

Giant Steps: Artists and the 1960s

June 30, 2018–January 6, 2019

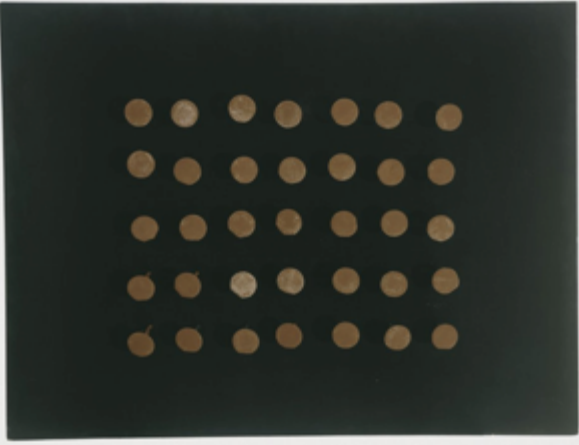
1905 Building, North Galleries, and Gallery for New Media

As one of the most culturally and politically significant periods of the twentieth century, the 1960s witnessed Woodstock, the first Moon landing, the victories of and regressive backlash against the Civil Rights movement, the American escalation to war in Vietnam (1965–75), and the growing dominance of consumerism. Simultaneously, it gave rise to numerous aesthetic innovations. Fueled by imagination and technological euphoria, artists began exploring new mediums and incorporating popular themes, motifs, and subjects into their practices. In time, movements such as Pop and Op art and Minimalism radically reshaped the boundaries of the art world.

Assembled from the Albright-Knox's expansive collection, *Giant Steps: Artists and the 1960s* features major works by some of the leading artists of the period, while also reconsidering those who played an underrecognized, but vital, role in furthering the visual avant-garde in the United States and beyond. Its title was inspired by John Coltrane's 1960 album *Giant Steps*, which provided aspiring jazz musicians a model of blasting free from the restraints of time and space, and speaks to the invention and progress that characterized the arts in general during this era.

This exhibition also considers the museum's history in defining Buffalo as a center of modern art. A vision of the Albright-Knox as a leader in collecting and giving voice to both established and up-and-coming artists took firm hold in the 1960s by way of groundbreaking exhibitions, music, dance, and theatrical performances. More than half a century later—and in the midst of a new transformative period for both the museum and the city—the works of art and archival material presented here revisit some of the vivacious imaginings of this compelling epoch.

This exhibition is organized by Godin-Spaulding Curator & Curator for the Collection Holly E. Hughes.

<p>Yaacov Agam Israeli, born Palestine (now Israel), 1928 <i>Loud Tactile Painting</i>, 1962 Wood and metal Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963</p>	
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Yaacov Agam approaches painting and sculpture with the belief that art is meant to be enjoyed through multiple senses. Raised as an Orthodox Jew, Agam's father, a rabbi, discouraged his artistic pursuits. To combine his desires to make art and to respect the biblical prohibition against figural imagery, Agam began creating nonrepresentational compositions as a means to inspire spiritual reflection. This painting is one of a number of tactile constructions the artist created to vibrate, move, or make sound when touched. *Loud Tactile Painting* features thirty-five long, slender springs attached to rattle-like drums made of metal that produce a subtle variety of tones and a pattern of bobbing shadows when activated.

While it is the intention of the artist for this work to be interactive, it is VERY fragile. Before touching this work, you must ask for assistance from a member of the museum's security staff, who can provide gloves and further directions.

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Josef Albers

American, born Germany, 1888–1976

Structural Constellation F. M. E. 3, 1962

Engraving on laminated plastic mounted
on plywood

George Cary, Evelyn Rumsey Cary,

James G. Forsyth Funds, 1974



Beginning in the 1930s, Josef Albers became one of the first artists to explore the psychological effects of color and space, a pursuit later adopted by Op art. He was especially interested in the ways in which the human eye processes the interaction among these compositional elements. Elegant geometric and spatial manipulations like *Structural Constellation F. M. E. 3* toy with the viewer's sense of space. Here, planes and angles appear to advance and recede into space simultaneously. Lines seem to cantilever outside of the picture plane or bend where they intersect. Throughout his lifetime, Albers created hundreds of works exploring variations of this motif, including drawings and embossed prints.

Carl Andre

American, born 1935

Lead-Copper Plain, 1969

Copper and lead

Charles Clifton Fund, 1972



During the early 1960s, Carl Andre made a living working on the Pennsylvania Railroad. His daily exposure to the endless miles of track and repetitive lines of freight cars heightened his awareness of the relationship between objects and their surroundings. This became a central idea in Andre's approach to artmaking and his

designation of “sculpture as form, sculpture as structure, sculpture as place.” *Lead-Copper Plain* is one in a series of works the artist referred to as “plains”—which further emphasizes their function as discrete places and evokes visions of a flat, sweeping landmass. It comprises thirty-six twelve-inch-square copper and lead tiles arranged in a checkerboard pattern and held in place only by gravity. Andre maintains that it is possible to sense the differing mass of the metals and hear the contrasting sounds they make underfoot. Viewers are invited to test Andre’s theories by gently walking on this work.

Mary Bauermeister

German, born 1934

Four Quart-er-s, 1965

Lenses, found objects, and drawings

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1968



Drawn to the vitality of the Pop art movement, Mary Bauermeister moved to New York City in 1962, becoming one of only a handful of women artists to achieve mainstream success during this fertile period in American art. She is best known for combining dense expanses of pen and ink drawing with found objects and optical lenses in multilayered constructions that embody a unique pictorial language rooted in science, mathematics, and poetry. A deliberate logic belies the chaotic appearance of *Four Quart-er-s*. Bauermeister began by dividing the background into four equal squares, which she then subdivided into four differing rectangular segments. Although this primary system is difficult to discern in the final composition, it allowed her to visualize the overall placement of the text, collaged,

and magnified elements. About this aspect of her work, she has said, "The lenses reverse, double, distort the images . . . I somehow wanted to unfix what I did in the background, or make it more ambiguous."

Romare Bearden

American, 1911–1988

Return of the Prodigal Son, 1967

Mixed media and collage on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Armand J.

Castellani, 1981



Amid the political turmoil of the 1960s and after working several decades as a painter, Romare Bearden began to cut, tear, and reassemble found images into visually powerful explorations of themes ranging from Harlem and jazz to the rural South and spirituality. This work is based on the biblical parable of the prodigal son. In the account, a father divides his estate between his two sons. While one stays and helps run the family farm, the other leaves, squanders his share, and is ultimately forced to return home penniless but repentant. Rather than turning him away, his father welcomes him with open arms. However, in Bearden's version, he is greeted by two women amid a sea of layered patterns and forms. Bearden also added another element: a candle that seems to float between the two female figures. This detail possibly refers to the early American tradition of placing a candle in the window when a member of the family was away as a token of love, hope, and faith, but also as a beacon of light. About his interpretation of this story, the artist has said, "The Prodigal Son has left North Carolina, gotten into bad company and has come back to the 'old folks,' his home, where, as Robert Frost says, when no one else wants you, they got to take you in."

Larry Bell

American, born 1939

Untitled, 1964

Glass, mirrors, and polished steel

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1964



In 1963, Larry Bell became interested in the ways in which glass diffuses, absorbs, and reflects light. Bell also discovered if he treated the material in a certain way, it would do all three at the same time. Over time, cubes became the ideal form with which he could investigate the interplay of light and surface, especially when presented on transparent pedestals. Initially, Bell employed household mirrors, selectively scratching away at areas of the reflective material. In these early sculptures, the artist also added visual complexity and depth by incorporating geometric imagery, such as the ellipsis shape presented here. Challenging notions of mass, volume, and gravity, this work seems as if it is floating.

Tony Berlant

American, born 1941

My Planet, 1964

Found and fabricated printed tin
collages on plywood with steel brads

Charles W. Goodyear Fund, 2013



One of the youngest members of the midcentury California arts scene, Tony Berlant is best known for his quirky, collaged assemblages that transform found images and materials into delightfully surreal tableaux. To create *My Planet*, Berlant hammered pieces of tin to a plywood surface with steel brads, which become part of the overall composition. Here, the artist brings together imagery related to astronomy, produce, and Marilyn Monroe. Shortly after the death of the actress turned pop icon in Los Angeles in 1962, Andy Warhol began employing her image in a variety of works. Here, Berlant presents her as a sex symbol surrounded by the innuendo-laden imagery of ripened fruit and vegetables. The concept for each of Berlant's works hails from myriad photographs, sketches, and notations. "The more personal and introspective an artwork is," he said, "the more universal it becomes."

Max Bill

Swiss, 1908–1994

Field of 32 Parts in 4 Colors, 1965

Oil on canvas


Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1968

Max Bill was a significant force in founding a core group of Swiss Concrete artists who strongly emphasized geometric abstraction devoid of figural or symbolic references. Bill's work as an industrial designer infused his visual practice with clarity and precision, and he arrived at his compositions using basic geometry and mathematical formulas. The artist favored the square format of *Field of 32 Parts in 4 Colors* for its neutral quality. Bill began by dividing the picture plane into four equal quadrants that he then bisected horizontally, creating two rectangles per quadrant. Each rectangle was then split on the diagonal to form two right triangles that were divided in half as well, ultimately resulting in thirty-two individual segments. Next, Bill applied a vibrant palette of green, blue, orange, and pink so that each color was used only once among any four sets of triangles. Their edges come together to form a diamond shape in the middle of the canvas, creating the illusion of depth.

<p>Martha Boto Argentine, 1925–2004 <i>Interférences optiques (Optical Interferences)</i>, 1965 Wood, aluminum, mirrors, and light with motor Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1967</p>	
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In the early 1960s, Martha Boto began adding motors or tinted lights to her sculptural work to explore the effects of movement, illumination, and color. She was especially interested in the ability of different industrial materials, such as aluminum and stainless steel, to modify, absorb, and reflect light. In *Optical Interferences* light radiates through a series of slits in a concealed turning aluminum disc and is multiplied by mirrors installed on the interior surface of the box. This effect is further enhanced by sixteen polished metal tubes mounted to the front of the work through which the viewer experiences the overall composition. Critics of the time related Boto's sculptures to science fiction and the mystery of space travel—in the same year that the artist first exhibited these works, Yuri

Alekseyevich Gagarin (Russian, 1934–1968) became the first human being to travel into space. About her work, Boto has said, “I have always been fascinated by the laws of harmony and equilibrium, which govern the cosmos through interrelations of light and movement, space, time, and color.”

