

PRESS RELEASE



Emma Amos (b. 1938), *Baby*, 1966. Oil on canvas, 46 1/2 x 51 in. (118.1 x 129.5 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchased jointly by the Whitney Museum of American Art, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee, and The Studio Museum in Harlem, museum purchase with funds provided by Ann Tennenbaum and Thomas H. Lee T.2018.33a-b. © Emma Amos, courtesy the artist and RYAN LEE Gallery, New York

SPILLING OVER: PAINTING COLOR IN THE 1960S TO OPEN AT THE WHITNEY MARCH 29

NEW YORK, February 11, 2019 – Opening at the Whitney on March 29, *Spilling Over: Painting Color in the 1960s* focuses on paintings from the 1960s and early 1970s that engage with bold, saturated, and even hallucinatory color to activate perception.

Drawn entirely from the Whitney’s collection, *Spilling Over* includes important recent acquisitions by Emma Amos and Kay WalkingStick, as well as works by Helen Frankenthaler, Sam Gilliam, Ellsworth Kelly, Morris Louis, Alvin Loving, Miriam Schapiro, Frank Stella, and others. Half of the included paintings have not been shown at the Whitney for over twenty-five years.

“Color as a formal, social, and political matter feels particularly urgent today, but the artists in *Spilling Over* already saw it as a means to bridge the seen and the felt, the conscious and unconscious, the political and the environmental. We’re thrilled to bring together such an incredible group of artists and their works, some acquired nearly at the time of their making and some very new to the Whitney’s collection,” said David Breslin, the exhibition curator and DeMartini Family Curator and Director of the Collection.

Scott Rothkopf, Senior Deputy Director and Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator, remarked, “We are particularly honored to be unveiling the first paintings to enter our collection by Kay WalkingStick and Emma Amos, the latter of which has been acquired jointly with The Studio Museum in Harlem—a fitting symbol of the long friendship between these two museums and the many artists we both hold dear.”

During this period, many artists adopted acrylic paint—a newly available, plastic-based medium—and explored its expansive technical possibilities and wider range of hues. Color Field painters poured paint and stained unprimed canvases, dramatizing painting’s materiality and visual force. Painters associated with Op art deployed pattern,

geometric arrangement, and intense color combinations to emphasize that vision is a commingling of physical response and unconscious association. While focusing primarily on abstraction, *Spilling Over* also includes paintings in which figures are depicted as extensions of the pulsing color that animates the work.

At the same historical moment, an emerging generation of artists of color and women explored color's capacity to articulate new questions about perception, specifically its relation to race, gender, and the coding of space. The exhibition avoids grouping artists by art-historical movements and looks instead to the divergent ways color can be equally a formal problem and a political statement. Many of the artists in the exhibition were painting as active participants in the civil rights and women's rights movements. Their paintings permit spaces for viewers to consider the politics of place and presence.

The title of the exhibition comes from a quote by artist Bob Thompson. He said, "I paint many paintings that tell me slowly that I have something inside of me that is just bursting, twisting, sticking, spilling over to get out. Out into souls and mouths and eyes that have never seen before." *Spilling Over* demonstrates how painting retained an urgency for artists who wanted to see anew.

Artists Included in *Spilling Over: Painting Color in the 1960s*

Josef Albers
Emma Amos
Richard Anuszkiewicz
Frank Bowling
Helen Frankenthaler
Alex Katz
Sam Gilliam
Marcia Hafif
Carmen Herrera
Ellsworth Kelly
Morris Louis
Alvin Loving
Kenneth Noland
Miriam Schapiro
Frank Stella
Bob Thompson
Kay WalkingStick

Curatorial Credit

The exhibition is organized by David Breslin, DeMartini Family Curator and Director of the Collection, with Margaret Kross, curatorial assistant.

Exhibition Support

Support for *Spilling Over* is provided by the LLWW Foundation.

About the Whitney

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists at a time when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for more than eighty years. The core of the Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists themselves, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art

Programmed: Rules, Codes, and Choreographies in Art, 1965 – 2018	September 28, 2018 – April 14, 2019
Andy Warhol – From A to B and Back Again	November 12, 2018 – March 31, 2019
Kevin Beasley: A view of a landscape	December 15 – March 10, 2019
Where We Are: Selections from the	Ongoing

Whitney's Collection 1900–1960

Derek Fordjour: Half Mast

2019 Whitney Biennial

Spilling Over: Painting Color in the 1960s

Moved by the Motion: Sudden Rise

Jason Moran

Rachel Harrison

Pope.L: Instigation, Aspiration, Perspiration

Ongoing

May 17 – September 22, 2019

Opens March 29, 2019

April 26–27, 2019

September 20, 2019 – January 5, 2020

October 25, 2019 – January 12, 2020

Opens October/November 2019

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Museum hours are: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10:30 am to 6 pm; Friday and Saturday from 10:30 am to 10 pm. Closed Tuesday except in July and August and in March, the final month of *Andy Warhol—From A to B and Back Again*. Adults: \$25. Full-time students, visitors 65 & over, and visitors with disabilities: \$18. Visitors 18 years & under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. For general information, please call (212) 570-3600 or visit whitney.org.

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