



UNITED STATES EMBASSY LONDON
ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION

MARK ROTHKO, **ORANGE AND TAN**, 1954

Oil on canvas, 81 ¼ x 63 ¼ in. (206.4 x 160.7 cm)

Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Enid A. Hapt 1997.47.13

THE ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM

Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's ART in Embassies Program (AIEP) plays a vital role in our nation's public diplomacy through a culturally expansive mission of temporary exhibitions, permanent collections, artist programming, and publications. The genesis for the Program was the Museum of Modern Art's International Council and the Woodward Foundation's lending works of art to a few of the high-profile embassies in the 1950s. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy named Nancy Kefauver, a painter and the widow of Senator Estes Kefauver, as the Program's first director. With a staff of two they strove to exhibit 'modern art' in the ambassadorial residences. Now with over 200 venues, AIEP produces temporary exhibitions of original works of art by American artists, on loan from a variety of sources, for the representational spaces of U.S. chief-of-mission residences worldwide.

Equally important is its relatively new commitment to create permanent art collections for all newly built U.S. embassies, consulates, and annexes, with a focus on contemporary art and artists from the U.S. and the host countries. Together, these temporary exhibitions and permanent collections provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of American and host country art and culture. By extending the reach and mission of the Program, the permanent collections, along with the temporary exhibitions, give AIEP a presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

Overseas, AIEP exhibitions and collections allow foreign citizens, many of whom might never travel to the United States, to personally experience the depth and breadth of our artistic heritage and values. AIEP presents multiple facets of American culture that help residence and embassy visitors understand us better, and it achieves this in a way that words often cannot. U.S. Secretaries of State, ambassadors, public affairs officers, and cultural affairs officers have attested to the positive impact of the Program time and time again. Noted art historian Henry Geldzahler called it a cultural "footprint that can be left where people have no opportunity to see American art."

"The ART in Embassies Program reveals the rich history and cultural heritage of the United States and the communal experiences that we share with peoples of different countries, backgrounds and faiths, binding us closer together. Through its temporary exhibitions and permanent collections, the ART in Embassies Program intrigues, educates, and connects – playing an ambassadorial role as important as that served by traditional diplomacy."

— *Hillary Rodham Clinton*
Secretary of State

AMERICANS ABROAD: MASTERWORKS BY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

Like our predecessors, we will have the honor of living in historic Winfield House for only a limited number of years. From the moment we envisioned this temporal opportunity, we began to dream of showcasing great American modern and contemporary art, as an expression of our appreciation for American ideals.

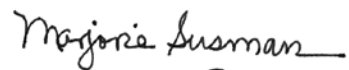

We shared our vision with museum directors, gallery owners, fellow collectors, and artists. They responded enthusiastically and generously. Their contributions, combined with works from our personal collection, have resulted in an exhibition we have entitled *Americans Abroad: Masterworks by Modern and Contemporary Artists*. Without their support and participation, we could not have mounted such an extraordinary exhibition.

The exhibition includes wonderful examples of artwork by: Louise Bourgeois, John Chamberlain, Willem de Kooning, Philip Guston, David Hockney, Jasper Johns, Alex Katz, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Bryce Marden, Agnes Martin, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, Robert Mangold, Martin Puryear, Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko, Robert Ryman, David Smith, and Cy Twombly, amongst others. Their works demonstrate a breadth and depth of beauty, intelligence, and spirit that represents the finest of American artistic leadership, innovation, and excellence.

This exhibition highlights America's artistic greatness and diversity. Artistic freedom of expression is a core American value. In that spirit, we hope that you find the exhibition thought-provoking, and that it inspires conversation. In presenting it, we add a cultural dimension to our diplomatic mission.

We are honored to share works from our collection as part of this exhibition, and we are profoundly grateful to our lenders: Jasper Johns; Martin Puryear; Agnes Gund; the National Gallery of Art; the Mark Rothko Foundation; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Tate Gallery and Candida and Rebecca Smith; the McKee Gallery; Lisson Gallery; David Hockney and Paul Gray of the Richard Gray Gallery; PaceWildenstein; Alex Katz; Claes Oldenburg; and The Willem de Kooning Foundation for their stunning generosity. Our special thanks go to Susan and Lew Manilow, and United Airlines for their support. Finally, we are grateful to the ART in Embassies Program, in particular, curator Virginia Shore, who understood our vision and helped to make it a reality.

Americans Abroad: Masterworks by Modern and Contemporary Artists is your exhibition. In the tradition of the many great art patrons, we believe that collecting, at its best, is not intended to secret great works of art in private, but to ensure their existence for the public. As President and Mrs. Obama refer to the White House as "your house," we likewise invite you to enjoy this exhibition as if it were your own.

Ambassador and Mrs. Louis B. Susman

London
March 2010

CHANGING CONTEXTS: TAKING AMERICAN ART ABROAD



Green Room

An Ambassador's Residence at all times serves dual roles as a private home and a public space and, most importantly, it is a representation of the United States on display in an international context. The current exhibition at Winfield House, *Americans Abroad: Masterworks by Modern and Contemporary Artists*, installed under the direction of the U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Louis Susman and his wife, Marjorie Susman, in partnership with the ART in Embassies Program, reflects this dual nature of the Residence. The exhibition highlights the artistic interests of the Susmans and the ideals, concerns, and accomplishments of American culture as represented by some of the most significant artists of our time.