<p>Pol Bury Belgian, 1922–2005 <i>Untitled</i>, 1965 Aluminum on wooden panel with motorized relief Gift of Mrs. Nell E. Wendler and James S. Ely, Jr. in memory of our Mother, Nell Schoellkopf Ely Miller, 1995</p>	
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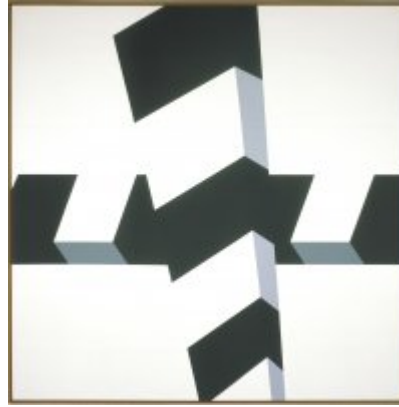
An early protagonist of Kinetic art, Pol Bury explored painting, drawing, and sculpture, as well as jewelry-making, public fountain commissions, and experimental film. Bury discovered his path only through successive encounters, influences, experiments, and failures. He was initially inspired by Surrealism, a movement whose practitioners sought to channel the creative potential of the unconscious mind. In 1952, however, the artist abandoned painting after discovering the work of Alexander Calder (American, 1898–1976), whose mobiles, set in motion by air currents, were a revelation for Bury. He began making sculptures with parts that slowly twist, tilt, or spin. The finger-like aluminum tendrils that protrude from a wooden panel in this work are powered by a concealed motor—an element of surprise that is undoubtedly connected to Bury’s Surrealist roots. Their sluggish, fidgety stops and starts can have an unsettling effect, perhaps like something out of a science fiction narrative.

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<p>Joseph Cornell American, 1903–1972 <i>Ninth Dawn</i> from the series “Home poor heart,” 1964 Collage Gift of The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation, 1993</p>	
<p><i>Soap Bubble Set (Ostend Hotel)</i>, ca. 1958 Mixed media Edmund Hayes Fund, 1971</p>	

An early pioneer in assemblage art, Joseph Cornell was deeply inspired by the unexpected compositions of Surrealism, whose practitioners sought to channel the creative potential of the unconscious mind. Cornell collected Victorian bric-a-brac, old photographs, dime-store trinkets, and other found elements, which he developed into extraordinary compositions that are as intriguing as they are elegant in their intimate presentation. By arranging his tableaux in small boxes or picture frames, the artist forces the viewer to lean in and look closely at these miniature worlds. Addressing recurrent themes, such as childhood, space, and birds, through unlikely juxtapositions and attention to texture and detail, Cornell turned everyday objects into mysterious treasures full of memory, wonder, and fantasy. While his work was considered avant-garde at the time of its creation—hovering between the twilight of Abstract Expressionism and the onset of Pop art—it also evokes a feeling of nostalgia.

Allan D'Arcangelo
American, 1930–1998
Landscape, 1968
Acrylic on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1969



Buffalo-born artist Allan D'Arcangelo aimed to chronicle the American experience. During the early 1960s, he began creating highly stylized images of desolate highways as seen from an exaggerated perspective. Often, these tableaux incorporate familiar roadside imagery, such as route signs and rearview mirrors. The cool, schematic abstraction the artist employed in these works relies on the viewer's own experiences and evokes a feeling of loneliness. However, later in the decade, D'Arcangelo's approach to this same subject became increasingly removed from reality. *Landscape*, for example, can be read in multiple ways. The black, white, and gray sections may call to mind a railroad crossing barrier, although their large scale challenges the readability of such a reference. The positive-negative qualities of this composition are abstracted, the elements floating in an implied space.

Walter De Maria
American, 1935–2013
Hard Core, 1969
16mm film, color, sound, edition 3/100
Running time: 26 minutes
The Panza Collection and by exchange:
George B. and Jenny R. Mathews Fund,
Bequest of Arthur B. Michael, Albert H.
Tracy Fund and Bequest of John
Mortimer Schiff, 2015



Walter De Maria is a crucial figure in the history of Minimalism as well as a pioneering Land artist who utilized the Earth's terrain as a material for artmaking. In 1969, De Maria collaborated with artist Michael Heizer (American, born 1944) to produce the work presented here, which was filmed in Nevada's Black Rock Desert. De Maria did not conceive of *Hard Core* as a traditional film. Offering the viewer an experience of the landscape in real time, it contains neither dialogue nor discernible chronology but rather largely consists of spliced shots of a dried, cracked lake bed and 360-degree pans of an expansive horizon with mountains hanging in the distance. The soundtrack, entitled *Ocean Music*, is based on recordings of De Maria drumming as an accompaniment to the sound of waves, which both lulls and heightens the tension as the film progresses.

A single narrative moment disrupts the otherwise measured pace of *Hard Core*. Heizer and De Maria appear dressed as cowboys and engage in a shootout from which both walk away unharmed—an act that evokes an image of the artist as maverick and alludes to the work's Western setting in the popular imagination. At the end of the film, the viewer is left to contemplate a lingering close-up of a young Vietnamese girl's face. The United States involvement in the Vietnam War (1955–75) was at its height when De Maria created this work, which makes his choice of concluding imagery all the more poignant.

Jim Dine
American, born 1935
Tennis Shoe, 1962
Painted tennis shoe and laces with
paper collage and oil on wood
Gift of Linda Hyman, 2001



In 1959, Jim Dine traveled to New York, where he took part in some of the city's early Happenings—spontaneous and experiential performances in which the audience was often encouraged to participate. A year later, he began to focus more on a painterly practice that incorporated physical objects, a love of which came from working in his family's hardware stores as a youth. He frequently affixed everyday objects, such as tools, rope, and articles of clothing, to his canvases. Here, a tennis shoe camouflaged in a layer of piggy-pink pigment emerges from the lower portion of the picture plane. While Dine is associated with the development of Pop art, he downplayed this connection in a 1966 interview, stating, "I'm not a Pop artist. . . . When I use objects, I see them as a vocabulary of feelings. I can spend a lot of time with objects, and they leave me as satisfied as a good meal. I don't think Pop artists feel that way."

Rosalyn Drexler

American, born 1926

Lovers, 1963

Acrylic and paper collage on canvas

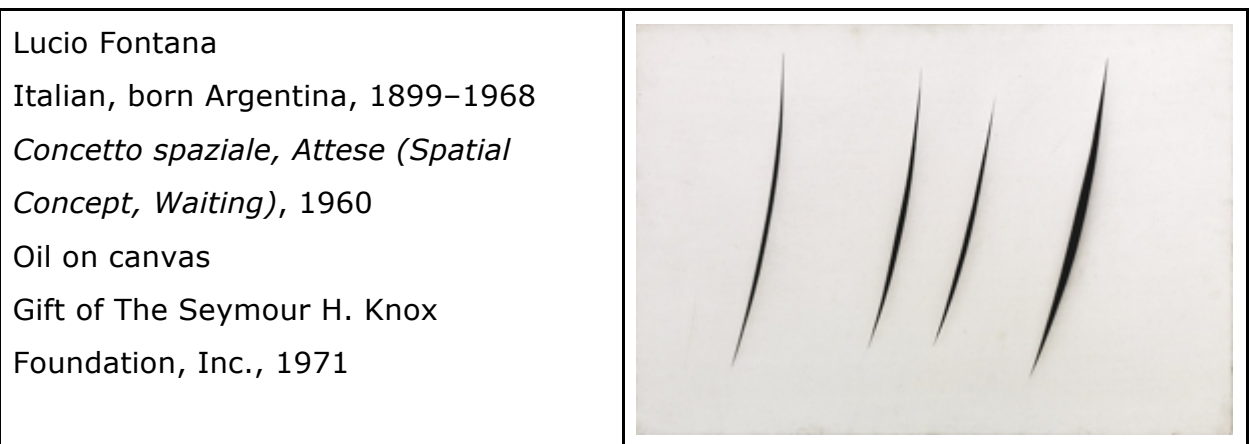
George B. and Jenny R. Mathews Fund,
by exchange, 2016



Drawn to popular culture themes and representations of gender in the mass media, Rosalyn Drexler began using pop-inspired imagery in 1961, on the heels of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein, whose work can also be found in this exhibition. Drexler altered a publicity poster for the 1957 movie *Jailhouse Rock* depicting Elvis Presley and Judy Tyler embracing as the basis for the kissing couple in *Lovers*. These figures are set against a background of collaged paper that features legible

snippets such as “co-starring,” “released,” “am I faris,” and “willi.” A man and a woman are seated atop this amalgamation of text. They do not interact, and their body language conveys doubt, uncertainty, and guilt. The overall composition implies that the figures in the foreground and those above may represent the same couple at two different points in their relationship: a moment of passion and one of betrayal.

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In the late 1940s, Lucio Fontana began puncturing the surface of sheets of paper and canvases in an attempt to blur the distinction between two- and three-dimensionality. Over the next two decades, he continued to seek new ways of developing the hole as his signature gesture. In *Spatial Concept, Waiting*, Fontana covered the canvas with paint and then sliced the picture plane from top to bottom using a utility knife, gently prying each incision open with his hands. Lastly, he backed the canvas with black gauze. This final step not only stabilized the work but also created an illusion that was important to Fontana—suggesting a mysterious space just behind and beyond the canvas itself. This aspect of his compositions was crucial for the artist, who once said, “I do not want to make a painting; I want to open up space, create a new dimension, tie in the cosmos, as it endlessly expands beyond the confining plane of the picture.”

Naum Gabo

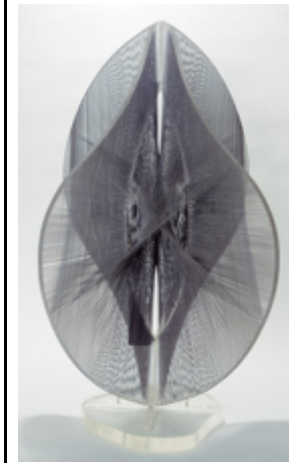
American, born Russia, 1890–1977

Linear No. 2, Variation, 1962–65

Stainless steel coil on plastic

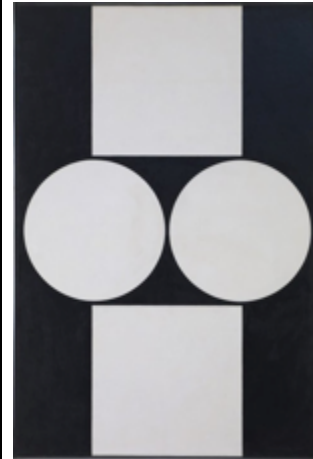
Gift of The Seymour H. Knox

Foundation, Inc., 1965



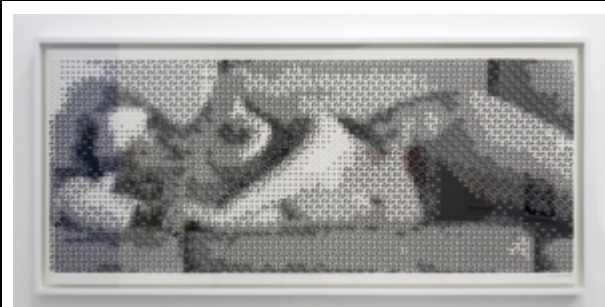
Naum Gabo believed that art should reflect contemporary culture and hoped to express the successful coexistence of nature and science. To create *Linear No. 2, Variation*, he used the decidedly modern materials of stainless steel and plastic, reflecting the optimism and excitement he felt about technological progress. Gabo applied his training in engineering, science, and math to the precise design of this work; he even integrated a star in the center that can be seen from certain angles. This sculpture also reflects the ideas of Constructivism—an earlier art movement that focused on the importance of space as part of a composition and the use of line as a sculptural form. However, Gabo did not wish his sculpture to be viewed solely in academic terms. He also allowed intuition to drive his compositions in order to imbue his craft with emotion and provide a kind of solace and renewal for the spirit.

