

HELEN FRANKENTHALER

American, 1928-2011

Green Sway, 1975

Acrylic on canvas

Collection of John and Zola Rex
L.2012.1

Helen Frankenthaler is one of the pioneers of Color Field painting, a movement that emerged in the exhibition *Post-Painterly Abstraction*, curated by influential critic Clement Greenberg at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1964. In Color Field painting, color takes precedence, covering the entire canvas, and is devoid of the gestural, emotive brushstrokes that typify Abstract Expressionism. Frankenthaler pioneered the “soak stain” method, in which pigment is diluted and applied to raw canvas, allowing the paint to soak into the fibers rather than rest on the surface. Suggestive of landscape painting, *Green Sway* uses color and light to evoke the tranquility of nature, while the watercolor-like painting effect provides a sense of immediacy and ephemerality.

GUY GOODWIN

American, born 1940

Hotel Motel - IN, 2014

Acrylic and tempera on cardboard

Courtesy of Brennan & Griffin, New York

Guy Goodwin began painting in New York in 1965. He belonged to a group of bold, experimental downtown painters who defiantly pushed the boundaries of painting. Since then, he has continued to explore painting as relief using a variety of materials and formal strategies.

Hotel Motel - IN comes from a series of works titled after imagined gathering places such as hotels, nightclubs, and restaurants. The jarring array of colors and puffy appearance of these paintings evoke the kitschy seediness of these interior spaces. For this series, the artist incorporated salvaged cardboard for both the structural support and the interlocking and overlapping shapes that form the composition. The physicality of Goodwin’s process — digging and carving recesses, stapling down rough-hewn pieces of cardboard — is implicit in his works’ wry update of various painting movements from the past.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN

American, 1898-1976

#5, 1961

Oil on canvas

Gift of Katherine Peake in Memory of her Mother, Alice F. Schott
1982.67

FREDERICK HAMMERSLEY

American, 1919-2009

Left Field #8, 1964

Oil on panel

Gift of the Artist
1965.43

FREDERICK HAMMERSLEY

American, 1919-2009

Growing Game, 1958

Oil on canvas

Museum Purchase with funds provided by an Anonymous Donor
2012.24

Frederick Hammersley, along with Karl Benjamin, Lorser Feitelson, and John McLaughlin, was included in the landmark exhibition *Four Abstract Classicists* in 1959 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Curator Jules Langsner brought the four artists together to assert a distinctively Southern Californian style of abstraction. The cool flatness of their work, dubbed “hard-edge,” offered a counterpoint to the emotive gestures of New York Abstract Expressionism. Langsner commented, “Frederick Hammersley presents a poetic attitude towards shapes as growing things.”

Growing Game, #1 is a painting from Hammersley’s “Hunch” series, which he began in 1950. His process would begin with a shape for which he intuitively chose a color and then proceeded to complete the work by adding shapes and colors by “feeling,” or “hunch.”

FREDERICK HAMMERSLEY

American, 1919-2009

In the pink, 1964

Oil on panel

Gift of Frederick Hammersley Foundation
2013.27.1

In 1965, Frederick Hammersley was the focus of a solo exhibition at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art comprised of forty-one paintings, including *Left Field #8*, which the artist gave to the Museum at the exhibition’s close. *In the pink* (seen here hanging above the artist) was also included in this exhibition and was recently donated to the Museum by the late artist’s foundation.



JOSIAH McELHENY

American, born 1966

Crystalline Landscape After Hablik and Luckhardt III, 2011

Hand-blown molded glass objects, colored sheet glass laminated to low-iron mirror, two-way mirrors, glass diffuser, electric lighting, birch plywood, steel display structure

Museum Purchase with funds provided by the SBMA Visionaries and the Ludington Fund
2013.8a-g

The utopian visions of modernist designers and architects find new form in the masterful glass sculptures of Josiah McElheny. Through the medium of glass, the artist resurrects objects from the past and casts them in a new light.