The Ambassador and Mrs. Susman are avid art collectors who have carefully guided the selection and installation of the works in Winfield House. As they moved from Chicago to the Ambassador's Residence in Regent's Park, the Susmans gave much consideration to which works of art would be best

suited for their new home. Keeping in mind the dual role of the Residence, they chose pieces that they wanted to live with on a daily basis, that would complement the distinctive setting of Winfield House, and that would communicate the remarkable wealth of art produced during the last half of the twentieth century in the United States.

The Susmans have always been drawn to abstract expressionism and to the generations of American artists who inherited the legacy of this post-war movement. The mid-twentieth century was a time of explosive artistic creativity and production, and with the installation of *Americans Abroad: Masterworks by Modern and Contemporary Artists*, Winfield House now showcases some of the best examples of modern and contemporary American art produced since the late 1940s. The Ambassador's Residence offers visitors a firsthand experience of works that illuminate the trajectory of modern American art, beginning with abstract expressionism and moving to quintessentially pop works and beyond.

Abstract expressionism marked a radical move away from representation and figuration and, for the first time, placed American artists at the fore of avant-garde production. The works of the abstract expressionist painters are among the earliest artworks in the exhibition. These striking pieces provide an art historical foundation for the viewing and understanding of the exhibition. Ad Reinhardt's *Untitled* (1947), a gestural, abstract painting on canvas, along with a visceral, expressive piece by Philip Guston, *Accord II* (1963), and two signature works by Mark Rothko, *Untitled* (1951) and *Orange and Tan* (1954), are superb examples of abstract expressionist art represented in Winfield House. The painting by Agnes Martin, *Unbeckoning Grass* (1958), like Rothko's works, evokes the spiritual or unworldly aspect of abstract expressionism and color field painting, conveying the transformative powers of abstract painting. Ellsworth Kelly is an artist who responded and reacted to the painterly investigations of the abstract expressionists. His *Black Ripe Study* (1956-58), now hanging in the Family Dining Room, shares the clear and bold aesthetic qualities of abstract expressionism. Yet he often suggested a different relationship between abstraction and figuration in his works — placing the two seemingly distinct strategies in a dialogic and comfortable relationship within a single piece. Kelly's paintings and the work of the abstract expressionists, while providing a historical and ideological foundation for modern American art-making, resonate with the other works in the home both thematically and visually.

Jasper Johns, an artist represented by two works, combined the concepts and styles of abstraction from the previous generation with a focus on images and objects (sometimes literally) taken from the everyday. His *Untitled (Red, Yellow, Blue)*, 1998, in the main stairwell, revisits many of the seminal themes he was working with in the late 1950s and 1960s, including text, the body, the relationship between the visual and the linguistic, and the pairing of abstraction and representation. Johns and his colleague Robert Rauschenberg are often cited as paving the way for pop, a movement that expanded upon their interest in the everyday and brought the contemporary world, from the banal to the transcendent, into art-making in unprecedented ways. Arresting examples of pop art — painting and sculptures by artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, and Alex Katz, all of which reinstate the figurative in innovative



Family Dining Room



Main Stairwell



Reception Hall



State Dining Room

form, and provides a modernist gesture of refreshing simplicity. Also on view are works by Alex Katz and Cy Twombly, two extremely influential artists who continue to make relevant and original contributions to the field of painting today. Through their gestural nature and use of abstraction, all of these works engage the architectural and decorative elements of the home, drawing the viewer's attention to both the artwork and the setting.

Other works within Winfield House draw attention not only to the house itself, but to its symbolic and political purpose. The house is a site for American culture abroad and a number of works within the exhibition draw inspiration and content from American symbols, themes, and icons. In the Reception Hall, John Chamberlain's sculpture *Foxymily* (2007), comprising the artist's signature twisted, interwoven strips of scrapped industrial metal, offers the dynamism of abstract expressionism rendered in three dimensions. In addition, through its material, *Foxymily* is an homage to America's industrial might and longstanding affinity for the automobile. Johns's bronze wall-mounted work *Flag* (1960), in the stairwell, indistinctly depicts, as the title suggests, the American flag. This work is an example of one of Johns's signature motifs drawn from the everyday, a symbol of the nationhood of the United States and at the time (perhaps now even more so), a symbol of America's almost ubiquitous presence in the world. Willem de Kooning's two charcoal drawings from 1969 to 1970, which hang in the Gold Room, depict the Washington Monument. However, like Johns's flag, the monument is not shown in an obvious



Main Stairwell

or glorified manner; it is an almost abstract representation of an American icon. A fitting selection for the Ambassador's Residence, these works of art embody a vision of the United States as seen from the unique perspective of contemporary artists.

