

REVOLUTIONS:

*Art from the Hirshhorn Collection,
1860–1960*

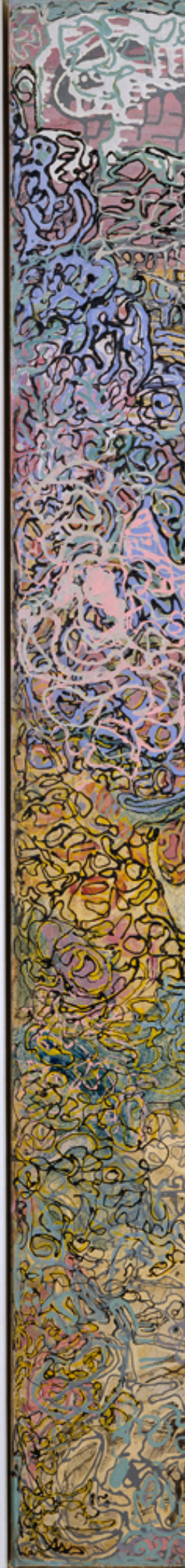
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Visual Descriptions (Select Artworks)



HIRSHHORN

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Exhibition Entrance

REVOLUTIONS:

Art from the Hirshhorn Collection, 1860–1960

Wall Text:

Drawn entirely from the Hirshhorn's holdings, *Revolutions: Art from the Hirshhorn Collection, 1860–1960* surveys one of the most innovative periods in art history. At the start of the twentieth century, the world was moving ever faster, propelled by new technologies, groundbreaking scientific discoveries, and rapidly expanding cities. Across Europe, growing nationalist sentiments would soon culminate in World War I, followed just two decades later by World War II. Artists in both Europe and North America invented dramatically novel approaches to represent this turbulent world, seeking to outdo one another with ever-newer forms of expression. This period saw the development of abstraction and the increased use of nontraditional materials in Western art, as well as the rise of Conceptualism—the notion that the appearance of an artwork is less important than the idea behind it. Many artists used their work to comment on social and political issues. Others looked inward, making art that dealt with personal expression or explored purely visual elements of color, shape, and line.

While this exhibition takes a generally chronological approach, it also opens dialogues across history: contemporary artworks installed on brightly colored floating walls show that the ideas and approaches employed by late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century artists still resonate today.

Curated by Marina Isgro, Associate Curator, and Betsy Johnson, Assistant Curator, with Alice Phan, Curatorial Assistant

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[QR code] Scan for visual descriptions of select works on view and additional resources.

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Lead your own tour. Grab your free Kids Guide to the exhibition.

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Visual Description:

The entry wall to the exhibition is a large, solidly black wall with an open doorway cut into the right side. In the left corner placed on a thick white platform is a sculpture of a large bright-red head with slick dark hair and wide, popping eyes. Immediately to the right of the sculpture, halfway up the wall is an aerial view outline of the Hirshhorn building over white text that reads *Revolutions: Art from the Hirshhorn Collection, 1860–1960*. Through the doorway, one can see a bright-yellow wall with a painting of a woman in a bright-blue dress.

ESCALATOR LOBBY—ENTRANCE WALL

Nicolas Party

b. Lausanne, Switzerland, 1980

Head

2018–2022

Oil on coated polystyrene

Gift of Iris and Adam Singer, 2022 (2022.018)

Visual Description:

Sitting on a thick white platform in a corner of the escalator lobby near the entrance to the exhibition, this large sculpture of a bright-red head and neck stands over 6 feet tall, bigger than the average person. The head has short black hair divided in a part on the left. Its wide eyes stare directly forward, with slightly raised dark eyebrows. The head has full, closed bright-blue lips.

GALLERY 1

Wall Text:

MODERN BEGINNINGS

In the late nineteenth century, having one's portrait painted was a mark of high social standing. Artists such as John Singer Sargent became known for their flattering portrayals of fashionable society women and men. But other painters began to reconsider their approach to the human figure. Thomas Eakins, for example, took Realism to the extreme, producing lifelike portraits often unbecoming to their subjects. Others played with color and form to convey emotional states. In *Young Girl Reading (Jeune fille lisant)*, Mary Cassatt—whose attention to women's inner lives was unusual for the time—imparts a sense of concentration in her subject by rendering her face in thick pastel, leaving her body loosely sketched.

Sculptors of this period also took increasingly experimental approaches to the figure. Auguste Rodin looked to classical models, yet fragmented and contorted them into deeply expressive cast-bronze forms; his onetime apprentice Constantin Brancusi chose the opposite approach, reducing bodies to smooth, streamlined shapes and often carving directly into marble. Henri Matisse's five *Heads of Jeannette* demonstrate the artist's passage into a more abstract style between 1910 and 1913: he modeled the first two directly after his neighbor Jeanne Vaderin, then simplified them into the reduced forms of the later three.

PLATFORM (TO RIGHT OF WALL TEXT)

Constantin Brancusi

b. Hobița, Romania, 1876–1957

Torso of a Young Man

1924

Brass, limestone, and wood

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.611)

Visual Description:

The top segment of this sculpture is a gold-colored cylindrical torso approximately 18 inches tall. Two additional cylindrical shapes at the bottom of the torso suggest the top part of the legs. The torso sits on a 6-inch-square base of white stone. The stone base sits atop a medium-brown foot-tall rectangular wood base. The wood base sits atop a lower, two-foot-tall brown wood base in the shape of an hourglass.

WALL TO LEFT OF PLATFORM AND WALL TEXT

Robert Henri

b. Cincinnati, Ohio, 1865–1929

Woman in White: Portrait of Eugenie Stein

1904

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2433)

Visual Description:

A life-sized portrait depicts a woman wearing a fancy gown in front of a dark background. She has light skin with rosy cheeks, thick dark eyebrows, and luxurious shoulder length black hair parted down the middle. Her ruby red lips are closed together as she looks directly at the viewer. She is wearing a satiny white gown with a V-shaped neckline, billowing long sleeves, and a form fitting bodice with a flowing skirt. Her body is turned toward her right and she slightly lifts up the front of her skirt with her right hand. In her left hand she holds a red fan pointing downward near the side of her body.

BLADE WALL

Amoako Boafo

b. Accra, Ghana, 1984

Cobalt Blue Dress

2020

Oil on canvas

Gift of Sandra and Howard Hoffen, 2022 (2022.016)

Wall Text:

Amoako Boafo creates striking portraits that document and celebrate Blackness today. In this large painting of a friend, he limits his palette to bright blue, beige, and brown, adding visual interest by varying paint handling and texture. Boafo is noted for his approach to painting Black skin: using gloved fingers, he swirls together multiple colors before touching up details with a fine brush, lending dimension and movement. This sensation of motion is amplified by the active posture of Boafo's subject, who lifts the sides of her dress in a gesture of self-presentation. With its active subject, *Cobalt Blue Dress* matches the power of works by portrait painters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as Robert Henri, seen here. In contrast to Boafo's brilliant hues and expressionistic handling of paint, however, Henri advocated for a dark, unflinching realism in his painting.

Visual Description:

Set against a mustard yellow wall, this rectangular painting depicts a standing woman from the legs up in front of a light gray background. She has dark brown skin, shoulder-length black hair, and bright-red lips. She looks straight at the viewer with wide-open eyes. She wears a bright cobalt-blue dress with one strap over her left shoulder. She holds the skirt of her dress away from her body. The painting has a rough texture, with thick paint swirled around by the artist's fingers.

CASE

Auguste Rodin

b. Paris, France, 1840–1917

Mask of the Man with a Broken Nose

1864/cast by 1928

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4334)

Pablo Picasso

b. Málaga, Spain, 1881–1973

Head of a Woman (Fernande Olivier)

1909/cast 1960

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4050)

Käthe Kollwitz

b. Königsberg, Germany, 1867–1945

Self-Portrait

1926–1932/cast c. 1946–1956

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2783)

Elie Nadelman

b. Warsaw, Poland, 1882–1946

Head of a Woman

c. 1907–1908

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3783)

Figure Study

1913

Gilded bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3774)

Elie Nadelman

b. Warsaw, Poland, 1882–1946

Female Head

1920/printed 1951/published 1952

Drypoint on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1977 (77.35)

Constantin Brancusi

b. Hobîța, Romania, 1876–1957

Sleeping Muse I

1909–1910

Marble

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.610)

Visual Description:

A white marble head, roughly life size, with no neck or body, rests on its right side on a short platform. Engraved lines across the top and back of the head give the impression of brushed-back hair. The face is slightly elongated, with a rounded chin, a small closed mouth, a thin, angular nose, and seemingly closed almond-shaped eyes, all outlined in subtle carving.

Elie Nadelman

b. Warsaw, Poland, 1882–1946

Female Head

1920/printed 1951/published 1952

Drypoint on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1977 (77.36)

Prometheus

1911

Brass

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.612)

Visual Description:

This circular bronze sculpture suggests a human head lying on its side. The sculpture is smooth, golden, and shiny. Light glints off the top. The right side of the sculpture's "face" is smooth and curved at the bottom, with an angular break where an eye or cheekbone would be. A protrusion at the center of the sculpture is reminiscent of a nose. The left side of the sculpture is shallower than the right. Two slight protuberances on the top right of the sculpture are similar to the shape of an ear. Just under the chin is another protuberance, suggesting a neck.

Henri Matisse

b. Le Cateau-Cambrésis, France, 1869–1954

Head of Jeannette I

1910/cast 1953

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3465)

Visual Description:

This bronze sculpture comprises the head and neck of a woman. She has short, wavy hair. Her features are rounded, with contoured cheekbones and eyebrows. Her eye sockets are prominent. She has an elongated nose, and her lips are pursed. The texture of the sculpture is rough and slightly bumpy.

Head of Jeannette II

1910/cast 1952

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3466)

Visual Description:

The bronze sculpture depicts a woman's head. She has short, wavy hair. Her features are rounded, with contoured cheekbones and eyebrows. Her eye sockets are prominent. She has an elongated nose, and her lips are pursed. The texture of the sculpture is rough and slightly bumpy. The head rests on a small rectangular pedestal.

Head of Jeannette III

1911/cast 1966

Bronze

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.196)

Visual Description:

This bronze sculpture is an abstracted representation of a woman's head and neck. Her hair is represented by three circular elements atop her head. Her head is also circular, with rounded cheeks. She has contoured eyebrows, and her eye sockets are prominent. Her nose is angular, and her lips are closed in a straight line. She has a short, thick neck that descends into a circular form. The texture of the sculpture is rough and slightly bumpy.

Head of Jeannette IV

1911/cast 1954

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3468)

Visual Description:

This bronze sculpture is an abstracted representation of a woman's head and neck. Her hair is represented by three circular elements atop her head. Her head is oval, with angular, pointed cheekbones. She has contoured eyebrows and sunken eyes. Her nose is sharp and pointed, and her lips are closed in a straight line. She has a thick neck that descends into a circular form connected to an irregularly shaped base. The texture of the sculpture is rough and slightly bumpy.

Head of Jeannette V

1913/cast 1954

Bronze

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.195)

Visual Description:

This bronze sculpture is an abstracted representation of a woman's head and neck. Her facial features are rounded and elongated. She has sunken eyes and a sharp, pointed nose. Her forehead is represented by a circular shape. Her lips are closed in a straight line. She has a short, thick neck that descends into a circular form connected to an irregularly shaped base. The texture of the sculpture is rough and slightly bumpy.