Crystalline Landscape After Hablik and Luckhardt III is influenced by the Glass Chain: a group initiated in 1919 that exchanged ideas on glass architecture and its spiritual potential through chain letters. The shapes of McElheny's colorful glass objects derive from the crystalline structures designed by Wenzel Hablik, the brothers Wassili and Hans Luckhardt, and others.

JORGE PARDO

Cuban, born 1963 (active USA, Mexico)

Untitled (Sea Urchin), 2012

Aluminum, molded Plexiglas, canvas,
electrical cords, light bulb

Museum Purchase with funds provided by The Museum
Contemporaries and the 20th Century Art Quasi
Endowment Fund
2014.59a,b

Jorge Pardo has become known for his sculpture and large-scale installations that ignore the established protocols of the museum exhibition, merging life with art. His work often conflates art with function, and philosophically overlaps with the experimental architecture of Richard Neutra, Rudolph Schindler, and the Case Study Houses, which Pardo cites as influential to his work.

Part of the artist's lamp series, *Untitled (Sea Urchin)* is inspired in part by classic, mid-century design, particularly Scandinavian lamps. Through the appropriation of domestic architecture and design, the artist effectively dissolves the boundaries between such disciplines and fine art.

LARRY POONS

American, born 1937

Yangtze, 1969

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Eva Roman in Memory of Murray Roman
1985.7

Early in his career, Larry Poons was linked with artists Richard Anuszkiewicz and Bridget Riley in the seminal 1965 Op Art exhibition titled *The Responsive Eye* at the Museum of Modern Art. Over time he became more closely associated with Color Field painters due to his all-over use of color, and with Lyrical Abstraction due to his gestural use of paint.

Yangtze is extraordinary not only for its sheer size but also for the fact that it was made during a time when the artist was abandoning delineated forms in favor of fields of poured and coagulated acrylic paint. The critic Michael Fried referred to Poons's surfaces from this period as "elephant skin." The painting's title, named after the famous river in China, suggests on one level an infinitesimal view of the water, and, on another, a vast view of the geography that contains it.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN

American, 1898-1976

#12, 1965

Oil on canvas

Gift of June Harwood in Memory of Jules Langsner
1978.28.2

John McLaughlin sought pure abstraction in his art. He has said, "I want to communicate only to the extent that the painting will serve to induce or intensify the viewer's natural desire for contemplation without benefit of a guiding principle." McLaughlin's first solo museum exhibition at the Pasadena Art Museum in 1956 featured asymmetrical, rectilinear paintings of unmodulated grays, yellows, pale blues, and blacks. Increasingly, McLaughlin's work tended towards greater symmetry and simplicity, achieving a balanced state of substance and void.

In 1978 the artist June Harwood donated McLaughlin's #12 to the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in memory of Jules Langsner, whom she had married in 1965. Langsner curated the exhibition *Four Abstract Classicists* in 1959 at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which presented McLaughlin's work alongside that of fellow hard-edge painters Karl Benjamin, Lorser Feitelson, and Frederick Hammersley.

LUCAS SAMARAS

American, born Greece 1936

Reconstruction #107, 1979

Sewn fabric on canvas

Gift of Alan Shayne
1998.75

Over the years, Lucas Samaras has created drawings, furniture, jewelry, paintings, photographs, sculpture, and room-sized installations using a variety of material including beads, chicken wire, clay, Corten steel, fabric, mirrors, pastel, pencil, pins, plaster, and oil.

This work belongs to a series of “Fabric Reconstructions” made primarily between 1976 and 1980. These audacious, large-scale fabric “paintings” have been likened to the expansive, dynamic canvases of the Abstract Expressionists. In his 1978 *New York Times* review, critic Hilton Kramer also added, “The spatial imagery of these pictorial ‘Reconstructions’ is akin to a kind of aerial Cubism,” referencing the flat, collaged pieces of fabric.