Employing the wit of pieces by Lichtenstein, and van Bruggen and Oldenburg, the quiet sublimity of pieces like those by Reinhardt, Kelly, Rothko, and Puryear, and the symbolic pieces of Chamberlain, Johns, and de Kooning, along with other major pieces, this exhibition presents works by American artists as they pioneered new ideas about art-making in the twentieth century. The Susmans and the ART in Embassies Program have organized an exhibition that reflects the deeply personal connection the Susmans have to art as well as ART in Embassies' mission to share "the quality, scope, and diversity of American art." *Americans Abroad: Masterworks by Modern and Contemporary Artists* offers superb examples of the art of the second half of the twentieth century in an historically pertinent and visually stunning exhibition.

Diana Nawi

Marjorie Susman Curatorial Fellow
Museum of Contemporary Art
Chicago, Illinois

December 2009

LOUISE BOURGEOIS 1911



SPIDER, 1995

Bronze, 24 ¼ x 38 x 38 in. (62.9 x 96.5 x 96.5 cm)

Donated by the artist, courtesy Cheim & Read, New York

Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; GIFT TO THE NATION

JOHN ANGUS CHAMBERLAIN 1927

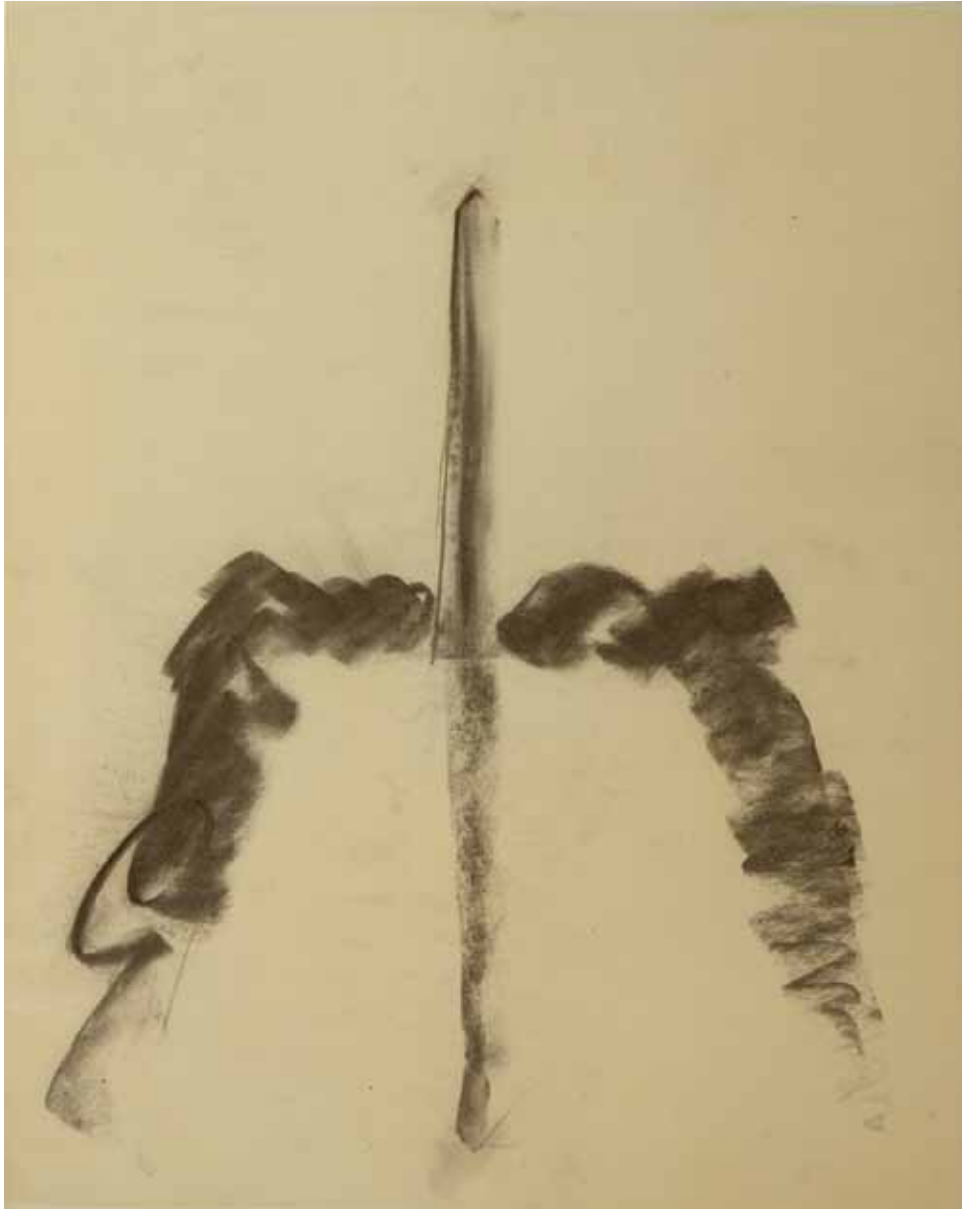


FOXYMILY, 2007

Painted chrome and steel, 21 x 27 x 11 in. (53.3 x 68.6 x 27.9 cm)

