

Release Date: July 3, 2014

Final Exhibition from the Kainen Collection Showcases the Vitality and Innovation of American Art; On View from September 1 to February 1, 2015



Stuart Davis, *Barber Shop Chord*, 1931
lithograph in black on wove paper
National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Ruth Cole Kainen

Washington, DC—*Modern American Prints and Drawings from the Kainen Collection*, on view from September 1 to February 1, 2015, is the final in a trio of exhibitions celebrating the 2012 bequest of Ruth Cole Kainen (1922–2009), a passionate collector who enriched the National Gallery of Art's holdings across a range of schools, including the first seven decades of 20th century American art.

Ruth Cole Kainen, trained in music and a patron of all the arts, was married to Jacob Kainen (1909–2001), a New York painter who relocated to Washington, DC, in the 1940s to become a curator in the Division of Graphic Arts at the Smithsonian's U.S. National Museum (now the National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center).

"Many of the works in this exhibition are by artists that Jacob knew personally from his exemplary career as an artist and curator," said Earl A. Powell III, director, National Gallery of Art. "He maintained friendships with pioneering artists like Stuart Davis, Arshile Gorky, and Willem de Kooning, whose works he also collected. By the time he met Ruth, she was already an astute connoisseur and generous arts patron in her own right. Together they became one of the most dynamic couples in Washington art circles."

About the exhibition

This intimate exhibition fills two galleries with 37 prints, drawings, and watercolors that exemplify American art as it advanced from 1904 to 1976. With the exception of a few works such as the light-dappled etching *Old Doorway, East Hampton* (1920) by Childe Hassam (1859–1935), the majority trend toward abstraction, evident in the jagged outlines of *Abstract City* (1927) by Abraham Walkowitz (1880–1965), invented forms in *Barber Shop Chord* (1931) by Stuart Davis (1892–1964), and biomorphic shapes in the surrealist-inspired *Study for Nighttime, Enigma and Nostalgia* by Arshile Gorky (1904–1948).

Other highlights include an evocative pictograph by Adolph Gottlieb (1903–1974), one of Jackson Pollock's (1912–1956) finest drip paintings on paper, a fluent black-ink drawing by David Smith (1906–1965), and two abstract expressionist works by Willem de Kooning (1904–1997).

This exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art.

Jacob and Ruth Cole Kainen

Jacob and Ruth Cole Kainen were among the most important friends and benefactors of the Gallery. From Jacob Kainen's earliest donation in 1974 to Ruth Cole Kainen's bequest in 2012, the couple individually and jointly gave the Gallery a total of 1,289 European and American works, principally prints

and drawings. To celebrate Ruth Cole Kainen's bequest, and more broadly the Kainens' achievement as collectors and benefactors, the Gallery has presented a series of three exhibitions dedicated to their key interests: northern mannerism, German prints and drawings, and now, American modernism.

Ruth Cole Kainen, who began collecting art in the early 1960s, served on the National Gallery of Art's Trustees' Council from November 1989 to December 1995 and again from March 2008 until her death in September 2009. Her 2012 bequest of 781 European and American works of art covers five centuries, ranging in date from 1531 through the 1980s. The 10 paintings; 39 watercolors and drawings; 731 prints and illustrated books; and one photograph represent a comprehensive range of schools, styles, media, and subjects, reflecting her delight in a diverse range of art.

Prints, Drawings, and Illustrated Books at the National Gallery of Art

The Gallery's collection of prints, drawings, and illustrated books consists of more than 111,000 European and American works on paper and vellum, dating from the 11th century to the present. Because works on paper are highly susceptible to overexposure to light, they can be exhibited only for short periods. For that reason, the Gallery maintains a schedule of changing exhibitions drawn from its own collection or on loan from other institutions and private individuals. Drawings and prints not on view may be seen by appointment by calling (202) 842-6380.

Curator

This exhibition is curated by Charlie Ritchie and Carlotta Owens, associate curators of modern prints and drawings, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Avenue NW, and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. For information call (202) 737-4215 or visit the Gallery's Web site at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt, Twitter at www.twitter.com/ngadc, and Instagram at <http://instagram.com/ngadc>.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

Department of Communications
National Gallery of Art
2000B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785
phone: (202) 842-6353
e-mail: pressinfo@nga.gov

Anabeth Guthrie
Chief of Communications
(202) 842-6804
a-guthrie@nga.gov

Subscribe to Our E-mail Newsletters

Stay up to date with the National Gallery of Art by [subscribing to our e-mail newsletters](#): Web, educators, family programs, fellowships/internships, films, lectures, music programs, and teen programs. Select as many updates as you wish to receive. To edit your subscriber information, please go to our [subscription management page](#).

PRESS KIT

Exhibition Press Release

[Checklist](#) (PDF 222 kb)

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Exhibition Page](#)

Questions from members of the media may be directed to the Department of Communications at (202) 842-6353 or pressinfo@nga.gov

The public may call (202) 737-4215 or visit www.nga.gov for more information about the **National Gallery of Art**.

RSS (NEWS FEED)

http://www.nga.gov/content/dam/ngaweb/press/rss/press_feed.xml

NGA NEWSLETTERS:

Stay up to date with the National Gallery of Art by [subscribing to our e-mail newsletters](#): Web, educators, family programs, fellowships/internships, films, lectures, music programs, and teen programs. Select as many updates as you wish to receive. To edit your subscriber information, please go to our [subscription management page](#).



© 2017 National Gallery of Art