Frederick Hammersley
American, 1919–2009
Bilingual, 1965
Oil on linen
Albert H. Tracy Fund, by exchange,
2009



While serving overseas in the U.S. Army during World War II (1939–45), Frederick Hammersley visited the studio of Pablo Picasso, an experience that inspired him to pursue a career as an artist. Unlike the Abstract Expressionists who dominated the East Coast art scene, Hammersley and many of his California contemporaries preferred a more contemplative aesthetic. Their methodology—based in cleanly delineated, flat shapes—came to be known as Hard-edge painting. The artist knew that many people have a difficult time understanding this visual language, which he once called “the worst kind of paintings to show the American layperson.” To this end, Hammersley provided accessible titles for his works, stating “It’s like I’m giving them an opening wedge to get into the painting.” The title of this work, *Bilingual*, suggests the ways in which the duo of black and white can represent communication and balance. Hammersley’s take on this color combination differs from its traditional association as a potent symbol of opposing forces, such as life and death, or good and evil.

Leon Harmon
American, 1922–1982
Ken Knowlton
American, born 1931
(Computer Nude) Studies in Perception
I, 1967



Screen print on paper Gift of A. Conger Goodyear, by exchange, 2014	
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(Computer Nude) Studies in Perception I is the most widely circulated early artwork made using a computer. It demonstrates the unique capacity of the viewer's brain to interpret a composition of abstract symbols grouped to emulate areas of tonal value as a human figure. Leon Harmon, a researcher in cognitive neuroscience, and Ken Knowlton, a computer engineer at AT&T's Bell Labs, reenvisioned a photograph of dancer Deborah Hay as a bitmap mosaic using a program they developed. Harmon and Knowlton were brought together by Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.). Organized in 1966 by engineers Billy Klüver (American, born Monaco, 1927–2004) and Fred Waldhauer (American, 1927–1993), and artists Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Whitman (American, born 1935), this nonprofit group aimed to provide creative minds with access to new technology and engineering professionals.

Rauschenberg hung a copy of this image in his studio during a press conference for an E.A.T. event. It was photographed and subsequently reproduced in an October 11, 1967, article in *The New York Times* titled "Art and Science Proclaim Alliance in Avant-Garde Loft," becoming the publication's first full-frontal nude. Due to the popularity of the image, a limited-edition screen print was created from the original work.



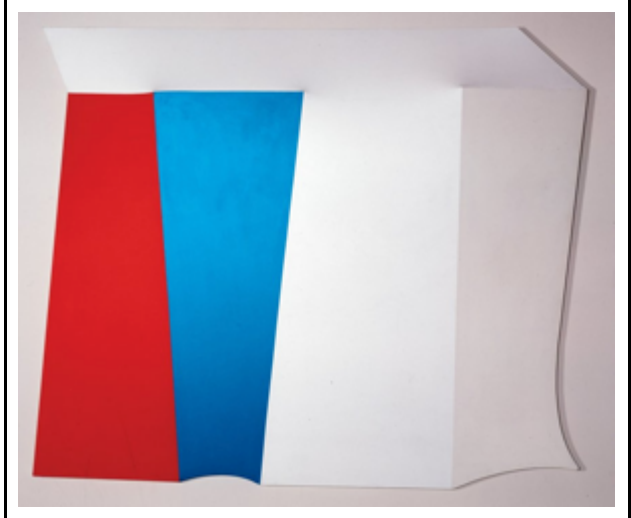
Al Held
American, 1928–2005
Bastion, 1967
Acrylic on canvas
Gift of the artist, 1986



Al Held created distinctly dramatic paintings, presenting his seemingly impenetrable compositions—from early gestural works to crisp geometric abstractions—on a theatrical scale. *Bastion* is part of the artist’s “Alphabet” series, which he made between 1961 and 1967. Held based these works more or less directly on the geometry of letters, bringing together aspects of Minimalism and Color Field painting via a hard-edged motif. Here, the edge of the canvas barely contains the image. A thick, dark-green line slinks across the bottom and up the right edge of the picture. Two small white squares push against this line from the bottom left and top right corners, creating tension. The title of the work, which refers to a fortified place, underscores this sentiment.



Charles Hinman
American, born 1932
Acropolis, 1965
Acrylic on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1966



During the mid-1960s, Charles Hinman worked out of an abandoned sail-making loft located on the Coenties Slip in Lower Manhattan that he shared with James Rosenquist, whose work is also on view in this exhibition. It was during this time that Hinman began playing a significant role in redefining the physical shape of painting, seeking to push the canvas out from the wall. The artist was also greatly influenced by Ellsworth Kelly's use of flat, contrasting colors. The protruding geometric and undulating forms in *Acropolis* allow it to function as a painting and a sculpture simultaneously. The artist's travels to Greece may have influenced the composition and title of this work, which evoke the citadel of ancient Athens.

Hans Hofmann
American, born Germany, 1880–1966
Rising Moon, 1965
Oil on canvas
Private Collection

By 1944, Hans Hofmann had developed an entirely abstract approach to painting, one that he would continue to hone for the rest of his career and proved influential to the ideas of a younger generation. Hofmann utilized a technique he called "push and pull," in which he employed color and shape to create a sense that areas of his compositions are emerging or receding. The larger formats and well-worked

surfaces of his paintings of the 1950s and 1960s reflect the ambiance of Abstract Expressionism. The smooth blocks of vivid color in *Rising Moon* are characteristic of Hofmann's work after 1958. Not unlike a traditional landscape, the weight of the image remains at the bottom, while the yellow disk, a specific reference to the moon, floats above.

Gwyther Irwin

British, 1931–2008

Bedford Heights, 1964

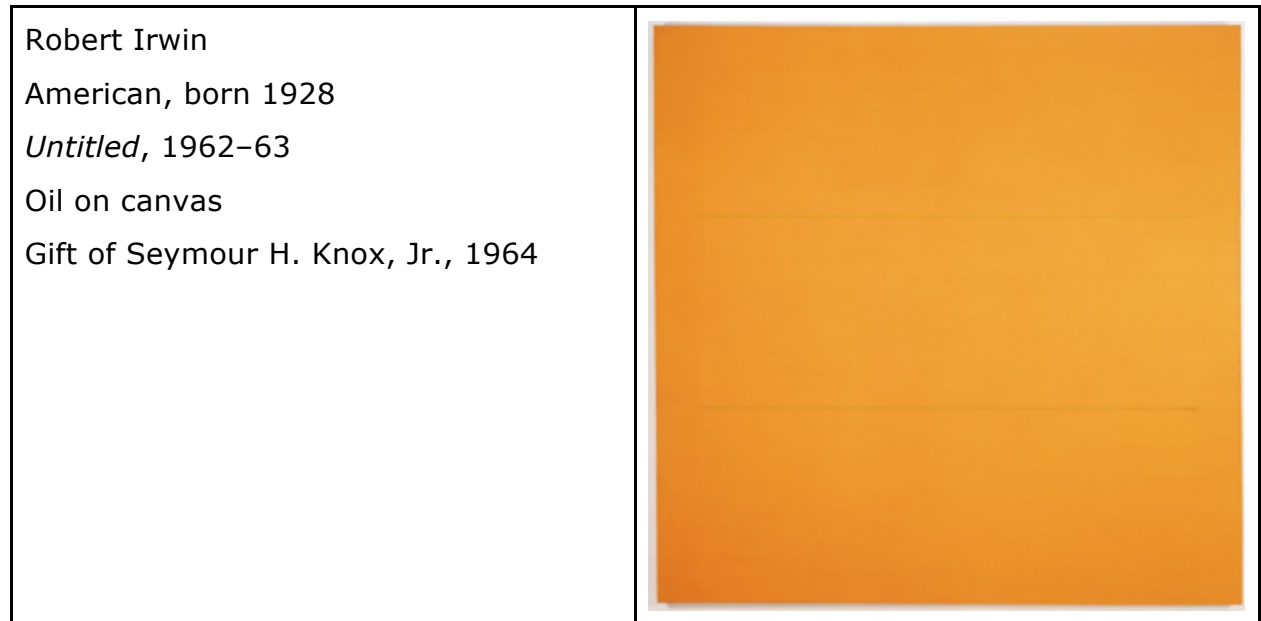
Collage relief

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1964



During the late 1950s, while many of his British contemporaries yielded to the influence of Abstract Expressionism, Gwyther Irwin maintained an interest in the European avant-garde. Inspirations such as Art Brut, which explored graffiti and outsider art, fed into a style that Irwin made all his own: a form of three-dimensional collage that hovers between painting and sculpture. The artist combed the streets, picking up bits of debris. He would then assemble the detritus into large-scale, delicate tableaux—repeating a simple motif across the picture plane, all the while subtly refining shape, color, and texture. In *Bedford Heights*, Irwin transformed corrugated cardboard and other materials into a monochromatic, depth-laden composition built within a system of rhythm, pattern, and structure.

The artist has said of his process, "I watch with wonder and excitement as the colors and marks, falling from my hand as if propelled by a source of guidance other than myself, slowly spread across the surface."



During the 1950s, Robert Irwin began creating gestural, expressionist paintings. However, by the end of the decade, he started to question their relevance, feeling that the works contained too many extraneous or unnecessary elements. Confronting and exploring his doubts, Irwin began to investigate ways in which he could tease out the physical nature of painting in order to offer a more intimate, contemplative experience for the viewer. He set about experimenting with the use of lines, which do not refer to or reference anything other than themselves. Subsequently, he simplified his paintings even further by reducing his composition to only horizontal lines on a single field of color. About this transition in his practice, Irwin once said, "I got into what some referred to as a 'less is more' thing, which is not really true at all; I was just trying to eliminate imagery in favor of physicality. The thing was to *maximize* the physicality while *minimizing* the imagery."

Jasper Johns

American, born 1930

Numbers in Color, 1958–59

Encaustic and newspaper on canvas

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1959



Jasper Johns's earliest paintings depict easily recognizable images like targets and flags—emblems we do not generally study in great detail. In many of his compositions, Johns included familiar symbols and systems that are used to create order in the world, such as numbers and maps. While numerals—from zip codes to social security identification—organize our lives in a variety of ways, they are, in fact, only ideas and not tangible things. For the artist, taking on everyday subjects allows viewers to focus on other aspects of the work, such as medium and surface, sequence and repetition. To create *Numbers in Color*, Johns used a store-bought stencil and encaustic, an ancient type of paint made by dissolving pigment in hot wax. Later in the process, he embedded pieces of newspaper in the encaustic. While these fragments add depth and texture, they also refer to concrete objects and events in the real world, even if the particular words have been rendered illegible.

Donald Judd
American, 1928–1994
Untitled, 1969
Galvanized iron and Plexiglas
Edmund Hayes Fund, 1972



Donald Judd was an influential leader of Minimalism, an art movement that favored industrial materials and anonymity over the expressiveness of Abstract Expressionism. Best known for his ability to harness bold color, repetition, and simple geometric shapes, Judd began working with an industrial fabricator in 1964 to create objects according to his exact specifications that are based on the neutrality of the box form. He explained, "I don't like sculpture with a handled look, just as I don't like the evidence of brushwork in painting. All of that implies expressionism, implies that the artist is involved with the work as he goes along. . . . I want the material to be material when you look at it."

