Glaesemer, *Paul Klee: Die farbigen Werke im Kunstmuseum Bern* (Bern, 1976), 248–249.

2. Paul Klee, “Contributions to a Theory of Pictorial Form,” in *The Thinking Eye: Paul Klee Notebooks Volume 1: The Thinking Eye* (London, 1956), 116–117.

WASSILY KANDINSKY

Russian, 1866–1944

Geteilt, 1928

watercolor and ink, on
the artist's original black
paper mount

484 × 322 mm

(19 1/16 × 12 1/16)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Stephen M. Kellen,

1999

Kandinsky created watercolors throughout his life, and they were a crucial medium for his art.¹ Within two years of joining the Bauhaus in 1922, personal lists of his production indicate that he no longer connected his watercolors with paintings but gave them titles and treated them as independent, finished works in their own right.²

By the end of 1927 Kandinsky had developed a major new style in watercolor when he began to simplify his dense, layered compositions by separating geometric forms so that they overlap less and tend to stand alone in different parts of the image.³ Simultaneously, he gave his watercolors a new textural richness through subtle transitions of sprayed color over stencils, a technique borrowed from Paul Klee, his Bauhaus friend and neighbor.⁴

Geteilt is one of Kandinsky's boldest and most striking works in this new style, with its radically strong band, which has indeed "divided" (*Geteilt*) the composition into two fields. Instead of dividing one's attention, however, this broad band of darkest blue focuses one's eye and pulls the two fields back toward the center.

Kandinsky may also have borrowed from Klee the idea of mounting some watercolors on a backboard. Here he has transformed Klee's standard practice of using white board by giving a colored board a positive role in the total work. The matte black not only contrasts with and enhances the colors of the central image; it also helps to contain the image and keep the "divided" fields together.

Each of the four elements in the fields of *Geteilt* prompts intriguing associations. Kandinsky explores the effect of form, color, and texture on perception. The polygon in the upper right is shaded with tonal variation so that it may be read as flat, or as modeled. As a solid, it would be a dodecahedron, whose representation is one of the characteristic examples of perspective in Renaissance and baroque treatises. This play on artistic creation of depth and flatness continues with the circles in the upper left, which may be overlapping (like coins) or may be simply intersecting (as in set theory, a subject of much discussion in mathemat-

ics in the 1920s). The form in the lower right is constructed and colored with extraordinary care, using multiple stencils in a negative fashion to cover and preserve areas during the spraying process.⁵ The resulting color forms "flip" back and forth from two to three dimensions. Three dark elongated curved triangles (shapes Kandinsky had used as single elements since the early 1920s) are attached to the blue triangle/cone so that they seem to project from it like appendages and thus evoke surrealist forms, especially Miró's stylized limbs and hairs. The rectilinear structure or "ladder" at the lower left may also be a witty reference if one sees it as a subtle geometric refinement, commenting on but cleaning up the spindly scaffolding so frequent in works by his friend Klee. Like the suffused and glowing light of the color fields, these associations give *Geteilt* richness, warmth, and even humor.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Hilde Haller, Zurich;
Galerie Koller, Zurich,
November 1975; private
collection, Zurich;
Christie's, London, 4 De-
cember 1979; Galerie Jan
Krugier, Geneva; private
collection; Sotheby's, New
York, 14 May 1992, lot 135;
Leonard Hutton Galleries,
New York; purchased by
the National Gallery of Art
with designated funds.

Notes

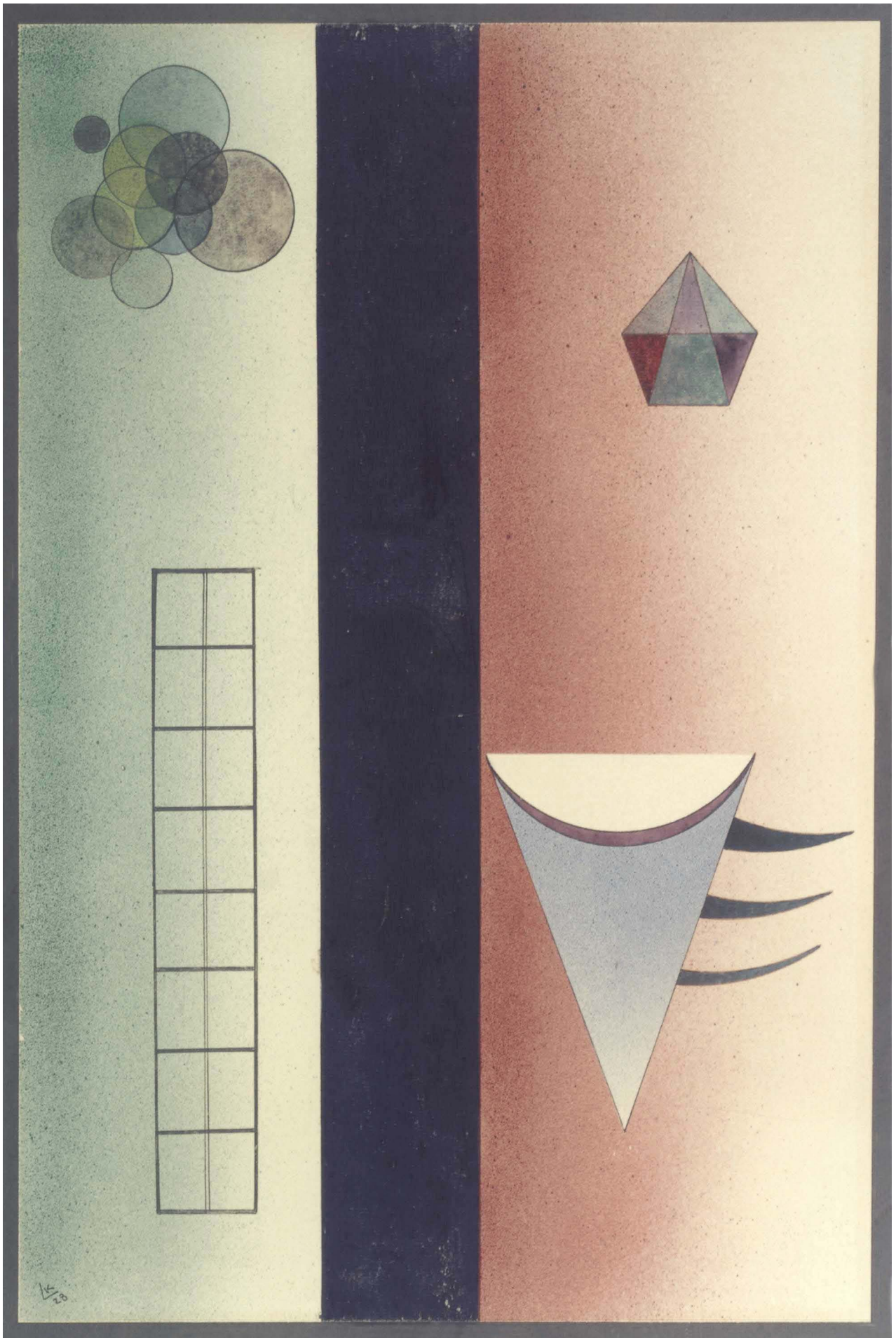
1. See Vivian Endicott Barnett, *Kandinsky Watercolors: Catalogue Raisonné*, 2 vols. (Ithaca, NY, 1992 and 1994), 1:29–37.

2. Barnett 1992, 1:35.

3. While this new style appeared as early as December 1924, it became more prevalent after September 1927, when the earliest clear examples of the variably sprayed color appeared (see Barnett 1992, nos. 736–737, 784, 780, and 785).

4. Klee was using the technique as early as 1925; see, for example, Carolyn Lanchner, *Paul Klee* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1987), 212.

5. For just a few examples of how extraordinarily detailed Kandinsky's care in this watercolor is, and how he enhances the extremely subtle sense of variation: the concave purple arc is on a reserved or white field and bordered by superimposed black outlines, whereas the dark (actually midnight blue) areas of the curved triangles have a different texture because they are over a red spattered field and have purplish appearing but actually red outlines that are not superimposed but showing around the edges from below. Again, the single line on the left edge of the blue cone is drawn at the top as red, farther down becomes midnight blue, and finishes at the point of the cone as black!



ERNST LUDWIG
KIRCHNER

German, 1880–1938

Self-Portrait, 1928

brush and ink with
watercolor over black
crayon

468 × 375 mm

(18 ⁷/₁₆ × 14 ³/₄)

Promised Gift of Mr.
and Mrs. Jacob Kainen

About 1927 Kirchner began to develop a new, “abstract” style. This *Self-Portrait* is one of the earliest mature examples of the style, which he also called working from imagination rather than from nature.¹ Kirchner was not interested in pure abstraction, so “abstract” here is relative to his earlier work. His line became more simply geometric, especially in large curved shapes. The outlines of forms overlapped each other regardless of natural boundaries, and this interpenetration of forms was enhanced by overlapping textured but solid color fields.²

The principal figure here is a self-portrait. Even with the abstraction, one recognizes a long slender face, large nose, fleshy lips, pointed chin, high forehead, long strong eyebrows, and fine dark hair combed straight and flat, exactly the features of Kirchner in contemporary photographs and as he shows himself in the 1926–1927 painting *Eine Künstlergruppe* (Ludwig Collection, Cologne).

Here the corner of Kirchner’s mouth is turned up, and his eyes are wide open but unfocused, probably an expression of pleasant musing or daydreaming.³ The setting is clearly urban, with background streetlights and multistoried buildings. The subsidiary figures—in Kirchner’s thoughts, as it were—include, on the left, a woman in a blue dress and cap, apparently walking down a street. A close look, however, reveals a disembodied right hand reaching up to touch her right breast. On the right stands a dark-haired woman who is mainly flesh colored and thus may be nude; but she wears high heels, so she too may be walking on the street. A ruddy man advances toward the woman. Originally his left hand had long fingers that seemed to reach across the woman’s pink left thigh, but Kirchner made the image more subtle by covering most of his fingers and her thigh with an arch-topped black shape. The man’s torso is blue, and the blue form in front of the woman’s chest may well be the man’s right arm reaching around her back.

Thus the subject of this *Self-Portrait* is Kirchner’s remembering or thinking about sexual encounters on the city streets. Such

encounters were a central theme of his great Berlin street scenes from 1913–1915. Kirchner revisited Zurich, Frankfurt, Dresden, and Berlin in 1925–1926 and produced new views of city monuments as well as streets.⁴ Thus it is not surprising that the inner content of his earlier works should have percolated in his thoughts again. In this drawing Kirchner has combined that subject with the theme of self-portraiture and completely integrated both into his new, more calm and balanced abstract style. It is almost as if he were saying: the presentation is different, but the artist and his human interests remain the same.

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

Dr. Frédéric Bauer, Davos; Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett, 26 November 1953, lot 1948; Kleeman Galleries, New York; Karl und Faber, Munich, 28 May 1971, lot 742; Galerie Wolfgang Ketterer, Munich, 26–28 November 1979, lot 902; Kunsthau Lempertz, Cologne, 7 December 1984, lot 611; Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Kainen.

Notes

1. See Donald E. Gordon, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* (Cambridge, MA, 1968); Lucius Grisebach, “Ernst Ludwig Kirchner als ‘stilbewusster’ Künstler,” in *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* [exh. cat., Nationalgalerie] (Berlin, 1979), 31–37. For other early examples of the abstract style see Berlin 1979, nos. 373 and 379; and Lucius Grisebach and Wolfgang Henze, *Ernst Ludwig Kirchner* [exh. cat., Kunsthalle] (Nuremberg, 1991), no. 97.

2. Kirchner’s “abstract” style is probably in response to what Alfred Barr called Picasso’s “curvilinear cubism” of the 1920s; see *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art* (New York, 1946), 132. See also Klee’s contemporary sweeping curved linear patterns of overlapping “outlines” (cat. 54).

3. Annemarie Dube-Heynig interprets this *Self-Portrait* as melancholic by relating its composition to a 1929 woodcut self-portrait Kirchner titled *Melancholie der Berge*; see *Kunst des XX. Jahrhunderts*, Kunsthau Lempertz auction, Cologne, 7 December 1984, lot 611. But the compositional relation between the two images is neither exact nor distinctive, and a straightforward reading of Kirchner’s face here reveals no pain or melancholy like, for instance, the downturned mouth in the 1929 woodcut.

4. See Berlin 1979, nos. 368–373, 378–381.



57

JOSEPH STELLA

American, 1877–1946

Self-Portrait, c. 1929

colored pencil, watercolor over wax resist, metalpoint, and graphite on prepared paper
556 × 400 mm
(21⁷/₈ × 15³/₄)
New Century Fund, 1997

Joseph Stella, who made many self-portraits during his career, here provides not only a physiognomic likeness of himself but psychological insight into his character as well. Stella was an adept portraitist and favored the profile format. By deliberately alluding to Italian Renaissance profile portraits, such as this sixteenth-century *Profile of a Man* (figure), Stella underscored ties to his artistic—and ethnic—heritage. In both drawings the headgear exaggerates the dominating physical presence of the sitter.

Stella was proud of his talents and was known to be something of a braggadocio and showoff. In fact, he often visually “boasted” of his technical prowess by purposefully making forbidding compositional choices or by using difficult materials, such as metalpoint. This unforgiving medium, which enjoyed a revival in the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, allows no erasures once a mark is made. By employing metalpoint as an underdrawing in the present image, Stella again harks back to the Renaissance, an unusual strategy for an artist of the early twentieth century, when historical references in art were frowned upon as unprogressive.



These evocations of the past, however, are held in formal tension with a more modern expressiveness. Stella emphasizes the flatness of the image by the suppression of his proper left ear, by the unmodeled chiaroscuro of the hat, and by the self-conscious mark-making overall. In contrast to the cool, classical pose of the sitter, the surrounding atmosphere, evinced by a colorful and agitated watercolor over wax resist, hints at the restlessness of the artist’s imagination.¹

JONATHAN F. WALZ

Provenance

Sergio Stella; Rabin and Krueger, Newark, NJ; Herbert A. Goldstone, New York; ACA Gallery, New York.

Note

1. This sheet, with the sitter in profile facing left and gazing at suspended flowers, bears a resemblance to the 1908 painting by Piet Mondrian entitled *Devotion*, now in the Haags Gemeentemuseum.

Lombard School, *Profile of a Man*, 1500/1520, black chalk with stumping and touches of red chalk heightened with white, National Gallery of Art, Woodner Collection, 1998



JOHN MARIN

American, 1870–1953

Storm over Taos, 1930

watercolor over graphite

382 × 532 mm

(15 1/16 × 20 5/16)

Alfred Stieglitz

Collection, 1949

Taos is located on a high desert mesa at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico. Beginning around 1920 the town and its environs attracted and inspired many of the artists in the Stieglitz circle, including Marsden Hartley, Paul Strand, Georgia O'Keeffe, and John Marin.¹ On their initial visits all were guests at Los Gallos, the estate of the writer Mabel Dodge, who, having fled New York, romantically envisioned the area, home of the Tewa tribe of Pueblo Indians, as “the beating heart of the world” where “great souls will be drawn.”²

Marin grasped the essential visual elements of the vast, daunting spaces of the Southwest soon after his arrival in Taos in the summer of 1929. In his epigrammatic style he wrote to Stieglitz: “The One who made this country, this big level seeming desert table land cut out slices. They are the canyons. Then here and there he put mountains atop. Astanding here you can see six or seven thunder storms going on at the same time. A Sun set seems to embrace the earth. Big sun heat. Big storm. Big everything. A leaving out that thing called Man.”³ The thunderstorms were a particularly dramatic feature of the summer season. Strand, who worked alongside Marin in 1930, recalled how “Mrs. Marin used to keep both eyes peeled” for “those violent storms here, that make you keep one eye on the horizon, wherever you get off on dobé roads, that become a slough in two minutes.”⁴

In *Storm over Taos* Marin captured the majestic breadth and scale of the landscape by depicting the adobe structures of Taos as dwarfed by the mountains and sky above and by the open desert plain below. A master of the watercolor medium, he conveys an enormous wealth of detail using the most economical of means. The town itself is described by a few squared-off brush strokes within a small swath of light earth tones at the center of the picture. Delicate serpentine lines delineate mountains, while gray and blue washes and a strong diagonal that cuts the sky in half combine to describe a range of atmospheric effects from light mist to driving rain. The desert foreground

is noted simply by horizontal bands of yellow, gray, green, and brown.

It is not surprising that Marin would be interested in the subject of the storm while in New Mexico. Throughout his long career, whether in his landscapes, seascapes, or cityscapes, he sought to express “the great forces at work,” the never ceasing “pushing, pulling, sideways, downwards, and upwards” tumult of the world.⁵ The fluidity, spontaneity, and speed of the medium of watercolor were perfectly suited to this ambitious task, and taken together his watercolors of New Mexico, Maine, and New York City constitute an encyclopedia of dynamic, evanescent forms.

CHARLES BROCK

Provenance

The artist to Alfred Stieglitz; Georgia O'Keeffe.

Notes

1. Hartley first visited in 1919, Strand in 1926, and O'Keeffe and Marin in 1929.
2. This is how the occultist Lotus Dudley described New Mexico when Mabel Dodge consulted her about settling there in April 1919; quoted in Lois Palken Rudnick, *Mabel Dodge Luhan: New Woman, New Worlds* (Albuquerque, 1984), 165. Her comments confirmed Dodge's own feelings and reassured her that it was her destiny to live in Taos.

3. Marin to Stieglitz, 21 July 1929, quoted in Dorothy Norman, ed., *The Selected Writings of John Marin* (New York, 1949), 129.

4. Strand to Herbert Seligmann, 29 July 1931, quoted in Sarah Greenough, *Paul Strand: An American Vision* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), 76.

5. This is how Marin described his watercolors of New York City in the famous catalogue essay that accompanied his exhibition at the 291 gallery in January 1913; reprinted in *Camera Work* 42–43 (April–July) 1913, 18.



PAUL KLEE

Swiss, 1879–1940

Dampfer und Segelböte, 1931

watercolor

435 × 640 mm

(17 1/8 × 25 1/8)

Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1983

Dampfer und Segelböte (Steamship and Sailboats) descends from two paintings that Klee made in 1927, one now in Switzerland (figure) and the other in the collection of the Nationalgalerie, Berlin.¹ Although both are nocturnal scenes and include elements absent from the watercolor—for example, the large full moon and the prominent arrow pointing to the right—they nonetheless share the same central motif as the National Gallery's watercolor, only in reverse.

Klee presumably revived his design in 1931 by tracing its contours either from a drawing or from one of the paintings, albeit reversing the direction in the process. Aside from the present watercolor, two more versions from the same year are recorded.² Although they follow the general contours of the 1927 paintings, they are conceived in a thoroughly distinct style that Klee called "divisionism." The artist tried the mosaic-like style in modified form as early as 1925, but it was not until 1931 that he fully explored its possibilities. Although often compared to Seurat's pointillism, Klee's objective was antithetical. Seurat intended his colored dots to mix optically, whereas Klee's larger markings are meant to remain separate in the viewer's eye, to be read as individual dabs of light-filled color.

Klee began the watercolor by dividing the sheet into irregularly shaped zones that were washed in blue or yellow. These lend structure to the composition and provide

subtle shifts in depth. Over the zones he mapped out a contour line that bends and interlaces to form a single entwined form, encompassing everything from the interlocking triangles that frame the boats' sails³ to the circular curves that shape their hulls. Lastly, he systematically overlaid thousands of opaque dabs—like short staccato notes. Each dab's brushy edge points to the left, a suggestion of a breeze coming from the right. Sea and sky are merged, and the ships—united by a shared contour—appear to float and sway on a vast field of sunlit atmosphere.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

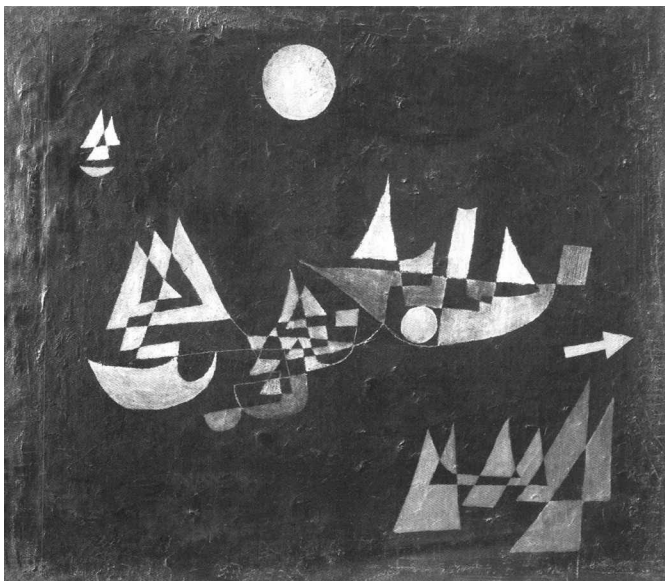
Galerie Beyeler, Basel; G. David Thompson; Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., New York, 23–24 March 1966, lot 50; Lock Galleries; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon.

Notes

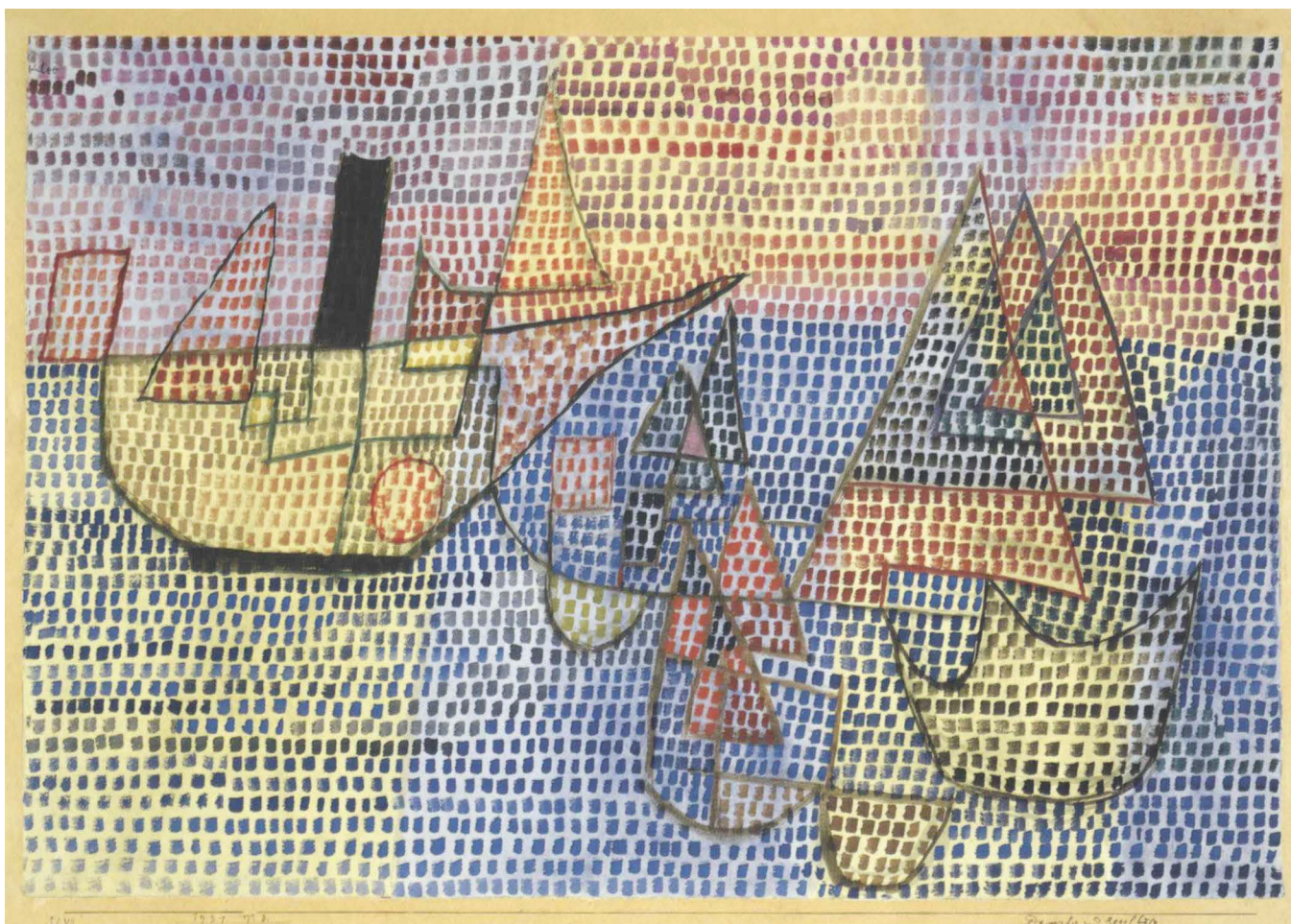
1. Reproduced in Robert Rosenblum, *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition: Friedrich to Rothko* (New York, 1975), 157. Also from 1927, there is a loosely related version of the motif in watercolor; see Jürgen Glaesemer, *Paul Klee: Die farbigen Werke im Kunstmuseum Bern* (Bern, 1976), 246, no. 121.

2. Will Grohmann reproduces one of the versions—all of which are watercolors—in *Paul Klee* (New York, n.d.), 401, no. 135. He also notes that each version represents a different time of day: early morning, noon, and evening. Other than the fact that the National Gallery of Art's watercolor is surely not an evening scene, there is no indication of its hour.

3. The steamship on the left has sails as well as a smokestack, which was not uncommon in early steamers of the 1870s.



Paul Klee, *The Departure of the Boats*, 1927, oil on canvas, private collection, permanent loan to the Kunstmuseum Basel



ALEXANDER
ZHITOMIRSKY

Russian, 1907–1993

Self-Portrait with Camera, 1932

ink and gouache with
gelatin silver print
and photomechanical
reproduction on album
page

185 × 263 mm

(7⁵/₁₆ × 10³/₈)

Gift of Henry Buhl,
1998

Alexander Zhitomirsky came to Moscow as an eighteen-year-old to study art, and within a few years he was known for his work as an illustrator, cartoonist, and designer for periodicals and newspapers. In the early 1930s, influenced by the works of John Heartfield that appeared in leftist German publications widely sold on newsstands in Moscow, Zhitomirsky began to use playful typography and his own photographs as well as magazine reproductions to experiment with collage. He assembled the resulting constructions in personal albums that revolved around various themes.¹

Self-Portrait with Camera is an homage not only to his love of photography but also to his newfound ability to make his pictures speak. Zhitomirsky juxtaposed the real—a photograph of himself and a picture of a Leica camera lens—with the fantastic to create this clever self-portrait. The lens is the central eye of the composition and is flanked by the distorted self-portrait of the artist² on one side and the elongated, cartoonish arm that snakes around the camera on the other. A delicate hand, gracefully poised to press the shutter release on his camera, extends from the protruding arm, as, in the words that seem to spring from his mouth, Zhitomirsky playfully exclaims, “hold still!” The combination of the misshapen surrounding elements with the crystal-clear camera lens creates an almost fish-eye view, as though the spectacle is seen in a convex mirror or, perhaps, through a lens and suggests not only that Zhitomirsky is taking a photograph but that he is in turn being photographed.

Although virtually unknown outside his own country, Zhitomirsky was considered the foremost artist of Russian political photomontage from the 1940s to the 1970s. During World War II his anti-Nazi propaganda leaflets were published by the millions and reached untold numbers of German soldiers; later, throughout the Cold War, Zhitomirsky’s work was widely

seen and had a considerable influence on the Russian people. The power of his photomontages, predicted in this early collage, lies in his witty, lively juxtaposition of images and his striking ability to make the absurd appear true and the true appear absurd.

JULIA THOMPSON

Provenance

Estate of the artist; the artist’s son; Gary Edwards Gallery, Washington, DC, by 1997; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

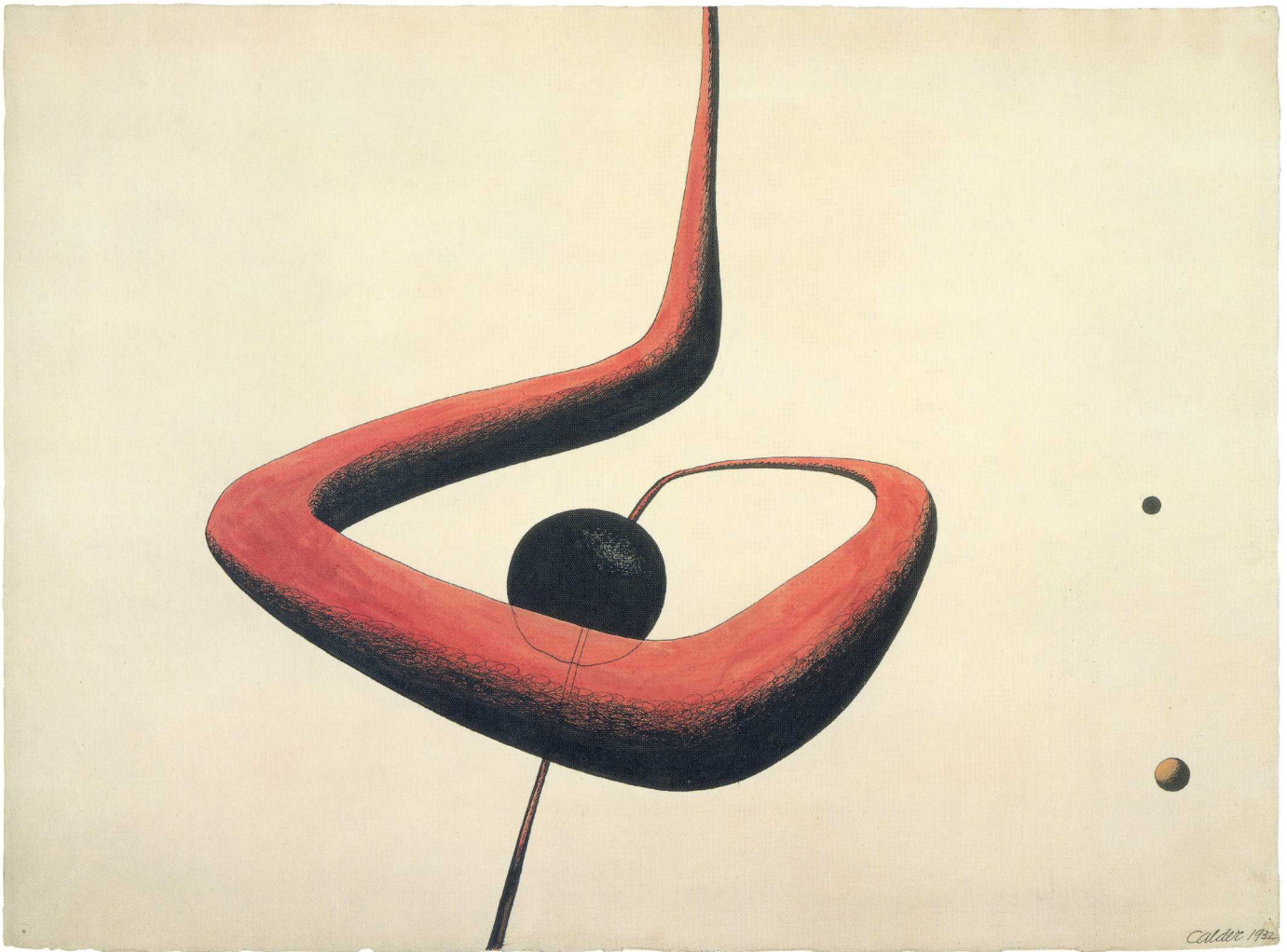
Notes

1. *Self-Portrait with Camera* is taken from an album titled *To the Little Bully*; a second collage from the album, also in the collection of the National

Gallery of Art, is a self-portrait as well. Several pages from an album celebrating Zhitomirsky’s honeymoon are also in the Gallery’s collection.

2. To create the elongated self-portrait, Zhitomirsky tilted the easel on which the photographic paper rested under the enlarger during printing. This accounts for the figure’s rather fuzzy appearance.





Calder 1942

ALEXANDER CALDER

American, 1898–1976

Untitled (Study for Mobile), 1932

watercolor and ink

578 × 781 mm

(22¾ × 30¾)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Klaus G. Perls, 1996

Repeatedly—in artist's statements, interviews, and in his *Autobiography with Pictures*—Alexander Calder credits a visit to the studio of Piet Mondrian in 1930 with his own decision to work in the abstract: it was “a shock that started things.” Calder explained: “It was a very exciting room. Light came from the left and from the right, and on the solid wall between the windows there were experimental stunts with colored rectangles of cardboard tacked on. . . . I suggested to Mondrian that perhaps it would be fun to make these rectangles oscillate.”¹

Calder recounted an earlier “shock” of seeing from a ship off the coast of Guatemala “the beginning of a fiery red sunrise on one side and the moon looking like a silver coin on the other.”² This gave him a sense of the universe that was crucial for his art: “I think that at that time [1930] and practically ever since, the underlying sense of form in my work has been the system of the Universe. . . . the idea of detached bodies floating in space, of different sizes and densities, perhaps of different colors and temperatures, and surrounded and interlarded with wisps of gaseous condition. . . . seems to me the ideal source of form.”³

With these two shocks of inspiration, Calder created a new body of abstract work, first in painting and then in sculpture. His fascination and experimentation with the introduction of actual motion into art ultimately led to his invention of a new art form, the mobile. In 1959 he would tell an interviewer: “In 1932, a wooden ball made me want to make a universe, something like the solar system. That was the beginning of everything.”⁴

The year of the present drawing and *The Circus* (cat. 62) was an important one for Calder. He was working in a variety of styles and media and exhibited his first kinetic work at the Galerie Vignon in Paris. *Untitled* is a simple abstract design. Calder draws two continuous ink lines intersected by a circle, with two small circles off to the right, modeled with red watercolor. With this startling sparseness Calder evokes a sense of the universe—with objects floating freely in an

infinite space, turning elegantly, given volume by the varying density of the watercolor and fine spiraling lines of black ink. The evocation is deliberate: “When I have used spheres and discs, I have intended that they should represent more than what they just are. More or less as the earth is a sphere, but also has some miles of gas about it, volcanoes upon it, and the moon making circles about it, and the sun is a sphere—but also a source of intense heat, the effect of which is felt at great distances. A ball of wood or a disc of metal is rather a dull object without the sense of something emanating from it.”⁵ Throughout his career Calder would create abstract works in every medium, but the forces and forms of the universe would remain his inspiration. He continuously strove to make “something that has a life of its own.”⁶

SALLY E. MANSFIELD

Provenance

Klaus and Dolly Perls,
New York.

Notes

1. Alexander Calder with Jean Davidson, *Calder: An Autobiography with Pictures* (New York, 1966), 113.

2. Calder 1966, 113.

3. Alexander Calder, “What Abstract Art Means to Me,” *The Museum of Modern Art Bulletin* 18, no. 3 (spring 1951), 8.

4. Interview with Yvon Taillander, “Calder: ‘Personne ne pense à moi quand on a cheval à faire,’” *XX^e siècle*, ser. 2 (March 1959), trans. Bettina Wadia and quoted in Gualtieri di San Lazzaro, ed., *Homage to Alexander Calder*, special issue of *XX^e siècle Review* (New York, 1972), 98.

5. Calder 1951, 8.

6. Calder 1959, 98.

ALEXANDER CALDER
American, 1898–1976

The Circus, 1932

pen and ink

514 × 743 mm

(20 1/4 × 29 1/4)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

Klaus G. Perls, 1996

Alexander Calder's fascination with the circus was lifelong. In one of his first jobs as an artist, for the tabloid *National Police Gazette*, he spent two weeks in the spring of 1925 drawing illustrations of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus. That same year he began fashioning animals out of wire.¹ These inventions, and a brief venture into the fabrication of mechanized toys, fostered the creation in 1926 of the *Cirque Calder*.² Comprising miniature performers made of wire, cloth, wood, cork, string, and other ephemeral material, the circus eventually extended to about twenty acts, with ringmaster, music, sound effects, and even peanuts.³

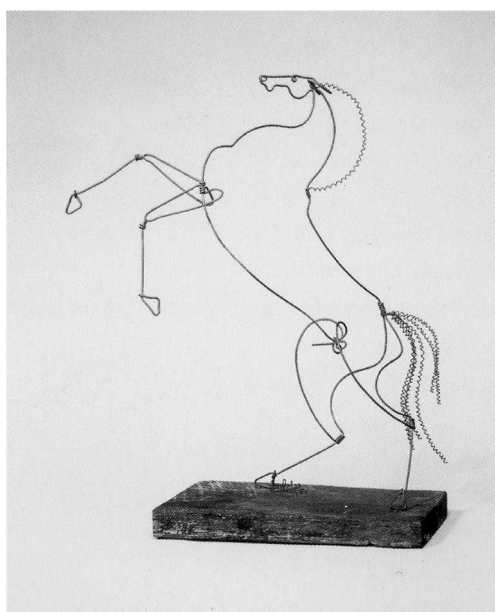
When asked in 1964 what had started his drawing the circus, Calder responded, "I was very fond of the spatial relations. I love the space of the circus. I made some drawings of nothing but the tent... I love the mechanics of the thing—and the vast space."⁴ *The Circus* is composed entirely of lines. There is no shading or other means of indicating three-dimensionality. Yet the sense of space is palpable. Studying at the Art Student's League in New York in 1924, Calder had learned from Boardman Robinson to draw with a single line, not lifting the pen from the paper. Calder here exploits that technique, achieving a sense of volume in his figures akin to that of his wire sculpture, which he described as "three-dimen-

sional line drawing"⁵ (see figure). This open-work sculpture achieves its form through the exploitation of its transparency, an element Calder uncharacteristically assigns historical import: "There is one thing, in particular that connects them with history. One of the canons of the futuristic painters... was that objects behind other objects should not be lost to view, but should be shown through the others by making the latter transparent. The wire sculpture accomplishes this in a most decided manner."⁶

Although Calder partly accounts for these linear feats in terms of advanced modernist ideas, it is their invention and cunning wit that remain most striking. In *The Circus* the artist pictures the scene perhaps from the high wire, nearly level with the daring trapeze artist, who practices a handstand. Below is a buzz of activity: two men show their prowess on stilts, one in a full, frilly dress and pantaloons; the bareback rider trots with her horse, while the distracted ringmaster seems about to be butted by a mule. In the side ring: drama. The elephant is crushing a performer. The trainer rushes to assist, casting aside his crop, while two layabouts loll on the bleachers, taking it all in. The lines are few, but they manage to describe every detail, to the point that one can distinguish the elephant as African, rather than Asian, and differentiate the distinctive motions of the various characters. Calder's deceptively simple technique belies his studied skill as a draftsman and his careful observation of the world.

SALLY E. MANSFIELD

Alexander Calder, *Rearing Stallion*, c. 1928, wire and painted wood, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Perls, 1996



Provenance

Mrs. Bliss Parkinson;
Sibyl Moholy-Nagy; Klaus
and Dolly Perls, New
York, 1963.

Notes

1. Alexander Calder with
Jean Davidson, *Calder: An
Autobiography with Pictures*
(New York, 1966), 71–72.

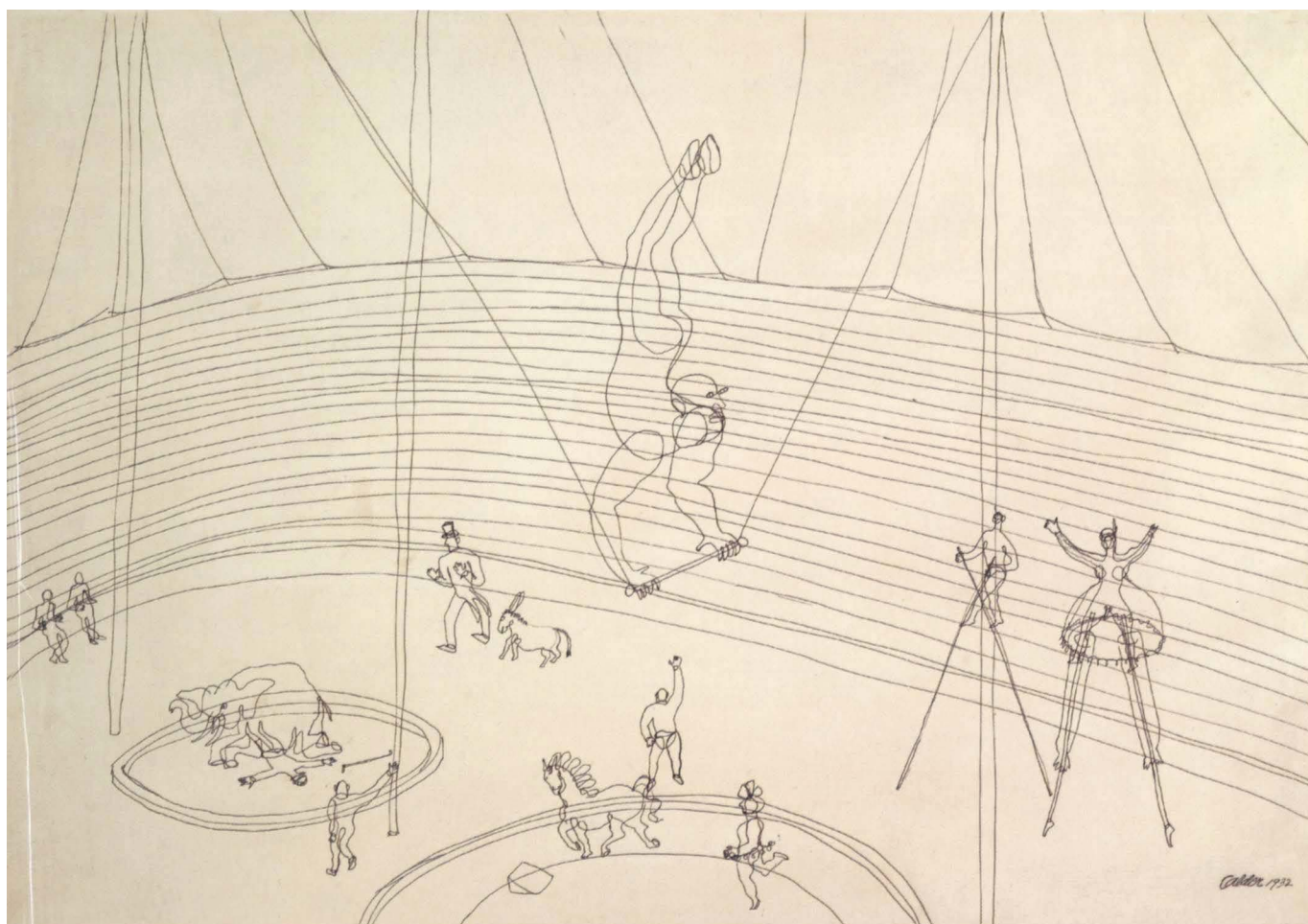
2. Permanently installed at
the Whitney Museum of
American Art, New York,
with a film of Calder per-
forming his circus.

3. See www.calder.org.

4. Cleve Gray, "Calder's
Circus," *Art in America* 52,
no. 5 (Oct. 1964), 23–25.

5. Marla Prather et al.,
*Alexander Calder, 1898–
1976* [exh. cat., National
Gallery of Art] (Washing-
ton, 1998), 21.

6. Washington 1998, 24.



CHARLES SHEELER
American, 1883–1965

**Interior with Stove,
1932**

conté crayon
818 × 584 mm
(32 3/16 × 23)
Gift (Partial and
Promised) of Aaron I.
Fleischman, 2000

Around 1910 Charles Sheeler and his friend and fellow artist Morton Schamberg began renting a small stone farmhouse in Doylestown, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, for use mainly as a quiet weekend and summer retreat where they could concentrate on painting. In 1917 Sheeler executed a series of photographs of the house, some of the exterior, but most depicting interior spaces—doorways, stairwells, windows, and other architectural elements. The series was shown at New York's Modern Gallery in December 1917; it was Sheeler's first one-man exhibition as a photographer, and it helped establish his reputation as a master of the medium.¹

Two of the Doylestown photographs portray a room with a large cast-iron stove lit from behind and darkly silhouetted against the white walls. One in a horizontal format concentrates on the stove itself, while the other is vertical and shows more of the room. Sheeler recreated the former photograph as a conté crayon drawing in 1931; he used the same process with the second photograph the following year to create this extraordinary work. Although derived directly from the photograph, and remarkably successful in capturing its nuances of light and dark, the drawing is utterly different in appearance and effect. It is significantly larger (the photograph is less than a third its size), and the distinctive stippling of the conté crayon on the textured paper makes it softer and more matte than the glossy photograph.

By the time he made this drawing, Sheeler was a recognized master of painting, drawing, and photography, and the relationships among his works in these media are complex and at times enigmatic. Why, some fifteen years later, would he be inspired to recreate a photograph as a drawing? Part of the answer may be that for Sheeler a painting was no more significant than a drawing, nor was a drawing more important than a photograph.² Each was simply a means to an end, and aspects of each could inform and influence the others. When he made the Doylestown photographs, he explained them to Alfred

Stieglitz by saying: "I decided that because of something personal I was trying to work out in them, that they were more akin to drawings."³ So the equation was there for Sheeler from the first, and the fact that in 1932 he made two photographic portraits of himself actually drawing this drawing confirms its elliptical nature. But why the long lapse of time? It is possible that his wife Katherine's diagnosis with cancer around 1931 (she died in 1933) inspired Sheeler to look back nostalgically at their years together in Doylestown in this simple room, warmed by an old-fashioned stove.⁴

The sequence that began with a 1917 photograph, and continued with this drawing and the two photographic self-portraits featuring it in 1932, reached its conclusion in 1943 in a painting by Sheeler entitled *The Artist Looks at Nature* (Art Institute of Chicago). There, in a surreal landscape of fields dotted with indecipherable bits of architecture, the artist sits at an easel working on this drawing, just as he was in the 1932 photographs. The artist, Sheeler seems to say, may look at nature, but what he ultimately sees and creates is something else altogether, a "separate reality," as his friend William Carlos Williams once said of another of his works. That Sheeler chose to portray that "separate reality" through the image of himself in the act of creating this great drawing, gives it a significance and meaning in his art that is all but unrivaled.

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

Edward Steichen, New York; Joanna (Mrs. Edward) Steichen, New York; Aaron I. Fleischman, 1999.

Photographs [exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts] (Boston, 1987), 8.

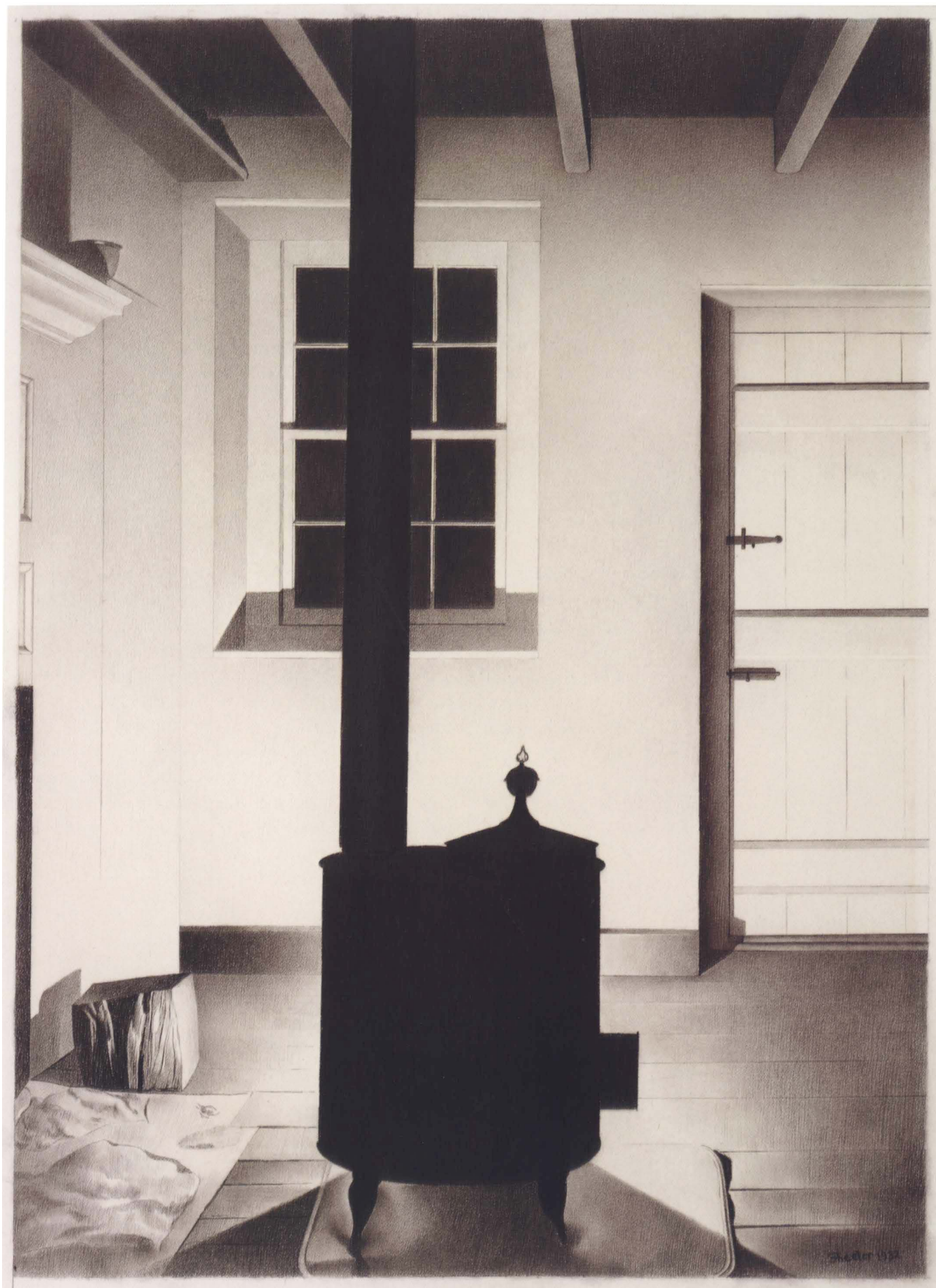
2. Boston 1987, 10.

3. Boston 1987, 9.

4. See Karen Lucic, *Charles Sheeler in Doylestown* [exh. cat., Allentown Art Museum] (Allentown, PA, 1997).

Notes

1. Theodore E. Stebbins Jr. and Norman Keyes Jr., *Charles Sheeler: The*



ARSHILE GORKY

American, born in
Armenia, 1904–1948

**Nighttime, Enigma,
and Nostalgia,**
c. 1932/1934

pen and ink over
graphite

559 × 720 mm
(22 × 28⁵/₁₆)

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund
and Andrew W. Mellon
Fund, 1979

During a period of intense drawing activity in the early 1930s, Gorky created more than fifty variations on the theme of *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia*. The overall composition of interlocked organic shapes varies only slightly throughout the series, but differences in tonal value, treatment, and texture give each drawing a distinctive mood. This version is one of the most dramatic in its contrast of light and dark and in the density of its blacks, built up through an extraordinary variety of hatchings and cross-hatchings. The addition of brown ink and the extensive use of scratching—revealing the thick paper's fiber—contribute to the richness and complexity of the work. The lighter areas stand out vividly against the velvety web of black lines, recalling Georges Seurat's *conté crayon* drawings, which Gorky admired. When a group of *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia* drawings was exhibited in New York in 1935, one critic noted the unusual range of tones: "On this practically black surface float weird, fantastic forms that, having no apparent or obvious meaning, are nevertheless so carefully set in their appointed place they carry the eye deep into composition, achieve an exquisite balance of shape and tone (amazing how much color the artist has introduced into these black-and-white) and set the whole arrangement in vibrating, arresting, movement."¹

The *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia* series marked Gorky's first involvement with surrealism, a movement that became popular in the United States in the early 1930s. Through his friendship with the painter John Graham, who traveled regularly to Europe, Gorky was well aware of the development of the French avant-garde. The

curvilinear, kidney shapes of this drawing derive from the biomorphic forms typical in the art of the surrealists Joan Miró and André Masson in the 1920s. The connotations of mystery and sadness carried by the title are related to the enigmatic pictures of Giorgio de Chirico, who was an important source of inspiration for Gorky. Many versions of *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia* present a trapezoidal format directly inspired by a composition by de Chirico.² This is notably the case in the other version of the series in the National Gallery of Art collection (figure). In the smaller drawing the emphasis on linear patterns and the geometric division of the background create a more abstract composition. Its light and playful mood contrasts with the somber and mysterious atmosphere of the larger one.

Gorky's first significant group of works, *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia* signals the importance of drawing in the artist's development. Gorky was to draw extensively throughout his life, a passion that is reflected in the linear quality of many of his paintings. The National Gallery of Art is fortunate to have eight drawings by Gorky, representative of every phase of his career.

ISABELLE DERVAUX

Provenance

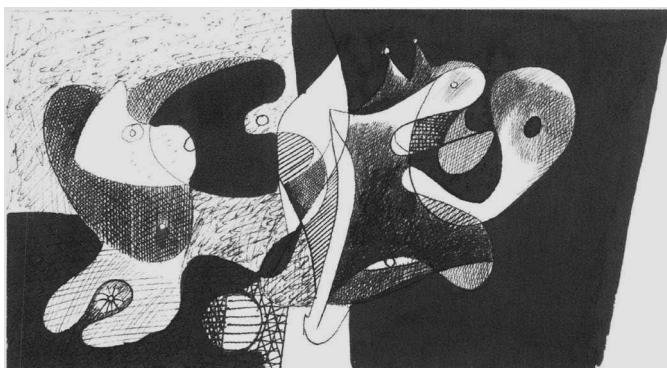
Ethel Schwabacher, New York; Artemis, Inc., London; Xavier Fourcade, Inc., New York.

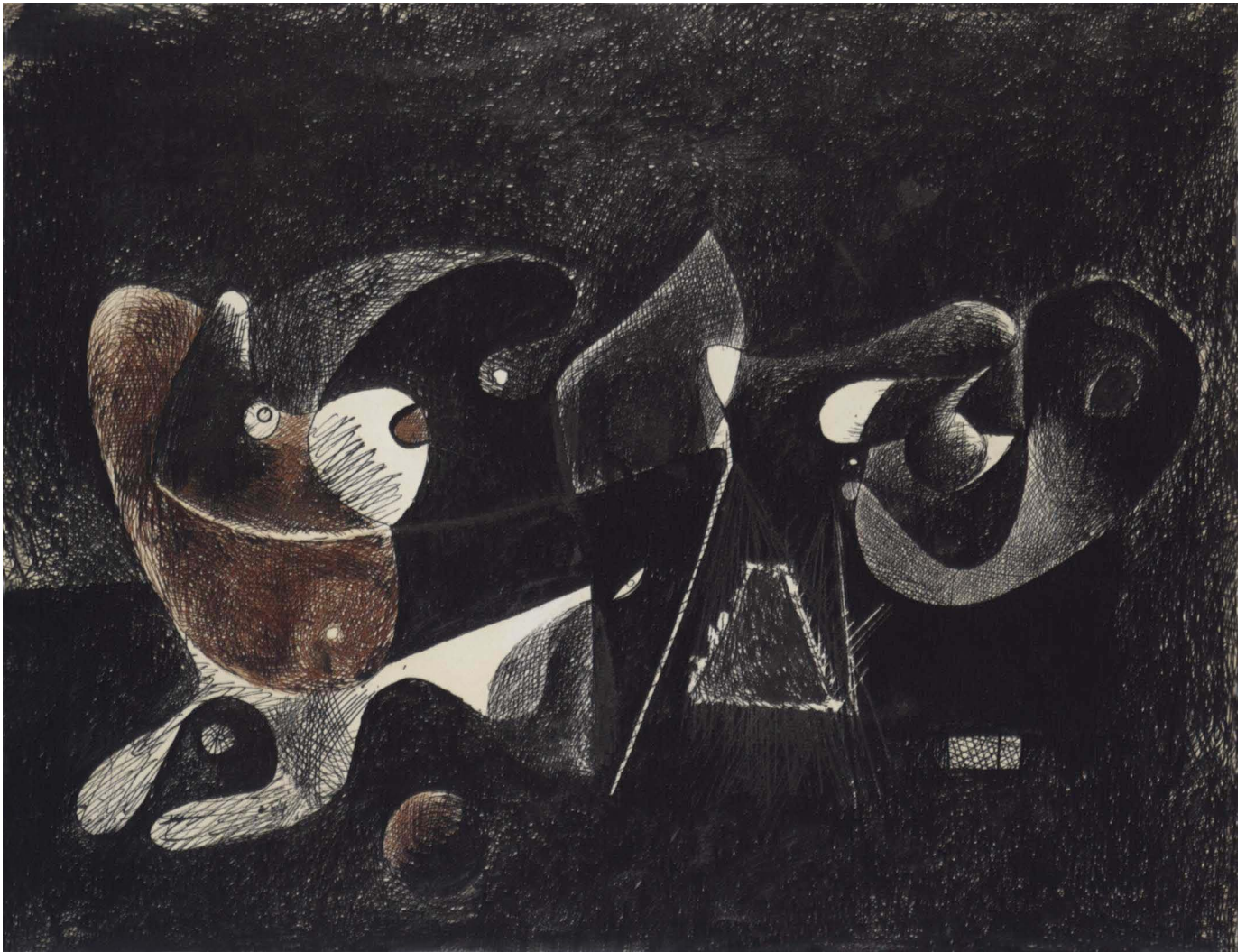
Notes

1. Emily Genauer, quoted in Melvin P. Lader, "Arshile Gorky: A Modern Artist in the Academic Tradition," in *Arshile Gorky, Works on Paper* [exh. cat., Peggy Guggenheim Collection] (Venice, 1992), 23.

2. *The Fatal Temple*, 1913, which Gorky would have seen in the Gallatin Collection. See *Arshile Gorky and the Genesis of Abstraction: Drawings from the Early 1930s* [exh. cat., Art Museum, Princeton University] (New York, 1994), 46.

Arshile Gorky,
Nighttime,
Enigma, and
Nostalgia, 1932,
pen and ink,
National
Gallery of Art,
Washington,
Gift of Mr. and
Mrs. Herbert
A. Goldstone,
1992





KÄTHE KOLLWITZ
German, 1867–1945

**Self-Portrait,
Drawing, 1933**

charcoal
479 × 635 mm
(18¾ × 25)
Rosenwald Collection,
1943

Self-Portrait, Drawing, is one of Kollwitz's greatest works. In this large-scale, grand image, devoid of any setting, the sixty-six-year-old artist represented herself, arm outstretched, ready to lay charcoal to the invisible sheet before her. Facing left, hair combed up into her characteristic bun, she gazes intently at her easel, represented with amazing economy by a single slanted line. Kollwitz used the side of the charcoal to rub the portrait onto this sheet of textured paper, lending a certain flatness to the head. By contrast, her right hand, with the fingers firmly curved around the fragile stick, seems to emerge from the page into the viewer's space. The few but powerful marks on the paper are counterpointed by the eloquent blankness of the rest of the sheet. Most surprising is the smudged zigzag that connects the equally balanced hand and head across the center expanse. This electric stroke, pure movement, suggests the dynamic link between the idea of Kollwitz's artistic intelligence and the concrete act of making.

Within the large corpus of self-portraits, there are very few in which Kollwitz has depicted herself working. Rather, many show her contemplatively regarding the viewer (figure). By contrast, this work seems more a portrait of the process of "making" than of merely the person herself. And the picture is self-referential: itself drawn in

charcoal, it could easily be the very sheet that Kollwitz is creating as she portrays herself here.

Indeed, the artist would cleave to her work in this year of 1933, as Hitler came to power in Germany. She announced the event in her diary with the terse, horrified comment, "The Third Reich begins."¹ The years that followed would see Kollwitz dismissed from her position as professor of art at the Prussian Academy of Arts, her work declared "degenerate" by the Nazi regime, her beloved grandson slain in combat, and her retreat into "inner exile" in her own country. She never ceased her life's work, however, concentrating on making prints and sculpture that continued to address the central themes of her art—mothers, children, death, and opposition to war—until her home in Berlin was bombed. In 1944 Kollwitz sought sanctuary in the countryside near Dresden (see cat. 1), and died there quietly on 22 April 1945.

