

**CY TWOMBLY'S MONUMENTAL *TREATISE ON THE VEIL*
(*SECOND VERSION*) AND RELATED DRAWINGS
TO BE EXHIBITED AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM**

Cy Twombly: *Treatise on the Veil*
September 26, 2014 through January 25, 2015

****Press Preview: Thursday, September 25, 10-11:30 AM****
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New York, NY, August 25, 2014 — Cy Twombly's *Treatise on the Veil (Second Version)* is considered a pivotal work in the career of one of the most important artists to emerge in the wake of Abstract Expressionism. Yet, due to its size—close to thirty-three feet in length—this highlight of his celebrated “grey-ground” period is rarely shown and has not been exhibited in New York in nearly thirty years. Beginning September 26, *Treatise on the Veil* and a selection of related drawings will go on view at the Morgan Library & Museum, in a collaboration with Houston's Menil Collection, which owns the works and organized the exhibition. The show will run through January 25, 2015.

Executed in Rome in 1970, *Treatise on the Veil (Second Version)* was inspired by a musical composition and explores Twombly's fascination with time, space, and movement. White lines running across the work's grey surface suggest, in the artist's words, “a time line without time.” The twelve drawings in the exhibition—which combine pencil, crayon, collage, tape, measurements, and other inscriptions—offer an intriguing window into the artist's creative



Cy Twombly
Treatise on the Veil (Second Version) (1970)
The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of the artist
Photo: Erika Barahona Ede, ©FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao
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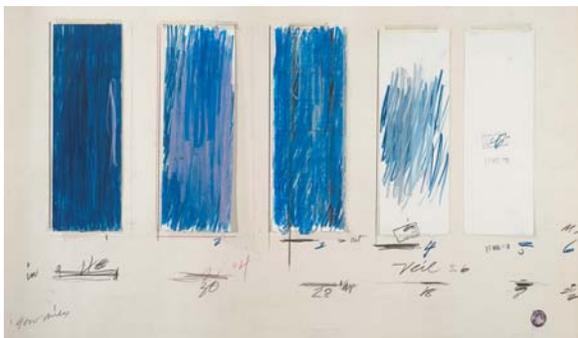
process. *Treatise on the Veil (Second Version)* was last exhibited in New York in 1985 at DIA.

“We are pleased to present this fascinating exploration of one of Cy Twombly’s signature works from a period of notable change in his art,” said Peggy Fogelman, acting director of the Morgan Library & Museum. “This show represents an ongoing partnership between the Morgan and the Menil Collection, under the auspices of the Morgan’s Drawing Institute, an initiative aimed at fostering scholarship and innovative exhibition programming related to the drawings field.”

Treatise on the Veil

In 1968, Twombly created a large, multipanel painting entitled *Treatise on the Veil* (now in the Museum Ludwig, Cologne). Two years later, he revisited the subject in a series of drawings that led to the execution of a second painting of the same title.

The related drawings are not so much preliminary studies as records of the artist’s meditation on time, sequence, and space. In most of them five or six vertical strips of paper are covered to varying degrees with energetically applied wax crayon, recalling the panels of the painting’s first version. They are arranged in a lateral progression from left to right. Scrawled inscriptions and traces of tearing, folding, and erasing reveal the physical engagement of the artist and endow these sheets with a singular, emotional presence. In the exhibition the drawings are presented in the presumed chronological order in which they were created, based on dates and numbers Twombly inscribed on them.



Cy Twombly
Untitled (1970)
The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of the artist
©Cy Twombly Foundation



Cy Twombly
Untitled (1972)
Photographer: Paul Hester
The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of the artist
©Cy Twombly Foundation

The two *Treatise* paintings are hallmarks of Twombly's "grey-ground" period, which ran from 1966 to the early 1970s. In a 1967 exhibition at New York's Leo Castelli Gallery, the artist set aside his trademark splashes of Mediterranean color, opting instead for lines of white crayon over flat grey house paint.