In the work presented here, ten identical boxes in a vertical composition appear to float off the wall; the units are separated by intervals that are precisely equal to the height of an individual element. The appearance of weightlessness is heightened by the artist's use of translucent orange Plexiglas as the top and bottom of the boxes. When lit, the installation creates a dramatic interplay of color and shadows.

Ellsworth Kelly
American, 1923–2015
Blue, Yellow and Red, 1968
Oil on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1969



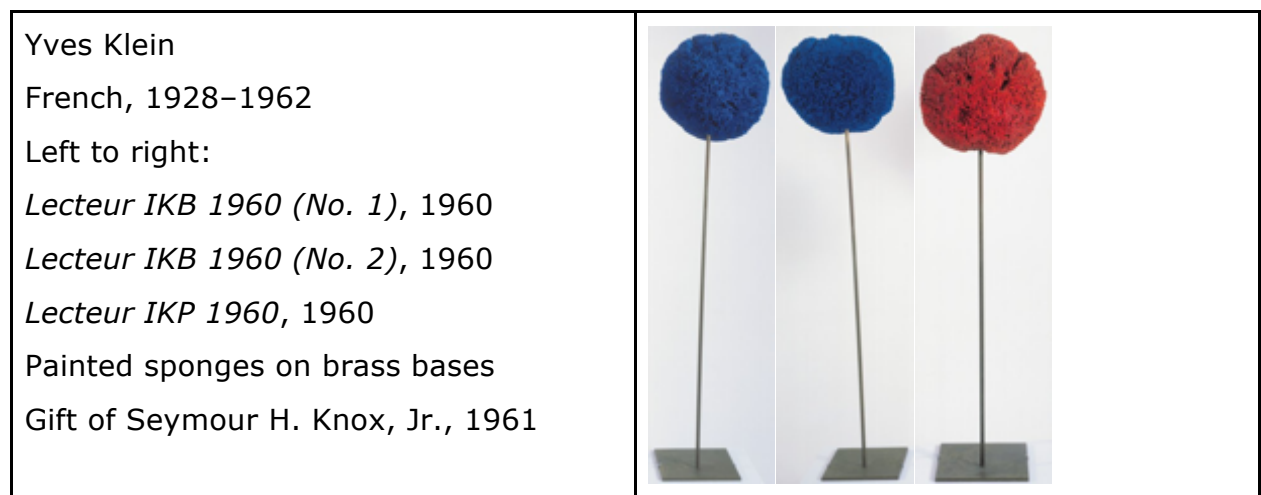
Throughout his diverse practice, Ellsworth Kelly focused on ways in which he could explore the dynamic relationships between color, shape, and form. Kelly was significantly influential in the development of Minimalism, Hard-edge and Color Field painting, and Pop art, examples of which are on view in this exhibition. He also created some of contemporary art's first paintings on irregularly shaped canvases. *Blue, Yellow and Red* depicts three equally sized, primary-colored bands placed side-by-side, extending the length of the painting. The leaning angle of this elongated parallelogram gives it a dynamic quality. About his approach to his compositions, Kelly stated in 1964, "I'm not interested in edges, I'm interested in the mass and color. . . . The edges happen because the forms get as quiet as they can be. I want the masses to perform."

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Edward Kienholz
American, 1927–1994
The Minister, 1961
Wood podium, Bible, enamel on
butcher's scale, and fabric assemblage
By exchange: Charles W. Goodyear
Fund and Gift of Mrs. George A.
Forman, 2013

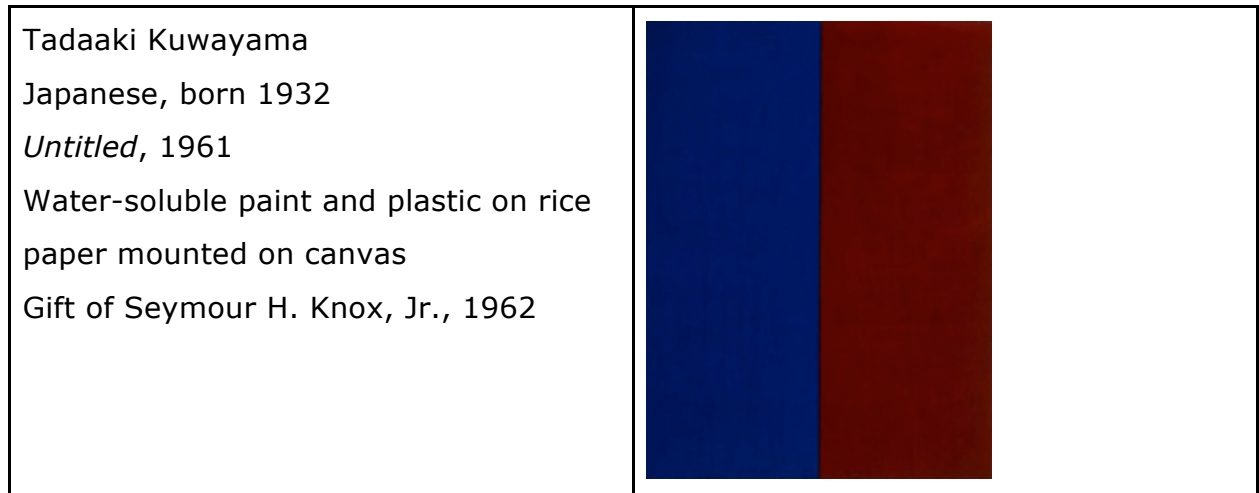


Edward Kienholz is best known for creating three-dimensional immersive environments from items he collected at yard sales and flea markets. Kienholz was also a key figure in Los Angeles's art scene and a cofounder of the Ferus Gallery, an important venue for emerging creatives. Throughout his body of work, the artist tended to focus on portraying the darker side of contemporary life, taking on themes such as political corruption, moral hypocrisy, and the oppression of marginalized groups in the United States. While Kienholz's assembly of objects in *The Minister* is at first humorous, there are numerous layers and potential meanings within the composition. The butcher's scale, for example, is painted to look like a minister. This brings to mind the phrase a "pound of flesh," which traces its origin to William Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*. The figure of speech has come to refer to a payment extracted from the person from which it is owed, causing great distress.



In the late 1950s, Yves Klein created a series of monochromatic paintings using a resilient and powdery ultramarine pigment. It was of great significance to him, symbolizing the physical manifestation of cosmic energy, and he patented the color under the name "International Klein Blue" (IKB). Klein subsequently applied it to a series of large sponges that, for him, served as a metaphor for art and the creative process. He either attached these to his canvases as relief elements or affixed them to wire stands as sculptures. Klein soaked two of the works presented here with IKB and one in a deep pink (IKP). In addition to blue and pink, Klein also used a

particular hue of gold (IKG). Together, he believed these colors to be a holy trinity of equivalency, stating, "Blue, gold, and pink are of the same nature. Any exchange at the level of these three states is honest."



During his time at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts, Tadaaki Kuwayama studied *nihonga*: a traditional Japanese form of painting on paper or silk with naturally sourced materials that emphasizes beauty over all else. The term was popularized during the late nineteenth century to differentiate such works from Western painting. In 1958, Kuwayama came to the United States and settled in New York City, where the art scene was still dominated by the emotional intensity of Abstract Expressionism. Not long after, he began to experiment with a reductive process, creating a series of subtle horizontal and vertical compositions, like the work presented here, that embody his desire to offer the viewer a quiet and spiritual experience. Throughout the decade, he continued to minimize his painterly practice, eventually incorporating industrial materials. By 1965, Kuwayama wholly abandoned *nihonga* techniques in favor of spray-painting to create pristine surfaces devoid of any trace of the artist's hand.

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Roy Lichtenstein
American, 1923–1997
Head—Red and Yellow, 1962
Oil on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1962




With his signature adaption of imagery found in comic books and advertisements, Roy Lichtenstein helped to define the Pop art movement of the 1960s. During this period, the artist was one of many who made the then-radical assertion that popular culture was a viable subject for serious artmaking. A smiling woman throwing a beach ball in a vacation newspaper advertisement served as the source for *Head—Red and Yellow*, as well as a large series of subsequent paintings. In this particular work, Lichtenstein appropriated just the figure's head and re-rendered it using only two primary hues: red and yellow. The dots on her face and neck emulate the Benday process, originally developed in 1879 by the newspaper engraver Benjamin Day (American, 1810–1889) to create tonal variations through size and spacing, and later adopted by the pulp comic books of the 1950s and 1960s. Unlike those in his source materials, however, Lichtenstein's dots are not machine-made. Instead, their painterly imperfections reveal the importance of the artist's hand in the resulting image.

Verena Loewensberg
Swiss, 1912–1986
Untitled No. 1, 1969–70

Oil on canvas Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1971	
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Verena Loewensberg belonged to a core group of Swiss Concrete artists that included Max Bill, with whom she had a lifelong friendship. However, her take on Concrete art—a European movement that strongly emphasized geometrical abstraction devoid of figurative or symbolic references—was more fluid than that of her peers. Throughout her lifetime, Loewensberg found that intellectual rigor stifled her creativity, and she explored a number of different artistic directions, ranging from Color Field to monochromatic painting. Taken as a whole, however, her body of work reflects a preoccupation with the square, rectangle, and circle, as well as the interaction between line and color.

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Len Lye American, born New Zealand, 1901– 1980 <i>Grass</i> , 1965 Stainless steel and wood, motorized and programmed Gift of Howard Wise Gallery, 1965	
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In the late 1920s, Len Lye began making experimental films, which formed the basis of his principle preoccupation: movement. Unable to afford a camera, he painted directly on celluloid film stock to create flickering images. After visiting New York in 1944, Lye relocated to the city, and in the late 1950s he began to explore kinetic sculpture fully. He initially described his work as “Tangible Motion Sculptures”—a term he employed to set his work apart from the gently moving mobiles made popular by Alexander Calder (American, 1899–1976). When in

motion, this calming work is reminiscent of beach grass swaying in the breeze along the shoreline of Lye's native New Zealand. However, "Grass came about without any preconceived ideas about its imagery," the artist explained. "It came from watching a single rod swaying and then doubling up to emphasize the accelerating stroke of its oscillation. It was the 'lurch' part of the sway that I liked. It should be timed to slow music . . . I prefer something in similar tempo in the Satie style."

For this installation, *Grass* has been paired with *Gymnopédie No.1, 1888*, by composer Erik Satie (French, 1866–1925). We invite viewers to first experience this work without music and then press the button to listen. To stop music, press button again. Please note that this work is designed to rest for five minutes between ten minute periods of motion.