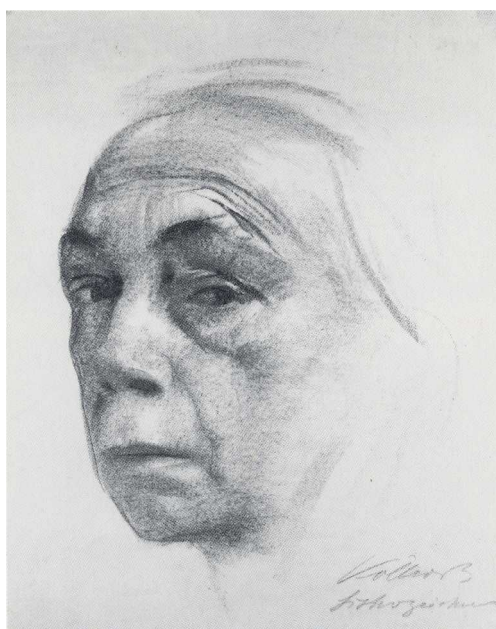
ELIZABETH PRELINGER

Provenance

Dr. Alfred Rose; Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1942.

Note

1. Entry of January 1933, in Käthe Kollwitz, *Die Tagebücher*, ed. Jutta Bohnke-Kollwitz (Berlin, 1989), 673.



Käthe Kollwitz, *Self-Portrait*, 1924, crayon with pen and ink on transfer paper, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection, 1954





66

KARL

SCHMIDT-ROTLUFF

German, 1884–1976

Yellow Iris, c. 1935

watercolor over graphite

688 × 487 mm

(27 1/16 × 19 3/16)

Rosenwald Collection,

1945

In 1933 Karl Schmidt-Rottluff was expelled from the Academy of Arts in Berlin. In 1937 six hundred works of his were confiscated and sixty-one of them included in the infamous “degenerate” art show held that year in Munich. Officially ordered to stop painting, Schmidt-Rottluff was placed under police surveillance in 1941. All of these events happened shortly before or after the creation of *Yellow Iris*. Yet the image betrays no disturbance. It is a superb example of the artist’s lifelong fascination with nature and a marvelous summation of aesthetic concerns developed over many years as a painter.

The vantage point is low, level with the flowering iris. The subject is both reassuring and awe-inspiring. It is pleasing simply to gaze at the spectacular blooms of this majestic plant. And it is wondrous to contemplate the primal, enigmatic forces of nature evident in its form. The depiction ultimately derives from the romantic movement of the early nineteenth century and its emphasis on the exotic and mysterious. This attitude was revived in the early twentieth century by members of *Die Brücke* (The Bridge), a group of German expressionists who filtered nature through the lens of their personal ideas and beliefs.

Schmidt-Rottluff was the youngest of the founding members and the one who supposedly suggested the name *Die Brücke*. Like his colleagues, he too regarded nature as a triumphant force whose rhythms and majesty had become alienated from man through capitalism and urbanization. Nature was chosen as subject matter not only for its beauty but also for its didactic message. The intent was to reawaken humanity to the transcendent wonder of nature and to reintegrate mankind into the seamless continuum of its cyclical rhythms.

Over the years Schmidt-Rottluff developed a distinctive style. Forms, although recognizable, are reduced to their essentials, delineated with emphatic outlines, and covered with broad strokes of bright, fluid colors. The tones in *Yellow Iris*—yellow, green, red, and blue—are few in number and carefully placed to harmonize with one another.

The individual colors are made more intense by the whiteness of the underlying paper, which gives them an inner luminosity that is accentuated by their placement next to other, equally lustrous, colors.

The result is an array of bold forms and bright colors arranged across the surface of the sheet. This emphasis on pattern allowed Schmidt-Rottluff to meld a depiction of flowering irises into an overall abstract structure. The vibrant colors and forceful contours remove the subject from the everyday and transform it into a scene of mystery and enchantment. It is this compositional dynamic that leads the viewer to a deeper contemplation of the interdependence between man and nature that is at the basis of *Yellow Iris*.

CHRISTOPHER WITH

Provenance

Karl Buchholz; Office of the Alien Property Custodian, 8 December 1944, lot 75; Lessing J. Rosenwald.

HENRI MATISSE

French, 1869–1954

Self-Portrait, 1937

charcoal

340 × 285 mm

(13 3/8 × 11 3/16)

Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1985

In 1937 while at Nice, Matisse drew three self-portraits that vary from a large bust-length view of himself,¹ to the close-up study of his face seen here, to an even more compressed view where the edges of the paper crop three sides of Matisse's image—the bottom of his beard, his ear, and the top of his forehead.² Although the sequence of the execution of these drawings is unknown, it would appear that as the artist continued to observe his features he concentrated his attention on his mouth, his eyes behind a pair of wire-rimmed glasses, and the bold ridge of his nose. Each self-portrait conveys the sense of a rather stern person, his brow furrowed in concentration.

The serious, rather forbidding expression shared by these self-portraits is enforced by Matisse's brisk, authoritative draftsmanship. Each of the portraits began with a layer of charcoal spread over the area of the head. An eraser was then used to remove parts of this ground, creating highlights that model the proper left side of Matisse's face and beard, the nose, and the furrowed brow. The artist then added details in heavy charcoal such as the eyes, glasses, and the specific shape of his nose and ear.

In his 1947 essay "Exactitude Is Not Truth," Matisse wrote about another group of self-portrait drawings:

Nevertheless the different elements which go to make up these four drawings give in the same measure the organic makeup of the subject. These elements, if they are not always indicated in the same way, are still always wedded in each drawing with the same feeling—the way in which the nose is rooted in the face—the ear screwed into the skull—the lower jaw hung—the way in which the glasses are placed on the nose and ears—the tension of the gaze and its uniform density in all the drawings—even though the shade of expression varies in each one.

It is quite clear that this sum total of elements describes the same man, as to his character and his personality, his way of looking at things and his reaction

to life, and as to the reserve with which he faces it and which keeps him from an uncontrolled surrender to it. It is indeed the same man, one who always remains an attentive spectator of life and of himself.³

Matisse's 1947 essay went on to explain that in his portraiture he always strove to find "the inherent truth of the personality" he was studying. The act of drawing was for him the essential way to arrive at a more profound understanding of his model. In the National Gallery's portrait Matisse presents himself as a serious, somewhat remote figure. He is very much a master in command of his art, an interpretation underscored by the assurance with which he drew this image.

VICTOR CARLSON

Provenance

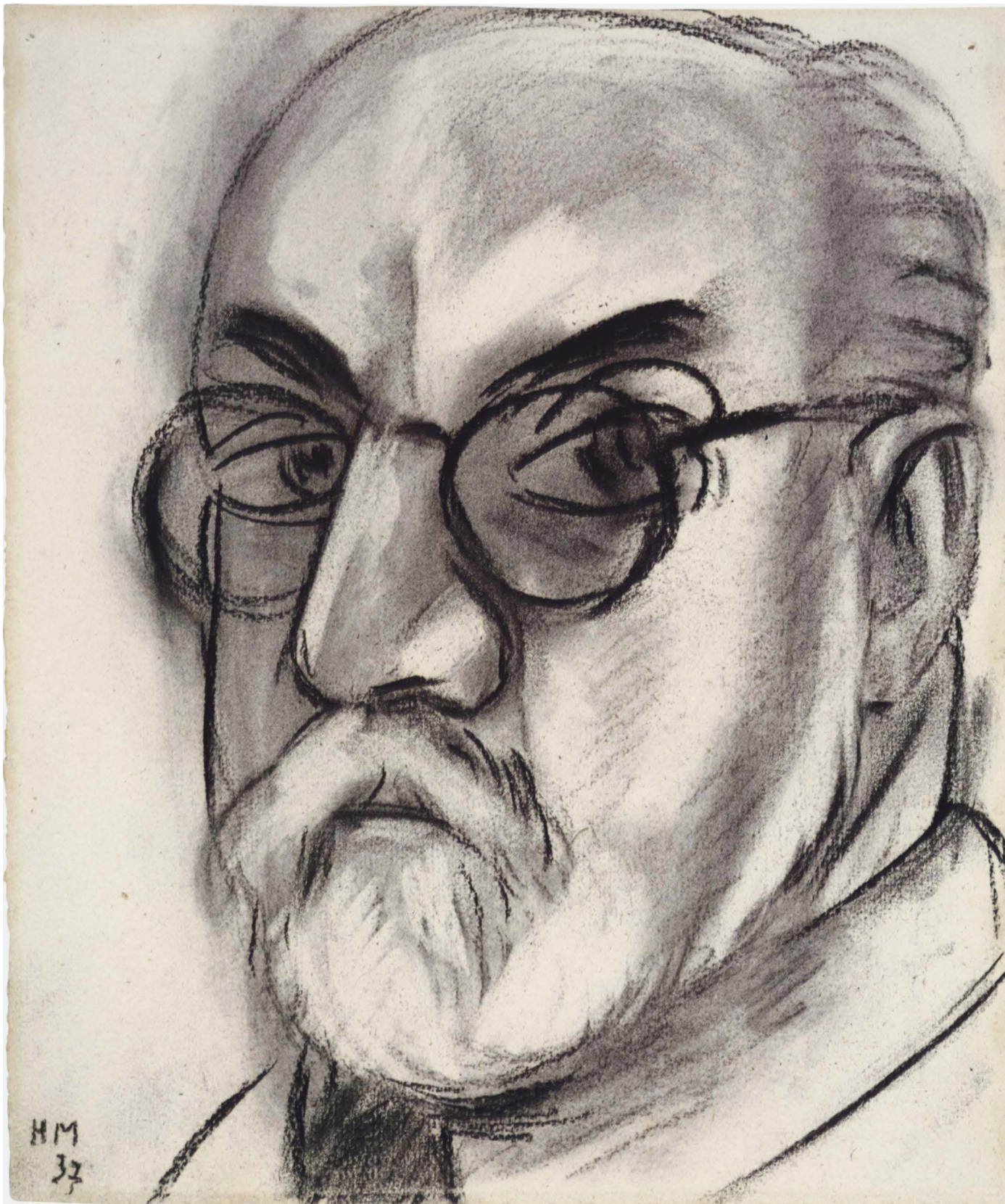
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, by 1948; Dr. and Mrs. T. Edward Hanley, Bradford, PA; E. V. Thaw & Co., New York, 1970; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon.

2. Reproduced in John Elderfield, *Drawings of Henri Matisse* [exh. cat., Hayward Gallery] (London, 1984), 87.

3. Quoted in Jack D. Flam, *Matisse on Art* (New York, 1973), 119.

Notes

1. Reproduced in Victor Carlson, *Matisse as a Draughtsman* [exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art] (Baltimore, 1971), 59.



EMIL NOLDE

German, 1867–1956

Anemones, c. 1937

watercolor over graphite

on Japanese paper

235 × 469 mm

(9 ¼ × 18 7/16)

Gift of Mrs. John

Alexander Pope, 1995

This splendid watercolor of anemones is, remarkably, the third work of its kind to enter the National Gallery of Art collection recently—all of them burningly intense, close-up, compressed displays of flowers from Emil Nolde's 1930s garden in Seebüll on the Frisian coast of northwest Germany.¹ It was on this site that the artist made his most ambitious garden, with its floral inhabitants becoming the frequent subject of his work, and it was in this beloved earth, he declared, that he and his wife should someday be buried.²

Three decades earlier Nolde had briefly associated with the younger artists of the early expressionist group *Die Brücke*, and he had had a decided impact on their work.³ The deep spirituality he sensed in the forces of nature and the union he craved with those mystical energies were evident from these earlier times and collegial affiliations. It was also during these years, as he matured from an early impressionist style into a more fully expressionist idiom, that he made his first, dazzling floral images.

By the 1930s the very materials he used became part of his ongoing effort to draw out and make visible the aesthetic workings of his subconscious mind. His water-soaked papers would free the pigments to flow from his brush, seemingly in occult cooperation with his subliminal directions. He reveled as he watched paper, pigments, and his innermost spirit apparently merging in wonderfully mysterious creative action.⁴ Sometimes, as with this drawing, he even applied some watercolor to the verso, enjoying the effect of the color seeping through the paper.

VIRGINIA TUTTLE CLAYTON

Provenance

Mrs. John Alexander Pope, Washington, DC.

Notes

1. The two other floral watercolors by Nolde are *Red and Yellow Poppies and a Blue Delphinium*, Gift of Alexander M. and Judith W. Laughlin; and *Sun-flowers, Pink and White Dahlias, and a Blue Delphinium*, Gift of Margaret Mellon Hitchcock.

2. Werner Haftmann, *Emil Nolde* (New York, 1959), 36; Martin Urban, "Die Stiftung Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde," in Walter Jens, *Emil Nolde* [exh. cat., Württembergischer Kunstverein] (Stuttgart, 1988), 236–237; Peter Selz, *Emil Nolde* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1963), 49.

3. Haftmann 1959, 22–23.

4. Haftmann 1959, 34–35.



69

JOSEPH STELLA

American, 1877–1946

Eggplant, c. 1939

colored pencil and
crayon

514 × 406 mm

(20 ¼ × 16)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

James T. Dyke, 1996

This striking drawing is a paragon of the way in which artists draw attention to seemingly mundane objects and cause the viewer to see them in a new way. Here a hefty violet aubergine with green striations huddles in an indeterminate space—is it a tabletop, the normal place one would expect to see a still life? or is it an upside-down landscape, as the topsy-turvy green upper half and blue lower register seem to suggest? An affinity with the landscapes-*cum*-still lifes of the surrealists, such as those by René Magritte, manifests itself through the presence of the cloudlike shapes in the background and the ambiguous sense of scale overall. The decontextualization of the eggplant not only heightens one's awareness of the drawing's subject but also focuses attention on the manner in which the image has been made. Layer on layer of colored hatching articulates the sensuous curves of the vegetable; scratching out excavates contours and highlights.

The self-referential techniques described above confirm Joseph Stella as a practitioner of high modernist aesthetic strategies. The intense concentration on a single mysterious and symbolic object allies Stella's drawing with the output of the literary imagists (for example, the famous poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" by William Carlos Williams). The voluptuous fullness of the fruit and the accentuated phallic forms in this drawing recall Georgia O'Keeffe's still-life paintings of the early 1920s. In addition, this work's disorienting close-up focus and shallow, compressed space correspond with features found in the early still-life photographs of Paul Strand. Stella, who frequented the avant-garde circles of Manhattan in the early twentieth century, would have been well acquainted with such artists and poets and their ideas and oeuvres.

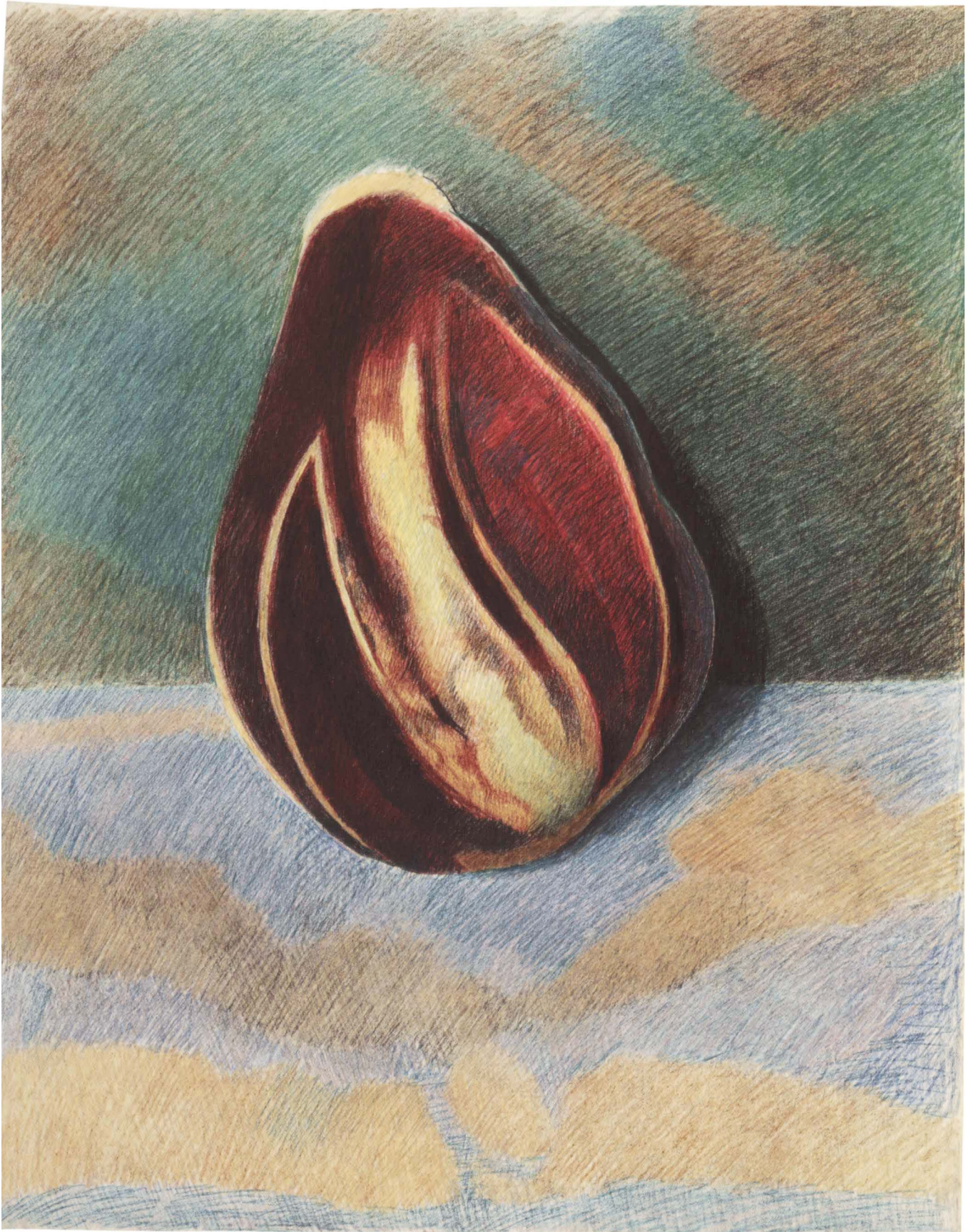
This sheet dates from late in Stella's career, after he had abandoned a peculiarly New York version of futurism for a highly

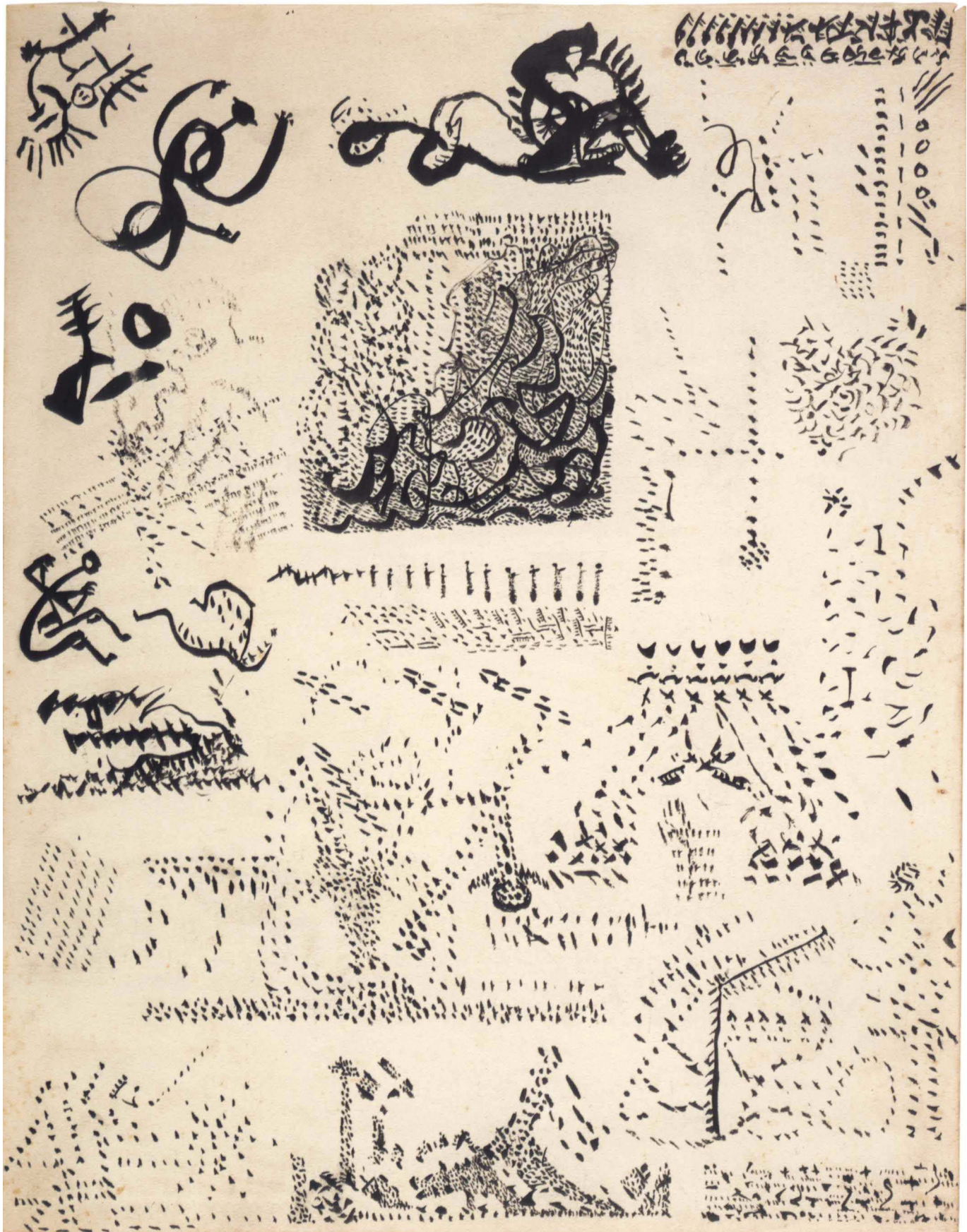
stylized and personal symbolist style. Any single "meaning" of *Eggplant* might continue to elude viewers into the twenty-first century, but one may well wonder at this drawing's immediacy and beauty.

JONATHAN F. WALZ

Provenance

One of the artist's brothers; private collection, Westchester County, New York; Richard York Gallery, New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.





JACKSON POLLOCK
American, 1912–1956

Untitled,
c. 1939/1942

brush and ink
450 × 352 mm
(17 5/8 × 13 7/8)
Leonard R. Stachura
Fund, 1985

Although no single drawing or painting can account for Jackson Pollock's inventiveness, this work from early in his career is notably revealing. Here Pollock explored the expressive potential of a brush loaded with black ink. Using the sheet from edge to edge, the artist laid down an array of marks: nervous dashes, pointillist dots, repetitive taps, and densely saturated lines that swell and taper. Considering that within a decade Pollock would turn his attention to the potential for "dripped" paint, this drawing seems remarkably prescient.

The sources of Pollock's inspiration are well documented and include tribal art, Picasso's works, automatic drawing, and psychoanalytic theory—all present here to some degree. Pictographic forms in various stages of resolution appear at the upper left, and a contorted Picasso-like motif dominates the top center of the composition, the latter probably related to the studies for *Guernica* that Pollock saw in New York City in 1939 and 1940.¹ The drawing's extemporaneous nature suggests a visual stream of consciousness, demonstrating Pollock's reliance on automatic drawing as a means of gaining access to his unconscious. And psychosymbolic references to Jungian theory are likely evident in the forms based on axial designs occupying the lower half of the sheet.

A source that has received less attention but is suggested in this case and others is jazz, which Pollock loved and listened to incessantly. His wife recalled that for days running "he would get into grooves of listening to his jazz records" and that he considered this music form the only other "really creative thing happening."² Pollock's highly improvisational composition shares many of the features of jazz, not least the "riff" of short repetitive markings that animate the sheet and serve as texture for its more commanding rhythms.

Although certain forms can be identified and related to particular sources, the drawing defies specific interpretation. Indeed its meaning resides almost entirely within its making, a precept that would fully overtake Pollock's work after 1947 and would prove

to be his most profound influence on succeeding generations.³ It is hard to imagine Cy Twombly's vaulting scrawls or Brice Marden's allover wanderings (cats. 128 and 135) without the example of Pollock.

This was one of twenty-nine drawings that traveled in the first Pollock retrospective in 1958.⁴ O'Connor and Thaw's catalogue raisonné places it with 155 drawings assigned to the years 1939/1942, when the artist was undergoing Jungian analysis.⁵ Pollock shared more than half of these drawings, mostly modest and sketchy, with his analyst, and they have been the subject of much scholarly interpretation.⁶ Although this sheet has chronological and stylistic ties to the group, it stands emphatically apart, both in its ambition and extraordinary degree of ingenuity and resolution. It is not a "therapy" sheet. It is a work of art in the larger sense—inspired, free-flowing, and masterfully orchestrated.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

The artist to Lee Krasner;
Krasner Pollock estate.

Notes

1. *Guernica* and related studies were exhibited at the Valentine Gallery, 5–29 May 1939. Between November 1939 and January 1940, the Museum of Modern Art held a major Picasso retrospective, *Picasso: Forty Years of His Art*, which featured 344 works, including *Guernica* and its related studies. For reproductions of the studies, see Ellen C. Oppler, ed., *Picasso's "Guernica"* (New York, 1988), figs. 1–75. See especially studies for the wounded horse.

2. See Francine du Plessix and Cleve Gray's interview with Lee Krasner in "Who Was Jackson Pollock?" *Art in America* 55 (May–June 1967), 48–51, republished in Pepe Karmel, ed., *Jackson Pollock: Interviews, Articles, and Reviews* (New York, 1999), 34. For Pollock's ties to jazz, see

Andrew Kagan, "Improvisations: Notes on Jackson Pollock and the Black Contribution to American High Culture," *Arts Magazine* 53 (March 1979), 96–99.

3. See Jeremy Lewison, *Interpreting Pollock* (London, 1999), 9.

4. The exhibition, which circulated to seven cities in Europe, was curated by Frank O'Hara and organized by the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art.

5. Francis V. O'Connor and Eugene V. Thaw, eds., *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1978), 3:487–642. The present drawing is no. 641.

6. The National Gallery of Art's drawing is not one of those. For the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition, see C. L. Wysuph, *Jackson Pollock: Psychoanalytic Drawings* (New York, 1970).

PAUL KLEE

Swiss, 1879–1940

Rechts unfreundlich,
1940brush and dry pigment
mixed with paste

204 × 353 mm

(8 1/16 × 13 7/8)

Promised Gift of the
Judith Rothschild
Foundation

Beginning around 1937 Klee's style and imagery underwent a dramatic change. Setting aside his delicate line for one that is notably blunt, Klee abandoned intricacy for simplicity. Color was largely dismissed, and the pace of his output accelerated. Klee had much to impart and little time left to him.

The artist had been diagnosed in 1935 with scleroderma, a disease affecting the body's connective tissue that can lead to fatal complications. Symptoms include tightening of the skin and muscular weakness, which has prompted some to attribute the change in Klee's style to impaired dexterity. In truth, his handwriting by 1940 was looser, but the penned inscription on the mount of this drawing confirms that it was still unusually fine and precise.

What primarily seemed to fuel the profound transformation in Klee's work was a sense of urgency. Confronted with his mortality, Klee sought a more direct and efficient means of expression. In 1939, the year before he died, Klee's output increased five-fold. Even in the four working months he had in 1940, he managed to make more than 350 pieces.¹ His wife described a continuous flow in which "sheet after sheet fell to the floor," and Klee himself lamented that he could "no longer quite keep up with [his] children," an affectionate reference to his artworks.²

Dominating *Rechts unfreundlich* (Downright Unfriendly) are two forms defined with an economy of strokes. The larger one, hovering between abstraction and figuration, extends nearly the length of the sheet. To its left approaches a smaller and more humanoid figure, its limbs splayed and head forward. In the event of a confrontation—and one may be looming—the figure on the right with its sicklelike appendage clearly has the upper hand.

Klee's work generally defies categorization within the "isms" of twentieth-century art. But he was not oblivious to artistic developments in Europe and America, nor did his achievements go unnoticed by his peers and younger generations. Indeed it is a revelation to compare this drawing with one by David Smith made nearly twenty

years later (cat. 95). Beyond the striking formal correspondence, even their respective materials were remarkably alike. For late works such as this, Klee concocted a thick paint made from pigment and paste that had a viscous quality when applied to paper. Smith also prepared his own medium: a mixture of ink and egg yolk with similar properties.

The titles Klee assigned to his works are often a key to their interpretation. His earlier titles tend toward specificity, whereas later ones frequently lack a grammatical subject or external referent, emphasizing actions and emotions. Here Klee subtly distorts the expression "downright unfriendly" [*Recht unfreundlich*] by using the plural "Rechts" and thus skewing it to mean "unfriendly on the right." Thus the viewer's attention is directed to the right-hand form poised to swallow, in "downright unfriendly" fashion, the head of the figure on the left. Klee may additionally be referring to Nazi Germany's political right. In either case, the title underscores the ominous sense of an advancing threat.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

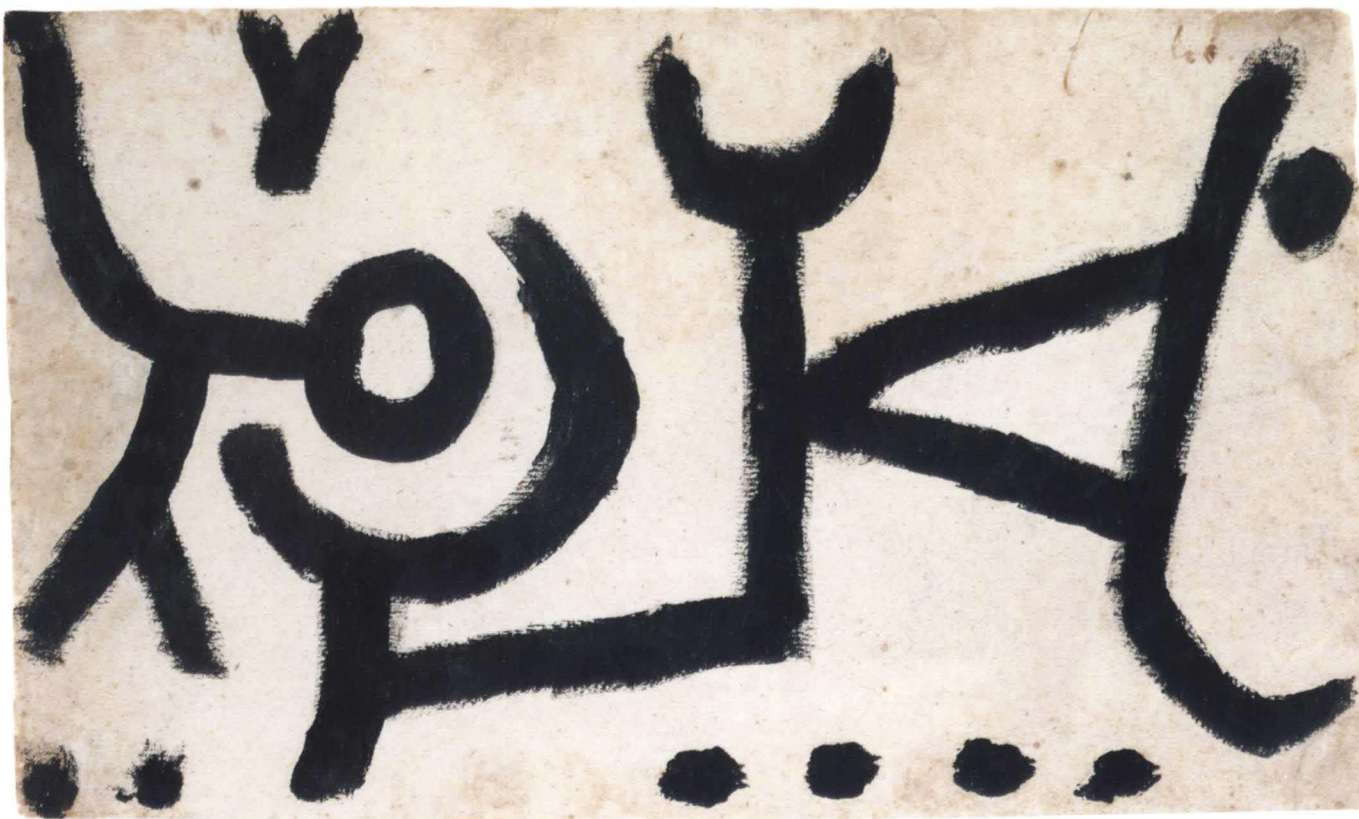
Lily Klee, Bern (1940–1946); Klee-Gesellschaft, Bern (1946–1951); Galerie Rosengart, Lucerne (1949–1951); A. Didier Graeffe, Gainesville, 1951; The Judith Rothschild Foundation.

Notes

1. Klee kept a meticulous inventory of his works. On average he completed about 265 per year. In 1938 the figure rose to

490, and in 1939 it stood at 1,253. See Marcel Francisocono, *Paul Klee: His Thought and Work* (Chicago, 1991), 287.

2. Lily Klee to Will Grohmann, 8 July 1937; quoted in Jürgen Glaesemer, *Paul Klee: Handzeichnungen III: 1937–1940* (Bern, 1979), 27. And Paul Klee, letter of 29 December 1939, in *Briefe an die Familie 1893–1940*, ed. Felix Klee, 2 vols. (Cologne, 1979), 2:1295.



CHARLES SHEELER

American, 1883–1965

Interior, 1940tempera over graphite
on gessoed composition
board

248 × 302 mm

(9 ¾ × 11 7/8)

Gift of Herbert A.

Goldstone, 1996

Sheeler's interest in still life was long-standing, and he explored it in a wide range of media: oil, watercolor, gouache, tempera, pencil, conté crayon, charcoal, chalk, crayon, and photography. In the early 1920s he created a number of works depicting objects arranged on tabletops, one of the enduring standards of still-life painting.¹ In the mid-1920s he produced a splendid series of floral still lifes, and from 1926 to 1934, a group of paintings of interiors with objects from his collection of early American furniture and decorative arts. Although his fondness for still life seems to have waned after the mid-1930s, he did take up the theme again from time to time, often with especially beautiful results.

Interior is set in Sheeler's home in Ridgefield, Connecticut, where he had moved in 1932. It depicts a Shaker table with a cleated end, a black Etruscan pitcher, and a simple bowl. At the right are a window and a lamp shade, both cropped by the edge of the composition. The left side is bracketed by a wooden form that may be an architectural element or part of a large piece of furniture. At first the image may seem straightforward, uncomplicated, and even austere in its simplicity, but it is remarkably complex. As in some of his earlier still lifes (see *Cactus*, 1931, Philadelphia Museum of Art), Sheeler lit the scene very brightly and from different angles, probably using some of his photographic lights. As a result, the three-dimensional objects are counterbalanced by intense, sharply drawn shadows and reflections that seem equally weighty, even though they are insubstantial. The inconsistencies of the direction of the light (from the left to illuminate the pitcher, but from above to light the lamp shade), the absence of shadows where one might logically expect to see them (behind the bowl on the wall, for example), and the odd, inexplicable relationship between the table legs and what seems to be the floor all work against the illusion of reality. Instead, the emphasis on abstract qualities of shape and form recalls cubism, the principles of which Sheeler had mastered much earlier. On the other hand, the mood of airless silence is akin to the effect

of surrealist paintings by Giorgio di Chirico, Salvador Dali, and others, whose works Sheeler knew as well.

Interior is one of the most beautiful of Sheeler's later still lifes. Despite its small size, it seems more monumental than intimate, its forms and shapes powerfully defined and rigorously locked into space. This drawing, along with *Interior with Stove* (cat. 63), two other drawings (including cat. 82), four photographs, and the great 1931 oil *Classic Landscape*, helps give the National Gallery of Art a fittingly strong representation of Sheeler's masterful achievements as photographer, painter, and draftsman.

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

Downtown Gallery, New York; Mr. Huntington D. Sheldon; Downtown Gallery, New York; Mrs. Rand, New York; Robert Carlen, Philadelphia; Herbert A. Goldstone, New York.

Note

1. Carol Troyen and Erica E. Hirschler, *Charles Sheeler: Paintings and Drawings* [exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts] (Boston, 1987), 160.



HENRY MOORE

British, 1898–1986

Figures in an Underground Shelter, 1941

crayon, watercolor, ink, and colored chalk

340 × 562 mm

(13 3/8 × 22 1/8)

Gift of Dr. Ruth B.

Benedict, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1987

On 11 September 1940 Henry Moore and his wife were detained by air-raid wardens in the London Underground.¹ This was the first occasion on which Moore saw refugees taking shelter in subway stations, far below ground.² The experience was both cathartic and catalytic. Moore explained, “I found myself strangely excited... by the unbelievable scenes... of the Underground Shelters. ... I went back again and again.... I began filling a notebook with drawings, ideas based on London’s shelter life.”³

The immediate products of this pivotal episode in Moore’s career are 162 pages in two sketchbooks, which he drew from memory after his Underground visits.⁴ Over the next year Moore developed from these prototypes some seventy large finished drawings.⁵ Exhibitions of these probing yet sympathetic renditions of such a contemporary subject won Moore an enthusiastic public audience. The private sale of many of them enabled him to give up part-time teaching and devote himself full time to his sculpture, on which especially the group compositions and drapery studies of the shelter drawings had an immediate and profound influence.

This superb sheet is a faithful enlargement of a drawing in the second shelter sketchbook.⁶ The prototype also prefigures its unusual technique. Moore had discovered that by laying down preliminary lines in white wax crayon and then washing over them with watercolor the tone would “take” only outside the crayon strokes; if the lines were then scraped free of wax and colored over again, more delicate tones could be made to adhere to their still-visible forms.⁷ In the present drawing this technique is most apparent in the vertical texturing of the background, in the foreground highlights, and in the ghostly structures of the figures themselves.

The nature and meaning of the images in the shelter drawings have received much attention, beginning with Moore’s own statement that he strove in them for “the creation of a unified human mood. The pervading theme of the shelter drawings was the group sense of communion in apprehension.”⁸ Moore wrote above the prelimi-

nary sketch for this composition, “Two or three people under one blanket, uncomfortable positions, distorted twistings.”⁹ These formal and psychological tensions, however, are compassionately resolved by Moore’s affecting rediscovery of humanity united and transfigured by suffering. “I was very conscious in the shelter drawings,” he said, “that I was related to the people in the Underground.... There was no discarding of [my] other interests in archaic [and] primitive... art, but rather a clearer tension between this approach and the humanist emphasis... perhaps a temporary resolution of that conflict.”¹⁰ Such a resolution is achieved here by Moore’s opposing strengths of naturalistic accuracy and originality of vision. The gravely somber rhythms of his figure groupings suggest timeless images of endurance, monumentality, and grandeur. His idiomatic invention of a generic new race populates these drawings with haunting echoes of Everyman.

DOUGLAS LEWIS

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Sir Kenneth Clark, 1941; Marlborough Gallery, London, 1966–1967; William S. and Ruth B. Benedict, late 1960s.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

1. Alan G. Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore* (New York, 1984), 300.

2. Alan G. Wilkinson, *The Drawings of Henry Moore* [exh. cat., Art Gallery of Ontario] (Toronto, 1977), 29.

3. Letter of 11 January 1943, in James Johnson Sweeney, *Henry Moore* (New York, 1946), 67–68.

4. Sweeney 1946, 91, no. 78; Kenneth Clark, *Henry Moore Drawings* (London, 1974), 320, no. 139; Toronto 1977, 29–32, 152, n. 5; E. Petermann, *Die Shelterzeichnungen des Henry Moore* [exh. cat., Staatsgalerie] (Stuttgart, 1967), preface to catalogue

section. See Donald Hall, *Henry Moore* (New York, 1966), 106–107.

5. Toronto 1977, 32 (estimating sixty-five finished drawings); Julian Andrews, *Henry Moore: Shelter and Coal Mining Drawings* [exh. cat., Nationalgalerie, Berlin] (London, 1984), 10 (estimating seventy-five).

6. Stuttgart 1967, no. 21; John Russell, *Henry Moore* (New York, 1968), 83 (fig. 85 top); Berlin 1984, 54 (fig. 34 top).

7. Herbert Read, *Henry Moore* (New York and Washington, 1966), 149; Philip James, *Henry Moore on Sculpture* (London, 1966), 218; Hall 1966, 103.

8. James 1966, 103, 218.

9. Stuttgart 1967, nos. 6, 21, 25; Russell 1968, 83 (fig. 85), 85 (fig. 86); Robert Melville, *Henry Moore: Sculpture and Drawings 1921–1969* (London, 1970), 133, fig. 274.

10. James 1966, 216–218; Toronto 1977, 29.



ARSHILE GORKY

American, born in
Armenia, 1904–1948

**Virginia Landscape,
1944**

graphite and crayon

558 × 762 mm

(22 × 30)

Gift (Partial and
Promised) of Mrs. Walter
Salant, in Honor of
the 50th Anniversary
of the National Gallery
of Art, 1991

“Gorky is, of all the surrealist artists, the only one who maintains direct contact with nature—sits down to paint *before her*,” the surrealist poet André Breton wrote in 1945.¹ Three years earlier Gorky had rediscovered the pleasure of drawing outdoors during a stay in Connecticut with his artist friend Saul Schary. From then on, almost every year until his death in 1948, he would spend the summer drawing in the open air. *Virginia Landscape* was inspired by the countryside near Hamilton, Virginia, where his in-laws owned property and where he lived with his family from May to November 1944.

The drawing presents the basic structure of a landscape: a horizontal format and a division in two parts, with the lower section suggesting the earth, and the upper one, the expanse of sky. Yet the clusters of organic forms and the fluttering lines that cover the paper hardly call to mind a traditional Virginia landscape. Gorky looked at nature at close range—“into the grass,” as he once said²—finding inspiration in details of flowers, plants, roots, insects, and other animals. From these details he elaborated a repertory of forms and motifs that he explored like variations on a theme. In *Virginia Landscape* the socklike motif in the center reappears in six variations throughout the drawing—smaller, reversed, or twisted, and with or without hatching to suggest its volume. Such echoes of forms animate the surface, which seems to pulse with the movement of living organisms. The vertical “plumes” of color, which scan the image at quasi-regular intervals, like the beat of a poem or a song, give the image its rhythm. Independent from the free-flowing organic shapes, short horizontal, vertical, and oblique lines structure Gorky’s composition and suggest spatial depth. They may have been inspired by Paolo Uccello’s battle scenes, in which the disorder of the battle is kept in check by the rigorous grid formed on the ground by the pieces of broken spears. Gorky, who admired Uccello, had a poster-size reproduction of his *Battle of San Romano* on his studio wall.

The year 1944 marked a high point in Gorky’s career. His contacts with the surrealists in exile in New York during World War II encouraged him to develop a much freer and more fluid style, which found superb expression in drawings such as *Virginia Landscape*. Lyrical and suggestive but never specific in its references, Gorky’s imagery appealed to the surrealists, especially to their leader André Breton, whose own poetry rested on a similar concept of multiple associations. After seeing Gorky’s drawings from Virginia, Breton convinced the dealer Julian Levy to give Gorky his first major one-man show in New York in March 1945, thereby promoting Gorky’s reputation in the avant-garde circles.

ISABELLE DERVAUX

Provenance

World House Gallery,
New York; Mr. and Mrs.
Walter Salant.

Notes

1. “The Eye-Spring: Arshile Gorky,” *Arshile Gorky* [exh. cat., Julien Levy Gallery] (New York, 1945).

2. Quoted in James Johnson Sweeney, “Five American Painters,” *Harper’s Bazaar* 78 (April 1944), 122.



MARK TOBEY

American, 1890–1976

New York, 1944

tempera on paperboard

837 × 532 mm

(33 × 21)

Gift of the Avalon

Foundation, 1976

A masterwork of early American abstraction, Mark Tobey's *New York* also marks the apogee of the artist's most renowned stylistic innovation, "white writing." With its surfeit of densely interlaced linear strokes of tempera paint built up over the soft gray surface of paperboard, this work evidences a consummate achievement among the pictorial possibilities Tobey's pioneering technique offered. While *New York* is relatively large for an artist who characteristically preferred working in formats of smaller scale, its tight mesh of marks deftly counterposes the illusion of a compressed, shallow space and sidereal bursts of line that ephemerally coalesce as flickering apprehensions of geometric shapes in perceptually unresolvable dimensionalities.

Tobey spoke of the "white dynamic flashes of line married to a geometry of space"¹ he sought to materialize in works such as this one. This governing idea of a "geometry of space" signals the artist's self-identification as a decisively postcubist painter. As was true for many young American artists of his generation, for Tobey the effect of seeing the Armory Show in 1913 was powerful and transformative. Visiting the exhibition at its Chicago venue, he encountered there some of the most challenging statements of European avant-garde art, including Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*, a painting he experienced like "an explosion in a shingle mill."² His subsequent desire to "smash form," "penetrate perspective and bring the far near," and explore the "dimensionless dimension" of abstract surfaces resulted in a unique pictorial vision of the twentieth-century cityscape.³

Compelled by the exigencies of abstraction, Tobey nevertheless distinguished himself among other abstract artists of his era by his reluctance to abandon subject matter altogether. Hence, even in a work as nonfigurative as *New York* the artist encourages the viewer, through the provision of the title, to refer its electric and vibratory surface to urban energies and rhythms: here specifically to the pulsing lights of Broadway and

the streaming movements of crowds, two of Tobey's favored city spectacles.

A generation senior to the abstract expressionists, many of whom were propelled by his precursorial example, Mark Tobey figured prominently in the seminal "Fourteen Americans" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1946. In 1958 he also became the second American in history to win the grand prize at the Venice Biennale. "In the forties I created a sensation of mass by the interlacing of myriad independent lines. In their dynamics and in the timing I gave to the accents within the lines, I attempted to create a world of finer substance."⁴ Tobey sought to weave that finer substance out of painted matter by wresting luminosity and movement out of the opacity of colored line. For Tobey, *New York* tokened a signal instance of success in his artistic goal.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Provenance

Dan Johnson and Marion Willard, New York, 1945; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

Notes

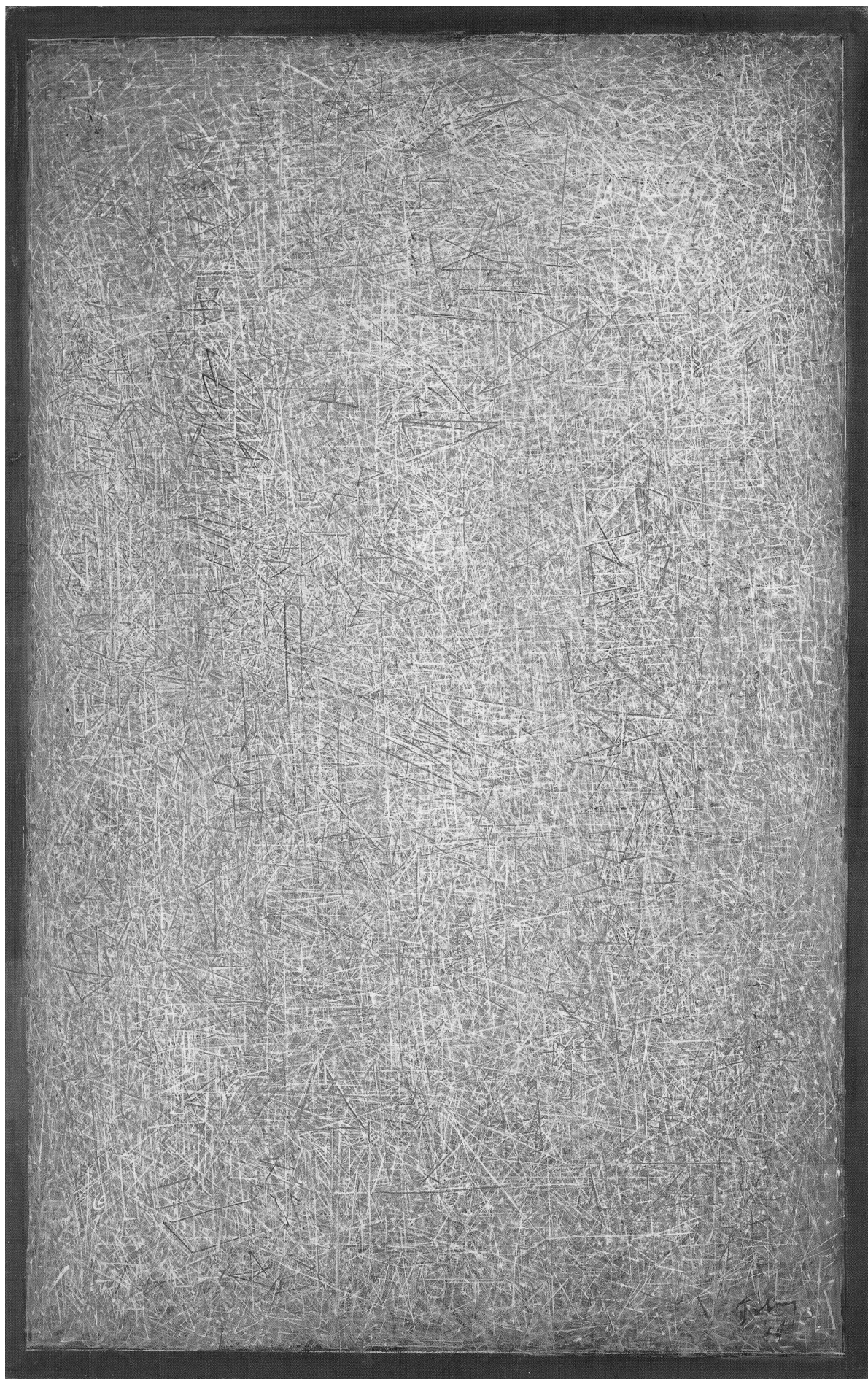
1. Quoted in Katharine Kuh, *The Artist's Voice: Talks with Seventeen Artists* (New York and Evanston, 1962), 244.

2. Quoted in John Russell, *Tobey* (Basel, 1971), 12. In 1913 the popular press disparaged Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* with the comment that it looked like "an explosion in a shingle factory." Tobey not

only changed the last word of the quip but also implicitly transformed the remark into an affirmative assessment of the work's power. For more on the reception of Duchamp's art at the Armory Show, see Milton W. Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show* (New York, 1988), 136–137.

3. Quoted in Kuh 1962, 236, 240; and Eliza E. Rathbone, *Mark Tobey: City Paintings* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1984), 49.

4. Quoted in Kuh 1962, 236.



MARK ROTHKO

American, born in
Russia, 1903–1970

Untitled, 1944/1945

watercolor, tempera,
graphite, and ink
533 × 668 mm
(21 × 26 5/16)

Gift of The Mark Rothko
Foundation, Inc., 1986

Mark Rothko's early drawings and watercolors informed his painted oeuvre in compelling ways. His aggressively incised drawing method was simulated in canvases through the early 1950s with a palette knife or the end of a brush handle. It was in watercolor that Rothko developed the syntax of fluid, sinuous motifs that became a trademark of his multiform paintings of the later 1940s. Parallels are often correctly drawn between the liquid medium of watercolor and Rothko's primordial surrealist imagery.¹ With its vaguely floral landscape, this drawing also evokes *terra firma* and flight. Composed primarily of biomorphic forms, it reveals vestiges of earlier mythological works, most notably references to birds.²

In his attempt to invest his art with tragic and timeless import, Rothko favored Aeschylus, whose *Oresteia* featured the "omen of the eagle" wherein eagles devour a pregnant hare.³ He gave one painting of 1942 this title and designated another *The Eagle and the Hare*; many more sketches, watercolors, and canvases incorporate stylized raptors and hares, or visual metonymy such as beaks, talons, and feathers.⁴ An untitled 1942 painting (figure) incorporates two hares in a "tomb" and several schematic birds. The feathers at the far left of the painting and the bird's head at the upper center (with its beak pointing down) correspond to the feathered cruciform "flower" at the left in this watercolor and the prominent beaked form evoking a bird's head at the top center.⁵

The suggestion of movement was central to Rothko's imagery of this period, and it is

conveyed in the present drawing by forms that seem to pulse or rotate in space. The blue "butterfly" at the far right, the implied bird's head, and particularly the rayed orb at center betray the influence of Joan Miró. The 1941–1942 retrospective of the Spanish surrealist's art at the Museum of Modern Art had a profound impact on Rothko, whose work was transformed by exposure to the surrealist movement. While he strove for the immediacy of automatic drawing, his planning is evident in the graphite notations on the surface of this drawing.

Rothko's surrealist watercolors were well received, especially at the Mortimer Brandt Gallery exhibition in spring 1946. Yet that show would prove a coda both to the artist's surrealist imagery and to his extensive production of watercolors. While his classic paintings, with their thin washes of luminous color, would always bear the traces of his work in this medium, it would be two decades before Rothko devoted himself with such intensity to works on paper.

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance:
Estate of the artist, 1970;
The Mark Rothko Foundation,
New York, 1979.

Notes

1. As Dore Ashton noted, "The traces of water itself—water, the medium from which all life emerged—seemed to excite his imagination and often during those years he played with floating effects." See *Mark Rothko: Works on Paper* [exh. cat., American Federation of Arts and the Mark Rothko Foundation] (New York, 1984), 10.

2. Though his direct emphasis on bird imagery is most evident in his paintings of 1942, Rothko referred to himself as an "ornithologist" in a letter to Barnett Newman in June 1947, after such motifs had been eradicated

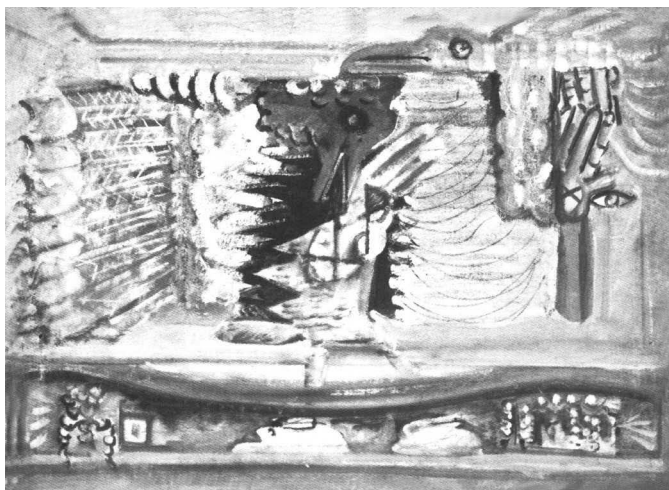
from his art (Barnett Newman Papers, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC).

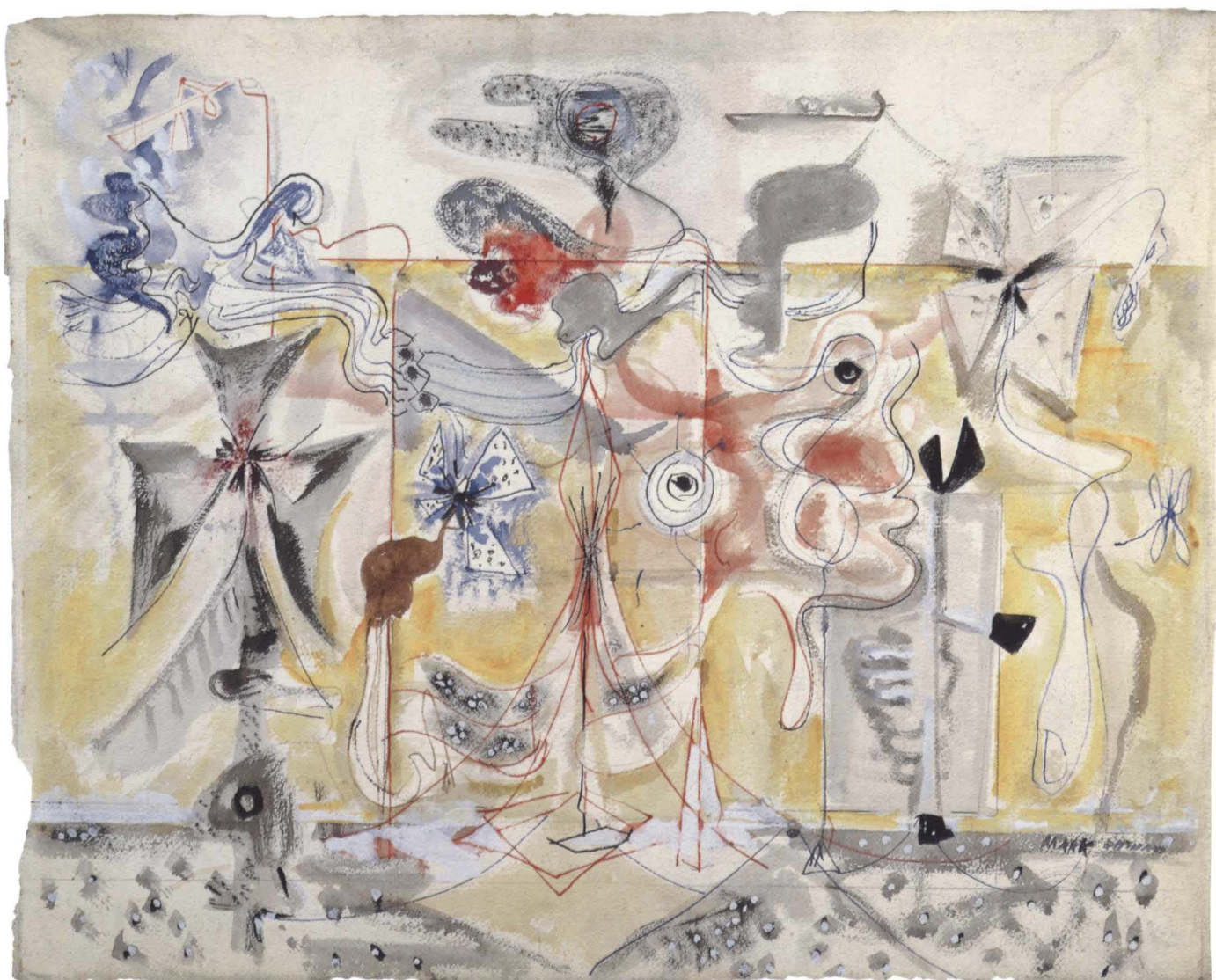
3. This omen augured the Trojan War.

4. The prevalence of such imagery just after the United States entered World War II is not surprising; see Anna Chave, *Mark Rothko: Subjects in Abstraction* (New Haven, 1989). Images of the American eagle were also omnipresent on war posters.

5. The presumed date of this drawing is within the range of the liberation of concentration camps and the victory in Europe. Thus the reappearance of this "eagle" conjoined with a feathered semblance of an Iron Cross, the German military decoration, is likely intentional.

Mark Rothko,
Untitled,
1942/1943,
oil on canvas,
National
Gallery of Art,
Gift of The
Mark Rothko
Foundation,
1986





STANLEY WILLIAM
HAYTER

British, 1901–1988

Sheet of Sketches,
1945

pen and ink with
watercolor and chalk
564 × 758 mm
(22 1/8 × 29 7/8)
Rosenwald Collection,
1946

Trained as a scientist, S. W. Hayter was well versed in theories of space, motion, and perception, and his professional articles and commentaries are packed with references to “interplanetary distance” and “parallax phenomena.” But above all Hayter was an artist and disposed to approach matters intuitively. “To trace with a point on a surface,” he wrote in 1944, “is about as elementary a human process as anything associated with expression,”¹ a conviction that goes to the very core of this dynamically penned drawing made one year later.

