

Matthew Marks Gallery
Art Basel Paris 2024





Ellsworth Kelly *Blue Green Yellow Black Red* 1959 Oil on canvas 15 x 26 1/8 inches; 38 x 66 cm

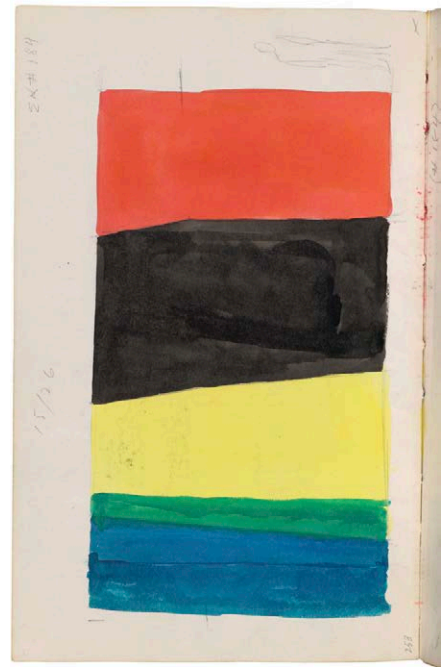


Ellsworth Kelly's *Blue Green Yellow Black Red*, 1959, is a striking example of the artist's career-long exploration of shape, color, and form. The polychrome composition is from a pivotal period of single canvas works that Kelly created following his return to New York from Paris in 1954. The curvilinear and geometric forms that appear throughout Kelly's innovative abstractions were first observed in the world around him. As the artist explained, "I think that if you can turn off the mind and look only with the eyes, ultimately everything becomes abstract." His found compositions drew inspiration from a wide range of sources, including a subway poster, a coffee cup, and a plant's leaves.

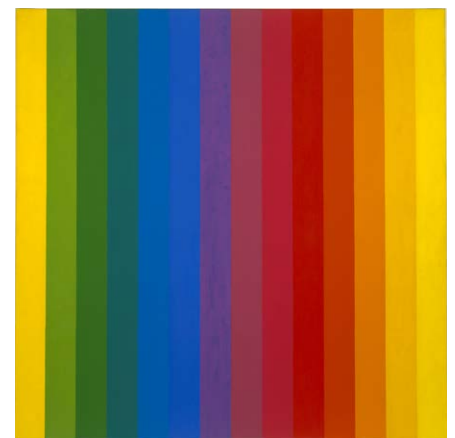
New York proved to be a fruitful landscape for Kelly's distinct approach to abstraction, particularly in relation to his exploration of color. The artist described the vibrant colors he encountered in the city as "a very loose, loud, fragmented, haphazard use of color – the yellow/blue, red/yellow taxicabs, the torn bits of packaging all over the streets." In *Blue Green Yellow Black Red*, the unique bends and curves of the saturated forms create a dynamic interplay that highlights the optical effects of color and shape.

Prior to completing *Blue Green Yellow Black Red*, Kelly studied the composition in a watercolor drawing. This drawing, from *Sketchbook #27, New York City*, 1954–58 (Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York), closely mirrors the completed painting and shows the artist's exploration with the irregular bands of color in the years leading up to his 1959 painting. *Blue Green Yellow Black Red*'s vertical fields of color further relate to the artist's renowned *Spectrum* paintings. Kelly's *Spectrum* paintings, including *Spectrum I*, 1953 (Collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art), share the artist's profound chromatic experimentation exemplified in *Blue Green Yellow Black Red*, and highlight the sensory effects produced through the juxtaposition of color.

