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NEW MORGAN EXHIBITION CELEBRATES ITS FIRST DECADE OF COLLECTING MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY DRAWINGS

Embracing Modernism: Ten Years of Drawings Acquisitions

February 13 through May 24, 2015

Press Event: Thursday, February 12, 10-11:30 AM

RSVP: media@themorgan.org

New York, NY, January 14, 2015 — In 2005, the Morgan Library & Museum embarked on a new program of drawings acquisitions with the goal of bringing to the present a collection that was known for its Old Master and nineteenth-century holdings. During the ensuing decade the institution put together a formidable collection of modern and contemporary drawings, representing a wide range of artists and movements. *Embracing Modernism: Ten Years of Drawings Acquisitions*, opening February 13, features more than one hundred works from the collection and explores the dynamic creativity that revolutionized the medium in our time. The exhibition runs through May 24.



Left: Susan Rothenberg (American, b. 1945), *Untitled*, 1985, Charcoal, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of the Modern & Contemporary Collectors Comtee and Purchase on the Acquisitions Fund and the Manley Family Fund, 2013.33, Photography by Graham S. Haber, © 2014 Susan Rothenberg / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Right: Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923–1997), *No Thank You! (Study)*, graphite and colored pencil on wove paper, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of James and Katherine Goodman, 2011.40. Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2013. © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein.

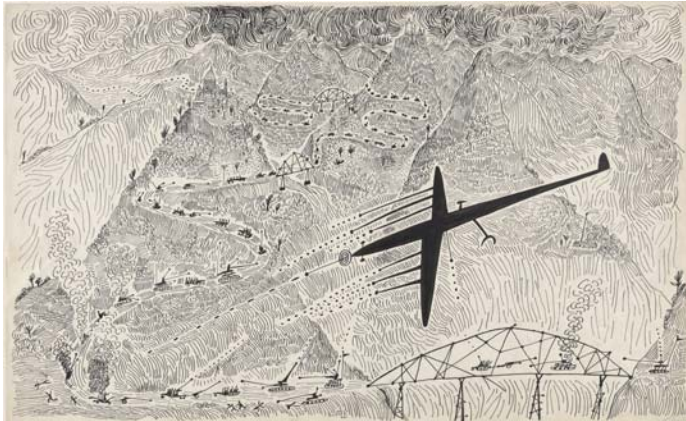
Embracing Modernism includes work by artists from Henri Matisse, Piet Mondrian, and Egon Schiele, to Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Susan Rothenberg, Martin Kippenberger, and Marlene Dumas. The exhibition is divided into five sections. Each focuses on a particular departure or shift in emphasis in modern drawing—such as the approach to the use of the line—that sets it apart from its antecedents. The exhibition is organized by Isabelle Dervaux, Acquavella Curator of Modern and Contemporary Drawings at the Morgan, who has led the museum in this area since 2005.

“The Morgan’s decision to collect modern and contemporary drawings underscores its belief that artists of our day are part of a long continuum that celebrates the primacy of the medium,” said Peggy Fogelman, Acting Director of the Morgan Library & Museum. “*Embracing Modernism* presents an extraordinary collection of works by some of our greatest artists. The Morgan is deeply grateful to the collectors and donors who helped build our collection over the last decade and make possible an exhibition such as this.”

Exhibition Sections

The Autonomy of the Line

An essential component of drawing from its origins, line took on a new role in the twentieth century as artists eschewed naturalistic representation. Liberated from its descriptive function—as the outline of an object or a figure—line achieved greater autonomy. Drawing became, in Paul Klee’s words, “an active line which moves freely; a walk for a walk’s sake, without aim.” The sheets by Matisse, Mondrian, Pablo Picasso, and Saul Steinberg in this section show them investigating the expressivity of the line, whether continuous or broken. During the 1960s and 1970s, artists such as Sol LeWitt and Agnes Martin eliminated any remaining illusionistic function of a line on a ground with the adoption of the grid format, in which the line is a basic modular unit.



Left: Saul Steinberg (American, b. in Romania, 1914–1999), *Cassino*, 1945, Graphite pencil and pen and ink, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of The Saul Steinberg Foundation, New York, 2012.1, Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2014, © The Saul Steinberg Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Right: Gavin Turk (British, b. 1967), *Rosette*, 2013, Exhaust emission on paper, mounted on linen, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of Gail Monaghan, 2013.10, Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2014. © Gavin Turk.