The artist’s trace—his line—is this work’s most essential component. In the hieroglyphic-like design at the lower left, sturdy lines in black and white are laid down with deliberation, conveying a sense of weight and groundedness. By contrast, in the sprawling horizontal and vertical motifs at the center and right, Hayter’s pen skimmed across the paper’s surface, suggesting the elastic curves of burin engraving. The allusion to printmaking is implicit not only in the sweeping curves but also in the embossed effect of the inked white lines, particularly in the elongated unit at the center, which calls to mind the deeply engraved, inkless lines of Hayter’s prints. In addition, the overall arrangement of discrete motifs corresponds to burin sketches the artist made throughout his career. Here, as in the prints, each element is independent yet rhythmically engaged with the others. A number also bear comparison to contemporaneous artists and movements—the pictographs of Adolph Gottlieb and the totemic forms of Matta (lower left), the biomorphism of Yves Tanguy (vertical right), even the sculptural configurations of Hayter’s fellow Englishman Henry Moore (upper left and lower right).

From 1926 through the 1930s Hayter was associated with the surrealists in Paris, especially Max Ernst, Alberto Giacometti, André Masson, and Joan Miró, all of whom made prints at Hayter’s workshop, Atelier 17. He favored the surrealists’ use of organic form and their reliance on automatism, “unconscious or automatic drawing.” A year after World War II broke out, Hayter trans-

ferred his printmaking operation to New York, where his shop became a locus for the exchange of American and European ideas about modernism. Exiles who congregated there in the 1940s included Masson, Miró, Tanguy, Marc Chagall, and Jacques Lipchitz. There they offered Americans such as Gottlieb, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, and David Smith firsthand exposure to European surrealism.

Experimentation was the governing principle at Atelier 17, and as Hayter observed, “all kinds of things resulted that were applied in painting and sculpture.”² Hayter, for example, used a bitumen-filled drip can suspended from a compound pendulum to produce random cyclical patterns on etching plates, a procedure often cited as a stimulus for Pollock’s “drip” paintings.³ Indeed one of the earliest mentions of Pollock in the press cites the resemblance of his work to “Hayter in general whirling figures.”⁴ Given Hayter’s emphasis on process, chance, gesture, and motion—all elements integral to this drawing—the connection to action painting is quite clear. The skeins of intertwined lines that score the surface of this sheet, accelerating and decelerating in their courses, possess a magnetic force that would have attracted an inquiring young artist such as Pollock.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Lessing J. Rosenwald, 1945.

Notes

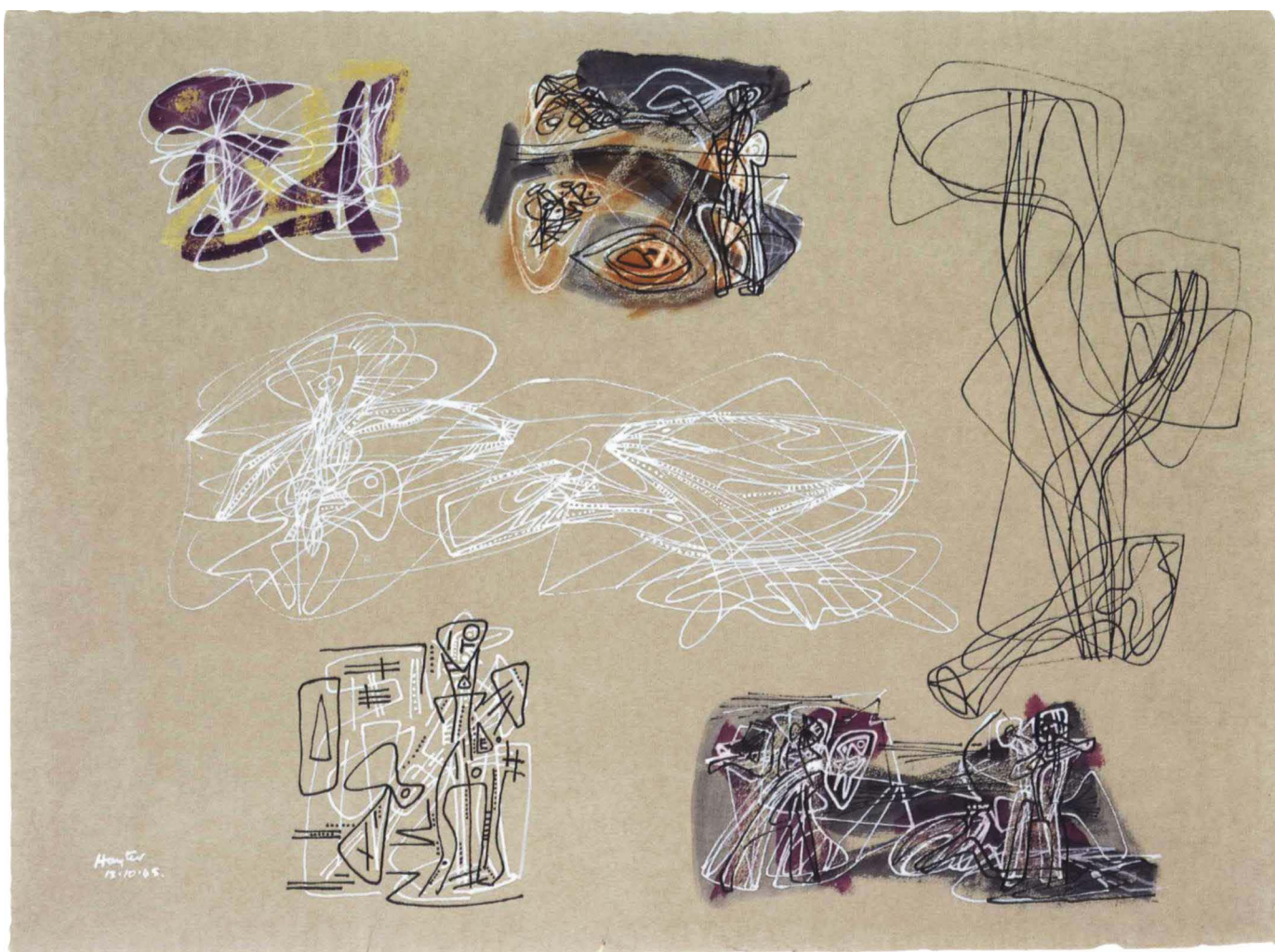
1. Stanley William Hayter, “Line and Space of the Imagination,” *View* 4 (December 1944), 127.

2. Martica Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 155.

3. See David Cohen, “S. W. Hayter and Atelier 17 in America: 1940–1955,” in

The Renaissance of Gravure: The Art of S. W. Hayter, ed. P.M.S. Hacker (Oxford, 1988), 25; Jacob Kainen, “Stanley William Hayter: An Introduction,” in Peter Black and Désirée Moorhead, *The Prints of Stanley William Hayter* (Mount Kisco, NY, 1992), 13; and Sawin 1995, 155, 207–208.

4. James Lane, “Passing Shows,” *ArtNews* 40 (15–31 January 1942), 29; as noted in Cohen 1988, 20.



JACKSON POLLOCK
American, 1912–1956

Untitled, c. 1945

pen and ink on paper
prepared with gouache
228 × 187 mm
(9 × 7³/₈)
Leonard R. Stachura
Fund, 1985

Drawing was of central importance to Jackson Pollock, and he practiced it over the course of his career with so much energy and vigor as to approach the level of obsession.¹ Although he rarely dated his drawings, scholars have constructed a convincing chronology of them through styles, influences, and relationships to his work in other media.² No dated drawings are known from 1945, but some thirty have been assigned to that year, including this one.³ Pollock was not at this point pouring and dripping his materials, so drawings such as this were made in the traditional method of applying an instrument directly to the paper. That is not to say, however, that Pollock's handling of line is in any way conventional, for the frenetic, swirling strokes present here are the hallmarks of a deeply personal and unique approach.

During the mid-1940s Pollock explored making works of art that simultaneously made references to figures (or parts of figures) and approached a nearly complete state of abstraction. In this drawing some of the swirling lines that flow across the paper describe nothing but themselves, while others trace the outline of a human face. Whose face is not known, although the distinctive cleft chin reminds one of the artist himself, raising the question of whether this may be a self-portrait. Yet the energy in all of these lines seems equally weighted, with no sense that Pollock slowed his technique when drawing the face or sped it up when tracing the abstract forms. The tension inherent between these two seemingly conflicting approaches, the one figurative and the other abstract, is part of what gives drawings like this their particular power.

Even more important are the drawing's exceptional sense of immediacy and how that immediacy serves to remind one of its creation. Looking at this drawing, it is not difficult to visualize Pollock actually making it, rushing his pen across the paper, sometimes with long, flowing strokes, other times with quick jabs. Many influences—

Picasso, Miró, surrealist automatic drawing, and so on—may lie behind a work like this, but the assertive reminder of artistic creation it presents points toward no one but Pollock himself.

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

The artist to Lee Krasner Pollock; Krasner Pollock estate.

Notes

1. Pollock's obsession with drawing has often been noted; see, for example, Bernice Rose, *Jackson Pollock: Works on Paper* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1969), 10.

2. See Francis V. O'Connor and Eugene V. Thaw, eds., *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1978), 3:vii–viii.

3. O'Connor and Thaw 1978, 3:229–248, nos. 726–755; the present drawing is no. 744.



ARSHILE GORKY

American, born in
Armenia, 1904–1948

**The Plow and the
Song, 1946**

graphite, charcoal,
crayon, pastel, and oil
122 × 150 mm
(47⁷/₈ × 59³/₈)
Gift of the Avalon
Foundation, 1971

In the 1940s, when Gorky was creating the paintings and drawings that would be his most original contribution to modern art, his working method remained highly traditional. He made numerous drawings, often directly from nature, and used them as the basis for paintings executed in the studio. In some cases—such as this—he created intermediary drawings, enlarging a study to the size of the final canvas and refining his composition before transferring it to canvas.

Close examination of this drawing reveals the marks of a study, notably in the presence of repeated contour lines to define a shape. Yet the sophistication and complexity of the drawing and of its mixed-media technique invite one to see it as a complete work of art, on a par with painted versions (see figure). Gorky probably began working on the theme in 1944,¹ but several early versions were lost in the fire that destroyed his studio in January 1946. Today three drawings and three paintings on the subject are known, making this one of the most extensive series in Gorky's oeuvre.

"What I miss are the songs in the fields," Gorky said in 1948. "No one sings them anymore.... And there are no more plows. I love a plow more than anything else on a farm."² The theme of *The Plow and the Song* is related to Gorky's fond memories of growing up in rural Armenia. Later, while living in the United States, he carved several miniature Armenian plows out of wood. Some of these soft, round shapes found their way into his drawings. The title may refer to popular Armenian harvest songs, which Gorky enjoyed singing while painting

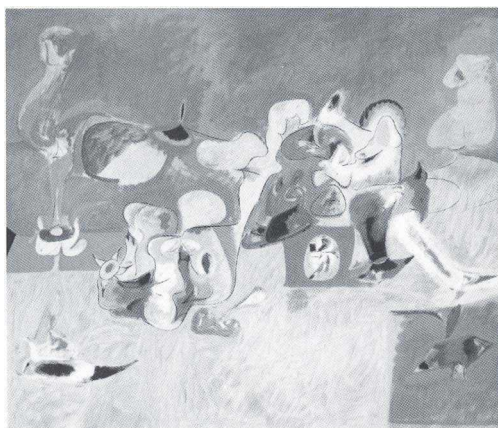
and drawing (he compared the artist's labor to that of a farmer, both participating in an act of creation).

This work also has an affinity with Armenian poetry, which often lauded the fertility of the native soil. Among the most renowned Armenian poems from the beginning of the century was "The Song of Bread" by Daniel Varoujan, a hymn to the abundance of the earth, celebrated through a rich, sensual imagery.³ Varoujan's quasi-sexual description of the earth offering herself to the plow is matched here by Gorky's voluptuous lines. Like the poem, the drawing abounds in images that suggest fertility: seeds, cells, and reproductive organs. From an ovarylike shape in the upper center a cluster of organic forms seems to sprout, ending with the motif of a flower. Ethel Schwabacher described this section as "the winding birth passage and spacious exit chambers out of which the seed passes into space."⁴

Gorky made few changes in transferring the linear design onto canvas. Although colors, values, and brushwork give the painting a different look, the drawing shows a painterly quality in the use of pastel and oil to add flickering accents of color. The shimmering surface of the drawing relates it to several grisaille paintings Gorky produced the same year, suggesting how tenuous the distinction between painting and drawing could be in his art.

ISABELLE DERVAUX

Arshile Gorky, *The Plow and the Song II*, 1946, oil on canvas, The Art Institute of Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis L. Coburn Fund

**Provenance**

Estate of the artist; Sidney Janis Gallery, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Paul Scott Rankine, Washington, DC; Stephen Mazoh & Co., Inc., New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

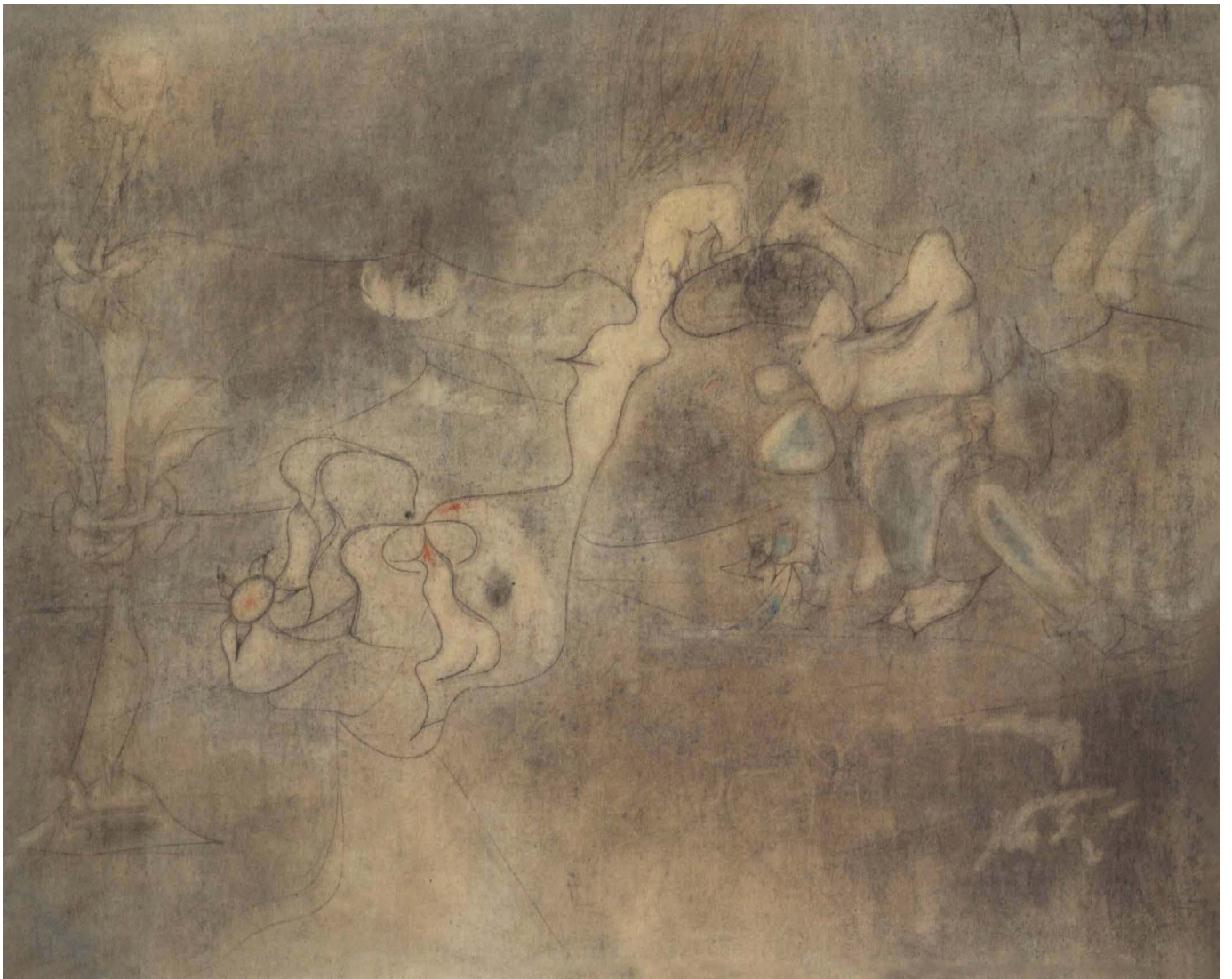
Notes

1. A dated drawing in the Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, appears to be the first in the series.

2. Quoted in Talcott B. Clapp, "A Painter in a Glass House," *Sunday Republican Magazine* [Waterbury, CT], 9 February 1948.

3. The poem was left unfinished when Varoujan (1884–1915) was arrested and killed by the Turkish government on the eve of the Armenian genocide. Gorky knew well and loved Armenian poetry.

4. Ethel Schwabacher, *Arshile Gorky* (New York, 1957), 128.



BARNETT NEWMAN

American, 1905–1970

Untitled, 1946

brush and ink

457 × 610 mm (18 × 24)

The Nancy Lee and

Perry R. Bass Fund,

1998

Harold Rosenberg, who did much to establish the early reputation of Barnett Newman's art, enlisted the following lines by Wallace Stevens to encapsulate those issues he saw as central to the painter's project as an artist: "How clean the sun when seen in its idea, / Washed in the remotest cleanliness of a heaven / That has expelled us and our images...."¹ The expulsion of the imagistic became fundamental to Newman's conception of modern art, as was true for many American postwar painters. Rosenberg's poetic selection, more than indicating the artist's formal orientation, also emphasizes the way metaphysical concerns informed Newman's particular version of abstraction and his convictions about its meaning. Newman saw his art as striving to communicate abstract ideas, and for him the abstraction of form necessarily followed: "In handling philosophic concepts which per se are of an abstract nature, it was inevitable that the painters' form should be abstract."²

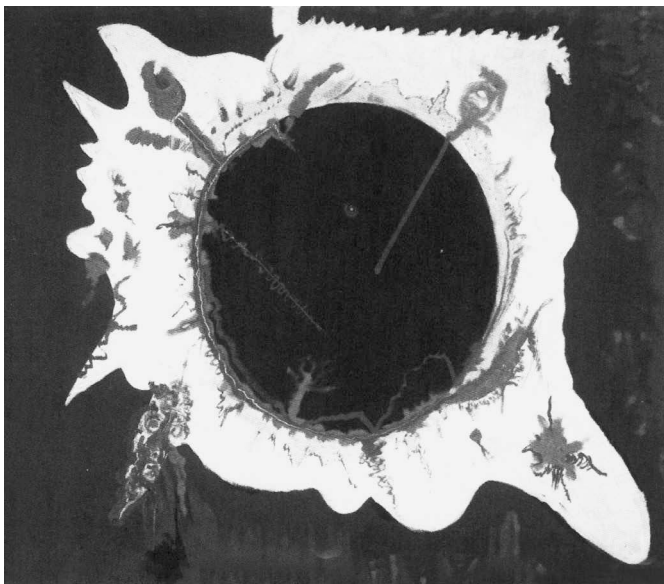
As much as Newman's art sought "to wrest truth from the void,"³ his proclivity for ideistic subject matter never eclipsed the primacy of what he called "the aesthetic act." From his exacting use of two different tones of black ink to his choice of thick, highly textured paper capable of lightly picking up dry brush strokes and of deeply absorbing into its surface those wetter, this work brings into relief the meticulous attention Newman paid to the materials of art-

making. The drawing features a circular motif, slightly off-center, hovering in an indeterminate space attained by the lightest grazing of ink brushed over the paper's surface. Around this form a dark outline reiterates its circumference, as if to reassert the inviolability of the shape. Strokes of ink applied with a broader brush—the darker of the two inks laid on top of the other—emanate from the border of the circle like solar halations. With almost fussy embellishment, Newman placed smaller accents of dark black around the outer edges of this "corona"; some subtly suggestive of corners, these accents help to stabilize the multidirectional movements of the encircling ciliary strokes and maintain the picture's formal balance between spatial evocations of gyration and fixity.

By its shape and coronal emanations, the central motif alludes to the figure of a sun. At the same time, the strokes' outward movement suggests a force internal to the shape that drives all color from its domain—as if Newman sought to take one of human culture's most overdetermined symbols and void it of determinate reference. The motif also relates to a painting of the same year, *Pagan Void* (figure).⁴ Newman purged the drawing of the appurtenances of *Pagan Void*'s quasi-surrealistic forms yet retained its primary metaphorical allusion to a central void—one from which, as Newman proposed, the "pure idea" might emerge.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Barnett Newman, *Pagan Void*, 1946, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Annalee Newman, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1988



Provenance

Estate of the artist; Annalee Newman, New York; Susan Lorence, New York.

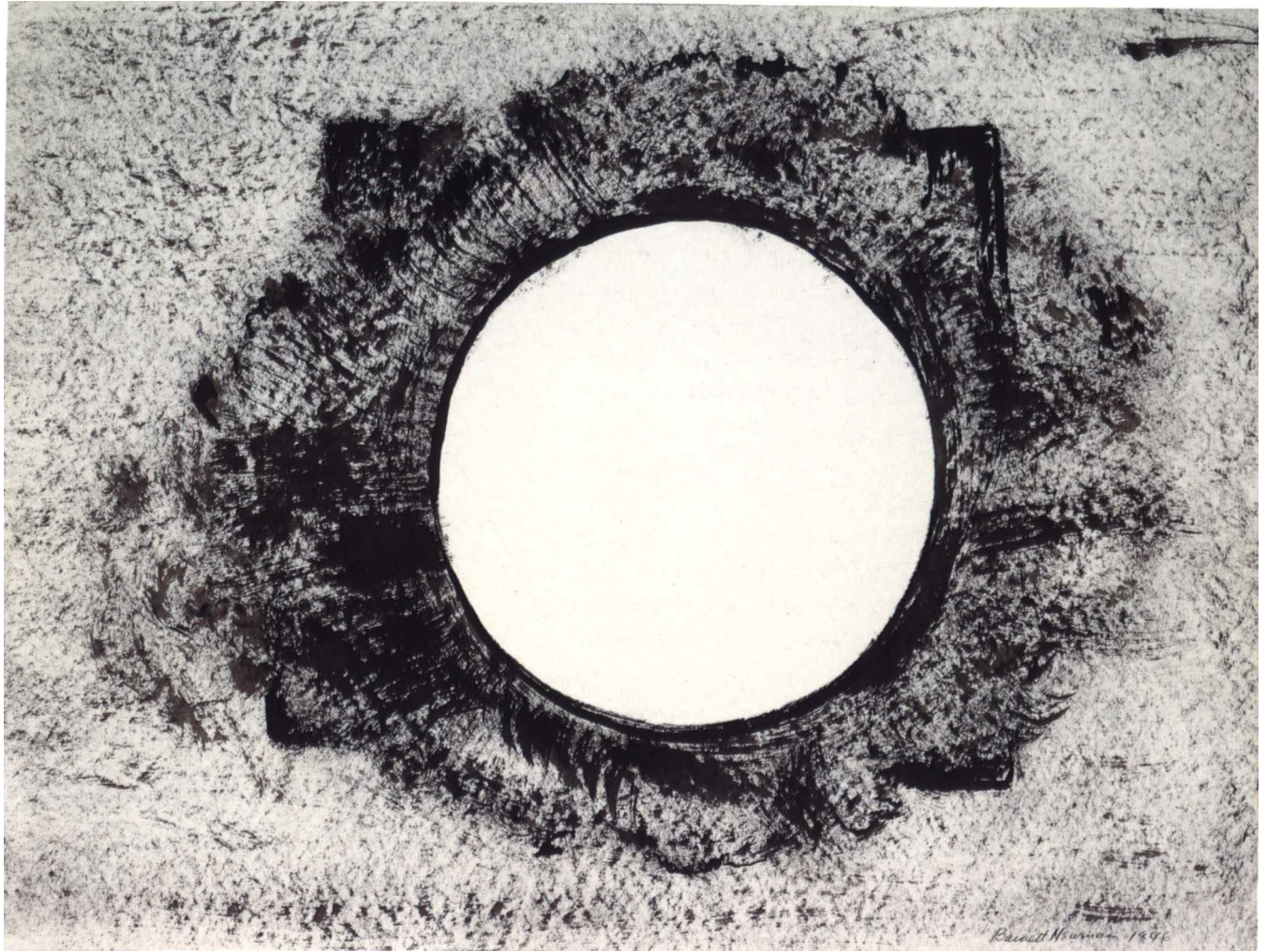
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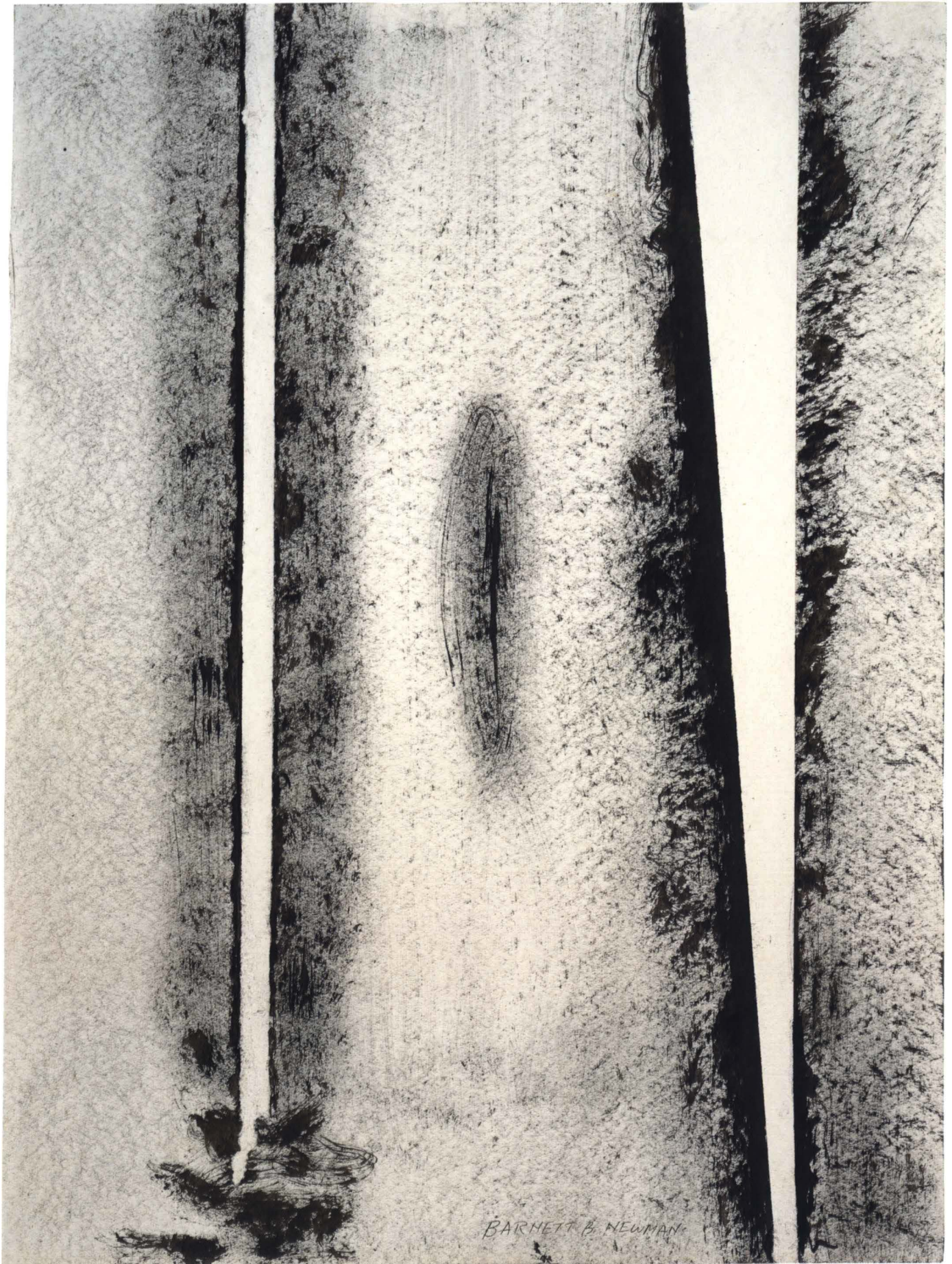
1. Harold Rosenberg, "The Art World: Icon Maker," *The New Yorker* (19 April 1969), 136; quoting Wallace Stevens, "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction," from *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (New York, 1990), 381.

2. Barnett Newman, "The Plasmic Image," in *Barnett Newman: Selected Writings and Interviews*, ed. John P. O'Neill (New York, 1990), 155.

3. Newman 1990, 140.

4. For further discussion of "the void" in Barnett Newman's work, see Thomas Hess, *Barnett Newman* (New York, 1971), 47–48. See also Brenda Richardson, *Barnett Newman: The Complete Drawings, 1944–1969* [exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art] (Baltimore, 1979), 114.





BARNETT NEWMAN
American, 1905–1970

Untitled, 1946

brush and ink
610 × 457 mm (24 × 18)
Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

This drawing distinguishes itself in two crucial respects among Barnett Newman's works on paper. Although the year 1946 was one of the artist's most prolific in the medium, this is one of few drawings that relate closely to the composition of a painting. It also marks a turning point in Newman's experimentation with artistic technique.

With *The Beginning* (figure), also executed in 1946, this work shares three formal elements the artist was exploring at the time, and in this rare instance Newman maintained the compositional placement of those forms almost precisely in the drawing and the painting. Both include a narrow vertical band at the left that comes to a halt at the base in a brushy amorphous cloud, while another straight-edged form, tapering in width toward the bottom, cuts through space at the right. These two structuring features flank a softly brushed elliptical form. Notably, the left-most pictorial elements in *The Beginning* are absent in the drawing, staving off any definitive parallelism. Yet careful inspection of the paper reveals that it has been cut along its left side,¹ leaving one to wonder whether that missing portion might have fleshed out the formal consonance between the two works.

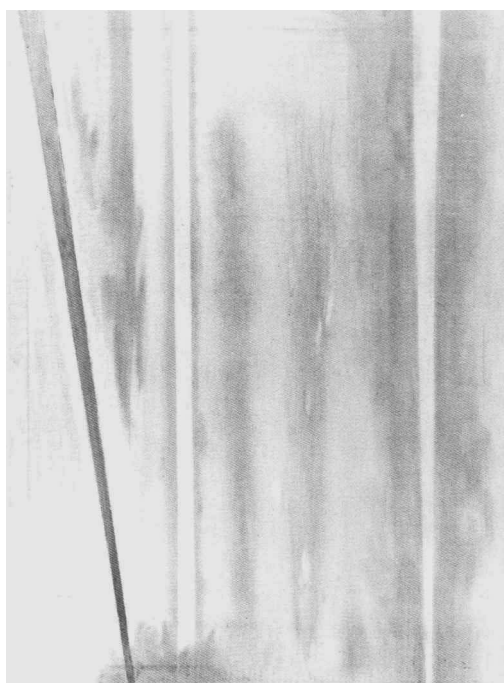
Intrinsic to the spatial composition of this drawing is Newman's choice to leave the two vertical elements unpainted. The

paper's texture in these areas discloses evidence of slight abrasion, promoting the status of this work to one of the earliest examples of the artist's innovative use of tape to protect reserved portions of his paper from ink. Applying the tape early in the artistic process, Newman later removed it and often reworked the resulting forms. Here the removal of the tape tore the paper's surface at the bottom of the left band, and the artist incorporated this "accident" into the greater compositional schema, creating a strange, almost biomorphic shape there. Newman's technique of using tape in this manner came to be known as his signature "zip," yet the breakthrough work that inaugurated his use of the "zip" in painting, *Onement I* of 1948, postdates the present drawing by two years.

The dusting of dry-brushed ink over the textured surface of the paper generates a diffuse atmosphere (see also cat. 80) that contrasts with the straight edges of the two unpainted elements, both of which are emphasized by darker inking at either side. The shape between the two bands has been called a "falling form,"² yet it also hovers aloft, as if buoyed by the density of the atmospheric space surrounding it. If the form also appears to be pulled down by an enigmatic force, this effect is in part accomplished by the sweeping turn of the brush at its top that accentuates the form's downward orientation. Narrowly verging on a subtle illusionism, this drawing holds in play tensions between flatness and depth, movement and stillness—formal preoccupations characteristic of Newman's work on paper at this time, yet presented here in one of his most complex compositional achievements.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Barnett Newman,
The Beginning, 1946, oil on
canvas, Estate of the artist



Provenance

Estate of the artist; Stephen Mazoh & Co., Inc., New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1985.

Notes

1. Brenda Richardson, *Barnett Newman: The Complete Drawings, 1944–1969* [exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art] (Baltimore, 1979), 106.

2. Baltimore 1979, 106.

CHARLES SHEELER
American, 1883–1965

Counterpoint, 1949

conté crayon
508 × 712 mm (20 × 28)
Gift of Daniel J. Terra,
in Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1991

Described as Sheeler's "last great conté crayon drawing," *Counterpoint* was completed in 1949 during a period of artistic rejuvenation sparked by an invitation three years earlier to spend several weeks as artist-in-residence at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.¹ As was his practice, Sheeler spent much of his time in Andover gathering the photographic "notes" he would later use to produce paintings and drawings.² Although he took photographs of several campus buildings, the architectural structure that truly captured his imagination was not an academic building, but rather an abandoned mill at Ballardvale, near Andover. The dilapidated mill, much transformed, is the subject of *Counterpoint*.³

Sheeler began working with conté crayon early in his career. About 1917, in a series of remarkable photographs and drawings of several barns and a country house near Doylestown, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Sheeler achieved artistic maturity.⁴ Working his way through the vocabulary of modernism, he produced a number of drawings based on the barn images that allowed him to explore one of the central issues of cubism: spatial ambiguity. Although based on identifiable subjects, the drawings are often so spare that they verge on abstraction.

Between 1930 and 1937 Sheeler produced at least sixteen such drawings before he abandoned conté crayon for more than a decade. It was, in fact, the invitation from the director of the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy, Bartlett Hayes, that initiated Sheeler's return to the difficult medium. Hayes wished to inaugurate a new acquisition program whereby contemporary artists would be invited to spend a period of time on campus and the gallery would then purchase the "creative results of this term of residence."⁵ Sheeler, the first artist invited to participate in the program, spent about six weeks in Andover in the fall of 1946. Intrigued by the old mill he discovered in Ballardvale, Sheeler took many photographs and subsequently produced an oil titled *Ballardvale* that was acquired by the Addison Gallery.

Three years later Sheeler completed *Counterpoint*, a large-scale drawing that displays all the tonal richness of the earlier drawings, but also a new compositional complexity derived from his more recent work in oil. As others have noted, this work is "at once entirely legible and intriguingly abstract."⁶ The image was initially conceived as a composite of superimposed photographs. Though it is not clear exactly how many negatives were used, at least one shows the mill in reverse. The result is a multifaceted composition that reprises in a far more sophisticated manner Sheeler's earlier investigation of cubist space.

In 1946 Sheeler wrote that he undertook conté crayon drawing "to see how much exactitude I could attain."⁷ *Counterpoint*, perhaps the finest of the artist's late drawings, demonstrates that he was capable of extraordinary conceptual and technical "exactitude."

NANCY K. ANDERSON

Provenance

Downtown Gallery, New York; Bernard Heineman, Jr., New York; Berry-Hill Galleries, Inc., New York; Daniel J. Terra, 1985.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

1. Carol Troyen and Erica E. Hirshler, *Charles Sheeler: Paintings and Drawings* (New York, 1987), 192.

2. Troyen and Hirshler 1987, 35.

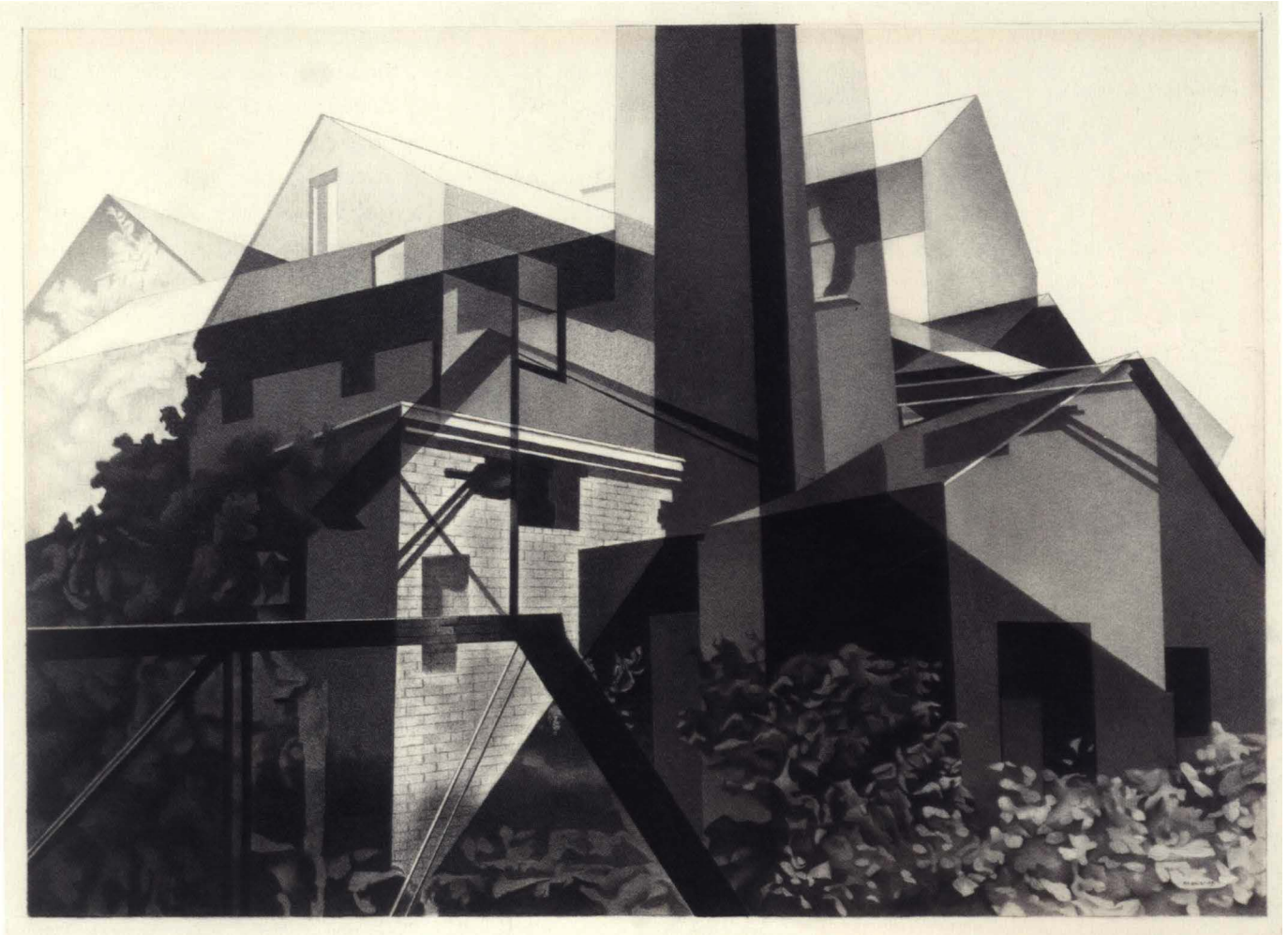
3. A photograph of Ballardvale mill by Sheeler is reproduced in Troyen and Hirshler 1987, 192.

4. Theodore E. Stebbins Jr. and Norman Keyes Jr., *Charles Sheeler: The Photographs* (New York, 1987), 8–14.

5. Troyen and Hirshler 1987, 35.

6. Troyen and Hirshler 1987, 192.

7. "Sheeler," *ArtNews* 45 (March 1946), 30.



BARNETT NEWMAN

American, 1905–1970

The Name, 1949

brush and ink

611 × 380 mm

(24 1/16 × 15)

Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,

Washington, DC, 1976

The composition of *The Name* breaks down into three basic formal elements coextensive with the size of the paper. From the left, roughly a quarter-width band of black is followed by a quarter-width band of unpainted paper. These are followed by approximately a half-width of black. Yet the nominal simplicity of this drawing's composition achieves remarkable relational complexity among its parts. The two dark bands flank and define the central band of untreated paper, conferring on it the appearance of positive presence; at the same time, the first dark band is twinned by virtue of its width with the central unpainted area, while those two, in turn, pair off together against the right half of the drawing. More, *The Name* does not support the abstract stability of formal quantification or the perceptual constancy of negative versus positive space for long. Rather, these are ideational coalitions secured after the fact of looking, in the time of cognitive reflection and memory. The neater distinctions of positive and negative, or measures of quarter to half to whole, are subtly compromised by the specific material qualities of the drawing in the actual experience of looking. The straight-edged delimitation of dark from light, for instance, is gently eroded by the highly absorptive paper that draws the ink into the central band in accordance with the textured quality of the paper. Thus the saturation of ink seeps slightly into the unpainted band, and the lines demarcating one area from another are not perfectly trued, obstructing imaginative projection of ideal forms into the picture.

As is the case in many of Newman's works on paper from this period, the artist has used at least two tones of black, one lighter—almost a dark brown—and another more saturated, thus analogously deidealizing the abstract forms constituting the work. Although Newman has carefully kept in evidence striations left by his brush, the underpainting of lighter ink has been opaquely overpainted (in contrast to cat. 80), leaving few discernible traces of the initial application of tone, whose presence emerges only with the slow and searching looking *The Name* calls for.

Renowned for his large canvases of saturated color fields that engulf the viewer's gaze, Newman insisted that "drawing is central to my whole concept. . . . I am always referred to in relation to my color. Yet I know that if I have made a contribution, it is primarily in my drawing. . . . Instead of using outlines, instead of making shapes or setting off spaces, my drawing declares the space."¹ Here Newman describes something other than contributions made "in" his drawings; rather, he offers a more elusive proposition about how his paintings are to be understood as "drawn." Although unrelated in compositional format to the painting *The Name I*, also executed in 1949,² this drawing introduces some of the abstract formal motifs and spatial-temporal rhythms brought to their highest level of complexity in Newman's late masterwork, *The Stations of the Cross* (National Gallery of Art).

KATHRYN A. TUMA

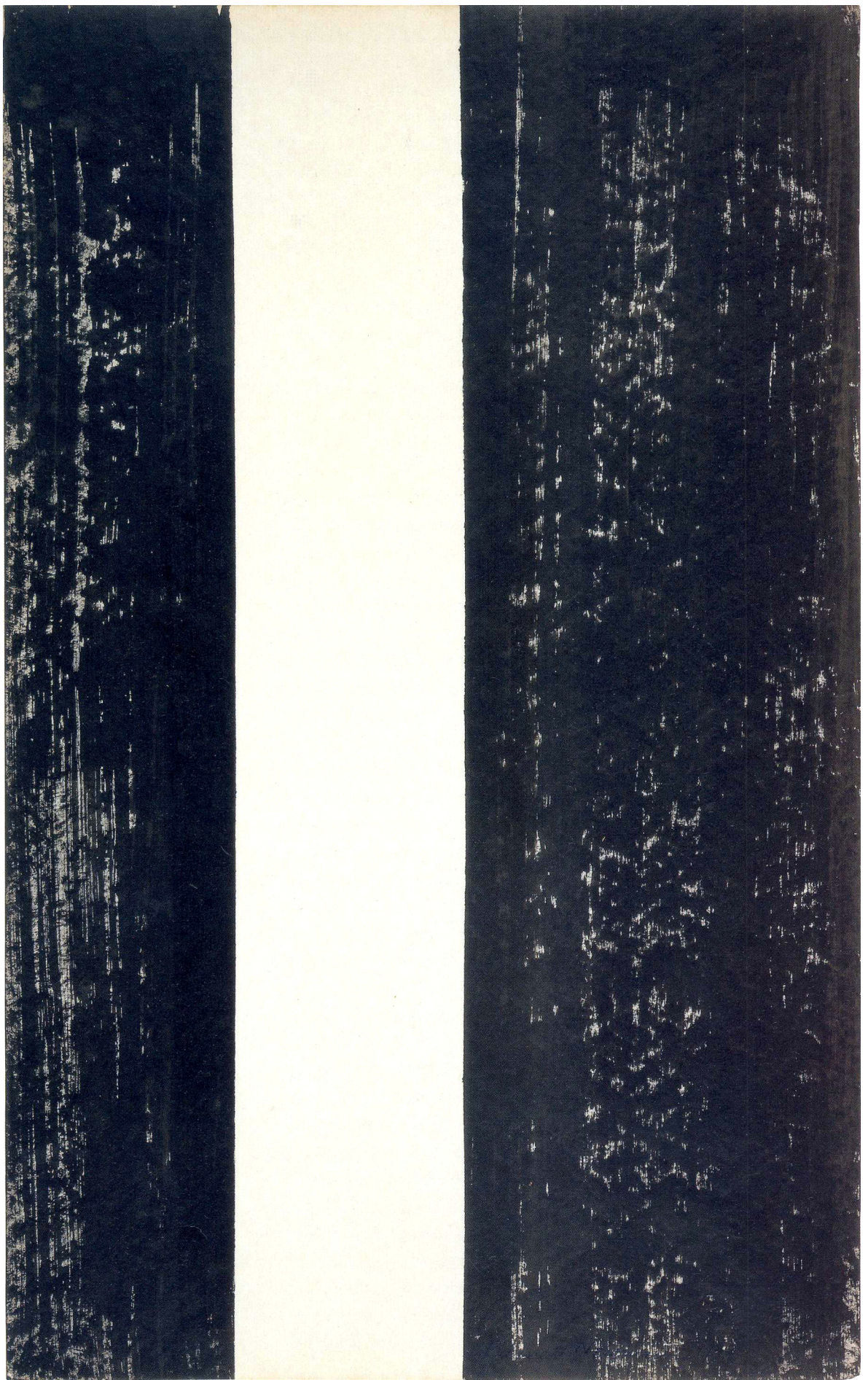
Provenance

The artist to the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, Inc., New York, 1965; Woodward Foundation, 1966.

Notes

1. Interview with Dorothy Gees Seckler, "Frontiers of Space," *Art in America* 50 (summer 1962); reprinted in *Barnett Newman: Selected Writings and Interviews*, ed. John P. O'Neill (New York, 1990), 251.

2. The present drawing was called *Untitled* until the inscription of its current title was discovered on the verso; see Brenda Richardson, *Barnett Newman: The Complete Drawings, 1944–1969* [exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art] (Baltimore, 1979), 148.



ALBERTO

GIACOMETTI

Swiss, 1901–1966

**The Table before the
Dormer Window, 1950**

graphite

512 × 357 mm

(20 1/8 × 14)

Gift of John D. Herring
and Mr. and Mrs. Paul
L. Herring, in Memory
of Mr. and Mrs. H.
Lawrence Herring and
in Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1991

“What I believe,” Giacometti said, “is that whether it be a question of sculpture or of painting, it is in fact only drawing that counts. One must cling solely, exclusively to drawing. If one could master drawing, all the rest would be possible.”¹ Giacometti came as close to achieving that goal as any artist of his generation, especially in his mature work after 1945. He moved seamlessly from one medium to another, his sculpture fortifying his drawings, and his drawings informing his paintings. Giacometti concentrated his eye on family and friends, the landscape of his native Switzerland, and the familiar objects that filled his home and studio. Yet it was not the appearance of these subjects that interested him but the physical act of seeing itself. Vision after all is not a static faculty; it shifts continuously, and Giacometti was able to capture that quality in drawings such as this one, with its swiftly coursing lines suggesting a reality that is momentary rather than constant.

As a child Giacometti was an enthusiastic draftsman, habitually sketching people and objects as well as reproductions he found in art books. He would turn again and again to the same subject, continuously renewing its possibilities. Although he began his art studies in Geneva, he concluded them in Paris, where he settled in a Montparnasse studio in 1927. During the late 1920s and early 1930s he explored the avant-garde styles in vogue at the time: primitivism, cubism, and surrealism. But by the end of World War II Giacometti had sifted through these alternatives and arrived at the signature style that marks this work.

Giacometti made annual visits to his family home in Stampa, a Swiss village in the Italian-speaking Bregaglia Valley. There he devoted his energies to painting and especially to drawing. This sheet depicts the kitchen table at Stampa, graced with a basket and a pitcher of flowers. Just above and to its right a wine bottle is poised on the sill of a dormer window. In attempting to capture the transitory experience of seeing, Giacometti relies solely on his line, a thinly defined mark that speeds from point to

point, propelled by a hand that seems never to lose touch with the sheet. The linear continuum is interrupted only where the line purposefully breaks or where the artist erased passages to admit light and air. For Giacometti there was no such thing as empty space. It was part of his encompassing vision, as tangible to him as the flowers that fill the pitcher or the bottle that rests on the sill.

James Lord’s essays on Giacometti are among the most insightful. In writing about the artist’s passion for drawing, Lord observed that “even when his fingers were not engaged, his eye was. And often when he was seated somewhere without a pen or pencil in hand, his fingers would move round and round with the insistent gesture of drawing—on the table of a café, or on his knee as he rode along in a taxi—as if the mere motion of drawing might induce some new fragment of reality.”² For Giacometti, drawing was an essential means of clarifying his vision and committing to line the transient nature of his surroundings.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

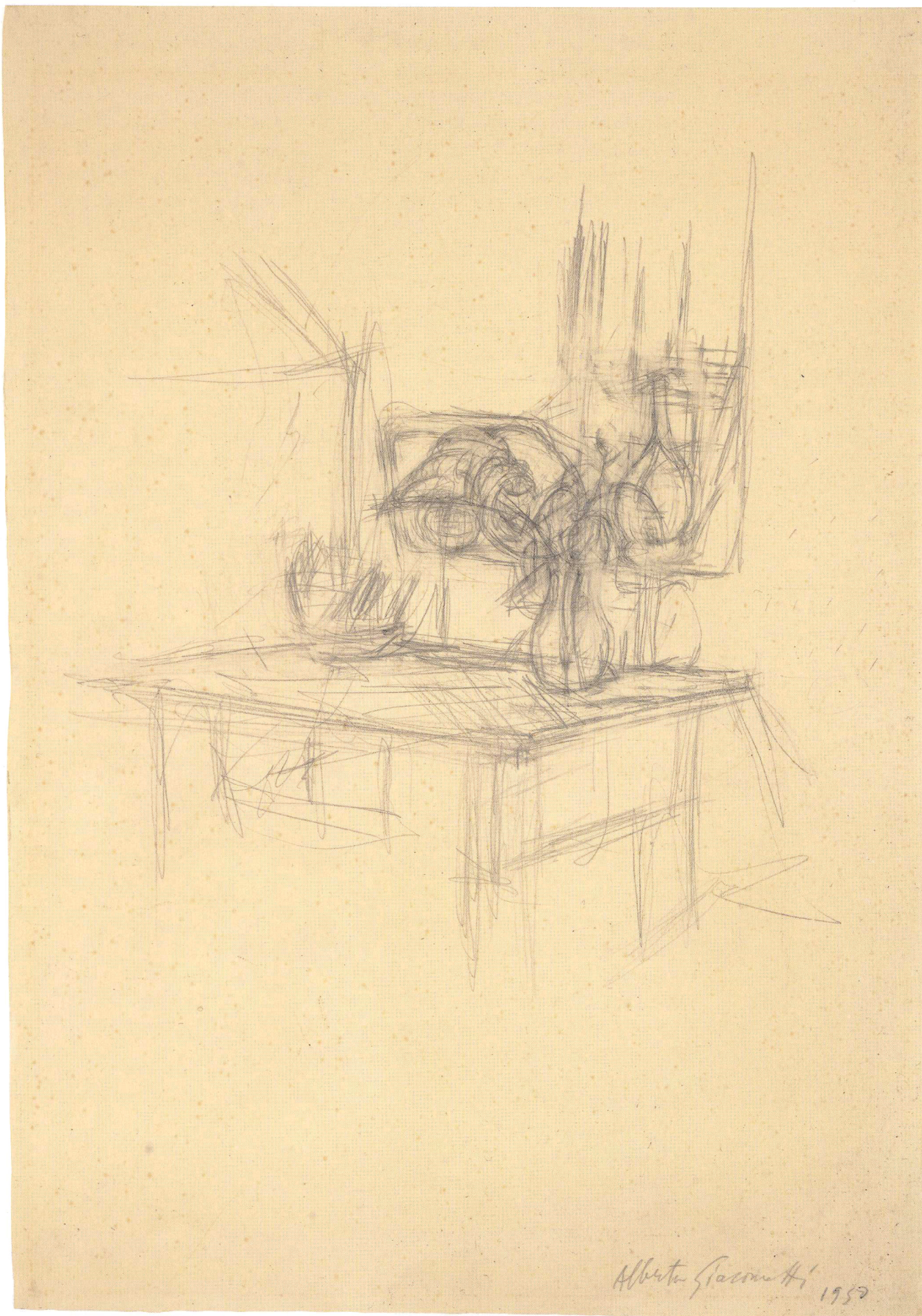
Mr. and Mrs. H. Lawrence
Herring; by inheritance to
John D. Herring and Mr.
and Mrs. Paul L. Herring.

Notes

An earlier version of this
text was published in
Washington 1991.

1. Quoted in James Lord,
*Alberto Giacometti Draw-
ings* (Greenwich, CT,
1971), 26.

2. Lord 1971, 26.



WILLEM DE KOONING
American, 1904–1997

Untitled, 1950/1951

liner's brush and palette
knife with Sapolin
enamel on the unlined
reverse side of graph
paper
559 × 762 mm (22 × 30)
Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,
Washington, DC, 1976

Willem de Kooning's extraordinary facility as a draftsman, which included the specialized techniques of the commercial artist (such as the use of a liner's brush in this drawing),¹ had been honed by his early training in Rotterdam and by his work for hire after arriving in the United States in 1926. It was not until his experience with the Federal Arts Project in 1935 that he relegated this commercial involvement to the status of a necessary aside and began his career as a full-time artist. By the later 1940s he had produced a series of important and influential abstract paintings, and after his first solo exhibition in 1948 he was recognized as a major figure in American painting. Along with such artists as Jackson Pollock, Hans Hoffman, and Robert Motherwell, and the critic Clement Greenberg, he is credited with establishing a new American art of international importance, which was labeled "abstract expressionism."²

In 1950 the artist began a series of predominantly abstract black-and-white drawings using Sapolin enamel on graph paper, and this drawing clearly is part of that series.³ It looks back to, and continues, the formal explorations of his abstract paintings from the late 1940s, some of which also verge toward black-and-white palettes and/or employ enamel on paper.⁴ Given this correlation, it is difficult to differentiate paintings and drawings as two distinct entities, in terms of either medium or purpose, in the context of de Kooning's art.⁵ It is equally difficult to characterize him with any consistency in terms of abstract expressionism alone, since he readily moved between abstract and figurative explorations.⁶ At the same time that he was creating these abstract drawings in the early 1950s, he was intensely occupied with the development of *Woman I* (cat. 88).

De Kooning's black enamel series of drawings has been deemed to be "among the most fluent, lyrical, and inventive in his work," and this sheet confirms that assessment.⁷ The lines are laid down with absolute assurance and breathtaking

panache. Concurrently, there is an unresolved tension between the black lines and the white forms they define, each of which vie for dominance of the composition. As such, the drawing illuminates an essential attribute of de Kooning's art, "the syllogism without syntheses, in which thesis and antithesis are both pushed to their fullest statement and then allowed to exist together."⁸

STEPHEN E. OSTROW

Notes

1. See Thomas B. Hess, *Willem de Kooning: Drawings*, New York Graphic Society, Ltd. (Greenwich, CT, 1972), 17–18, for a discussion of de Kooning's use of the liner's brush.

2. See the Chronology in *Willem de Kooning: Drawings, Paintings, Sculpture* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1983), 267–272; and Clement Greenberg, "American Type Painting," first published in *Partisan Review* (1955), reprinted in the anthology *Abstract Expressionism: Creators and Critics* (New York, 1990), 235–251.

3. Hess 1972, 33–36, and plates 29–36. Neither the use of Sapolin enamel nor graph paper have previously been cited in reference to the National Gallery drawing; see New York 1983, no. 22.

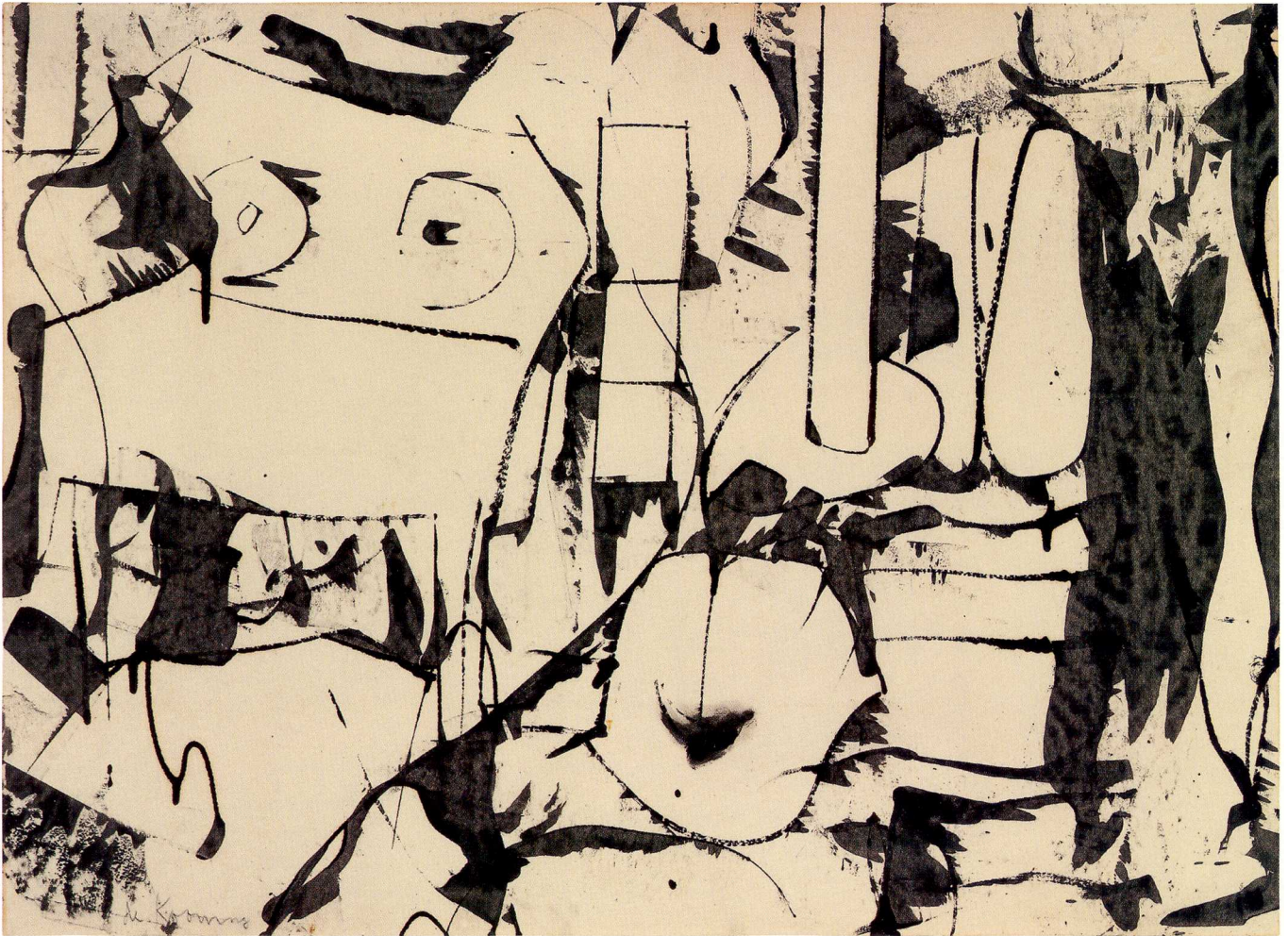
4. Marla Prather, David Sylvester, and Richard Schiff, *Willem de Kooning: Paintings* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1994), nos. 9–15, 18, 19. In the paintings, the paper was then mounted on wood or composition board.