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<p>Heinz Mack German, born 1931 <i>Simona</i>, 1965 Lenses and plastic Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1966</p>	
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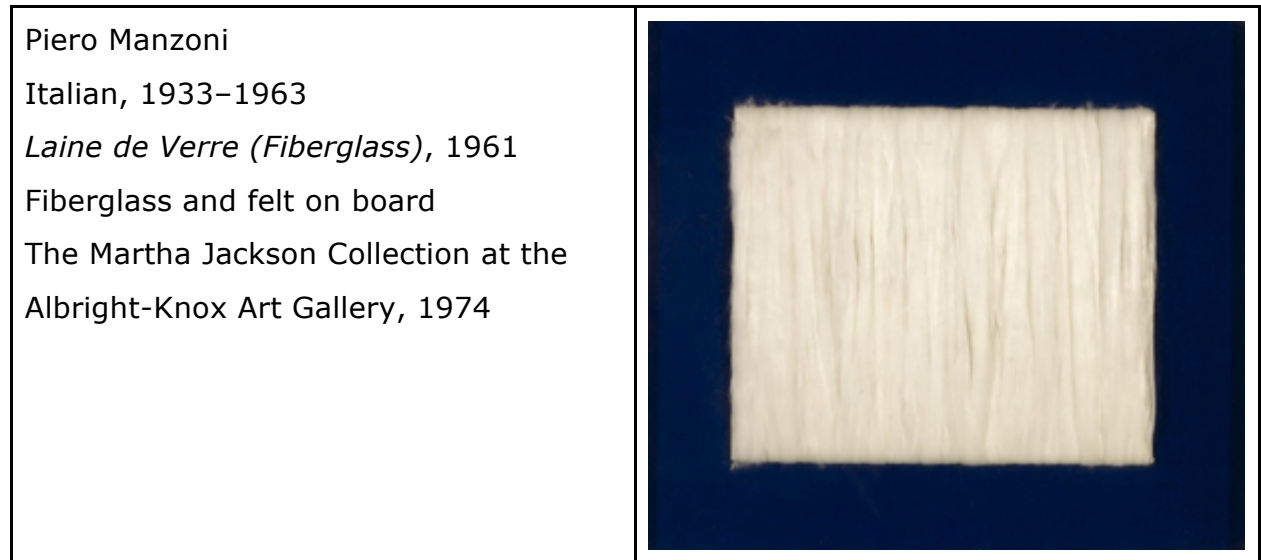
Heinz Mack and Otto Piene's series of *Abendausstellungen* (evening exhibitions) in their shared Düsseldorf studio led to the formation of the ZERO group in 1957; Günther Uecker joined the duo in 1961. The name was chosen based on the association of zero with silence and potentiality, not to convey irony or emptiness. Emerging in the wake of World War II (1939–45) and the collapse of Germany's economy, the group worked cooperatively, often experimenting with cheap, easily sourced materials.

In the majority of his compositions, Mack aims to capture the movement of natural elements, and the ways in which they reflect and absorb light. *Simona*, a tall, slender construction of repetitive design alludes to the silhouette of the skyscraper—a symbol of mid-twentieth-century modernity. For the artist, however, the column also represents dignity and humanity standing upright in space. Mack has said, “The main thing is that all the artists that were or have been involved in the spirit of ZERO in general are working with structures . . . making concrete not realistic work: it’s just structures—and behind these structures is the idea of light, space, and movement.”



While living in New York and working as an architect, Ronald Mallory was inspired by the city’s art scene. He eventually decided to become an artist himself and worked predominantly as a painter. In the early 1960s, he began sharing a studio with Pol Bury, whose work is also on view in this exhibition. “Pol was a huge influence on my work,” he said. “He was a pure kinetic artist, and I was coming to kinetic art from a painterly point of view.” Mallory bought a small vial of mercury on Canal Street in 1965 and soon after began experimenting with it in his paintings, thinking it would add more volume to his compositions. However, even after being mixed with polyurethane, the substance would not dry and continued to move. The artist was captivated by this result and started to use the material on its own to

create kinetic sculptures. While controlling the viscosity of the mercury proved to be difficult, eventually, after trial and error, Mallory began to unravel the secret of manipulating it to achieve the desired effect.



Piero Manzoni's distinctly innovative practice called into question the very nature of the object; no material was off-limits in his quest to challenge the status of modern art. A critic of his time, Manzoni had reservations about the mass production and consumerism taking hold throughout Italy after World War II (1939–45). The artist named his most extensive series of works *Achromes*, a term that referred to their colorlessness. In these works, Manzoni experimented with various white pigments and materials, such as gesso, felt, stitched canvas, and even bread rolls. The work presented here, for example, is made of fiberglass. Manzoni wrapped the material around a board and then set it on a background of blue felt. The artist believed that this lack of traditional compositional elements, such as color, representational imagery, or symbols, freed painting to be something altogether new. After his untimely death in 1963, Manzoni's friend and fellow artist Ben Vautier (Italian, born 1935) signed Manzoni's death certificate, declaring it a work of art.

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Marisol

Venezuelan and American, born France,
1930–2016

Tea for Three, 1960


Wood, acrylic, and found objects

Bequest of Marisol, 2016



In 1954, Marisol began making sculpture, initially taking influence from pre-Columbian art. At first, she worked on a relatively small scale, but within a few years, she began to focus on life-size, totemic figures. The artist combined wood with painting and found objects to create oftentimes quizzical or satirical mixed-media assemblages. When Pop art emerged in the 1960s, Marisol's works were often associated with the movement. However, she did not share the preoccupation with mass media and mass culture that drove her friends and peers, such as Andy Warhol.

Tea for Three brings together three heads mounted atop narrow rectangular bodies painted yellow, red, and blue: the colors of the Venezuelan flag. These merge to create a single entity with rocker-like feet. The clown-like head of each character is actually a found hat form the artist then painted, carved, and adorned with a plaster mouth and glass eyes. Two hands are also present in the center of the sculpture. The larger of the two is based on the artist's hand. It is paired with a small, child-like palm that extends forth a cup of tea—a gesture that seemingly beckons the viewer to join them.

<p>Agnes Martin American, born Canada, 1912–2004 <i>The Tree</i>, 1965 Acrylic and graphite on canvas Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1976</p>	
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Agnes Martin's contemplative compositions are informed by her belief in the ability of art to invoke what she called "abstract emotions." When asked how viewers should respond to her work, the artist compared the experience to looking at the ocean: "You just go there and sit and look." In a reflective state, Martin drew freehand a series of graphite lines on her paintings. While her work is often compared to meditative or transcendent experiences, the artist insisted it is not about spirituality. Rather, she preferred that viewers see in her paintings the perfection and beauty of nature. Regarding the connection between the grid form and a tree, the artist explained, "I asked myself why do I like trees so much and this grid came as a visual image in my mind. After I had finished it I recognized it as representing the innocence of a tree. Later in my untitled work, most of my paintings are about innocence."

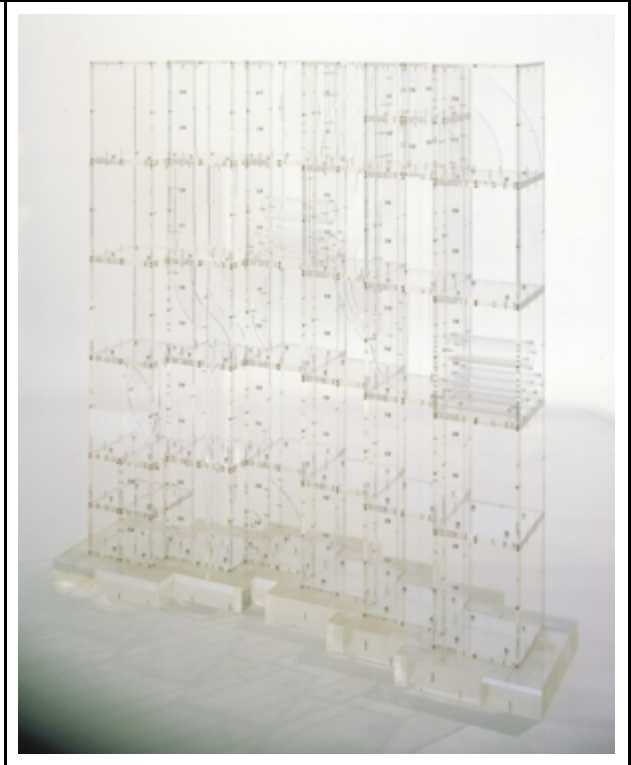
Louise Nevelson

American, born Russia (now Ukraine),
1899–1988

Transparent Sculpture I, 1967–68

Plexiglas

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1968



To create her signature large-scale assemblages, Louise Nevelson organized furniture and other wood elements into nested, box-like structures. Throughout her career, the artist also experimented with other materials, such as bronze, fiberglass, and steel, which allowed her to expand the complexity and scale of her work while still addressing themes of modular and symmetrical balance.

Transparent Sculpture I is one of several Plexiglas cubic constructions Nevelson completed during the late 1960s. The artist further enhanced the surfaces of these with screws and various patterns of incised, curved lines. Although geometric forms make up the basic framework of this sculpture, Nevelson was also focused on elements of light, transparency, reflection, and refraction. While only a brief exploration within her larger body of work, the artist's series of transparent sculptures signify an important intermediary step in the evolution of her practice.

Kenneth Noland
American, 1924–2010
Wild Indigo, 1967
Acrylic on canvas
Charles Clifton Fund, 1972



Kenneth Noland is best known for his strikingly minimal, yet vibrant, compositions. He was a prominent member of the Washington Color School—a group of abstract painters, including Morris Louis (American, 1912–1962), Gene Davis (American, 1920–1985), and others, who rejected the gestural imaginings of the Abstract Expressionists in favor of exploring the optical and transcendent qualities of color. According to Noland, a painting should be nothing more than the marrying of surface and pigment. He preferred simple motifs with limited external associations, such as targets, chevron patterns, and horizontal stripes. *Wild Indigo* is one of Noland’s earliest paintings employing horizontal stripes on a monumental scale and features twenty-eight bands of carefully applied, variegated hues separated by breathing spaces of raw, white canvas. With extended viewing, this field of colors may appear to undulate from side to side. In works such as this, Noland has described striving “to neutralize the layout, the shape, the composition. I wanted to make color the generating force.”

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Jerry T. Okimoto
American, 1924–1998
Study for Composition #1, #2, #3 and
#4 for *Mobile Painting #17*, ca. 1963
Set of four watercolors on paper
mounted on board
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



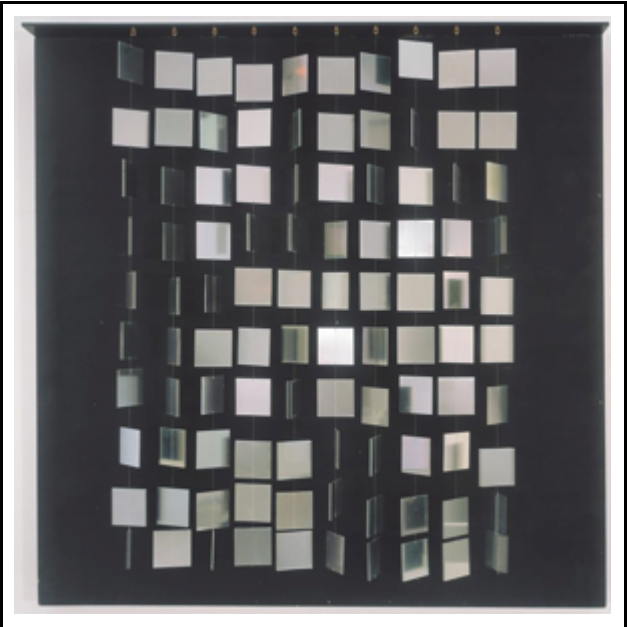
Jerry T. Okimoto
American, 1924–1998
Mobile Painting #17, 1963
Acrylic on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



Jerry Okimoto sought to challenge the distinction between painting, sculpture, and other traditional modes of artmaking. An exploration of geometric form and three-dimensionality, *Mobile Painting #17* also plays with the perception of the viewer. While at first glance this painting appears to be a completely flat, tricolored surface, the blue square in fact sits in a channel in front of the red and yellow squares and can be moved left or right to reconfigure the composition. The artist even created four studies, at left, to demonstrate a range of possibilities.

