

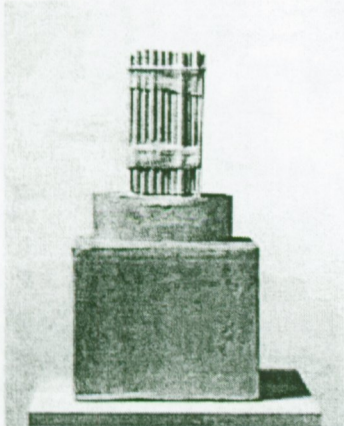
National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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Untitled, Rome, 1959
Kunsthaus, Zurich

"CY TWOMBLY: THE SCULPTURE,"
FIRST MAJOR RETROSPECTIVE
OF ARTIST'S SCULPTURE ON VIEW
AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART,
MAY 6 – JULY 29, 2001

Washington, D.C. – Cy Twombly: The Sculpture, the first major survey of the artist's three-dimensional works, will be on view in the West Building of the National Gallery of Art from May 6 through July 29, 2001. The exhibition, previously on view at the Kunstmuseum Basel and The Menil Collection, Houston, brings together 58 of the artist's sculptures, spanning the years from 1946 to the present. Before this retrospective, many of the objects had rarely been shown.

"Cy Twombly is one of the most distinguished artists of the postwar period. His sculpture is remarkable both for its haunting beauty and its poetic allusions to motifs and relics of classical antiquity," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "This first sculpture retrospective will certainly attract long-deserved attention to Twombly's substantial contribution to twentieth-century sculpture."

THE EXHIBITION

Cy Twombly: The Sculpture is devoted to an impressive but less familiar body of the artist's work than his paintings and drawings. The exhibition features works, mostly small and medium in scale, representing two major sculptural campaigns: 1948 to 1959 and 1976 to 1998.

Composed primarily of rough fragments of wood coated in plaster and white paint, Twombly's sculpture is rooted in various prominent movements in modern art, including the dadaist and surrealist traditions of assemblage and found-object sculpture. His work alludes to artifacts of the archaic past—tribal fetishes, reliquaries, altars, chariots, and architectural fragments—and incorporates poetry and mythological themes from Greek and Roman antiquity.

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The exhibition includes outstanding examples of Twombly's early works, such as Untitled, New York 1954, which exemplifies his preoccupation with the themes of ritual and mortality. In this sculpture, Twombly uses both palm fronds, symbolic of eternal life, and a shrinelike plinth, suggesting the cult of the dead. Another early piece, Untitled [Rome], 1959, demonstrates the introduction of ancient mythology into his work. Formed by eleven bound rods placed on a corrugated cardboard box, this sculpture suggests an archaic panpipe resting on an altar, alluding to Pan, an Arcadian fertility deity.

Several recurring motifs appear in later sculptures in the exhibition. Untitled, Bassano in Teverina 1979 and Anabasis, Bassano in Teverina 1980, recall ancient battle chariots—allusions to archaic warfare which Twombly explores in other works. Winter's Passage: Luxor, Porto Ercole 1985, an important later sculpture, employs another prominent motif, the boat, and reveals the influence of Egyptian art on Twombly's work. Untitled, Bassano in Teverina 1987, a two-tiered pyramid, shows the artist's special fascination with architectural elements.

THE ARTIST

Cy Twombly was born on April 25, 1928, in Lexington, Virginia. He studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Washington and Lee University in Virginia, and the Art Students League in New York. His subsequent study at the renowned school for the arts, Black Mountain College, in North Carolina, strongly influenced his early development.

In the early 1950s, following extended travel in Italy, Spain, and North Africa, Twombly returned to New York and emerged as a prominent figure among a group of artists working there, including Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg. By the end of the 1950s Twombly had relocated to Italy, married, and discontinued his work in sculpture, preferring to focus on his drawings and paintings. In 1976 Twombly returned to sculpture, and since that time has consistently created both spare wooden constructions and bronze casts. To date, Twombly has created over 150 works of sculpture, the most significant of which are included in the Gallery exhibition.

ORGANIZERS AND CATALOGUE

Cy Twombly: The Sculpture was co-organized by The Menil Collection, Houston, and the Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel. Jeffrey Weiss, curator of modern and contemporary art at the National Gallery of Art, is coordinating the Washington installation, which Twombly himself will supervise. A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue (in English and German) by Katharina Schmidt, director, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, is available for \$55 in the Gallery Shops, or by calling 1(800) 697-9350.

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SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Slide Lectures

Sunday, May 6, 2:00 p.m.