5. Hess 1972, 13–14.

6. "By the time artists, critics, and a gradually growing audience had found a stylistic label for this development—Abstract Expressionism—de Kooning had protested against this co-option of his work by producing imagery that was dialectically opposed to the new mainstream" (Jorn Merkert, "Stylelessness as Principle: The Paintings of Willem de Kooning," in New York 1983, 115).

7. Hess 1972, 33.

8. Hess 1972, 17.





JACKSON POLLOCK
American, 1912–1956

Untitled, c. 1951

ink on Japanese paper
635 × 984 mm
(25 × 38¾)
Promised Gift of
Robert P. and Arlene R.
Kogod

Around 1947 Jackson Pollock put aside traditional approaches to making art. Instead of brushing paint onto canvas or applying pencil or crayon on paper, he poured or flung paint onto surfaces. Instead of illustrating feelings, he attempted to express them. And despite an apparent lack of inhibition, these works are essentially highly controlled. The sheer effusion and velocity of lines in this strikingly bold drawing belie its ingeniously ordered invention.

Pollock's work was basically linear, with little distinction made between drawing and painting. As one commentator remarked, Pollock had the "impulse to draw with paint."¹ The present drawing is from a series of works done in ink and sometimes watercolor on Japanese papers. The artist began by making an ink drawing on the top sheet of a stack of Japanese papers. Because oriental paper is very absorbent, the primary image would bleed through to the sheets beneath. These were later separated and often expanded upon with either ink or watercolor. This powerful image was the primary work in its sequence; the sheet immediately underneath is in a private collection; and the next two were acquired by the National Gallery of Art in 1985.² It is rare to have three directly associated works from a Pollock series. Rarer still is a primary work of such exceptional impact and brilliance.

Whereas many of Pollock's so-called poured works are centrifugally structured, the present drawing is essentially episodic. Two wildly energetic vortices mirror each other on alternate sides of the sheet. The one on the left is underlaid with a burst of gridlike lines, the one on the right by a more compact grid. Four dynamic spatters of ink toward the center punctuate the whole and slow the frenzied motion. A line spills onto the page from the top and decisively parts and isolates the activity. Barely compressed into the lower right corner is a diminutive vortex, acting like a coda. This masterly orchestration calls to mind the poet Frank O'Hara's statement about Pollock's

draftsmanship: "that amazing ability to quicken a line by thinning it, to slow it by flooding, to elaborate that simplest of elements, the line—to change, to reinvigorate, to extend, to build up an embarrassment of riches in the mass of drawing alone."³

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

The artist to Lee Krasner; Krasner Pollock estate, 1986; Robert P. and Arlene R. Kogod.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

1. Bernice Rose, *Jackson Pollock: Drawing into Painting* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1980), 16.

2. For the present drawing and its associated sheets, see Francis V. O'Connor and Eugene V. Thaw, eds., *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works*, 4 vols. (New Haven and London, 1978), 3:821–822; and 4:165.

3. Frank O'Hara, *Jackson Pollock* (New York, 1959), 26.

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JACKSON POLLOCK

American, 1912–1956

Untitled, c. 1951

ink on Japanese paper

632 × 990 mm

(24⁷/₈ × 39)

Promised Gift of Mr.

and Mrs. Jacob Kainen

This drawing is on the type of highly absorbent Japanese paper that Pollock began using in 1951 (see also cat. 86). Pouring or dripping the inks onto the paper, he creatively exploited the soaking and staining that occurred. In a number of instances he allowed the inks to penetrate several sheets of paper stacked together, then separated the individual sheets and reworked them. The origins of this drawing lay in the black inks that soaked through when Pollock worked on another sheet of paper above it in the stack.¹ He then turned the paper over and reworked it with black and brown inks to create the present drawing. Interestingly, traces of the P, the second l, and the k from Pollock's large washed signature on the first sheet survive (in reverse) a few inches above his signature here. Yet another sheet is known that was underneath this one (Krasner Pollock Foundation), bringing the total number in this series to three.² When Pollock reworked that drawing, he did so by turning it upside down and backward and retouching it, so that the result was an altered and inverted mirror image of the present work.³

During 1951 Pollock executed more than forty large works on paper, making that year his most important and productive as a draftsman.⁴ Moreover, the style and methods he used in creating them were so closely paralleled in his canvases of the same year as to blur any meaningful distinction between the activities of drawing and painting. Drawing with paint was, of course, fundamental to Pollock's breakthrough achievement in his classic poured paintings. In this *Untitled* work of 1951 the artist's handling of a medium and support traditionally associated with drawing approached the purely painterly, with the soaking, staining, and overlapping of colors producing effects that are virtually the same as those in his canvases.

FRANKLIN KELLY

Provenance

Robert Elkon Gallery; N. Richard Miller, Philadelphia; Weintraub Gallery, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Kainen.

Notes

1. The first in this series is listed in Francis V. O'Connor and Eugene V. Thaw, eds., *Jackson Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Drawings, and Other Works*, 4 vols. (New Haven, 1978), 3:291, no. 812, as owned by Robert

Elkon Gallery. Although O'Connor and Thaw did not note the relationship between no. 812 and the Kainen drawing, it was pointed out by Bernice Rose in *Jackson Pollock: Drawing into Painting* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1980), 21.

2. O'Connor and Thaw 1978, 3:299, no. 820.

3. O'Connor and Thaw 1978, 3:298.

4. O'Connor and Thaw 1978, 3:283.





WILLEM DE KOONING

American, 1904–1997

Woman I, 1952

pastel and crayon over
graphite
227 × 285 mm
(8 7/8 × 11 1/4), unevenly
cut along the right edge
Andrew W. Mellon
Fund, 1978

Woman I, for which this is a study, is an emotionally charged, disturbing, and fierce painting (figure), which shocked both an avant-garde art world devoted to abstraction and “a larger, collective unconscious, which had considered the subject of *Woman* to be safe, sane, and above all, pretty.”¹ It is the last of many versions that de Kooning successively painted from 1950 to 1952, only to scrape each away, in whole or in part, before painting anew on the same canvas. He executed (and then obliterated) these in rapid succession, often on a daily basis.² While this departs from the customary practice of using drawings as the primary vehicle for the sequential development of visual imagery, drawings remained very much a part of the artist’s creative explorations. He affixed them to the canvas to serve as a starting point for new departures, for example, painting over them as he moved on; or he made drawings or tracings of portions of the painting for future reference, before the canvas was scraped once more. Even when he used drawings in a more traditional way, rapidly pursuing successive ideas, he would often fabricate new drawings by joining segments of extant sheets together.³

Since both painted and drawn images were destroyed by this process, and photographic documentation was intermittent, scholars are left with an incomplete record

of the painting’s chronological development. Nevertheless, it is possible to place the present drawing in the context of others related to the painting. This study for the head and upper torso was cut from a larger sheet, which most likely included the lower torso as well. Therefore, it can be positioned with a group of drawings for *Woman I* that share the methodology implied by its fragmentary nature (some of the drawings in this group are assembled from joined fragments), medium (in most cases pastel and graphite), and above all, purpose (exploration of “how shapes connect,” especially the head to the torso).⁴ It is most closely related to one drawing in this group, datable to about 1952, in terms of details of physiognomy, the placement of dark shapes to delineate facial boundaries, and the elegant curvilinear contour defined by the cut of the right edge of the National Gallery sheet and by drawn lines in the other.⁵

STEPHEN E. OSTROW

Provenance

Xavier Fourcade, Inc.,
New York.

Notes

1. Thomas B. Hess, *Willem de Kooning: Drawings*, New York Graphic Society, Ltd. (Greenwich, CT, 1972), 40.

2. For a color illustration of *Woman I* and photographs that document six stages of the canvas, see *Willem de Kooning: Drawings, Paintings, Sculpture* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1983), plates 190 and 184–189.

3. For discussions of the development of the painting and de Kooning’s use of drawings, see, for example, Thomas B. Hess, “de Kooning Paints a Picture,” *ArtNews* 52, no. 1 (March 1953), 30–33 and 64–67 (written shortly before the painting was first exhibited); Hess 1972, 40–45; Jorn Merkert, “Stylelessness as Principle: The Painting of Willem de Kooning,” in New York 1983, 124–126.

4. Hess 1972, 44–45, and plates 59–64.

5. Hess 1972, 44, and plate 60. In 1972 this drawing was in the collection of the artist.

Willem de Kooning, *Woman I*, 1950–1952, oil on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Purchase, 1953



WILLEM DE KOONING

American, 1904–1997

Two Women, 1952

charcoal

572 × 724 mm

(22½ × 28½)

Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

Between June 1950, when de Kooning began work on *Woman I* (see cat. 88), and March 1953, when an exhibition at the Sidney Janis Gallery presented six of his major Woman paintings and related works on paper, the artist produced a large number of drawings on the theme. These drawings, including the present work, were experimental and exploratory in nature; Thomas Hess called them “exercises in spontaneity—a casting around for images.”¹ De Kooning made *Two Women* in the summer of 1952 while staying in East Hampton, Long Island, at the home of Leo Castelli and Ileana Sonnabend (he inscribed the recto: *to Ileana / with love from / Bill / Summer 1952*). Setting up a studio on an enclosed porch of their house, he worked on drawings, a number of pastels, and the large painting *Woman II* of 1952 (The Museum of Modern Art, New York).²

De Kooning had painted women in twos since the late 1940s; indeed *Woman I* had begun as a pair of figures. The velvety textures and wonderfully animated surface here are the result of de Kooning’s gestural application of charcoal lines as much as his adept removal of them with an eraser. Hess observed de Kooning at work on a pencil drawing in 1951, using an eraser “not to rub out the lines, but to move them, push them across the paper, turn them into planes.”³ The artist deployed the eraser (or his fingers) as the graphic equivalent of a palette knife, to blur and soften his marks, thereby heightening the ambiguity of his forms. (It was this notion of the eraser as a “drawing tool” that prompted Rauschenberg’s famous erasure of one of de Kooning’s Woman drawings in 1953.⁴) According to Nina Sundell, who was present in East Hampton when this drawing was made, the vertical lines between the heads of the two figures refer to a curved driveway and fence that de Kooning could have seen from his studio.⁵ Nevertheless, such forms appear in similar locations in others of

de Kooning’s Woman drawings, some of which predate the present example.⁶ For the torso of the woman at the right, the artist converted the same formation to an abstracted mouth, an obvious variation on the surrealist *vagina dentata*.⁷

MARLA PRATHER

Provenance

Ileana Sonnabend, Paris;
Allan Stone Gallery, New
York; Robert and Jane
Meyerhoff, 1963.

Notes

An earlier version of this
text was published in
Washington 1996.

1. Thomas Hess, *Willem de
Kooning Drawings*, New
York Graphic Society, Ltd.
(Greenwich, CT, 1972), 41.

2. Nina Sundell, *The
Robert and Jane Meyerhoff
Collection: 1958–1979* (Bal-
timore, 1980), 14. Sundell
is the daughter of Castelli
and Sonnabend.

3. Hess 1972, 16.

4. See “Robert Rauschen-
berg Talks to Maxime de la
Falaise McKendry,” *Inter-
view* 6 (May 1976), 36.

5. Sundell 1980, 14–15.

6. See, for example, Hess
1972, nos. 54 and 56, or
Harold Rosenberg, *Willem
de Kooning* (New York,
1974), nos. 83, 94, and
109, as well as Marla
Prather, David Sylvester,
and Richard Shiff, *Willem
de Kooning: Paintings* [exh.
cat., National Gallery of
Art] (Washington, 1994),
99, and 104 n. 46.

7. Sundell 1980, 15, says
that this form was based
on the grille of a car.



FRANZ KLINE

American, 1910–1962

Untitled, 1950s

oil

198 × 251 mm

(7¹³/₁₆ × 9⁷/₈)

Gift of Elisabeth R.

Zogbaum, 1993

The dash and drag of the brush—loaded with black paint and set with vigorous force against the surface of paper—is, in a palpably physical sense, the very subject matter of this iconic Franz Kline. New York poet Frank O'Hara considered Kline “the Action Painter *par excellence*,”¹ and here the dynamic brushwork of this small yet powerful work viscerally exacts the concerns of that moment in the history of American abstract painting. The “concentration of energy” Kline admired in the art of his contemporary Jackson Pollock is fully present in this work,² as the emotive content of the act of mark-making cleaves to its surface: Kline's brush is confrontational and declarative, the paper tarred as much as painted. With assertive disregard for the paper's edge, Kline's exuberant brush runs out of bounds, yet the small size of the thin and fragile sheet in no way detracts from the picture's explosive visual impact. Rather, the size plays in tension with the grandness of artistic gesture. In delicate counterpoise between deliberation of conception and speed of delivery, the velocity of Kline's execution hangs in tight balance with the way the paint meticulously structures space, offering an exemplary image of what Clement Greenberg saw specifically in Kline's black and white work as a compositional “tautness quintessential.”³ In this work striations of black deposited by a drier brush activate portions of the picture plane less charged with paint. Kline leaves no part of the paper inert. Unlike related black and white paintings, where tonal gradations are more decisively eschewed for starker contrasts, here Kline tempers his black: the terse application of gray paint in the lower left corner, for example, or his brush-handled scraping of the more saturated central strokes, modulates the tonal contrast between dark and light.

This painted drawing comes from a series Kline executed in the late 1940s and 1950s, when his work charged into abstraction with uncompromising energy. Kline viewed painting as “a form of drawing,”⁴ and his works on paper are key to understanding the formal and expressive exigencies driving his art during this period. An

artist born in 1910 in the coal-mining regions of eastern Pennsylvania, Kline was educated in the early 1930s at the Art Students League in Boston. His formative commitments remained throughout his career to art historical tradition, despite the manifest abstraction of his art.⁵ Later settling in New York, this painter associated with the abstract expressionists distinguished himself by his palette predominantly composed of black and white, his signature calligraphic strokes, and his inimitable bravado of brushwork.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Provenance

Estate of the artist;
Elisabeth R. Zogbaum.

Notes

1. Frank O'Hara, “Franz Kline,” *Art Chronicles 1954–1966* (New York, 1975), 40.
2. Selden Rodman, *Conversations with Artists* (New York, 1957), 108.
3. Clement Greenberg, “Feeling Is All,” *Partisan Review* 19 (January–February 1952); reprinted in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 3, *Affirmations and Refusals, 1950–1956*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago and London, 1993), 104.

4. David Sylvester, “Franz Kline 1910–1962: An Interview with David Sylvester,” *Living Arts* 1 (spring 1963), 10.

5. For discussion of this aspect of Kline's work, see David Anfam, “Kline's Colliding Syntax: ‘Black, White, and Things,’” in *Franz Kline: Black & White, 1950–1961* (Houston, 1994), 9–31.



ROBERT

MOTHERWELL

American, 1915–1991

**End of Dover Beach,
1953–1957**collage with tempera,
crayon, and graphite
1,016 × 762 mm
(40 × 30)Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

No matter how one defines the diverse phenomenon variously known as “abstract expressionism” or “the New York School,” Robert Motherwell’s position within it remains unusual. He was an articulate spokesman for the movement who produced a larger, wider-ranging body of statements and writings than any of his colleagues (with the possible exception of Barnett Newman). In addition, Motherwell distinguished himself from the others by a certain intellectual approach and a desire to uphold—as much as to challenge—the European traditions of “high” and modernist culture. His longstanding involvement with collage reflected this attitude, particularly since the origins of the medium are linked with a key moment in European modernism, the cubism of Picasso and Braque around 1912.

The use of torn paper is crucial in *End of Dover Beach*. Motherwell titled another work he completed in the same year *The Tearingness of Collage*, adding that the title not only refers “to an angry tearing of a collage... but also it emphasizes that part of my contribution to the art of collage, the torn rather than the sharp or cut-out edge.”¹ The ragged contours are interwoven with areas of tempera paint and golden glue streaks to create a flux that has a spontaneity originating in surrealist automatism, a method that uses rapid gestures to suggest the artist’s volatile unconscious impulses. The composition’s shattered planes imply a wrenching process of deconstruction and recreation. Here it is appropriate to note Motherwell’s further remark that “tearing the paper is like killing someone.”²

Just as its sense of energy signals violence, the choice of colors and title for *End of Dover Beach* is meant to prompt a train of associations—as if the whole image were a metaphor for the artist’s state of mind. The ochers and blue, mingling tempera tones and the color of the wrapping paper elements, appeared early in Motherwell’s career and would become major elements in his later collages. In part they relate to the California landscape of his childhood: “Yes, certain childhood impressions last a lifetime. What a burden! Sunlit, arid, high blue

skies, green on ocean blue, sunbaked yellow ochre island....”³ On a more symbolic plane they speak for emotional polarities. The ochers evoke a Mediterranean world: earthiness, organic presence, passion. By contrast, blue for Motherwell signifies less tangible realms, something nearer to air, water, or absence itself that harks back, ultimately, to an empyrean otherworldliness that Mallarmé (whom Motherwell much admired) had termed “l’azur.” In turn, the memory of a landscape that symbolizes human emotions is amplified by Motherwell’s title.

Matthew Arnold’s “Dover Beach” is a poem that at once expresses highly romantic Victorian passions and a feeling of isolation amid a chaotic universe that anticipates twentieth-century existentialism. Often anthologized, it has inspired works of art by at least two other Americans.⁴ Surveying a nocturnal vista of sky, white cliff, and “turbid” ocean, Arnold’s thought modulates to ponder the human condition. Despite the maplike look of *End of Dover Beach*, it remains of course altogether abstract. Yet through his reference to Arnold’s poem, Motherwell adds another layer of metaphorical resonance. And as if to complete the counterpoint, the artist’s presence is inscribed on the whitest of paper scraps near the center of the collage—an incisive sign in a shifting tide of fragments.

DAVID ANFAM

Provenance

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1959.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1996.

1. Quoted in H. H. Arnason, *Robert Motherwell* (New York, 1977), 117.

2. Unpublished interview with Bryan Robertson, quoted in Robert Saltonstall Mattison, *Robert Motherwell: The Formative Years* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1987), 81.

3. Mattison 1987, 166.

4. Namely, the composer Samuel Barber’s eponymous song (1931, Op. 3) and George Tooker’s painting *Sleepers I* of 1951.



R. M. Thorne M
757 F

ALBERTO

GIACOMETTI

Swiss, 1901–1966

Annette Sewing, 1954

graphite

511 × 340 mm

(20 1/8 × 13 3/8)

Collection of Mr. and

Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1995

The painter Balthus once commented that Alberto Giacometti “could look at his teacup and see it forever as if for the first time.”¹ By viewing the commonplace as constantly new and unexpected, Giacometti was able to find inexhaustible subjects in the people, places, and things of his everyday world. It was a practice that sustained countless attempts to render the sensation of his experiences.

Annette Sewing depicts Giacometti’s wife absorbed in an ordinary task. While her downward gaze imbues the picture with a sense of casualness, the artist firmly establishes a compositional formality by placing the figure in the center of the drawing. Encircled by a variety of objects—the table, hanging lamp, bowl, doorway, and pictures on the wall—Annette’s static, symmetrical frontality contrasts with their flowing, asymmetrical placement. The duality of stillness and movement is further developed through the use of vertical and horizontal lines near her shoulders, which serve to constrain her form. This sense of compression is reinforced by the quality of line used to describe the figure itself: short, repeated, halting marks made more dense by smudges and partial erasures. These lines effectively lock the figure into its central position and create a visual anchor for the looser, calligraphic surrounding marks. The background forms are drawn with such fluid, gestural energy—in contrast to the weightiness of the figure—that they race across Annette’s contours in several locations, as if the artist, after carefully constructing the form of the sitter, disregarded its labored edges with a series of unconsciously scribbled lines.

Giacometti achieved a virtuoso performance in contrasting the immobility of the central figure with the movement of the surrounding environment, creating a work that is at once motionless and motion-filled. He was aware of this duality, stating, “the motor that makes one work is surely to give a certain permanence to what is fleeting.”² With simple, seemingly unconcerned lines, he accurately drew complex subjects, using suc-

cinct yet lyrical marks as his hand and eye moved together over the surface of the paper in one long, seamless activity of observation and drawing. Roger Fry described the work of Paul Cézanne, whom Giacometti greatly admired, as an expression of objects and space “in an incessantly varying and shifting texture.”³ The process of working from life and its various unending textures was for Giacometti not one of producing pictures of traditional illusions, but rather an open-ended inquiry into the nature of the visual world.

THOM BROWN

Provenance

Private collection;
Sotheby’s, New York,
29 November 1967, lot
108; Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon.

Notes

1. James Lord, *Giacometti: A Biography* (New York, 1983), 172.

2. Lord 1983, 307.

3. Roger Fry, *Cézanne: A Study of His Development* (New York and London, 1927), 59; quoted in Jakob Rosenberg, *On Quality in Art: Criteria of Excellence, Past and Present* (Princeton, 1967), 108.



Alberto Giacometti 1954

J. Dubuffet 55



JEAN DUBUFFET

French, 1901–1985

Jardin de Bibi Trompette, 1955

butterfly wings and watercolor

221 × 321 mm

(8 1/16 × 12 5/8)

The Stephen Hahn

Family Collection

(Partial and Promised

Gift), 1995

In the summer of 1953 Jean Dubuffet traveled to the French Alps with fellow artist Pierre Bettencourt, who inspired him to catch butterflies and create images with their wings.¹ Captivated by the “liveliness of the chase itself, the exhilarating effect of the hot sunshine . . . and the charm of the mountain solitudes,”² Dubuffet composed twenty works using wings and watercolor. *Jardin de Bibi Trompette* (Bibi Trompette's Garden) dates from the summer of 1955, when the artist embarked on a series of similar assemblages in Vence, where he and his wife had recently moved. He was particularly taken with the overgrown gardens of villas in this region of southern France, which were soon featured in his art. Although there may have been a garden owned by a “Bibi Trompette,” Dubuffet more likely fabricated this title for its sonority.³

In his search for an authentic and vital means of expression, Dubuffet repudiated Western art and culture, yet he certainly knew the tradition of still-life painting in which butterflies flutter above flowers as symbols of fleeting beauty and the cycles of life.⁴ He significantly extended this metaphor of transformation here, fashioning illusory blossoms from dismembered butterflies. The profusion of wings, in all of its intricacy and delicacy, is at once magnificent and macabre.

Though enamored of the “iridescent diaphanous haze” produced by the wings, Dubuffet took great liberties with their natural decoration.⁵ He created hybrid creatures by uniting wings from disparate species, affixing the elements of certain butterflies on top of others, and surrounding them with invented wings of watercolor. The wings of Orange Sulphurs, for example, arranged as a three-petaled pansy just left of the lower center, appear again in a similar configuration higher in the composition, just right of center, but this time flipped to show their yellow undersides and surmounted with the wings of Blues.⁶

Given Dubuffet's notorious stance against conventional standards of beauty (professed in his 1951 lecture “Anticultural

Positions” at the Art Institute of Chicago), it is not surprising that he subverted the romantic image of the butterfly by including moths in this image. Black-and-white Tiger Moths of two varieties are joined with similarly colored Scarce Swallowtails to dramatic effect in an oval configuration along the lower edge and again in the bottom right corner. Moth wings are integrated throughout the work, forming effective designs if unusual flowers.

These assemblages of organic material were of great significance to Dubuffet, who developed his important *Tableaux d'Assemblages* series in striving for a painted equivalent.⁷

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Samuel Kootz Gallery, New York; Norton Simon; Montgomery Art Center, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, 1957; Norton Simon, 1973; Stephen Hahn, 1974.

Notes

1. Gregory Jecmen and Judith Walsh of the National Gallery of Art have pointed out a sixteenth-century precedent for this technique in the Gallery collection: Joris Hoefnagel's *Animalia Rationalia et Insecta (Ignis)*, vol. 1, in which the wings of insects are fixed atop minutely rendered bodies—for more scientific purposes.

2. Jean Dubuffet, quoted in Peter Selz, *The Work of Jean Dubuffet* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1962), 109. Dubuffet was ordering preserved butterflies by mail in 1955; see *Dubuffet* [exh. cat., Fondation Pierre Gianadda] (Martigny, Switzerland, 1993), 86.

3. Dubuffet's inventive titles, which frequently employed street slang, are often untranslatable. “Bibi” is a term of endearment; “Trompette” means trumpet but could refer to a person with a voice or nose like a trumpet.

4. Dubuffet studied art at the Académie Julien as a young man; and he apparently intended to write a treatise on artistic motifs. See *Jean Dubuffet: A Retrospective* [exh. cat., Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum] (New York, 1973), 17 n. 3.

In his mature career Dubuffet abandoned such principles; his work was profoundly influenced by his interest in the *art brut*, or “raw art,” which he began collecting in 1945.

5. Jean Dubuffet in New York 1962, 120.

6. Dubuffet included front and hind wings of Scarce Swallowtails; Old World Swallowtails; Red Admirals; Orange, White, and Yellow Sulphurs; Blues; Jersey Tiger Moths; and Scarlet Tiger Moths. Gary Hevel of the department of entomology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, kindly identified these species.

7. Dubuffet called the butterfly works a “determining factor” in later works; see New York 1962, 112. He soon began to incorporate other organic materials in his Botanical Elements series.

JEAN DUBUFFET

French, 1901–1985

L'Heureux de peu,
1957

oil and collage

612 × 669 mm

(24 1/8 × 26 5/16)

The Stephen Hahn

Family Collection

(Partial and Promised
Gift), 1995

L'Heureux de peu (Happy with Little) is hardly exceptional in its subject matter—a figure in a landscape—yet it defies convention on many levels. The ungainly figure virtually engulfs the sterile landscape through which it lurches, like a reanimated corpse composed of ill-fitting limbs. But it is the creature's mysterious habitat that is most arresting. Scarcely delineated in terms of topography (beyond a sloping horizon line), this alien landscape is mottled and maculated in curious ways.

Though *L'Heureux de peu* seems vastly different from the lyrical *Jardin de Bibi Trompette* (cat. 93) that predates it by two years, there are significant parallels between the works. Following his endeavors with butterfly wings, Dubuffet strove to attain a comparable play of subtle color and delicate luster in painted works,¹ and his turbid medium here provided such an effect. An opalescent sheen and bluish cast are most prominent in the dusky sky of this assemblage, but they are readily apparent throughout the barren ground, as are flickering touches of gold.

Prizing the unexpected, Dubuffet relentlessly explored new approaches and materials, and *L'Heureux de peu*, like much of his art, reflects both spontaneity and intention. Its malformed colossus appears to have been assembled in a remarkably haphazard fashion, and it is incongruously presented from both a frontal and profile view. Yet the forms were carefully set in place prior to being fixed, as tiny pinholes demonstrate.² Dubuffet's method of "painting" the assemblage—by pressing the paper elements against a painted surface and rapidly removing them—was derived from canvases he "imprinted" with crumpled newspaper or other material.³ He soon began to employ, indeed to prefer in their own right, these papers, which by their use had become simultaneously offset with paint, and he constructed images such as this one culled from cut elements of those papers.⁴

Dubuffet's art represents a clear rupture with Western standards of beauty and

cultural canons. The *art brut*, or "raw art" (made by the mentally ill and amateurs with no academic training), that he collected and championed was integrally tied to his break with the tradition of art he had studied as a young man.⁵ Though Dubuffet never copied the images he collected, his attempts to invest his art with similar unrestrained creative power resulted in a unique and influential approach to technique, material, and subject matter that is manifest in this assemblage.

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Arthur Tooth & Sons, Ltd., London, 1958; Chester Beatty, 1958; Sotheby's London, 27 June 1991, lot 5); Stephen Hahn.

Notes

1. Dubuffet in Peter Selz, *The Work of Jean Dubuffet* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1962), 113 and 120–121.

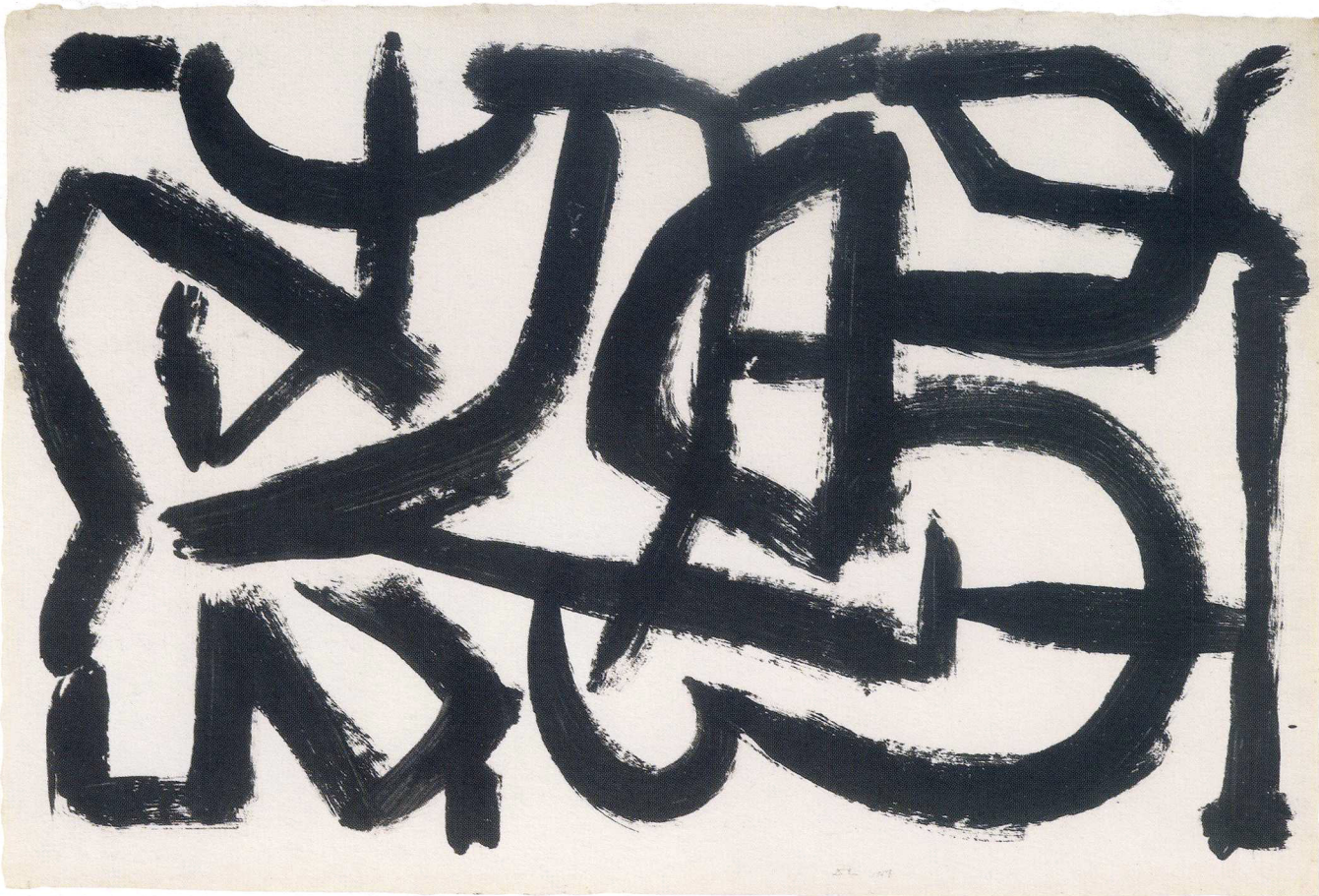
2. National Gallery of Art paper conservator Judith Walsh provided expert analysis of this work.

3. The resultant flamelike surface pattern is most apparent in the nebulous earth and sky.

4. "Soon I began working with a view to obtaining imprints rather than to preserving the painting itself. . . . The ones on paper, however, came nearer to what I had in mind than those on canvas" (quoted in New York 1962, 129).

5. His interest in *art brut* was sparked by *Bildneri der Geisteskranken*, Dr. Hans Prinzhorn's book on the art of the mentally ill, which Dubuffet received as a gift in 1923. He began acquiring such material in 1945, ultimately amassing a collection of nearly 5,000 examples.





95

DAVID SMITH

American, 1906–1965

Untitled, 1957

brush and ink mixed

with egg yolk

680 × 1,016 mm

(26¾ × 40)

Promised Gift of Mr.

and Mrs. Jacob Kainen

David Smith is acclaimed as one of America's greatest sculptors, and his reputation rests, deservedly, on his astonishing constructions in steel. But during more than three decades of working life, he explored a remarkable range of media and disciplines: welded iron and steel, cast bronze, carved stone, painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, and more. A painter before he was a sculptor, Smith continued to work extensively in two dimensions, even after he committed his principal energies to working in three. His art was nourished not only by his continuing dialogue with stimuli ranging from ancient artifacts to discarded machine parts, and from the art of the past to that of his contemporaries, but also by a lively conversation among his sculptures and his reliefs, drawings, prints, photographs, and paintings. It is impossible to isolate any one aspect of this inventive artist's work if his full achievement is to be understood.

Smith himself disliked distinctions. As he wrote in 1952: "The works you see are segments of my work life. If you prefer one work over another, it is your privilege, but it does not interest me. The work is a statement of identity, it comes from a stream, it is related to my past works, the three or four works in process, and the work yet to come."¹ Yet within his complex oeuvre, Smith's drawings remain distinct. After his sculptures, they constitute his most compelling and powerful body of work, and perhaps his most intimate and revealing—something of which he himself was well

aware. "Drawing is the most direct, closest to the true self, the most natural liberation of man," he wrote in 1955. "Drawings remain the life force of the artist."²

Drawing played a special role in the evolution of Smith's sculpture. It was at once a way of previewing projected works, a method of exploring the permutations of works under construction, and a means of releasing unexpected imagery. Smith's works on paper encompass the entire spectrum of sculptors' drawings, from depictions of the potentially buildable to apparently self-sufficient accumulations of marks. For Smith, the character of the mark floating in ambiguous space seems eventually to take precedence over what it might once have referred to; the drawings of his last decade range from the assured calligraphic "web" of evenly weighted touches seen in this drawing to the loose association of expressively inflected brush strokes of *Untitled (September 13, 1958)* (figure). Smith elegantly alluded to this variety of possibilities in 1952, when he described his drawings as "studies for sculpture, sometimes what sculpture is, sometimes what sculpture can never be."³

KAREN WILKIN

Provenance
Estate of the artist; Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Kainen.

(no date). Reprinted in Cleve Gray, ed., *David Smith by David Smith* (New York, 1972), 17.

Notes
1. David Smith Papers, Archives of American Art, Roll ND Smith, frame 360

2. Garnett McCoy, ed., *David Smith* (New York, 1973), 120, 137.

3. Gray 1972, 104.



David Smith, *Untitled (September 13, 1958)*, 1958, brush and ink mixed with egg yolk, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Candida and Rebecca Smith, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1991

DAVID SMITH

American, 1906–1965

**Untitled (11–22–58),
1958**

brush and ink mixed
with egg yolk
446 × 661 mm
(17 ⁹/₁₆ × 26 ¹/₁₆)
Gift of Candida and
Rebecca Smith, in
Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1991

In the 1930s and 1940s an eager young Smith filled notebooks with records of things that he found provocative—among them, Egyptian tomb furnishings, medieval artifacts, dancers, pool players, and the stages of a developing embryo—along with energetic renderings of ideas for sculptures, only some of which he realized. By the early 1950s Smith's drawings had become less notations of stimuli or depictions of the possible than improvisations in a language of loaded brush strokes. While still related to his sculptures, these mature drawings are in the realm of what he called “what sculpture can never be”: not visualizations of objects intended to exist in some other medium or space, but disembodied autonomous images.

Unlike the works on paper of Smith's formative years, a drawing such as *Untitled (11–22–58)* does not prompt speculation about how it might be translated into steel but instead triggers contemplation of subtle transitions from thick stroke to thin or from opacity to transparency. It suggests that drawing had now become an end in itself for Smith. And in fact, by the early 1950s the artist was developing his sculptures mainly through direct engagement with his materials.

Smith routinely kept to what he called “a double shift” at his home at Bolton Landing, New York, in the Adirondacks, working by day with steel in his factory/studio and drawing in his “clean studio” in the evening. That drawing revitalized him after the labor of working in heavy, resistant metal remains evident in the fluidity of Smith's gestures. Plainly, he enjoyed the liquid nature and weightlessness of ink, the ease of moving his hand across the surface of the paper. Yet the physicality of these gatherings of detached, supple marks is striking. Smith frequently employed a home-brewed ink of his own invention, combining black ink with egg yolk as a binder and applying this mixture with a variety of brushes that spanned extremes of softness and responsiveness, dryness and resistance. Smith's special ink makes every stroke sit up on the paper; it gives each touch of the brush a surprising materiality and a distinct character as the embodiment of a gesture. Partly because of

this heightened physicality, even a seemingly autonomous work like *Untitled (11–22–58)* demands multiple readings. Smith's substantial brush strokes convince the viewer that his self-sufficient evocations of the forms and spaces of landscape and the body are, at the same time, references to possible sculptures and explorations of the implications of existing constructions.

Smith's drawings of the 1950s also invite comparison with Chinese and Japanese calligraphy, an interest confirmed by his writings and by the books in his library. Yet he wrote in 1952, “It is not Japanese painting but some of the principles involved that have meaning to me... such as the beginning of a stroke outside the paper continuing through the drawing space to project beyond, so that the included part possesses both the power of origin and projection.”¹ Smith's underlying assumption that a disembodied brush stroke possesses a physical reality as both trajectory and object helps to explain the “sculptural” sense of materiality and thrust that animates his drawings of the 1950s. It comes as no surprise to learn that while he was “building” these gestural images in his special egg-ink, he was also at work on related (and sometimes unrelated) free-standing sculptures and reliefs. As at every other time in his career, changing media and disciplines was a way of not only recharging himself but also expanding and exploring possibilities. Each fed the other.

KAREN WILKIN

Provenance

Estate of the artist.

Note

1. Garnett McCoy, ed.,
David Smith (New York,
1973), 83.



ROBERT

RAUSCHENBERG

American, born 1925

Tour, 1959

solvent transfer, crayon,
graphite, acrylic, and
watercolor

581 × 733 mm

(22⁷/₈ × 28⁷/₈)

Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

In 1958 Rauschenberg began to make independent drawings, though not through conventional means. *Tour* embodies one of the many methods he has devised to appropriate imagery from a virtually infinite range of sources.¹ To compose this work, Rauschenberg selected reproductions clipped from newspapers or magazines, wet the illustration with an organic solvent (lighter fluid), and placed them face down on his paper. He then rubbed the backs of the images with such implements as an empty ballpoint pen or a pencil (the latter depositing medium in the process) to transfer the ink of the reproductions to the new surface. This frottage technique bathes the images in a kind of linear sfumato and sets them within a dynamic graphic flux. Rauschenberg reinforces the faint, transferred color with delicate touches of crayon and paint, using color to bind his pictorial elements to one another.²

The content of *Tour* shifts from the banal to the sublime: crocuses, three rubbings or imprints of quarters, a settee, superimposed Popeye cartoons on the one hand; the head of Botticelli's Venus on the other. And although the images do not coalesce into a single narrative, they are not randomly selected: old master reproductions appear frequently in Rauschenberg's work, and Botticelli was very much on his mind in 1959, when he was also at work on his illustrations for Dante's *Inferno* (see also cat. 107) and had seen the Italian painter's interpretations of the subject. Other recurrent images in *Tour* include a baseball player, a rooster, and a cube drawn in perspective. The neoclassical portico is the Palais Bourbon in Paris (which had just been cleaned), here dramatically illuminated at night. Beneath this, faintly traced at the bottom of the sheet, are two Gothic windows. In his "tour" Rauschenberg intersperses such subjects from abroad, including oval stickers from an international driver's license, with prototypically American ones.

MARLA PRATHER

Provenance

Leo Castelli Gallery, New York; Gomprecht-Benesch, Baltimore; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1959.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1996.

1. Rauschenberg, who has frequently titled works well after their creation,

titled *Tour* in September 1986. It was previously known by Castelli registry number D31.

2. The pinkish beige areas of paint in *Tour* were once white and probably more transparent, but the chemical makeup of the paint has caused it to change over time.



JASPER JOHNS

American, born 1930

Night Driver, 1960

charcoal, pastel, and collage

1,143 × 940 mm

(45 × 37)

Promised Gift of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff

Jasper Johns' enigmatic *Night Driver* deeply rewards lingering and searching engagement. As the eyes gradually adapt to the dark surface of the drawing, overall obscurity slowly resolves to subtle differentiation of detail and pictorial incident. Certain aspects of this work's construction are more readily perceptible: that it is, for example, composed of four sheets of paper, including a large supporting sheet, another attached to it that covers almost seven-eighths of the image, and two smaller, rectangular sheets below. Yet other qualities only emerge in delayed discovery over the course of time.

As vision attunes to *Night Driver's* somber opacity, an increasingly discriminating perceptual awareness hones in on how Johns draws across edges of the sheets as if to bind them, or cuts certain edges of the smaller sheets yet tears others to reveal their fibrous inner texture. One begins to wonder, too, at how thin horizontal marks mysteriously extrude from the surface of the largest applied sheet, as if some pressure exerted by mark-making on the verso had left traces of subtle indentation. Finally, immersed in the depths of *Night Driver's* domain, one comes to discern how the darkest of Johns' marks become those to which one turns to orient one's looking—how in the overall dimness it is counterintuitively on the blackest of his marks one ultimately focuses attention.

Consisting primarily of variant shades of black worked up in layers of soft charcoal and the greater density of pastel, *Night Driver's* palette also discloses highlights of green, blue, and yellow as well as rubbings of white, which mix with the black to lighten it in places to shades of gray. And although underlying hues on the smaller sheets of paper are also covered with dark marks, those sheets radiate a warmer tonality that confers a candescence on the work as a whole, lightening its dusky sobriety. The largest of the applied sheets, at some point stapled to the supporting sheet of paper, has been irregularly cut along its edges, both surfaces then reworked after layering. Now unstapled, the top sheet curls slightly at its edges to reveal glimpses of the supporting paper. This curvature creates a narrow lip,

inviting the eyes to inspect what lies under it. This subtle dimensionality reminds the viewer that this work is not abstract flatness but rather speaks to what Johns has called the "object quality" of his art.

Of all the dense and hermetic drawings Jasper Johns has produced, *Night Driver* remains one of his most elusive works of art. Asked briefly to discuss its imagery, the artist responded, "There's almost no imagery in it." Pressed further to explain the meaning of its title, he remarked: "I'm afraid it's inexplicably associated in my mind with getting a license in North Carolina in 1960 and beginning to drive."¹ Metaphorical associations among this work, its title, and the anecdotal origins of the piece have been explored with limited illumination. In the end, it is the object itself that continues to confront the viewer. Its irreducible "object quality," as the artist concedes, is what "keeps it where it is, but simultaneously it draws you into somewhere else."² In this way, *Night Driver* becomes an objective metaphor of metaphor itself.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Provenance

Leo Castelli Gallery, New York; Everett Ellin Gallery, Los Angeles; Leo Castelli Gallery, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Rowan, Pasadena; Arman, New York; Ben Heller Inc., New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1978.

Notes

1. Ruth E. Fine and Nan Rosenthal, "Interview with Jasper Johns," in *The Drawings of Jasper Johns* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), 82.

2. Quoted in Robert Saltonstall Mattison, *Masterworks in the Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Collection* (New York, 1995), 22.



ROBERT

MOTHERWELL

American, 1915–1991

Black Shapes, 1961

acrylic

737 × 584 mm (29 × 23)

The Nancy Lee and

Perry Bass Fund, 1999

Motherwell is considered an “action painter,” a subcategory of abstract expressionism. His images are born of a reaction to his materials, here including the texture of the paper, paint, and brush. The surface of this work documents the process of his drawing. In the 1940s Robert Motherwell had experimented with tapping into the collective unconscious through the doodling process. This spontaneous automatism, which had also intrigued the surrealists, motivated Motherwell’s forms in various graphic media for the next several decades.

In *Black Shapes* a combination of paint that Motherwell applied with volition and paint dripped by chance animates the field of the drawing. A roughly horizontal band, with loops and spatters that break its contour, strikes out across the page above two upright forms that almost mirror one another. The soft brush, its reserve of paint diminishing near the end of each stroke, reveals the trail of each bristle. The overall motif is reminiscent of a Chinese character and suggests the artist’s urge to communicate, however cryptically. Later in the decade, in 1968, Motherwell would experiment with a series, beginning with *Imaginary Letter #1*, in which calligraphic strokes surge across the page.

The artist succeeds in bold mark-making in the present work, using both additive and subtractive techniques. A noose of encrusted paint lies elevated on a bed of black. A white line is scraped out of the opaque black surface in the large horizontal shape at the top of the drawing. The paper records Motherwell’s gestures—fast, bold, and angry—not to be contained by the boundaries of the sheet. This work monumentalizes the experience of emotion.

In a review of Motherwell’s paintings at the Sidney Janis Gallery in 1961—which relates as well to this drawing—critic Jack Kroll described the work as “an incendiary meeting of emotion and gesture,” and went on to explain: “the central blazoning event has thrown off a galvanic spoor of spatters and drips that acts like the sun’s corona to

lick the astronomer’s eye into an expansive awareness of decisive occurrence.... It is not picayune water-pistol that spurts Motherwell’s automatism, but a proud Big Bertha that rears its muzzle into the blank sky and asks no quarter from critics of controlled combustions.”¹

KATHRYN M. RUDY

Provenance

Estate of the artist;
Dedalus Foundation.

Notes

1. *ArtNews* (May 1961), 10.



DAVID SMITH

American, 1906–1965

Untitled, 1963

enamel spray paint

445 × 295 mm

(17 1/2 × 11 5/8)

Gift of Candida and Rebecca Smith, in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art, 1991

Smith's method of starting his large-scale sculptures by arranging elements against a white painted rectangle on the floor of his studio is well documented, both in photographs and in written descriptions.¹ The configurations he initiated in this way were then tack-welded together and hauled up to be developed as free-standing structures. Always alert to suggestions that presented themselves in the course of working, Smith noticed that when he raised these early stages of his sculptures, a negative white image of the configuration remained on what was left of the painted rectangle, outlined by the burnt black traces of welding sparks. In the late 1950s and early 1960s he began to incorporate this accidentally discovered method into his repertoire of drawing and painting techniques, arranging pieces of cardboard, wood, or steel on sheets of paper or canvas and substituting a spray of paint for the explosion of sparks.²

The practice is vivid evidence of the seamlessness of Smith's work in various media. The white rectangles were equivalents of the canvas or sheet of paper, an analogy reinforced by the fact that by beginning his sculptures against a supporting ground plane (no matter how spatially articulate they would later become) Smith gained the freedom to "draw" with chunks of steel as uninhibitedly as he did with strokes of the brush, without worrying about structural logic. By starting three-dimensional works as flat arrangements against a continuous surface—in other words, as reliefs—he was also recapitulating his own evolution from painter to sculptor, a process in which, he said, "the canvas became a

base and the painting became a sculpture."³ The spray drawings, which had their genesis in arrangements almost identical to the beginnings of Smith's steel sculptures, can be read as memories of fugitive reliefs, weightless records of constructions that existed only briefly. In the present spray drawing Smith made this connection more explicit than he usually did, by anchoring his airborne circular forms on a horizontal rectangular "base" and implying a ground plane by means of a reserved wider band at the bottom of the sheet. To complete the cycle, the insubstantial silhouettes of the sprays seem in turn to have found a new kind of physical reality in a group of economical, graphic, essentially planar painted steel sculptures of the early 1960s, including three *Primo Piano* sculptures of 1962 and 2 *Circles*, 2 *Crows*, of 1963 (figure).

Paradoxically, the spray drawings also represent the antithesis of Smith's usual practice in other media. In contrast to his sculptures, which were always made by adding discrete part to discrete part, the spray drawings result from a process of subtraction, of un-making. In contrast to his mature ink drawings, which celebrate the expressive power of gesture, the spray drawings seem designed to neutralize or even eliminate evidence of the hand. Yet despite their impersonal, distanced facture, their silhouetted shapes are far from impersonal; instead, like Smith's idiosyncratic, large-scale constructions of the period, which they resemble in miniature, the spray drawings are potent evocations of a distinctive individual personality. The ghostly images implied by the sprays defy gravity; they are structurally impossible, unbuildable, yet no less confrontational, no less unignorably present than their most robust steel counterparts.

KAREN WILKIN

David Smith, 2 *Circles* 2 *Crows*, 1963, painted white steel, Collection of Irma and Norman Braman, photograph by David Smith



Provenance
Estate of the artist.

Notes
1. E. A. Carmean Jr., *David Smith* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1982), 24–37.

2. Washington 1982, 27–28.

3. Garnett McCoy, ed., *David Smith* (New York, 1973), 82.



ED RUSCHA

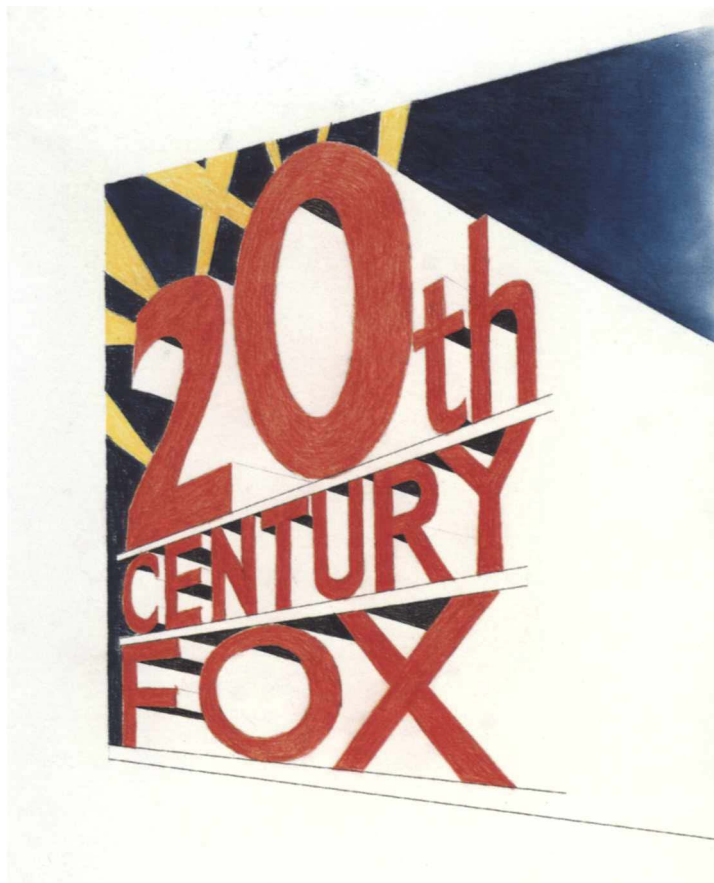
American, born 1937

View of the Big Picture, 1963colored pencil with pen
and ink over graphite
each of three sheets:

558 × 456 mm (22 × 18)

Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,

Washington, DC, 1976



Drawing on his experience as a commercial graphic artist, Los Angeles-based Ed Ruscha systematically investigated the idea of texts on two-dimensional surfaces in the early 1960s. By 1962 he had reached something of a turning point and conceived *Large Trademark with Eight Spotlights*, an oil on canvas of monumental proportions (5 × 11 feet). That painting, now in the collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, portrays one of the best-known logos of the past century—that of 20th-Century Fox—and marks Ruscha's foray into an informal series of one-point perspectival images.

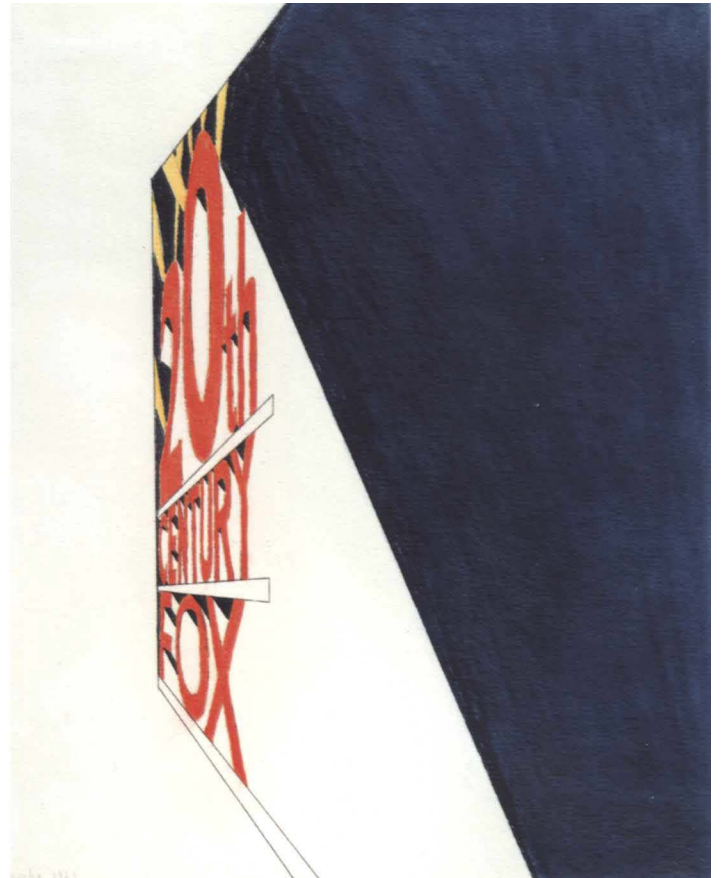
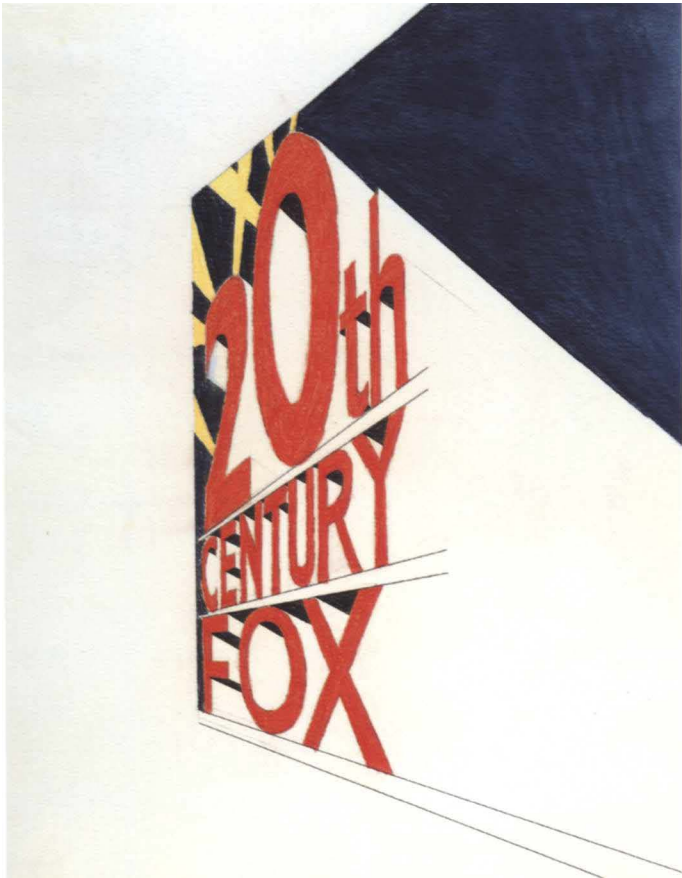
In 1963 Ruscha revisited the 20th-Century Fox logo as the subject of the present drawing, *View of the Big Picture*. This dramatic work, composed of three separate sheets, challenges any preconceptions one may have about the seemingly static nature of images. With tongue in cheek, Ruscha takes this popular icon and presents three

successive parallax views. Rather than employing the fixed viewpoint of a single “snapshot” image, Ruscha's vision breaks through the presumed conceptual frame, allowing a glimpse “behind the scenes.” Calling to mind cartoon flipbooks, the photographs of Eadweard Muybridge, and even the predella panels of Renaissance altarpieces, this image's cinematic vision is a fitting tribute to the subject. The artist used this “stop-action” strategy on at least one other occasion, for a drawing triptych entitled *Smash* (1964).¹

JONATHAN F. WALZ

Note

1. Reproduced in Ed Ruscha, *They Call Her Styrene* (London, 2000), n.p.



JACOB LAWRENCE

American, 1917–2000

Street to Mbari, 1964

tempera over graphite

565 × 784 mm

(22¼ × 30⅞)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs.

James T. Dyke, 1993

Jacob Lawrence's expressive narratives encompass historical subjects and the contemporary quotidian world. Socially conscious and autobiographical in nature, the artist's genre scenes focus on his family, friends, and community—at home, at work, at play. Invited by the Mbari Artists' and Writers' Club Cultural Center in Nigeria to stage an exhibition of his work, Lawrence first traveled to the African republic in late 1962.

Back in Nigeria in 1964 with his wife, painter Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence, and writing for a Mbari club publication, Lawrence indicated that during his earlier stay he "became so excited by all the new visual forms I found in Nigeria—unusual color combinations—textures, shapes, and the dramatic effect of light—that I felt an overwhelming desire to come back as soon as possible to steep myself in Nigerian culture so that my paintings, if I'm fortunate, might show the influence of the great African artistic tradition."¹

Despite difficulties the couple faced on their arrival in Nigeria, the eight months they spent there were artistically productive for Lawrence.² He completed several drawings and at least eight works in tempera, among the most brilliantly colorful and structurally complex of which is *Street to Mbari*.³ This meticulously worked painting on paper is a celebration of the intense light and heat of the Nigerian midday, the tremendous variety of activities within the village community, and the marvelously rich patterning of color that had so inspired the artist on his previous visit. More dramatically than the other of Lawrence's Nigerian marketplace views, this street scene deeply recedes into space, offering radical differences in the sizes of the myriad shopkeepers and customers; babies at play or nursing at their mothers' breasts; statuesque women simultaneously bearing children on their backs and baskets of food on their heads; chickens and sheep, among the numerous varieties of animals; exotic food-stuffs and the dazzling bolts of fabric that are essential to the celebratory aura of the image. Dozens of figures (more than had heretofore appeared in any of Lawrence's

works) are carefully articulated in both facial expression and gesture, presenting a fascinating contrast to the geometry of the awnings and stalls that structure the scene as it is thrust into the distance, leading to Mbari.

Street to Mbari represents Lawrence's extraordinarily sympathetic view of a specific place at a specific time. Yet the artist explained three decades later that the seeds of his responses to the forms and colors of Nigeria had been planted many years before, within the context of his own experience. Answering an inquiry as to whether "the patterns he saw in the marketplace were inspired by the African textiles he was seeing, Lawrence replied that his penchant to see pattern came from his earliest memories—of being conscious of patterns in his Harlem community."⁴

RUTH E. FINE

Provenance

Terry Dintenfass Inc., New York; Dr. and Mrs. Marvin L. Radoff; Terry Dintenfass Inc., New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

Notes

1. Irma Rothstein Papers, microfilm roll D286, Archives of American Art; quoted in Ellen Harkins Wheat, *Jacob Lawrence: American Painter* [exh. cat., Seattle Art Museum] (Seattle, 1986), 108; in a footnote to the original source (p. 199) Wheat suggests "it is possible that Lawrence's statement regarding African artistic influence is based more on diplomacy than on desire."

2. The Lawrences went to Africa independently, not under the auspices of the United States Information Agency, which often sponsored artists' trips abroad during the 1960s. The couple was "black-listed upon arrival, unable to

secure housing, and under constant surveillance," according to Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence; quoted in Patricia Hills, "The Protest Years of the 1960s," in Peter T. Nesbitt and Michelle DuBois, *Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence*, University of Washington Press in Association with Jacob Lawrence Catalogue Raisonné Project (Seattle, 2000), 182.

3. See Peter T. Nesbitt and Michelle DuBois, *Jacob Lawrence: Paintings, Drawings, and Murals (1935–1999), a Catalogue Raisonné*, University of Washington Press in association with Jacob Lawrence Catalogue Raisonné Project (Seattle and London, 2000), no. P64–03; see also P64–02, P64–04 through P64–09, and D64–01 through D64–06.