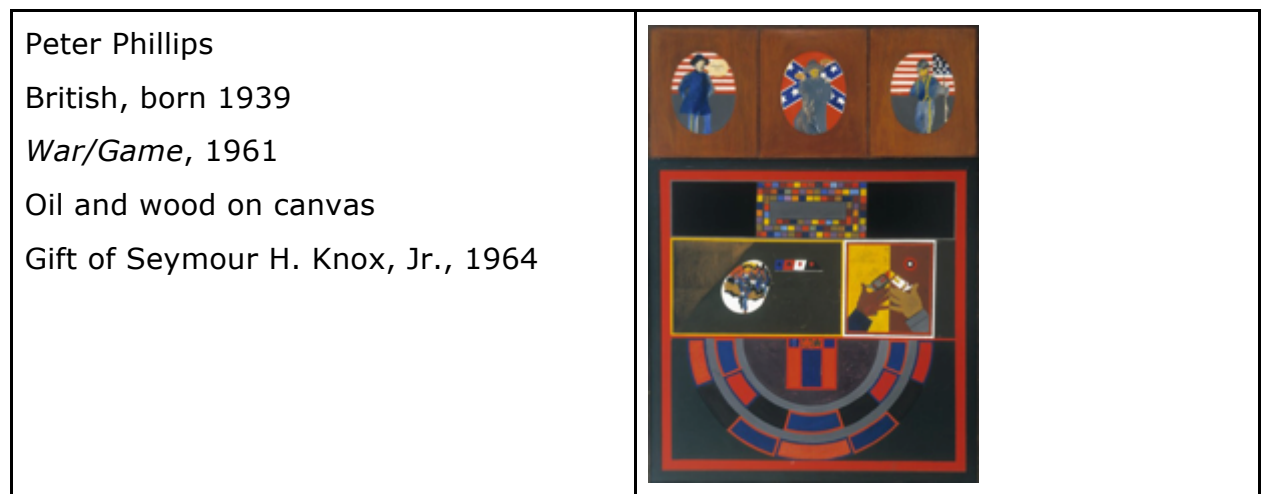
We ask that viewers please refrain from touching this work of art. The composition is rearranged by museum staff weekly.

Julio Le Parc
Argentine, born 1928
Instable-continuel lumière (Unstable-continual Light), ca. 1962
Metal, wire, and wood
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



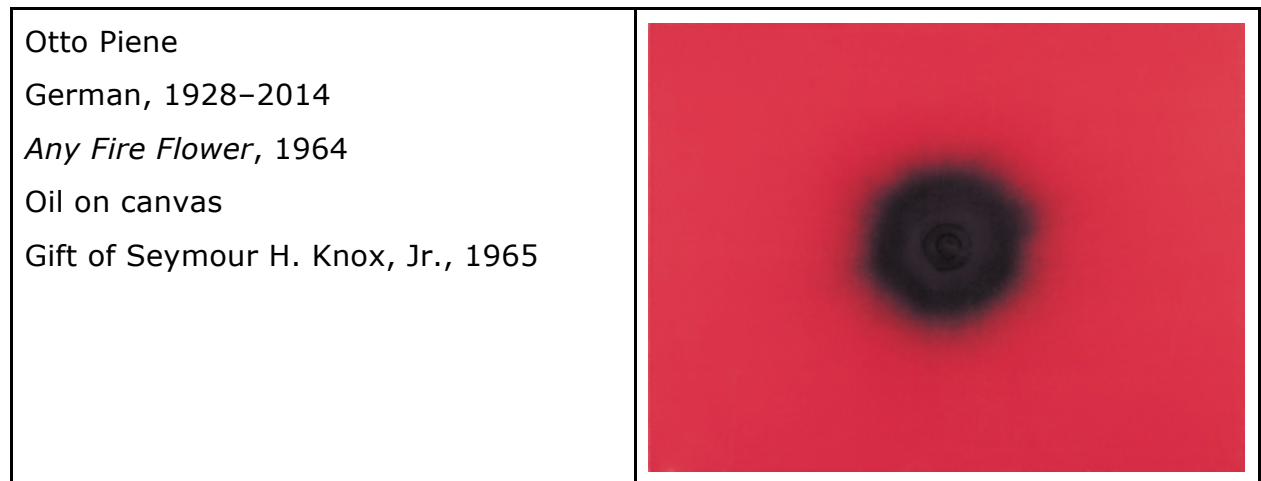
During the 1950s, Julio Le Parc became intrigued by the participatory possibilities of Op and Kinetic art, two movements that were in their formative years. In 1959, Le Parc relocated from Argentina to France. There he helped found the Paris-based collaborative Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV) in 1961. The group brought together eleven Op and Kinetic artists, including Francisco Sobrino and Jean-Pierre Yvaral, whose work is also on view in this exhibition. Le Parc found his niche in employing light and movement to produce vibrant results that depend on viewer interaction. *Unstable-continual Light* is composed of highly polished metal paillettes hung on nylon thread in front of a black backdrop. The slightest air disturbance causes a significant degree of interplay among these elements, which also reflect their surroundings to create a brilliantly random play of light and shadow.

While it is the intention of the artist for the elements of this work to respond to air movement, we ask that you please not blow on it.



In 1964, Peter Phillips was awarded a travel fellowship that brought him to New York City, where he lived until 1966. It was there that he realized his approach to artmaking aligned with aspects of American culture and Pop art's incorporation of commercial iconography. Throughout his body of work, Phillips borrows imagery and hard-edged, precise patterns from game boards, pin-up magazines, comic books, and other everyday sources. *War/Game* depicts opposing Confederate and Union forces through typical emblems of combat: flags, guns, and uniforms. In

works such as this, Phillips combined areas of machine-inspired precision with sections that are more painterly to create assemblage-like compositions. Not unlike artist Robert Indiana (whose work is on view elsewhere in the museum), he often returned to similar imagery in multiple compositions.



The members of the ZERO group often experimented with or referenced natural elements such as light, movement, fire, and water in their work. A cofounder of this collaborative, Otto Piene developed new art forms, among them media art and performance, over the course of a nearly sixty-year career. For him, the sky was a canvas, and paintbrushes were flames. To create *Any Fire Flower*, Piene painted his canvas with flammable pigments, which he then ignited. It came out of a series of related works, called “Black Suns,” in which he painted with soot left behind by bundles of candles directed at specially prepared canvases.

Michelangelo Pistoletto

Italian, born 1933

Sacra Conversazione (Holy Conversation), 1963

Painted tissue paper on stainless steel

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1964



Michelangelo Pistoletto helped lay the foundation for one of the most influential European movements of the 1960s, Arte Povera. These artists rejected abstract painting in favor of evoking classical concepts through unassuming, everyday materials. In 1961, Pistoletto began a series of mirror paintings, initially mimicking the effect using metallic paint on canvas before moving to polished steel surfaces. The earliest of these paintings are populated by individual figures, but he eventually expanded his imagery to groups. This allowed the artist to fill the picture plane, limiting the open reflective areas. Here, the only vacancy within the composition is at the center (the man in light gray on the edge of this region is a self-portrait of the artist). The title of this work, *Holy Conversation*, alludes to a type of Italian Renaissance painting in which saints are gathered in conversation. While viewers can visually join Pistoletto's group, they are unable to be part of the mysterious discussion. The inexpressive faces and flatness of the figures further emphasizes this sense of detachment and isolation.

Robert Rauschenberg

American, 1925–2008

Ace, 1962

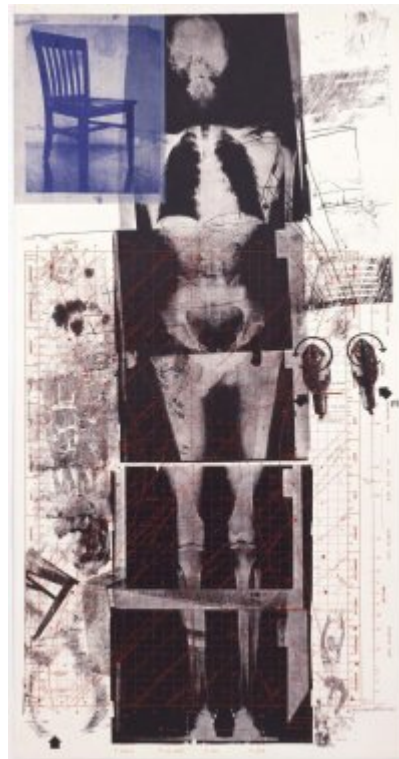
Five panels: oil, cardboard, wood, and metal on canvas

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963




Robert Rauschenberg and many of his contemporaries often lacked the money they needed to buy supplies. He partly solved this problem by collecting found objects to use as materials in his work. The artist referred to the resulting amalgamations of painting, sculpture, art, and life as "combines." This work includes various items he gathered from the streets of New York, including a piece of denim, a broken umbrella, a wooden sign with letters, crumpled metal, cardboard, and a can. Rauschenberg united these objects with areas of solid color as well as those that evoke the energetic strokes of Abstract Expressionism. The title, *Ace*, is spelled out in the upper left-hand corner. The "R" that appears in the lower left can be linked to the "auschenberg" near the lower right to form the artist's last name. The wood type, color, and font of the "R" match those of "ACE," suggesting a second connection. The resulting word—"RACE"—brings to mind numerous social and political developments of the 1960s, such as the Civil Rights movement and the Space Race.

Robert Rauschenberg
American, 1925–2008
Booster from the series "Booster and Seven Studies," 1967
Lithograph and screen print, edition 28/38
Published by Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles
By exchange: Charles W. Goodyear Fund, Sherman S. Jewett Fund, Charles W. Goodyear and Mrs. Georgia M. G. Forman Funds and Gift of Mrs. Georgia M. G. Forman, 2016



Robert Rauschenberg’s approach to art was exceedingly innovative, often resulting in works that elude categorization. His collaborations with printmakers, for example, did not always yield traditional results. The artist’s self-portrait *Booster* exemplifies his highly experimental approach to the medium. Here, Rauschenberg brings together a seemingly disparate collection of imagery: a life-sized X-ray portrait of himself, an astrological chart, pictures of athletes taken from magazines, and images of a chair and two power drills. By combining the processes of lithography and screen printing, the artist, together with master printmaker Kenneth Tyler, radically expanded the aesthetic possibilities of planographic printmaking, which utilizes a flat, as opposed to a raised, surface. At the time of its creation, *Booster* was the largest and most technically sophisticated hand-pulled print ever produced, and it catapulted printmaking into a new era of experimentation.

