

WHITNEY

Whitney Museum
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PRESS RELEASE

THE WHITNEY MUSEUM PRESENTS A REINSTALLATION OF ITS COLLECTION WITH “*UNTITLED*” (*AMERICA*)



Opening July 5, “Untitled” (America) delves into the Whitney’s collection and features highlights that explore the artistic practices of American artists across more than eight decades.

New York, NY, July 3, 2025 — The Whitney Museum of American Art presents a refreshed look at the Museum’s collection in the exhibition [*“Untitled” \(America\)*](#). Coinciding with the Whitney’s ten-year anniversary in its current building downtown, this reinstallation celebrates highlights of the collection alongside new acquisitions in an open, dynamic exhibition design that forges connections across subjects and decades. Reflecting on the vision of its founder, sculptor, and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, the presentation underscores the Museum’s longtime commitment to supporting contemporary American art, even as the notion of “America” has and continues to evolve.

Today, the Whitney’s collection is a testament to the ambitious and experimental practices of artists in the United States, offering diverse stories of American life through formal, social, and political lenses. *“Untitled” (America)* features recognizable favorites by renowned American

artists, including **Jean-Michel Basquiat, Barkley L. Hendricks, Edward Hopper, Jasper Johns, Archibald John Motley Jr., Georgia O’Keeffe, Mark Rothko, Ed Ruscha, Alma Thomas, Kay WalkingStick, and Andy Warhol**, alongside more recent acquisitions from the Museum’s collection. It highlights key ideas and artistic approaches in American art from 1900 through the early 1980s, at times cutting across chronological boundaries. Beginning with the Whitney’s robust holdings in figurative and realist traditions, the presentation considers how artists have responded to place and memory in the American landscape, popular culture and the rise of consumerism, the seductions and illusions of mass media, and the spatial and cultural dynamics of abstraction.

“We’re thrilled to welcome visitors back to our collection galleries,” said Kim Conaty, Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator at the Whitney Museum. “The newly configured spaces offer something for everyone, with favorite works in new conversations, and recent additions to the collection making stunning debuts. Special installations, like a daylight sculpture gallery dedicated to the work of Isamu Noguchi, celebrate the great strengths of the collection set within the unique architecture of the Whitney’s downtown building.”

“Untitled” (America) will be on view at the Whitney Museum beginning July 5, 2025. The exhibition is curated by Kim Conaty, Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator at the Whitney, with Antonia Pocock, Curatorial Assistant. This presentation of the Whitney’s collection is dedicated to the memory of Leonard A. Lauder, Chairman Emeritus, who recently passed away, in honor of his extensive contributions to the Museum.



Exhibition Overview – “Untitled” (America)

On the occasion of the Whitney’s tenth anniversary downtown, *“Untitled” (America)* celebrates the past, present, and future of the Museum’s collection. This presentation, which features works from 1900 through 1980, highlights beloved icons from the Whitney’s collection, including recent acquisitions that expand existing narratives and surface new ones.

Organized thematically, the exhibition foregrounds key ideas and approaches in twentieth-century artmaking in the United States, and the open exhibition design allows for

meaningful connections to be made across subjects and time periods. The exhibition title draws inspiration from Felix Gonzalez-Torres, whose 1994 work of the same name will be installed in the west window, just off the entrance to the exhibition. This work, consisting of twelve strands of light bulbs, one of which will be installed here, offers a participatory meditation on the concept of “America.” As Gonzalez-Torres reflected, “The America that I now know is still a place of light, a place of opportunities, of risks, of justice, of racism, of injustice, of hunger and excess, of pleasure and growth. Democracy is a constant job, a collective dedication. My sculpture *“Untitled” (America)* comes with no instructions. It can be installed any way someone might want.” In that spirit, this exhibition embraces the complexity and contradictions of “American” art, leaving its definition open to question and collaboration from visitors.

“Untitled” (America) opens with five iconic works from the collection: Jasper Johns, *Three Flags* (1958), Georgia O’Keeffe, *Summer Days* (1936), Barkley L. Hendricks, *Steve* (1976), Alma Thomas, *Mars Dust* (1972), and Kay WalkingStick, *April Contemplating May* (1972).

The first gallery is dedicated to the Whitney’s rich history of collecting works by artists working in figural and realist traditions. It highlights several works from the Museum’s founding collection, including Robert Henri, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney* (1916), George Bellows, *Dempsey and Firpo* (1924), and Edward Hopper, *Early Sunday Morning* (1930). Reflecting on the Museum’s continued commitment to realism and portraiture, Arshile Gorky’s *The Artist and His Mother* (1936) will be paired with Alice Neel’s *Andy Warhol* (1970), both on view at the Museum for the first time in several years.



The American landscape will be examined through conceptions of place, memory, and war, with a selection of works from Jacob Lawrence’s *War Series* (1946–47), paired with a new acquisition by Fritz Scholder, *Massacre at Wounded Knee II* (1970). Works by Elsie Driggs, Eldzier Cortor, Joseph Stella, and a new acquisition by Aaron Douglas will examine the built landscape across different moments in US history.

Subsequent galleries in the exhibition explore how artists have engaged with objects from everyday life, both as materials and sources of inspiration. Works like Yayoi Kusama’s *Air Mail Stickers* (1969) explore an artist’s transformation of the mundane to the extraordinary, and

Marisol's print *Diptych* (1971) introduces an irreverent take on self-portraiture through the use of her own body as a matrix. Works by Gerald Murphy and Man Ray offer earlier examples of artists questioning consumerism and bringing popular culture into their work.