More recently, contemporary artists have used the line to visualize aspects of man's relationship to the world in dense, labor-intensive drawings. Examples include Giuseppe Penone's extension of a fingerprint into growth rings of an ancient tree, or Marco Maggi's nod to the electronic age with an intricate network of nearly invisible incisions.

Gesture and Trace

Drawing as a gesture—the record of physical engagement—is central to twentieth-century expressionist tendencies. It reflects a conception of art as a direct, spontaneous experience as seen in the work of Cy Twombly, Michael Goldberg, and Joan Mitchell. But the gesture can also be more automatic, calling into question the traditional notion of the hand of the artist. The Surrealist Max Ernst was the first to explore the technique of *frottage* (rubbing) to create unexpected patterns intended to stimulate the viewer's imagination. During the 1960s, the technique was revived in process drawing—drawing as the trace of an action independent from usual artistic practice—as in Robert Overby's rubbing of his studio wall.

Contemporary artists' fascination with the use of chance has led them to rely more and more on unconventional modes of drawing. Gavin Turk, for instance, produced his elegant *Rosette* by placing a sheet of paper in front of the exhaust pipe of his van before starting the engine.

High and Low

In the modern era, the interplay between art and popular culture considerably broadened the range of drawing styles available to artists. Inspired by commercial illustrations, comic books, graffiti, tattoos, and posters, artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Ed Paschke, Red Grooms, and Martin Kippenberger gave their drawings a new kind of energy. At the same time their work questioned the very nature of what constitutes “artistic” drawing as opposed to any other form of mark making.

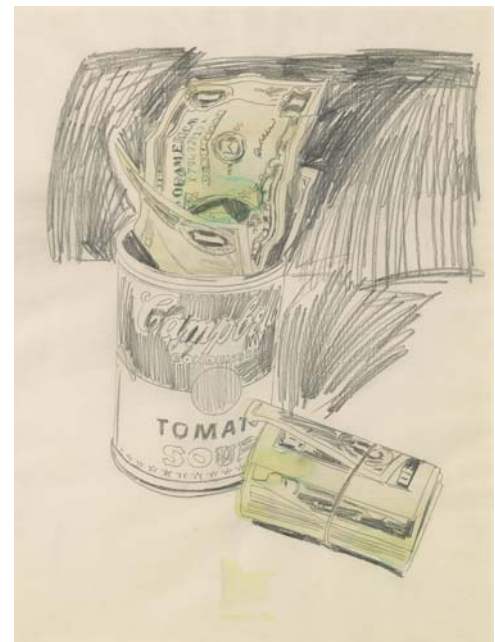
The use of non-traditional art material was another way to bridge the gap between art and everyday life. Following the lead of the Cubists, who first introduced fragments of newspapers and labels in their *papiers collés*, Kurt Schwitters created collages from scraps of contemporary urban culture: ads, ticket stubs, candy wrappers, torn packaging. The practice has remained a vital form of expression to the present day as can be seen in the collage books of John Evans and the poignant compositions of Hannelore Baron.

Everyday Objects

Although the depiction of everyday objects has a long tradition in the genre of the still-life, the range of items deemed worthy of the artist’s attention has expanded in modern times, as attested by the cigarette-butt, ice cube, soup can, and portable electric heater in the drawings on view in this section by artists including Andy Warhol and James Rosenquist. Artists also explored new modes of representation, notably in compositions that favor odd cropping and extreme close-up, largely influenced by photography and film.



Martin Kippenberger (German, 1953–1997), *Untitled*, 1990, Graphite pencil and felt-tip pen on hotel stationery, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of Gail Monaghan, 2013.110, Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2014. © Estate of Martin Kippenberger / Galerie Gisela Cantain