<p>Bridget Riley British, born 1931 <i>Drift No. 2</i>, 1966 Acrylic on canvas Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1967</p>	
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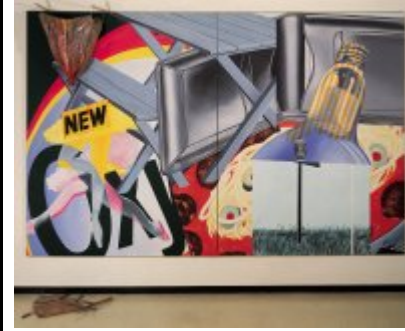
Since the early 1950s, Bridget Riley has continually pursued the fallibility of the human eye in the Op artworks for which she is best known. During the 1960s, Riley became increasingly interested in exploring qualities of fast and slow motion, cool and warm pigments, static and active forms, and confined and open spaces. Initially, she used a restrained approach to color. In *Drift No.2*, the precisely placed, wavy, vertical lines modulate from dark to light to dark again. Overall, they appear to vibrate and sway beyond the confines of the canvas. At the end of the 1960s, a trip to Egypt inspired Riley to abandon her stark palette, and she began incorporating bands of color and mosaic-like patterns into her work.

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James Rosenquist
American, 1933–2017

Nomad, 1963

Oil on canvas with plastic and wood
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



James Rosenquist's large-scale paintings are visual time capsules. The artist aimed to emulate society's bombardment with imagery by cohering fragments of illustrations and photographs primarily borrowed from advertising and mass media. *Nomad* combines multiple references to consumer products, leisure time, and items from everyday life. Rosenquist brought these disparate compositional elements together with repeated motifs; for example, the X from the Oxydol powdered soap label echoes the legs of the ballet dancer and those of the picnic table and bench. Rosenquist worked as a commercial billboard painter during his first year of college and likened this work to "a composite billboard, providing no central focal point; the eye of the viewer tends to wander over the surface, attracted first to one area and then another, like the nomad of the title."

A component attached to the upper-left corner of the canvas creates the illusion of paint trickling onto a wood construction below. This element is possibly a reference to a major artistic movement of the previous decade, Abstract Expressionism, and the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock, who significantly influenced Rosenquist.

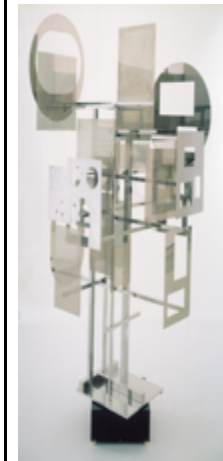
Nicolas Schöffer

French, born Hungary, 1912–1992

Lux 9, 1964

Stainless steel with motor

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1972



Nicolas Schöffer believed that art should be dynamic and fluid. In the mid-1940s he began to create metal sculptures favoring a stripped-down formal vocabulary that embodies the influence of Russian Constructivism and its Dutch counterpart, De Stijl. Schöffer brought to this art-historical foundation an interest in scientific progress, especially the realms of cybernetics and theoretical physics. He started to program his sculptures with feedback systems that allowed them to interact with viewers and the surrounding environment, connecting art with technology. In 1956, he created *CYSP 1*—a groundbreaking construction with an electronic “brain” that emits light and sound, moves at various speeds, and reacts to color and heat. The artist was even able to program the work to perform alongside human dancers.

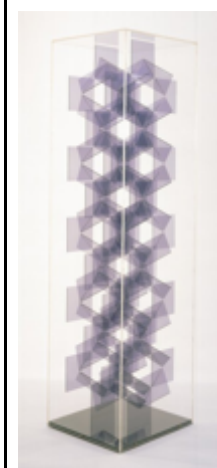
By the 1960s, Schöffer began to take his work in a direction he referred to as *luminodynamism*, a shift that resulted in his series of “Lux” sculptures. *Lux 9* revolves on a motorized base, generating a painterly form of kinetic art in its unfolding of shadow and reflected light. In 1965, the Albright-Knox hosted the first presentation of Schöffer’s work in the United States, exhibiting seven of his constructions in *Art Today: Kinetic & Optic* during Buffalo’s second Festival of the Arts Today.

Richard Serra
American, born 1938
Triangle Belt Piece, 1967
Rubber
James G. Forsyth Fund, 1973



Shortly after moving to New York City in 1966, Richard Serra began making art with scraps of rubber he discovered in the Canal Street area, including wall reliefs such as *Triangle Belt Piece*. This work comprises strips of the found material wired together and arranged so that they droop in large, curving bands. As Serra has noted, his rubber sculptures are defined by gravity and by a form of drawing that is “predicated on the joints and where the lines crossed.” Occasionally, Serra also combined rubber strips with irregular loops of neon tubing. And, in some instances, he addressed themes of repetition and variation, which many other artists and experimental musicians of the time were also exploring, by hanging multiple “belt” pieces in a row.

Francisco Sobrino
Spanish, 1932–2014
Permutational Structure, 1963–66
Plexiglas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1969

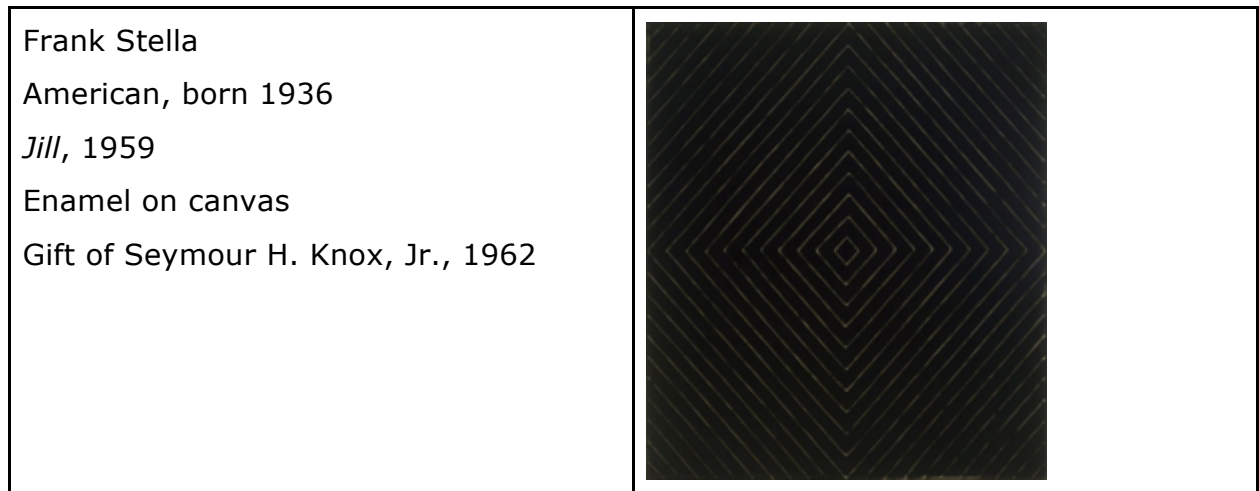


In 1949, Francisco Sobrino emigrated with his parents from Spain to Argentina, where he went on to study at the National School of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires. It was there that he first met Julio Le Parc and other artists associated with the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV). Like his peers, Sobrino wished to imbue his art with social function, fun, and creativity. From 1960 onward, Plexiglas was the artist's preferred medium; he was particularly drawn to the way the material lends itself to modular form. Light passes through the surface of *Permutational Sculpture*, creating shadows that overlap, adding to and subtracting from the overall composition. This disciplined and controlled mastery earned Sobrino the nickname of "architect of light."

<p>Jésus Rafaël Soto Venezuelan, 1923–2005 <i>Jai-Alai</i>, 1969 Set of nine optical and kinetic works: five sculptures and four screen prints on Plexiglas, edition 202/300 Gift of Thomas S. Currier, 1979</p>	
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Throughout his body of work, Jésus Rafaël Soto utilized industrial and synthetic materials, such as nylon, steel, and Plexiglas, in an exploration of pure abstraction, color theory, and the dynamism between background and foreground. In the group of works presented here, Soto activates optical effects through the manipulation of color relationships and sculptural interventions. *Jai-Alai* takes its title from a highly popular sport in Latin America, which involves catching and throwing a ball against a wall at high speeds with a hook-shaped basket worn on the player's arm. In these works, Soto sought to express the continual movement of jai-alai athletes. During the 1950s and 1960s, Soto collaborated with many group ZERO artists, who utilized light and motion to expand viewers' perception (examples of their work are on view in the adjacent gallery). Like Naum Gabo, Soto was also influenced by Constructivism, in which artists sought to abolish composition as a traditional

artistic concern and, instead, focused on the construction of objects using modern materials.



Beginning in the winter of 1958, Frank Stella came to the attention of the art world with a series of austere geometric canvases he called “Black Paintings.” These nearly two-dozen works fall into two general formats: the earlier paintings are rectilinear, while the later ones, such as *Jill*, are based on diamond patterns. Stella began each composition by drawing lines with a pencil and ruler. He then painted the black stripes freehand using enamel and a two-and-a-half-inch-wide housepainter’s brush. The light stripes between the black are simply the unpainted canvas showing through. With these works, Stella rejected the past in an effort to create something altogether new. This entailed moving away from any representational imagery as well as the emotional content often associated with Abstract Expressionism. Stella’s goal was to treat the work of art as no more or less than the sum of its physical components—in this case, paint and canvas. In later works, such as *Fez*, Stella paired similar deceptively simple, yet sophisticated motifs with a new interest in color experimentation.



Jean Tinguely

Swiss, 1925–1991

Peut-être No. II (Maybe No. II), ca.

1959

Motorized metal mobile relief

Gift of Philip Johnson, 1963



Jean Tinguely began his career composing sculptures from found objects. However, intrigued by industrial innovations of the time, he started to experiment with putting these static works into motion and devoted the rest of his practice to this exploration. In 1951, Tinguely moved to Paris, where he enjoyed great success exhibiting with the ZERO group and working with other avant-garde artists, such as Yves Klein. In *Maybe No. II*, Tinguely combined the chance arrangement of irregularly cut pieces of paper with precision engineering. The work continually rearranges itself slowly and erratically, escaping any fixed configuration and deliberately challenging what the viewer sees.