Courtesy of PaceWildenstein, New York, New York

WILLEM DE KOONING 1904-1997

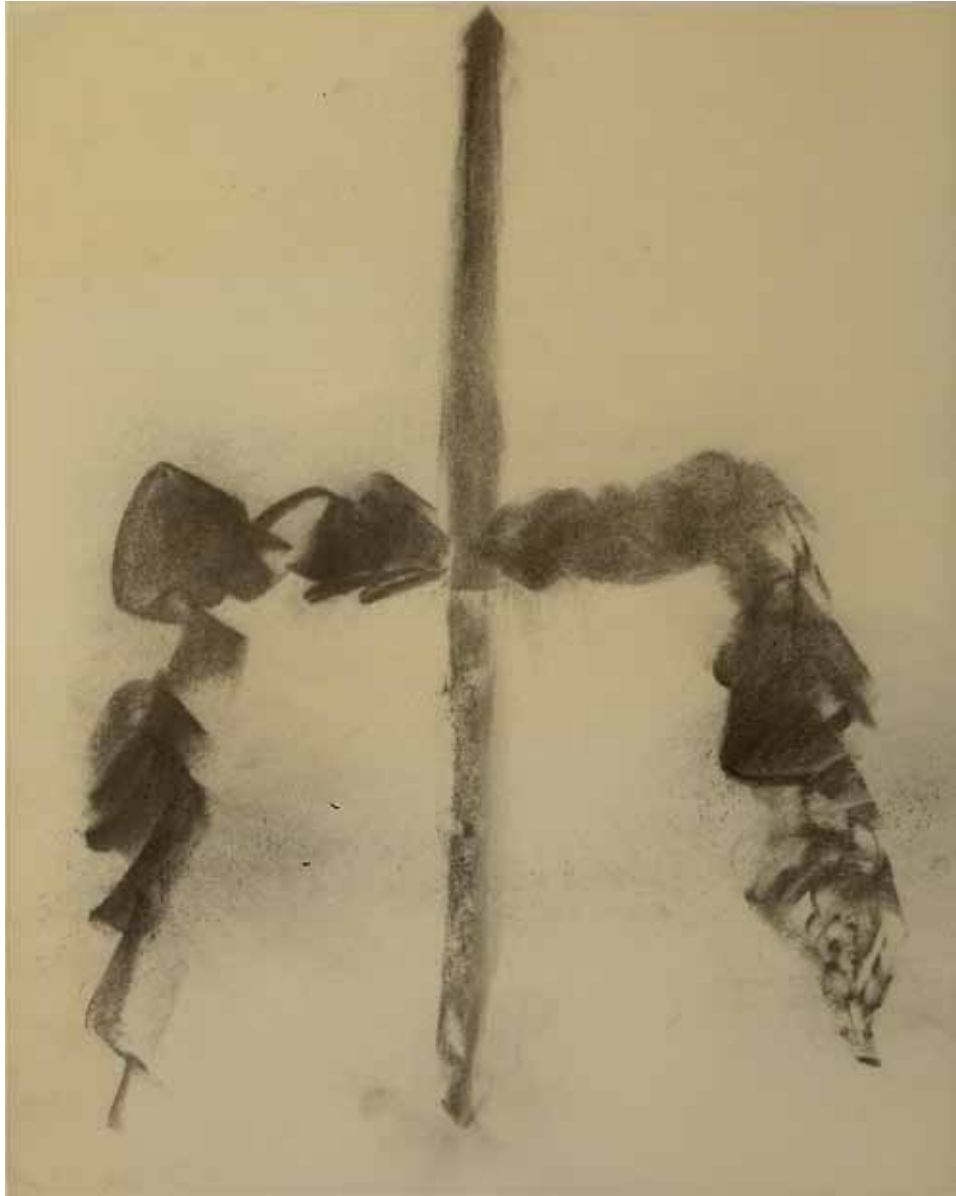


UNTITLED (WASHINGTON MONUMENT), ca. 1969-1970

Charcoal on vellum, 23 3/8 x 18 3/4 in. (60 x 47.6 cm)

Courtesy of The Willem de Kooning Foundation

WILLEM DE KOONING 1904-1997



UNTITLED (WASHINGTON MONUMENT), ca. 1969-1970

Charcoal on vellum, 23 3/8 x 18 3/4 in. (60 x 47.6 cm)

Courtesy of The Willem de Kooning Foundation

PHILIP GUSTON 1913-1980



ACCORD II, 1963

*Gouache on paper, 38 x 48 ¼ in. (96.5 x 122.6 cm)
Courtesy of the McKee Gallery, New York, New York*

DAVID HOCKNEY 1937



Photo: Richard Schmidt

FRIDAYTHORPE VALLEY, 25 OCTOBER 2005, 2005

Oil on canvas, 36 3/4 x 48 3/4 in. (93.3 x 123.8 cm)

Courtesy David Hockney and Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago

JASPER JOHNS 1930



FLAG, 1960

Bronze, 12 ¼ x 18 ¾ in. (31.1 x 47.7 cm)

Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois, through the prior bequest of Katherine Kub

JASPER JOHNS 1930



UNTITLED (RED, YELLOW, BLUE), 1998
Acrylic on etching, mounted on linen, 34 x 75 ½ in. (86.4 x 191.8 cm)
Collection of the artist, Sharon, Connecticut

ALEX KATZ 1927



MARIGOLDS, 2001

Oil on canvas, 30 x 30 in. (76.2 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of Alex Katz, and PaceWildenstein, New York, New York