LEFT WALL (SALON HANG)

Winslow Homer

b. Boston, Massachusetts, 1836–1910

Scene at Houghton Farm

1878

Transparent and opaque watercolor and graphite pencil on paper

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2489)

Edouard Vuillard

b. Cuiseaux, France, 1868–1940

Grandmother Michaud Seen against the Light

1890

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Marion L. Ring Estate, 1987 (87.32)

William Merritt Chase

b. Williamsburg, Indiana, 1849–1916

In the Studio

c. 1892–1893

Pastel on paperboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.878)

Oskar Kokoschka

b. Pöchlarn, Austria, 1886–1980

Portrait of Egon Wellesz

1911

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2776)

Oskar Kokoschka

b. Pöchlarn, Austria, 1886–1980

Portrait of Mrs. Karpeles (Frau K.)

1911

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2775)

Visual Description:

This is a portrait of the head and upper body of an older woman. She stands toward the right side of the canvas, leaving empty space on the left side. She is turned slightly toward her right. Curly reddish-brown hair is piled atop her head. She has thick, shaped eyebrows and angular cheekbones and chin. Her red lips are pursed. She wears a long-sleeved black garment whose overall features are rendered indistinct through muted brushstrokes. It appears to have a V-shaped neckline; layered underneath is a lacy black garment that covers her chest and neck. Her arms are slightly bent, and her right arm is crossed over her left wrist. Her left palm rests under her right forearm, both hands hovering in front of her abdomen. The background is a mix of muted browns and green brushstrokes extending in different directions. In the lower left corner are the artist's initials, "OK," in capital letters.

Thomas Eakins

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1844–1916

Frank B. A. Linton

1904

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1492)

Thomas Eakins

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1844–1916

Portrait of Mrs. Thomas Eakins

c. 1899

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1522)

Visual Description:

This is a small oil portrait of a middle-aged woman. Set against a black background, she takes up most of the canvas, her head in its upper half and her shoulders and chest in its lower half. Her head is tilted to her right, and her hazel eyes gaze at the viewer. Her expression appears forlorn, as the left side of her face is in shadow. A rosy glow shines on her cheeks, a contrast against her pale skin. Her hair is styled in a Victorian updo, and a small gold teardrop-shaped swipe of paint high on her head suggests a hair comb or pin. A silver streak of hair frames the right side of her face. Her clothing is all black, and it is hard to discern much of its detail because it is so dark. The handling of her blouse suggests it is silk, as the black shades are depicted with movement and shine. Over her blouse, she wears a coat with a high collar that reaches up to her right ear. Her clothing and hair blend into the background, which further emphasizes her face.

Robert Henri

b. Cincinnati, Ohio, 1865–1929

Portrait of a Girl, Checkered Blouse

1910

Oil on canvas lined to linen

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2428)

Celestina

1908

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2427)

Mary Cassatt

b. Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, 1844–1926

Young Girl Reading (*Jeune fille lisant*)

c. 1894

Pastel on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.853)

Visual Description:

This small pastel work shows a young girl reading a book. The girl has fair skin and rosy cheeks. Her light-brown hair is pulled back, and short bangs cover her forehead. She wears a blue dress with puffy upper sleeves and pink lower sleeves that cover her arms. Her left elbow rests on a brown surface next to the open book, her forearm extending upward so that her left cheek rests on her open palm. Her right hand holds one page of the book. The girl's face and hands are depicted realistically, with finely blended colors. The rest of the work—the girl's blue dress, the open white book, the brown table, and the plain brown background—are highly gestural, with layered colors and messier pastel markings.

CORRIDOR (LEFT WALL, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)

Thomas Eakins

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1844–1916

Study for “The Swimming Hole”

1884

Oil on fiberboard mounted on fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1510)

Marey Wheel Photographs of George Reynolds

1884

Albumen photographs

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (83.46)

Marey Wheel Photographs of George Reynolds

1884

Albumen photographs

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (83.45)

Thomas Hart Benton

b. Neosho, Missouri, 1889–1975

People of Chilmark (Figure Composition)

1920

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.468)

CORRIDOR (RIGHT WALL, FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

Emily Carr

b. Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 1871–1945

Indian Community House

1912

Oil on paperboard mounted on fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.834)

Joseph Stella

b. Muro Lucano, Italy, 1877–1946

Landscape (Waterlily)

1920–1924

Oil on glass

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4782)

Gabriele Münter

b. Berlin, Germany, 1877–1962

Mountains in the Twilight

1908

Oil on paperboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3682)

Oscar Bluemner

b. Prenzlau, Germany, 1867–1938

Morning Light (Dover Hills, October)

1912–1916

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.32)

Joseph Stella

b. Muro Lucano, Italy, 1877–1946

Study for “New York Interpreted: Brooklyn Bridge”

1920–1922

Watercolor and ink on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4775)

Study for “New York Interpreted: Brooklyn Bridge”

1920–1922

Ink, opaque paint, and crayon on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4774)

Sunset (Factories)

c. 1920

Pastel on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4768)

GALLERY 2

Wall Text:

ABSTRACTION AND CONSTRUCTION

By the 1910s and '20s, many European artists had moved away from representing the world literally, the way a photographer might. Instead, they employed varying degrees of abstraction to impart deeper truths about reality. Fernand Léger and other Cubists flattened their subject matter into disjointed geometric shapes to produce a sense of fragmentation. The Italian Futurists—who saw speed and violence as the defining qualities of the time—used forceful lines to convey movement. Some artists turned away from real-world scenes altogether, creating completely abstract paintings that refer to ideas, concepts, or feelings. While these approaches were new in the context of European fine art, they often drew on existing forms from African and Indigenous cultures: the Cubists, for example, were inspired to play with flatness and depth by African masks.

During the same years, other artists, in the United States and elsewhere, addressed modern life in a Realist style. Painters such as George Bellows depicted scenes of urban life like amateur boxing matches; Edward Hopper's paintings offer a quieter perspective, showing anonymous figures in moments of alienation. Portrayals of rapid urbanization, such as Joseph Stella's factory scenes, appear alongside idyllic landscapes by Gabriele Münter and others that recall an earlier era.

LEFT WALL (LEFT TO RIGHT)

Marsden Hartley

b. Lewiston, Maine, 1877–1943

Painting No. 47, Berlin

1914–1915

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.148)

Yun Gee

b. Kaiping, China, 1906–1963

Skull

1926

Oil on paperboard mounted on wood

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.126)

Alexander Archipenko

b. Kyiv, Ukraine, 1887–1964

Woman with a Fan II

1915

Fiberboard, wood, and paint

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.80)

Fernand Léger

b. Argentan, France, 1881–1955

Rooftops

1912

Watercolor on laid paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2910)

Stuart Davis

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1892–1964

Lucky Strike

1924

Oil on paperboard

Museum purchase, 1974 (74.228)

Visual Description:

This still life depicts a newspaper, pack of cigarettes, tobacco pipe, and rolling papers. The objects seemingly float above a brown tabletop set before a blue-gray wall. The newspaper fills most of the canvas. The newspaper's name is *Evening Journal Sports*, and the top headline is "CLASSY FIELD OPPOSES RAY IN 3,000 METERS." A cartoon occupies the center of the paper, showing three men in coats and hats speaking to one another, but their words, in speech bubbles, are illegible. Other headlines and articles are suggested by vertical and horizontal lines. To the left is a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes in a hunter-green and red package. The package is open, with the interior paper unfolded. The bottom of the package reads, "ROLL CUT TOBACCO." To the right of the cigarettes is a tobacco pipe with a brown and tan bowl and a black stem. Below the pipe sit a loose rolling paper and a cream-colored package of rolling papers labeled "ZIG ZAG."

CASE

Giacomo Balla

b. Turin, Italy, 1871–1958

Boccioni's Fist—Lines of Force II

1916–1917/reconstructed 1956–1958/cast 1968

Brass and paint

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.19)

Aleksandra Aleksandrovna Exster

b. Białystok, Poland, 1882–1949

Harlequin

1926

Wood, paint, fabric, copper, leather, nails, and thread

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1789)

Visual Description:

A marionette figure is suspended by strings from a white, X-shaped cross-brace. The puppet is wearing a hat with large, upturned brims and has a stylized face with blue coloring around the eyes. The body is composed of angular and blocky shapes, and it wears a costume with blue, tan, and black blocks of color overlaid with tan crisscrossed straps. The marionette's is positioned to be standing straight with its left arm raised slightly above its shoulder. It wears black boots with blocky toes.

Judy (Djudi)

1926

Wood, paint, fabric, metal, plastic, nails, and wire

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1787)

Visual Description:

A brightly colored marionette figure is suspended by strings from a white, X-shaped cross-brace. The figure is presented in a standing position with both arms reaching out and up in a wide U shape. It is dressed in an exaggerated, theatrical costume with large, flowing sections in bright yellow and red, resembling the attire of a jester. The artistic style is highly stylized, with blocky, geometric shapes and bold, flat colors that give it a modern, almost abstract quality. The figure's face, hands, and lower legs are painted sky blue. It has simple facial features and wears a wide-brimmed, light-yellow hat.

Aleksandra Aleksandrovna Exster

b. Białystok, Poland, 1882–1949

Pierrot

1926

Wood, paint, fabric, felt, metal, plastic, thread, and nails

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1790)

Visual Description:

A brightly colored marionette figure is suspended by strings from a white, X-shaped cross-brace. The figure wears a yellow, black, and white outfit. It's upper arms are covered with large circular white forms with a black outline that fit into tighter black leather sleeves that reach to its hands, which are outstretched into yellow, translucent tubes. It's pants are made from strips of yellow and black fabric. A large, gray, oval shaped collar sits around its neck, obscuring most of its upper torso. The figure has a blocky, black face with dark blue accents around the mouth and eyes. It wears a long gray hat on its head that folds over its back.

Giacomo Balla

b. Turin, Italy, 1871–1958

Motif for a Book Endpapers

1916

Watercolor and pencil on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.220)

Raymond Duchamp-Villon

b. Damville, France, 1876–1918

Horse

1914/cast 1954-1963

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1469)

Visual Description:

An eighteen-inch bronze sculpture made of various twisted forms that suggest the shape of a horse with angular features. The ebony black sculpture is smooth in texture. The horse is facing right with long tube-like shapes representing legs that are embedded in the base. A long cylindrical shape forms the body of the horse. Extending from the body is a triangular shape that resembles a horse's head with indistinct features.

Joseph Stella

b. Muro Lucano, Italy, 1877–1946

Study for “Battle of Lights, Coney Island, Mardi Gras”

Oil and ink on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4792)

Giacomo Balla

b. Turin, Italy, 1871–1958

Futurist Flowers

1918–1925/reconstructed 1968

Wood and paint

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.222.1, 86.222.3, 86.222.5)

Visual Description:

Displayed together on a raised platform are three abstract flower-like sculptures made of painted wood. Each is approximately the size of a desk lamp. The flower on the left is shaped much like a tulip with a red center surrounded by green petals. The middle flower is shaped like a backward question mark with two petals painted black, and two petals painted dark green. Each petal is trimmed in pink. The flower on the right is shaped like a candelabra with jagged edges. Two of its sides are painted light pink and the other two sides are painted mint green.