The seductions and illusions of mass media are explored in works like Nam June Paik's *Magnet TV* (1965), which undermines the power of broadcast and mass media by distorting and manipulating the content being served to the viewers. Ed Ruscha's *Large Trademark with Eight Spotlights* (1962), Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Hollywood Africans* (1983), Andy Warhol's *Ethel Scull 36 Times* (1963), and Rosalyn Drexler's *Marilyn Pursued by Death* (1963) point to the artifice of Hollywood and celebrity culture while engaging in the visual languages of commercial culture.

The final gallery of the exhibition explores abstraction through key Abstract Expressionist works, including Clyfford Still's *Untitled* (1956), Norman Lewis' *American Totem* (1960), and Mark Rothko's *Four Darks in Red* (1958). Alongside these paintings, Jay DeFeo's *The Rose* (1958-66), Lee Bontecou's *Untitled* (1963), and a recent acquisition, Zilia Sánchez's *Eros* (1976/1998), push further at the spatial and material dynamics of abstraction.

Focused Sculpture Gallery on Isamu Noguchi

The Whitney began collecting works by Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) in 1931, just after its founding the previous year, and today it is a major repository of the artist's work. Born in Los Angeles, Noguchi spent much of his childhood in Japan. He traveled extensively throughout Asia, Europe, and Mexico as a young sculptor, observing methods of working in various mediums like ceramics, wood, stone, and metal. In 1927, Noguchi spent an extended stay in Paris working as a studio assistant for Romanian sculptor Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), and met fellow American sculptor Alexander Calder (1898–1976) during this period. Brancusi and Calder both encouraged Noguchi to shift his practice toward abstraction and away from academic realism.

This gallery will focus on three decades of Noguchi's work, examining the artist's broad explorations in form and materials from the 1930s to the early 1960s. His artistic practice is woven with elements of engineering, which is evident in *Integral* (1959), a work featuring a marble plinth balanced on sheets of metal and wood, and the interlocking carved pieces in *The Gunas* (1946) and *Humpty Dumpty* (1946), which rely solely on their own weight to anchor them. Noguchi also appreciated the innate characteristics of his chosen materials, often showcasing their raw textures and qualities, as seen in the chalky, pale orange surface of earthenware in *The Queen* (1931/c. 1943) or the smooth, purplish-brown sheen of cast iron in *Endless Coupling* (1957).

Claes Oldenburg: Drawn from Life

Within "*Untitled*" (*America*), a focused gallery will feature a biannually rotating presentation that offers an opportunity for a special, in-depth look at works from the collection. The inaugural iteration, [*Claes Oldenburg: Drawn from Life*](#), features the artist's drawings from the 1960s in which he playfully reimagined the spaces and objects of daily life. Oldenburg is best known for his sculptures of everyday objects, made with unexpected textures and unusual scale. While he

began to realize these works as large-scale, outdoor sculptures in 1969, his innovations in sculpture emerged from his drawing practice, which he used to capture and reshape the contours of the world he observed. In his earliest body of work, *The Street* (1959–60), Oldenburg channels influences from everyday modes of drawing into expressive scenes of city life. Drawing inspiration from comics and advertising illustrations, his subsequent series, *The Store* (1961–64) and *The Home* (1963–69) feature exuberant drawings of food, clothing, and household appliances. These drawings informed his colorful, cartoonish “soft” sculptures, including the one on view in this exhibition. In 1965, Oldenburg began playing with scale in his sketches, placing enlarged versions of his favorite items—fire hydrants, baked potatoes, and teddy bears—towering over cityscapes. Pulled from the Whitney’s extensive holdings of Oldenburg’s works on paper, *Drawn from Life* attests to the artist’s wide range as a draftsman and expanded definition of life drawing.

Exhibition Tickets

Visitors can purchase timed tickets for “*Untitled*” (*America*), opening July 5, 2025. [More ticketing information will be available on the Museum’s website.](#)

Press Visits

The Whitney Press Office welcomes members of the press to coordinate early visits to see “*Untitled*” (*America*) during member preview days, July 2–4, 2025. Please reach out to pressoffice@whitney.org with any questions or to request press tickets to the Museum.

Free Public Programs

A series of free virtual and in-person programs are offered in conjunction with “*Untitled*” (*America*). More information about these programs and how to register will be available on the Museum’s [website](#) as details are confirmed.

PRESS CONTACT

For press materials and image requests, please visit our [press site](#) or contact:

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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 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 ninety 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, 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.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning "island of many hills." The Museum's current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan ("tobacco field"). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region's original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum's Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum's website](#).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors twenty-five years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credits:

Lead image: Edward Hopper, *Early Sunday Morning*, 1930. Oil on canvas, 35 3/16 × 60 1/4 in. (89.4 × 153 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.426. © 2025 Heirs of Josephine N. Hopper/Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Left to right: George Bellows, *Dempsey and Firpo*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 51 1/8 × 63 1/4 in. (129.9 × 160.7 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney 31.95; Archibald John Motley, Jr., *Gettin' Religion*, 1948. Oil on linen, 32 × 39 7/16 in. (81.3 × 100.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase Josephine N. Hopper Bequest, by exchange 2016.15. © Valerie Gerrard Browne

Left to right: Robert Henri, *Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney*, 1916. Oil on canvas, 49 15/16 × 72 in. (126.8 × 182.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Flora Whitney Miller 86.70.3; Joseph Stella, *The Brooklyn Bridge: Variation on an Old Theme*, 1939. Oil on canvas, 70 1/4 × 42 3/16 in. (178.4 × 107.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Purchase 42.15; Norman Lewis, *American Totem*, 1960. Oil on canvas, 73 11/16 × 43 1/8 in. (187.2 × 109.5 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund in memory of Preston Robert and Joan Tisch, the Painting and Sculpture Committee, Director's Discretionary Fund, Adolph Gottlieb, by exchange, and Sami and Hala Mnaymneh 2018.141. © Norman Lewis, courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, LLC

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