4. Hills in Nesbitt and DuBois, *Over the Line*, 183.



ELLSWORTH KELLY

American, born 1923

Small Oak, 1964

graphite

573 × 726 mm

(22 9/16 × 28 9/16)

Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,

Washington, DC, 1976

In the spring of 1949 while living in Paris, Ellsworth Kelly began to make line drawings of plants. A hyacinth he bought for his room provided his first subject.¹ That summer Kelly produced a group of drawings while on Belle-Ile off the west coast of France.² He was also making automatic drawings at that time, exploring ways to introduce more spontaneity into his work.³ It is notable that his plant drawings were initiated not even a year after Kelly made his first abstractions and have continued intermittently alongside his paintings and sculptures throughout his career.⁴

In *Small Oak* Kelly's elegant forms are in full evidence. This is the second of four drawings on the subject the artist made in 1964, each rendered with sureness and grace in an even and nearly continuous graphite line. The closed shapes of the leaves and the narrow stem endow the pristine form with its own mass and set it apart from the "background" of white paper. Subtle inflections appear in the undulating line, caused by changes in direction and pressure on the pencil. These provide a glint of the artist's hand.

Despite stylistic differences, Kelly's drawings have often been compared to those of Henri Matisse,⁵ based on their shared focus on contour line. As Kelly points out, however, Matisse's forms are generally open, whereas his are almost always closed.⁶ This emphasis on the closed form links Kelly's drawings directly with his shaped canvas paintings and sculptures. The exquisite rendering of the natural form in the present work conveys a perfection much like that in his paintings. In *Small Oak* the delicate motif and medium balance with the structural strength of Kelly's self-contained contour form to create a subtle tension that is characteristic of his best work.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Notes

1. E. C. Goosen, *Ellsworth Kelly* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1973) 96.

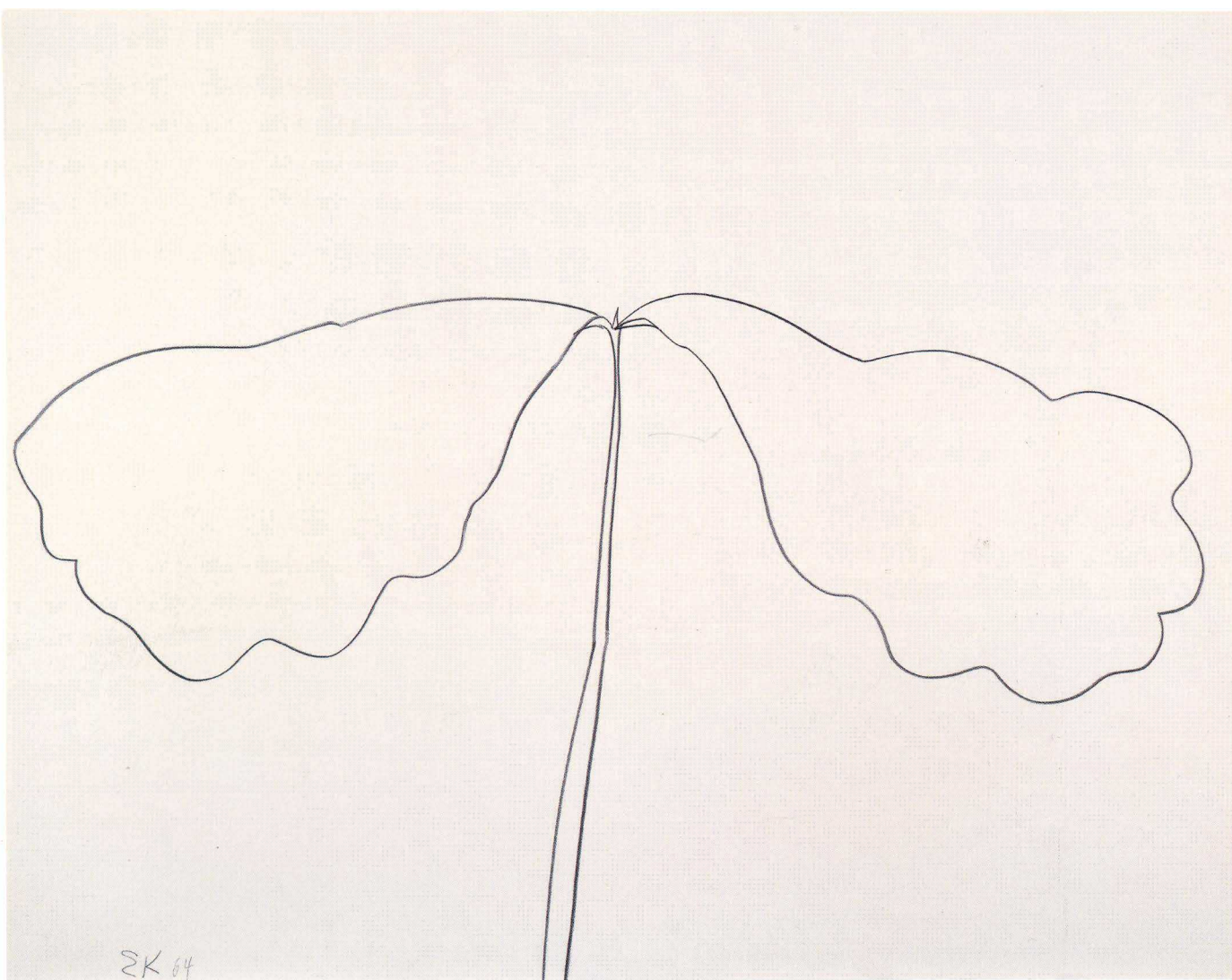
2. Telephone conversation with the artist, 8 January 2001.

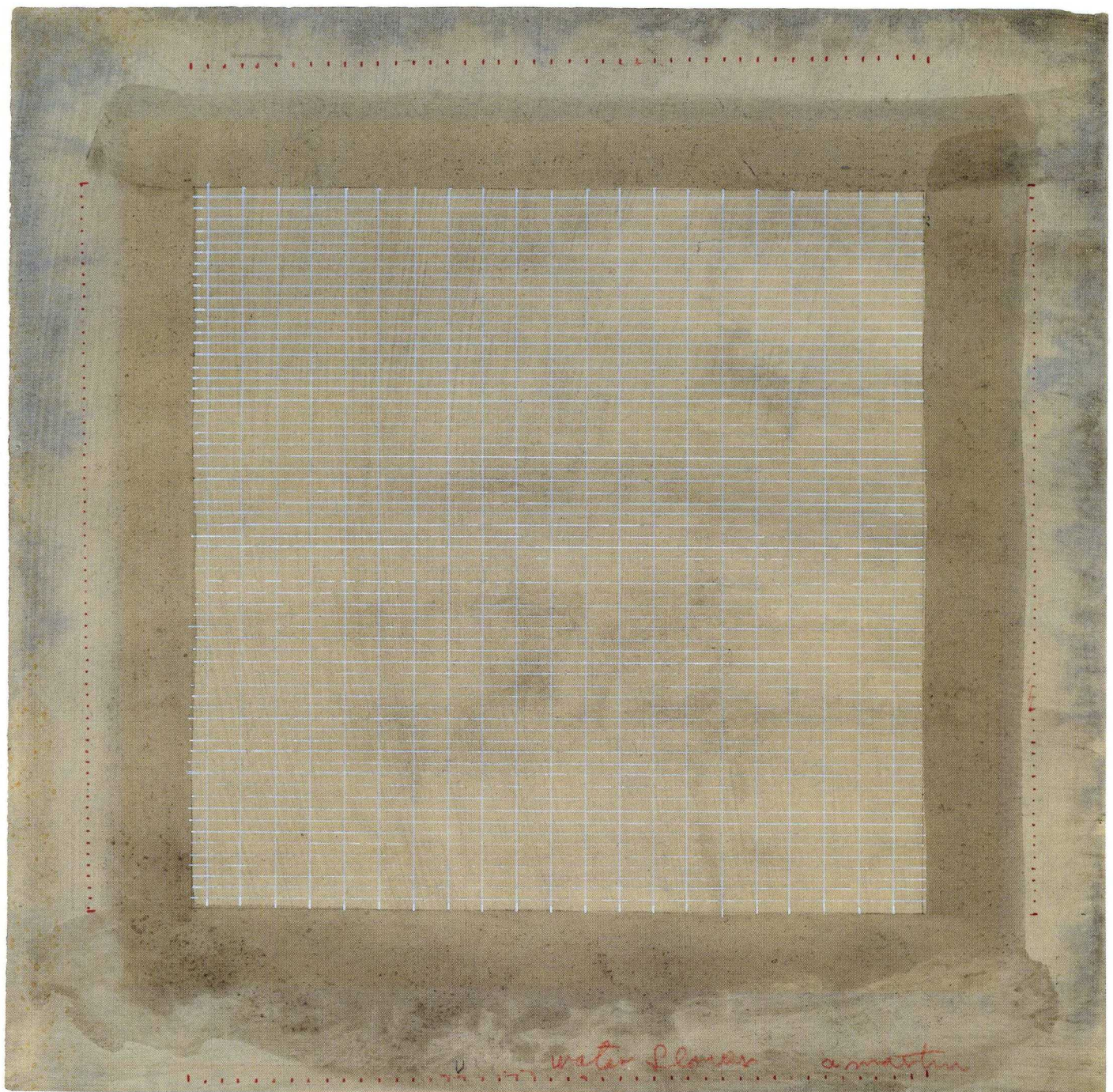
3. New York 1973, 19.

4. Barbara Debs Knowles, "Ellsworth Kelly's Drawings," *Print Collectors Newsletter* 4 (September–October 1972), 73–77; and New York 1973, 97.

5. Knowles 1972, 73–77; New York 1973, 97; and Linda Nochlin, in *Ellsworth Kelly: Drawings 1961–1962* [exh. cat., Matthew Marks Gallery] (New York, 1999), 8.

6. Telephone conversation, 8 January.





104

AGNES MARTIN

American, born in
Canada, 1912

Water Flower, 1964

pen and ink with wash
over graphite
301 × 303 mm
(11 7/8 × 11 15/16)
Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,
Washington, DC, 1976

Agnes Martin has been a painter since the early 1930s when she came to the United States from her native Saskatchewan. Her work did not mature (or “get on the right track,” as she puts it) until 1957, when she settled in Coenties Slip, New York, the neighborhood of Ellsworth Kelly and Ad Reinhardt, with whom she had in common a rejection of 1950s painterliness. Over the next ten years she created a large and consistent body of work in a severely reductionist style.¹

Most of the works of this period are made up of lines and grids. Unlike graph paper, in which a grid of squares occupies a rectangular field, Martin’s grids are made up of rectangles on a square field. For Martin the rectangle drains the stability from the square and introduces more chaotic elements into it, and it is this interplay between the stasis of the square and the quixotic nature of the rectangles that imbues her work with its underlying tension.

With its multitude of empty rectangles, *Water Flower* is like a piece of graph paper on which nothing has yet been drawn. The ground on which Martin has established her grid is a gray wash, ranging in tone from cool to warm and overflowing the confines of the square to fill the borders. The white ink lines of the grid seem to skim the surface of the paper; sometimes they are crisp and emphatic, sometimes they are delicate or broken. The overall impression is of a shimmering, sometimes floating, sometimes immersed field.

Martin described how she came to use the grid motif: “I was coming out of the mountains, and . . . I came out on this plain, and I thought, Ah! What a relief! . . . This is for me! The expansiveness of it. I sort of surrendered. This plain . . . it was just like a straight line. It was a horizontal line. . . . Then, I found that the more I drew that line, the happier I got. First I thought it was just like the sea . . . then, I thought it was like singing! Well, I just went to town on this horizontal line. But I didn’t like it without any verticals.”²

JULIA THOMPSON

Notes

1. Carter Ratcliffe, “Agnes Martin and the ‘artificial infinite,’” *ArtNews* 72 (May 1973), 26.

2. John Gruen, “Agnes Martin: Everything, everything is about feeling . . . feeling and recognition,” *ArtNews* 75 (September 1976), 94.

105

AGNES MARTIN

American, born in
Canada, 1912

Wheat, 1964

pen and ink with
gouache
300 × 300
(11 13/16 × 11 13/16)
Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,
Washington, DC, 1976

Agnes Martin's works from the mid-1960s shift back and forth between the expression of external and internal states. While some works refer to generalized, enveloping aspects of nature, others speak to the individual's response to nature; still others do both simultaneously.

Wheat depicts a grid made up of delicately traced lines of black ink on buff-colored paper. The rectangles of this grid are not empty; each contains a dot of white pigment. While these dots are not drawn exactly in the center of each rectangle, they are not randomly placed either. As the viewer's eye travels over the drawing, the impression created by the dots is of a swaying, undulating field of glistening stalks. It evokes not only the sensation of a vast, ever-changing landscape but also a profound connection to that landscape.¹

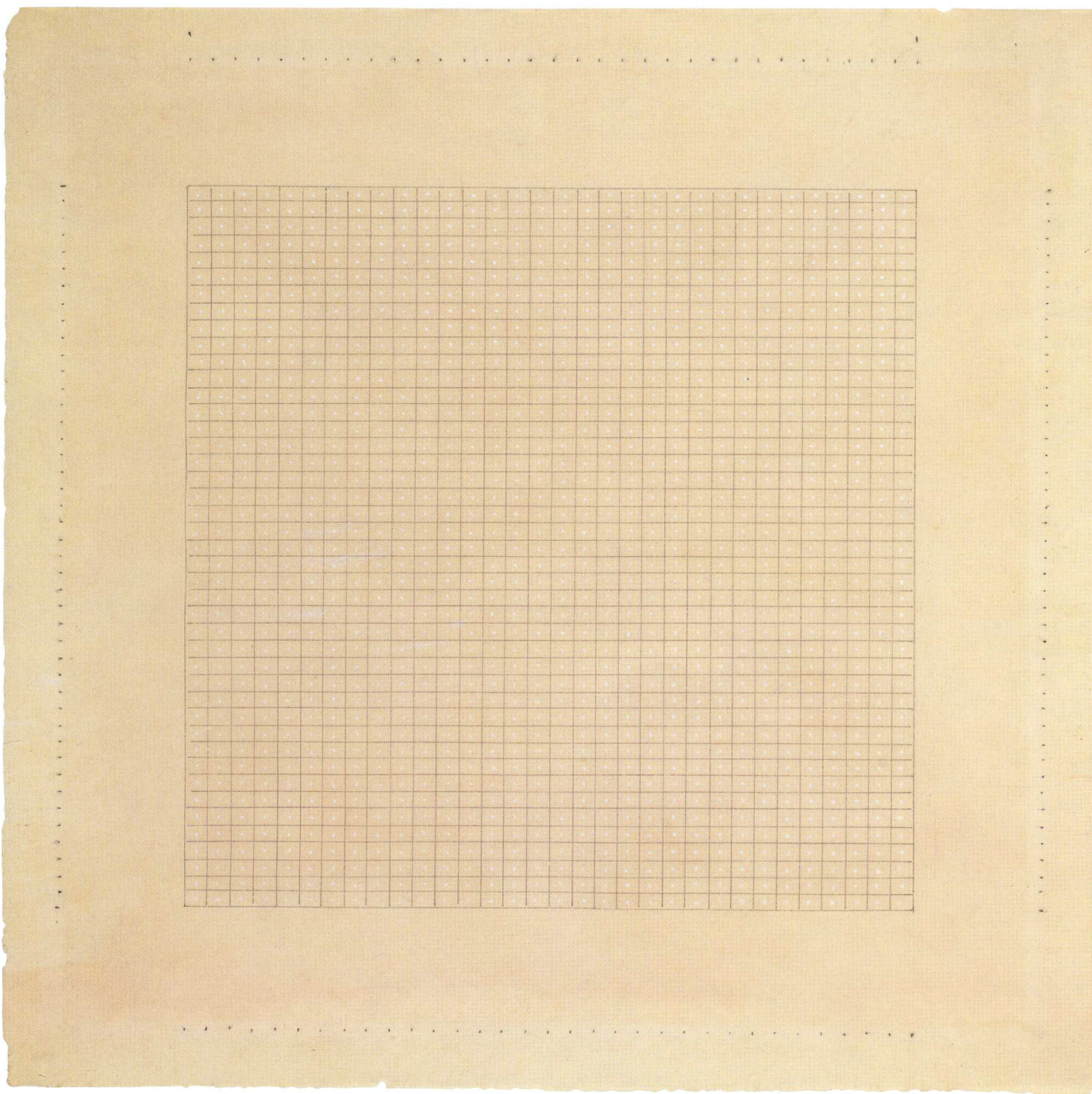
Over time the meaning of the grid changed for Martin. She came to consider her work to be nonobjective—"not about the world, or nature or things like that"—and she began to make her first fully abstract paintings. She refuted the earlier version of how she came to use the grid motif (see cat. 104). The grid "came to me as an inspiration. I was thinking about innocence, and then I saw it in my mind—that grid. And so I thought, well, I'm supposed to paint what I see in my mind. So I painted it, and sure enough, it was innocent. The grid expresses innocence.... Art is a concrete representation of our most subtle feelings."²

JULIA THOMPSON

Notes

1. Martin's father, who died when she was a child, was a wheat farmer.

2. Joan Simon, "Perfection is in the mind: an interview with Agnes Martin," *Art in America* 84 (May 1996), 124.



EVA HESSE

American, born in
Germany, 1936–1970

Untitled, 1964

watercolor, gouache,
felt-tip pen, ink, and
collage

441 × 584 mm

(17 3/8 × 23)

Gift of Werner H. and
Sarah-Ann Kramarsky,
1998

Best known for her work as a postminimalist sculptor between the mid-1960s and 1970—an artist who brought a sense of the body and the organic into the regular and serially repeating geometric modules pioneered by such abstract sculptors as Donald Judd, Robert Morris, and Carl Andre—Eva Hesse originally aspired to be a painter. As a master of fine arts candidate at Yale between 1957 and 1959, she studied color relations under Josef Albers, and her early drawings and paintings from the 1960s show the influence of abstract expressionists like Willem de Kooning and Adolph Gottlieb, among others.

In 1964, however, her work began to develop in new directions. Returning that summer to her native Germany, where she and her husband, sculptor Tom Doyle, were to live and work for the next fifteen months under the patronage of F. Arnhard Schiedt, a German textile manufacturer and art collector, Hesse began to concentrate more on drawing, which led to her first sculptures in 1965. In these breakthrough drawings of 1964 and 1965, in which mechanical and geometrical forms gradually came to dominate the more gestural abstract elements, Hesse experimented with a range of techniques and formal combinations, moving back and forth between gesture and geometry, until a focus on line and contour impelled her to move into the third dimension.

In this untitled and wonderfully enigmatic work, Hesse demonstrates the contradiction that was characteristic of her drawing during these years. A predominantly pink, flowing swath of watercolor sweeps in from the top left to the lower right of the slightly textured white paper, creating an airy and shallow volume, which is built up in places with ink and areas of translucent white gouache. Within this pinkish “mass,” hard ink outlines define shapes that suggest both cellular forms and machine parts. Three large collage elements also appear: an irregular white lozenge with color markings at the lower left of the pink swath; a squarish shape with a curving yellow tail at the lower right; and a multicolored shape with fanlike articulations at the upper right. The simple inte-

rior shapes recall the biomorphs of Arshile Gorky, whom Hesse admired, and the parallel hatchings and repeated squares on some of the collage elements prefigure Hesse’s later simple, repeated modules. The even colors of the two collage pieces on the right flatten the overall image, establishing a tense dialogue with the flowing colors and gestural lines that evokes an ambiguous space.

Belonging to the earliest of Hesse’s German drawings, this sheet reveals strong continuities with some of the multimedia works she had made in the previous two years, owing to its emphasis on what Hesse called her “free crazy forms” and “wild” fluctuating space.¹ In comparison with the drawings that followed, it is among the least geometric and most unconstrained and gestural of her German works. In addition to the unpredictable contrasts between flatness and volume, gesture and stillness, cutting and stroking, mechanical and organic form in this drawing, the most impressive quality is the sheer labor of its execution: not only the layering and interpenetration of its media and forms but also the sense of its having been worked and reworked. Hesse called her best work “absurd,” by which she meant enigmatic, thought-provoking, and multivalent.² Here she seems to play with different gestures and shapes, augmenting, transforming, or replacing one or the other element until the resulting whole evinced the unpredictability of form and connotation that she craved at this time.

MATTHEW BIRO

Provenance

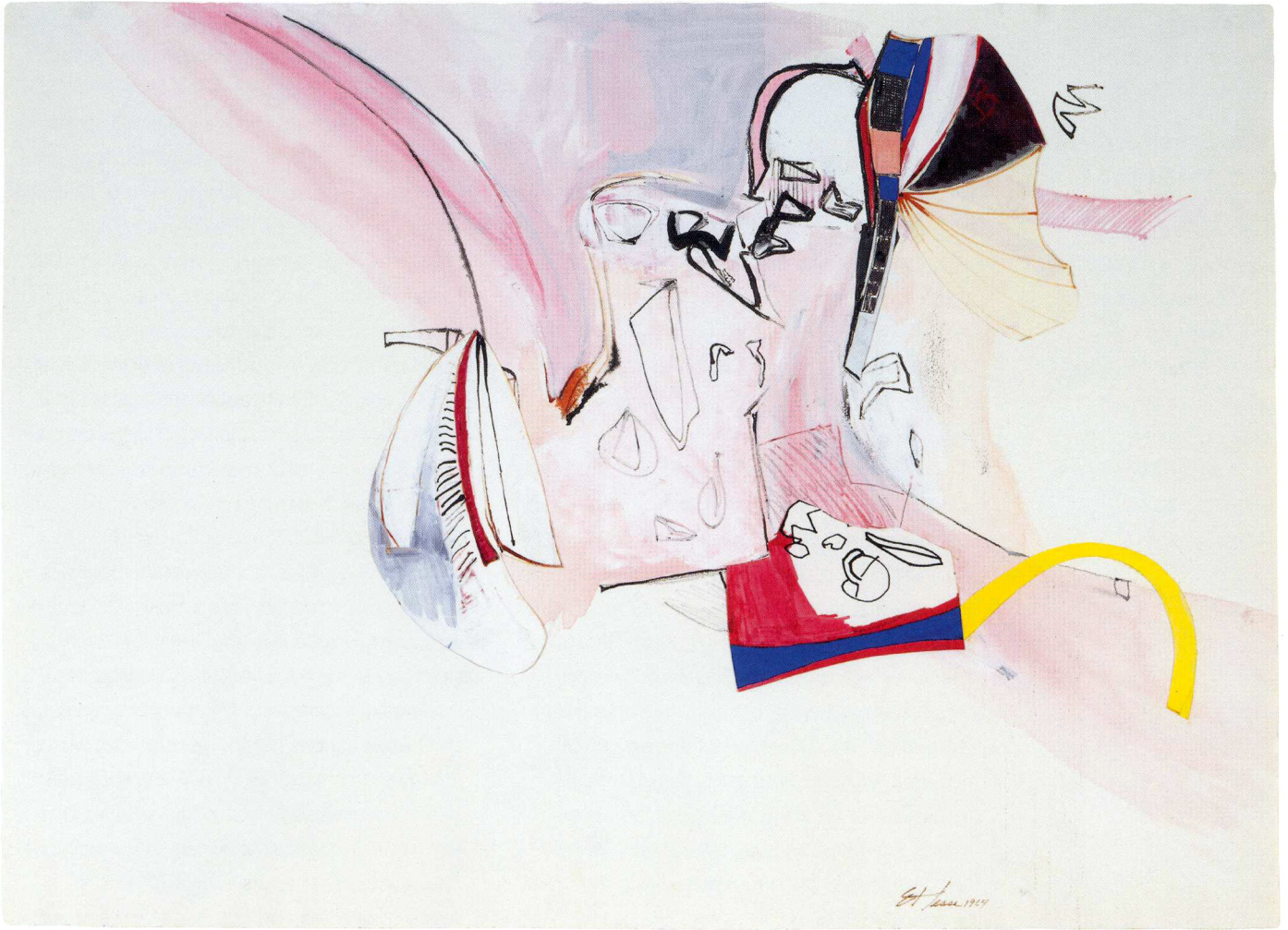
Estate of the artist; Kate Ganz, Ltd., New York; Werner H. and Sarah-Ann Kramarsky, 1993.

1964–1965,” in *Eva Hesse: Drawing in Space—Bilder und Reliefs* [exh. cat., Ulmer Museum] (Ulm, 1994), 113.

Notes

1. Letter from Hesse to Sol LeWitt, 18 March 1965; quoted in Helen A. Cooper, “From the Chronology: Eva Hesse in Germany,

2. See Ellen H. Johnson, “Drawing in Eva Hesse’s Work,” in *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective of the Drawings* [exh. cat., Allen Memorial Art Museum] (Oberlin, 1982), 14.



ROBERT

RAUSCHENBERG

American, born 1925

**Drawings For Dante's
700 Birthday, I.B. and
II.B., 1965**graphite, watercolor,
and gouache over
photolithograph
each of two sheets:

382 × 790 mm

(15 × 31⁷/₁₆)Gift of the Woodward
Foundation,

Washington, DC, 1976

Between 1951 and 1953 Robert Rauschenberg developed his technique of “combine” painting, a process that integrated gestural strokes and blotches of paint with mass-produced elements such as newspaper photographs and common objects such as clocks, chairs, and ladders. After the ascendancy of the largely nonobjective abstract expressionists of the late 1940s, this technique not only reintroduced representational imagery into the painterly vocabulary of the American avant-garde but also countered the belief that painting could directly reveal the artist’s psyche or “self.” Rauschenberg’s combines, recalling abstract expressionism through their large sizes, shallow pictorial spaces, and “relational” compositions (with colors and marks balanced against one another), “recast the existentialist discovery of the self as a discovery of the environment from which the self takes its form.”¹

Although Rauschenberg eventually moved away from the combine process, he continued to appropriate images from the mass media, first through the technique of solvent transfer drawing (see cat. 97) and later, under the influence of Andy Warhol in the early 1960s, through the processes of photosilkscreening and photolithography. Moreover, Rauschenberg’s appropriated images, used as much for their formal qualities as for their reference or semantics, continued to suggest the distracted or dissociated consciousness of a modern urban dweller.

In *Drawings For Dante's 700 Birthday, I.B. and II.B.*, Rauschenberg creates an ominous portrait of the early 1960s. He juxtaposes imagery from his own contemporary moment with that of World War II and, through his title’s reference to Dante, recalls his own *Inferno* series of 1959 and 1960, probably his most symbolic works. There, Rauschenberg used mass-media images to provide ambiguous illustrations for each of the thirty-four cantos of Dante’s *Inferno*. In contrast, *Drawings For Dante's 700 Birthday* do not illustrate a particular moment in Dante’s narrative; rather, they present a

generalized vision of the second half of the twentieth century as a Dantean inferno.²

A range of newspaper images here reflects the social and political turmoil of the 1950s and 1960s: Kennedy’s Cadillac in the crosshairs of a rifle scope, Hell’s Angels in handcuffs, nooses and cross burnings by the Ku Klux Klan, George Wallace campaigning, Malcolm X making a speech, strippers and patrons of pornographic movies, anti-Semitic propaganda, and Adolf Eichmann on trial. Overlapping images of Adolf Hitler, atomic mushroom clouds, destroyed cities and trees, and living and dead victims in the Nazi concentration camps vividly convey a dark trajectory of horror in the twentieth century. Symbols of technology—cars, motorcycles, trucks, helicopters, a workman standing in a huge pipe—and the menacing face of a screaming baboon increase the violence of the images and suggest dangerous aspects of technological and industrial development.

Juxtaposed with one another to create a staccato but balanced composition, and further integrated through Rauschenberg’s abstract play of color and gesture, the pictorial elements resolve into a formally complex and harmonious design. The relationship between the top and bottom fields adds another dimension to the work: not only do the larger images on the bottom (which are also fewer in number) provide a slight relief from the multitude of smaller images on the top, but the color scheme creates a sense of “random order” and connection in this highly disparate and chaotic work. Despite the horror that Rauschenberg discovers around him, he seems to suggest that balance and form can still be achieved through disciplined and creative activity. Even if one can no longer assign meaning to the era, one can still find beauty in its turbulent chaos.

MATTHEW BIRO

Notes

1. Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*, 2nd ed. (New York, 2000), 178.

2. Similar to the contemporaneous “Modern Inferno,” published in *Life* magazine (17 December 1965), 49–51.



WAYNE THIEBAUD
American, born 1920

Study of Cakes,
c. 1965

brush and ink with
gouache
564 × 768 mm
(22 ¼ × 30 ¼)
Gift of the Thiebaud
Family, in Honor of
the 50th Anniversary of
the National Gallery
of Art, 1991

Decorated cakes, repeated wedges of cherry pie, and other intensely colored foodstuffs were the subjects Wayne Thiebaud depicted in his mature still-life paintings of the early 1960s. He painted desserts, hotdogs, and gumball machines, all subjects that exemplified popular American eating habits. He continued these themes, in numerous compositional variations, through the 1990s. Thiebaud referred to black-and-white studies, such as the present one, as he developed paintings and prints (see figure).

Misidentified as pop art because of its similarities with Andy Warhol's repeated images of commercial products, Thiebaud's work has more to do with an exploration of textures and repeated familiar forms than with mechanically reproduced mass culture. The serial arrangement of the cakes seen here emphasizes their commonality as much as their individuation. As one critic put it, Thiebaud's images have a "double existence in the worlds of Euclid and Betty Crocker."¹ Thiebaud himself insists on the traditionally realist nature of his art, and he takes inspiration from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century masters Johannes Vermeer and Jean Siméon Chardin.

In this drawing Thiebaud's fluid ink slinks and spirals over the surface of the paper, as if it had been extruded from a pastry bag. The forms include a donut-shaped slab of chocolate frosting on the cake at the upper right, a ring of curlicue frosting decorations at the center, and a circle of white

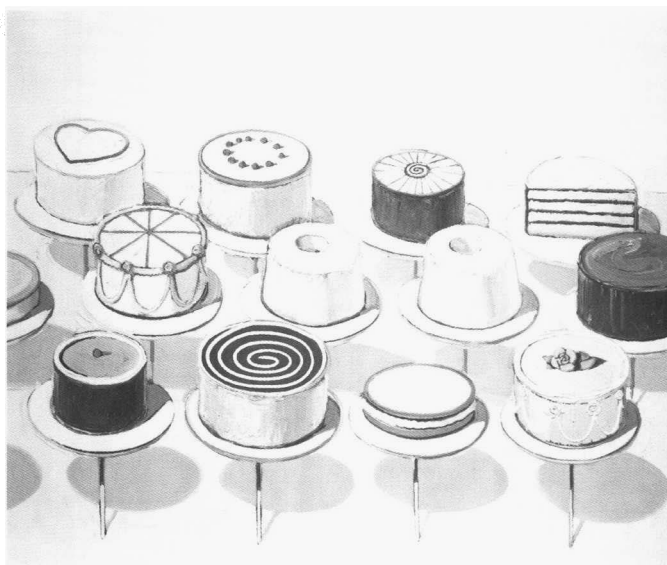
cream that melts into a pool at the left. Throughout the 1960s Thiebaud manipulated the relationship between paint and subject matter, trying to bring the two as close together as possible so that white, gooey, shiny, sticky oil paint would "become" frosting. He played with the properties of materials to create an illusion.

Each cake has been carefully—perhaps industriously—molded, and Thiebaud adorns each with viscous "frosting," transforming them into icons of American celebration, not necessarily for wedding, anniversary, or birthday, but for quotidian indulgence.

KATHRYN M. RUDY

Note

1. Adam Gopnik, "An American Painter," *Wayne Thiebaud: A Paintings Retrospective* [exh. cat., Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco] (San Francisco, 2000), 53.



Wayne Thiebaud, *Cakes*, 1963, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift in Honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Art from the Collectors Committee, the 50th Anniversary Gift Committee, and The Circle, with Additional Support from the Abrams Family in Memory of Harry N. Abrams, 1991



109

ROBERT
MOTHERWELL

American, 1915–1991

Beside the Sea #42, 1966

brush and ink

778 × 565 mm

(30 5/8 × 22 1/4)

The Nancy Lee and

Perry Bass Fund, 1999

The two strong horizontals at the bottom of the composition unite this work with others from the *Beside the Sea* series that Motherwell began around 1962.¹ Certain images in the series explore colors such as blue and yellow, which suggest the radiance of light on water. This one relies on pure black. Motherwell described his approach: “When I use black, I don’t use it the way most people think of it, as the ultimate tone of darkness, but as much a color as white or vermilion, or lemon yellow or purple, despite the fact that black is not color, non-being, if you like. Then what more natural than a passionate interest in juxtaposing black and white, being and nonbeing, life and death?... There are many artists who paint in black and white, but essentially they’re not thinking of them as colors.”²

The two broad horizontals lend weight to the image; they extend beyond the paper, as if they cannot be contained by it. The black shape above is large and expulsive; it marks not only the gesture of a brush on paper but also the velocity of the gesture, its vigor and direction. The drips are all caught with sheer dynamism in the act of flight. The lines of splashing arrange themselves like vectors radiating from a single point, resembling a high-speed study in perspective. The bold horizon line below—the source of the pool of black—suggests the sea collapsing into a storm.

Jack Flam has noted, “In Motherwell’s work, the acts of painting and drawing are simultaneous. Because of this, even Motherwell’s largest paintings often have the spontaneity of his drawings, and his smallest drawings can have some of the richness of the largest paintings. In either case, meaning is inseparable from the act of making.”³

KATHRYN M. RUDY

Provenance

Estate of the artist;
Dedalus Foundation.

Notes

1. See David Rosand, ed., *Robert Motherwell on Paper: Drawings, Prints, Collages* [exh. cat., Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University] (New York, 1997), nos. 53–55.

2. Interview with Robert Motherwell, in *Robert Motherwell in California Collections* [exh. cat., Otis Art Institute Gallery] (Los Angeles, 1974), n.p.; see Stephanie Terenzio, *Robert Motherwell & Black* [exh. cat., William Benton Museum of Art, University of Connecticut] (Storrs, CT, 1980), 42.

3. Jack D. Flam, “With Robert Motherwell,” in *Robert Motherwell* [exh. cat., Albright-Knox Art Gallery] (Buffalo, 1983), 12.



JASPER JOHNS

American, born 1930

Numbers, 1966

graphite with
graphite wash and
metallic powder wash
on polyester fabric
417 × 337 mm
(16 7/16 × 13 1/4)
Gift of Leo Castelli
in Memory of Toiny
Castelli, 1989

In the hands of Jasper Johns the most straightforward subject matter—here the repeated sequence of single-digit numerals from 0 to 9 arranged within the pattern of a grid—becomes an opportunity to elaborate conceptual questions of the highest order of complexity. Johns frequently makes use of what appear on the surface to be self-evident subjects—or what he describes as “things the mind already knows”¹—not only to accentuate the specific material properties of the work of art but also to bring the metaphorical associations of those properties into play with conceptual logics that are often incommensurate with them. In *Numbers* the artist takes up a motif he had explored in the past: eleven rows and eleven columns demarcate 121 small rectangular fields, each of which frames a single numeral whose outline has been traced with a stencil. The numerals progress regularly from left to right, each row consecutively beginning with a numeral larger by one than that initiating the previous row. A single unit at the upper left corner has been left blank so that the diagonal ordination from top left to bottom right also maintains consecutive numeric regularity.

As conceptual abstractions, numbers organize and quantify particulars by reducing them to the status of equivalents (by the logic of addition, for example, 1 + 1 = 2 only if it is initially agreed that 1 = 1). Johns underscores this principle of equivalence in *Numbers*: the use of the stencil formally identifies a particular numeral 9 with all the others; the overall surface of the work has been treated in the same way, with metallic powder applied over a layer of graphite wash; and the grid’s systematizing of pictorial space not only upholds equivalence among each of the rectangular subdivisions that constitute the picture’s overall structural format but also implies a logical relation of each part to that larger rectangle which is the whole.

Yet Johns undermines this principle of equivalence at the conceptual level of the aesthetic. Neither the stenciling nor the generalized treatment of surface nor the systematicity of the grid is able to reduce the

uniqueness and particularity of the way the shape of each stenciled numeral submits to the irregularities of the artist’s hand, as each occupies differentially its allotted space. More, the granules of metallic powder have attached variably to the picture’s surface, giving rise to different textures and densities and ranges of color. And the warm, bronze color of the wash is dark in some areas yet revealing in others as traces of the polyester fabric support also show through and provide relief from the dense, coagulated materiality of this work’s rich surface. Even the nominal linearity of the grid itself, as the structural matrix of the image as a whole, bows to Johns’ hand.

Numbers plays with the differences between systematic regularity of conceptual ordination and the irregularities of irreducible material particularity. That the grid of eleven rows and eleven columns of numerals from 0 to 9, moreover, is established according to a number that its fields do not figure—according, in other words, to the number “eleven”—proposes a subtle point: that which constitutes the whole of a work of art will always be greater than the sum of its parts. And as if to press this point, *Numbers* is also one of a series of *Numbers*, each distinct, unique, and inequivalent by virtue of those aesthetic particularities that make it one and not another.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Provenance

The artist to Leo Castelli.

Note

1. Nan Rosenthal, “Drawing as Rereading,” in *The Drawings of Jasper Johns* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), 15.





CLAES OLDENBURG

American, born 1929

**Fork Cutting Cake
No. 1: Proposed
Colossal Monument
for Piccadilly Circus,
London, 1966**

crayon and watercolor
380 × 560 mm
(14 15/16 × 22 1/16)
Director's Discretionary
Fund, 2000

An incessant draftsman since childhood,¹ Oldenburg developed an extremely sophisticated line, which he could freely vary. This talent flowered in the decade 1958–1968 when he formed his mature styles. He explored markedly different types of drawing, from the roughly torn and darkened edges of cardboard and newspaper collages of 1960–1961² to the firmly geometric and extensively hatched works of 1967–1969.³ Another favored style, both in the 1960s and later, is seen here in the free-form and rotund line, which speeds loosely across the page. Its freedom evokes as much as defines forms, brilliantly enhancing the transformation of objects into other objects in Oldenburg's Rorschach visual thought. Lighting and interior modeling are created with apparently casual but deftly telling splashes of watercolor. This style culminated in 1965–1966 in Oldenburg's extraordinary proposals for colossal monuments.

These proposals played with the visual and emotional effects of grotesque enlargements of ordinary household and personal objects or body parts to take an unexpectedly dominant place among grand architectural and public places.⁴ In one of Oldenburg's most basic principles, "nothing is irrelevant, everything can be used."⁵ Originally the proposals for colossal monuments were so tongue-in-cheek that one cannot imagine Oldenburg actually thought they would be built; it was only later that some, amazingly, were executed.⁶ It is especially in the wild and wonderful inspiration or conception drawings of the mid-1960s, however, that they have their most provocative and delightfully outrageous life.

Here the monument is clearly meant for Piccadilly Circus (thus the "P.C." at bottom left), but Oldenburg has dislodged the location slightly to the base of Regent Street (note the curved buildings on the right). A dirty pink sky effectively recalls the evening skies of industrial cities like London. The splendidly artificial-looking cake of food-coloring-yellow layers with thick white icing and glossy cherries is true to everyone's memories of such sweets. The giant cherries also allow Oldenburg a typical transfor-

mation: as they tumble off the cake, they approximate the red double-decker buses on the street. As always with Oldenburg, sexual overtones are also clear:⁷ the slang meaning of the fruits above and below reinforces the implications of the rigid tines of the fork piercing this soft confection, a hilarious Oldenburgian metaphor, especially when one realizes that this monument replaces the statue of Eros in the center of the Circus. Not missing a trick, Oldenburg even props the fork on the building that contains the famous Café Royal, just the place where one could order such a cake.⁸

ANDREW ROBISON

Provenance

John Weber Gallery, New York; private collection, Chicago; Grant-Selwyn Fine Art, New York and Los Angeles; Marlborough Gallery, New York, 2000, lot 101.

Notes

1. Barbara Rose, *Claes Oldenburg* (New York, 1970), 19, 23, 27.
2. Corresponding, of course, to the rough edges of "The Street" sculptures and the roughly molded and painted plaster objects in "The Store."
3. See, for instance, Oldenburg's "Colossal Fagend in Park Setting" in this exhibition (cat. 114).
4. An excellent brief summary on the sources, humor, and some potential sociopolitical implications of Oldenburg's proposals for colossal monuments of the mid-1960s is given in Rose 1970, 103–105.
5. Quoted in Rose 1970, 9.

6. The first real monument was the 1969 Yale *Lipstick*, described by Oldenburg in Barbara Haskell, *Claes Oldenburg: Object into Monument* (Pasadena, 1971), 96. An excellent recent survey of his executed monuments is given by Mark Rosenthal, Germano Celant, and Dieter Koepllin, in *Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1995), 254–283, 364–413, 472–535.

7. As Oldenburg says about the erotic element in his art, "If you ignore that, you're missing the point"; and note Haskell's pithy summary: "All of Oldenburg's objects are surrogates for the body or parts of the body"; see Haskell 1971, 10 and 8.

8. Giving pointed meaning to Barbara Rose's summary, "The monuments are also a distillation of whatever is, to Oldenburg, the essence of a particular place, the composite of sensations he has registered in that environment" (Rose 1970, 105).

FRANK STELLA

American, born 1936

Drawing for Lincoln Center Poster, 1967

felt-tip pen on graph paper

988 × 746 mm

(38⁵/₁₆ × 29³/₈)

Gift of the Woodward Foundation,

Washington, DC, 1976

Initially enthusiastic about abstract expressionism—"particularly the size of the paintings and the wholeness of the gesture"¹—Frank Stella soon rejected many of the qualities associated with this school. In 1959 he began his series of Black Paintings: large, deep canvases, painted in enamel, and entirely composed of narrow, repeating black stripes against a white, barely visible ground. Inspired in part by the example of Jasper Johns, Stella's breakthrough works undermined the psychological content of abstract expressionist painting as well as its shallow, illusionistic spaces and its emphasis on "relational painting, i.e., the balancing of various parts with and against each other."²

Resolutely antisubjective and flat, Stella's Black Paintings obviated many of the decisions involved in painterly composition through a strategy that art critic Michael Fried called "deductive structure," namely, the practice of deriving the "depicted" shape of the figure from the "literal" shape of the canvas.³ Exploring the relationship between these two aspects of abstract painting during the 1960s, Stella first developed the shaped canvas (not square or rectangular). He reintroduced color contrast, spatial illusionism, and relational composition as his painting evolved.

Stella's *Drawing for Lincoln Center Poster* presents a good example of just how far his abstract and resolutely formalist painting had developed by the late 1960s. Related to his monumental Protractor Series, comprising ninety-three wall-sized paintings created between 1967 and 1971, this drawing is based on the repetition of one simple form or module—the half-circle or protractor shape. Using a commercial graph paper grid, Stella built up a complex image with multi-colored, felt-tip pens. A circle at the lower right is constructed of two protractors joined vertically, while a second circle is formed by the conjunction of two horizontally oriented protractors, and a single protractor shape caps the composition at the upper left. The three primary elements, intersecting one another at their exact midpoints, each composed of protractor modules consisting of three concentric bands surrounding an inner field. Each band, measuring five-sixteenths of

an inch wide, is filled in with a different color, and narrow, irregular, blank spaces separate the color bands.

Unlike the paintings of the Protractor Series, which were shaped, Stella's drawing is an abstract image on a rectangular ground. But if one concentrates on the image alone, Stella's strategy of deductive structure remains clear. The main interior shapes mirror both one another and the overall shape of the defining outline; and through this repetition, compositional decisions are reduced (though not eliminated). Stella's concern with flatness and anti-illusionism also continues. First, the bands are interlaced to create maximum flatness. No band passes in front of all the other bands, which undermines a reading of one band as standing before all the others. Then, in the two circles many of the same colors repeat asymmetrically in each protractor half, which flattens the image by denying the illusion of different color levels placed on top of one another. Finally, an extra band following the outside curve of each protractor invades the body of its "mate": for example, two pink curves echo the center double protractor and extend into the upper and lower vertical protractors, while purple and yellow orange curves echo the left and right vertical protractors and break up the interior of the center double protractor.

Despite the deductive structure, Stella's drawing is highly composed. Not only do the complex color juxtapositions convey the sense of careful composition, but Stella's meticulous interlaces, which do not mirror one another, create a multiplicity of different forms. *Drawing for Lincoln Center Poster* thus demonstrates how radical diversity can emerge out of the simplest of forms.

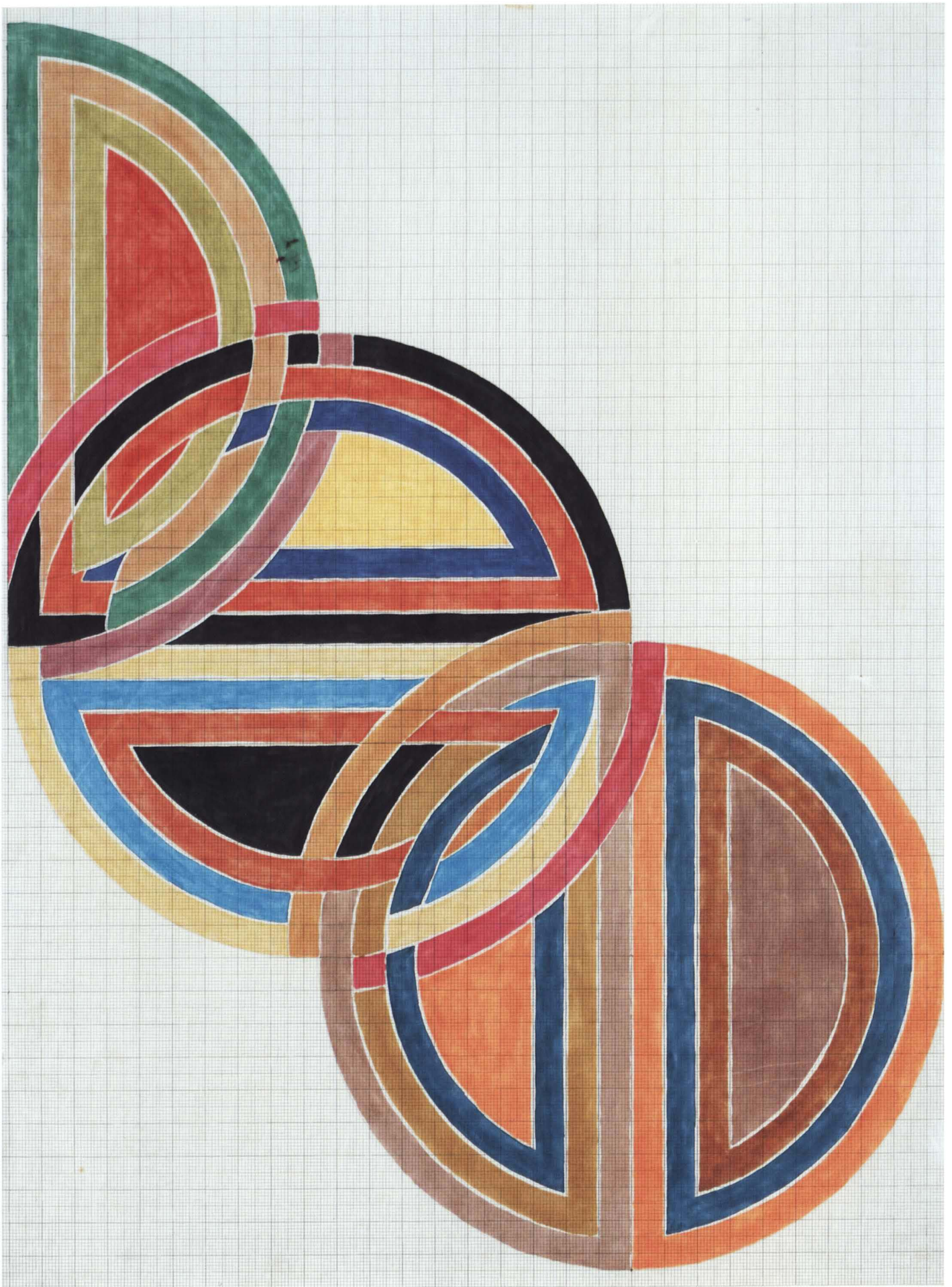
MATTHEW BIRO

Notes

1. Frank Stella, interviewed by Alan Solomon for "U.S.A. Artists," produced for National Educational Television and published in William S. Rubin, *Frank Stella* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1970), 9.

2. Frank Stella, lecture at Pratt Institute, 1960, quoted in Rubin 1970, 22.

3. See Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago, 1998), 77–99, 213–265, and 277–278.



SAUL STEINBERG

American, born in
Romania, 1914–1999

La Scala di Ferro,
1967

graphite, pen and ink,
colored pencil, rubber
stamp, and collage
500 × 649 mm
(19 1/16 × 25 9/16)
Gift of Evelyn and
Leonard Lauder, 1986

Although much of the writing on Saul Steinberg seems obliged to defend his position as an artist, from the postmodern point of view there can be little doubt. Steinberg was not a cartoonist; he made art. Born in Romania, the son of a bookbinder and maker of cardboard boxes, he studied literature, philosophy, sociology, and psychology in Bucharest, then architecture in Milan. In 1941 he fled the war in Europe, emigrating to South America and then to the United States in 1942. Between 1944 and 1946 he traveled widely as a correspondent for the *New Yorker* before settling in the city that would become the center of his iconographic universe.¹

The chronicle of Steinberg's education and travels is essential to interpreting the eccentricities of his imagery and the quirky perspectives he projected onto the world around him. His work is permeated with literary and philosophical references and shaped by the psychology of a multilingual itinerant who, through his migrations, bore a love/hate relationship with officialdom. He collected records and documents of all sorts, deployed illegible passages of notary-like scrawl in his drawings, and commissioned rubber stamps with indecipherable legends to "validate" his compositions.

La Scala di Ferro (The Iron Staircase) seems to have begun with the careful placement of two found elements: a torn airmail envelope with a pair of Belgian commemorative stamps that were lifted from somewhere else and reapplied, and a bill from a restaurant in Sardinia that lends the drawing its title. From these coordinates Steinberg improvised an abstract still life that coyly parodies the style of synthetic cubism. The flaglike patterns of color that evoke ladders, rainbows, and military decorations take their cue from the envelope's border. A shuffled and flattened architecture of shapes plays out across a table, implicitly Steinberg's own drawing table. His work space was a favorite microcosm that he variously transformed into little cityscapes of large import, whole continents mapped over the

view from his window, and orderly utopias constructed of pens and their cases, palettes, protractors, and sketchbooks.²

Like so many of Steinberg's drawings, *La Scala di Ferro* is a passport to other locations and a play on the present and the past. It is an essay on authority made light of, and at the same time granted importance. And it is a short course on techniques of replication: the printed bill, the ornamented envelope, the postage stamps with their official cancellation, and three nonsense stamps of Steinberg's devising. The choice of imagery ranges from caprice to careful selection, from consciously styled naïveté to deliberate sophistication. However, Steinberg leaves no doubt about his claim to authorship, having signed the drawing in four variations and then sealed it with the ironic flat thump of his stamp.

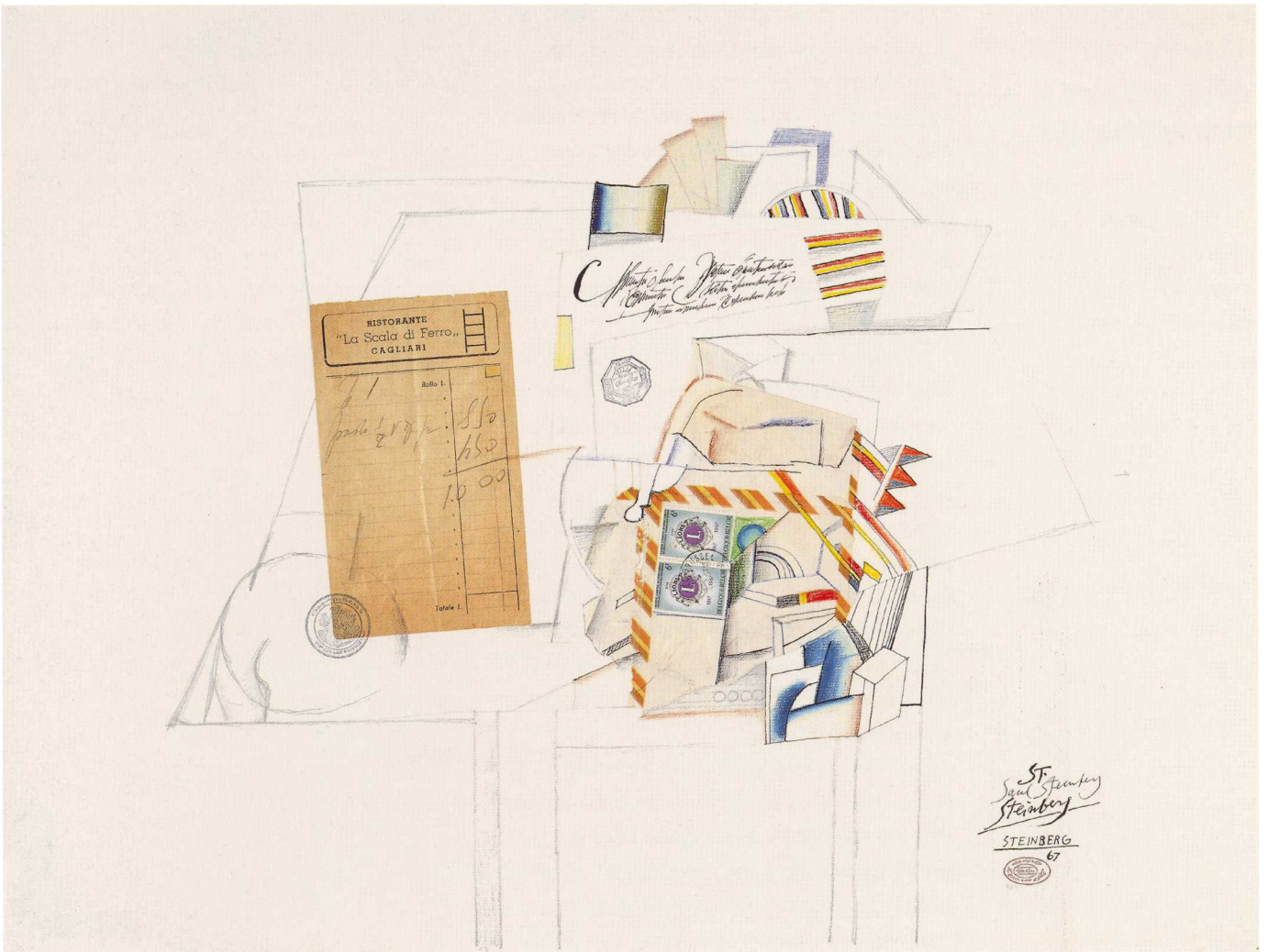
PETER PARSHALL

Notes

1. For an abbreviated chronology of Steinberg's life, see *Saul Steinberg: Zeichnungen, Aquarelle, Collagen, Gemälde, Reliefs—1963–1974* [exh. cat., Kölnischer Kunstverein] (Cologne, 1974), 10–30. A sweeping interpretation of the intellectual context for Steinberg's work and his relation to twentieth-century art in general is put forward by Harold Rosen-

berg, *Saul Steinberg* [exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art] (New York, 1978), 10–36. For an especially literate response, see John Updike, "On Saul Steinberg (1914–1999)," in *New York Review of Books* (24 June 1999), 12–13.

2. Bernice Rose, "Drawing Tables," in *Drawing into Being* [exh. cat., Pace Wildenstein] (New York, 1999), 7–15.



CLAES OLDENBURG

American, born 1929

**Colossal Fagend in
Park Setting, 1967**

graphite and watercolor

762 × 562 mm

(30 × 22 1/8)

Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

Among the most antiheroic subjects Claes Oldenburg has proposed for monuments is the lowly “fagend,” which emerged as a theme in his work in 1966 during his extended stay in London. There he was struck by the abundance of columns and other generally phallic forms, as well as by an antismoking poster placed around the city that featured a used ashtray. Oldenburg (a former smoker) collected fagends to see if he could discern a pattern in their forms, then mounted them on cardboard bases. “In any scale,” he discovered, “the Fagends are a variable and arbitrary composition.”¹ He was also drawn to the form’s metamorphic capacities. The fagend’s cylindrical shape undergoes transformation by the smoker, who partially consumes it then crushes the remains.

Throughout the 1960s Oldenburg explored several other cylindrical shapes, such as knees—a ubiquitous image in the heyday of miniskirts—lipsticks, baseball bats, and drainpipes. These related forms appealed to the artist as analogues for the human body: “The minute you make a soft column, you’re making references to flesh,” he has said, “because the body is composed of soft columns—fingers, penis, legs—all those things. It’s in the realm of coincidental structure.”²

While in London, Oldenburg made a group of small drawings featuring the fagend as a monument for Hyde Park. On his return to New York, he explored the theme further in several works, including this drawing, made for a show opening at the Sidney Janis Gallery on 26 April 1967. In the drawings, which show the fagend in its colossal incarnation, the park setting becomes the base/ashtray. In fact the artist seems to have always associated the fagends with a natural rather than an urban environment.

Oldenburg had previously presented his monument proposals in the form of collages and loosely executed sketches (see cat. III). In 1967 he began to make larger, more formal presentations in a highly illusionistic

style. In *Colossal Fagend in Park Setting*, Oldenburg beautifies a repellent, vilified object through his skilled draftsmanship and capacity for invention. Although figures rarely occur in his monument drawings, in *Colossal Fagend in Park Setting* a hat-topped male figure stands in the fagend’s shadow, endowing the monument with tangible scale.

MARLA PRATHER

Provenance

Sidney Janis Gallery, New York; Christophe de Menil, New York; Leo Castelli Gallery, New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1981.

Notes

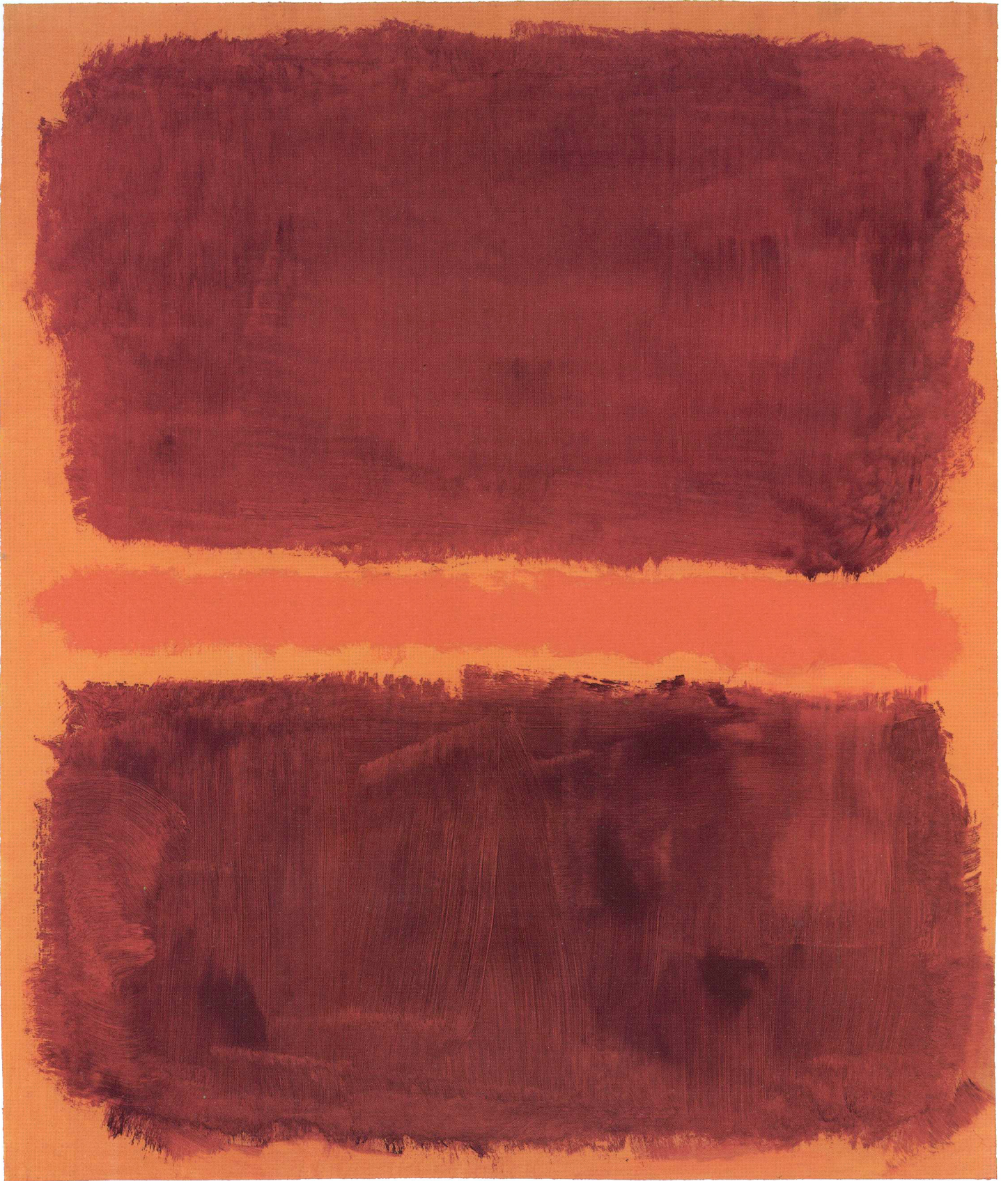
An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1996.