Gino Severini

b. Cortona, Italy, 1883–1966

Composition

1958

Ceramic and paint

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4528)

BLADE WALL

David Alekhuogie

b. Los Angeles, California, 1986

34.0113° N, 118.3358° W, Crenshaw and Martin Luther King Drive

2021

Gelatin silver photographs, spray acrylic, and enamel paint on polyethylene fabric

Museum purchase, 2023 (2023.007)

Wall Text:

David Alekhuogie creates assemblages that combine photography with unusual materials. *34.0113° N, 118.3358° W* features black-and-white photographs of a site where Black Lives Matter protests occurred in the Baldwin Hills East neighborhood of South Los Angeles in 2020. Partly overpainted and attached to stretched tarps, the photographs offer fragmented views of boarded-up storefronts covered with spray-painted slogans as a monument to the community's attempts to resist gentrification. Alekhuogie's abstracted views of architecture connect him to a long history of Modernist painting, such as Robert Delaunay's famously radical depictions of the Eiffel Tower. Delaunay repeatedly portrayed the structure, an icon of technological progress; here he shows it from above, using prominent diagonals and bold, flat colors.

Visual Description:

This artwork is made from two rectangular canvases wrapped in royal blue tarp. The top canvas is layered approximately one foot over the bottom one so that the bottom edge juts out slightly. Black and white photographs are layered unevenly across both canvases. The photographs contain closeup images of wood crates with graffiti style letters and wide bands of black spray painted on them. On the upper right corner, a black band of paint is sprayed directly on the tarp.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

Wassily Kandinsky

b. Moscow, Russia, 1866–1944

Small Worlds #6

1922

Woodcut on paper

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1974 (74.73.7)

Small Worlds #3

1922

Color lithograph on paper

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1974 (74.73.4)

Small Worlds #9

1922

Engraving on paper

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1974 (74.73.10)

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Robert Delaunay

b. Paris, France, 1885–1941

Eiffel Tower and Gardens, Champ de Mars (*La Tour Eiffel et Jardin du Champ de Mars*)

1922

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1421)

Visual Description:

This large painting, nearly 6 feet square, shows an aerial view of the Eiffel Tower and its surrounding gardens. The painting is composed of blocks of color and geometric shapes. The Eiffel Tower is at the center of the canvas. Green and yellow garden areas, depicted with a brushed texture and varying shades, surround the tower. A bright, sunny day is suggested by yellow patches of sunlight on the green grass. The tower's dark shadow extends to the top center of the canvas. Circular, winding white and yellow walking paths provide a contrast to the green and draw your eye to the tower. Wider roads create a large grid across the entire canvas. Two roads flank the tower, and one road runs underneath it, divided by blocks of garden. In the top left corner, beyond the top road, is a gray, black, and white triangular area. It is hard to tell if this is another road or buildings. At the bottom right corner is a rectangular area outlined by a thin red line, set atop a green space that extends off the canvas.

BLADE WALL

Barbara Kasten

b. Chicago, Illinois, 1936

Construct PC 4B

1981

Dye diffusion photograph

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 2018 (2018.016)

Wall Text:

Barbara Kasten is an experimental photographer whose work often alludes to early-twentieth-century artistic movements. Her *Constructs* series (1979–1986) are photographs of what she calls “stage-sets”: large abstract compositions created in the studio using fabric, mirror, Plexiglas, wire, and mesh. The series title refers to Constructivism, an abstract art movement founded in Russia in the 1910s that took its cues from modern industry. Vladimir Tatlin, a founder of the movement, was inspired by Cubist constructions that he saw in Pablo Picasso’s studio to create abstract compositions out of industrial materials such as iron and glass. Kasten continues this tradition, creating assemblages that engage with light, color, and geometry. She then uses the camera’s flattening effect to examine three-dimensional form and space in two dimensions.

Visual Description:

A large photograph depicts objects arranged in an abstract geometrical composition. Near the lower right side of the photograph, ten pairs of strings run diagonally towards the left. Parallel to the strings are black rods. The overall effect resembles the fret of a stringed instrument. Behind the strings is a triangular shaped mirror, which creates an added sense of depth. To the right of the triangle is a turquoise half circle set against a black rod. The background contains another triangular mirror that contains the reflection of abstract objects in red and brown that are out of the photograph’s range. To the right of the mirror is a turquoise wall. Propped up against the wall are black rods that look similar to an upside-down easel.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

Man Ray

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1890–1976

Revolving Doors: Orchestra

1916–1917/printed 1926

Pochoir print on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.3122.3)

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Daniel Vladimir Baranoff-Rossiné

b. Kherson, Ukraine, 1888–1944

Capriccio musicale (Circus)

1913

Oil and pencil on canvas

Gift of Mary and Leigh B. Block, 1988 (88.8)

Stanton Macdonald-Wright

b. Charlottesville, Virginia, 1890–1973

Conception Synchromy

1914

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3189)

Visual Description:

This painting, 3 feet tall and 2 ½ feet wide, shows multicolored geometric shapes: approximately one hundred of them cover most of the canvas. Triangles, circles, and cones of varying sizes overlap one another, their edges translucent to reveal the shapes underneath. Some of the shapes' outlines are blurred so that they blend into one another. Many colors are present in the composition, but yellow and purple dominate, with red, blue, and green appearing as accent colors. White and gray spaces are evident in the top right and lower right corners. The colors are muted, appearing mostly as soft shades, with some darker shades near the corners of the canvas. Color gradients lend create shading and dimension to the shapes, and a circular white area is present at the center of the canvas.

BLADE WALL

Hurvin Anderson

b. Birmingham, England, 1965

Jet

2016

Acrylic on canvas

Anonymous Gift, 2017 (2017.014)

Wall Text:

The dynamic arrangement of black rectangles on a unified ground seen in Hurvin Anderson's *Jet* recalls early-twentieth-century experiments in geometric abstraction. Artists such as Nadia Léger (whose Suprematist works are seen here to the right) and de Stijl cofounder Piet Mondrian (in the next gallery) sought a purity of expression by eliminating representational content and dramatically limiting their compositions to specific colors, shapes, and lines. *Jet* is perhaps most closely related to the groundbreaking Suprematist work *Black Square* (1915), created by the movement's founder, Kazimir Malevich: a black square on a white ground that caused a sensation in Malevich's seminal 0,10 exhibition because the artist placed it high in the corner of a room, a location in Russian homes traditionally reserved for religious icons. As in *Black Square*, the black rectangles in *Jet* replace icons: a companion piece, M.J. (2016; also in the Hirshhorn collection), shows an earlier variation on the theme, with monochromatic portraits of Black cultural leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Michael Jackson filling the blocky frames. With *Jet*, Anderson erases the specificity of portraiture to arrive at a work that communicates the dynamic lineage and legacy of such historic figures through abstraction.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

El Lissitzky

b. Polchinok, Russia, 1890–1941

Victory over the Sun: Sportsmen

1921/published 1923

Color lithograph on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.3057)

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Nadia Léger

b. Vitebsk, Belarus, 1904–1982

Suprematism No. 2

1922/probably recreated later

Opaque paint and graphite on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2916)

Suprematism: White Square and Movement of Forms

1922–1924/revised 1969

Opaque paint and graphite on paper

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2917)

Josef Albers

b. Bottrop, Germany, 1888–1976

Lattice Picture

1923–1925

Sandblasted opaque flashed glass and paint

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1974 (74.5)

Skyscrapers (B)

1929

Glass laminate and paint

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1974 (74.6)

RIGHT WALL

Childe Hassam

b. Boston, Massachusetts, 1859–1935

The Union Jack, New York, April Morning

1918

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2402)

BLADE WALL

Catherine Opie

b. Sandusky, Ohio, 1961

Untitled #1, Untitled #12, Untitled #6, Untitled #16, Untitled #29, Untitled #22 (from the Inauguration series)

2009

Archival pigment prints

Gift of Catherine Opie, 2014 (14.3.1, 14.3.12, 14.3.6, 14.3.16, 14.3.29, 14.3.22)

Wall Text:

Catherine Opie's photographs explore how we think about America and what it means to be an American. On January 20, 2009, Opie joined more than one million people on the National Mall in Washington, DC, for the inauguration of Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States. Opie spent three days in the city, capturing the hope and historical significance of the moment. Her *Inauguration* series appears here alongside Childe Hassam's 1918 painting *The Union Jack, New York, April Morning*, which depicts Fifth Avenue bedecked with the flags of Allied nations, commemorating the first anniversary of US entry into World War I. Both works represent displays of national pride; Hassam's shows a moment in which patriotism was linked to military strength, whereas Opie's captures a celebration of the nation's diversity.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

Edward Hopper

b. Nyack, New York, 1882–1967

Eleven A.M.

1926

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2504)

Visual Description:

The painting shows an interior scene, with a nude woman sitting in a navy-blue velvet chair and looking out a large window. In the foreground, near the canvas's lower left corner, a lamp with a red velvet shade sits on a table covered with a patterned red tablecloth. In the lower right corner is a ladder-back chair. In the middle ground, framed between the lamp and chair, the woman sits in profile, turned slightly to her left. Sunlight filters in through the window, illuminating the woman and part of the room. Her elbows rest on her knees, and her hands are clasped. She leans slightly forward. Long reddish-brown hair hangs over her right shoulder and obscures her face. She wears only black shoes. Olive-green drapes hang to her right in the background. To the right of the drapes, an indistinct picture hangs on a cream-colored wall. Below the picture is a tan chest of drawers, partially obscured by the blue velvet chair.

CONTINUATION OF RIGHT WALL

Reginald Marsh

b. Paris, France, 1898–1954

George C. Tilyou's Steeplechase Park

1936

Egg tempera on fiberboard

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.3356)

BLADE WALL

Cang Xin

b. Baotou, Inner Mongolia, China, 1967

To Add One Meter to an Anonymous Mountain

1995

Black and white photograph

Private Collection

Wall Text:

In the early 1990s, Cang Xin was part of an avant-garde community of artists that formed on the eastern fringe of Beijing. Performance thrived in what came to be known as Beijing's East Village, and artists often worked collaboratively to realize one another's visions. *To Add One Meter to an Anonymous Mountain* was organized by fellow artist Zhang Huan in May 1995 and performed by ten East Village artists, including Zhang and Cang, who removed their clothing and weighed and stacked their bodies, heaviest to lightest, in a clearing atop Mount Miaofeng. In this photograph of the work, the performers turn away from the camera, obscuring their faces and redirecting our focus to the gently sloped lines of their bodies, echoed in the distance by a neighboring mountain ridge. The composition bears a striking resemblance to a charcoal drawing of a football game made by George Wesley Bellows more than a century ago, with the heaving, horizontal thrusts of the players' bodies framed by the surrounding landscape.