The "in-two" of Twombly's Sculpture

Rosalind Krauss, Meyer Schapiro Professor of Modern Art and Theory, Columbia University, New York

East Building auditorium

Thursday, May 17, 6:00 p.m.

The Sculpture of Cy Twombly

Kirk Varnedoe, chief curator, department of painting and sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

East Building auditorium

Tours of the Exhibition

Tours begin at the West Building art information desk. For dates and times, please consult the calendar of events there, the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov, or call (202) 842-6706. No reservations are required. Tours by special appointment may be arranged for adult groups of twenty or more by calling (202) 842-6247.

For information about accessibility to galleries and public areas, assistive listening devices, sign language interpretation, and other services, please inquire at the art information desks, access the Web site at www.nga.gov, or call (202) 842-6690.

NATIONAL GALLERY INFORMATION

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden, located on the National Mall between Third and Ninth Streets, NW, are open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is free. For information, call (202) 737-4215; Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176; or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov.

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National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C.

Cy Twombly: The Sculpture

Checklist

National Gallery of Art 6 May - 29 July 2001

- J-peg image available
- ☐ Slide available in exhibition slide packet

1. *Untitled*
Lexington, 1946
wood and metal
36.8 x 8.9 x 9.2 cm (14 1/2 x 3 1/2 x 3 5/8)
Daros Collection, Switzerland
2. *Untitled*
Lexington, 1948
wood, porcelain knobs, metal curtain tie-back, cloth, and house paint
35.8 x 26.7 x 30.5 cm (14 1/8 x 10 1/2 x 12)
Collection of the artist, Rome
3. *Untitled*
● New York, 1953
☐ wood, wire, twine, nails, house paint, and wax on cloth
38.1 x 25 x 10.1 cm (15 x 9 7/8 x 4)
Collection of Robert Rauschenberg
4. *Untitled*
New York, 1954
wood, glass, mirrors, cloth, twine, wire, wooden spoons, oil crayon, house paint, and wax
203.2 x 35 x 28 cm (80 x 13 3/4 x 11)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
5. *Untitled*
● New York, 1954
☐ wood, palm leaves, twine, house paint, cloth, nails, and wire
139 x 60 x 12.4 cm (54 3/4 x 23 5/8 x 4 7/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
6. *Untitled*
New York, 1955
wood, wooden spoons, house paint, cloth, glue, and nails
105 x 15.5 x 15.5 cm (41 3/8 x 6 1/8 x 6 1/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
7. *Untitled*
New York, 1955
wood, wooden spoons, cloth, nails, house paint, and rope
29.8 x 30.5 x 18.4 cm (11 3/4 x 12 x 7 1/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome

8. *Untitled*
New York, 1955
wood, cloth, twine, and house paint
56.5 x 14.3 x 13 cm (22 1/4 x 5 5/8 x 5 1/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome

9. *Untitled*,
● Rome, 1959
wood, cloth, cardboard, house paint, and nail
67 x 34 x 27 cm (26 3/8 x 13 3/8 x 10 5/8)
Kunsthaus Zürich

10. *Untitled*
New York, 1959
wood, plastic leaf, plaster, pigment, and house paint
70.4 x 34.6 x 39.4 cm (27 3/4 x 13 5/8 x 15 5/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome

11. *Untitled*
Rome, 1976
cardboard tubes, cloth, house paint, and paper tape
193.6 x 16.8 x 16.8 cm (76 1/4 x 6 5/8 x 6 5/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome

13. *Untitled*
Rome, 1978
wood, cloth, wire, nails, and paint
43.8 x 222.2 x 17.8 cm (17 1/4 x 87 1/2 x 7)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston

14. *Cycnus*
● Rome, 1978
□ wood, palm leaf, paint, and nails
40.6 x 24.7 x 5.7 cm (16 x 9 3/4 x 2 1/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome

15. *Orpheus (Thou unending trace)*
● Rome, 1979
wood, nails, paint, and graphite
266 x 244.5 x 22.2 cm (104 3/4 x 96 1/4 x 8 3/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome

16. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1979
plaster and sand
49 x 42 x 22 cm (19 3/8 x 16 5/8 x 8 3/4)
Kunsthaus Zürich

17. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1979 (cast Rome 1979)
bronze, edition 4/6
47.6 x 45.7 x 22.8 cm (18 3/4 x 18 x 9)
Collection of the artist, Rome