Ellsworth Kelly
Blue Green Yellow Black Red
1959
Oil on canvas
15 x 26 1/8 inches
38 x 66 cm



Ellsworth Kelly,
Sketchbook #27, New York City, 1954–58,
Collection of The Museum of Modern Art,
New York



Ellsworth Kelly, *Spectrum I*, 1953,
Oil on canvas
Collection of the San Francisco Museum of
Modern Art



Ellsworth Kelly *Black Form on White with Red* 1956 Oil and ink on newspaper
15 x 10 1/2 inches; 38 x 27 cm



Ellsworth Kelly *Red, White, Black, and Blue* 1952 Collage 7 x 2 3/4 inches; 18 x 7 cm



Robert Gober *Paco* 2008–2024 Plaster, acrylic paint, graphite
9 x 6 x 7 inches; 23 x 15 x 18 cm



Robert Gober

Paco

2008–2024

Plaster, acrylic paint, graphite

9 x 6 x 7 inches

23 x 15 x 18 cm

Robert Gober's *Paco*, 2008–2024, depicts a striking hybrid between human and animal forms. Following the ancient tradition of death masks that preserve the memory of the departed, Gober began the sculpture in 2008 after the unexpected loss of his dog, Paco. A cast of Gober's own face forms the basis of the mask, upon which he sculpted Paco's long snout. The uncanny sculpture merges the artist's own likeness with that of his beloved pet, exemplifying Gober's embrace of enigmatic imagery that is imbued with deeply personal meaning.

Paco builds upon Gober's extended exploration of human anatomy, which includes his well-known, meticulously hand-made sculptures of legs and torsos. The sculpted tape that appears to secure the dog's snout to the cast of the artist's face draws attention to the peculiar act of combining human and animal features. The piercing blue eyes and loosely painted pink lips contrast the plaster's stark white form, adding to the sculpture's captivating character.



Robert Gober *Untitled* 2017 Graphite and colored pencil on spiral bound paper
12 x 9 inches; 31 x 23 cm

Robert Gober

Untitled

2017

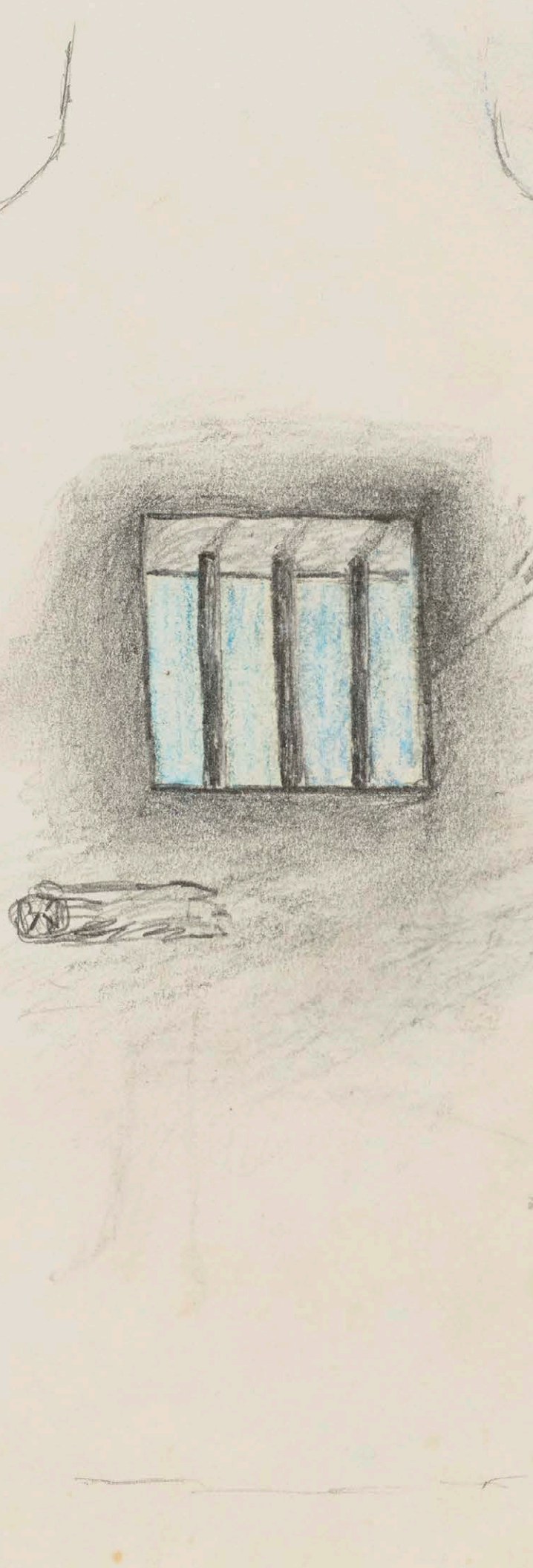
**Graphite and colored pencil on
spiral bound paper**