Visual Description:

This black and white photograph features a landscape with five nude bodies lying in a prone position stacked on top of each other. The lowest person is lying face down directly on the grass. The people each have light skin and dark hair. Their faces are turned away from the camera and covered by their hair. Bushes with bare branches are in the foreground and around the stacked bodies. The background features a hazy mountain range.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

George Grosz

b. Berlin, Germany, 1893–1959

Café

1915

Oil and charcoal on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2282)

CONTINUATION OF RIGHT WALL

George Wesley Bellows

b. Columbus, Ohio, 1882–1925

The Football Game

1912

Charcoal on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.442)

FREESTANDING WALL WITH PLATFORM

Marcel Duchamp

b. Blainville, France, 1887–1968

Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2 (*Nu descendant un escalier no 2*)

1937 (after 1912 painting)

Pochoir-colored collotype with pen and ink over French five-centime revenue stamp

Promised gift of Barbara and Aaron Levine

Abraham Cruzvillegas

b. Mexico City, Mexico, 1968

Self portrait nude descending a staircase at the Raval

2012

Acrylic paint on iron, wooden handlebar, stainless-steel bottle opener, beer bottle caps, and anodized pigment on galvanized can

Gift of Estrellita and Daniel Brodsky, 2023 (2023.035)

Wall Text:

Abraham Cruzvillegas considers the ways people construct places and identities by using the resources at their disposal. *Self portrait nude descending a staircase at the Raval* is part of the artist's *Autoconstrucción* series, which addresses the way that people in much of the world—including Cruzvillegas's own family in Mexico—have improvised the construction of their homes using materials at hand and working with no formal knowledge of architecture. The title also nods to Marcel Duchamp, whose famous *Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)* (1912) depicts an abstracted figure in motion that is suggested by Cruzvillegas's tilting, almost drunken-looking stepladder. Duchamp's pioneering use of found "readymade" objects is a precursor to Cruzvillegas's choice of materials, including the bottle caps and galvanized can used in this sculpture.

Visual Description:

This freestanding sculpture resembles a wobbly, crooked stepladder. Its "rungs" zig-zag unevenly between two thin, flat vertical beams, one of which is painted mostly white and the other a rusty brown. At the base of the left leg of the sculpture sits a dark-blue aluminum drum filled with bottle caps.

GALLERY 3

Wall Text:

VITAL FORMS

World War I caused many artists to question the principles of reason that, in their view, had led to catastrophe. Some, who took the nonsense name Dada, embraced irrationality and chance, creating a movement that spread from Zürich to Paris and New York. The artists of Surrealism, beginning in 1924, sought inspiration from dreams and the unconscious. Their influence gave rise to the organic forms of artists such as Jean Arp and Joan Miró, a style sometimes described as biomorphic abstraction. In sculpture, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore created works that similarly hint at bodily and natural forms. (Four large sculptures by Moore and one by Hepworth are outdoors on the Museum Plaza.) The interests of European Surrealists converged with artists working in Haiti, including Hector Hyppolite and Rigaud Benoit, whose lyrical works incorporate Vodou iconography into dreamlike scenes and depictions of everyday life.

Other artists rejected Surrealism and grounded their abstract work in ideas of balance and order. Piet Mondrian developed his geometric grids, seeking a universal language to reflect the underlying structures of the world: horizontal and vertical, harmony and tension. Joaquín Torres-García believed that pure forms are not enough to express the breadth of human experience, instead filling his gridded works with simplified images drawn from ancient Latin American cultures, African masks, and other sources.

HANGING FROM CEILING ON RIGHT

Alexander Calder

b. Lawnton, Pennsylvania, 1898–1976

Zarabanda (One White Disc)

1955

Sheet metal, paint, metal rods, and wire

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.54)

Visual Description:

This hanging mobile, 5 feet long, consists of amorphous metal pieces connected by rods. The mobile contains approximately twenty amorphous shapes, which hang in an arrangement reminiscent of a family tree. One piece is painted white, with two round holes in it. Another is painted black, with one round hole. Another is painted royal blue. All the other pieces are black and solid.

HANGING FROM CEILING ON LEFT

Alexander Calder

b. Lawnton, Pennsylvania, 1898–1976

Untitled

c. 1953

Sheet metal, paint, and wire

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.788)

REVERSE OF FREESTANDING WALL

Alexander Calder

b. Lawnton, Pennsylvania, 1898–1976

Fish

1944

Metal, paint, wire, plastic, wood, glass, and ceramic

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.785)

Visual Description:

This colorful sculpture is a fish with its mouth open made of metal wire. A bright-red painted wire outlines the fish's back and mouth. Dark navy blue is used for its underbelly. Sunshine-yellow wire makes up its tail. A red-painted circular wire forms its eye. Woven throughout its body are thin metal wires in a pattern resembling scales. Hanging from each wire are charm-like pieces of wood, glass, plastic, and ceramic in various shapes. The "charms" are of assorted hues, creating a kaleidoscope of color.

Joan Miró

b. Barcelona, Spain, 1893–1983

Woman and Little Girl in Front of the Sun

1946

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.203)

LEFT WALL

Joan Miró

b. Barcelona, Spain, 1893–1983

Painting (Circus Horse)

1927

Oil and graphite on burlap

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.202)

Visual Description:

This large rectangular painting, measuring 6 feet high and 9 feet long, shows amorphous shapes and forms set against a medium-brown background. A yellow circle sits near the upper left corner, about a third of the way down the canvas. To its right, near the canvas's upper edge, is a blue circle. Under this circle, a wavy white line forms the shape of a large V. Between the arms of the V is a white circle. To the right of the V sits a white form similar in shape to a rearing horse or a sea lion. A blue circle sits in the spot where a nose would be. From the underside of this form dangles a solid red upside-down triangle with a blue circle at its tip. Above the white form, near the canvas's upper edge, is a red circle. To the right of the white form, a wavy yellow line with a blue circle near its upper end resembles a lightning bolt.

RIGHT WALL

Max Ernst

b. Brühl, Germany, 1891–1976

Beauty of the Night

1954

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.111)

LIGHTWELL

Henry Moore

b. Castleford, England, 1898–1986

Figure

1935

Cumberland alabaster

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3606)

Reclining Figure: Internal and External Forms (Working Model)

1951/cast 1952–1953

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3609)

Helmet Head No. 3

1960

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3646)

Barbara Hepworth

b. Wakefield, England, 1903–1975

Two Heads (Janus)

1949

Mahogany

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2439)

Head (Elegy)

1952

Mahogany and string on wood base

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2438)

Visual Description:

A vertically oriented mahogany sculpture, roughly twice the size of a human head, is connected to a thick wood base. The work is in the round, with long holes smoothly carved into a rectangular form with rounded edges. On one side of the form, two long shapes run almost top to bottom and are separated by a thin strip of wood. In the center of each concave shape is a hole cut through the middle. The opposite side of the sculpture has two oval-shaped cutouts in the center, with a thicker strip of wood separating them. Across each of the holes, lines of string connect to a single point on an inner wall and fan out to connect to the outline of the shape on the opposite side.

Jean Arp

b. Strasbourg, Alsace, 1886–1966

Venus of Meudon

1956/cast 1957

Brass

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.105)

Torso Fruit

1960

Marble

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.108)

Max Ernst

b. Brühl, Germany, 1891–1976

The Table Is Set

1944/cast 1954

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1808)

Moonmad

1944/cast 1956

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1802)

LEFT WALL

Piet Mondrian

b. Amersfoort, Netherlands, 1872–1944

Composition with Blue and Yellow (*Composition bleu-jaune*)

1935

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.205)

Visual Description:

This painting consists of flatly painted black lines and solid white, yellow, and blue squares and rectangles. The canvas is almost square, measuring 27 by almost 29 inches. Nine straight black lines divide the canvas into squares and rectangles. All lines are on a vertical or horizontal axis. Most spaces are filled with white. A single yellow square is in the upper left corner, and one small, thin blue rectangle is to the right of the center of the bottom edge.

Burgoyne Diller

b. New York City, 1906–1965

Construction

1934

Wood, paint, and fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1373)

Charles Biederman

b. Cleveland, Ohio, 1906–2004

Structurist Work #10, 1939–40, New York

1939–1940

Oil and wood on glass

Holenia Purchase Fund, in memory of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1988 (88.41)

Leon Polk Smith

b. Chickasha, Oklahoma, 1906–1996

Black-White Duet with Red

1953

Oil on canvas

Museum purchase with funds donated by Edward R. Downe, Jr., 1982 (82.134)

BLADE WALL

Ann Pibal

b. Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1969

LDFSX

2008

Acrylic on aluminum panel

Museum purchase through the contributions of members of the Contemporary Acquisitions Council and the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 2009 (09.13)

Wall Text:

Ann Pibal's paintings build on the early-twentieth-century legacy of Piet Mondrian and other de Stijl artists, who sought a pure, universal abstraction by dramatically limiting their artistic vocabulary. Their philosophy, termed Neoplasticism, restricted compositions to three primary colors (red, blue, and yellow), three primary values (black, white, and gray), and two primary directions (horizontal and vertical). Playfully and critically engaging with this history, Pibal's hard-edged geometric paintings severely limit color and form, yet add vitality through diagonals, unexpected palettes, and iridescent paints that respond to their environment. Just as Neoplasticism reached far beyond painting into design, architecture, and fashion, Pibal understands her work within this expanded field, working with unconventional materials that resist distinctions between design and painting.

Visual Description:

This geometric painting consists of neon-red and lilac lines on a black background. All the lines are horizontal or diagonal. A horizontal lilac line divides the canvas in half. The top half contains six lilac horizontal lines set apart at varying widths. On the left, two red and one lilac diagonal lines point to the right, seeming to meet four red diagonal lines pointing left. On the right, the colors are reversed: four red diagonal lines point right, and two red and one lilac lines point left. The bottom half of the canvas contains eight lilac horizontal lines set apart at varying widths. On the left, two red diagonal lines point right, one lilac diagonal line points left, and four additional red diagonal lines point right. On the right, four red diagonal lines point left, and one lilac and two red diagonal lines point right. The varying widths of the crisscrossed horizontal and diagonal lines create triangles and rhombuses throughout the entire painting.

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Joaquín Torres-García

b. Montevideo, Uruguay, 1874–1949

Composition

1931

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.295)

Untitled

1931

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4972)

Composition

1932

Oil on canvas

Gift of Jon N. Streep through the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.296)

Visual Description:

This painting contains pictographs organized in a loose grid of different size squares and rectangles. In the upper left corner is a horizontal rectangle with a shape that resembles a football goal post placed on its side, with its posts toward the right. The next pictograph to the right resembles the letter W. Next to it is a masklike pictograph in the shape of a letter U with two oval shapes for eyes, a long rectangular nose, and an oval mouth. The middle left edge of the painting is a vertical rectangle filled with a long, thin anchor. To the right of the anchor is a section filled with a shape that resembles a person's upper torso and head. Other sections of the grid are filled with various shapes: an O-shaped circle, a circular shape that resembles a snail, an upside-down U, a fish, a house, and a shape that resembles an entryway with two arches. The artwork is painted in neutral tones of brown, tan, and black.

Anni Albers

b. Berlin, Germany, 1899–1994

Memo

1958

Woven textile mounted on fabric mounted on wood in
artist's frame

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.27)

RIGHT WALL (FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

Auguste Herbin

b. Quiévy, France, 1882–1960

The Cyclist (*Le cycliste*)

c. 1930

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2528)

Fernand Léger

b. Argentan, France, 1881–1955

Nude on a Red Background

1927

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.173)

Visual Description:

Nude on a Red Background is 4 feet tall and 2 ½ feet wide and is painted in oil on canvas. A female figure is placed prominently in the center of the canvas against a deep-red background. Painted off-white, with thick black brushstrokes forming her outline, the woman is portrayed in both profile and frontally. Her face is simple and symmetrical, and she holds her flowing black hair in her hands as she peers out at the viewer. One leg is bent upward, and the other wraps over it, as if she is sitting cross-legged in the ambiguous red space. The figure is simple, composed of rounded, almost geometric shapes, with ovals overlapping to form the shoulder, forearm, thighs, and calves. Her hands are made up of smaller rounded forms and look similar in style to medieval armored gloves.