1. Claes Oldenburg, “Fagends,” in *Claes Oldenburg: Object into Monument* [exh. cat.,

Pasadena Art Museum] (Pasadena, 1971), 37. Oldenburg’s first fagend drawings and sculptures, made at the studio of Edition Alecto, Ltd., were included in a show at the Robert Fraser Gallery, London, 22 November–31 December 1966.

2. Quoted in *Oldenburg: Six Themes* [exh. cat., Walker Art Center] (Minneapolis, 1975), 49.





MARK ROTHKO

American, born in
Russia, 1903–1970

Untitled, 1969

acrylic

1,276 × 1,073

(50¼ × 42¼)

Gift of The Mark Rothko
Foundation, Inc., 1986

This work features a spare variation on Mark Rothko's paradigmatic pictorial device: softly delineated rectangles set apart by a narrower band. Although the composition resembles canvases of the artist's classic period, the jarring palette of fiery oranges and dark oxblood derives from an important series of murals he created as part of a 1958–1959 commission for the Four Seasons restaurant in the Seagram Building in New York. Rothko was distressed by the ostentatious setting and withdrew from the commission before the murals were installed. Several factors may have contributed to his return to this color scheme a decade later.¹

Following an aortic aneurysm in April 1968, Rothko established a foundation dedicated to his work, necessitating an inventory of the objects that remained in his possession. He began the process in November 1968, and over the next several months, hundreds of works on canvas and paper were brought to his East 69th Street studio to be photographed, signed, and given inventory numbers. From the first of January 1969 Rothko lived alone in the studio, surrounded by his work of past and present as the documentation continued.

Over the course of that year Rothko chose a set of Seagram murals to make up a gift of paintings to the Tate Gallery that he had contemplated since 1965. One mural had been donated in 1968, and the Tate's director, Norman Reid, visited Rothko's studio in January 1969, and again in November, to determine the final selection. Rothko and Reid discussed the placement of the works with the aid of a scale model for which Rothko painted "maquettes" of the murals in tempera on construction paper.² Deeply concerned with the presentation of his work, Rothko presumably ruminated at length about which sequence to donate. The Tate was ultimately given nine paintings in somber tones, while Rothko kept the more vibrant murals (now primarily in the collections of the National Gallery of Art and the Kawamura Memorial Museum of Art, Chiba-Ken).

The artist's notion of evanescent resolution in his use of color applies to the bright orange and dark maroon Seagram murals as well as to the present work: "My colors bring into a single house (close confinement) colors that cannot live together, and the vision of harmony lives only for the moment before it is burst asunder."³ Rothko claimed he intended for viewers to feel trapped in the presence of his murals;⁴ the incongruous palette of these brighter works contributes to that goal.

Using the fast-drying medium of acrylic, Rothko was able to prepare numerous works on paper rapidly. The speed of execution is apparent in this image, with its virtuosic brushwork, particularly in the lower rectangle, composed of sweeping jagged arcs and vertical strokes. The edges of the forms are delicately indicated with the bristles of the artist's brush. Rothko extended his brushwork to the margin of the right lower corner but balanced the composition diagonally by indenting the upper left corner of the corresponding field above it. The artist also subtly paraphrased the undulating silhouette of the orange-red center band in the sinuous right edge of this upper field. With its blackening maroons emerging from a nearly Day-Glo orange ground, this brilliant yet somber work resuscitates the power and tension of Rothko's volatile Seagram mural project.

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Estate of the artist; The Mark Rothko Foundation, New York, 1979–1986.

Notes

1. Rothko reprised the palette and format of certain Seagram works in his Harvard murals of 1962.

2. See Tate Gallery Archive. Rothko also created diminutive studies on colored construction paper for his mural commissions, a practice that had been common only in his work of the 1930s and 1940s.

3. Mark Rothko, unpublished text likely from the 1950s in the Rothko family archive, quoted here with the gracious permission of Christopher Rothko.

4. Rothko's comments were made in reference to the architectural parallels between his own murals and Michelangelo's Laurentian Library but may well relate to his palette; see John Fischer, "The Easy Chair: Mark Rothko: Portrait of the Artist as an Angry Man," *Harper's* 241 (July 1970), 16.

MARK ROTHKO

American, born in
Russia, 1903–1970

Untitled, 1969

acrylic

1,848 × 1,080 mm

(72 ¾ × 42 ½)

Gift of The Mark Rothko
Foundation, Inc., 1986

Rothko's voluminous production of works on paper in his early career—scores of figure studies, preparatory drawings, and watercolors—tapered off dramatically in the 1950s. Then in 1968, following an aortic aneurysm, his health dictated that he paint solely on a limited scale. He began to make numerous small acrylic paintings on paper, continuing even when he was able to return to a larger format. Between 1968 and 1970 Rothko produced at least 180 paintings on paper, compared with 24 canvases, a testament to their importance in his final years.

This exquisitely subtle work and others like it, composed of muted or pastel hues highlighted with white, serve as a powerful foil to Rothko's black and gray paintings of the same year. Emphasizing pallid shades of brown, gray, rose, or ocher, such works constitute a return to certain prominent 1940s watercolors of the same palette. These late works on paper convincingly illustrate the relevance of Rothko's watercolors from nearly a quarter-century before.¹ In reinterpreting his first significant critical success, this body of material is a poignant coda to Rothko's career.

Untitled is spectral in appearance, with colors and forms that shift and meld and quiet brushwork that lends an atmospheric quality to the surface. The central band, formed both by a horizontal thrust and short vertical flicks, contains the essence of the painting's palette. These hues, a soft brown and white, are strongest here, then gradually dissolve into the upper and lower fields, where they seem alternately gray, mauve, or taupe.

A delicate apparition on one level, *Untitled* is also solidly grounded in its materials. Rothko calls attention to the paper by delineating the white perimeter with graphite and incorporating the ground into the composition. This approach, together with the palette, may reveal the influence of Alberto Giacometti's paintings, which are portraits at their core.² Giacometti's works uncannily enact Rothko's 1947 statement, "For me the great achievements of the centuries... were the pictures of the single human figure—alone in a moment of utter

immobility."³ Although Rothko had eradicated the figure by the late 1940s, his work continued to allude to the human form.⁴ The works in the present exhibition, intended to be mounted on canvas or board, approach Rothko's professed ideal scale: the measure of a man.

Rothko ended his 1947 essay with a statement that is relevant here: "I do not believe that there was ever a question of being abstract or representational. It is really a matter of ending this silence and solitude, of breathing and stretching one's arms again."⁵

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Estate of the artist; The Mark Rothko Foundation, New York, 1979.

Notes

1. Rothko opened his 1961 Museum of Modern Art exhibition with several watercolors and later told his friend and fellow painter William Scharf that he would buy these works back if he saw any of them for sale ("Remembering Rothko," a public conversation at the National Gallery of Art, 3 May 1998). A number of these watercolors sold in the 1940s, some to museums. An excellent example is *Vessels of Magic*, 1946, acquired by the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 1947, which Rothko described, along with four related watercolors, as a "culmination of a period of concerted painting in this medium" (letter of May 1947 to the Brooklyn Museum, quoted in Angelica Zander Rudenstine, *Peggy Guggenheim Collection* [New York, 1985], 691).

2. Rothko certainly knew Giacometti's work; by March 1968 a gallery adjoining the "Giacometti Room" at the Tate had been designated for works by Rothko that the artist

proposed as a gift (Tate Gallery Archive). And by March 1969 the UNESCO office in Paris had sent him a proposal to provide paintings for a room that would contain Giacometti's sculpture (he was unable to accept the commission). This relationship has been discussed primarily in relation to the black and gray works, but Jeffrey Weiss in *Mark Rothko* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1998), 326–329, argues that the influence unquestionably extends to this other late series.

3. Mark Rothko, "The Romantics Were Prompted," *Possibilities* 1 (winter 1947–1948). © 2001 Kate Rothko Prizel and Christopher Rothko.

4. In Rothko's 27 October 1958 Pratt Institute lecture he indicated that he had studied the human figure but found it did not meet his needs and that his "current pictures are involved with the scale of human feeling, the human drama, as much of it as I can express." From typescript in the Rothko family archive, quoted with the gracious permission of Christopher Rothko.

5. Rothko 1947–1948.



MARK ROTHKO

American, born in
Russia, 1903–1970

Untitled, 1969

acrylic

1,530 × 1,226 mm

(60¼ × 48¼)

Gift of The Mark Rothko
Foundation, Inc., 1986

The series of black—or dark brown—and gray paintings that Rothko initiated in his final years demonstrates an entirely new and reductive approach to the format he had refined throughout his career. This campaign, which defined the artist's 1969 production on canvas, evolved from an important sequence of dark brown and gray works on paper that he began in 1968.¹ On both paper and canvas Rothko limited his palette to two essential hues—allowing many variations in tone—and established a perimeter of white. The white border, a significant new element that arose from the margins of masking tape that secured the papers to the artist's easel, effectively sealed the previously expansive edges of his images.

Despite ill health and depression, Rothko invested great emotional energy in this new body of work, ultimately seeking the approbation of the New York art world at a studio party in December 1969.² The artist died by his own hand a few months later, in February 1970, and these dark paintings have since been interpreted as emblematic of his depression. Yet Rothko had earlier claimed that it was his bright paintings that were violent, that “radiance is the afterglow of the explosive.”³

If tragedy and death suffuse these dark paintings, the themes are widely applicable to Rothko's oeuvre. From the early 1940s, the artist strove to invest his paintings with tragic content. In a lecture at the Pratt Institute in 1958 Rothko identified “a clear preoccupation with death—intimations of mortality” as the first ingredient of successful art.⁴ Another ingredient was “intensity.” Elsewhere Rothko implied a relationship between the two: “To live vitally is to tempt death / that is how near one can approach the edge without going over the brink. That I believe is the meaning of intensity, which translates itself in every day language to the dramatic, to speed, to the dangerous and exciting.”⁵

This work illustrates the intensity Rothko was capable of devoting to this penultimate series. Drama and even speed are conveyed through the ethereal gray field—one of the most beautiful passages in all of Rothko's dark paintings—and its juxtaposi-

tion with the vastly different dark region that surmounts it. The gray, with its softly roiling motion and variations in hue that suggest mist and sea,⁶ is painterly, though its atmosphere veils the artist's hand. The dominant sepia-colored field is executed in a programmatic fashion, yet the viewer is allowed to witness the exact trajectory of the brush. With an emphasis on both vertical and horizontal linear movement, the dark field is composed of a virtual cross-hatching.⁷ The potency of the work derives from the play between the two fields, and Rothko has emphasized their meeting point, deliberately leaving elements of white ground.

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Estate of the artist; The Mark Rothko Foundation, New York, 1979.

Notes

1. See Bonnie Clearwater in *Mark Rothko: Works on Paper* [exh. cat., American Federation of Arts and The Mark Rothko Foundation] (New York, 1984), 51.

2. Brian O'Doherty, who attended the “opening” in Rothko's studio, recalls that works on paper were shown; see “Rothko's Endgame,” in *Mark Rothko: The Dark Paintings 1969–1970* (New York, 1985), 5.

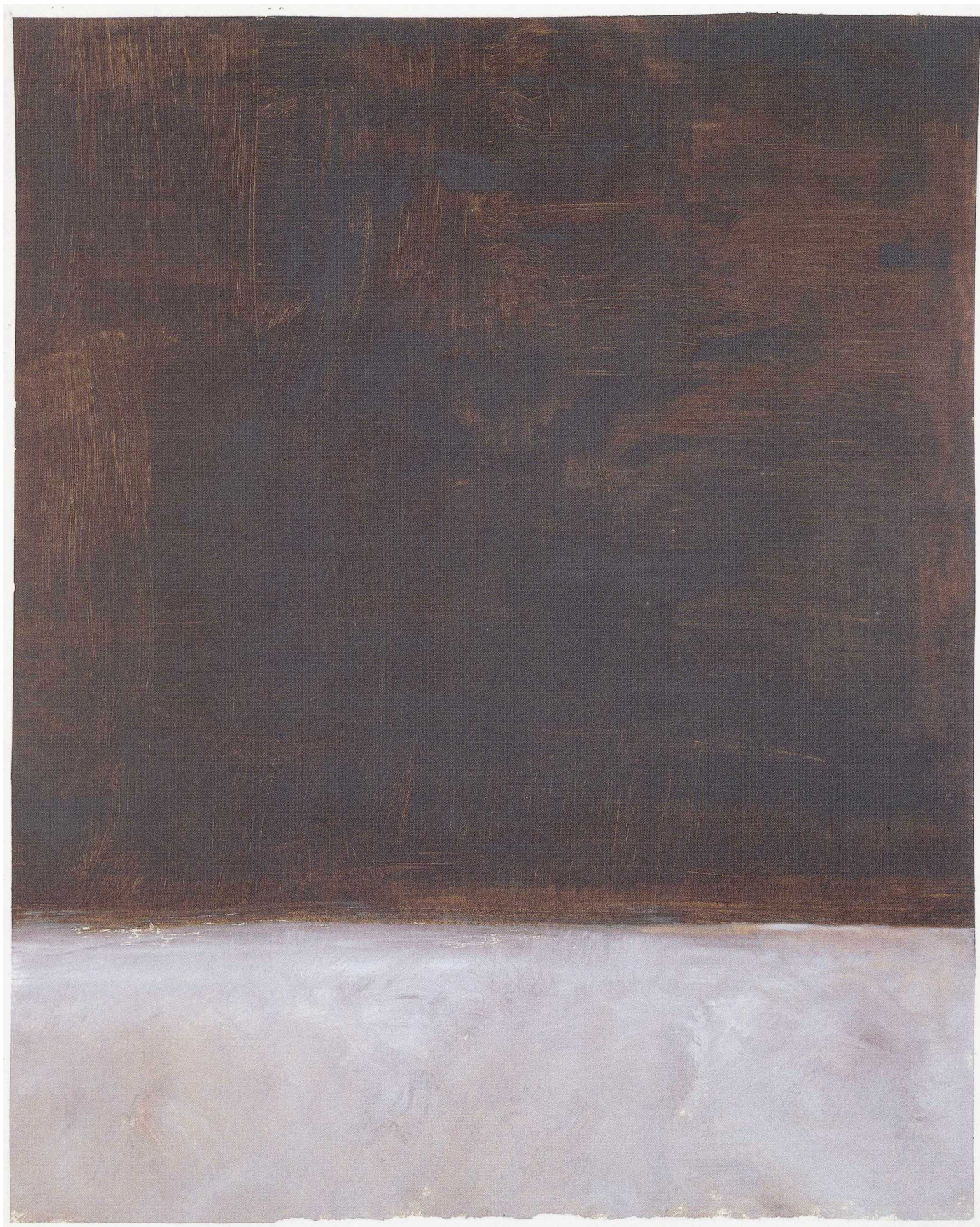
3. Unpublished document in the Rothko family archive. Papers in this archive are quoted here and below with the kind permission of Christopher Rothko.

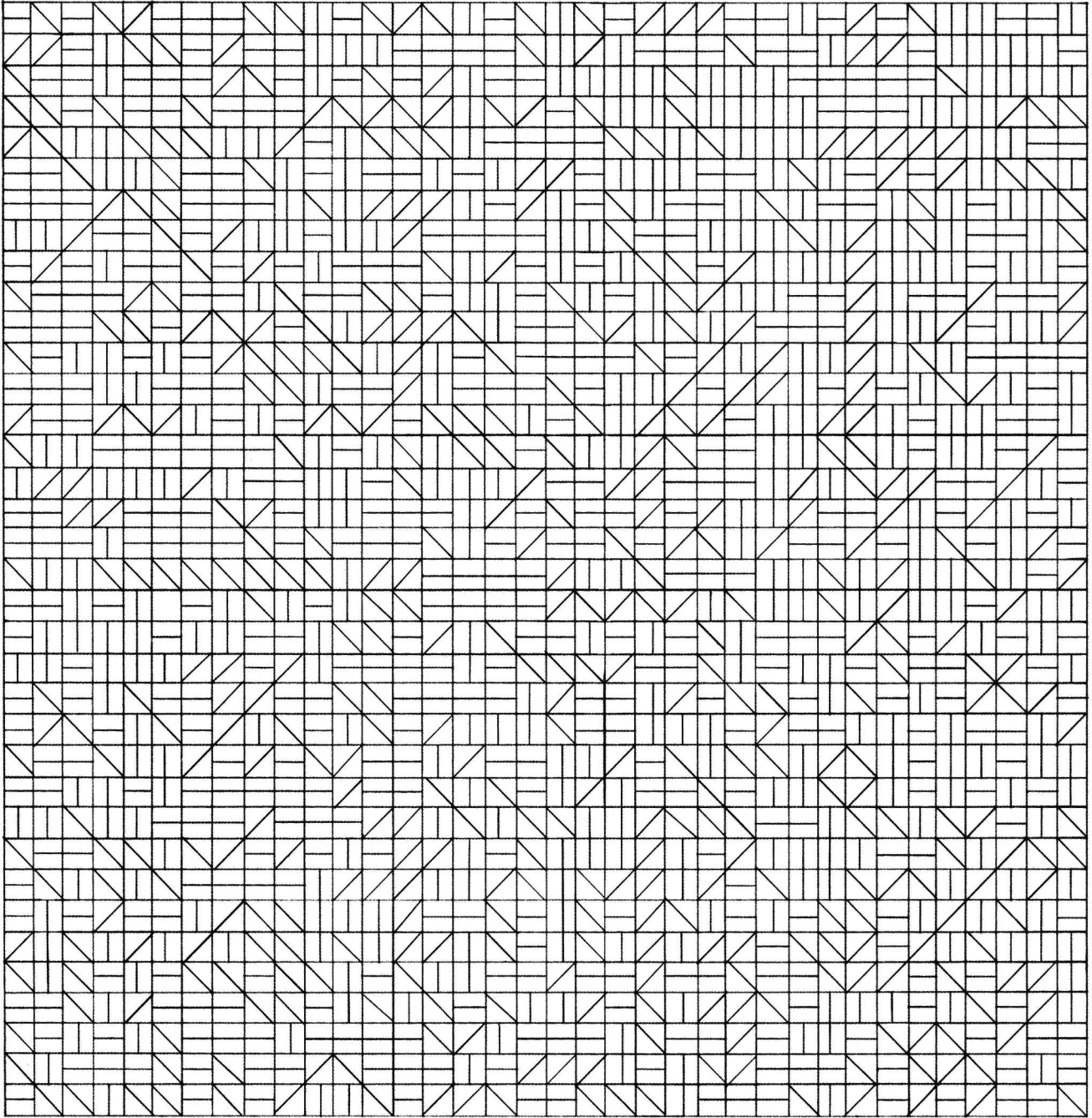
4. Pratt Institute lecture, 27 October 1958, from typescript in the Rothko family archive.

5. Unpublished document titled “Space II” in the Rothko family archive.

6. This quality may derive from Rothko's interest in J.M.W. Turner. Barbara Novak, who viewed a 1966 Turner exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art with Rothko, relates that he was transfixed by two images and suggests that his interest had to do with relationships between light and dark. See Barbara Novak and Brian O'Doherty in *Mark Rothko* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1998), 279.

7. In this reductive manner, the work may refer to the black paintings of his friend Ad Reinhardt.





SOL LEWITT

American, born 1928

**Wall Drawing No. 26,
1969**

graphite¹

914 × 914 mm (36 × 36)

The Dorothy and

Herbert Vogel

Collection, Ailsa Mellon

Bruce Fund, Patrons'

Permanent Fund, and

Gift of Dorothy and

Herbert Vogel, 1991

For more than three decades Sol LeWitt has been considered one of the premier conceptual artists in the United States. Reacting to the emphasis on composition, gesture, and psychological content characteristic of American abstract expressionism in the 1940s and 1950s, LeWitt began to make a seemingly hyperrational and antisubjective form of art beginning in the 1960s. "The idea," as he wrote in 1967, "becomes a machine that makes the art."² Best known for his freestanding modular structures of white-painted wood based on square and rectangular forms, which he began to make in 1966, and his wall drawings of horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines, traced directly onto the wall with black, red, yellow, and blue pencils, which he started to create in 1968, LeWitt emphasized the concept or plan behind the physical object or image. Usually based on simple, geometric forms (particularly lines, squares, and cubes) that were repeated serially or varied according to a clear set of permutations, sometimes integrated with simple text describing the structure of the work, and frequently constructed by others, LeWitt's "hyperrational" works, on longer consideration, often appeared tautological and obsessive—like traces of a rational process emphasized to the point of irrationality.³

Wall Drawing No. 26 [A one-inch (2/5 cm) grid covering a 36" (90 cm) square. Within each one-inch (2/5 cm) square, there is a line in one of the four directions] presents a good example of the complexities entailed by LeWitt's conceptual approach. According to the artist, the actual artwork is either the drawing as installed on the wall or the certificate and installation instructions when the drawing is not installed. In its latter form the present work consists of three sheets of paper: first, a handwritten certificate dated 1976 and signed by LeWitt, second an undated certificate of authenticity issued in 1986, printed on thick, cream paper and signed by the artist, describing the drawing as it is to appear on the wall; third, a diagram also issued in 1986, printed on the same cream stock, on which a twelve-by-twelve square grid and four numbered

boxes have been traced in pencil, detailing the series of repeating permutations that are to be drawn into the grid. The variations between the two certificates, the original from 1976 and the latter from 1986, suggest developments in LeWitt's understanding of his wall drawings. Whereas the original, handwritten certificate allows for size variations as long as the square format and permutation series is respected, the second certificate, which the artist considers to be the official one, specifies the work's dimensions exactly, perhaps a reflection of LeWitt's growing concern that his wall drawings were not being executed properly.

As suggested by *Wall Drawing No. 26*, LeWitt's conceptual wall drawings challenge traditional notions of art. Because they exist in radically different forms at different moments and can be reinstalled by the holders of their certificates, they confound the traditional view of the art object as largely unchanging and stable across time. Because they can be installed—that is, drawn—by assistants, they undermine the commonsense notion that an artist's "drawing" necessarily has to come from the artist's own hand. Finally, because the ultimate authenticity of the works comes from a certificate and because their simplicity means that they are easily reproducible, they challenge the idea that artworks can be completely and unequivocally owned.

MATTHEW BIRO

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Dorothy and Herbert Vogel.

Notes

1. The image that is illustrated is a graphic representation of the wall drawing.

2. Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (summer 1967), 80.

3. See Rosalind Krauss, "LeWitt in Progress," in Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 244–258.

119

SOL LEWITT

American, born 1928

**Six-Part Color
Composite with Two
Colors in Each Part,
1970**

ink

473 × 473 mm

(18⁵/₈ × 18⁵/₈)

Promised Gift of
Dorothy and Herbert
Vogel

Deceptively simple, Sol LeWitt's *Six-Part Color Composite with Two Colors in Each Part* is a good example of what art historian Rosalind Krauss calls LeWitt's "absurd nominalism," his tendency in his art to painstakingly enumerate all the logical permutations of a simple series of contrasting elements.¹ In addition, unlike a number of his line drawings that deal exclusively with geometric combinations, *Six-Part Color Composite* also suggests a strong interest in the nature of color perception.

In this work LeWitt explores a series of color combinations by presenting six rectangles of equal size, each made up of two intersecting sets of parallel lines. Each set of parallel lines is restricted to a single "color"—red, blue, yellow, or black—and, because LeWitt is here concerned with color permutations rather than arrangements of line, each set of colored lines always runs in the same direction. (Yellow lines are positioned vertically, black lines horizontally, blue lines diagonally from top left to lower right, and red lines diagonally from lower left to top right.) Each set of colored lines is repeated three times in the drawing, allowing all possible color combinations to be represented once. Moving from top to bottom and from left to right, one discovers: yellow-black, yellow-red, yellow-blue, black-red, black-blue, and red-blue.

LeWitt's delicate integration of colored lines suggests the work of minimalist artist Agnes Martin (see cats. 104 and 105). As with Martin's work, the viewer becomes aware of how his or her perception of color changes depending on the nature of the color bands that are allowed to interact through either proximity or crossing. In the case of the LeWitt drawing, one notices how the addition of black merely darkens the color that it

crosses, while, despite the distinct nature of the lines, the interaction of different combinations of yellow, red, and blue produces orange, green, or purple. Because of the more repetitive and exhaustive nature of LeWitt's linear structures, however, his work seems more conceptual—more focused on the idea behind the series—than the work of Martin.

MATTHEW BIRO

Provenance

Acquired from the artist
by Dorothy and Herbert
Vogel.

Note

1. Rosalind Krauss,
"LeWitt in Progress," in
Krauss, *The Originality of
the Avant-Garde and Other
Modernist Myths* (Cam-
bridge, MA, 1985), 256.



YELLOW BLACK	BLACK RED
YELLOW RED	BLACK BLUE
YELLOW BLUE	RED BLUE

Set for drawing
using two colors
in each set
Set 1/1/17
March 17, 1970

120

RICHARD TUTTLE

American, born 1941

Stacked Color with Wavy and Straight Side, 1971

watercolor over graphite
302 × 227 mm
(11 7/8 × 8 15/16)

Stacked Color Drawing with Arch of Egg Shaped Form Painted, 1971

watercolor over graphite
455 × 305 mm
(17 15/16 × 12)

The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, Patrons' Permanent Fund, and Gift of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel, 1991

Each of these works belongs to the stacked color drawing "series" in which Richard Tuttle explored a set of ideas pertaining to line, form, space, and color. A series for Tuttle becomes a tool for examining a concept that has no real beginning or end.¹ In the 1960s and early 1970s the artist typically produced such groups of ten to twelve works, revealing the process of investigating ideas over time and space.

Tuttle's art relates to ways of being and to the act of discovery, offering new possibilities for artistic practice. He belongs to the generation of artists who focused their concerns on the very process of art making. In contrast to the earlier production of the New York School and pop artists, Tuttle's work conveys a humility informed by his long-standing involvement with Eastern thought and aesthetics.

These drawings have an unmistakably handmade quality, heightened by the use of the variable watercolor medium. The artist has said that in making these works his strokes of horizontal color "flowed from the body through the hand" and that the white spaces in between allowed for "fluidity and breathing." In making *Stacked Color with Wavy and Straight Side*, he measured the increments with his fingers, marking them off with a pencil.² He employed this anthropometric method in an era when artists were eschewing the cold industrial aesthetic of so-called minimal art in favor of revealing the hand of the artist and, by extension, the human element.

In *Stacked Color Drawing with Arch of Egg Shaped Form Painted* the elliptical shape evaporates on the bottom edge of the half-egg. Such a formless form characterizes much of Tuttle's work and even suggests a sense of incompleteness. Economy is integral, and negative spatial elements become as important as the artist's marks. In the careful balance of ingredients the color values in each progression seem sensitively weighted and applied—neither completely random nor entirely scientific in their order.

In these two drawings the open space endows each chromatic form with a quasi-sculptural presence; both stacks of color occupy their space on the otherwise empty sheet, encouraging the viewer to imagine the shapes in the round.³ This hint at mass is belied, however, by the translucent watercolor medium and the layered color swaths that permit the white of the paper to show through. While these works contain certain traditional characteristics of drawing, painting, and sculpture, they combine to function in a new dimension.

The stacked color drawings number at least thirteen, with *Stacked Color with Wavy and Straight Side* among the first in the group and *Stacked Color Drawing with Arch of Egg Shaped Form Painted* the last. The mood shifts from the exuberant and light-hearted in the earlier drawing to a more contained spirit in the latter. In the end, these drawings reflect on Tuttle's original and poetic vision.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Provenance

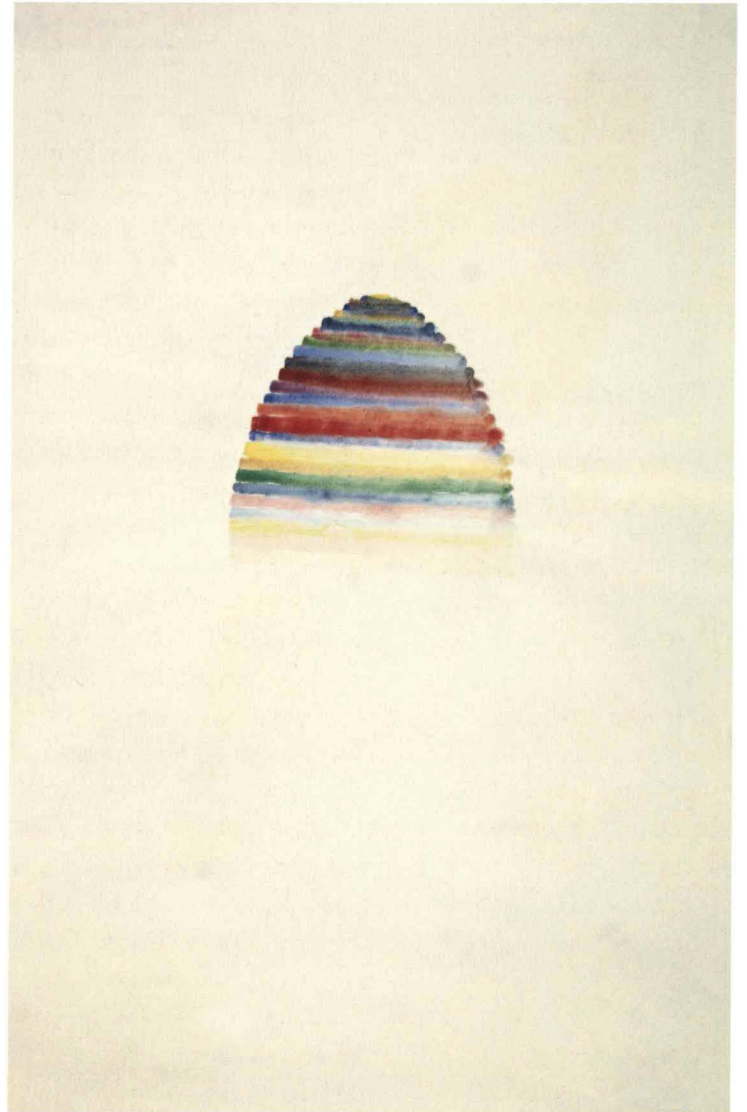
The artist to Dorothy and Herbert Vogel.

Notes

1. Telephone conversation with the artist, 8 January 2001.

2. Telephone conversation, 8 January.

3. See Holiday T. Day, "Drawing a New Role for Drawing: Richard Tuttle and His Contemporaries," in *Richard Tuttle: Drawings from the Vogel Collection* [exh. cat., Institute of Contemporary Art] (Amsterdam, 1992), 33–37.



CHRISTO

American, born in Bulgaria, 1935

**Valley Curtain,
Project for Grand
Hogback, Rifle,
Colorado, 1971**

colored pencil, crayon, graphite, and enamel paint on photostat with fabric, tape, staples, and two diazo prints
707 × 559 mm
(27 ¹³/₁₆ × 22)

The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund, Patrons' Permanent Fund, and Gift of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel, 1992

Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Valley Curtain, Grand Hogback, Rifle, Colorado, 1970–72, 1972*, color photograph by Harry Shunk, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel

Valley Curtain, Grand Hogback, Rifle, Colorado, 1970–72, for which this is a preparatory study, became the first work by the husband and wife team of Christo and Jeanne-Claude to be realized in the rural American landscape.¹ It was the progenitor of many projects by the Christos in the United States, the site of more of their projects than any other country.² With *Valley Curtain*, the Christos suspended fabric in the Rifle Gap near Rifle, Colorado, creating a luminous cascade of billowing orange in the landscape. The result was an extraordinarily beautiful sight in the negative space between two natural land formations.

Studies such as this anticipate the look of the Christos' projects (all of the studies are made in advance) and later provide a record of the evolution of the installation. The present one was made not long before the realized project, and it bears exceptionally close resemblance to the finished work (figure). While the projects themselves are a collaboration between Christo and Jeanne-Claude, the drawings are made solely by Christo.

This collage for *Valley Curtain* recalls the surrealist tradition of photocollage and its related fantastical notions; yet there is no metaphoric displacement here as in surrealist work, for the Christos' projects are real. The collage in fact serves both technical and aesthetic functions: it provides information about the *Valley Curtain*, and it represents an exquisite object. Photographs show the

realized project as a magnificent bright orange V-shape set against the blue Colorado sky. The Christos are said to have chosen the color orange particularly for its ability both to contrast and to blend with the natural landscape.³

As with all of the Christos' projects, *Valley Curtain* was a temporary installation.⁴ This concept of ephemerality reflects a generation of artists in the 1960s and 1970s who began to offer new possibilities for an impermanent art, one that ultimately questioned the fundamental program of the art institution. This premise, central to the Christos' projects, has become a major legacy to subsequent artists.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Provenance

The artist to Dorothy and Herbert Vogel.

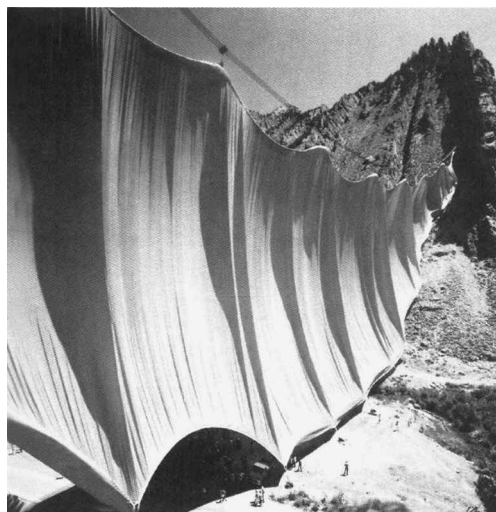
Notes

1. Christo and Jeanne-Claude have been most generous in providing information and counsel. *Valley Curtain* was preceded by three urban projects: *1,200 Cubic Meter Package*, Minneapolis School of Art, Minnesota, 1966; *1,240 Oil Barrels Mastaba and Two Tons of Wrapped Hay*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 1968; and *Wrapped Museum of Contemporary Art*, Chicago, 1969.
2. Following *Valley Curtain* were: *Ocean Front*, Newport, Rhode Island, 1974, *Running Fence*, Sonoma

and Marin Counties, California, 1972–1976, *Wrapped Walkways*, Loose Park, Kansas City, 1977–1978, *Surrounded Islands*, Biscayne Bay, Greater Miami, Florida, 1980–1983, and *The Umbrellas, Japan-USA*, 1984–1991. The two projects in progress are: *The Gates, Project for Central Park*, New York City, 1979–present, and *Over the River, Project for the Arkansas River, Colorado*, 1992–present.

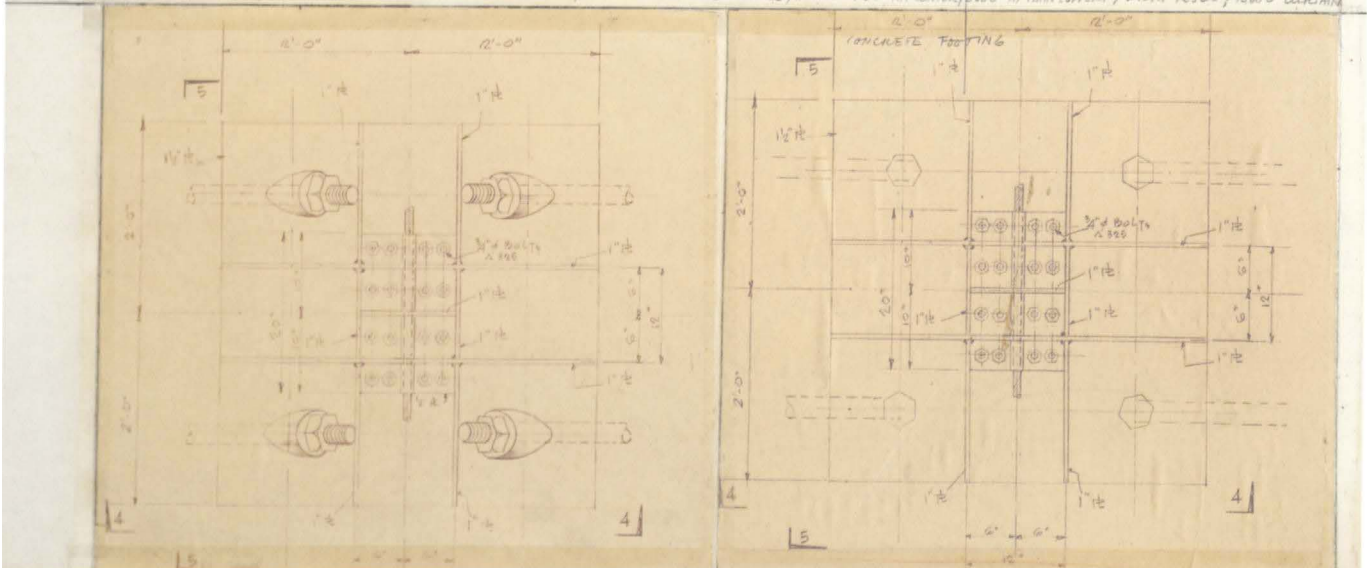
3. Jan van der Marck, "The Valley Curtain" in *Art in America* 3 (May–June 1972), 61.

4. The *Valley Curtain* was realized from 10 August to 11 August 1972 after a previous attempt failed in October 1971 owing to mechanical problems.





VALLEY CURTAIN (PROTECT FOX COLORADO) GRAND HOBBACK, 7 miles NORTH FROM RIFLE; WEIGHT: 1850' (AT CENTER) 3650' AT MAIN SUPPORT; WIDTH 1250', 1380' CURTAIN *Chute 1971*



NANCY GRAVES

American, 1940–1995

Sabine D Region of the Moon, Lunar Orbiter Site II P–6 Southwest Mare Tranquilatis, 1972

gouache and ink over graphite

c. 572 × 761 mm

(22 ½ × 30)

Gift of Esther Cattell

Schmitt, 1992

Nancy Graves formed many significant impressions viewing art, science, and history exhibitions at the Berkshire Museum in Massachusetts where her father was an administrator. The installations inspired Graves to examine how an artist's subjectivity could affect the representation of scientific fact. Fusing principles of anthropology and archaeology with aesthetics, she created massive camels in the 1960s made of latex, plaster, and wood that appeared realistic from a distance yet highly manufactured on closer examination. In the 1970s Graves' paintings and drawings explored how perception influences the interpretation of spatial depth on a two-dimensional surface, an interest that led her to study cartography.

As a two-dimensional system that organizes three-dimensional space, extracting and abstracting information from the natural world, maps served as catalysts for Graves' investigations into the manipulation of scientific data for aesthetic purposes. Studying maps at the New York Public Library as well as NASA satellite images at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Graves produced drawings and paintings of the Earth's ocean floor, meteorological maps, and geological maps of planets. After analyzing 250 lunar maps, Graves created this work and nine other gouaches for Lunar Orbiter Series in the collection of the National Gallery of Art.¹

Graves chose the moon as her subject for scientific and pop culture reasons. Around 1968–1970 Americans were flooded with televised images from space, as the Apollo missions led to man's landing on the moon. For *Sabine D Region of the Moon* and the other drawings in this series, Graves worked with scientific material and video imagery, looking at geological maps of the moon's surface superimposed onto sequential satellite photographs. Interpreting two-dimensional abstractions of a three-dimensional subject, she took many liberties in constructing her own map, adding and omitting scientific details, changing orientations, cropping, and even merging portions of maps.² Ultimately, science was a point of departure for Graves, who believed that maps, rather than reflecting a compilation of data, could become "the most

advanced level of conceptual abstraction"³ when subjected to an artist's perception.

Scientists use color in lunar maps to indicate information that was once documented in gradations of black and white. For her maps, applying small dabs of gouache in a style similar to pointillism, Graves carefully created patterns of color ranging from blues and metallic grays to highlights of magenta, orange, and yellow. Each brilliant hue represents a specific lunar surface feature such as a crater, fault, or ridge, but each color was chosen for aesthetic rather than scientific reasons. Graves' vivid stippling generates a pulsating, push-and-pull tension—with the lighter, neutral colors receding and brighter areas projecting—to emphasize depth and movement. Her map appears somewhat realistic from afar and abstract up close, a characteristic of her earlier camel constructions. Faint horizontal bands refer to scan lines on television photographs taken by lunar satellites.⁴ In the end, aesthetic decisions or gaps in scientific information determined the configuration of the image, which is cropped at slight angles on the sides and the bottom.⁵ Accentuating the artistic nature of her map, Graves omitted measurement scales and legends.

Graves interpreted her version of mapping as "a systematic presentation on a surface of the nature and distribution of phenomena in space."⁶ Merging time, space, scale, and multiple viewpoints with aesthetic perception, she transformed landscape painting into a conceptual experience.

RENÉE MAURER

Provenance

M. Knoedler & Company, New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

Notes

1. Using different colors and orientations, Graves in 1972 also produced a suite of ten lithographs and eight paintings based on Lunar Orbiter Series.

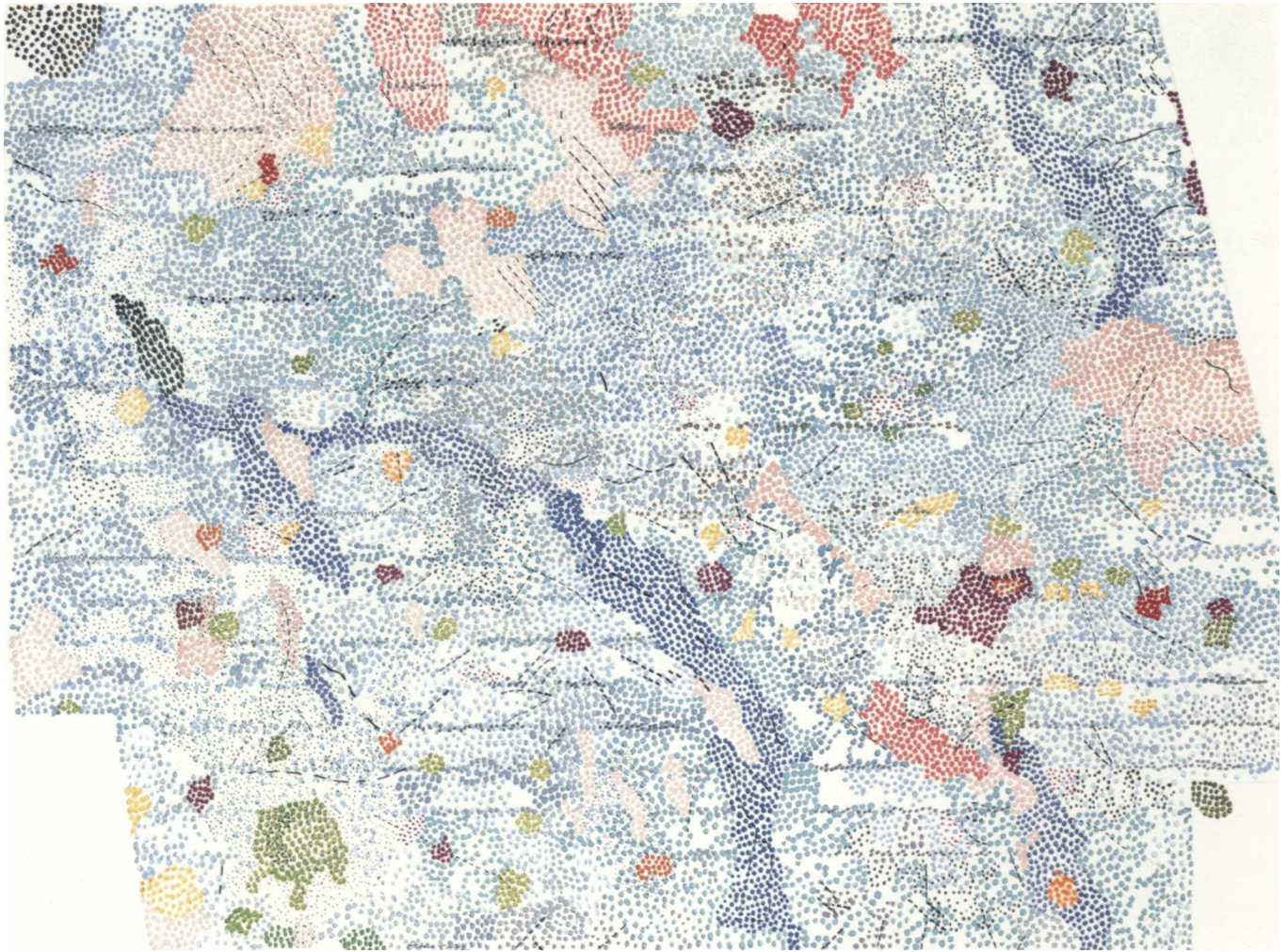
2. Thomas Phadon, *Nancy Graves: Excavations in Print, a Catalogue Raisonné* (New York, 1996), 16.

3. Quoted in Roberta Smith, *4 Artists and the Map: Image/Process/Data/Place* [exh. cat., Spencer Museum of Art] (Lawrence, KS, 1981), 11.

4. Linda L. Cathcart, *Nancy Graves: A Survey 1969/1980* [exh. cat., Albright-Knox Art Gallery] (Buffalo, 1980), 22.

5. Mary Fish, "Macrocoscopic Mapping," *ArtWeek* 4 (15 September 1973), 1.

6. Quoted in *Nancy Graves* [exh. cat., La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art] (La Jolla, 1973), 3.



123

VIJA CELMINS

American, born in
Latvia, 1939

Untitled, 1973

graphite

757 × 111 mm

(29 ⁷/₈ × 43 ³/₄)

Gift (Partial and
Promised) of the
Grinstein Family, in
Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1991

This beautiful sheet exemplifies a pivotal moment in Vija Celmins' career, when she took a break from painting and turned to drawing as her primary mode of expression. Whether in drawings or prints, the artist's depictions of the ocean are meditative in their quietness and hypnotic in their constancy. Nothing intrudes on their peacefulness or their suggestion of rhythmic motion.

In the late 1960s Celmins began to take photographs of the sea. She made her first graphite drawing of the Pacific Ocean in 1968, which led to intense study of the subject, both from nature and from the photographs she took from a pier near her studio in Venice, California, south of Los Angeles.¹ Her large early drawings of the rippling surface of the ocean fill the page. The water is brought so close to the picture plane that it almost seems to enter the viewer's space. In 1973 Celmins began to explore the illusion of depth in drawings such as this one. She adopted a more distant perspective, relegating her placid views of the sea to a narrow horizontal band in the lower register of a large sheet of paper. This compositional strategy emphasizes the breadth of the panorama. At the same time, the illusion of depth is intensified by the dramatic featureless white background representing the sky. Compressing the representation of water into a narrow band at the bottom of the sheet also increases the abstract qualities of the image.

One's attention shifts from the literal subject to the artist's rendering. On close inspection, one loses sight of the overall scene and becomes more engaged in the surface, the graphite markings on the page. As Celmins explained, "the art is in the making, not in the object."² Her painstaking technique and delicate touch reveal how devoted she is to the process of drawing.

Celmins' ocean images, distinctive in their density and tonality, are among her best-known works. This exceptionally striking drawing elegantly reflects her delight in the ceaseless revelations of nature.

CARLOTTA J. OWENS

Provenance

Riko Mizuno, Los Angeles,
1973; Stanley and Elyse
Grinstein.

Notes

An earlier version of this
text was published in
Washington 1991.

1. *Vija Celmins: A Survey
Exhibition*, introduction by
Susan C. Larsen [exh. cat.,
Newport Harbor Art
Museum] (Los Angeles,
1979), 27.

2. Kenneth Baker, "Vija
Celmins: Drawing Without
Withdrawing," *Artforum*
22 (November 1983).



PHILIP GUSTON

American, 1913–1980

Untitled, 1975

pen and ink

483 × 635 mm (19 × 25)

Promised Gift of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff

For almost twenty years Philip Guston enjoyed widespread recognition as an abstract expressionist, yet even at the height of his career his singularity was noted. In a 1956 review of Guston's work, Leo Steinberg commented on the slower pace of his abstractions and their sense of having been "hauled up from unspeakable depths of privacy."¹ And when the artist embraced figuration years later, Steinberg's reading proved prescient. In works from the 1970s Guston bared his soul in a manner unique among his contemporaries. Images such as this one, littered with abandoned objects and dismembered limbs, appear both painfully emotional and deeply private. "They don't seem to be pictures anymore," observed Guston, "but sort of confessions—exposures."²

Figures and objects began to emerge in Guston's imagery over the course of the 1960s, with the final break from abstraction occurring around 1970. Thereafter a deluge of "things" spewed forth. In this vigorously penned drawing from 1975, with its hardened strokes of black ink, Guston lays out the "stuff" of his life: a canvas stretcher, a discarded tire, a nail-studded shoe, a toppled inkpot, severed limbs, and a head buried to its eyes and ears in some sort of mire.

It is hardly surprising to learn that Guston's father was a junkman. Having fled the pogroms in Odessa, the elder Guston took a job as a trash collector in Los Angeles in the early 1920s; fifty years later his son would figuratively follow suit. Philip Guston's final métier was the junkyard, and his genius lay in his capacity to invest its rubble with potency.

This drawing speaks not only to the twin anxieties of old age and death but also to the burden of the creative mind—a subject that Dürer codified in his 1514 engraving *Melencolia I*. The relationship is an apt one. A reproduction of the master's famed print hung on Guston's wall, and according to a friend, Ross Feld, "nearly every allegorical element of Dürer's great diagram... came down off the wall and fed through Guston's unconscious."³ Dürer's figure of Melancholy is surrounded by a loaded array of objects, reflecting her state of mind and her existen-

tial predicament. The half-submerged head in Guston's drawing (surely a stand-in for the artist) is also surrounded by a jumble of objects, some similarly related to the crafts and all likewise representing the artist's psychological burden. Individual items, such as the lumpy tire above the horizon line, take on allegorical significance. In form and meaning the tire recalls the grindstone at the center of Dürer's engraving. Both devices rotate on an axle; both have been made obsolete either by disuse or age. The tire can also be read as a rising or setting sun, the radiating, dashed-off pen strokes serving as its nimbus. That interpretation sets up a telling comparison with the artist's wide-open eyes—two dark orbs struggling to stay above the mire, with comically exaggerated lashes for nimbi. As the sun is the source of energy, so too is the artist's vision.

Guston paid dearly for these late works. Between the public's first glimpse of them in 1970 and the time of his death in 1980, he was maligned by friends and critics alike, most of whom were mystified by the new imagery. Although pained and angered by their responses, Guston saw no alternative to what he sensed to be inevitable, knowing that, as one of his favorite authors, T. S. Eliot, wrote: "In my beginning is my end."⁴

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Estate of the artist; David McKee Gallery; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff.

Notes

1. Leo Steinberg, "Fritz Glarner and Philip Guston among 'Twelve Americans' at the Museum of Modern Art," *Arts* 30 (1956), 44, reprinted in Steinberg, *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (New York, 1972), 282.

2. Musa Mayer, *Night Studio* (New York, 1988), 180.

3. Ross Feld, "Guston in Time," *Arts Magazine* 63 (1988), 41. Feld specifically cites "the book, the inkpot, the scales, the rhomboid, [and] the rainbow." These elements show up in many of Guston's works, along with rough-hewn timbers, hammers, and tapered nails. For an interpretation and illustration of *Melencolia I*, see Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton, 1943), 156–171, fig. 209.

4. T. S. Eliot, "East Coker," *Four Quartets* (New York, 1943), 11.



JASPER JOHNS

American, born 1930

**Untitled (from
Untitled 1972),
1975/1976**

pastel and graphite

385 × 959 mm

(15 3/16 × 37 3/4)

Gift of Jasper Johns, in
Honor of the 50th
Anniversary of the
National Gallery of Art,
1990

This pastel is one of five drawings Johns made between 1973 and 1976 based on his monumental four-panel painting, *Untitled* 1972 (Museum Ludwig, Cologne), and like most of the artist's drawings, it follows the painting on which it is based.¹ The oil, encaustic, and collage painting of 1972 is a pivotal work, recalling motifs employed by the artist since the late 1960s and introducing imagery critical to the work of the succeeding two decades. Its far left panel of green, violet, and orange cross-hatching represents Johns' earliest use of a motif that frequently recurred in works throughout the 1970s and 1980s (see cat. 130). The two middle panels—oil on the left, encaustic on the right—depict in red, black, and white a flagstone pattern Johns has said he glimpsed on a wall in Harlem. Crisscrossing the far right panel are wooden slats to which are attached flesh-colored body parts that have been cast from life in wax.

Three of the drawings based on *Untitled* 1972 are identical in size and follow the entire composition of the painting. The first and last of the group are monochromatic. The present drawing, a richly textured pastel on gray paper, closely evokes the color and composition of the painting, but variations exist throughout. For example, the cross-hatching in the first panel of the pastel is composed on a scale commensurate with that of the painting but in different configurations, and the color scheme has been enhanced with additions of blue, brown, and yellow.

The flagstone patterns of the pastel carefully replicate those of the painting, yet there is no analogy here for the two different media in the painting. In 1969 Johns wrote about the perceptual game at work in the flagstone panels:

Flagstone ptg. 2 panels. one in oil.
one in encaustic.

An imagined unit the square of the
height of these canvases.

The flagstones enclosed by a border (within the imagined square). The left rectangle (oil?) will include area A.B.C.D. The right (encaustic?) will include E.F.G.H. The meeting B.D. and E.G. will not have borders. (Or will they? Aim for maximum difficulty in determining what has happened?) (The possibility of these—or others—in gray.)

Whether to see the 2 parts as one thing or as two things.

Another possibility: to see that something has happened. Is this best shown by "pointing to" or by "hiding" it.²

This "imagined square" results when one flagstone panel shifts over the other, aligning the patterns and forming a single square panel.

The silhouetted shapes in the far right quarter of the pastel only schematically suggest the three-dimensional boards and casts of the painting. The warm tones and shimmering layers of pastel echo but by no means duplicate the palette of the painting. Each of the boards in the pastel is marked with a discrete band of "matching" color at either end. This device replaces the "L" and "R" (left and right) stenciled on either end of the boards in the painting.

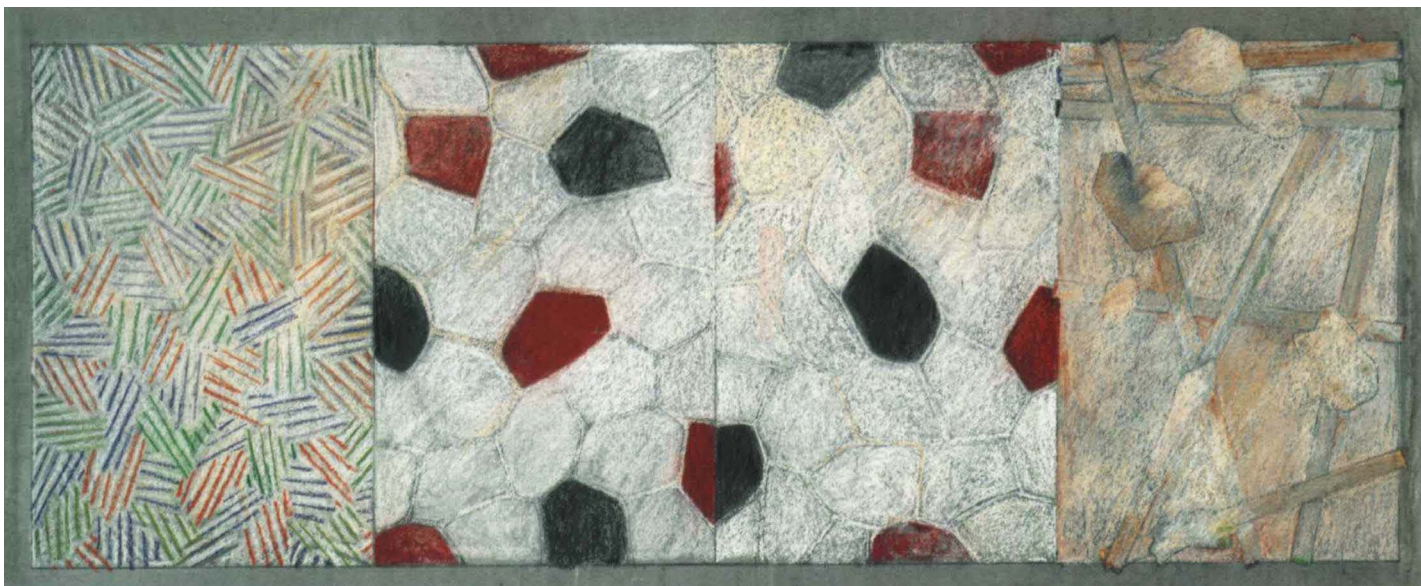
MARLA PRATHER

Notes

1. An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1991.

2. On these drawings see Nan Rosenthal and Ruth E. Fine, with Marla Prather and Amy Mizrahi Zorn, *The Drawings of Jasper Johns* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), nos. 63–66.

2. Jasper Johns, "Sketchbook Notes," 0 to 9, no. 6 (July 1969), 1–2.



SOL LEWITT

American, born 1928

Map of Amsterdam,
1976

commercial map with
cutout removed
656 × 816 mm
(25 13/16 × 32 1/8)
The Dorothy and
Herbert Vogel
Collection, Ailsa Mellon
Bruce Fund, Patrons'
Permanent Fund, and
Gift of Dorothy and
Herbert Vogel, 1991

The simple, quasi-tautological works of conceptual artist Sol LeWitt appear rational only on the surface. On closer examination, their rationality disappears, and they become “obsessional,” “compulsive,” and “absurd.”¹ *Map of Amsterdam with the Area between Emma-Plein, Europa-Plein, Ooster Park, Nieuwmarkt, and Bus Station Removed* is a case in point. Something of a departure for LeWitt, it consists of page one—the central panel—of an official map of Amsterdam, published by its office of public works on nine separate pages and organized according to a three-by-three square grid. From this mass-produced schematic representation of the city center, printed in full color and surrounded by a border of marks and numbers that indicate the divisions of a regular grid, LeWitt has cut a pentagon with uneven sides. The corners of the pentagon are determined by the city locations spelled out in LeWitt’s hand-printed title at the lower left corner of the map. Following the order specified in the title and moving in a counterclockwise fashion, one finds Emma-Plein at the corner farthest to the left, Europa-Plein below it toward the right, and so on, concluding with the Bus Station above and slightly to the right of Emma-Plein.