12 x 9 inches

31 x 23 cm

Over the last several years, Robert Gober has made a series of drawings that revisit the artist's signature prison window motif, which first appeared in his 1992 installation at the Dia Center for the Arts in New York. At the time, this site-specific work was the artist's most significant and immersive installation to date and featured barred prison windows high on the gallery walls that revealed glimpses of an illusionistic blue sky.

Untitled, 2017, depicts a prison window set within a human torso. The drawing exemplifies Gober's uncanny combinations of the human body with familiar objects. Torsos are an important recurring motif in Gober's work that first appeared in his seminal *Slides of a Changing Painting*, 1982–83 (Collection of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis). To make this work, Gober spent a year repeatedly painting and photographing the same small Masonite board, with the human torso appearing frequently across painted iterations, altered and amended with additional signature motifs that include pipes, drains, and doors. Gober's *Untitled* drawing exhibits a shared focus on transformation, metamorphosis, and the object-like condition of the human body. The captivating blue sky provides the illusion of exterior space beyond the two-dimensional confines of the paper, provoking a tension between freedom and containment.





Simone Leigh *No Face (House)* 2024 Stoneware, raffia, and porcelain
41 x 30 x 28 inches; 104 x 76 x 71 cm





Simone Leigh

No Face (House)

2024

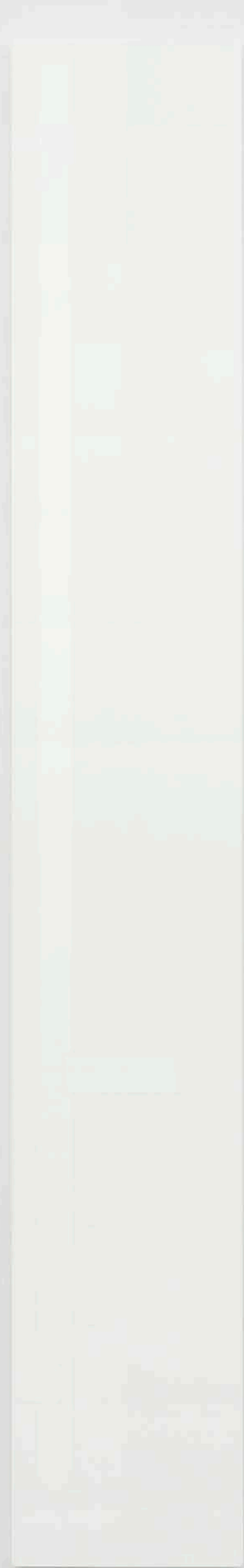
Stoneware, raffia, and
porcelain

41 x 30 x 28 inches

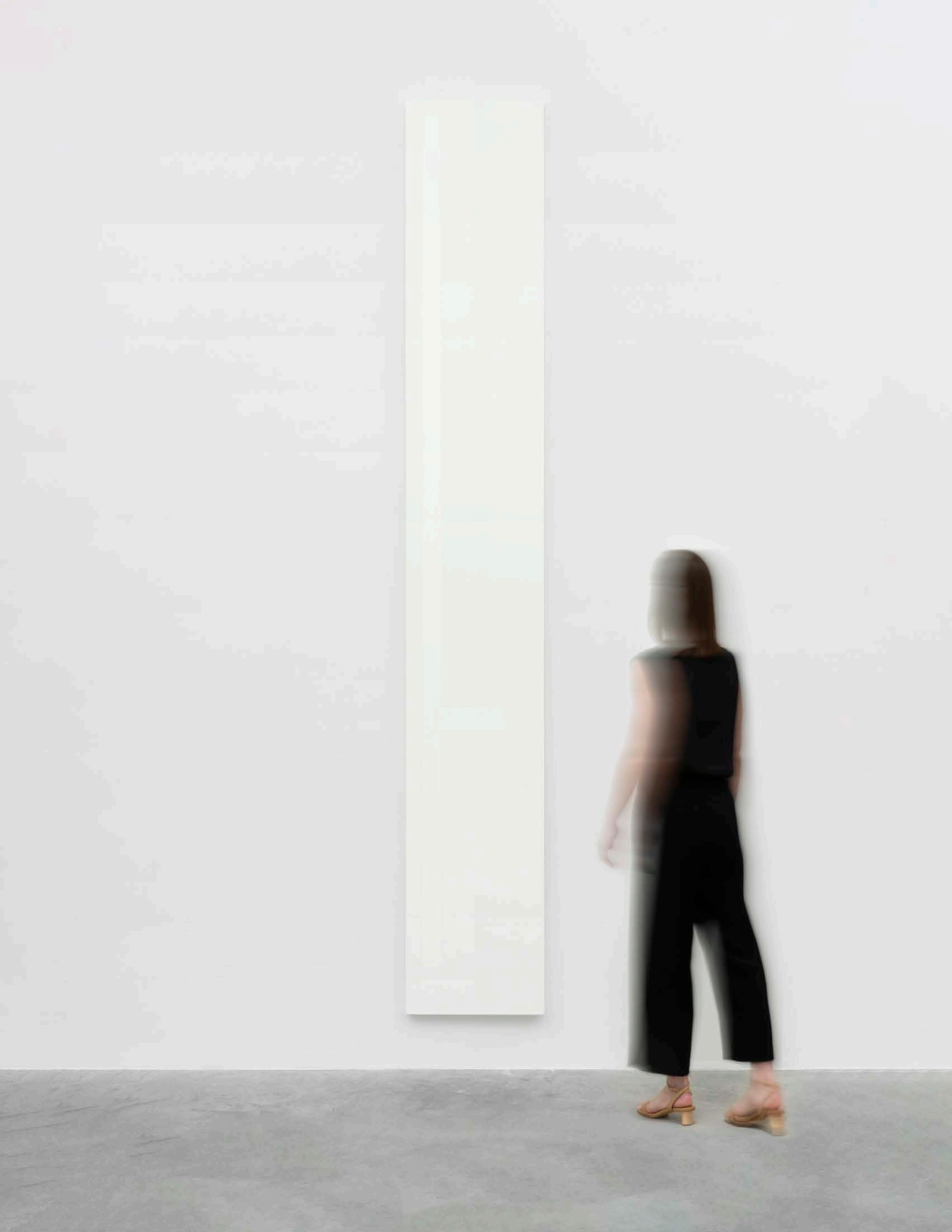
104 x 76 x 71 cm

Simone Leigh's *No Face (House)*, 2024, is a striking example of the artist's ongoing engagement with bust-like sculptures. In many of these works, Leigh merges the female body with domestic vessels and architectural elements to point to unacknowledged acts of labor and care. Combining the artist's signature hand-coiled rosettes and raffia material, *No Face (House)* presents an abstracted vision of the body. Hundreds of rich blue rosettes surround a facial void, powerfully rejecting an identifiable portrait in favor of a collective experience. By "abstracting the figure," Leigh explains, "I imagine a kind of experience, a state of being, rather than an individual person."

No Face (House)'s bell-shaped raffia skirt is a recurring motif in Leigh's work, reflecting the artist's practice of drawing upon a wide range of historical and cultural imagery. Leigh's sources of inspiration include a 1940s-era Mississippi restaurant named Mammy's Cupboard, the huts of the 1931 Paris Colonial Exposition, and Diego Velázquez's 1656 painting, *Las Meninas*. The shape is a signature motif in Leigh's oeuvre, further explored in sculptures including *Cupboard VIII*, 2018 (Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York); *Brick House*, 2019 (Awarded the Golden Lion for Best Participant at the 59th Venice Biennale); and *Cupboard*, 2022 (Collection of the Dallas Museum of Art).