BLADE WALL

Genesis Tramaine

b. Brooklyn, New York, 1983

Hour of Incence

2022

Acrylic, oil stick, oil pastel, Lawry's Seasoned Salt, and the Holy Spirit on canvas

Gift of Tiffany and Hooman Dayani, 2023 (2023.041)

Wall Text:

Genesis Tramaine is a queer Black artist known for expressionistic portraits that teeter between figuration and abstraction, prioritizing emotional content over physical likeness. Mostly self-taught, Tramaine describes herself as a devotional painter and views her paintings as spiritual visions that flow through her onto the canvas. Eyes play a critical role in her paintings and frequently repeat, as in *Hour of Incence*, where a multitude of eyes stretches across the figure's forehead, gazing out at us under heavy lids. Similar creative license occurs in the lower half of the face, where the teeth and lips are stretched, distorted, and pushed to the limits of legibility. Through this fragmentation and repetition, Tramaine's work draws from a visual legacy pioneered by Pablo Picasso and other early-twentieth-century Cubists, who fractured and rearranged three-dimensional forms into disjointed two-dimensional images, as in the portraits of Dora Maar and Marie-Thérèse Walter shown here.

Visual Description:

Set against an emerald green background, this painting depicts a person from the chest up with fragmented geometric facial features. Circular forms resembling eyes encompass the upper portion of their face especially across the forehead. Their dark red lips are open wide exposing bright white teeth. The person has dark hair and skin with protruding ears. They are wearing a bright chartreuse colored shirt with hints of red underneath.

SPOKE WALL (LEFT OF BLADE WALL FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

Pablo Picasso

b. Málaga, Spain, 1881–1973

Bust of a Woman (Dora Maar)

1938

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4042)

Woman in a Hat (Marie-Thérèse Walter)

1934

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.3801)

Visual Description:

This rectangular painting depicts a woman from the waist up in fragmented geometrical forms. She is in front of a yellow and pink background crossed by a decorative trim like a wall molding. Oval and triangular shapes form her face, which is seen in profile and frontally at the same time. One of her eyes is parallel to the bridge of her nose. Her other eye is behind her head. Triangular shapes form her neck, and circular shapes suggest her breasts. Atop her head are several triangular and rectilinear shapes that resemble a hat. The color palette comprises muted tones of blue, purple, green, yellow, red, pink, and white.

CORE—CASE (LEFT TO RIGHT)

Joseph Cornell

b. Nyack, New York, 1903–1972

Untitled (Aviary with Yellow Birds)

c. 1948

Wood, cork, paint, and cardboard in glass-fronted wood box

Gift in honor of James T. Demetrios, Director, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, 1984–2001, by Robert and Aimee Lehrman, 2013 (13.7)

Visual Description:

This shadow box, roughly the size of a shoebox, has an aged-looking wooden frame and a clear glass front. Inside, the box is divided into sections by wooden elements: on the left, twenty cylindrical pieces of cork are attached to the upper left side of the box in ten rows of two. Below them is a vertical series of four small, closed dark-brown drawers with round knobs, seemingly darkened with age. To the right is a branch that splits into three smaller branches, making it look like a real tree. Positioned on the branches are four flat, stylized figures of birds cut out of a bright-yellow material. One bird sits at the branch's fork, another on the left branch, and another behind the right branch. Behind the main branch, on the right side of the box, is a white birdbath-like object on which a fourth bird sits. At the bottom of the box is a shallow closed drawer with a knob the size of a pencil eraser. The background and base of the box are dark and shadowed, adding depth to the scene.

Bootes

c. 1954–1956

Printed papers, printed and stamped metal, painted wood, painted clay pipe, metal rod and ring, and painted nails with gesso in glass-faced wood box

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.982)

Visual Description:

A small wooden box is similar in dimension to a legal sized piece of paper. Around the front of the box is a walnut colored frame with a glass front. Inside the box is a metal rod that extends the length of the box. On the right side of the rod is a silver hoop. The back of the box is covered in a white plaster like substance that is cracked and peeling. In the center, the plaster is missing and a picture of the sun is visible. The sun's face is yellow with large eyes, prominent cheekbones, and smiling red lips. Black text on a white background is below and to the right of the sun. The first line reads "CHOCOLAT" in capital letters. The letters of the next line are partially visible. The first four letters are "MENI" and the next two letters are obscured by the plaster. Resting on the bottom of the box is a smoking pipe painted white.

Joseph Cornell

b. Nyack, New York, 1903–1972

Suite de la Longitude

1955–1957

Wood, paint, printed papers, glasses, marbles, cork, metal rings, ink, and pencil in glass-faced wood box

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.979)

Visual Description:

The wooden box is twelve inches high and eighteen inches long and contains a glass front. Inside of the box is a metal rod that extends the length of the box. On the left side of the rod are three silver rings. Centered in the back of the box is a picture of a globe with the longitude lines. On each side of the globe is printed paper with unreadable text. In front of the printed text and globe are six small goblet glasses evenly spaced apart. In each goblet is muted lime green marble. Behind the first goblet on the left is a small light tan sphere. Between the third and fourth goblet is a muted sky-blue marble. An additional muted sky-blue marble is located between the fourth and fifth goblet.

Man Ray

b. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1890–1976

Nut Girls (*Les filles des noix*)

1941

Collage of gelatin silver photographs, printed papers, and walnut

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3236)

André Masson

b. Balagny-sur-Thérain, France, 1896–1987

Caryatid

1939

Colored sand, seashells, and seaweed on wood

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1979 (79.199)

CORE—LEFT WALL

Castera Bazile

b. Jacmel, Haiti, 1923–1966

Boy Sketching

1950

Oil on fiberboard

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.270)

Visual Description:

This rectangular painting is a close-up view of a boy seated on the ground in front of a tree in full leaf. The boy fills the canvas, with his feet and the top of his head out of frame. He sits with his right leg tucked underneath himself and his left leg bent at the knee. A sketchpad rests on his right thigh and is held in place by his left hand. He holds a yellow pencil in his right hand as he works on a drawing. The boy has dark skin and dark hair. His eyes focus downward on the sketchpad. He is wearing a long-sleeved button-down white shirt, blue pants, and a tan belt with a rectangular golden buckle. Next to his left arm are two large, olive-green winged bugs with many legs.

Man in Hospital

1952

Oil on fiberboard

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.271)

Hector Hyppolite

b. Saint-Marc, Haiti, 1894–1948

A Young Woman

By 1948

Oil on paperboard

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2577)

Chez La Gorzan Dire

By 1948

Oil on paperboard mounted on wood

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2579)

General Baubou and the Mambo

1948

Oil on paperboard mounted on wood

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2578)

Rigaud Benoit

b. Port-au-Prince, Haiti, 1911–1986

Nude among Flowers

Before 1954

Oil on fiberboard

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.319)

Visual Description:

A stylized nude woman with light-brown skin stands before a salmon-pink background. Her dark hair is pulled up and held back with a pink headband. She wears gold hoop earrings that dangle just below her earlobes. She faces forward, but her eyes look to her right. Her right arm is extended slightly to her right. Her right hand is covered by a white flower with a yellow center. Two large mint-green plants with hanging leaves stand to either side of the woman and fill the sides of the painting. The plants have multiple fully bloomed white flowers with yellow centers. Their small, thin petals burst out from their centers like sun rays. At the base of the two plants, roots reach into the ground, which is depicted as a bright-green triangle that fills the bottom of the image. The woman's bare feet rest to either side of the triangle's apex.

GALLERY 4

Wall Text:

LOCAL VISIONS

While Surrealism and geometric abstraction dominated Europe in the early decades of the twentieth century, artists in North America developed their own distinctive styles. In New York, a group associated with photographer and gallerist Alfred Stieglitz painted lyrical images of the natural world. Georgia O’Keeffe, the most prominent among them, made regular trips to New Mexico in the 1930s and ’40s that inspired her paintings. Sculptor David Smith, part of a younger generation, developed a new approach to metal informed in part by American agriculture and industry—as exemplified in *Agricola I*, inspired by scavenged farm equipment. Self-taught artists, meanwhile, took varying approaches to the American landscape. Horace Pippin is particularly notable for paintings shaped by his experience as a Black soldier in World War I, while Grandma Moses painted her childhood memories of rural life.

Views of city life were also a frequent subject during the 1930s, Berenice Abbott trained her eye on the rapidly changing architecture of New York City; later, Ralston Crawford borrowed the improvisational strategies of jazz in his photographs of musicians and dancers in New Orleans.

LEFT WALL

Rufino Tamayo

b. Oaxaca, Mexico, 1899–1991

Academic Painting

1935

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4873)

Marsden Hartley

b. Lewiston, Maine, 1877–1943

Canuck Yankee Lumberjack at Old Orchard Beach, Maine

1940–1941

Oil on fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2384)

Ben Shahn

b. Kaunas, Lithuania, 1898–1969

Brothers

1946

Tempera on paper mounted on fiberboard mounted on wood mounted on fiberboard

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.4537)

Pavel Tchelitchev

b. Kaluga, Russia, 1898–1957

Study for “Children”: Two Nude Boys

1929

Transparent and opaque watercolor on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4892)

BLADE WALL

Aliza Nisenbaum

b. Mexico City, Mexico, 1977

***Mis cuatro gracias* (Brendan, Camilo, Carlos, Jorge)**

2018

Oil on canvas

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 2021 (2021.016)

Wall Text:

Initially an abstract painter, Aliza Nisenbaum discovered her interest in portraiture while working at an organization supporting immigrants in New York. Like many earlier artists in this gallery, such as Alice Neel and Ben Shahn, she depicts members of her community, focusing on often-overlooked people at society's margins. This painting portrays four dancers whom Nisenbaum met in a salsa group that gathers weekly at a downtown New York club, forming a temporary community around music and dance regardless of age, nationality, or sexual orientation. Titled *Mis cuatro gracias*, meaning "my four graces," this work expands the traditional motif of the Three Graces of Greek mythology—goddesses often depicted holding hands in a dance—into a powerful image that speaks to body awareness, queerness, and social inclusion.

Visual Description:

This large-scale painting depicts four people with their hands linked together as if they are in the middle of a dance. The person on the left side of the canvas has light skin and reddish-brown hair. They wear a long-sleeved pink crop top, gray shorts, and black lace-up boots. To the right, the next person has light skin, dark hair, and a mustache and beard. They wear a light mint-green shirt with tan pants and brightly patterned blue, tan, and orange shoes. The next person is dark-skinned, with shoulder-length black hair. They wear a short-sleeved light-blue shirt with a long-sleeved black shirt underneath it, white pants, and white tennis shoes. The person on the far right is light-skinned, with short brown hair and a mustache and beard. They wear vibrant yellow pants; a brightly patterned yellow, green, pink, and red long-sleeved shirt; and brown shoes. The four people stand on a brightly colored mosaic-tiled floor in orange, yellow, turquoise, gray, and white. Behind the group is a mural of dancing figures.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

Milton Avery

b. Altmar, New York, 1885–1965

Sally and Sara

1947

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Marion L. Ring Estate, 1987 (87.21)

Visual Description:

The painting depicts two seated female figures in an interior setting. The forms are flat and geometric. The color palette is bold and bright. In the foreground, a female figure partially reclines on what appears to be a type of settee. The settee is red, with a tall black back. The figure is seen in profile, facing right. She has dark-brown shoulder-length hair. Her face is tan, with no facial features. Her shirt is pink with white sleeves. She wears a purple skirt that hits below her knee. Her lower calves end at the bottom edge of the canvas. In the middle ground is a large yellow form that resembles a recliner. To the right of the recliner, in the background, is a seated figure sitting in a second yellow chair. Her right arm rests at her side. Her left arm is bent at the elbow, and her chin rests on her left hand. She has short light-gray hair that is parted down the middle. Her skin is cream-colored, with no facial features. She wears a gray dress. The back wall is painted sky blue. Extending from the left side of the frame is a rectangular shape that looks like a window. It is painted lime green and framed by a baby-blue border. The floor is navy blue, with thin white lines tracing out a pattern of squares.