ELLSWORTH KELLY 1923

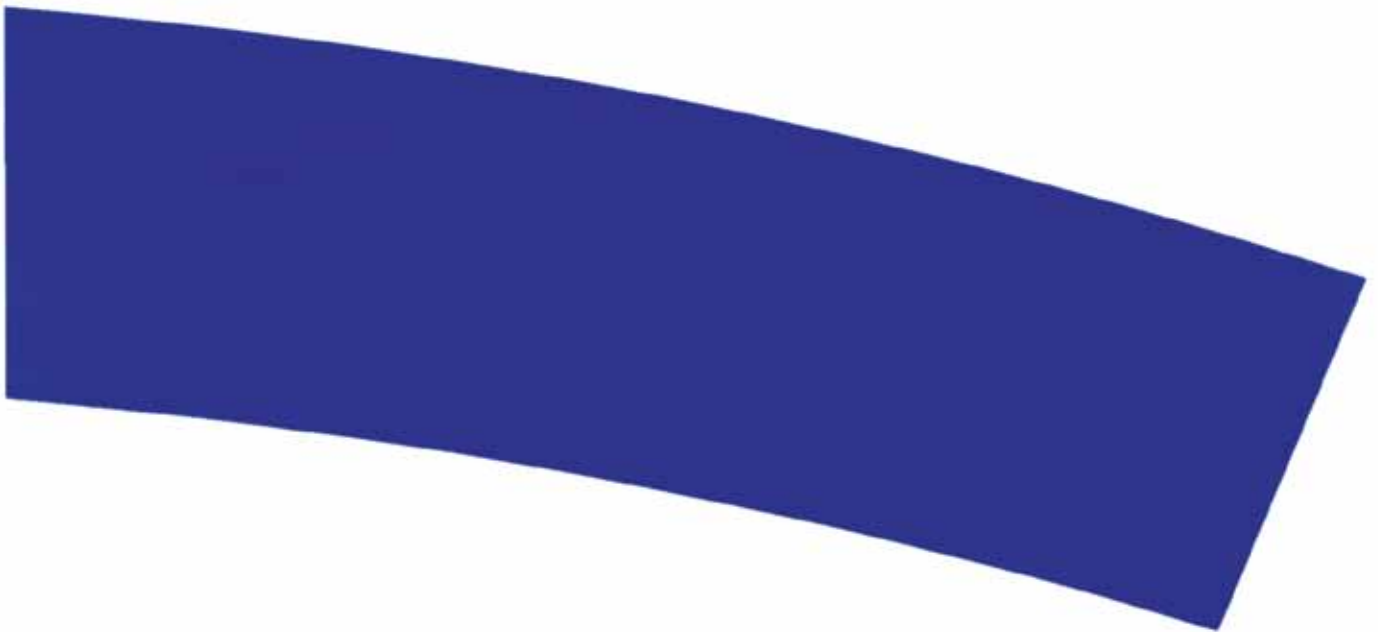


BLACK RIPE STUDY, 1956-1958

Oil on wood, 30 x 29 in. (76.2 x 73.7 cm)

Courtesy of Agnes Gund, New York, New York

ELLSWORTH KELLY 1923



DARK BLUE CURVES, 1997
Oil on canvas, 54 ½ x 118 in. (138.4 x 299.7 cm)
Courtesy of Ambassador and Mrs. Louis B. Susman, Chicago, Illinois