18. *Untitled*
● Bassano in Teverina, 1979
□ wood, plaster, sand, nails, and paint
177.1 x 60 x 63.5 cm (69 3/4 x 23 5/8 x 25)
Collection of the artist, Rome
19. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1980
wood, nails, clay, metal, and paint
202.7 x 59 x 39.7 cm (79 7/8 x 23 1/4 x 15 5/8)
Private collection, Rome
20. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1980
wood, nails, paint, wire, and metal strapping
273 x 41.4 x 64.8 cm (107 1/2 x 16 3/8 x 25 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
22. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1980
plaster and sand
36 x 36.5 x 27 cm (14 1/8 x 14 x 10 5/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
23. *Anabasis*
● Bassano in Teverina, 1980
□ wood, clay, plywood, metal strips, nails, paint, cloth, casters, paper, and staples
116.8 x 48.9 x 49.5 cm (46 x 19 1/4 x 19 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
24. *The Keeper of Sheep*
Bassano in Teverina, 1980
wood, palm leaves, plaster, wire, nails, clay, metal strips, glue, and paint
192.6 x 91.2 x 94 cm (75 7/8 x 36 x 37)
Private collection, Rome
25. *Aurora*
Rome, 1981
wood, plastic flower, wire, twine, plaster, nails, and paint
134.6 x 109.5 x 21.1 cm (53 x 43 1/8 x 8 3/8)
Private collection, Rome
26. *Anadyomene*
● Bassano in Teverina, 1981
wood, nails, crayon, paint, cloth, and screw eye
47 x 57.1 x 73.6 cm (18 1/2 x 22 1/2 x 29)
Private collection, Rome
27. *Untitled*
● Formia, 1981
□ wood, nails, cord, paint, and screw eyes
152 x 88.4 x 33.6 cm (59 7/8 x 34 7/8 x 13 1/4)
Private collection, Rome

28. *Thicket*
Formia-Rome, 1981
wood, wicker, plastic flowers, nails, wire, and paint
123.8 x 29.8 x 54.6 cm (48 3/4 x 11 3/4 x 21 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
29. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1981
wood, webbing, thread, plastic and metal casters, wire, nails, and paint
154.3 x 39.4 x 38.4 cm (60 3/4 x 15 1/2 x 15 1/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
31. *Untitled*
Rome, 1983 (cast Rome 1983)
bronze, edition 5/6
141.6 x 24.1 x 32.4 cm (55 3/4 x 9 1/2 x 12 3/4)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
33. *Untitled*
● Rome, 1983 (cast Rome 1983)
□ painted bronze, edition 2/5
176 x 22.8 x 41 cm (69 3/8 x 9 x 16 1/8)
Private collection, Rome
34. *Untitled*
Rome, 1983 (cast Pfäffikon 1998)
painted bronze, edition 2/4
82 x 55.8 x 52 cm (32 1/4 x 22 x 20 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
35. *Untitled*
Gaeta, 1984 (cast Rome 1987)
painted bronze and graphite, edition 2/4
120.6 x 36.2 x 57.1 cm (47 1/2 x 14 1/4 x 22 1/2)
Private collection
36. *Untitled*
Rome, 1984/1985
wood, plaster, nails, paint, and metal fastener
51.3 x 52.7 x 23.7 cm (20 1/4 x 20 3/4 x 9 3/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
37. *Winter's Passage: Luxor*
● Porto Ercole, 1985
□ wood, nails, paint, paper, glue, and traces of copper sulphate
53.5 x 105 x 51 cm (21 1/8 x 41 3/8 x 20 1/8)
Kunsthau Zürich
38. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1985
□ wood, plaster, plastic leaf, nails, pigment, and paint
33 x 46 x 60.3 cm (13 x 18 1/8 x 23 3/4)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston