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Ralston Crawford

b. St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, 1906–1978

New Orleans

1960

Gelatin silver photograph

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1228)

New Orleans / Dancers in the Backyard

n.d.

Gelatin silver photograph

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1202)

Outdoor Recording Session, New Orleans / Seated Musicians

L. to R.: Louis Nelson, Kid Sheik, Chester Jones, John Handy

n.d.

Gelatin silver photograph

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1159)

Berenice Abbott

b. Springfield, Ohio, 1898–1991

Rooster

n.d.

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2021 (2021.150)

4th Ave, Brooklyn

1936

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2021 (2021.147)

West St.

1936

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2021 (2021.151)

ENTRYWALL TO RIGHT

Georgia O'Keeffe

b. Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, 1887–1986

Black Hills with Cedar

1941

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.3471)

Visual Description:

This landscape painting features a close-up view of rolling hills. On each side of the painting the hills are rendered in beige and coral hues. Black hills frame the background creating a sense of depth into a canyon like space. Behind the black hills, blue sky and cloud forms peak through. In the foreground are green tree branches with white and lilac buds.

Loie Hollowell

b. Woodland, California, 1983

Boob Wheel

2019

Oil, acrylic, sawdust, and high-density foam on linen mounted on panel

Gift of Iris and Adam Singer, 2020 (2020.025)

Wall Text:

Loie Hollowell paints abstract images of the body that evoke sensory experience. Echoing the weighty curves of ancient fertility figures, she attaches spherical forms to her canvases, turning paintings into sculptural objects that reflect light and cast shadows onto their own surfaces. Hollowell uses color to convey emotional and spiritual content in a manner akin to early American Modernist painters such as Georgia O'Keeffe, whose works similarly blur the line between the human body and the landscape. In *Boob Wheel*, Hollowell distills the female form into five geometric shapes arranged along lines of light that run vertically and horizontally through the composition. The vertical line stands in for the spine and acts as an *axis mundi* (axis of the world), a device used in sacred architecture to connect heaven and earth.

Visual Description:

This painting is 6 feet tall and over 4 feet wide—roughly the size of a person. The canvas has a muted gray and peach-colored background. Bright orange-red and blue shapes stacked from top to bottom suggest a body. The painting is nearly symmetrical: if divided in half vertically, the shapes and colors would be near mirror images. Centered at the top is a blue oval, which sits above a large purplish-red form resembling an upside-down U. This form extends toward the bottom of the canvas. Underneath it are two bright-blue half ovals resembling breasts, side by side, that protrude from the canvas. Within the upside-down U is a shape resembling a pinwheel. Two stacked three-dimensional blue half circles compose the center of the pinwheel, with curved light-blue lines and red dots radiating outward.

Arthur G. Dove

b. Canandaigua, New York, 1880–1946

City Moon

1938

Oil and wax emulsion on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1413)

RIGHT WALL (FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

Arthur G. Dove

b. Canandaigua, New York, 1880–1946

Haystack

1931

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1415)

Marsden Hartley

b. Lewiston, Maine, 1877–1943

Mt. Katahdin

1941

Oil on fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2369)

BLADE WALL

Sally Mann

b. Lexington, Virginia, 1951

Battlefields, Manassas (Veins)

2000

Gelatin silver photograph

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest Fund, 2004 (04.1)

Wall Text:

Sally Mann, renowned for her intimate photographs of people and places in the rural American South, uses a large-format camera and nineteenth-century techniques to signal the passage of time. *Battlefields, Manassas (Veins)* was created with the collodion process, which requires the photographer to use a portable darkroom—Mann works in the back of her truck—to develop the negative before the collodion dries on the plate. Mann welcomes interruptions from dust, light, and emulsion slippage, resulting in an image visibly marked by its making. Characteristic of the series, the landscape in this photograph is dark and indistinct—an abstraction that is in dialogue with Marsden Hartley's painting of Mount Katahdin, seen to the right. Mann has made many atmospheric depictions of historic battle sites, just as Hartley repeatedly painted Maine's highest peak, gradually reducing the palette and detail of the scene to emphasize the mountain's grandeur.

Visual Description:

This black and white photograph features a dark and indistinct landscape. Across the top third of the image is a wavy, white horizon line. The contrast between the sky and landscape is extremely low, with little variation between shades of dark gray and black. On the left side of the image near the horizon line is a lone tree. Dark spots are sprinkled throughout the entire image.

CONTINUATION OF RIGHT WALL

Horace Pippin

b. West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1888–1946

Holy Mountain III

1945

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4069)

Visual Description:

This painting shows people and animals in a forest landscape. The foreground is covered with grass with white and red flowers scattered throughout. The background is covered in dark-green trees. Among the trees are barely discernible gravestones, soldiers, a tank, and a hanged figure. At the upper right corner of the painting, a blue sky peeks out between the trees. Centered in the middle of the painting is a dark-skinned man with short black hair. He wears a white robe and holds a shepherd's hook in his right hand. Various animals surround him. In front of him, a jaguar lies in the grass. In front of the jaguar is a white dog. To the man's right are a lamb, a gray wolf, a lion, and a brown bull. To his left are two bulls, a gray bear, and a black one. Behind the bull, a parrotlike bird sits on a tree limb. In the left foreground, a child lies in the grass. He has short black hair and wears a yellow shirt and white shorts. In the right foreground, another medium-dark-skinned child crouches next to a felled tree trunk. He has short black hair and wears a yellow- and red-striped shirt and grayish-tan pants. In front of the children, a tree trunk lies in the grass, with another parrotlike bird perched atop it. The artist's signature and a date "Aug. 9, 1945" appear in the lower right corner.

Grandma Moses

b. Greenwich, New York, 1860–1961

The Old Oaken Bucket

1945

Oil on fiberboard

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Schneider, New York, 1974 (74.229)

Horace Pippin

Dogfight over the Trenches

c. 1939

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4071)

FREESTANDING PLATFORM

David Smith

b. Decatur, Indiana, 1906–1965

Agricola I

1951–1952

Steel and paint

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4638)

Visual Description

Painted a vibrant red, this life-size metal sculpture depicts a thin, abstracted figure. The figure's head is roughly the shape of an arrowhead, with an elongated neck and a torso shaped like a fish. The figure holds a spiked metal rod at the end of each outstretched arm. A protruding handle connects the back of the head to the bottom of the torso. Extending from the right side of the figure is a flat platform shaped like a bicycle seat. The figure rests upon a small rectangular pedestal, which sits atop a flat, rectangular metal plate.

CASE (LEFT TO RIGHT)

David Smith

b. Decatur, Indiana, 1906–1965

Untitled

1957

Iron

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.4400)

Spectre Riding a Headless Horse

1951–1952

Steel and bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4624)

Untitled

1952

Ink and opaque paint on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4621)

Ancient Household

1945

Iron and wood

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation and Lily Harmon, 1979–80 (80.148)

Medal for Dishonor: War Exempt Sons of the Rich

1939–1940

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4626)

Medal for Dishonor: Propaganda for War

1939–1940

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4627)

Medal for Dishonor: Death by Gas

1939–1940

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4628)

Dorothy Dehner

b. Cleveland, Ohio, 1901–1994

Signpost No. 2

1958

Bronze and paint

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1309)

Jacob's Ladder No. 1

1957

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1310)

Wall Text:

Next gallery:

LAURIE ANDERSON

Four Talks

Revolutions continues in the following gallery

GALLERY 5

Wall Text:

AFTERSHOCKS

World War II tore apart artistic communities in Europe, sending many into exile in North America. Across both continents, numerous works from this period are raw, unnerving, and inflected by the horrors of war. In 1941, American Adolph Gottlieb began his gridded *Pictographs*, describing these “obsessive” paintings as “the expression of the neurosis which is our reality.” Wifredo Lam—a Cuban painter who left Paris for Havana following the Nazi invasion—fused European Surrealism and Afro-Cuban imagery. His work reflects the devastation of the war, but also the longer history of colonial violence in Cuba.

Among the artists who remained in Europe, Jean Dubuffet, whose works can be seen in the adjacent gallery, looked to art by children and people with mental illness as sources for a new artistic language, while Alberto Giacometti created emaciated figures that exude a sense of alienation.

In the postwar years, the center of the art world shifted to New York. Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, and others took up and evolved the legacy of Surrealism, looking to the unconscious mind and mythology for inspiration. These painters would soon coalesce around a shared tendency known as Abstract Expressionism.

CORE—LEFT WALL

George Grosz

b. Berlin, Germany, 1893–1959

The Painter of the Hole I

1948

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2248)

Visual Description:

This painting features a lone figure sitting in front of an easel in a post-apocalyptic landscape. The figure, shown seated in the profile, has very thin limbs and a bulging bloodshot eye. Facing the easel, the figure sits on a yellow stool with pale green legs. In their left hand, the figure holds a palette with white, tan, and black paint mixed on it. Different sized brushes are secured to the top of the palette. The figure holds a red paint brush in their right hand. The easel sits in front of a large natural form, and the painting on the easel resembles a donut. A mouse is perched on top of the painting. Another mouse hangs on to the leg of the easel. Behind the figure several paintings containing the same donut shape are propped up against another natural form. A book, paint tubes, brushes and other debris litter on the ground in the foreground. At the top of the canvas, a branch with leaves billows in the wind. The painting is rendered in muted neutral colors of cream, tan, and brown with a muted background in light blue, yellow and gray.

Wifredo Lam

b. Sagua la Grande, Cuba, 1902–1982

Seated Woman

1955

Oil and charcoal on canvas

Gift of Mrs. Bernard Gimbel, 1978 (78.100)

The Dream

1947

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2815)

CORE—RIGHT WALL

Arshile Gorky

b. Dilkaya, Turkey, 1904–1948

Soft Night

1947

Oil, india ink, and conte crayon on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2341)

Adolph Gottlieb

b. New York City, 1903–1974

Pictograph

1949

Oil, tempera, opaque paint, and casein on linen

Gift of the Marion L. Ring Estate, 1987 (87.29)

Visual Description:

Organized in a gridlike fashion, this painting contains approximately five rows of pictographs. Across the first row are triangular shapes and amoebic forms, two of which look like animals. In the second row, the first pictograph is an eye with lashes. To the right are blocks, lines, and circular forms. The third row contains circular biomorphic forms, ending with shapes arranged to resemble a stick figure. In the fourth row are interlocking circular and oval biomorphic forms, along with an image of a hand. Centered in the last row is a biomorphic form that resembles a fish surrounded by swirling circular forms. The artwork is painted in tones of white, shades of gray, and black.