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Günther Uecker

German, born 1930

Overgrowth, 1962

Nails and canvas over wood

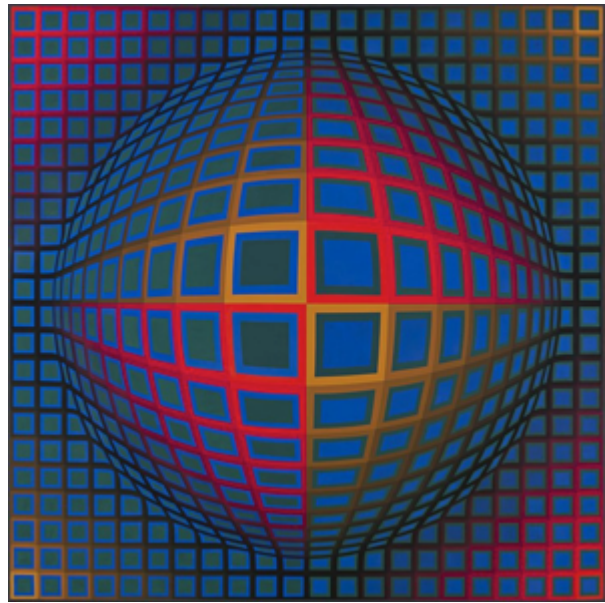
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1964



In 1961, Günther Uecker became the third member of the ZERO group. Throughout the 1950s, Uecker nurtured an interest in repetition and ritual through an engagement with the philosophies of Buddhism, Taoism, and Islam. Ultimately, he developed routines of his own, including the repetitive hammering of nails—a process he eventually translated into his artistic practice. His nail-relief works exceed the limits of the picture plane, creating calculated patterns of light and shadow. Upon first glance, the aptly titled *Overgrowth* appears to be an abyss of texture. However, further inspection reveals shapes and patterns that morph depending on the viewer's perspective.

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Victor Vasarely
French, born Hungary, 1906–1997
Vega-Nor, 1969
Oil on canvas
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1969



Op art refers to the work of a group of artists who emerged in the 1960s were interested in the scientific properties of color and line, and the ways in which the human eye processes information. Victor Vasarely was at the core of the movement, earning him the nickname "Father of Op Art." *Vega-Nor* is one of a number of paintings the artist created in which an orderly grid seemingly swells and protrudes off the picture plane. Warm colors, like orange and yellow, typically appear to advance in space, which is why Vasarely chose these hues for the area surrounding the central squares. The cells become progressively thinner and smaller toward the edges of the canvas, as if they are receding into space. This work takes its title from Vega, one of the brightest stars in the night sky, and Vasarely explained, "this composition expresses the extension, the expansion of the Universe: the extreme of the great infinities of Nature."

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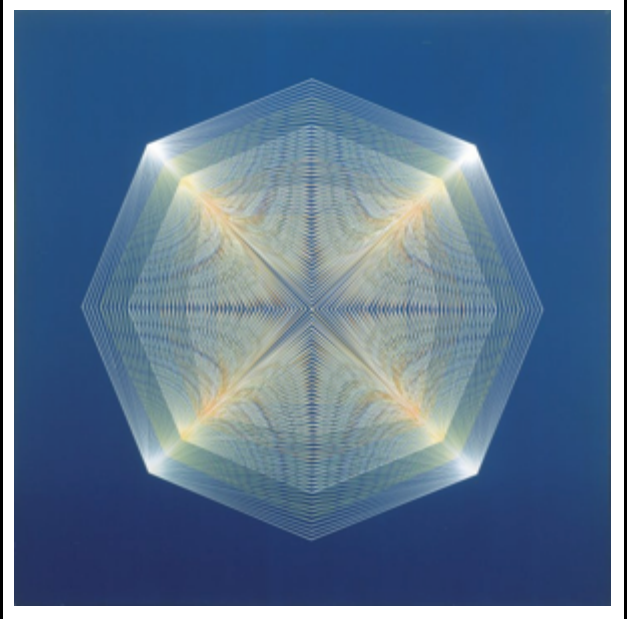
Miguel Ángel Vidal

Argentine, 1928–2009

Focos de luz (Focus of Light), 1969

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1970



The adoption and proliferation of computers during the late 1950s prompted the beginnings of the shift from mechanical and analog technology—events that deeply impacted Miguel Ángel Vidal. In 1959 Vidal, along with Eduardo Mac Entyre (Argentine, 1929–2014), cofounded Buenos Aires’s Generative Art movement, which pulled influence from Constructivism and Op and Geometric art, but focused on the use of an autonomous system to help produce imagery. He began to form highly elaborate tableaux that reveal his steadfast inventiveness and desire to create a restrained form of expression. Vidal based his composition in *Focus of Light* on a computer-generated drawing created by the artist or a computer programmer. Yellow and white lines intersect on a blue background in a way that conveys the illusion of volume on a two-dimensional surface, which seems as if it is emanating light.

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Andy Warhol

American, 1928–1987

100 Cans, 1962

Casein, spray paint, and pencil on
cotton

Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



Before becoming the prolific artist he is known as today, Andy Warhol was the most successful and highly paid commercial illustrator in New York. Warhol's paintings from the early 1960s were crucial in pioneering the breakdown between high and low art forms characteristic of Pop art, and his images of Marilyn Monroe, soup cans, and sensational newspaper stories quickly became synonymous with the emerging artistic movement.

Consumer goods and ad imagery were flooding the lives of Americans during this era, and Warhol turned his attention to consumer products like Coca-Cola and Campbell's Soup as the basis for subtly re-creating this abundance. His use of everyday items encouraged people to be more observant of the world and commercial products around them. Warhol painted many works that feature soup cans, both individually and in groups. *100 Cans* was painted by hand with the partial use of stencils; however, a closer look reveals that the cans are not identical. For example, the amount of black in the word "Soup" is not always consistent and the clarity of the word "Campbell's" varies. The same year he made this painting, Warhol began using silk screen, which allowed him—and others—to produce his work in an assembly-line fashion that emphasized the ways in which everything can be processed and packaged for consumption, even art.

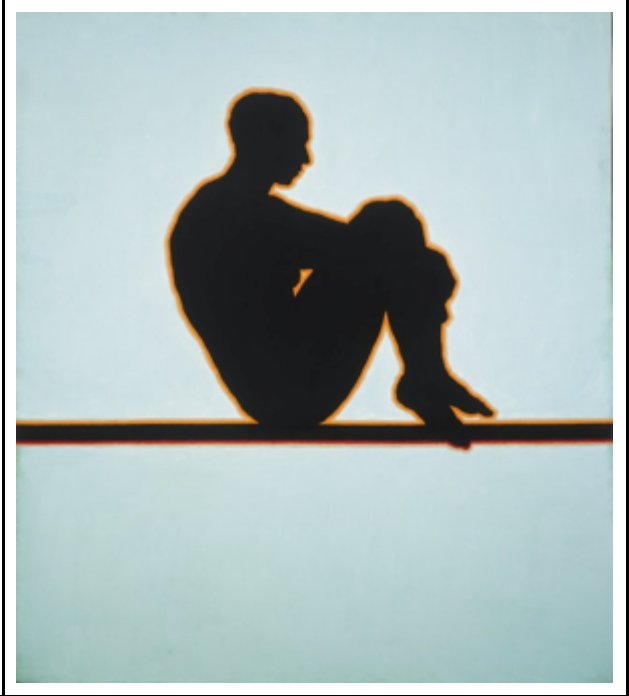
Idelle Weber

American, born 1932

Reflection, 1962

Liquitex on Berges #62 linen

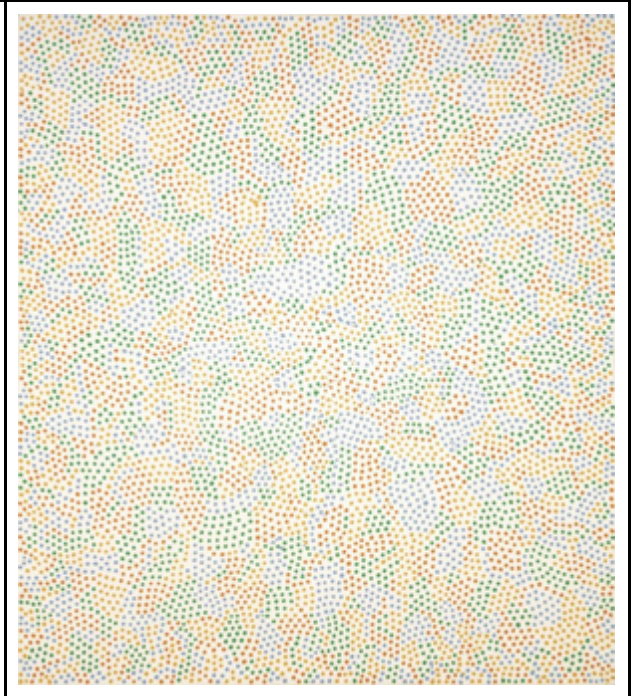
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



In the early 1960s, Idelle Weber began to merge the influence of eighteenth-century shadow portraits with the Pop art vernacular. Her iconic, graphic tableaux explore themes of corporate culture, gender roles, mass media, and politics. Much of her work from this period was inspired by the frequent trips she made to the office with her husband, who was a corporate lawyer in Midtown Manhattan. She is perhaps best-known for her "Men in the Office" series, which depicts anonymous silhouettes of men in suits and subsequently inspired the opening credits of the acclaimed TV series *Mad Men* (2007–15). Weber's economic and eloquent use of form and color imbues her subjects with an anonymous, universal character. Her female figures in particular almost always appear isolated. They exercise, sit on swings, or, as in the work presented here, float nude, hovering between the terrestrial and celestial worlds.

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Peter Ford Young
American, born 1940
Number 22—1968, 1968
Acrylic on canvas
Members' Council Purchase Fund, 1972



In the early 1960s, Peter Ford Young began to harness aspects of Pointillism and Aboriginal art to create playful constellations of circles and dots. Unlike many of his contemporaries, who engaged in a more restrictive geometric abstraction, Ford focused on color and density to generate surprisingly sensual and monumental paintings. *Number 22—1968* exemplifies his full journey into Pointillism, a technique of applying small, distinct dots of color to a canvas to form an image developed by late-nineteenth-century post-Impressionist painters. Here, monochromatic clusters and patterns—which are best seen with some distance—converge in multicolored blotches, offering simultaneously macro- and microcosmic imagining. By 1969, Young began to detach himself from American artistic circles, traveling to Morocco, Spain, and Costa Rica, where he spent time with the Boruca tribe.

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Yvaral (Jean-Pierre Vasarely)
French, 1934–2002
Acceleration #15, Series B, 1962
Vinyl cords and painted wood
Gift of Seymour H. Knox, Jr., 1963



During the mid-1950s, Jean-Pierre Vasarely, who worked under the name Yvaral, began to experiment with the illusion of warping patterns. Unlike his father, the Op artist Victor Vasarely, whose work is also featured in this exhibition, Yvaral extended his practice into the realm of sculpture, creating works in which simple visual motifs are only activated by the viewer's perception. In *Acceleration #15, Series B*, he suspended vinyl cords in front of a black and white striped background, and the kinetic relief may appear to vibrate or shimmer. This unexpected result is referred to as a "moiré effect," which occurs when one repetitive design is superimposed over another to create an altogether new image. In 1960, Yvaral cofounded the Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel (GRAV) with Julio Le Parc, Francisco Sobrino, and Jesús Rafaël Soto, whose work is also on view in this exhibition, as well as Horacio Garcia Rossi (Argentine, 1929–2012), François Morellet (French, 1926–2016), and Joël Stein (French, 1926–2012).