39. *Untitled*
Gaeta, 1985
wood, plaster, nails, paint, iron ring, and metal fastener
82.1 x 74 x 34.2 cm (32 3/8 x 29 3/4 x 13 1/2)
Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Kunstmuseum, Arnold Rüdlinger Fund
41. *Rotalla*
Gaeta, 1986
wood, metal, cloth, nails, and paint
72 x 71 x 52 cm (28 3/8 x 28 x 20 1/2)
Kunsthaus Zürich
42. *Rotalla*
● Gaeta, 1986 (cast Pfäffikon 1990)
bronze, edition 2/6
71.1 x 68 x 50.1 cm (28 x 26 3/4 x 19 3/4)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
43. *In Time the Wind Will Come and Destroy My Lemons*
Rome, 1987
wood, plaster, nails, and paint
26.2 x 97.8 x 50.1 cm (10 3/8 x 38 1/2 x 19 3/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome
44. *Ctesiphon*
● Gaeta, 1987
wood, plaster, metal strips, nails, paint, and wire
65.4 x 90.8 x 52.7 cm (25 3/4 x 35 3/4 x 20 3/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome
45. *Untitled*
Rome, 1987
wood, nails, twine, paper, paint, plaster, and plywood
123.2 x 41.3 x 41.3 cm (48 1/2 x 16 1/4 x 16 1/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome
46. *By the Ionian Sea*
Gaeta, 1987
wood, nails, plaster, clay, glue, pencil, and paint
33 x 62 x 51.5 cm (13 x 24 1/2 x 20 1/4)
Kunsthaus Zürich
47. *Untitled*
● Bassano in Teverina, 1987
wood, plaster, nails, clay, paint, and crayon
128.9 x 152 x 29.8 cm (50 3/4 x 59 7/8 x 11 3/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome
48. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1988
wood, plaster, clay, and traces of paint
32.4 x 35.5 x 21 cm (12 3/4 x 14 x 8 1/4)
Collection of the artist, Rome

49. *Untitled*
Bassano in Teverina, 1989
wood, plaster, nails, and paint
75.6 x 31.1 x 32.7 cm (29 3/4 x 12 1/4 x 12 7/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
50. *Untitled*
Gaeta, 1990
wood, cloth, plastic flowers, wire, clay, paint, metal, wax, and thread
167.6 x 35 x 34.3 cm (66 x 13 3/4 x 13 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
51. *Thicket (Thicket of Ur)*
Gaeta, 1990
bamboo, metal, wood, wire, wooden tags, paint, graphite, and plaster
188.3 x 38.1 x 36.2 cm (74 1/8 x 15 x 14 1/4)
Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Kunstmuseum, Arnold Rüdinger Fund
52. *Thicket (Thickets of Akkad – Sumer)*
● Gaeta, 1991
□ wood (tree trunk), cement, wire, twine, paper, wooden tags, paint, nails, and ink
260.3 x 58.4 x 57.1 cm (102 1/2 x 23 x 22 1/2)
Collection of the artist, Rome
53. *Thermopylae*
● Gaeta, 1991
□ plaster on wicker, coarsely woven cloth, graphite, wooden sticks, and plaster-coated cloth flowers on plastic stems
137 x 89 x 66 cm (54 x 35 x 26)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
54. *Thermopylae*
Gaeta, 1991 (cast Meudon 1992)
bronze, edition 3/3
137 x 89 x 66 cm (54 x 35 x 26)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
55. *(To F. P.) The Keeper of Sheep*
Jupiter Island, 1992
wood, cloth, plaster, nails, and paint
194.6 x 29.2 x 63.5 cm (76 5/8 x 11 1/2 x 25)
Collection of the artist, Lexington
56. *Untitled*
Jupiter Island, 1992
wood and plaster
48.2 x 33.6 x 44.4 cm (19 x 13 1/4 x 17 1/2)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
61. *Epitaph*
● Jupiter Island, 1992
□ wood, plaster, plywood, and paint
40.7 x 38.7 x 38.1 cm (16 x 15 1/4 x 15)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston

62. *Thicket*
● Jupiter Island, 1992
wood, plastic leaves, plaster, and paint
47.8 x 33.8 x 23.5 cm (18 7/8 x 13 3/8 x 9 1/4)
Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston
63. *Madame d'O*
Jupiter Island, 1992
wood, palm frond, metal, wire, plaster, and paint
177.8 x 40.6 x 27 cm (70 x 16 x 10 5/8)
Collection of the artist, Lexington
64. *Untitled*
Gaeta, 1993
painted iron pot, paper bag, and dried flower
78.1 x 36.2 x 37.1 cm (30 3/4 x 14 1/4 x 14 5/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
65. *Vulci Chronicle*
Gaeta, 1995
wood, paint, palm fronds, and plaster
27.9 x 61.3 x 33 cm (11 x 24 1/8 x 13)
Collection of the artist, Rome
66. *Untitled*
Gaeta, 1998
wood, plaster, wire, plastic flower pot, and paint
128.6 x 24.1 x 19.9 cm (50 5/8 x 9 1/2 x 7 7/8)
Collection of the artist, Rome
- Untitled*
Lexington, 2000 (cast New York 2001)
bronze
235.5 x 58.4 x 78.7 cm (92 3/4 x 23 x 31)
Property of the artist