LEFT WALL

Tsuruko Yamazaki

b. Ashiya, Japan, 1925–2019

Work

1957

Aniline dye and varnish on tin

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest and Purchase Funds, 2019 (2019.004)

FREESTANDING WALL

Francis Bacon

b. Dublin, Ireland, 1909–1992

Study for Portrait V

1953

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.183)

REVERSE OF FREESTANDING WALL

Jackson Pollock

b. Cody, Wyoming, 1912–1956

Water Figure

1945

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.4087)

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Jackson Pollock

b. Cody, Wyoming, 1912–1956

Number 3, 1949: Tiger

1949

Oil, enamel, and cigarette fragment on canvas mounted on fiberboard

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.235)

Janet Sobel

b. Dnipro, Ukraine, 1894–1968

The Attraction of Pink

1945

Oil, enamel, and lacquer on canvas

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund and Gift of Sol and Leah Sobel, 1999 (99.33)

BLADE WALL

Annette Lemieux

b. Norfolk, Virginia, 1957

Nomad

1988

Latex on canvas

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 2017 (2017.030)

Wall Text:

Annette Lemieux created *Nomad* during a period when she felt unsure about the subject and style of her painting. While pacing in her studio, she decided to make her restlessness the subject, creating this work by covering her feet in paint and walking across the canvas. Lemieux's act of placing her canvas on the floor and using the movement of her body to determine the composition echoes Jackson Pollock's famous gestural painting of decades earlier. By using her feet rather than her hands—which had been trained to paint in a particular way—Lemieux explored new territory, eventually making several “foot paintings.” She describes *Nomad* as the freest of them all, as she decided not to follow the canvas's edges but instead wandered toward its middle.

Visual Description:

Meandering along a circular path on a 9-by-13-foot canvas are footprints in black paint. Toward the bottom right corner of the cream-colored canvas, the footprints are distinct. They become fainter along the top and left side.

CONTINUATION OF LEFT WALL

Clyfford Still

b. Grandin, North Dakota, 1904–1980

1948-C

1948

Oil on canvas

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 1992 (92.8)

CASE (LEFT TO RIGHT)

Julio González

b. Barcelona, Spain, 1876–1942

Head of Monserrat Crying II

1942

Ink on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2101)

Head of Montserrat Screaming II

1941–1942/cast by 1961

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2112)

Personage(s) with a Knife: Study for Sculpture

1940

Ink on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2098)

Head Called “Hooded”

c. 1934–1935/probably cast c. 1950–1959

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2110)

Mask of Montserrat Screaming

c. 1938–1939/cast by 1955

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2108)

Jean Dubuffet

b. Le Havre, France, 1901–1985

Limbour as a Crustacean

1946

Oil and sand on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.100)

Visual Description:

Set against a dark red, black, and brown textured background, this painting is a portrait of a person in the form of a crab-like caricature. The textured figure is light beige with a large round head and body. The figure has spiky hair, close set eyes, a thin elongated nose, and oval shapes on the side of their face resembling ears. Their mouth is wide open, revealing two upper teeth and one lower tooth. Button-like circles run vertically along the torso implying that the figure is wearing a shirt. The figure has spindly legs. Hinged at the elbows, the upper arms extend outward while the forearms dangle downward.

The Soul of Morvan

1954

Grape wood and vines, slag, cement, tar, rope, wire, twine, nails, and staples

Gift of Mary and Leigh B. Block, by Exchange, 1989 (89.19)

Half-Length Personage

1958

Watercolor and collage on paper

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.102)

Profuse Wet Nurse

1954

Iron slag on cement base

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1454)

Spirit of Tarnish

1959–1960

Metal foil, papier-mâché, and nails

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1456)

Excrecence at Play

1954

Iron slag and cement

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1457)

RIGHT WALL (RIGHT TO LEFT)

Willem de Kooning

b. Rotterdam, Netherlands, 1904–1997

Two Women in the Country

1954

Oil, enamel, and charcoal on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1200)

Woman

1953

Oil and charcoal on paper mounted on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.1199)

Zurich

1947

Oil and enamel on paper mounted on fiberboard

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.1355)

Woman/Verso: Untitled

1948

Oil and enamel on fiberboard

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.1197.A–B)

Visual Description:

Woman, nearly 4 1/2 feet tall by 3 1/2 feet wide, is hung in a wooden frame. The subject is an abstracted woman, with swaths of off-white and gray paint as the central tonal palette. De Kooning used sharp, quick strokes of black paint to outline her body. She faces the viewer and has broad shoulders and curving breasts. She is seated, hands in her lap. Long blonde hair cascades down her back, and her head tilts to the right. With exposed white teeth, she appears to be laughing. The woman's eyes gaze upward toward the upper left corner of the painting, where a yellow starburst emerges from the layers of gray and white paint. In contrast to the predominant grays and blacks of the overall painting, the lower section is filled with color. Bursts of lilac cut across the woman's midsection, with splashes of sherbet orange, soft pale pink, and sky blue composing the lower section of her body.

BLADE WALL

Cecily Brown

b. London, England, 1969

Hoodlum

2000–2001

Oil on linen

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 2001 (01.11)

Wall Text:

Cecily Brown is one of the most renowned painters of her generation, and her lush compositions deftly marry abstraction, figuration, and a masterful knowledge of art history. *Hoodlum* was created after the artist had moved to a new studio in the Meatpacking district of New York City, and the painting's vibrant palette of reds, oranges, and browns recalls the scenes of viscera, blood, and flesh that punctuated her surroundings. However, far from reveling in gore, the scene evokes the body in all its fleshy, sensual wonder. In the center of the painting, the indication of a nude figure emerges, both exposed and filtered through the blur of riotous swaths of paint. Influenced by painters such as Willem de Kooning, the artist harnesses the tensions that occur when figuration explodes into abstraction.

Visual Description:

Hoodlum, a rectangular abstract painting, is over 6 feet tall and more than 7 feet wide, with swaths of vibrant reds, oranges, and browns spread across the canvas. The spread of paint evokes images of blood and carnage where red patches mix with flesh tones. In the center of the canvas, part of a splayed nude figure begins to emerge, both exposed and hidden in the blur of paint.

CONTINUATION OF RIGHT WALL (RIGHT TO LEFT)

Willem de Kooning

b. Rotterdam, Netherlands, 1904–1997

Queen of Hearts

1943–1946

Oil and charcoal on fiberboard

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.1223)

Seated Man

c. 1939

Oil and charcoal on canvas

Gift of the artist through the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.89)

FREESTANDING PLATFORM

Alberto Giacometti

b. Borgonovo, Switzerland, 1901–1966

Tall Figure

1947/cast 1956

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2031)

LIGHTWELL

Alberto Giacometti

b. Borgonovo, Switzerland, 1901–1966

Man and Woman (Construction)

1926–1927/cast 1954–1956

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2032)

Woman

1928/cast 1929

Bronze

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972 (72.131)

The Nose

1947/revised 1949/cast c. 1960–1965

Bronze, iron, and twine

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.132)

Visual Description:

Hanging from twine in the center of a rectangular metal armature is a roughly textured, abstracted bronze head. The approximately 2-foot-tall head is in profile, its mouth open. Its neck and the suggestion of its torso are a single elongated form shaped much like an upside-down baseball bat. Its thin, pointed 2-foot-long nose extends outward, protruding approximately 1 foot past the armature.

Dog

1951/cast 1957

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2038)

Visual Description:

This bronze sculpture of a dog stands on a low platform. It shows the dog in profile. The texture of the bronze is rough and craggy, like that of a rock. The dog is a gaunt, sticklike figure. Ribs or gashes are seen along its sides. Its head droops downward, as if it is sniffing the ground. The position of the dog's legs creates a sense of movement, as if the dog is meandering along.

Alberto Giacometti

b. Borgonovo, Switzerland, 1901–1966

Bust of Diego

1957

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2039)

Seated Woman

1956/cast 1957

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2037)

Standing Woman

1961

Bronze

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2047)

GALLERY 6

Wall Text:

GESTURES AND MYTHS

By the late 1940s, Abstract Expressionism had become a full-blown artistic movement, its artists eliminating any trace of recognizable subject matter and working on a grand scale. New York-based artists Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, Lee Krasner, and others abandoned traditional brushwork: instead, they flung and dripped paint onto their canvases in gestures they saw as direct expressions of their innermost emotions. Others created huge fields of intensely saturated color intended to evoke awe in their viewers. Some, such as Morris Louis and Helen Frankenthaler, soaked and stained raw canvas with thinned acrylic (rather than oil) paints to create their signature visual effects. In the Bay Area, some artists rebelled against the abstraction of their teachers: Richard Diebenkorn and Joan Brown, for example, combined gestural brushwork with recognizable subject matter.

At the same time, Paris continued to host a vibrant community of international artists, including the Chinese-born Zao Wou-ki and the American Joan Mitchell, each of whom developed a distinct style of abstraction.

LEFT BLADE WALL

Flora Yukhnovich

b. Norwich, England, 1990

Lipstick, Lip Gloss, Hickeys Too

2022

Oil on linen

Gift of Iris and Adam Singer, in honor of the Hirshhorn's 50th anniversary, 2023 (2023.011)

Wall Text:

Flora Yukhnovich's monumental paintings combine subjects, themes, and palettes drawn from earlier artistic movements with the dynamic brushwork of postwar American painting. In *Lipstick, Lip Gloss, Hickeys Too*, she puts elements of the eighteenth-century Rococo style, characterized by pastel colors and sensual femininity, into conversation with Abstract Expressionism, associated with the swaggering, hypermasculine stance of painters such as Jackson Pollock. The resulting composition hovers between figuration and abstraction, as Yukhnovich's broad, swirling brushwork makes the female nudes all but melt into the surrounding landscape. This fluid, all-over quality, in which landscape and figures slip in and out of focus—also seen in Lee Krasner's *Siren*, to the left—thwarts conventional objectification of form in favor of a more sensual or even empathetic engagement.

Visual Description:

This large painting, more than 10 feet wide, depicts abstracted figures set in a landscape. In the foreground, wide, swirling brushstrokes of pastel pink, peach, and cream create the illusion of nude figures lounging in the grass, in turn suggested by dark greens and blues. At the top right and top left of the canvas, deep greens also suggest a lush and abundant forest. Sweeping circular forms of vibrant light and dark blue give the impression of billowing clouds in a bright sky.

Lee Krasner

b. Brooklyn, New York, 1908–1984

Siren

1966

Oil on canvas

The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Bequest, 1981 (86.2768)

BLADE WALL**Joan Mitchell**

b. Chicago, Illinois, 1925–1992

Cercando un Ago

1959

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3577)

Visual Description:

This abstract painting, over 5 feet wide and 5 feet tall, is composed of multilayered overlapping brushstrokes. In the upper left quadrant, diagonal brushstrokes of pine-green, bright-yellow, dark-red, and blue paint overlap one another. In the upper right quadrant, brushstrokes of dark blue and dark red are oriented vertically, and bands of gray and tan run diagonally. In the lower left quadrant are various widths of brushstrokes in green, black, red, and brown. The brushstrokes here are largely diagonal. In the lower left corner, the brushstrokes do not extend to the bottom edge, leaving the cream-colored canvas exposed. In the lower right quadrant, brushstrokes of dark green, red, blue, brown, and black move in various directions, horizontally, diagonally, and vertically. Throughout the painting, white paint peeks through the bands of color. Paint splatters and drips are also evident throughout.

