

The Murray Skylight Gallery, September 1, 2017

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Patrick Caulfield
English, 1936 - 2005
Still Life with Bottle and Two Glasses, 1965
Oil on board
Bequest of Richard Brown Baker 2009.92.17



Patrick Caulfield's starkly graphic still-life presents common objects in a monochromatic interior. Flat, hard-edged forms and angular planes of color collapse the painting's foreground and background, creating a vibrant, floating image. Inspired by Cubism and the color-block, line-based sensibility of Henri Matisse, Caulfield gives the traditional still-life a distinctly Pop aesthetic.

Amédée Ozenfant
French, 1886-1966
Large Jug and Architecture, 1926
Oil on canvas
Mary B. Jackson Fund 39.095



This composition is crowned by a classical cornice, or molding, which echoes the swelling curves of an arrangement of vessels. Their simplified forms include a Greek amphora and a dark brown wine jug whose spherical shape and materiality are emphasized by the concentric patterns of grooved brushstrokes. These elements are representative of Purism, a movement that sought a return to pictorial clarity and order in the years following World War I. Its adherents investigated relationships between painting and architecture, and depicted recognizable objects in ways that echoed the precise, unornamented forms of the modern machine age.

RISD MUSEUM

Jean Hélion
French, 1904-1987
The Chimney Sweep, 1936
Oil on canvas
Gift of Mrs. Peggy Guggenheim 54.188

This volumetric figure reflects Hélion's interest in classical form. Informed by his earlier experiments with abstraction, it demonstrates his belief that he had arrived at a balance of "curves and obliques . . . that started to feel like nature again." Its enclosed shapes, distinguished by flat or shaded colors, emerge and recede on harmonious, geometric fields. Their precision and metallic tones impose a Machine Age order, even as the separate elements appear to float within the composition.

Hélion exhibited this painting in New York in 1942 at Peggy Guggenheim's Art of This Century gallery, a venue of artistic exchange that encouraged the acceptance of modern art in America.

Grace Hartigan
American, 1922-2008
Homage to Matisse, 1955
Oil on canvas
Anonymous gift 56.120

In this still-life painting, thick, slashing brushstrokes define a tabletop laden with lemons, a lute, and a profusion of platters. Hartigan's composition was inspired by Henri Matisse's *Variation on a Still Life by de Heem* (1915), a painting Hartigan saw exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1951. Matisse's homage to Jan Davidsz de Heem had freely reconstructed the Dutch artist's lavish and meticulously drawn dessert table, a painting from 1640 that Matisse had studied at the Louvre.

Hartigan's version engages in a conversation taking place between artists over centuries, and infuses the traditional still-life motif with the exuberance of mid-20th-century abstraction.

