

Dorothy Hood

(American, 1919-2000)

***Sea Elegy II*, 1972**

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Meredith J. Long, 1974.33

This painting comes out of a time when the artist and her husband frequently sailed at night on Galveston Bay near their home in Houston, Texas. The push and pull between center and edges, up-down and side-to-side rocking evoke the sensation of a sailboat bobbing on the sea, endlessly pursuing a center a gravity atop a perpetually swelling ocean. While not well-known outside of Texas, Hood was a particularly accomplished abstract artist, who studied with Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City and befriended the poet Pablo Neruda.

Fred Eversley

(American, b. 1941)

***Untitled*, 1975**

Cast polyester resin

Gift of the Estate of Robert K. Straus, 1997.79.2

This lens appears to radiate energy from within, like a star in the void of outer space. Made by spinning resin in a mold affixed to a turntable, this lens is thinnest at its translucent middle and thickens towards its opaque edges. Before becoming a pathbreaking African-American artist in California's Light and Space movement, Eversley studied electrical engineering at Carnegie Mellon, where he immersed himself in calculus, physics, and computer programming. He later worked in Los Angeles's aerospace industry but befriended artists in the bohemian neighborhood of Venice Beach. He understands energy from the perspective of an engineer and an artist. He says, "The genesis of energy is central to the mystery of our existence as animate beings in an inanimate universe."

Anish Kapoor

(Indian, b. 1954, active UK)

***Turning the World Inside Out*, 1995**

Cast stainless steel, ed. 3/3

Museum purchase, 20th Century Art Acquisition Fund and funds provided by Leatrice and Eli Luria and the Luria Foundation, Lillian and Jon B. Lovelace, Jr., Smith Richardson and the Grace Jones Richardson Trust, and the SBMA Visionaries: Jill and John C. Bishop, Jr., Poney and George D. Eagleton, Mercedes B. Eichholz, Amanda and Jim MacIntyre, Mary and Robert M. Looker, Lillian and Jon B. Lovelace, Jr., Leatrice and Eli Luria and the Luria Foundation, Smith Richardson and the Challenge Fund, and Karen and Matthew T. Yonally, 1998.48

Born in India, the son of an Indian Punjabi Hindu father and Baghdadi Jewish mother, Anish Kapoor relocated to England as young adult to pursue art. This sculpture, which turns the world into a navel, relates to the artist's background. In the Hindu creation story, a lotus flower grows from Lord Vishnu's navel. A seated Brahma emerges from the flower and transforms it into the Heavens, Earth and Sky. In ancient Greece, the navel was called *omphalos*, which also meant source of the world or center of the earth. With its mirrored stainless steel surface, the massive object merges with its surrounding space.

Roger Brown

(American, 1941-1998)

***Bonsai #1 Driftwood*, 1996**

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of George Eagleton, 2004.62

A bonsai tree and silhouetted figures stand against a quilt-like bank of clouds. The foreground placement of the bonsai alters the perspective. The bonsai towers over the miniscule figures, who, in reality, must be larger than the tiny tree. The artist cultivated bonsai at his home in La Conchita, California. After completing a series of five Bonsai paintings, he succumbed, like many other gay men, to AIDS-related complications. Ominous clouds loom directly above the bonsai but lighten towards the horizon. Perhaps, Brown reflects upon his illness and mortality. Like other Chicago Imagists, the artist lavished attention on beautifully executed paint surfaces and produced peculiar images that defy interpretation or identification.

Kori Newkirk

(American, b. 1970)

***Channel 11*, 1999**

Encaustic on wood panel

Gift of Barry Sloane, 2009.74.2

In a 12 by 16 grid of painted panels, the artist reproduces a photograph of himself in his signature look—a blue shirt and white undershirt. During the late 1990s, he taught at a high school in south central Los Angeles. His students talked about identifying with the suspects they saw on television crime shows. The painting adopts a blurring technique common on series like *Cops* and *LAPD: Life on the Beat*. An African-American man, Newkirk inserts himself into the position of a criminal suspect and removes markers of his individuality. “It’s really not about me,” he says, “it’s more about the collective black body.”

Tony de los Reyes

(American, b. 1960)

1851 (#3), 2011

Ink and oil on linen

Museum Purchase, 2011.4

This painting comes from a series that reflects on Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* and the violence that threads through American history. No longer red, white, and blue, this flag is backwards, superimposed on a stormy ocean, and has 31 stars. In 1851, California became the 31st state and completed the expansion of the United States across the North American continent. That same year, Herman Melville published *Moby-Dick*, a novel about the monomaniacal ship captain Ahab, who circled the globe trying to find and kill the white whale that ate his leg. Ahab's unrelenting quest is like the United State's expansion all the way to California and the Pacific. In fact, the artist says that the ocean "is not always beautiful but inky, black and disturbing." This black and white flag quietly suggests the terrible reality of American western expansion, which sought to carry slavery into newly formed states and subjected indigenous people to murder, dispossession, and genocide.