Anne Truitt *Arundel III* 1973 Acrylic and graphite on canvas
120 1/8 x 18 1/8 inches; 305 x 46 cm





Anne Truitt

Arundel III

1973

Acrylic and graphite on canvas

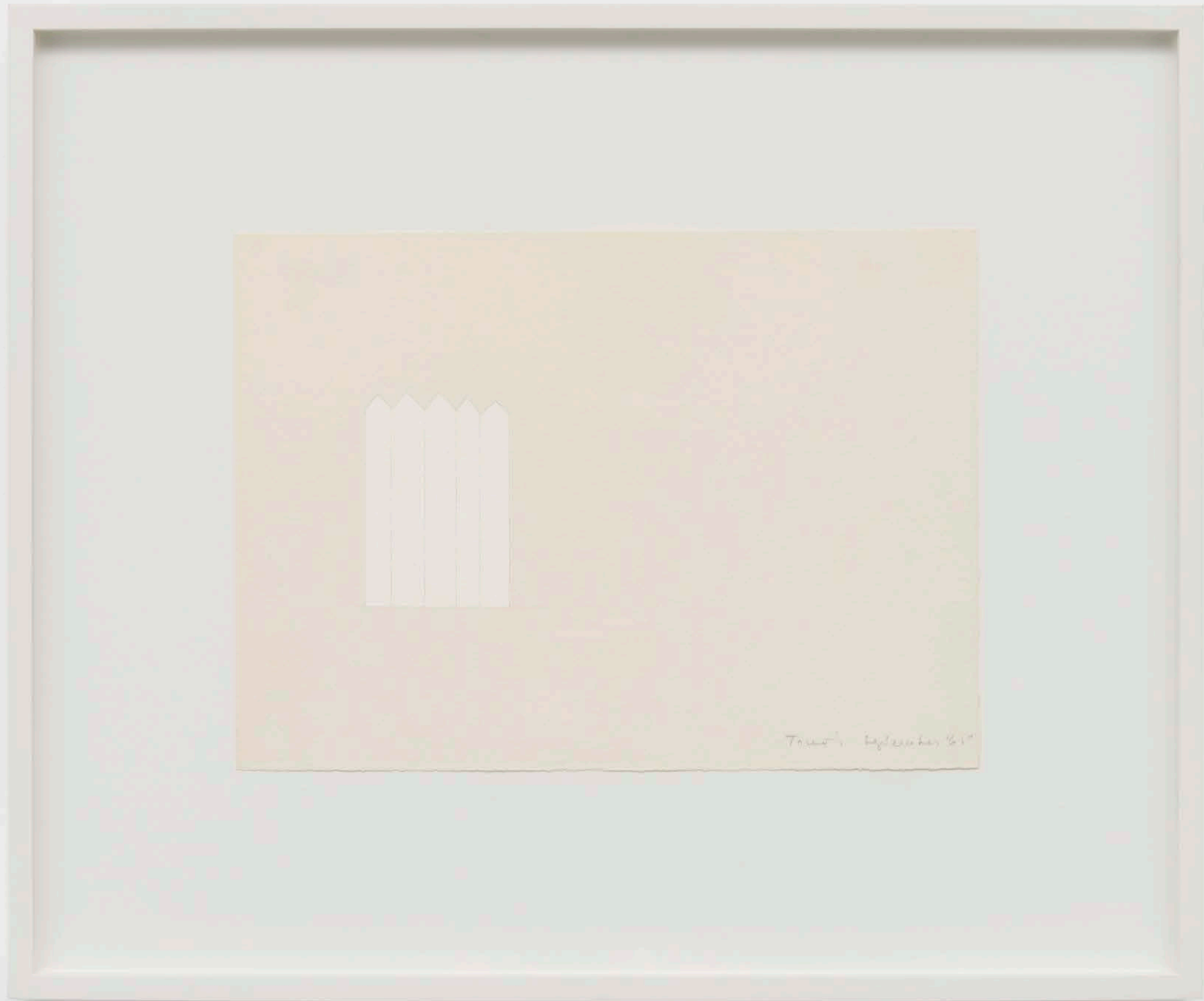
120 1/8 x 18 1/8 inches

305 x 46 cm

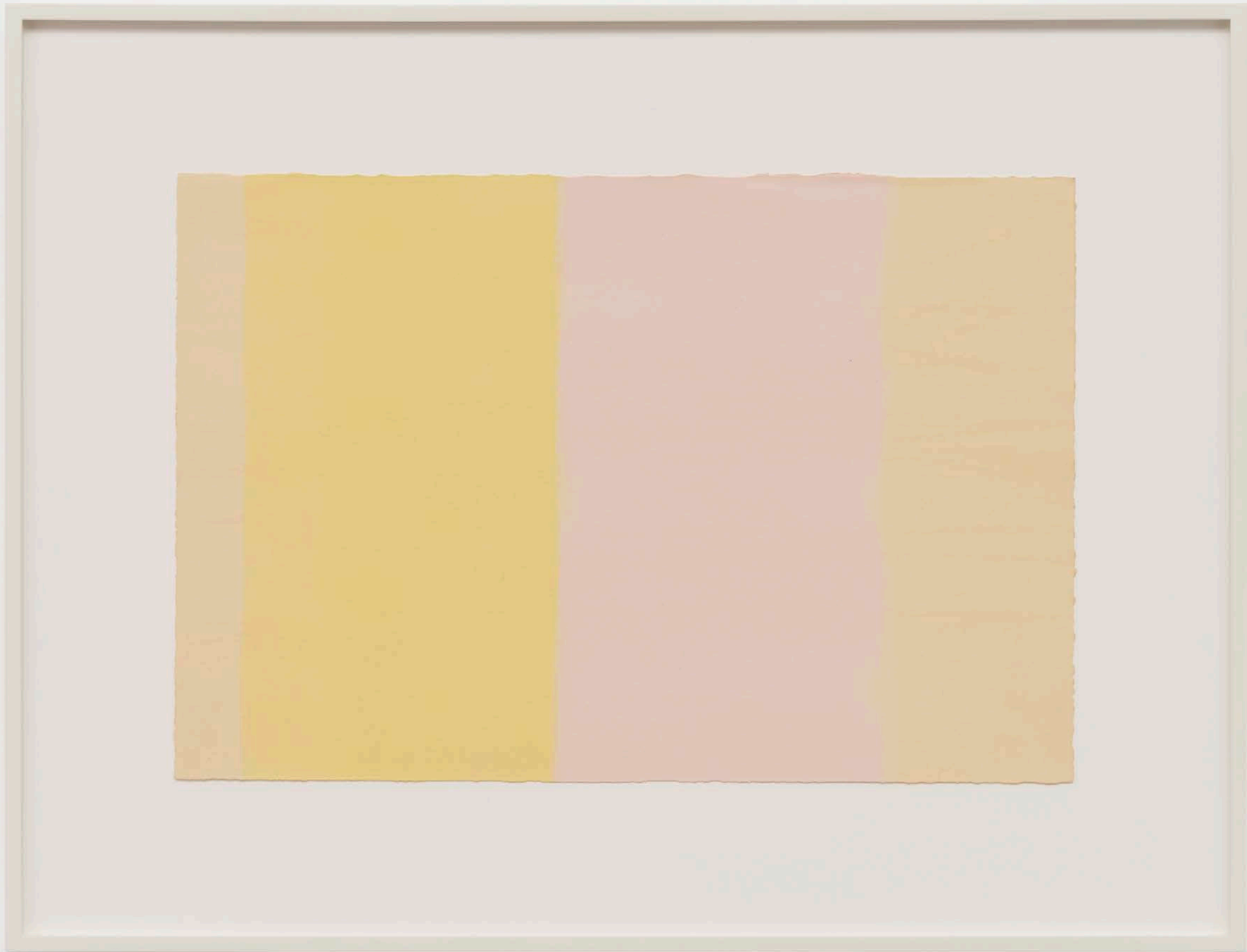
Anne Truitt's *Arundel III*, 1973, is an early example from a series of white paintings the artist began in 1973. Each painting in the series, which she pursued on and off for over twenty-five years, consists of minimally applied, crisp graphite lines and occasional strokes of pure titanium white. In the artist's own words, the *Arundels* exemplify "the sort of pursuit in art that I like best: the pursuit of the just-visible, of some mystery that seems to me to lie at the thresholds of perception."