Seemingly straightforward, LeWitt’s clear, yet ultimately illogical transformation of a ready-made, utilitarian reproduction prompts a number of lines of analysis. First, by rendering the map partly useless, the artist transforms the schematic of the city into an independent object, subverting its transparent representational function and inviting viewers to consider the nature of maps in general. No matter how precisely it is drawn, a map, LeWitt suggests, is an abstraction; and its careful deformation of reality serves the world’s manipulation and control, a connotation strengthened by the overlay of the measurement grid suggested in the map’s border. In addition, by leading viewers to focus on the map and its grid as related and overlapping systems of representation, this work promotes awareness of how much one sees in terms of preexisting systems of knowledge and measurement. By laying bare this hermeneutic dimension of

ordinary perception—the fact that seeing always means interpreting on the basis of prior knowledge—LeWitt’s work also inspires reflection on the nature of perception itself. Finally, although quite different from his better-known works, this “altered ready-made” harks back to important antecedents in the history of conceptual and minimal art, encouraging viewers to recall art’s development in the 1960s and 1970s. Because it is based on a simple formula indicated by its title, *Map of Amsterdam* calls to mind LeWitt’s earlier combinations of images with texts that define the image’s making. Moreover, because of its rational realization of an ultimately irrational process, one that undermines the function of the map, it remains true to one of his artistic priorities. In the end, in terms of manufacture, the work resonates with the earlier removal works of conceptual artist Lawrence Wiener; and by provoking an interplay among the viewer, the work, and their shared physical environment, it recalls one of the central concerns of both minimal sculpture and land art.

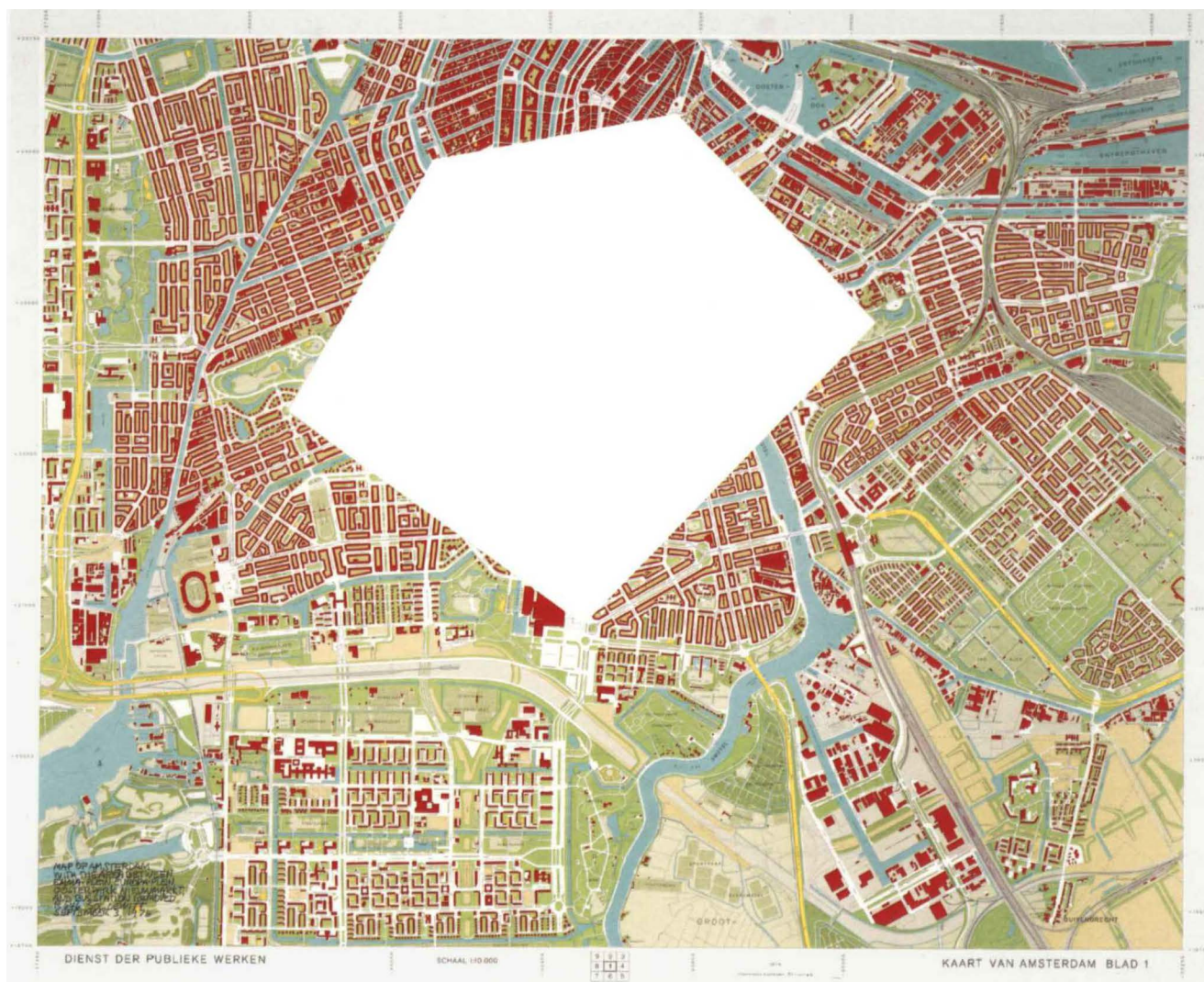
MATTHEW BIRO

Provenance

Acquired from the artist
by Dorothy and Herbert
Vogel.

Note

1. Rosalind Krauss, “LeWitt in Progress,” in Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 244–258.



JIM DINE

American, born 1935

Nine Self-Portraits with a Very Long Beard, 1977

graphite
 each of nine sheets:
 762 × 559 mm (30 × 22)
 Promised Gift of the
 Artist

Jim Dine's nine-part drawing is as much an inquiry into the self as it is an investigation of drawing. The artist made the work over the winter of 1976–1977 while living in Vermont, having moved there from New York in 1971. Away from the city and the art scene that had propelled him to fame in the 1960s, Dine took account of his life as well as the direction of his work. From 1974 to 1980 he devoted himself almost entirely to drawing from life and forging links with established artistic traditions.

Scrupulous observation goes hand in hand with drawing from life, and Dine allowed little to escape his attention. "The works are about my eyes," he states. "I've tried to teach them to be ruthless and kind."¹ Indeed in these self-portraits he scrutinizes every crevice, chiseling in the deep furrows above the bridge of his nose and the scar on his forehead. Although the artist is obviously adept at capturing his own likeness, the work's strength goes far beyond the mimetic. He invests his countenance with tension by shifting the focus from penetrating clarity to hazy obscurity, determining what to reveal, what to withhold, and what merely to insinuate. Some of the portraits underscore the physical self—the likeness the artist sees in the mirror. Most are largely interpretive and imply the psychological. Some are profoundly elusive, dissolving into pure light and atmosphere.

Dine's approach is both physical and incisive but also subtly suggestive. Areas are sometimes literally worn away by scraping, and lines are often emphatic and deeply scored. He maximizes the lustrous quality of graphite, laying it on thickly so that its steel gray color casts a metallic glow, and he works back into the drawings with an eraser to create highlights and delicate transitions. Many of the images are surrounded by a shadowy accumulation of smudges, thus openly revealing the traces of their making. Dine favors the incidental mark: "It's about the history of the drawing," he observes. "I like to leave the history in."² These markings are likewise further evidence of the artist's presence, extending the fundamental autobiographic nature of *Nine Self-Portraits*.

Like other artists of his generation, Dine scales up his image, in this case multiplying it by a factor of nine. Although each sheet is physically independent, the artist regards the group as a single entity. He frequently works in serial format, breaking his subject down into a succession of incrementally adjusted images. In this respect *Nine Self-Portraits* recalls the late nineteenth-century analytical photographs of Eadweard Muybridge, yet Dine is not in search of scientific truth. On the contrary, his work suggests that there is no single truth. And although the obsessive repetition of the composition bears comparison to Warhol's images of Elvis or Marilyn, Dine's intention is very different. Whereas Warhol's repetition addresses the loss of individuality, *Nine Self-Portraits* speaks passionately about the complexity of the individual.³

Commenting on the time he spent mastering the art of drawing in the 1970s, Dine notes, "it taught me to be conscious of the language of marks and of the fact that every mark has a specific task in the making of the whole drawing. . . . When I tired of the discipline . . . I kept my spirits aroused by realizing I was doing just what the artists that I venerated as a kid had been doing. I investigated a way to be part of the human comedy and to embrace it without fear."⁴

JUDITH BRODIE

Notes

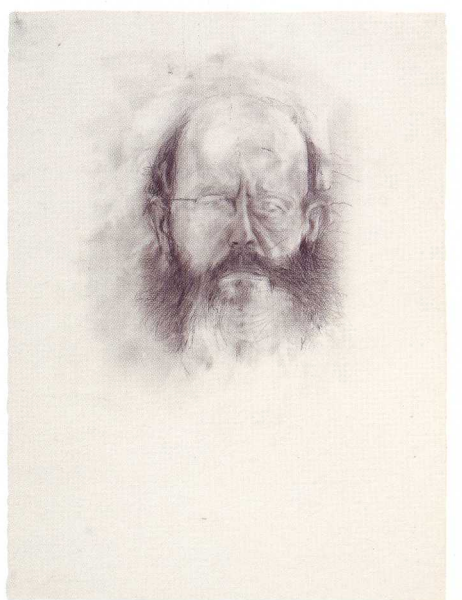
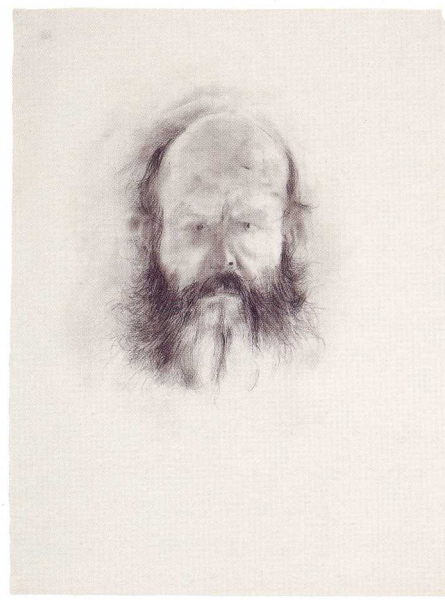
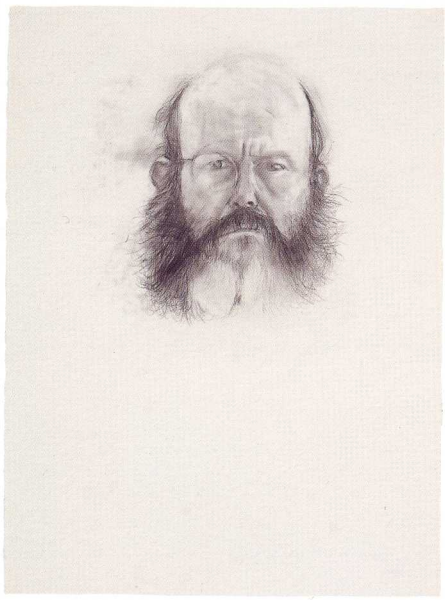
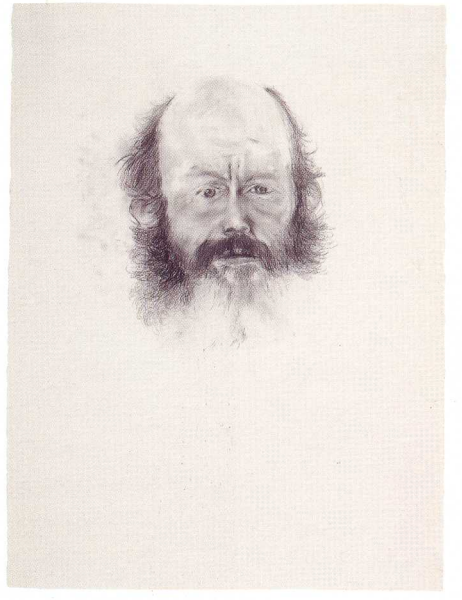
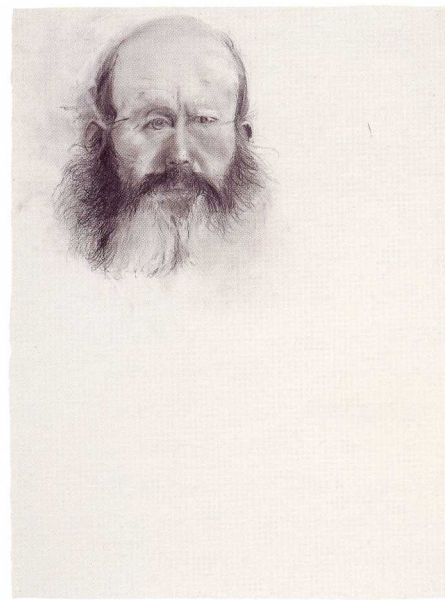
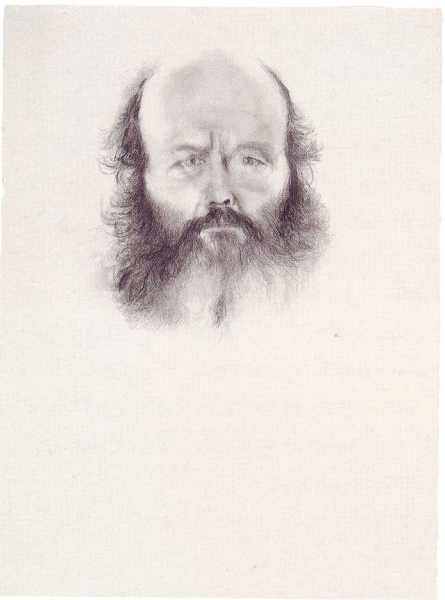
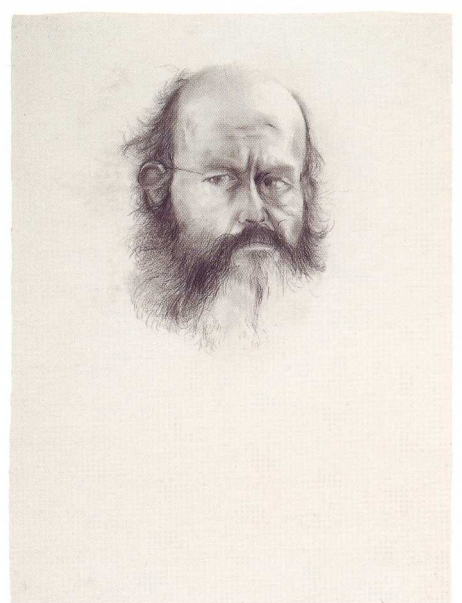
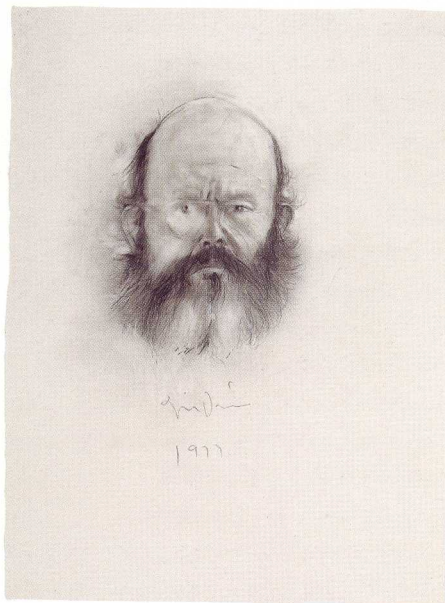
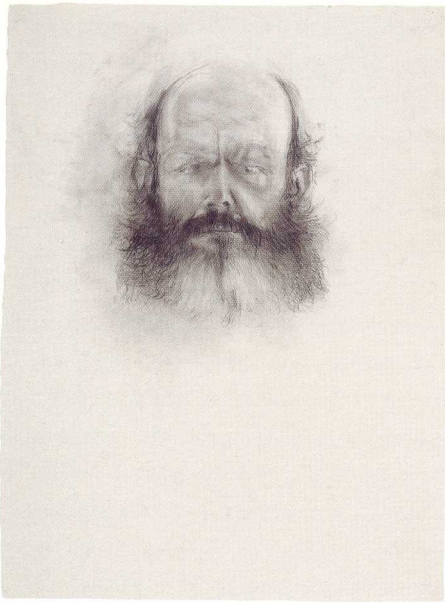
1. Quoted in Constance W. Glenn, *Jim Dine Drawings* (New York, 1973), 204.

2. Quoted in Glenn 1973, 202.

3. For a discussion of fragmentation and repetition in modern art, see Kirk

Varnedoe, *A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern* (New York, 1989), 102–181.

4. Quoted in Marco Livingstone, *Jim Dine: The Alchemy of Images* (New York, 1998), 231.



128

CY TWOMBLY

American, born 1928

Nike, 1981

acrylic, crayon,
and graphite
997 × 692 mm
(39 ¼ × 27 ¼)

Sylvae, 1981

paint stick, acrylic,
crayon, and graphite
998 × 705 mm
(39 ¼ × 27 ¾)

Sylvae, 1981

paint stick, acrylic,
crayon, and graphite
998 × 705 mm
(39 ¼ × 27 ¾)

Gift of Lila Acheson
Wallace, 1986

Executed in a burst of activity in August of 1981 at the artist's studio at Bassano in Teverino, Italy, these drawings were later culled from a larger group of related works and exhibited as a suite of three. That they display the traces of their celerity of execution—a thumbprint of red at the paper's edge or a spattering of white paint rising up from the multicolored mass in *Nike* like spurts of sea foam—does not suffice to obscure the careful deliberation of Twombly's dexterous play with pictorial elements. Despite the elliptical bundles of scribbled line and the smeary impasto of paint, the apparent insouciance of artistry is traduced by Twombly's formidable sensitivity to overall compositional balance, where formal decisiveness is never sacrificed to restlessness of hand. The artist's nimble touch is everywhere in evidence. From the tremulous letters hovering in space in the first *Sylvae* to the deep embossing of *Nike*'s title in red, variations in the placement, quality, and color of words play meticulously to each drawing's more abstract elements. In the first *Sylvae*, for instance, Twombly fills in the loop of the title's y to rhyme with the colored elaborations of the scrolling below, and its v tips to echo the C of "Cy," only to metamorphose again, amplified, as the alar extension of the drawing's featured figure. Thus the artist syncopates rhythms of form across the space of the work, holding the composition taut so as to afford greatest elasticity for his touch.

Twombly handles with extraordinary agility the complex relations not only among forms but also among the diverse media he employs. As he uses graphite, colored crayons, paint, and three types of paper, each distinct in weave and cast of white, here color remains one of the artist's chief concerns. Applying paint over colored line, Twombly melts the two media together to create a delicious polychromy of pigmentation. Texture is another source of pleasure, as Twombly splatters and smears paint, incises paper with the wrong end of the brush, and revels in the sinuosity of repeated line. Although abstract in the forms depicted, these drawings elicit an

emotive effect that is a subtle combination of elation and melancholy. The ball of plan-gent scrawl in the first drawing, grounded as if by its own pathos, with its lilting arc suggestive of a wing unsuccessful in its path to flight, confers at the same time on the aerial lettering an affective counterpoint of joy.

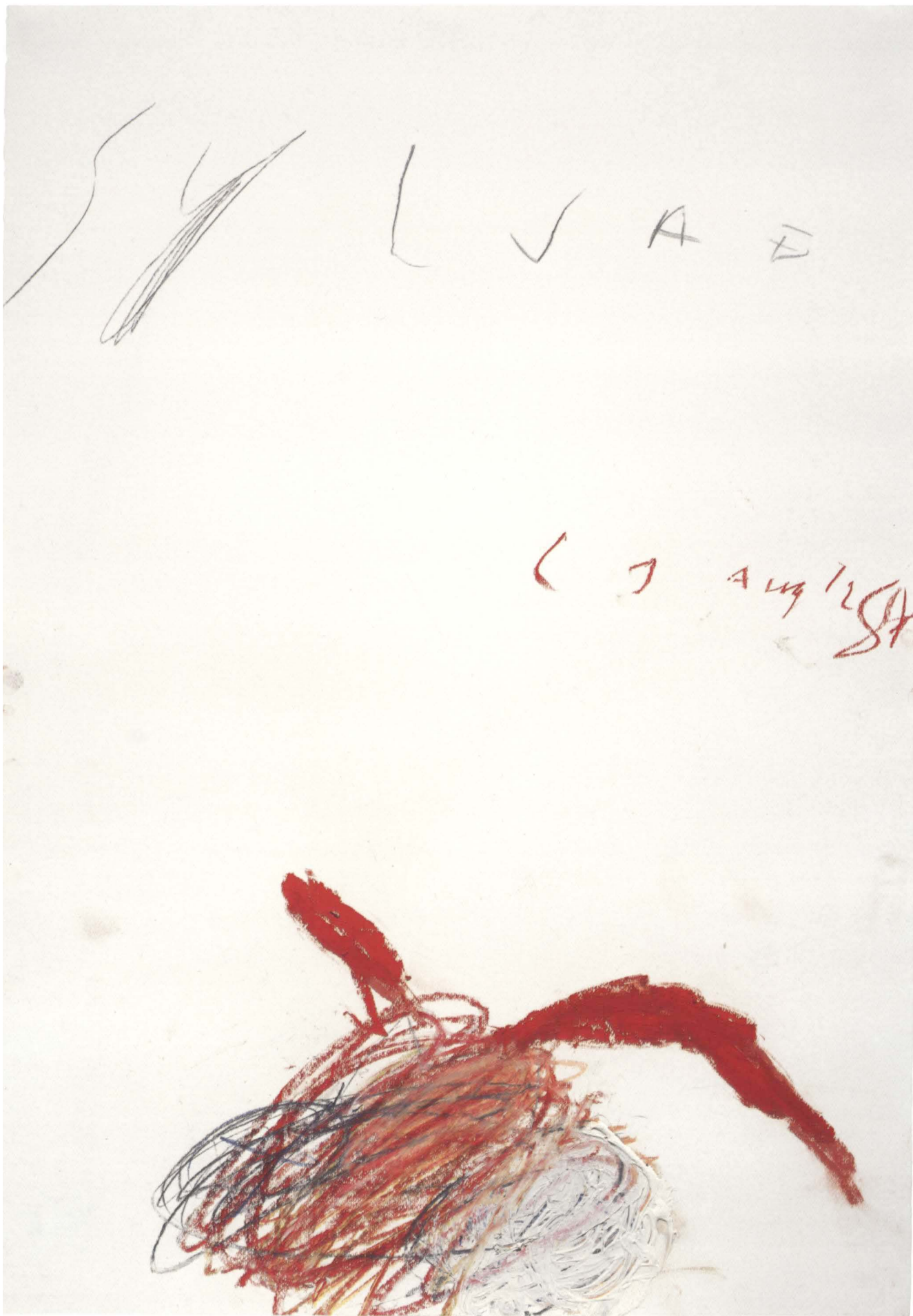
Twombly explores the special properties of artistic media with felicity and grace in the service of the invention of a complex poetic domain. Themes derived from classical literature and mythology appear frequently in Twombly's art. Here *Nike* refers to the Greek goddess of Victory. The title of the first two works, *Sylvae*, may allude to the poet John Dryden's *Sylvae* of 1685, the famous preface for which is a rumination on the difficulties of translating classical lyric into a modern style. Yet as the titular inscriptions hover in the upper regions of each of these pictures, so too does the greater meaning of their conjunction hover elusively over the group as a whole. Enigmatic, the significance of pairing *Sylvae* and *Nike* orbits around the three works, unanchored by clarified reference, enjoining the viewer instead to delight in the visual and sensual pleasures offered by the artist's imagination and fancy.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Provenance

Sperone Westwater Fisher
Inc., New York; purchased
by the National Gallery of
Art with designated funds.







**RICHARD
DIEBENKORN**

American, 1922–1993

**Study for Untitled
(from Club/Spade
Group 1981–82),
1982**

tempera with pastel and
crayon over graphite
965 × 635 mm (38 × 25)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Richard Diebenkorn,
1992

Richard Diebenkorn, whose life roughly spanned the classic era of American postwar avant-garde culture, distinguished himself from his peers in many ways. An artist whose seriousness and talent matched those of the great New York School figures such as Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, and Franz Kline, Diebenkorn nevertheless remained firmly identified as a West Coast figure. It may have been in part owing to his lifelong resistance to moving to New York, as so many abstract expressionists felt compelled to do, that Diebenkorn was able to forge a series of extraordinary paintings and drawings whose essence draws on and yet fundamentally departs from the work of his established fellow artists.

In his early mature style (1949–1956) Diebenkorn evinced two concerns that would continue to obsess him artistically: color, always based on observation but deployed in increasingly idiosyncratic ways; and a kind of restlessly evolving linear quest that drew both on naturalistic forms and on symbols, or talismanic shapes, for character. It was clear from as early as 1952, especially in early works on paper, that the artist was as interested in abstract form as he was in figurative depiction.

An acknowledged source of enduring influence for Diebenkorn was Henri Matisse, whose spirit infuses the series of works on paper known as the Clubs and Spades Group. It is tempting to compare Diebenkorn's evolution in these works with Matisse's late-style paper cutouts. Both use paper in ways that transcend the common nature of the medium; both involve imagery that is abstract and at the same time laden with symbolic character. Diebenkorn's pictures, however, derive from a very different impetus than those of Matisse. They employ shapes or images that the artist himself acknowledged to refer to the suit symbols on playing cards.

The so-called Clubs and Spades drawings (or one might even call them paintings on paper) were initially received within what can only be called a climate of puzzlement. Very little was written about the 1982 exhibition at the Knoedler gallery in which these

works were first shown, but a great deal of verbal response passed among critics, artists, curators, and collectors.

Now, with the hindsight of nearly twenty years, it is clear that some of the Clubs and Spades compositions take their place among the most original and satisfying works of Diebenkorn's career. They deliberately use images that were emotionally laden for the artist, whose abiding fascination with heraldry is well known. And yet, in the long tradition of modernism, the artist chose to obfuscate the meaning of the images. The composition of the present work suggests more than simply a variation on the club, spade, or heart; rather, it veers into a disciplined yet freewheeling variation of the artist's exploration of these shapes. The image here is unusual in being almost symmetrical bilaterally. A stemlike, double axis supports a figure that seems to have been derived from a distorted version of the three-lobed club—stretched into a horizontal form, surmounting a field interrupted by opulent Matissean curves. This work embodies a classic example of Diebenkorn's distinctive handling of the edges of a composition: both the left and right margins are allowed to breathe, as it were, by establishing narrow whitish bands. Its most defining characteristic is perhaps its color—an exquisite red that is nearly unique in the artist's oeuvre. The barest presence of purplish blue on the right side of the composition enlivens the entire surface, in a technique whose subtlety equals that of Diebenkorn's other model, Paul Cézanne.

The stately and openly decorative nature of this work sets it apart from some of the other works from this period, which tend to be less symmetrical, less clarion in their presence. It is not insignificant that the artist chose this piece to give to the National Gallery of Art. It stands on its own as clearly as any of his ambitious, large-scale paintings on canvas and communicates the very essence of Diebenkorn's later achievement.

JANE LIVINGSTON



JASPER JOHNS

American, born 1930

Between the Clock and the Bed, 1984

watercolor over graphite

619 × 918 mm

(24 3/8 × 36 1/8)

Promised Gift of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff

Frequently elaborating on motifs drawn from his own work to explore subtle nuances among artistic media, Jasper Johns executed multiple versions of *Between the Clock and the Bed* over the course of several years in the early 1980s.¹ The title of the series Johns took from a late self-portrait by the Norwegian artist Edvard Munch. An image of great psychological complexity, Munch's painting depicts a solitary figure standing between a grandfather clock and a bed, over which lies a coverlet with a stylized graphic pattern evocative of the hatching that constitutes the design basic to Johns' series (see figure). While the shared title may appear to invite analogously psychological interpretations of these works, the artist has explained that it was only after the similarity between the decorative pattern on the bed in Munch's painting and the design of his own work had been pointed out to him that he adopted Munch's title for the series.² Although it is true that each *Between the Clock and the Bed* creates a subtly distinct mood through variations in color and artistic materials, it is also deeply characteristic of his art that efforts to impute narrative or psychological content to specific works are as much invited as they are elusively resisted.

The mildest in overall tonality, this is the only work in the series where watercolor was used. Here the strictness of the graphite lines laid down to delineate the hatching

pattern is tempered by the ethereal softness of the watercolor washes applied over them, achieving a gentle play between the linearity of the graphite marks and the limpidity of the colors. The overarching compositional frame of the work is partitioned into three panels, mimed by the tripartite format of the rectangular shape that partially intrudes into the right panel from the top. Any mirrored duplication of the design in the left and right panels that one might pursue as an ordering principle for this work is complicated by that shape. Johns has structured the drawing as a whole around such disrupted duplications: not only does the central panel not divide in a manner whereby one half mirrors the other (the brightness of the more saturated yellow calling attention to that disruptive center) but also evident throughout the work are other discrepancies. Whereas one line establishes the distinction between each of the three panels in the drawing at large, within the smaller shape—which would ostensibly be its “double” in miniature—those dividing lines are doubled, bringing the conceit into even subtler play. More, the smaller shape is not treated with watercolor wash but is visually set apart by its relative austerity. Finally, although the graphite marks that establish the hatching pattern of the larger panels trespass the delineating boundary of the smaller form, the hatched marks within that shape duplicate neither the orientation nor the regularity nor the quality of touch of the greater design, even as they elicit formal comparison with them.

KATHRYN A. TUMA

Edvard Munch, *Between the Clock and the Bed*, c. 1949, oil on canvas, Munchmuseet, Oslo

**Provenance**

The artist via the Leo Castelli Gallery to Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1985.

Notes

1. For more on this series, see Nan Rosenthal and Ruth E. Fine, *The Drawings of Jasper Johns* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1990), 260–267.

2. Mark Rosenthal, “Jasper Johns,” in *The Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Collection, 1945 to 1995* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1996), 76.



JOEL SHAPIRO

American, born 1941

Untitled, 1987

chalk and charcoal

1,886 × 153 mm

(74 ¼ × 60 ¼)

Robert and Jane

Meyerhoff Collection,

1994

Dynamically poised between abstraction and representation, Joel Shapiro's untitled drawing of 1987 combines the rigid geometry associated with minimal art and the fluidity of the human form in motion. The floating blocks in this drawing strongly relate to those in such works as Kazimir Malevich's *Suprematist Painting: Eight Rectangles* of 1915 (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam). Shapiro humanizes Malevich's reductive aesthetic, however, by relating it to the figure—a characteristic of so-called postminimal art. In this drawing the alternating rectangles, proportionate to human body parts, spring from a central axis, as appendages would along a spinal column.

Although the deep black volumetric rectangles in this work echo the reference to limblike beams in Shapiro's sculptures, the drawings are not studies for the sculptures, but finished works in their own right. As Shapiro points out, "[in my drawings] I approached certain intentions that I can't realize in sculpture."¹ Among these intentions would be the sense of motion.

In Shapiro's sculptures the abstracted figures assume active poses but are frozen in space. In his drawings, however, these same figures assume active poses that convey an added kineticism, recalling the implied motion in Italian futurist painting, evident here in the reverberating lines under the "legs" and around the "torso." The energized forms also communicate a playfulness that threads throughout Shapiro's work, most notably in his miniature house and chair sculptures of the 1970s and early 1980s.² Subjects suggested by this drawing include tumbling blocks, a child's pull-string toy with its appendages animated, and a dancer in midair. Given the human scale of the drawing, perhaps the analogy to a dancing figure is most convincing. Shapiro affirms, "I am interested in movement, in dislocation of mass. I am interested in dance, in the way I'm interested in sports. I'm interested in the dislocation of the body from the ground."³

The personal element in Shapiro's drawing—handwrought marks and fingerprints—sets it apart from other works of

geometric abstract art. The sensuously scumbled surfaces here reveal not only the artist's virtuosity but his working methods as well. Using an eraser, his finger, and a wide planar implement, Shapiro has pulled the velvety chalk and charcoal media outside the edges of the rectangles, a technique that is most obvious around the largest block. The artist's hand is also clearly signaled in the passages of fingerprints—the evidence of an individual's identity—on the edges of the paper.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Provenance

Paula Cooper Gallery, New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1988.

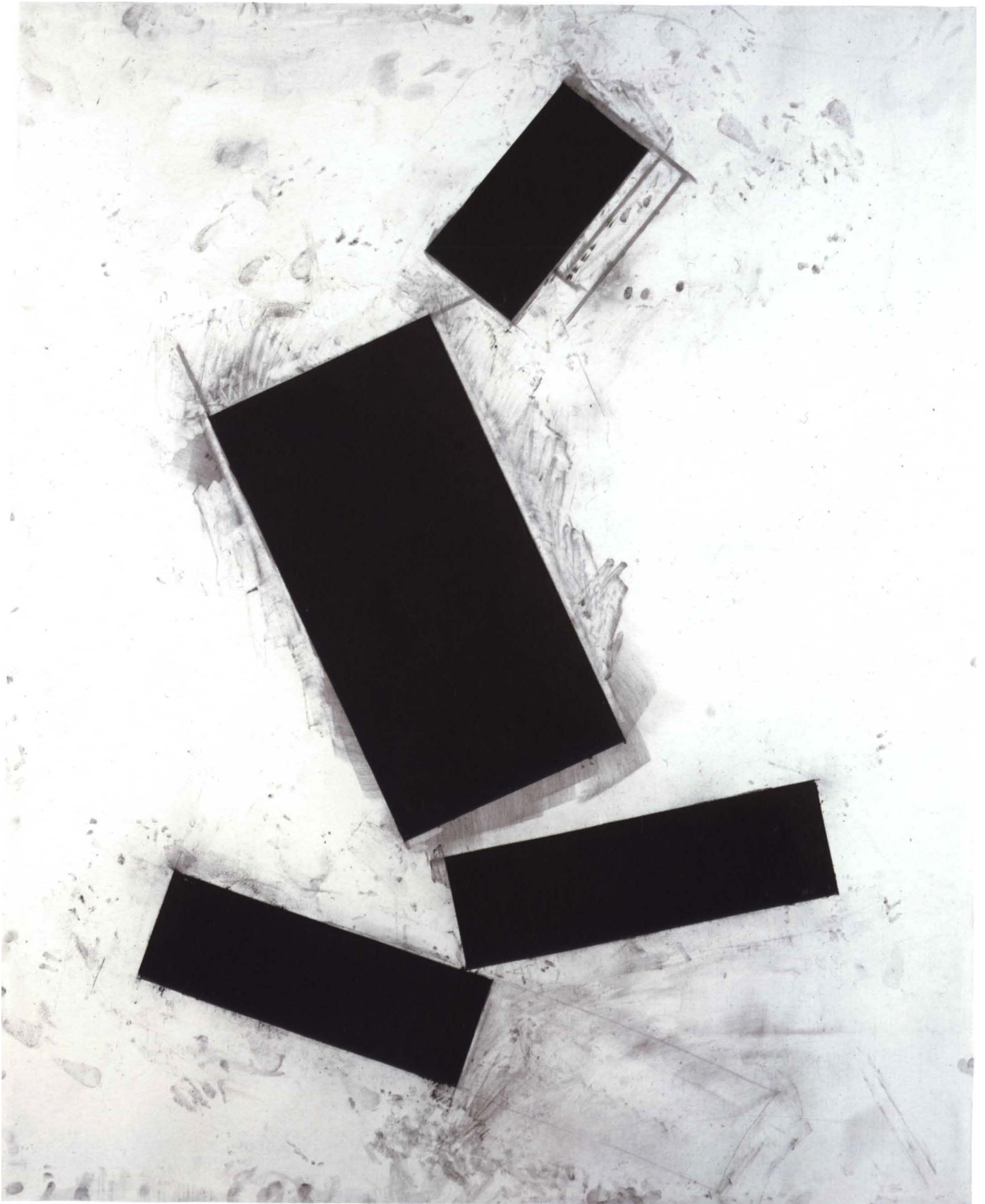
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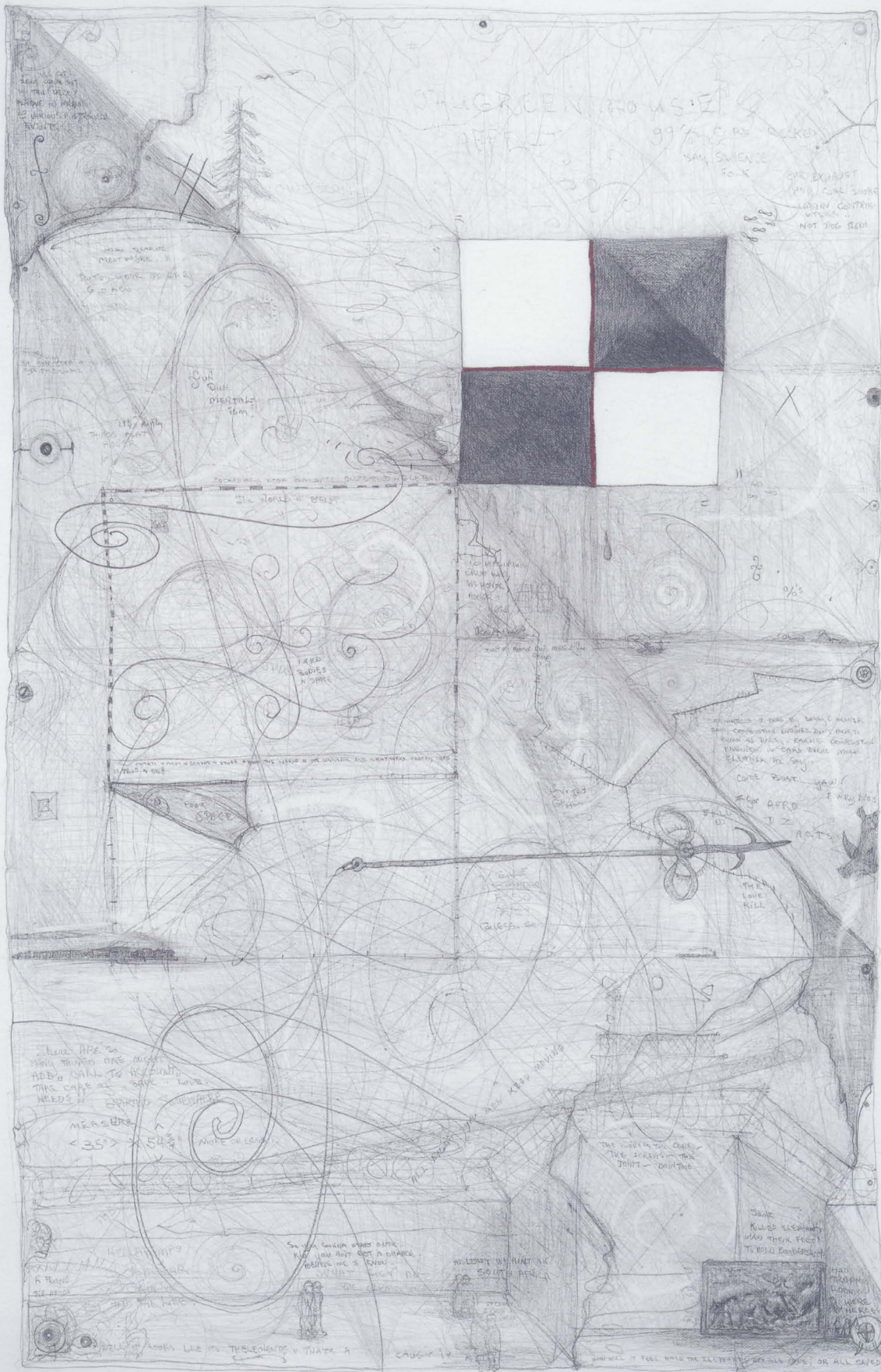
An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 1996.

1. Joel Shapiro in *Joel Shapiro: Selected Drawings 1968–1990* [exh. cat., Center for the Fine Arts] (Miami, 1991), 11.

2. Donald B. Kuspit refers to them as "toys of thought," in "Manifest Destinies," *Art in America* 5 (May 1983), 152.

3. Joel Shapiro in *Joel Shapiro: Tracing the Figure* [exh. cat., Des Moines Art Center] (Des Moines, 1990), 60.





WILLIAM T. WILEY

American, born 1937

**The Green House
Affect, 1988**

graphite and colored
pencil

1,518 × 1,016 mm

(59 ¾ × 40)

Gift of the Collectors
Committee, 1995

Punningly titled *The Green House Affect*, this imposing drawing—inscribed “35” × 54 ¾”—is more or less toward the lower left—is a wide-ranging meditation on environmental themes by Northern California artist William Wiley. Wiley rose to prominence after his inclusion in the landmark *Funk* exhibition at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1967. Since that time he has alternately turned his attention to painting, sculpture, performance, and even film, but drawing remains at the core of his work.

Considered a “draftsman’s draftsman,” Wiley here demonstrates his absolute mastery of the drawing process despite the Spartan limitation of his means (graphite on white paper with a modicum of red pencil). This virtual abecedarium of techniques includes shading, erasure, stumping, and scratching out. Actual drawing methods, as well as allusions to the history of the medium, abound: mechanical drafting, cartography, illustration, graffiti, and doodling.

Through the use of an idiosyncratic system of symbols developed over the course of his lengthy career, Wiley confronts the viewer with an image of a postlapsarian world spinning out of control. One can observe a landscape suffering from “car exhaust and coal smoke,” among other ill effects. In a brilliant stroke of metaphorical thinking, the artist has envisioned the sheet of paper as synonymous with the depicted panorama: just as acid rain physically attacks mountains and buildings, so Wiley’s emphatic mark-making has scored and worn away the surface of the present sheet. From the idea of acid rain it is only a small conceptual step to the artist’s involvement with printmaking (particularly intaglio, which uses weakened hydrochloric acid to bite the metal plate) and to his long-standing interest in alchemy (the pseudoscience of transforming one physical substance to another, sometimes employing acid). This kind of associative and accumulative linking elucidates the genesis—and exponentially possible meanings—of Wiley’s art, but not

his intentions. Decidedly subjective and open-ended, the artist’s vision hovers ambivalently between description and prescription. In fact, much of the power of *The Green House Affect* derives from the multitude of ostensible dichotomies—Eastern/Western, obvious/obscured, light/dark, beauty/ugliness, word/image, humor/anger—that are held in a perpetual state of tension.

JONATHAN F. WALZ

Provenance

Marsha Mateyka Gallery,
Washington, DC; purchased by the National
Gallery of Art with designated funds.

SEAN SCULLY

American, born Ireland,
1945

8.10.89, 1989

oil stick and watercolor
572 × 765 mm
(22 ½ × 30 ⅞)
Gift of the Collectors
Committee, 1993

The stripe is not merely a formal element in Sean Scully's work but a subject that he imbues with eloquence and power.¹ Melding the disparate traditions of abstract expressionism and minimalism, he emphasizes gesture and handling within a defined geometric structure. He builds his richly nuanced colors through almost obsessively repeated application of pigment: here, densely layered pastels of gray and black interwoven with warm brown form stripes of equivalent, but not identical, proportions.

Scully's work reveals the profound influence of the art of Henri Matisse, particularly in his orchestration of somber hues. There is a clear relationship between 8.10.89 and Matisse's monumental painting *Bathers by a River* of 1909–1916 (Art Institute of Chicago), in which potent gray and black verticals designate the river and earth, and colossal nudes in essence become stripes.² Scully is equally engaged by Matisse's depictions of windows, which emphasize the flatness of the picture plane by conflating outside views with interior space.

Scully's mature work consistently involves internal counterpoint and rhythm. In the mid-1980s he began to insert smaller "paintings" of distinct palette and design into his compositions, referring to them as "windows." Scully thus subverts a standard trope—of the painting itself as a window—even acknowledging that his windows do not all "lead to light" but may "feed on the field and undermine it."³ 8.10.89's window, distinctively rendered in watercolor, allows for refracted radiance, yet its bands of rust

and metallic gray resemble the windowless façades of weathered corrugated aluminum in a series of Scully's photographs of simple homes in the Scottish isles (figure).⁴

Like his architectural photographs, Scully's works on paper are often executed while he is traveling. This drawing, as its title suggests, was made on 10 August 1989 during a sojourn in Madrid. Scully had spent significant time in the Prado looking at paintings by Velázquez, whose sumptuously costumed "Infantas" held compelling appeal.⁵ The lush grays and blacks of 8.10.89 may derive from the exquisite fabrics in *Las Meninas*, with their contrasting, and even banded, patterns of dark and light. The complexity of the suggested portals in Velázquez's masterpiece—mirror, door, implied window, and paintings on the easel and walls—must have fascinated Scully as well. With disarming lucidity and an expansiveness that belies its scale, 8.10.89 subtly alludes to the splendor that Scully finds in the highest traditions of art, and in the most elementary forms of architecture.

JESSICA STEWART

Provenance

Mary Boone Gallery, New York; purchased by the National Gallery of Art with designated funds.

Notes

1. In a public conversation with Ned Rifkin at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 14 June 1995, the artist said the stripe functions for him as a subject, "like a nude or trees."

2. Scully saw this painting at least by the time of his 1987–1988 exhibition at the Art Institute. He affirmed the relationship (telephone conversation, 10 January) and generously made available a 1992 BBC film, "Artists Journeys: Sean Scully on Henri Matisse." During the same conversation Scully clarified that his widely acknowledged debt to Mark Rothko does not

extend to that artist's austere black and gray canvases of 1969.

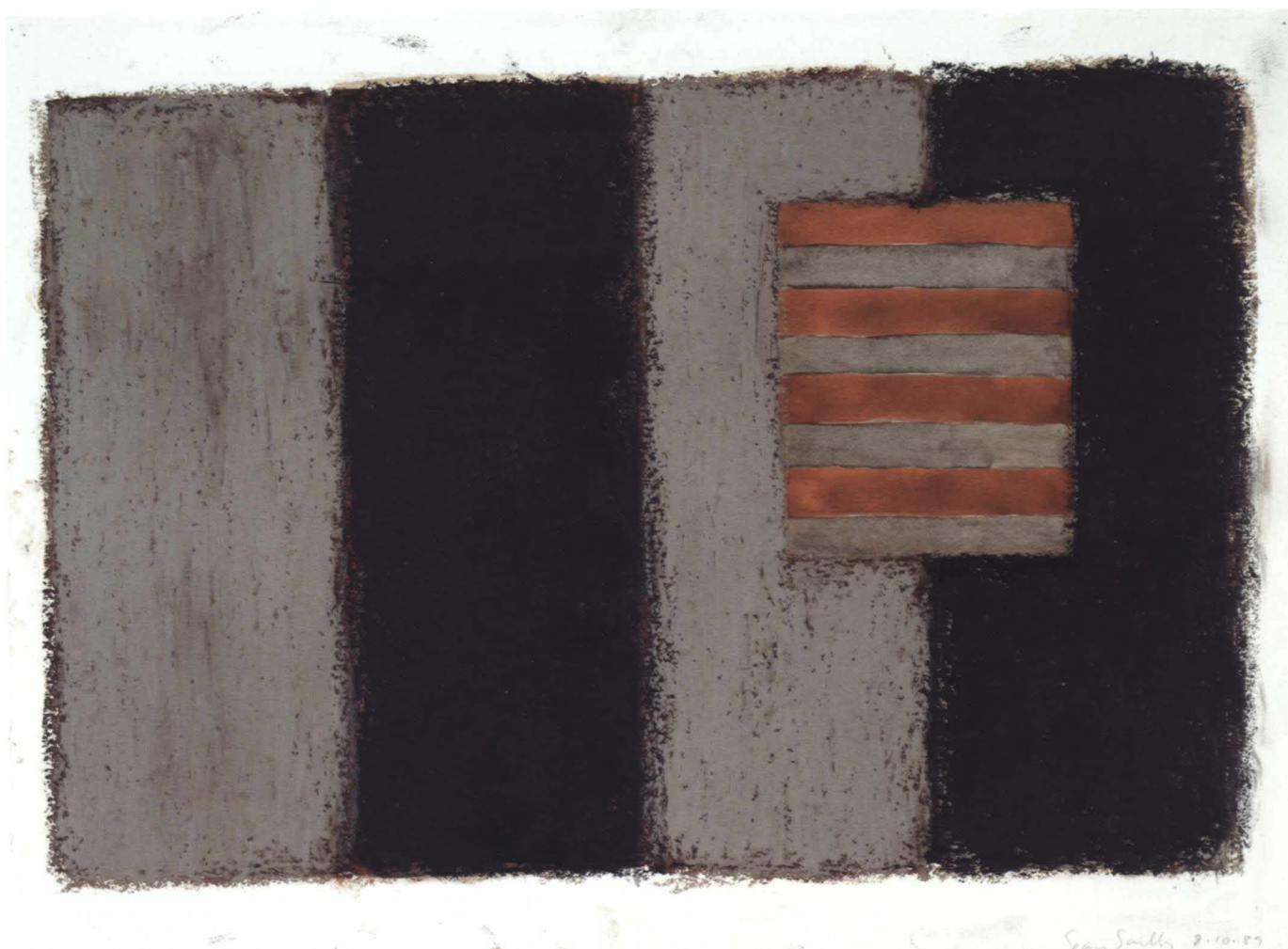
3. Hirshhorn conversation, 1995.

4. The artist began to photograph architectural elements in Siena, Italy, in 1979. The photographs visually relate to his paintings and drawings because he was fully formed as an artist when he began making them, and his style as a photographer was determined by his approach to painting (telephone conversation, 10 January). Although the photograph illustrated here was taken in 1990 (after this drawing was executed), Scully shot similar homes with aluminum siding in Mexico in 1987; see Maurice Poirier, *Sean Scully* (New York, 1990), 159–160.

5. Telephone conversation, 10 January.

Sean Scully,
*Harris & Lewis
Shacks*, 1990,
color C-print,
courtesy of the
artist





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HELEN

FRANKENTHALER

American, born 1928

Freefall, 1992

pigmented paper pulp

1,778 × 1,473 mm

(70 × 58)

Gift of Helen

Frankenthaler, 1993

For more than half a century Helen Frankenthaler has explored the expressive possibilities of abstraction to create a body of work that is both experimental and unabashedly seductive and beautiful. Frankenthaler's immutable spirit of invention in the manipulation of materials and techniques is as apparent in the joyous lyricism of mature works like *Freefall* as in earlier pieces such as *Mountains and Sea*, 1952,¹ the canvas that established her reputation among the most influential painters of postwar America.

Rather than employing traditional drawing media, Frankenthaler worked here for the first time with colored paper pulp and dyes, drawing, incising, painting, spraying, and otherwise investigating the visual possibilities of these more unusual materials. The multiple layers of pulp she set down form *Freefall*'s dimensional surface, which is closely related to the build-up of paint that marks many of Frankenthaler's canvases of the 1980s and early 1990s. To make *Freefall*, the artist used one of the printing presses at Tyler Graphics Ltd. (Mt. Kisco, New York) as a tabletop, letting the size and shape of the press bed determine the size of the work. After its completion *Freefall* was used as a maquette for a woodcut of the same title, printed on handmade, hand-dyed paper at Tyler Graphics (figure).² It is the artist's

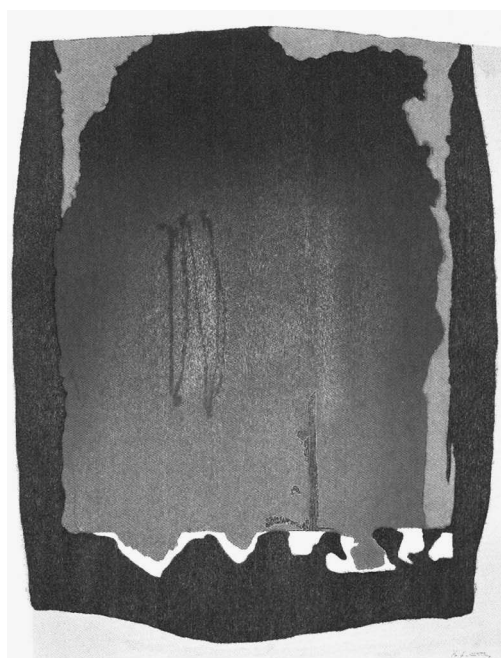
largest woodcut to date, and indeed one of her largest prints in any medium.

The radical distinctions between the handmade maquette and the printed woodcut are vividly apparent. To list only a few, the dimensional build-up of paper pulp contrasts strikingly with the thin layers of ink embedded in the woodcut paper; visual variations in the paper pulp are markedly more vigorous than the delicate, regular wood-grain surface; the edges of paper-pulp forms are less confined than those created by cut woodblocks; white as a color plays a more pervasive role in the maquette than in the print; and, most obviously, the irregularity of the outer shape of the maquette differs from the rectangular form created by the woodcut's pale violet framing band.

Experimental artistic approaches to materials and processes throughout the twentieth century have caused boundaries that historically have separated paintings from sculpture, for example, or drawings from prints to become less clear. *Freefall* offers an intriguing demonstration of this. The paper-pulp *Freefall* was listed as a "working proof" in the *Freefall* woodcut entry of the 1996 catalogue raisonné of Frankenthaler's prints. A working proof designation is generally used for early impressions of unfinished printed images to which an artist has made alterations by hand, using paint, crayon, graphite, collage, or other materials. Here, however, the term has been applied to a unique work on paper, made directly by the artist, with no printed elements at all.

RUTH E. FINE

Helen Frankenthaler, *Freefall*, 1993, color woodcut, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Helen Frankenthaler and Tyler Graphics Ltd., 1993



Notes

1. Reproduced in John Elderfield, *Frankenthaler* (New York, 1989), 64.
2. See Pegram Harrison, *Frankenthaler: A Catalogue Raisonné, Prints 1960–1994*, with introduction by

Suzanne Boorsch (New York, 1996), 471–474, no. 233; a second paper-pulp maquette was made for *Radius* (no. 234). Tom Strianese and Kenneth Tyler are listed as assisting with both paper-pulp works.



BRICE MARDEN

American, born 1938

Long Drawing,
1993/1996

ink and gouache

248 × 965 mm

(9 ¾ × 38 ½)

Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

In the minimalist climate of the 1960s Brice Marden made drawings composed of tightly drawn grids and solid rectangles in charcoal and graphite. Yet even within the circumscribed realm of minimalism Marden's work tended toward the sensuous. He paid obsessive attention to surfaces, sanding down layer after layer of graphite to yield rich, dense blacks. In his *Homage to Art* collages of the early 1970s the artist stressed the plane of the paper by literally "inlaying" postcards flush with its surface. And he often enriched media such as graphite and chalk with beeswax and oil crayon. Looking back to his work of those decades, Marden states: "I just got to the point where it was more about refining than anything else. I wanted more expression."¹ In addition, he concedes that he "always felt more related to the abstract expressionists than any other group."²

Prompted by an interest in Chinese poetry and calligraphy, Marden made a dramatic shift in the mid-1980s, adopting a calligraphic idiom that culminated in his *Cold Mountain* series of 1989–1991. Marden doubtless recognized that the fluid nature of calligraphy drew on the same kind of intuitive expression that energized Jackson Pollock's work. Over the next decade Marden extended the idiom even further. Less informed by the discipline of calligraphy, works such as *Long Drawing* resonate with allusions to landscape, movement, and light.

Given that *Long Drawing* was executed over the course of three years, it also appropriately speaks to the issue of time. Unlike Pollock's line, which typically accelerates with lightning speed and determination, Marden's meanders. Here it is somewhat vagrant, even prone to fits and starts. Observation requires time, and the artist gives the viewer license to linger, backtrack, and pause. Although *Long Drawing* possesses the all-over activity typical of Pollock's work, the action here is more protracted, like the unfolding progression of a Chinese handscroll. Dense and tangled at one end, the pictorial space gradually opens up, admitting light and air. After applying a relatively even network of lines across the length of

the drawing, Marden went back to conceal passages at the right with opaque white gouache. Often the overpaint bled into the underlying tone, creating puddles of color that offer up undisguised *pentimenti*—another factor that contributes to the drawing's sense of extended time.

Since 1973 Marden has made drawings (including this one) using sticks from tree branches as instruments rather than conventional pens or brushes. He generally chooses longish ones, dipping them in ink and holding them so as to create an extended arc reaching from his shoulder through the end of the branch. He relates this practice to photographs he saw of Matisse drawing with long segments of bamboo that had pieces of charcoal affixed to their ends.³ In *Long Drawing* the pliable implement sometimes met with the paper's resistance, skipping over its surface like a pebble across water, leaving a dashed line in its wake. Where the stick encountered no such resistance, the line flows seamlessly. Although numerous lines extend beyond the paper's edge, the dominant ones loop their way back into the confines of the image. Instead of suggesting a cropped detail from a larger and frenetic field of activity, *Long Drawing* tracks a more hushed, contained, and reflective course.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Matthew Marks Gallery, New York; Robert and Jane Meyerhoff, 1996.

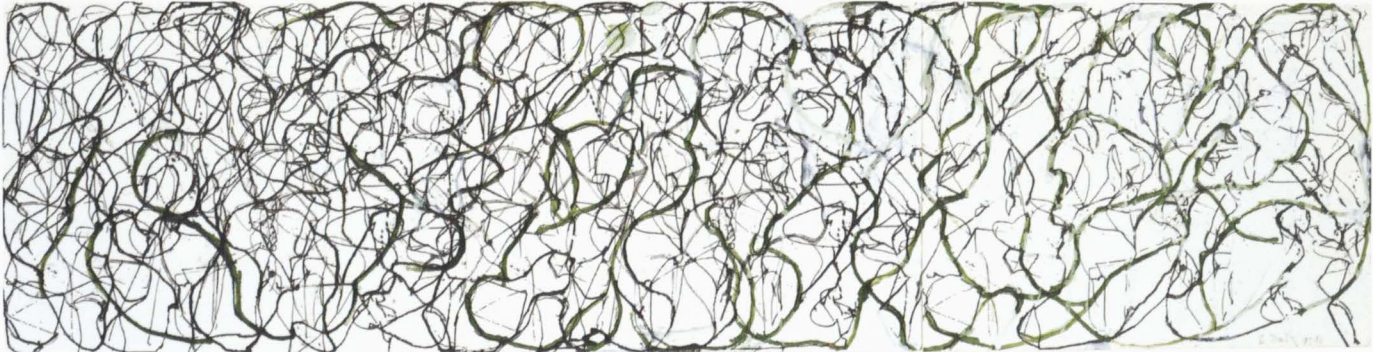
Rosenthal in *Mark Rothko* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1998), 361.

Notes

1. Interview with Janie C. Lee in *Brice Marden Drawings: The Whitney Museum of American Art Collection* (New York, 1998), 23.

2. Interview with Mark

3. Interview with Pat Steir in *Brice Marden: Recent Drawings and Etchings* [exh. cat., Matthew Marks Gallery] (New York, 1991).



ANDREW TOPOLSKI

American, born 1952

Overground II, 1994

graphite, pigment, and transfer type on architects' vellum

1,251 × 917 mm

(49 ¼ × 36 ⅞)

Gift of Werner H. and Sarah-Ann Kramarsky, 1998

Andrew Topolski's drawing, which reads like an arcane plan for some mysterious device or project, is executed with a polished precision that implies utter feasibility. The interlocking rings on the left seem charged with energy and radiate a metallic glow, but whether they relate to something material or hypothetical is a question that goes unanswered. The effect seems almost acoustic, as when metal strikes metal. The annotated diagram on the right suggests an obscure mechanical instrument resembling a tripod. But this tripod is absent one leg, and the two existing ones are inverted canes. Although the rings and the mechanism are evidently related, their connection is puzzling. Indeed one of the drawing's most compelling qualities is its ambiguity—the way it ostensibly engages one's reason but persistently appeals to the intuition.

When pressed to explain the work's title and significance (does it relate to "ground zero" or "groundwater," or is it meant paradoxically to call attention to "underground"?), the artist states that his titles and imagery are not meant to be decoded. Nonetheless he allows that his intention is to disable objects or events that threaten one's safety or being, claiming that in taking something apart—especially something dangerous—one comes to understand its power. Moreover, by transforming danger into beauty, the peril is deflated.¹

Topolski acknowledges a debt to the German artist Joseph Beuys, whose all-encompassing outlook affected his own approach to making art. Topolski thinks globally and often alludes to environmental and political issues, including the disfiguration of the landscape and the development of nuclear energy and its military implications.² A text block repeated twice in *Overground II* reads like an indictment of imperialist tactics: "Together with propaganda and periodic terror attacks, announced as reprisals, this increasing weakening of the basis of food supply will paralyze and finally break the will of the people to resist, and thereby force its government to capitulate." These text blocks, composed of white type on two narrow black

rectangles, are superimposed on the handles of the upside-down canes, props that figure prominently in Beuys' work.³ Topolski regards the cane as a sign of strength, since it lends support, but also as an indication of weakness, since support is needed. Other influences include artists from the early twentieth century who were engaged with the machine, such as Marcel Duchamp. Considering, for example, Duchamp's *Chocolate Grinder, No. 2*, from 1914 and his *Large Glass* from 1915–1923, it becomes clear that Topolski's drawing, like Duchamp's schematic works, is tantalizingly real but destined never to be actualized.