For the next five years, these paintings offered a more calculated and controlled alternative to the sporadic, painterly compositions of his earlier style. Although some of the grey-ground paintings are highly lyrical with their flurry of curves spilling from left to right as in a handwriting exercise, others, more sober, have been linked to the contemporary development of Minimalism. Taken as whole, the "grey-ground" paintings display a pared down aesthetic at odds with the profusion and exuberance that characterized Twombly's work in the early 1960s.

Sources of Inspiration

According to Twombly, both versions of *Treatise on the Veil* were inspired by a musical piece by French composer Pierre Henry (b.1927), a pioneer of *musique concrète*, a type of music that incorporates non-instrumental sounds recorded on magnetic tape and manipulated. Henry's 1953 piece, entitled *The Veil of Orpheus*, features the recording of cloth being torn—a prolonged, seemingly unending sound that impressed Twombly for its embodiment of the concept of duration.

Henry's composition evoked the journey of Orpheus to the underworld to rescue his wife, Eurydice. The composer used the recording of tearing fabric to reference the moment at which Orpheus loses his bride forever by transgressing the gods' command and gazing upon her before leaving Hades. The reference to mythological poet and musician Orpheus would have appealed to Twombly's love of classical culture.

Another source mentioned by Twombly is an unidentified photograph of a veiled woman walking by Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904), an early practitioner of recording human movement through stop-action photography. In Muybridge's pictures, figures appeared in front of a numbered white grid upon which each move could be registered, offering a fascinating new way to look at movement in time and space. Such concerns were central to Twombly in the *Treatise* series.

Cy Twombly

Twombly (1928–2011) was born in Lexington, Virginia. He studied at the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts, New York's Art Students League, and Black Mountain College, North Carolina. Early travels to Spain, North Africa, and Italy fueled his interest in Mediterranean culture. In 1957, Twombly moved to Rome, where he lived most of his life. Inspired by the gestural style of the Abstract Expressionists, he developed a rich repertoire of marks, scrawls, scribbles, doodles, and scratches that functioned both as expressive marks and cultural symbols. His fascination with classical antiquity and the Renaissance, evident in many inscriptions and references, nourished an imagery linking personal experience to myth and history. One of his last projects, in 2010, was the painted ceiling of the Salle des Bronzes at the Musée du Louvre, which houses Roman antiquities.

The exhibition *Cy Twombly: Treatise on the Veil* was shown at the Menil in 2009. Prior to that, the monumental painting was included in the exhibition *Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons*, organized by Tate Modern in 2008, and also shown in Bilbao and Rome.

Public Programs

Gallery Talk **Cy Twombly: Treatise on the Veil**
Isabelle Dervaux, Acquavella Curator of Modern & Contemporary Drawings
Gallery talks are free with museum admission.
No tickets or reservations are necessary.
Friday, November 7, 6:30 PM

Concert **JACK QUARTET**
This concert by the dynamic JACK Quartet coincides with the exhibition *Cy Twombly: Treatise on the Veil* and will feature a selection of contemporary composer Matthias Pintscher's *Studies for Treatise on the Veil* (2004-2009) written in response to Twombly's painting. New arrangements of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* for string quartet will be performed with Pintscher's works. The one-hour concert will take place in the exhibition gallery.
Tickets: \$30; \$20 for Members. Seating is limited
Thursday, November 20, 7 and 9 PM

Organization and Sponsorship

Cy Twombly: Treatise on the Veil is organized by the Menil Collection, Houston, with the Morgan Library & Museum. The exhibition is curated by Michelle White, Curator, the Menil Collection, Houston under the auspices of the Menil Drawing Institute and curated at the Morgan Library and Museum by Isabelle Dervaux, Acquavella Curator of Modern and Contemporary Drawings. It is a program of the Drawing Institute at the Morgan Library & Museum, with additional generous support provided by an anonymous gift; the Gagosian Gallery; the Ricciardi Family Exhibition Fund; and Nancy Schwartz. At the Menil Collection, this exhibition was realized through the generous support of Janie C. Lee and David B. Warren; the Taub Foundation in memory of Ben Taub, Henry J. N. Taub, and Carol J. Taub; Ann and Mathew Wolf; Nina and Michael Zilkha; and the City of Houston.



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, musical 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, 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.