Truitt named the series after Anne Arundel County, which is the area in Maryland where she grew up. "It's a kind of mask off my name," she said, "Those paintings are as close to the core of me as you can get."

Arundel III was included in a one-person exhibition at the Baltimore Museum of Art in 1975 dedicated to Truitt's *Arundel* paintings. Due to the paintings' minimal character, the exhibition was controversial at the time, and the museum received pressure from the press and the public to close the exhibition early. As a sign of their unwavering support for Truitt and the *Arundel* paintings, the museum responded by extending the exhibition beyond its original dates.



Anne Truitt *September '65 No. 1* 1965 Acrylic and graphite on paper 7 3/4 x 10 3/4 inches; 20 x 27 cm



Anne Truitt *Truitt '67 [15]* 1967 Acrylic on paper 14 x 20 1/2 inches; 36 x 52 cm



Sturtevant *Nine Warhol Flowers* 1965/69 Synthetic polymer silkscreen and acrylic on 9 individual canvases in artist's frame 66 1/2 x 66 1/2 inches; 170 x 170 cm





Sturtevant

Nine Warhol Flowers

1965/69

Synthetic polymer silkscreen and acrylic on 9 individual canvases in artist's frame

66 1/2 x 66 1/2 inches

170 x 170 cm

Sturtevant is best known for her repetitions of recognizable artworks made by other contemporary artists, through which she disrupts and investigates the underlying structures of art. As curator Peter Eeley describes, “By faking faking, Sturtevant showed that she was not a copyist, plagiarist, parodist, forger, or imitator, but was rather a kind of actionist, who adopted style as her medium in order to investigate aspects of art’s making, circulation, consumption, and canonization.”

Sturtevant’s *Nine Warhol Flowers*, 1965/69, evokes Andy Warhol’s iconic silkscreens of flowers. Less than a year after Warhol debuted his flower paintings at New York’s Leo Castelli Gallery in 1964, Sturtevant used a silkscreen that Warhol had lent her to produce her own versions of the now-iconic motif. A repetition of a repetition, Warhol’s flowers were themselves appropriated from a photo by Patricia Caulfield, which appeared in a Kodak advertisement in the June 1964 edition of *Modern Photography*. Revolutionizing the concept of originality and authorship, Sturtevant has said, “I make reproductions in order to confront, in order to trigger thinking.”



Xinyi Cheng *Moon Water* 2023 Oil on linen 15 3/4 x 19 5/8 inches; 40 x 50 cm



Xinyi Cheng
Moon Water
2023
Oil on linen
15 3/4 x 19 5/8 inches
40 x 50 cm

“My paintings are about different aspects of desire and human relationships. I paint situations that are based on my memories or imagination.”

— Xinyi Cheng

Xinyi Cheng’s paintings, with their unexpected colors and compositions, often begin with her own observations, whether an interaction she witnessed or an image from a film that lingered in her mind. Her subjects, which often include strangers, friends, animals, or commonplace objects, convey a wide range of emotions and sensations such as intimacy, alienation, peacefulness, and unease.

In *Moon Water*, 2023, Cheng depicts a close friend, a subject who has been the focus of several of the artist’s paintings. Cheng abstracts the figure with the painting’s rich tones, distinct orientation, and the artist’s signature atmospheric ground. Describing *Moon Water*, the artist has said: “I like to make small, portrait-format paintings, but I always refuse to call them portraits. I enter the painting by finding the right background color to set the mood, space and light, and I finish by painting the eyes, hoping in between that there is enough magic happening. I wanted to paint yellow like Chardin. Chardin paints softly glowing jars and cups that catch your eyes and invite you in, while the soft outlines push you out.”