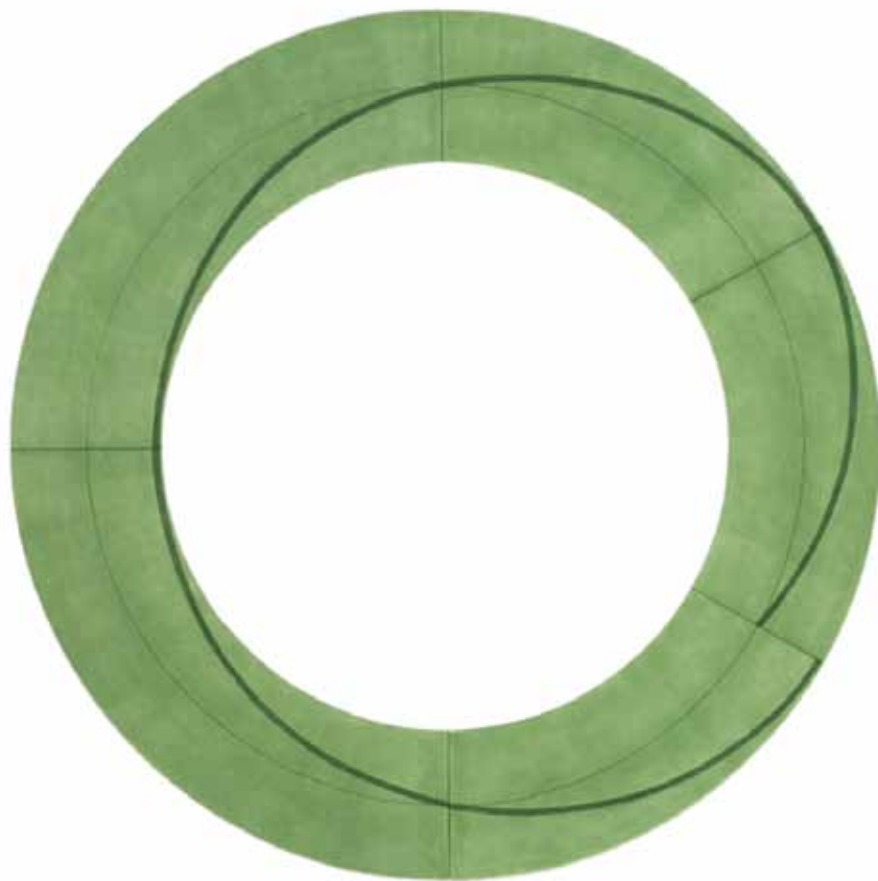
ROY LICHTENSTEIN 1923-1997



MIRROR, 1970

*Oil and magna on canvas, 24 in. (61 cm) in diameter
Courtesy of Agnes Gund, New York, New York*

ROBERT MANGOLD 1937



RING IMAGE H, 2009

Acrylic and pencil on canvas, 79 3/8 x 79 3/8 in. (203.2 x 203.2 cm)

Courtesy of Lisson Gallery, London, England

BRICE MARDEN 1938



UNTITLED NO. 3, 1986-1987
Oil on linen, 72 x 58 in. (182.9 x 147.3 cm)
Courtesy of Agnes Gund, New York, New York

BRICE MARDEN 1938

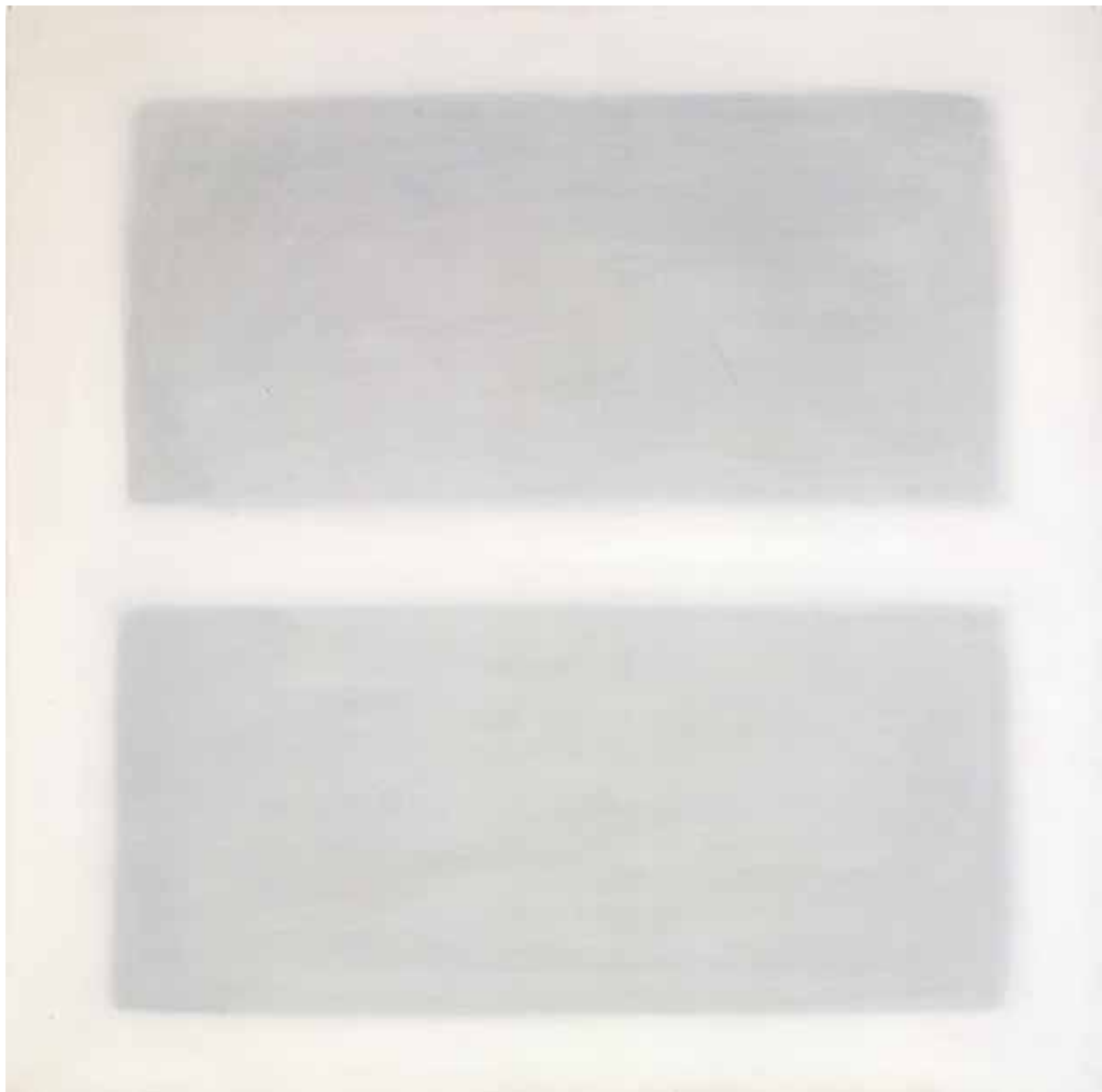


RED AND BLACK, 1999-2000

29 ¼ x 16 ¾ in. (74.3 x 42.5 cm)

