

# BLOUINARTINFO

## The Met Breuer's Upcoming Exhibition Explores Abstract Expressionism

July 25, 2018

“Epic Abstraction: Pollock to Herrera” at The Met Breuer in New York will explore Abstract Expressionism through the works of multiple artists. The show opens on November 28.

The exhibition begins in the 1940s and extends into the 21st century. It explores large-scale abstract painting, sculpture, and assemblage and features more than 40 works from The Met collection, a selection of loans, and never-before-seen promised gifts and new acquisitions. “Enhanced in the setting of Marcel Breuer’s 1966 modernist architectural masterpiece, icons of Abstract Expressionism, such as Jackson Pollock’s classic ‘drip’ painting No. 28, 1950 (1950), and Louise Nevelson’s monumental Mrs. N’s Palace (1964–77), will be shown in conversation with works by international artists, such as the Hungarian artist Ilona Keseru,” states the museum.

The highlights of the show include a group of paintings by Pollock and a selection of his experimental sketchbook drawings from the late 1930s and early 1940s. These reflect the artist’s interest in Jungian psychoanalysis and his exploration of automatic techniques. Important works by artists such as Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, and Clyfford Still look at the representation of mid-century American painting. A whole room is dedicated to Mark Rothko’s compositions that showcase his engagement with color, feeling, and sensation. These Abstract Expressionists are joined by Hedda Sterne and Philippines native Alfonso Ossorio, who were also a part of the movement. The international reach of Abstract Expressionism is shown through the ink painting from 1966 by Japanese artist Inoue Yūichi. “Monumental painterly canvases by Joan Mitchell – a lyrical retort to Pollock’s freighted whipping drips – and Mark Bradford – whose ‘Duck Walk’ (2016) marks a recent addition to the collection – will evoke Abstract Expressionism’s long and profound legacy,” the museum writes.

The exhibition also features works by the next generation of artists, including Edna Andrade, Carmen Herrera, Ellsworth Kelly, Kenneth Noland, Frank Stella, and Anne Truitt. “They tamed the highly pitched emotionalism of Abstract Expressionism by working in the hard edge and minimalist styles that came to define modern art in the 1960s and 1970s,” the museum adds. The reductive technique of staining canvas in painting is explored through key works of Helen Frankenthaler and Morris Louis. Finally, the largest gallery devoted to the show includes a range of works composed of found objects and repurposed materials. Nevelson’s “Mrs. N’s Palace,” and Thornton Dial’s elegiac “Shadows of the Field” (2008) are the centerpiece of the installation. These evoke the history of American slavery.

The World War II brought tremendous destruction and loss of lives. This led to many painters into questioning the traditional methods of using easels to paint and figurative sculpture which no longer expressed human nature in its entirety. Several painters and artists started associating themselves with the New York School and came to believe that large-scale abstract styles evoked contemporary states of being. According to the museum, “many of the artists represented in Epic Abstraction worked in large formats not only to explore aesthetic elements of line, color, shape, and texture but also to activate scale’s metaphoric potential to evoke expansive – “epic” – ideas and subjects, including time, history, nature, and existential concerns of the self.”