Laddie John Dill

(American, b. 1943)

***Light Sentence*, 1969**

Argon with mercury and glass tubing

Museum Purchase, 2011.33

This work features fused colored sections of delicate glass tubing filled with mercury vapor and argon, which, when electrified, emits a pale lavender blue light. The varying whites and blues recall layers of clouds mixed with patches of clear sky. The artist purposely keeps the tube from being distractingly bright. Instead, the object casts a calm glow. Like Fred Eversley, whose lens is on display in this gallery, Dill was a Light and Space artist and experimented with non-traditional materials to radiate and channel light.

Sally Hazelet Drummond

(American, 1924-2017)

***Connections*, 1971**

Oil on canvas

Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz, 2014.17.12

A radiant center darkens as it reaches the canvas' perimeter. Delicate, stippling brushstrokes of varying hues subtly modulate across its surface. Each color, a pointillist dot, gradates from one to another. The painting's centralized focus is mesmerizing. No lines or shape. No background or foreground. No top or bottom. No distracting subject matter. Drummond imagines a peaceful, meditative scene, in her words, "to discover a beautiful essence."

Tschang-Yeul Kim

(Korean, 1929-2021, active Korea and France)

***Waterdrops No. L6*, 1978**

Oil on jute canvas

Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz, 2014.17.15

These semi-translucent droplets give the illusion of magnifying the canvas's jute thread. Momentarily suspended, the beads cling to the canvas before sliding down or, perhaps, evaporating. Their transitory state mirrors Buddhist and Taoist teachings about the constant flux of life and the impermanence of everything. In these traditions, the translucency of water represents nothingness. "By returning... to 'emptiness,'" Kim says, "we experience peace and contentment." There is a soothing and emotionally neutral quality to this painting as it shows us emptiness and gives the insubstantial form.

Roger Shimomura

(American, b. 1939)

***Oriental Masterpiece 28*, 1975**

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of Robert B. and Mercedes H. Eichholz, 2014.17.23

For someone who knows about traditional Japanese theater and woodblock prints, this painting is non-sensical. It illustrates Shimomura's self-admitted distance from his Japanese heritage. Courtesans mingle with *onnagata*, who are male kabuki actors performing women's roles. Commonly dressed men appear around a *bugaku* stage, a place typically reserved for only elegantly robed male court dancers. Appearing, as the artist describes, "foreign-looking," the painting lends shape to Shimomura's experience as a second-generation Japanese-American—perceived as a foreigner and perpetually attached to an ancestral heritage he does not identify with.

Helen Frankenthaler

(American, 1928-2011)

***Green Sway*, 1975**

Acrylic on canvas

Gift of ZHR Properties, LLC, 2016.35

The artist applied acrylic paint, thinned with water, with buckets, mops, and paintbrushes onto raw canvases as they lay on her studio floor. She stated that none of her paintings were planned and depended upon happy accidents through the painting process. For *Green Sway*, she poured paint in thinned washes on a raw canvas and let them form color-drenched veils. Its vertical strokes of complementary tones—warm browns and varying greens—suggest trees or plant matter. The sense of undulating movement hints at nature's seasonal transformations. At a time when women artists struggled in the male-dominated New York art world, Frankenthaler achieved enormous success. She is sometimes credited as the inventor of Color Field painting, a movement that prioritized areas of color over the emotive drips and marks of Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock.

Jenny Holzer

(American, b. 1950)

***The Living Series: THERE IS A PERIOD
WHEN IT IS CLEAR THAT YOU HAVE GONE
WRONG BUT YOU CONTINUE. SOMETIMES
THERE IS A LUXURIOUS AMOUNT OF TIME
BEFORE ANYTHING BAD HAPPENS, 1989***

Bethel white granite, from an edition of 3 + 1 AP

Gift of Laura-Lee W. Woods, 2017.20

Jenny Holzer, a feminist whose art draws on the conventions of commercial advertising, is well-known for her “truisms.” These are canny observations about life that appear on billboards, shopping bags, t-shirts and, for a period, in New York’s Times Square. This work elliptically warns about impending danger. Moreover, granite commonly marks graves, adding to the menacing tone.