Courtesy of Ambassador and Mrs. Louis B. Susman, Chicago, Illinois

AGNES MARTIN 1912-2005



UNBECKONING GRASS, 1958
Oil on canvas, 40 x 40 in. (101.6 x 101.6 cm)
Courtesy of PaceWildenstein, New York, New York

CLAES OLDENBURG 1929
AND COOSJE VAN BRUGGEN 1942-2009



TIED TRUMPET, 2004

*Aluminum, canvas, felt, polyurethane foam, rope, cord, coated with resin and painted with latex; plastic tubing,
50 ½ x 23 ½ x 15 in. (128.3 x 59.7 x 38.1 cm). Courtesy of Claes Oldenburg and PaceWildenstein, New York, New York*

MARTIN PURYEAR 1941



UNTITLED, 1987-1988

Red cedar and pine, 113 x 22 x 17 in. (287 x 55.9 x 43.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Accord, New York

AD REINHARDT 1913-1967



UNTITLED, 1947

40 x 32 in. (101.6 x 81.3 cm)

Courtesy of Ambassador and Mrs. Louis B. Susman, Chicago, Illinois

AD REINHARDT 1913-1967



ABSTRACT PAINTING RED, 1953

Oil on canvas, 40 x 40 in. (101.6 x 101.6 cm)

Courtesy of Ambassador and Mrs. Louis B. Susman, Chicago, Illinois

MARK ROTHKO 1903-1970



ORANGE AND TAN, 1954

Oil on canvas, 81 ¼ x 63 ¼ in. (206.4 x 160.7 cm)

Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Enid A. Hapt 1997.47.13

MARK ROTHKO 1903-1970

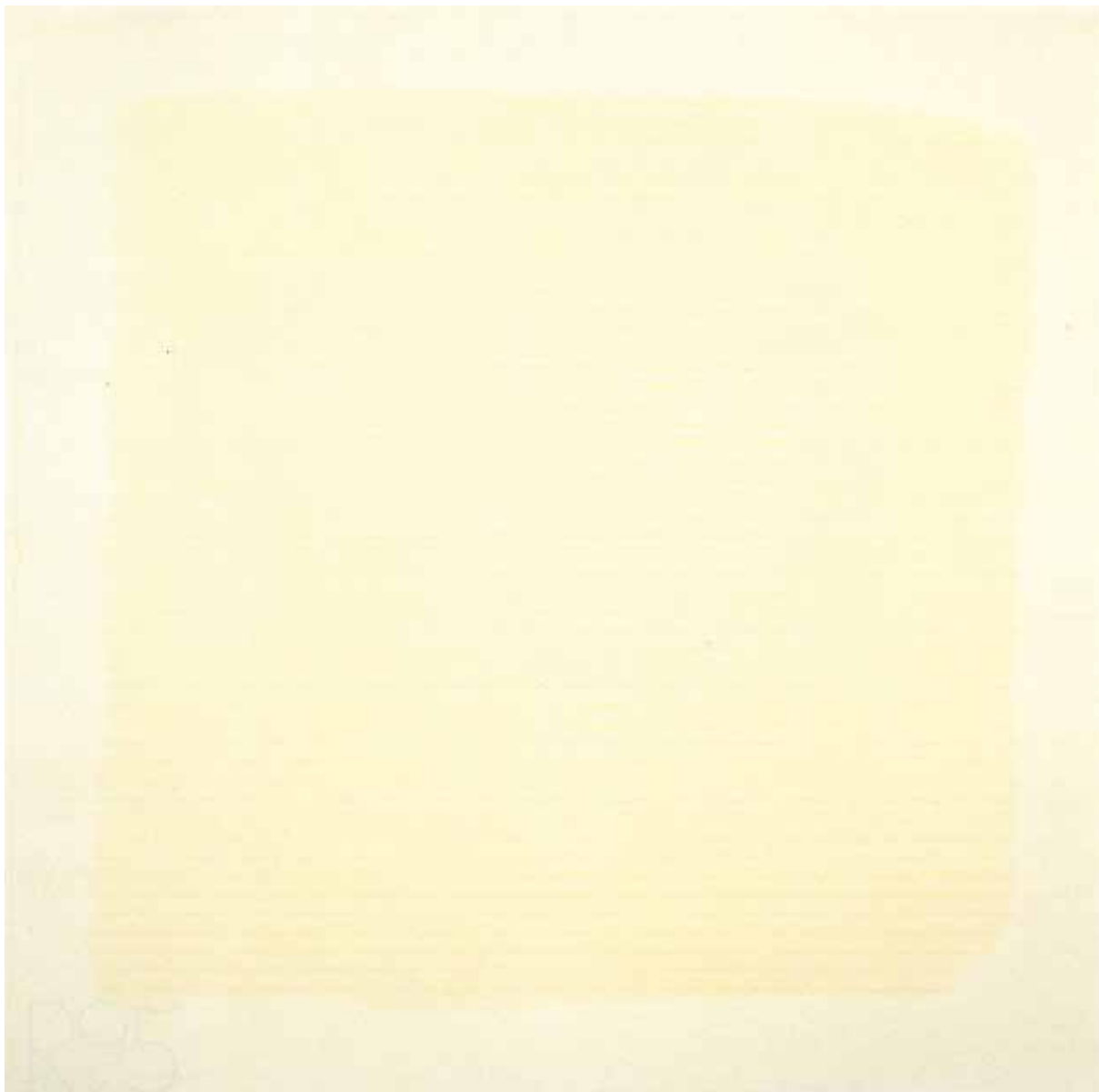


UNTITLED, 1951

Oil on canvas, 44 1/4 x 37 5/8 in. (112.4 x 95.6 cm)

Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of The Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc. 1986.43.157

ROBERT RYMAN 1930



CORE IX, 1995

*Encaustic painting with graphite on Japan paper, 19 ¼ x 19 ¼ in. (48.9 x 48.9 cm)
Collection of Karsten Schubert, Courtesy of PaceWildenstein, New York, New York*

DAVID SMITH 1906-1965

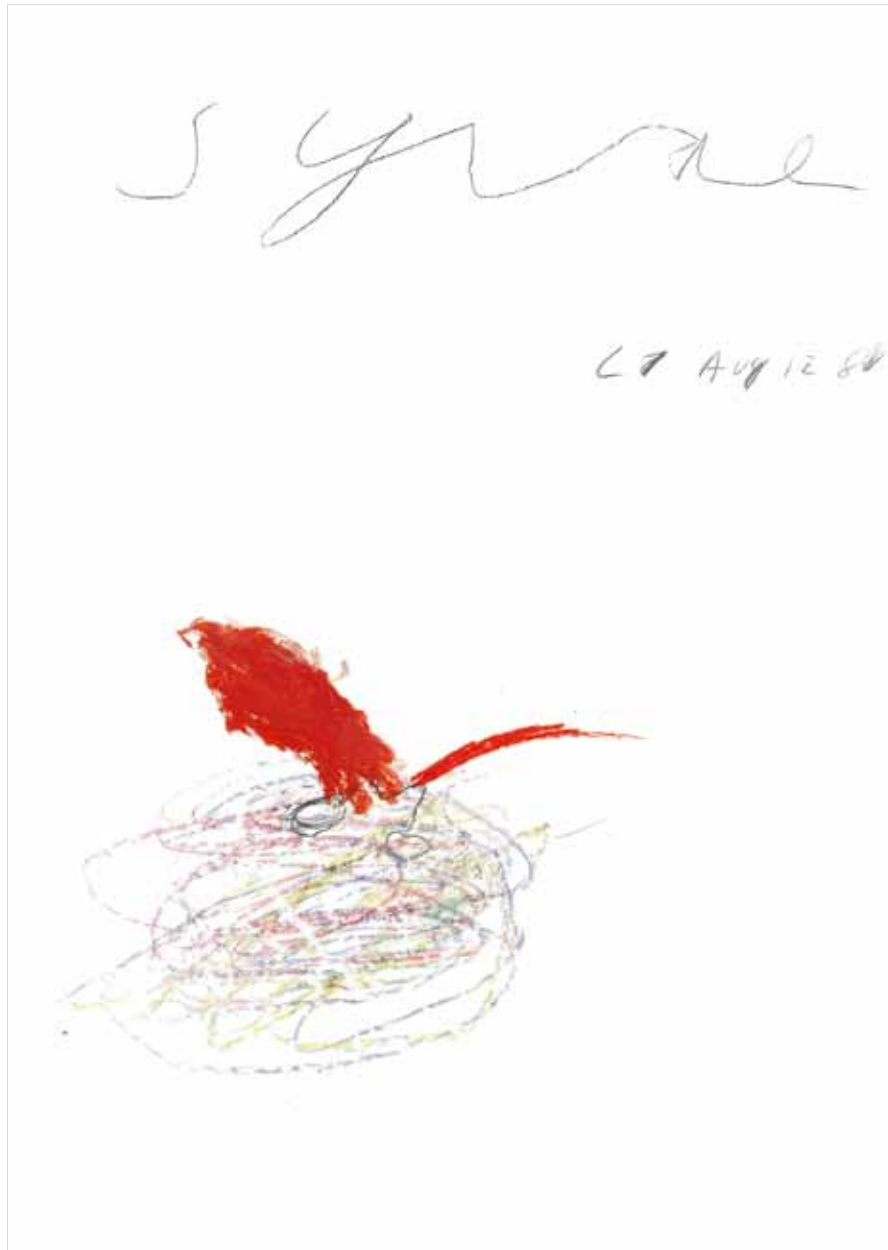


FORGING VIII, 1955

Steel, 89 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ x 8 ⁹/₁₆ in. (228.5 x 24 x 21.8 cm)

Estate of David Smith/VAGA, New York/DACS, London, Tate Images 2010; Lent from the collection of Candida and Rebecca Smith 1996

CY TWOMBLY 1928



SYLVAE, 1980

*Paint stick, crayon, and pencil on paper, 52 ½ x 42 ½ in. (133.4 x 108 cm)
Courtesy of Agnes Gund, New York, New York*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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