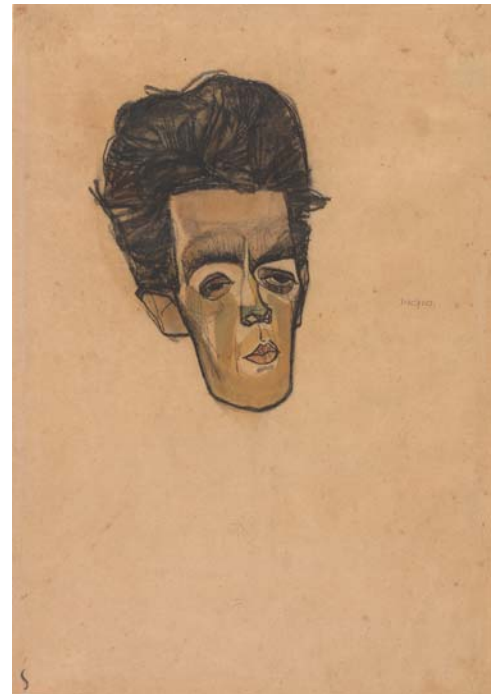


Andy Warhol (American, 1928–1987), *Campbell Soup Can and Dollar Bills*, 1962, Graphite pencil and watercolor, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of the Roy and Dorothy Lichtenstein Collection, 2014.45, Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2014, © 2014 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

From Melancholia to Schizophrenia

Nowhere is the disruption of the academic tradition in modern art more visible than in portrait and figure drawings. Liberated by photography from the necessity to produce a likeness, and stimulated by psychoanalytic revelations about the complex inner life of individuals, artists set out to render emotions and mental states with unprecedented immediacy. Various formal means— fragmentation, distortion, exaggeration, awkward poses and cropping—were used to convey sensations and feelings, from the psychological tension of Walter Sickert's bedroom scene to Anne-Marie Schneider's vision of a schizophrenic bus passenger who imagines himself in the luggage rack.

Self-portraits offer particularly rich territory as artists used drawing to probe their most intimate psychological states and lay bare on paper their fears and anxiety. Examples in this section include work by Egon Schiele, Lucas Samaras, Philip Guston, and Maria Lassnig. Others, such as André Masson, Jackson Pollock, and Steve di Benedetto, relied on a range of visual metaphors—including the labyrinth and other intricate patterns—to conjure the workings of the unconscious.



Egon Schiele (Austrian, 1890–1918), *Self-Portrait*, 1910, Black chalk and watercolor on brown paper, The Morgan Library & Museum, Bequest of Fred Ebb, 2005.162, Photography by Graham S. Haber, 2014.

Public Programs

Lecture
Series

Modern/Contemporary Drawings: New Perspectives

In conjunction with the exhibition, this series of lectures by international scholars will feature current research in the field of twentieth and twenty-first century drawings. This series is co-organized by the Morgan Drawing Institute and the Department of Education.

To Hell with the Media: On Robert Rauschenberg's XXXIV Drawings for Dante's Inferno (1958-60)

Ed Krčma, Lecturer in History of Art, University College Cork
Tuesday February 24, 6:30 pm

Nietzsche's Moustache. Or, The Imagination of Mechanical Reproduction in Rosemarie Trockel's Drawings

Brigid Doherty, Associate Professor in the Departments of German and Art and Archaeology, Princeton University
Tuesday, March 31, 6:30 pm

Abstraction and the Frame of Drawing

Briony Fer, Professor of History of Art, University College London

Wednesday, April 29, 6:30 pm

Series of 3 lectures: \$40; \$25 for Members

Single Ticket: \$15; \$10 for Members

Free for students with valid ID

Organization and Sponsorship

This exhibition is made possible by the Ricciardi Family Exhibition Fund and the Rita Markus Fund for Exhibitions.



The programs of the Morgan Library & Museum are made possible with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

The Morgan Library & Museum

The Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. Today, more than a century after its founding in 1906, the Morgan serves as a museum, independent research library, music venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. In October 2010, the Morgan completed the first-ever restoration of its original McKim building, Pierpont Morgan's private library, and the core of the institution. In tandem with the 2006 expansion project by architect Renzo Piano, the Morgan now provides visitors unprecedented access to its world-renowned collections of drawings, literary and historical manuscripts, musical scores, medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, printed books, photography, and ancient Near Eastern seals and tablets.

General Information

The Morgan Library & Museum

225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, New York, NY 10016-3405

212.685.0008

www.themorgan.org

Just a short walk from Grand Central and Penn Station

Hours

Tuesday–Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; extended Friday hours, 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. The Morgan closes at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Admission

\$18 for adults; \$12 for students, seniors (65 and over), and children (under 16); free to Members and children 12 and under accompanied by an adult. Admission is free on Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is not required to visit the Morgan Shop, Café, or Dining Room.