

Exhibition of Jackson Pollock's Black Paintings to Open Exclusively at Dallas Museum of Art in November

Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots Is Only the Third Major U.S. Museum Exhibition to Focus Solely on the Artist



Dallas, TX—UPDATED November 3, 2015—On November 20, the Dallas Museum of Art will present what experts have deemed a “once in a lifetime” exhibition, organized by the DMA’s Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art Gavin Delahunty: the largest survey of Jackson Pollock’s black paintings ever assembled. This exceptional presentation will include many works that have not been exhibited for more than 50 years, several of which were considered lost. *Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots* offers critical new scholarship on this understudied yet pivotal period in the artist’s career and provides radical new insights into Pollock’s practice. On view at the DMA through March 20, 2016, the exhibition will receive its sole US presentation in Dallas, with more than 70 works, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, and prints.

Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots is the first large-scale exhibition to be curated by Gavin Delahunty at the DMA since he joined the Museum in May 2014. The exhibition is co-organized with Tate Liverpool, where Delahunty previously served as Head of Exhibitions and Displays. Tate Liverpool opened a smaller version of the exhibition in June.

The exhibition will first introduce audiences to Pollock’s work via a selection of his classic drip paintings made between 1947 and 1950, including *Number 2*, 1950, a work from the Harvard Art Museums’ collection that has not traveled in over 20 years. These works will serve to contextualize the radical departure represented by the black paintings, a series of black enamel paintings that Pollock created between 1951 and 1953. An unprecedented 31 black paintings will be included in the DMA presentation, nearly double the next largest survey of these works (which was presented at the Museum of Modern Art in 1967).

“While several of Jackson Pollock’s contemporaries combined black and white, his black paintings were exceptional in their absolute merging of color and surface, which went over and above what Pollock himself had previously achieved; this is a crucial difference for many contemporary artists revisiting Pollock’s work today,” said Delahunty. “Through a comprehensive display of more than 70 works, the exhibition offers the opportunity to address ‘blind spots’ in the current understanding of the artist’s practice, offering a new perspective on his lasting contributions to post-war and contemporary art.

“As one of the first American museums to acquire Pollock’s work, it only is fitting that the DMA should present this definitive exhibition of the black paintings, engaging a new generation of audiences with this important and under-examined aspect of the artist’s practice,” Delahunty concluded.

The Dallas Museum of Art acquired Pollock’s 1947 painting *Cathedral*, included in the exhibition, in 1950; it was the first of Pollock’s “classic period” paintings to enter any museum collection in the world. In 1967 the DMA acquired a second Pollock work, his 1953 *Portrait and a Dream*, which is widely considered to be one of his last major artistic statements.

Also featured in the exhibition are 30 works on paper made by Pollock during the same period as the black paintings. Made with enamel and ink and watercolor, the works on paper are considered by scholars to be the artist’s most important as a draftsman. The exhibition will also feature five of Pollock’s extant six sculptures, which provide a true three-dimensional experience of his well-known painting approach. Together with the 37 paintings on view, these works immerse audiences in Pollock’s complete oeuvre and shed new light on the experimentation and ingenuity that has become synonymous with his practice.

While Jackson Pollock’s leading role in the Abstract Expressionist movement has been widely discussed, less attention has been devoted to his black paintings period. In describing this pivotal phase in Pollock’s artistic trajectory, the critic and historian Michael Fried remarked that “[Pollock is] on the verge of an entirely new and different kind of painting . . . of virtually limitless potential.” The black paintings assembled for the exhibition will include significant loans from U.S., Asian, and European collections, as well as important works drawn from the collections of the DMA and Tate.

“Pollock’s extraordinary, still controversial black paintings of 1951 finally get the attention they deserve; they prove to be just as radical as his earlier, more celebrated all-over drip paintings, and speak even more to our own time as well,” said John Elderfield, Chief Curator Emeritus of Painting and Sculpture, Museum of Modern Art.

Exhibition Organization:

Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots is co-organized by the Dallas Museum of Art and Tate Liverpool. The exhibition is curated by Gavin Delahunty, Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, Dallas Museum of Art (formerly Head of Exhibitions and Displays at Tate Liverpool), with Stephanie Straine, Assistant Curator, Tate Liverpool. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. *Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots* is co-presented by Bank of America and Texas Instruments. Additional support is provided by The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, Inc. The presentation in Dallas is made possible by TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art, an annual fundraising event

that jointly benefits amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research and the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Contemporary Art Initiative. Marketing support is provided by the Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District, the Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau, and *Texas Monthly*. Appraisal services are provided by Christie's and Heritage Auctions. Flooring is provided by Property Advisers Realty and Freeman Companies. Additional leadership gifts are provided by Marguerite Hoffman and Tom Lentz, Catherine and Will Rose, Deedie and Rusty Rose, Jennifer and John Eagle, Cindy and Howard Rachofsky, Gayle and Paul Stoffel, Laura and Walter Elcock, Allen and Kelli Questrom, and Sharon and Michael Young.

The exhibition tour includes:

Tate Liverpool: June 30–October 18, 2015

Dallas Museum of Art: November 20, 2015–March 20, 2016

Exhibition Catalogue:

A scholarly and wide-ranging publication will accompany the exhibition with contributions by Gavin Delahunty, Dallas Museum of Art; Michael Fried, J. R. Herbert Boone Professor of Humanities and the History of Art, Johns Hopkins University; Stephanie Straine, Tate Liverpool; and Jo Applin, Senior Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art, University of York.

Delahunty's essay examines the relative exclusion of the black paintings in Pollock's exhibition history; their relationship to the black and white painting that had only gotten underway in the U.S. in the late 1940s (Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, and Franz Kline); and the evolution of all-black painting around and after Pollock's 1951 exhibition at Betty Parsons. Michael Fried re-visits his seminal 1965 essay for *ARTFORUM*, where he championed the black paintings. Stephanie Straine explores Pollock's use of paper as a ground for a complex variety of work, and Jo Applin interprets Pollock's lifelong fascination with sculpture.

In addition the publication will include over sixty full-color plates, an artist chronology, a black painting chronology, an exhibition checklist, and a number of, as yet, unpublished photographs by Hans Namuth of the Black Paintings.

Images: Jackson Pollock, *Echo: Number 25, 1951*, 1951, enamel paint on canvas, Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest and the Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller Fund, Museum of Modern Art, New York, © 2015 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Jackson Pollock, *Number 14, 1951*, 1951, oil on canvas, Purchased with assistance from the American Fellows of the Tate Gallery Foundation 1988, © 2015 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Jackson Pollock, *Number 7, 1951*, 1951, enamel on canvas, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Gift of the Collectors Committee (1983.77.1), © 2015 The Pollock-Krasner Foundation / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) is among the 10 largest art museums in the country and is distinguished by its commitment to research, innovation, and public engagement. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 23,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the nation's largest arts district, the Museum welcomes over 650,000 visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance

presentations. In January 2013, the DMA returned to a free general admission policy and launched DMA Friends, a free program available to anyone who wishes to join focused on active engagement with the Museum. For more information, visit DMA.org.

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