REVERSE OF BLADE WALL

Torkwase Dyson

b. Chicago, Illinois, 1973

Bird and Lava #04

2021

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Hunter/Dunbar Projects, NYC, 2022 (2022.035)

Wall Text:

Torkwase Dyson works primarily with the color black in an abstract style, often combining delicate brushwork with textural effects to produce complex and nuanced surfaces. *Bird and Lava #04* belongs to a series that explores bird flight and lava flows as metaphors for Black liberation. Like Zao Wou-ki and Franz Kline, also on view in this gallery, Dyson is interested in reducing abstraction to a monochrome black palette, yet she insists on the social meanings that abstract forms can contain. The circular shape of the canvas, often referred to as a tondo, was popular during the Italian Renaissance. Dyson repeatedly adopts this shape, which echoes a portal or tunnel, in works that allude to systems of Black oppression and pathways to freedom.

Visual Description:

This circular painting measures 8 feet in diameter. Deep black, with swirling bluish-gray at the edges, the textured layers of paint resemble the surface of the Moon. Pale vertical streaks mark the right side of the canvas. Near the lower right edge, at about the five o'clock position, is a bright red-orange dot.

RIGHT WALL

Helen Frankenthaler

b. New York City, 1928–2011

Indian Summer

1967

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.120)

Visual Description:

This painting is made of stacked, roughly rectangular bands of color of various lengths and widths. The background is light-tan raw canvas. Dominating the top half of the painting is a wide, rectangular chocolate-brown band. The brown paint starts at the left edge of the painting and extends almost to the right edge. In the bottom half of the painting, below the brown band, is a navy-blue rectangular band. Below it is a magenta band. The lower bands are of similar widths. Below the magenta band is a thin stripe of emerald green. The three lower bands do not touch the edges of the painting, and each is shorter in length than the one above it. To the right of the green stripe is a short, thin chocolate-brown one that extends to the right edge of the painting. Each band of color has irregular edges.

Morris Louis

b. Baltimore, Maryland, 1912–1962

Buskin

1959

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.3113)

Barnett Newman

b. New York City, 1905–1970

Covenant

1949

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.213)

Visual Description:

This large, horizontal canvas is primarily painted in rust red. Two vertical lines near the middle of the canvas, roughly equidistant from the middle, were seemingly painted freehand from top to bottom in a long, continuous stroke. The left line is painted black, like a shadow, and the right one is painted mustard yellow. The black line is slightly wider and flatter than the yellow line.

Zao Wou-ki

b. Beijing, China, 1920–2013

Painting

1958

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.5652)

*END WALL***Franz Kline**

b. Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 1910–1962

Delaware Gap

1958

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2751)

LEFT WALL

Hans Hofmann

b. Weissenburg, Germany, 1880–1966

Flowering Swamp

1957

Oil on wood

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.2482)

Alma Thomas

b. Columbus, Georgia, 1891–1978

Blue and Brown Still Life

1958

Oil on fiberboard

Gift of Vincent Melzac, 1976 (76.138)

Richard Diebenkorn

b. Portland, Oregon, 1922–1993

Man and Woman in a Large Room

1957

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966 (66.1371)

Visual Description:

This painting is approximately 6 feet by 5 feet. In the foreground, a person sits on a stool, their back to the viewer. The person wears a long-sleeved grayish shirt and dark-blue pants. In the midground is a woman facing forward. She stands with her right arm bent at the elbow and wrapped across her torso. Her hand rests along her left bicep. She wears a short-sleeved blue shirt and a knee-length blue- and white-striped skirt. Her facial features are indiscernible. The two figures are in a large room with dark-gray walls and floor. On the floor is a large greenish-blue rug trimmed in yellow. Along the back wall are large square windows that let in the light from a blue sky. In the far right corner is an open door showing a glimpse of the outdoor landscape, which is suggested by bands of bright color.

Joan Brown

b. San Francisco, California, 1938–1990

Nun with Staffordshire Terrier

1961

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.685)

Visual Description:

This roughly 5-foot-square painting depicts a woman seated in a dark gray-green chair with a medium-sized dog sitting at her feet on a blue- and white-checkered floor. The woman has light-brown skin and black hair piled atop her head. She has a neutral facial expression, and her hands are clasped in her lap. She wears a long-sleeved dress in blended hues of white, pink, and green. The dog, its head turned to gaze beyond the right edge of the canvas, is painted in yellow, white, and blue. Behind them, brightly colored walls are suggested by thick brushstrokes of red, orange, and green. Thickly applied paint and wide brushstrokes are seen throughout the painting.

Grace Hartigan

b. Newark, New Jersey, 1922–2008

Chinatown

1956

Oil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.2366)

CORE

Berenice Abbott

b. Springfield, Ohio, 1898–1991

Path of a Moving Ball

1958–1961

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2021 (2021.146)

Cycloid

1958–1961

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2021 (2021.141)

Carlotta Corpron

b. Blue Earth, Minnesota, 1901–1988

Chambered Nautilus Space Composition

1949

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2023 (2023.125)

Light Follows Form

1946

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2023 (2023.126)

Visual Description:

This black-and-white photograph is roughly the size of a standard sheet of paper and shows two amorphous three-dimensional forms resting against each other on a neutral surface. Lines of light and shadows fall diagonally across the forms and their surroundings.

Birds and Clouds

1945

Gelatin silver photograph

Gift of Herbert Lust, 2023 (2023.127)

GALLERY 7

Wall Text:

NEW REALITIES

In the late 1950s, a new generation of New York-based artists rejected the grand emotional painting of their predecessors. Instead, they used found materials and commonplace imagery to make art that directly addresses the experiences of daily life. In his “combines”—hybrid paintings, sculptures, and collages—Robert Rauschenberg drew inspiration from the dense flow of goods and information in his Manhattan neighborhood; the example here—*Fossil for Bob Morris*—includes a pedal bike frame and a plastic funnel amid a jumble of screenprinted images. Louise Nevelson also turned to the streets of New York for material, gathering discarded wood and architectural fragments that she painted black and assembled into evocative forms. Cy Twombly, meanwhile, continued to paint in an abstract mode but replaced the gestures of Abstract Expressionism with crude, graffiti-like scribbles and clumps of paint.

LEFT WALL

Louise Nevelson

b. Kyiv, Ukraine, 1899–1988

Black Wall

1964

Wood, paint, and metal

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.3825)

Visual Description:

This 6-foot-tall structure resembles a display cabinet with 12 open cupboard spaces arranged in 3 rows across and 4 columns tall. Stacked on top of a base, each open cubby space contains circular and square shapes resembling spindles on a staircase. The structure is made of wood and is spray-painted black.

BLADE WALL

Rick Lowe

b. Eufaula, Alabama, 1961

Fire #4: This Time Athens

2023

Acrylic and paper collage on canvas

Gift of Mahshid and Jamshid Ehsani, in honor of the Hirshhorn's 50th anniversary, 2023
(2023.105)

Wall Text:

Rick Lowe is a social practice artist who directly engages with communities around the world through the game of dominoes. His large-scale collages echo the shapes and patterns of domino play while also referencing the location in which they were made. *Fire #4: This Time Athens* was inspired by Lowe's travels to Greece and incorporates newspaper clippings covering a deadly rail disaster painted over with Greek letters in a fiery palette. Cascading trails of rectangular clippings radiate outward from the center of the canvas, evoking both train lines and toppled dominoes in a powerful elegy for the event. Created nearly sixty years earlier, Louise Nevelson's *Black Wall* is similarly dominated by rectangles: a grid of twelve milk crates stacked on a large base. Each box contains a unique assemblage of scavenged wood—sometimes recognizable objects, such as chair legs and a spool. Like Lowe's collages, Nevelson's sculptures are created through an additive process of layering rather than carving away. However, in stark contrast to Lowe's bright colors, Nevelson typically chose to paint her sculptures a solid black to unify their many parts into a singular whole. The rectangular grid similarly provides stability and stasis to Nevelson's work, ultimately creating a very different effect from the dynamic movement and energy seen in Lowe's use of the shape.

Visual Description:

This 6-foot-square abstract painting contains several layers of paper and paint arranged in a pattern that resembles an aerial map of a city. Images and text from newspaper clippings make up the under layer. Superimposed over the clippings are rows of shaped lines in white, yellow, pink, red, and maroon that resemble letters of the alphabet. Meandering throughout the canvas is an added layer of colored rectangular forms similar in size to dominoes.

WALL TO RIGHT OF BLADE WALL

Cy Twombly

b. Lexington, Virginia, 1928–2011

Untitled (Roma)

1959/cast 1990

Synthetic resin and paint

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund, 1991 (91.27)

WALL FACING ESCALATOR LOBBY

Robert Rauschenberg

b. Port Arthur, Texas, 1925–2008

Fossil for Bob Morris

1965

Paper, metal, plastic, rubber, and fabric on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972 (72.240)

RIGHT WALL

Cy Twombly

b. Lexington, Virginia, 1928–2011

Ferragosto II

1961

Oil, oil crayon, and graphite pencil on canvas

Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966 (66.5029)

ESCALATOR LOBBY—EXIT WALL

Wall Text:

Revolutions: Art from the Hirshhorn Collection, 1860–1960 is the first of three major exhibitions marking the Museum’s fiftieth-anniversary year. It includes highlights from the first years of the Museum’s collection; subsequent exhibitions will explore the period from 1960 to the present.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, our nation’s museum of modern and contemporary art, is named for its founding donor, Joseph Hirshhorn (b. Mitau, Latvia, 1899–1981), and opened in 1974. Hirshhorn was an enthusiastic collector who often purchased multiple works—and sometimes entire exhibitions—by artists he admired. He gave the nation nearly 6,000 works in his founding gift and 6,400 more upon his death, constituting one of the most important collections of postwar American and European art in the world. At the same time, Joseph Hirshhorn’s collecting habits reflected the prevalent tendencies of his time and his own interests. In recent decades, Hirshhorn curators have expanded the collection through an ambitious ongoing acquisition program, adding both historical artworks that allow us to present a more inclusive history and recent ones that reflect the full breadth of contemporary artistic practices.

Larry Rivers

b. Bronx, New York, 1923–2002

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

1974

Color offset lithograph and serigraph on paper

Gift of the Smithsonian Resident Associate Program, 1974 (74.216)

Visual Description:

This vintage poster depicts the inaugural opening of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in 1974. Its top half contains a rendering of the Museum building against an orange background. In its lower half is a vibrant green area representing the Sculpture Garden. Surrounding the Museum building and on the green background is an array of paintings and sculptures from Joseph Hirshhorn's initial donation, including artworks by Willem de Kooning, René Magritte, Edward Hopper, Auguste Rodin, Alexander Calder, and Henry Moore. On the poster's sides are black capital letters reading, "Hirshhorn Museum" and "Sculpture Garden." In red cursive near the upper right corner is the word "and." In the center of the poster are a row of brown trees and two rows of words reading, "Smithsonian Institution Washington D.C. Opening October 1974 October Opening."

Image credit:

Janet Sobel

b. Dnipro, Ukraine, 1894–1968

The Attraction of Pink

1945

Oil, enamel, and lacquer on canvas

Joseph H. Hirshhorn Purchase Fund and Gift of Sol and Leah Sobel, 1999 (99.33)

HIRSHHORN

 Smithsonian