Topolski rarely thinks in terms of an individual statement and considers each work, whether it be one of his precisely calibrated sculptures or a large-format drawing such as this one, part of a continuum, each serving as a catalyst for the next. He is acutely attuned to his materials and almost never limits himself to a single medium. In *Overground II* the burnished coppery pigments create a metallic polish, and the smudging endows this rather cool drawing with warmth. It also introduces the element of time, as if the drawing had been handled and scrutinized repeatedly. The smudges are the telltale marks of a human hand, perhaps seeking to sort out the drawing's intention or unscramble its mystery.

JUDITH BRODIE

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Werner H. and Sarah-Ann Kramarsky.

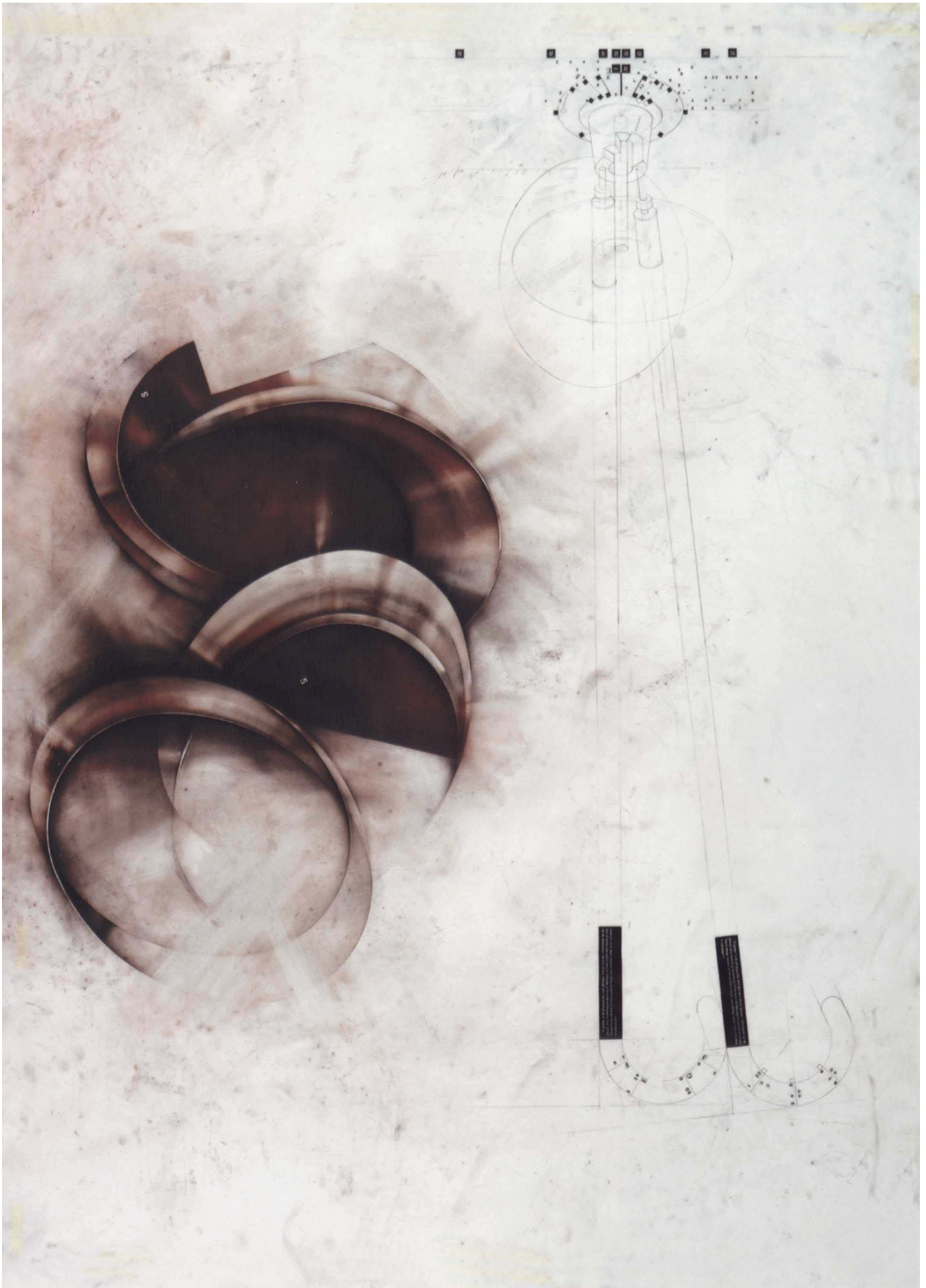
zones created when an atomic bomb is detonated (telephone conversation, 12 February).

Notes

1. Telephone conversation with the artist, 12 February 2001.

2. The artist says that he had the mysterious phenomenon of vegetation rings called "crop circles" in mind when he drew the interlocking rings, as well as the circular radioactive

3. Beuys made repeated use of canes, for example, in the drawing *Eurasian Staff against a Clandestine American Alliance for Aims of Political Power* (1967), in the performance *I Like America and America Likes Me* (1974), and in the book *Conversation* (1974).



SOL LEWITT

American, born 1928

Wavy Brushstrokes,
1996

gouache

1,537 × 2,946 mm

(60½ × 116)

The Dorothy and
Herbert Vogel
Collection, 1999

Wavy Brushstrokes is one of a group of gouaches Sol LeWitt initiated in 1992 that employ the primary colors—red, yellow, and blue—along with black and white. They exist in vertical, horizontal, and square formats and in multipanel compositions. As a group they explore all possible combinations of LeWitt's designated visual elements: straight lines in vertical, horizontal, and diagonal left to right and right to left orientations, as well as diverse wavy variations. Other gouaches of the 1990s employ less classic color combinations and an array of brush stroke types: *Squiggly Brushstrokes*; *Irregular Brushstrokes*; *Irregular Grid*; and a 1999 sheet entitled *Loopy Doopy*.¹

LeWitt's works on paper from the late 1950s are marked by a sensuous response to materials that has remained evident in his drawings, even the most stringent, throughout his career. By the mid-1960s, LeWitt was an esteemed advocate for conceptual art, defined by him as art in which "the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work," as distinguished from art in which "the concept may be changed in the process of execution."² These beliefs have enabled both his sculpture and wall drawings to be fabricated by others.³ But LeWitt has himself drawn thousands of works on paper, including *Wavy Brushstrokes*, in addition to the matrices for many of his prints.⁴

Graphite and black or color inks were LeWitt's primary drawing media through the 1960s and 1970s. Since about 1982, however, gouache has also been prominent in his repertoire; the resultant works are more painterly than linear. Likewise, augmenting the geometric shapes and forms that were essential to his drawing language from the 1960s through the 1980s, LeWitt has worked with bands and fields of color since the early 1990s.

Concepts and proposals become LeWitt's titles: *Four Basic Lines in Four Directions*, in *Four Colors*, *Superimposed*; or *Short Straight Lines*, *Not Touching*, *Drawn at Random*, and *Evenly Distributed Over the Area*; or *Wavy Brushstrokes*. The loosely drawn, interwoven,

densely layered color lines of *Wavy Brushstrokes* seem remarkable for an artist associated with visual systems.

The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection at the National Gallery of Art, both gifts and promised gifts, includes one hundred of LeWitt's works on paper dating from 1965 (the year of the Vogels' first purchase of this artist's work) through *Wavy Brushstrokes* of 1996, the most recent acquisition. Many sheets have personalized notes from the artist to the collectors. LeWitt, an avid collector of the art of his contemporaries, was among the primary inspirations for the Vogels when they began to purchase art.⁵

RUTH E. FINE

Provenance

The artist to Dorothy and Herbert Vogel, 1996.

Notes

An earlier version of this text was published in Washington 2000.

1. For an overview of the gouaches of the 1990s, see "Large Gouaches," in Gary Garrels et al., *Sol LeWitt: A Retrospective* [exh. cat., San Francisco Museum of Modern Art] (San Francisco, 2000), 346–361.

2. "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (June 1967), 79–83; reprinted in San Francisco 2000, 369. "Sentences on Conceptual Art," *Art-Language* 1, no. 1 (May 1969), 11–13, also reprinted in San Francisco 2000, 371–372.

3. See San Francisco 2000; and *Sol LeWitt: Twenty-five Years of Wall Drawings, 1968–1993* [exh. cat., Addison Gallery of American Art] (Andover, MA, 1993).

4. On LeWitt's prints, see Jeremy Lewison, *Sol LeWitt: Prints 1970–1986* [exh. cat., Tate Gallery] (London, 1986); Wendy Weitman, *Sol LeWitt: Prints 1970–1995* [exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art] (New York, 1996); and Kathan Brown, "Sol LeWitt: A Mystic, Not a Rationalist," in *Overview* (Crown Point Press' newsletter), February 2000.

5. See Ruth E. Fine, "Dorothy and Herbert Vogel in Conversation," in *From Minimal to Conceptual Art: Works from the Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art] (Washington, 1994), 59–60. On LeWitt's collection, see Andrea Miller-Keller, "Varieties of Influence: Sol LeWitt and the Arts Community," in San Francisco 2000, 79–81, particularly the section on LeWitt as mentor and collector.



CHRISTO

American, born in
Bulgaria 1935

**Wrapped Reichstag,
Project for Berlin,
1995**

graphite, charcoal,
pastel, crayon, fabric,
and tape; photograph
by Wolfgang Volz

upper part:
380 × 2,440 mm
(15 × 96); lower part:
1,066 × 2,440 mm
(42 × 96)

Gift of Christo and
Jeanne-Claude in
Honor of Dorothy and
Herbert Vogel, 2001

This two-part drawing is a preparatory study by Christo for the large-scale public project *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, 1971–1995*, among the greatest challenges and achievements in the career of Christo and Jeanne-Claude.¹ The drawing envisions the *Wrapped Reichstag* under a gray, late afternoon sky, which gives the image an exceptional elegance and calm. The power of the realized project comes through in this large-format drawing, with its monolithic view of the south and east façades of the building. Its grandeur underscores the beauty of the Christos' transformation of one of the most symbolic buildings in twentieth-century geopolitics.

As with nearly all of Christo's drawings, this work combines collage elements, seen here in the top panel. Included are a sample of the 100,000 square meters of aluminized polypropylene fabric to be used for the wrapping, a photograph by Wolfgang Volz of the east façade, and a drawing by the artists' engineers showing the location of the specially manufactured steel cages, frames, and cornice covers that crowned the four towers to exaggerate the contours of the building. In the bottom panel Christo's bravura draftsmanship distinguishes the work with the mark of the artist's hand, a property of his drawings not present in his finished sculptural projects.

This study was completed a few months before the *Wrapped Reichstag* was realized (figure) after twenty-five years of planning. Built in 1894 and designated the first democratic parliament of Germany, the Reichstag

was set on fire in 1933 and bombed by the Red Army in 1945.² Following World War II, it became an emblem of a divided city in a divided country. Christo was particularly sensitive to East-West relations, having escaped from his native Bulgaria in 1956 and made his way to New York by the early 1960s via Prague, Vienna, Geneva, and Paris.³ For the Christos the complexity of working with multiple governments to obtain the permits to wrap the Reichstag and receiving refusals in 1977, 1981, and 1987, intensified by the changes in those governments and the thickets of red tape, presented seemingly insurmountable obstacles. But with the reunification of Germany in October 1990, the Christos found their opportunity to complete the project. The *Wrapped Reichstag* was on view from 24 June 1995 until 7 July 1995 and came to symbolize a unified, peaceful Germany.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Notes

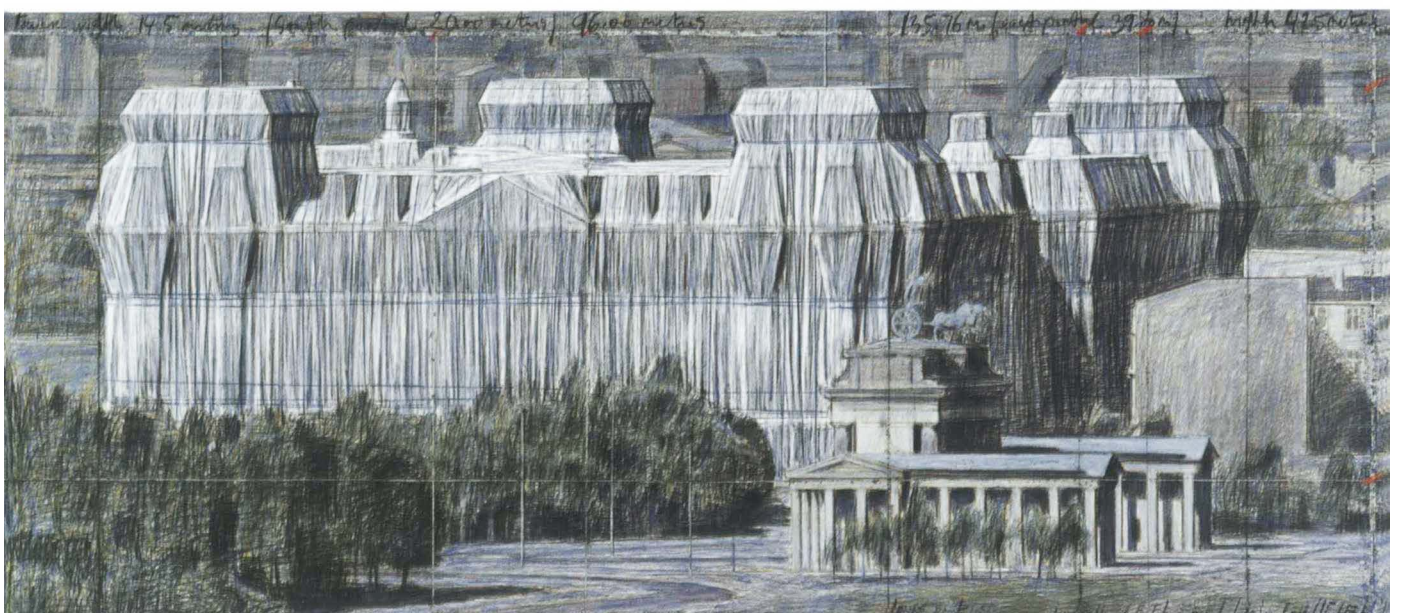
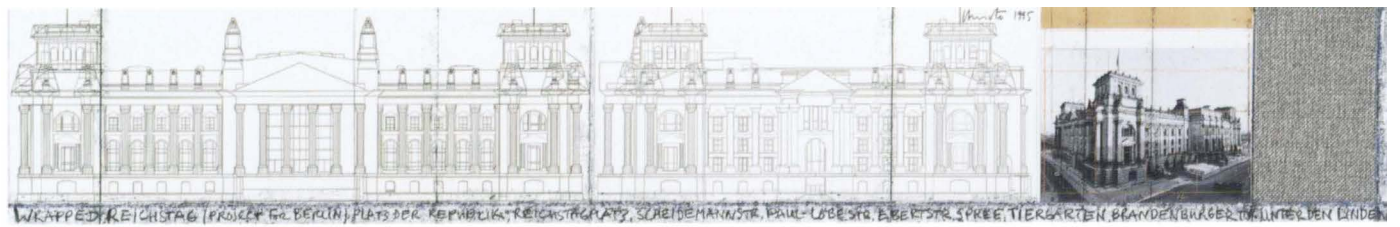
1. Many thanks to Christo and Jeanne-Claude for their time and attention.

2. Michael S. Cullin, "The Reichstag: Its Turbulent History," in *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, 1971–1995* (Cologne, 1996), 23–26.

3. David Bourdon, "A Postcard from Berlin," in *Wrapped Reichstag*, 1996, 16.



Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *Wrapped Reichstag, Berlin, 1971–95, 1995*, color photograph by Wolfgang Volz, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Dorothy and Herbert Vogel



ELLSWORTH KELLY

American, born 1923

Beanstalk, 1999

graphite

2,950 × 565 mm

(116 7/8 × 22 1/4)

Promised Gift of Robert
and Jane Meyerhoff

Kelly's *Beanstalk* is both wondrous and whimsical—a masterpiece in his graphic oeuvre. The subject, which he drew from life in his studio, dictated the format of the nearly ten-foot-high by two-foot-wide work. It is one of two drawings of such scale by Kelly, both of the beanstalk and both made in 1999.¹ It produces a spectacular effect in exceeding the height of the human form.

For this work Kelly reversed the top-to-bottom direction in which he usually draws: he began at the bottom and worked his way up a ladder, depicting the plant at eye level at every stage. Thus no vanishing perspective is employed. As the artist notes, *Beanstalk* renders a three-dimensional form, which he conveyed in the foreshortened leaves shown slightly darker than the fine, double-lined stalk;² in this way the leaves generally read in front of the stalk. The third dimension is represented in Kelly's work only in his drawings and in some of his sculpture.³

The plant drawings are a distinct but integral part of Kelly's graphic production that underscore the intuitive method by which the artist arrives at the abstract shapes in his paintings and sculpture. For Kelly the drawings offer an antidote to the abstractions, yet his seemingly binary interest in both abstraction and representation maintains a single purpose: in both Kelly translates forms found in everyday life into closed contour shapes using an ever perfect line.

MOLLY DONOVAN

Provenance

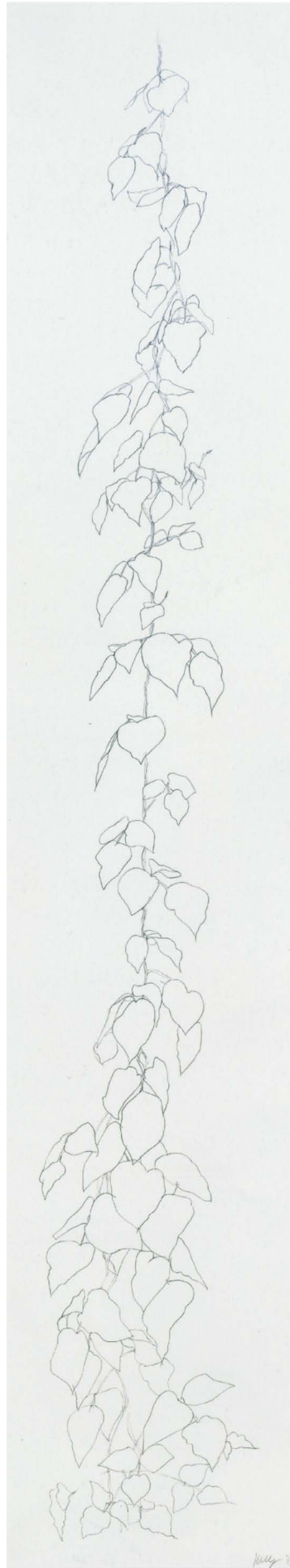
Matthew Marks Gallery,
New York; Robert and Jane
Meyerhoff, 2000.

Notes

1. The first beanstalk drawing of this scale was commissioned by a private patron for her grandson Jack, in reference to the fairy tale "Jack and the Beanstalk."

2. Telephone conversation with the artist, 8 January 2001.

3. Much of Kelly's sculpture is predominantly planar and creates a flattened graphic effect; some invoke the third dimension. In the telephone conversation of 8 January Kelly recalled E. C. Goosen's observation, while preparing for his Museum of Modern Art catalogue, that the artist repeatedly produced a group of drawings before he made new sculpture. This implies that the drawings stimulate Kelly's thinking with respect to sculpture and to working in the third dimension.





Drawn to Tradition: Artists' Paper through the Twentieth Century

JUDITH WALSH

Over the course of the twentieth century almost every aspect of the manufacture and distribution of paper changed. Casting off one after another of its craft features, paper became a specialized, machine-made commodity that is today merchandised internationally by huge corporations. A highly competitive industry, modern papermaking requires enormous capital to build the newest gargantuan machines and to fill their troughs with fiber. Throughout the century paper usage expanded as papermaking machines were adjusted to produce everything from lollipop sticks to roofing felts (fig. 1). Machine-made papers for artists replaced the inexpensive sheets of higher quality that had previously been available.

From the fourteenth century European artists used locally produced, handmade writing papers for their drawings. Beginning around 1760, hand-papermakers and artists developed specialty sheets for printmaking, watercolor, drawing, and pastel.¹ By 1900, however, not a single hand-papermaking mill survived in the United States and only fourteen hand mills remained in the United Kingdom, accounting for less than one half of one percent of Britain's total paper tonnage.² Although almost negligible from the industry's viewpoint, this tiny fraction of paper production was critically important to artists who still, as a rule, chose handmade sheets when available. By the mid-twentieth century even that traditional manufacture was gone, and artists were forced to look for substitutes. Now handmade paper is an international luxury item, sold in art supply stores next to mass-produced machine-made sheets.

After about 1850 papermaking machinery markedly increased the quantity of paper

produced worldwide, but the burden of the equipment's cost and the volume of fiber needed were crippling.³ In 1898 the consolidation of seventeen pulp and paper mills resulted in one of the first papermaking conglomerates, the International Paper Company. By 1901 the company's assets exceeded \$45 million and included thirty-four mills in New England, New York, and Canada, as well as woodlands, real estate, paper bag manufacturers, chemical companies, textile plants, and pulp factories.⁴ Consolidation was swift: in 1872, 82 percent of paper mills in the United States were owned by individuals or in partnerships, but by 1934 the figure was only 2 percent.⁵ Papermaking in Europe followed a similar path, and in the period after World War II mergers and sales of papermaking companies created today's multinational conglomerates.

Each move toward economy in the production and distribution of paper changed the sheets available to artists. For example, in 1922 the American Writing Paper Company, a business stationery giant, reorganized its product line as well as its manufacturing and distribution networks. Based on a study of market needs, output was reduced from about 1,500 types of paper to just 59 standard papers designed to meet the needs of commerce. Drawing papers were restricted to just one type, manufactured in four grades that were distinguished only by fiber content and price.⁶

By midcentury the remaining artists' paper manufacturers also began to consolidate, and soon fewer types of art papers were being distributed, albeit more widely. Artists lost many treasured sheets for their work. The trend reversed by about 1965, when a generation of artist-craftsmen

1. This Fourdrinier papermaking machine was first put into operation in 1913 and since then has been rebuilt four times, most recently in 1992. The rebuilding doubled the machine in size and tripled its speed. Strathmore Paper Company.



revived hand-papermaking, with artists as one target market. Their success was based on the economy of their small scale and prompted a few historic mills to open museums of hand-papermaking in combination with paper production. Nonindustrialized countries introduced papermaking to villages as a cottage industry, using native plants and fibers to create exotic sheets that find a ready market in industrialized countries. Very recently, hand-papermakers have even begun recreating a few distinctive eighteenth- and nineteenth-century paper types for the arts. Dealers in fine paper around the world offer the most complete lines of papers ever to art supply houses, as trade of premium sheets exists alongside the marketing of commercially produced artists' paper.⁷ Today artists have the luxury to buy almost any sheet produced anywhere in the world from the comfort of their studios, by mail or online.

A Century of Drawing offers an opportunity to review the types of paper artists chose throughout the twentieth century. The exhibition presents only a tiny fraction of the National Gallery of Art's larger holdings, as these drawings are all masterworks made

by artists of the highest rank. Missing from the survey are student works, modest sketches, works compromised by their condition, or the first ideas artists jot down on any paper at hand—paper napkins, shirt cardboard, or check stubs. Rather, the drawings in this exhibition are independent works of art, frequently intended for exhibition; they give a reasonable indication of the papers twentieth-century artists chose for their most deliberate aesthetic statements.

Almost all the drawings in the exhibition that date from before 1915 are made on handmade papers, and among those, one papermaker stands out. Winslow Homer in 1901, Pablo Picasso in 1901/1902, John Marin in 1912, Lovis Corinth in 1914, and Stanton Macdonald-Wright in 1914 (cats. 3, 4, 17, 26, 28) all chose Whatman paper. Handmade in England from linen rags, Whatman paper was creamy white, sturdy, and perfectly suited to the watercolor technique; an artist could scrub, scrape, or re-wet washes limitlessly on such a sheet. No other paper has ever had quite the same properties.

The Whatman name had been synonymous with paper of premium quality since

1740.⁸ As the ultimate compliment, nineteenth-century papermakers in France, Germany, and Austria pirated the Whatman watermark.⁹ Oddly, from 1807 to 1859 two papermakers in England were both legally using the word “Whatman” in their watermarks, as neither would part with it when their parent firm disbanded.¹⁰ Pablo Picasso’s *Self-Portrait* from 1901/1902 (cat. 4) shows a Whatman/Turkey Mill watermark, meaning the sheet was at least forty-two years old when the young artist drew on it. Perhaps the sheet was a gift from his father (also an artist) or Picasso found it in a shop in Paris—whatever its origin, the paper demonstrates that from very early in his career, Picasso had an interest in and the temerity to use expensive, vintage sheets.¹¹ He was not the first or only artist to do so. In this exhibition the Marin watercolor *Storm over Taos*, dated 1930, appears on a sheet watermarked “J Whatman 1889,” and Claes Oldenburg used an antique sheet for his 1966 *Fork Cutting Cake No. 1* (cats. 58 and 111).¹²

Mold-machine production was introduced to Whatman in the 1930s, and hand-papermaking finally ceased there in 1957.¹³ Handmade and mold-made Whatman papers are also found in this exhibition in works made by George Grosz in 1922, László Moholy-Nagy in 1922/1923, Charles Demuth in 1924, Edward Hopper in 1924, Mark Rothko in 1944/1945, and Jacob Lawrence in 1964 (cats. 44, 47, 50, 51, 76, and 102).

As papermakers became familiar with the new machines, they began to improve the quality of their paper. From early in the century the Strathmore Paper Company in Massachusetts sold a wide range of high-quality mold- and machine-made papers that were of interest to artists.¹⁴ One of the company’s great successes was a line of paper that approximated the very beautiful and costly vellum papers from Japan.¹⁵ Made from 1908 to 1941, Strathmore’s “japans” found a market in Europe. Mistakenly identified as butcher’s paper in some texts, these Strathmore papers were used by Egon Schiele for dry brush watercolors such

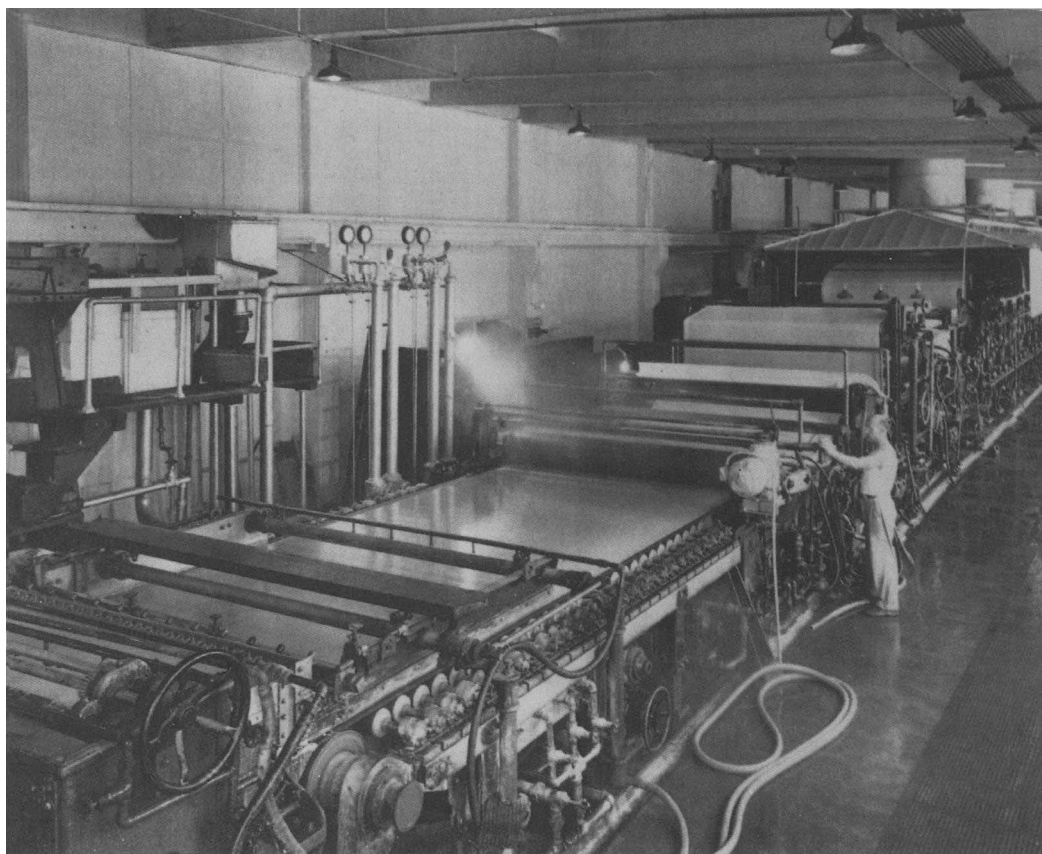
as *Self-Portrait* of 1912 and for the charcoal pencil drawing *Dr. Koller* of around 1918 (cats. 20 and 37). Käthe Kollwitz used the same paper for lithographs, but she chose a gray Strathmore drawing paper for *Out of Work* in 1909 (cat. 12).¹⁶

During the 1930s Strathmore converted its art paper production to Fourdrinier machines and continued to offer the same paper lines. The machine-made sheets share many of the visual and working properties of their mold-made predecessors but lack the satisfying small variations that characterize hand- and mold-made sheets. Strathmore papers were used by Arshile Gorky for *Nighttime*, *Enigma*, and *Nostalgia* in around 1932/1934, by Joseph Stella for his *Self-Portrait* in around 1929 and *Eggplant* in around 1939, and by Robert Motherwell for *Black Shapes* in 1961 (cats. 64, 57, 69, and 99). Robert Rauschenberg used Strathmore illustration boards for his 1965 mixed-media *Drawings For Dante’s 700 Birthday, I.B. and II.B* (cat. 107).

Machine-made papers appealed to some artists, apparently for their fine texture and smooth surface. Auguste Rodin’s watercolor *Dancing Figure* of 1905 (cat. 6) is on a thin machine-made paper that reacted to the watercolor by puckering around the figure in energetic rays. Edgar Degas used a greenish transparent tracing paper made by Canson-Montgolfier for *Ballet Scene* in around 1907 (cat. 9), since he relied on overlaying images when reworking an idea.¹⁷ Some artists may have used machine-made papers for reasons of economy. Emil Nolde used an English machine-made typewriting paper¹⁸ for his watercolor *An Apostle Filled with the Holy Spirit* in 1909, and Marsden Hartley’s *Self-Portrait* of 1908 is on a similar but unidentified paper (cats. 13 and 11).

In 1916 speculation in the fiber market and the interruption of trade as a result of the war in Europe caused the price of paper to increase by about 60 percent in just six months, and sheets became scarce.¹⁹ Artists, like the general public, had to improvise, and they apparently made do with whatever paper they could find. In that year Henri Laurens mounted *L’Instrument de Musique*

2. Hand-dipping sheets in gelatin sizing baths at the Arches mill in 1904. The “secret” process of sizing the sheets allowed Arches watercolor paper to retain bright whiteness as it aged. Private collection.



(cat. 32) to the lid of a box from Galeries Lafayette, a department store in Paris. In 1918 Otto Dix scavenged a large sheet of cream-colored machine-made paper from the fly-leaf of a book for his *Homunkulus* (cat. 36).

Papermaking thrived between the wars. Throughout the 1920s direct-mail advertising proved a boon to papermakers and printers, as fashionable broadsides touted products in subtle combinations of design, paper, and ink. Machines and pulps were adjusted to produce a riot of colors and novelty textures. Large papermaking companies sought to accommodate the needs of advertising and business and abandoned the production of drawing and printmaking papers, leaving it to the small traditional mills of England, Germany, and especially France. The historic French papermakers of Arches, Rives, and Canson-Montgolfier produced much of the paper used by artists during the next fifty years.

Arches had been established in the Vosges by the end of the fifteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century Arches had stopped hand production but continued to

produce high-quality artists' papers on cylinder mold machines. In the early years of the twentieth century the mill developed, tested, and aggressively marketed a mold-made watercolor paper made of cotton fiber, which was clearly intended to capture the place held by Whatman as the premier watercolor sheet. During its ten years in development Arches had an independent laboratory test its new watercolor paper against handmade Whatman. After aging and exposure to light, the Arches paper was declared “better” than Whatman (fig. 2).²⁰ Arches' smooth, bright-white watercolor paper was used by René Magritte for his collage *The Murderous Sky* in 1927 (cat. 53). Georgia O'Keeffe used mold-made, laid Ingres d'Arches drawing paper for *I-Special* in 1916, as did Käthe Kollwitz for her expressive *Self-Portrait, Drawing*, in 1933 (cats. 33 and 65). Similar sheets are a stable part of the Arches line of papers and are used by artists up to the present day. For example, Robert Motherwell and Nancy Graves used smooth-textured Arches paper for *Beside the Sea #42* in 1966 and *Sabine D Region of the Moon* in 1972 (cats. 109 and 122). Jim Dine's *Nine*

Self-Portraits with a Very Long Beard of 1977 (cat. 127) is on a machine-made sheet cut from a roll of paper that is watermarked “J Perrigot Special Arches (France).”

Now a sister company to Arches, the Rives mill was founded in 1573, in Isere, near Grenoble. Its famous BFK watermark²¹ was placed on machine-made photographic and artists’ papers, such as the sheet used for the charcoal drawing by Charles Sheeler, *Interior with Stove* of 1932 (cat. 63).²² Rives was also the likely manufacturer of the machine-made drawing paper sold by the art supply house Lucien-Lefebvre-Foinet, whose initials appear as the watermark on the soft, smooth, white machine-made papers used by Alexander Calder for his drawings *Untitled* and *The Circus* (cats. 61 and 62), both from 1932.²³ Alberto Giacometti’s pencil drawings *The Table before the Dormer Window* of 1950 and *Annette Sewing* of 1954 (cats. 84 and 92) may also be on a Rives paper, since they are similar to watermarked sheets he used for other pencil drawings of the period.

By far the most colorful and romantic of the historic paper mills in France was the Canson-Montgolfier mills at Vidalon-les-Annonay in the Rhone Valley, founded in 1557.²⁴ By 1877 Canson offered more than seven hundred papers for all uses, including a line designed for arts and crafts. In 1878 they announced that they were able to make sixty different colors of paper in ten tones and in five different sizes.²⁵ Despite such rich offerings, twentieth-century draftsmen used Canson’s cream-colored papers almost exclusively. Henri Matisse used it for *Antoinette with Long Hair* and *The Plumed Hat*, both of 1919 (cats. 38 and 39). Stuart Davis used a Canson sheet for *Abstract Composition* around 1921, and Picasso chose “Canson A Grain” paper for *Ruth Dangler* in 1922 (cats. 43 and 46). Saul Steinberg used Canson’s Ingres-type drawing paper for *La Scala di Ferro* in 1967 (cat. 113).

From about 1925 the Canson mills accommodated the hand-papermaker Gaspard Maillol, the nephew of the sculptor and printmaker Aristide Maillol. Responding in 1910 to his uncle’s complaint that he could

find no papers suitable for his woodblock prints, Gaspard initially pulped rags in his kitchen and cast his first sheets on screens made by his wife. In January 1925, however, he relocated his hand-papermaking operation to the Vidalon mill and for several years produced Montval paper specifically for artists’ use.²⁶ Matisse used one of Gaspard’s sheets for his *Self-Portrait* of 1937 (cat. 67).

In contrast to the works by British, French, and American artists in this exhibition, which tend to be on handmade or mold-made papers from the period between the wars, those by artists from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Eastern Europe tend to be on papers that have a more regular surface and a machine-made look. Fine-textured sheets of a light cream tone offered a more neutral support for expressionist images, but sheets appropriated from other uses were often not strong enough to withstand artists’ aggressive manipulation of their media. The smooth, machine-made sheet that Lovis Corinth used for *Mrs. Hedwig Berend* in 1923 (cat. 48) records all the expressive marks made by the artist, but the sheet failed when the artist pushed hard: there is a small hole poked through the paper in Mrs. Berend’s eye. Likewise, Ludwig Meidner in 1915 applied the graphite so vigorously in *Hans Freimark* (cat. 29) that even where it was erased at the subject’s proper right ear, a deep impression from the pencil point remains. Erich Heckel exploited another anonymous, smooth sheet in his *Siddi in Bed* of 1912 (cat. 21), wetting his finger and smudging the crayon strokes across the slick surface of the paper.

Some artists used beautiful handmade Japanese papers that possess the same visual characteristics as machine-made sheets. Asian-style papers have been found in Western art since the mid-seventeenth century, when Rembrandt used them for etchings. Rarely employed for watercolor, those lightly sized sheets allow wet pigment to bleed, an effect that was apparently desired by Emil Nolde for his *Anemones* of around 1937 (cat. 68). Even slight surface rubbing pulls the long Japanese fibers up into threads, as seen at the collar in Hein-

rich Campendonk's *Self-Portrait* of around 1912 (cat. 19). Jasper Johns used a light gray Japanese sheet for the pastel *Untitled (from Untitled 1972)* of 1975/1976 (cat. 125).

During World War II reduced labor kept only the most modern high-speed papermaking machinery active. Paper was declared essential for the war effort and thus was strictly regulated. One estimate suggested twenty tons of paper were needed to design a battleship.²⁷ Paper manufacturing plants were also among the targets of wartime destruction. In 1946 a British Intelligence committee reported on the condition of paper mills in postwar Germany. The notes on the Höffsummer mill in Düren could describe the destruction inflicted on both sides: "The mill was very badly damaged; the buildings were 80% destroyed, and the machinery 50% destroyed. One paper machine had been cleared of rubble and was nearly ready to start. The envelope factory was completely destroyed. No samples of paper were available. All samples and records had been burnt." Only two employees were at the mill in 1946: a manager and a clerk.²⁸ Regulations on paper production remained in effect until about 1950.

With few exceptions, drawings in this exhibition made during the war appear on unidentifiable, nondescript sheets, or on sheets that artists presumably had on hand. For example, Jackson Pollock used papers of poor quality in 1939/1942 (cat. 70), but in 1945 he was able to find a whiter, machine-made drawing paper of better quality (cat. 78). Mark Rothko was lucky enough to find a precious piece of prewar Whatman for his watercolor *Untitled* of 1944/1945 (cat. 76).

Stanley William Hayter used a paper with a poignant history for his *Sheet of Sketches* from 1945 (cat. 77). Its "F. J. Head & Co" watermark indicates the sheet was made between 1911 and 1917. F. J. Head was a charismatic young paper dealer and a favorite of art students. The Green family made drawing and printing papers with Head's name as the watermark at Hayle Mill, starting about 1911.²⁹ In 1917, within six months of having been drafted, F. J.

Head was killed in service. His heirs sold his papermaking screens, some of which had been designed to achieve an ancient look, to the Green family, who by 1924 had developed a suite of "J. B. Green/F. J. Head" papers for drawing, etching, and woodblock printing.³⁰ Hayter may have known the story of the papermaker, and it is worth considering if he meant this work to be commemorative of the people who fought both wars, since by the date recorded on the drawing, the fighting had finally ended in Europe.

The venerable artists' paper firms survived past midcentury by abandoning their hand-papermaking vats for more profitable cylinder mold-machines and high-speed Fourdriniers. They also began to consolidate, as commercial papermakers had earlier in the century, sharing the costs of advertising and distribution. In 1956 Arches, Johannot, Marais, and Rives merged to become the Arjomari group, a corporate identity created from the first letters of their four names. They continued as an independent firm until 1968, when they were incorporated into the machine-papermaking Prioux family of companies. Arjomari-Prioux purchased 60 percent of Canson in 1976. In 1991 British American Tobacco merged its two paper companies, Wiggins-Teape (a partnership formed in England in the late nineteenth century) with Appleton Mills in the United States and spun them off as Wiggins-Teape Appleton. This new company was quickly acquired by Arjomari-Prioux, and now all these art papermaking facilities—Arches, Johannot, Rives, and Canson—proceed from the much larger corporate body known as Arjo-Wiggins, which has more than 450 subsidiaries.

It is hard to estimate the value of artists' papers to their huge parent companies. These anachronistic manufactures provide comparatively small revenue but must be of great value in other ways. The names Arches and Rives have survived in artists' sheets despite corporate decision-making. Fabriano, the ancient and now large Italian papermaker, reintroduced hand- and mold-made artists' papers to the lucrative American market in the mid-1960s. Picasso had

used Fabriano's colored Ingres paper for the elements of his collage *The Cup of Coffee* of 1913, and Jacques Lipchitz used a handmade Fabriano sheet in 1916 for *Pierrot* (cats. 25 and 31). Eva Hesse discovered modern Fabriano paper for her *Untitled* of 1964 (cat. 106). More recently, Cy Twombly used three different Fabriano papers, from rolls, for *Sylvae, Sylvae*, and *Nike* of 1981 (cats. 128). In the late 1970s the Inveresk Paper Corporation revived the manufacture of old style sheets identified with the papermaker T. H. Saunders at St. Cuthbert's Mill in Devonshire.³¹ Sean Scully uses the thick, richly textured Saunders watercolor sheets for his oil stick drawings such as 8.10.89 (cat. 133).

Strathmore, now the arm of the International Paper Company that produces fine paper, made a conscious marketing decision in the 1930s to continue manufacturing artists' papers, although the line did not generate a large profit. The company still reasons that these sheets introduce art and design students to its brand name, and later in their careers as art directors and book designers these users are more likely to specify Strathmore for projects. Since less than 10 percent of art materials are sold to professional artists—art students, teachers, and practicing artists—the commercial market is aimed at designers and amateurs who may be enticed by a familiar name. Finally, it must be remembered that papermakers do love paper; there may be no reason beyond that for the life of some of these sheets.

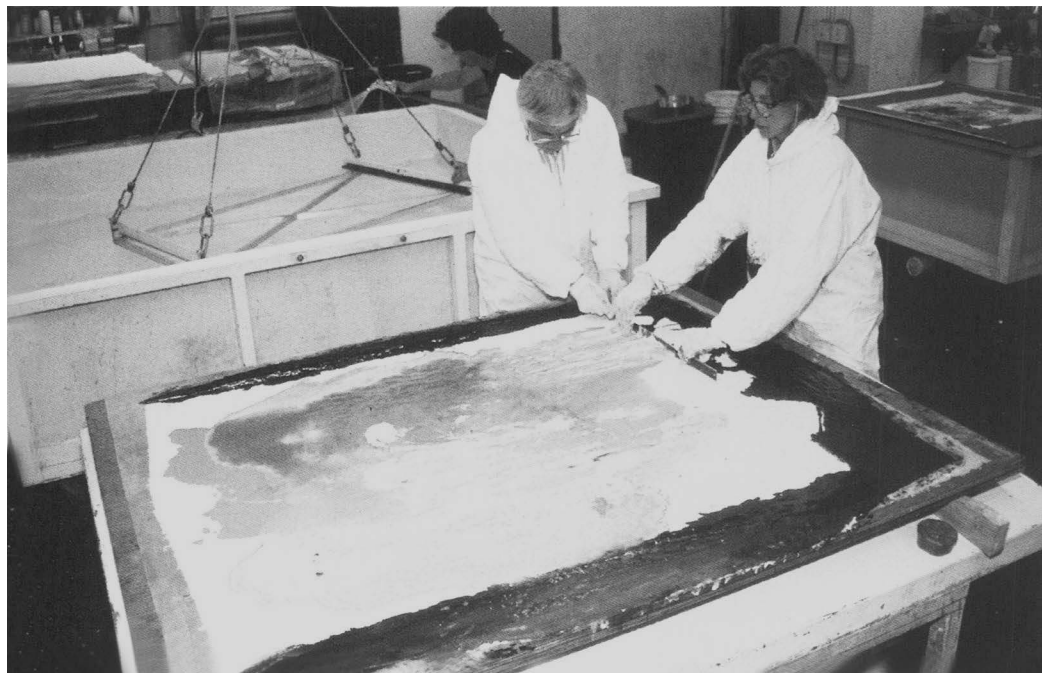
Inspired by the arts and crafts movement, the so-called hand-papermaking revival in the United States and England grew throughout the 1930s and 1940s, together with the craft bookbinding and modern printmaking revival. Dard Hunter, a remarkable book and paper man, explored almost every aspect of paper and fine press-work.³² A couple of his disciples were sought out by particular artists—Douglas Morse Howell,³³ who made sheets for Jackson Pollock and other abstract expressionists, and John and Kathy Koller at HMP, who produced sheets for Richard Diebenkorn. Such a relationship recalls Matisse's

use of Montval paper in the 1930s. But most drawings from the 1950s and 1960s seen here are made on generic white machine-made drawing papers, which appear to have been removed from the newly developed artists' pads. De Kooning's *Woman I* of 1952 (cat. 88) even incorporates the ragged edge from the wire spiral binding into the design.

Since the 1960s small hand-papermaking mills have proliferated in North America and Europe, with fine artists and printers as their primary market. In the last quarter of the century artists completed the transition of hand-papermaking from a trade to an artistic craft, as paper itself became the subject of works of art in pulp pieces and paper sculptures. The signal event of this trend was Robert Rauschenberg's 1973 trip to the Moulin Papier de Richard de Bas, founded in 1326 in Ambert, France, where he made collage and painted pulp "drawings" for later print editions.³⁴ Other artists such as David Hockney, Ellsworth Kelly, Jonathan Borofsky, Chuck Close, Alan Shields, and William Weegee have used colored and painted pulps to create both individual works and some numbered editions. Ken Tyler, who first broached the idea to Rauschenberg, later helped Helen Frankenthaler create *Freefall* in 1992, a painted and manipulated pulp piece in this exhibition (cat. 134; and fig. 3).

Papermaking changed in the twentieth century from a cottage industry to big business, from a trade craft to an artistic one. As twentieth-century papermaking comprised so many different kinds of papers, and twentieth-century artists are broadly understood to have been daring and experimental, one expects to see a wide variety of sheets used in their drawings. Curiously, most of the sheets displayed in this exhibition fall within a very narrow range of papers. The artists usually chose art papers of high or highest quality for their work. Only rarely does a self-consciously modernist aesthetic assert itself by the appropriation of a commercial paper for drawing. Although outside the scope of this survey, a similar trend can be found in these artists' choice of media.

3. Ken Tyler and Helen Frankenthaler working on *Freefall*. Tyler Graphics; photograph by Marabeth Cohen-Tyler.



They used high-quality watercolors and pastels and expensive papers even when they had little money, obviously taking pride and pleasure in their tools.

Although twentieth-century artists sought high-quality sheets for their drawings, they chose markedly different papers than artists of previous centuries. Despite the literally hundreds of colored papers available, these do not appear to have been of overwhelming interest to twentieth-century draftsmen. Instead, the paper chosen for drawings most often was bright white. It tended toward thickness. Generally artists also chose smoother sheets, despite being offered novelty textures.

How did these observed qualities in the sheets—their whiteness, thickness, and smooth surface—serve the artists who used them? Blue, brown, green, or pale pink sheets were useful to earlier artists, as the color provided a middle tone for chiaroscuro drawings that easily allowed the suggestion of modeling three-dimensional or illusionistic space. Few of the artists represented in this exhibition were interested in such modeling. Their white paper gives the impression of flatness—a single plane that holds the image. It must be noted, however, that most of the colored sheets seen in this exhibition are gray or a saturated black. A black background seems to suggest an ambiguous

but infinitely deep space, a vacuum in which an image may float.

Thicker paper could bear the action of vigorous drawing without tearing or distortion. Many of the expressionistic flourishes used by twentieth-century draftsmen were aggressive—digging into the sheets, fraying fiber, and spreading paint and ink across the page. Delicate sheets failed under such violent action.

Strong paper texture interrupts the light falling across the sheet and would obscure the drawing in some modern images that rely on the simple elegance of a pristine line, as in Ellsworth Kelly's *Small Oak* of 1964 and *Beanstalk* of 1999 (cats. 103 and 139). Ken Tyler characterized some handmade paper as “so beautiful and powerful in its surface that it intimidated not only me, but also the artists. The images . . . looked better . . . on a neutral ground.”³⁵ Variable paper texture was also useful in minimizing any smudges or false marks an artist might erase in the course of creating a work. In the second half of the twentieth century smudges and fingerprints were often welcomed as evidence of the process of creation, as in Jim Dine's *Nine Self-Portraits with a Very Long Beard* and Joel Shapiro's *Untitled* of 1987 (cats. 127 and 131).

Finally, the connections of commerce that linked the papermaking industry

throughout the century made commercially produced papers widely available. Just as twentieth-century ideas about art traveled from country to country, the trade of sheets became international also. One sees American papers in Germany, French papers in American artists' works, and English water-color paper everywhere. As artists traveled more freely, they became aware of sheets found abroad and requested them from their local suppliers. Fine paper became a separate commodity in the marketplace, with its own network of dealers and agents who place sheets in large art supply houses around the world.

Throughout the century putting a mark on paper remained an intimate and personal act, connected to a long tradition of drawing. Since drawings are dependent on their paper supports for so many qualities that sway the viewers' subtle visual sensations, it is not surprising that modern artists continued to "treat" themselves to good paper, even when it meant financial sacrifice. In choosing fine papers, modern artists assert that their drawings are valuable and connected to a long tradition in art. Apparently, for twentieth-century artists, as for the artists before them, good paper was part of the pleasure of drawing itself.

Notes

1. John Krill, *English Artists' Papers, from Regency to Empire* (London, 1987), 79–85.
2. Geoffrey Wakeman, *Twentieth Century English Vat Paper Mills* (England, 1980), and A. Dykes Spicer, *The Paper Trade* (London, 1907), 241, 258–260.
3. There are two important designs for papermaking machines: the cylinder mold machine and the Fourdrinier machine. The cylinder mold machine was invented by John Dickinson in England in 1809. At the present time only a half-dozen cylinder mold machines are still in operation around the world; all are used for the production of artists' papers and papers for fine printing. Sheets made on this machine are described as "mold-made" to distinguish them from either handmade or Fourdrinier "machine-made" sheets. Mold-made sheets of high rag content are closer to handmade than machine-made sheets in quality, character, and price; most premium fine art paper sold today is mold-made.
- Louis Robert invented the high-speed papermaking machine in France in 1799. In 1807 Bryan Donkin made the machine operable for the London stationers Henry and Sealy Fourdrinier. Paper is produced on the Fourdrinier in an endless roll, which is made faster and wider by each advance in technology; it is the machine that makes modern papermaking possible. See R. H. Clapperton, *The Papermaking Machine: Its Invention, Evolution, and Development* (New York, 1967), 15–92.
4. Lyman Horace Weeks, *History of Paper Manufacture in the U.S., 1690–1916* (New York, 1916), 302–316.
5. Louis Tillotson Stevenson, *The Background and Economics of American Papermaking* (New York, 1940), 96.
6. American Writing Paper Company, *Handbook of Quality-Standard Papers* (Holyoke, MA, 1922), 7–9.
7. The paper dealers who make fine papers available to artists and fine printers are a separate but related topic of interest to students of twentieth-century paper. See Judith Walsh, "The Japan Paper Company Centennial," in *Hand Papermaking* 16, no. 1 (Summer 2001).
8. John Bidwell reports that in 1892 Whatman papers were four times as expensive as high-quality machine-made sheets. Their price reflected Whatman's reputation for high quality and represented a premium over other handmade sheets, which were only three times the cost of high-quality machine-made sheets. John Bidwell, *Fine Papers at the Oxford University Press* (London, 1999).
9. Today handmade sheets sell at ten to twenty times the cost of machine-made sheets.
9. Peter Bower and Richard Hills, "British Watermarks: Forgeries of Whatman Marks," *The Quarterly Review of the British Association of Paper Historians* 17 (January 1996), 1–4.
10. "For seven years after Whatman's death [17 March 1798] the Whatman countermark continued to be used by Hollingworths & Balston, but in 1806 the firm broke up. The Hollingworth brothers remained in Turkey Mill and used the J WHATMAN TURKEY MILL countermark on their handmade papers. Balston was for one year at Hollingbourne Mill and thereafter at his new Springfield Mill, and he had the use of J WHATMAN. In 1859 the Hollingworths sold their mark to Balston's sons, and since then all papers with either mark have been made by his descendants, now W. & R. Balston Ltd." Thomas Balston, *James Whatman, Father and Son* (London, 1957), 139.
11. Picasso apparently saved old papers throughout his career. In 1980 John Richardson recalled a visit to Picasso's studio in 1955. The artist opened a bulging portfolio of old papers, declaring them far too good to use. Marilyn McCully, ed., *A Picasso Anthology* (London, 1981), 278. Thanks to Ann Hoenigswald for bringing attention to this reference.
12. The work by Oldenburg shows a "T&J H KENT" watermark indicating Thomas and John Hollingworth were the papermakers; they were in partnership from 1847 and still active in 1860. By 1884 their names had disappeared from active papermaking lists. Alfred H. Shorter, *Studies on the History of Papermaking in Britain* (London, 1993), 213–251; Paper Trade Review, *ABC Paper Mill Guide for Great Britain and Europe* (London, 1884).
13. Marian Dirda, in Judith Walsh, "Catalogue of the National Gallery of Art Paper Sample Collection," CD-ROM, National Gallery of Art, 1999.
14. Alfred Stieglitz used Strathmore photo-mounting papers for *Camera Work*, and Strathmore mat board for his photograph mounts. Georgia O'Keeffe chose Strathmore drawing paper for some of her seminal drawings, including *First Drawing of Blue Lines* from 1916.
15. Japanese vellum is a creamy yellow, translucent sheet of strength and luster, made at the Imperial Mill in Oji from *mitsumata* fiber. In 1875 a second mill at Shidzuoka was opened to make the same sort of paper for export. Richard T. Stevens, *The Art of Paper Making in Japan*, Japan Paper Company (New York, 1909), 5–7. Papermakers around the world tried to duplicate the expensive sheets for printmaking, drawing, and commercial printing. In English these papers became known as "japans" or imitation vellums.
16. I am grateful to Margaret Holben Ellis, Sherman Fairchild Director of the conservation graduate program, New York University, who discussed her knowledge of the papers used by Schiele with me, and to Rebecca Donnan, Mellon Fellow, National Gallery of Art, for information on the Kollwitz print.
17. In 1807 the Mon-golfiers received a patent for their transparent "Papier Calque." By the time Degas used the sheet, it was manufactured by machine and available in rolls. Marie-Hélène Reynaud, *Une Histoire de Papier: Les Papeteries Canson et Montgolfier* (Annonay, 1989), 56–57, 94.
18. This sheet shows the watermark "JOYNS . . .," which most likely refers to Joynton and Sons, who were at St. Mary's Cray Mill in Kent in 1910. Joynton invented the dandy-roll, which impressed watermarks in already formed but still wet machine-made sheets. Richard Hills, *Papermaking in Britain 1488–1988* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ, 1988), 176–181; *Paper Makers' Directory of All Nations, 1910* (London, 1910), 598.
19. Lyman Horace Weeks, *History of Paper Manufacturing in the United States, 1690–1916* (New York, 1916), 318–319.
20. Henri Onfroy reported that although sized with six applications of gelatin hardened in a secret process, the aged Arches sheets remained free from acid and did not yellow in the slightest. *L'Art du Papier et le Papier d'Art* (Paris, 1906), 35–37. Arches' "secret process" might have been to run the sized sheets through a bath of formalin, to harden the gelatin, rather than adding acidic alum to the gelatin solution as was typically done to keep it liquid and free of mold. The use of formalin was described by the British Intelligence Objectives Subcommittee to make

- photo-base papers at the Schoeller Mill in Düren, Germany, before World War II. W. A. Wiltshire, W. J. Carter, and A. J. C. Aikman, *German Paper-making Industry*, British Intelligence Objectives Subcommittee (London, 1946), 133. These sheets are a graphic demonstration of the trend toward “whiteness” and “smoothness” over the long history of Western papermaking, identified by Elizabeth Lunning and Roy Perkinson in *The Print Council of America’s Paper Sample Book*, Print Council of America (1996), 15–16.
21. The BFK watermark commemorates Blanchet Freres et Kleber, the directors of Rives who ran the company from 1820.
22. The watermark and date of this sheet suggest that it was purchased in Europe and carried to the United States, presumably by the artist. In 1897 a tariff was placed on imported papers, and beginning in January 1906, the regulation was enforced. All papers with watermarks that were imported to the United States were required to carry the name of the country of manufacture in English within the sheet. “Douanes Etrangères” in *Bulletin de Fabricants de Papier* 22, no. 23 (1 Dec. 1905), 6–7. Although this sheet is watermarked, it does not show a country name. The regulation gave rise to watermarks made particularly for export to the American market, and eventually perhaps to the subtle advertising for the quality of a sheet with watermarks, such as “Hand Made in England.”
23. Georgia O’Keeffe purchased a similar paper by mail in 1953 directly from Lucien-Lefebvre-Foinet. The letter and receipt are held in the files at her studio in Abiquiu, and the remaining sheets are in the collections of the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum Research Center, Santa Fe.
24. The mill manufactured the early fabric-backed wallpapers famously used by the papermakers Etienne and Joseph Montgolfier for the first hot air balloon flight in 1782. It took place over the river Deûme in Vidalon, near the papermill.
25. Reynaud 1989, 76–79.
26. The sheets made by Gaspard Maillol bear distinctive watermarks: a recumbent nude on a sliver of a moon, designed by Aristide Maillol, and an entwined M and V within a circle, with FRANCE below. Reynaud 1989, 86–89, and *The Paper Maker* 33, no. 1 (1964), 34–41.
27. Hills 1988, 188.
28. Wiltshire, Carter, and Aikman 1946, 72–109, 127–138.
29. The Green family of papermakers owned Hayle Mill in Kent, England, from 1810 to 1999. Nine generations of Greens operated the mill, keeping between two and four hand-papermaking vats in production into the 1950s. The family made papers for fine presses such as Oxford University Press, and for bank notes and fine art. Their commitment to traditional hand-made paper and to their family business is a remarkable story. It ended in 1987 when Simon Green was forced to close the mill. Bidwell 1999, 52–59.
30. Frederick A. Brett, *The Story of F. J. Head Papers* (Leicestershire, England, 1975). I am grateful to Michelle Facini, graduate student at Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation, who transcribed this text for me.
31. “TH Saunders” was a paper made at Wookey Hole Mill in Devonshire by the Hollingsworths. Inveresk’s St. Cuthbert’s, a nearby machine mill, began using the TH Saunders watermark between 1965, when the mark was still registered to the T. H. Saunders Company, and 1978, when the sheets were introduced to the American market. *Phillips’ Paper Trade Directory of the World* (1965), 675. The Wookey Hole Mill was reopened in the 1980s as a museum of papermaking combined with an amusement park; one passes from the papermaking demonstration into a hall of mirrors and a display of pinball machines.
32. Sylvie Turner and Birgit Skiöld, “Table of Influences of American Papermakers,” *Handmade Paper Today* (London 1983), 98–99; Cathleen A. Baker, *By His Own Labor: A Biography of Dard Hunter* (New Castle, DE, 2000).
33. Alexandra Soteriou, *Douglas Morse Howell Retrospective* (Hackensack, NJ, 1982).
34. Ken Tyler and Rosamund Felsen, “Two Rauschenberg Projects,” in Pauline Long, ed., *Paper—Art & Technology: The History and Methods of Fine Papermaking with a Gallery of Contemporary Paper Art* (The World Print Council, 1978), 81–86.
35. Ken Tyler, “Experiences with Paper: the Commercial Workshop,” in Long 1978, 79.

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