Katharina Fritsch *Heiligenfigur (St. Michael) / Figure of a Saint (St. Michael)* 2008
Polyester, paint 76 3/4 x 26 x 22 1/2 inches; 195 x 66 x 57 cm





Katharina Fritsch
Heiligenfigur (St. Michael) /
Figure of a Saint (St. Michael)
2008

Polyester, paint
76 3/4 x 26 x 22 1/2 inches
195 x 66 x 57 cm

Katharina Fritsch's *Heiligenfigur (St. Michael) / Figure of a Saint (St. Michael)*, 2008, is a life-sized monochromatic sculpture depicting an angel slaying a demon. Fritsch portrays St. Michael thrusting his spear at the demon below, personifying the fight between good and evil. The sculpture is cast from polyester and painted with an uncanny matte green surface that destabilizes the religious iconography, combining the familiar with the foreign. "I find the play between reality and apparition very interesting," Fritsch has said. "I think my work moves back and forth between these two poles. There is still the connection to the real, but at the same time to the unreal."

Heiligenfigur (St. Michael) / Figure of a Saint (St. Michael) exemplifies Fritsch's decades-long engagement with subject matter derived from the world of myth, religion, and fairy tales. Fritsch's depictions of St. Michael can also be found in the collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art, as well as in the artist's sculptural ensemble, *Figurengruppe / Group of Figures*, 2006–2008, in the collection of The Museum of Modern Art in New York.



Willem de Kooning *Untitled (East Hampton Landscape)* c. 1975–76
Oil on paper on canvas 29 5/8 x 29 inches; 75 x 74 cm





Willem de Kooning
Untitled (East Hampton Landscape)
c. 1975–76
Oil on paper on canvas
29 5/8 x 29 inches
75 x 74 cm

Willem de Kooning's *Untitled (East Hampton Landscape)*, 1975–76, reflects a pivotal period in the artist's oeuvre during which figurative references dissolved into gestural, abstract landscapes. In 1963, de Kooning moved to East Hampton, New York, where he would live and work for the rest of his life. The artist was deeply influenced by East Hampton's bucolic coastal landscape. "I wanted to get in touch with nature," he said. "Not painting scenes from nature, but to get a feeling of that light, that was very appealing to me."

The emotive, abstract gestures in *Untitled (East Hampton Landscape)* evoke the light and landscape near de Kooning's studio on Long Island, an environment that reminded the artist of his native Holland. De Kooning balanced soft colors with chromatic richness, including verdant greens and electric blues, applying paint with sweeping brushstrokes, drips, and splatters. "Color may or may not suggest a figure, the grass, or the sky; freed from depiction, liberated from shape and contour it has a more random quality than in any other of de Kooning's canvases," curator and art historian Diane Waldman has said. "But like everything else he has touched, it is far from random, it is subject to his masterful control."

Thomas Demand

Thomas Demand began his *Dailies* series in 2008. To make these works, the artist selects images from his personal archive of cellphone photographs, reconstructs these scenes in his studio using paper and cardboard, and then photographs his reconstructions. The works depict a vast array of objects and scenes in nondescript settings, including a bucket of water, a slipper stuck under a door, and other often overlooked details of everyday life. Once he photographs his recreated environments – always devoid of figures but often displaying evidence of recent human activity – Demand destroys his models, complicating the relationship between reality and reproduction. Each of Demand's *Dailies* are printed using the labor-intensive dye transfer process, which gives the work a distinct richness and depth of color.





Thomas Demand *Daily #37* 2024 Framed dye transfer print
26 5/8 x 21 1/4 inches; 68 x 54 cm



Thomas Demand *Daily #38* 2024 Framed dye transfer print
26 5/8 x 21 1/4 inches; 68 x 54 cm

Nan Goldin

Nan Goldin is recognized as one of the foremost photographers of her generation. Both as a leading figure of the Boston School as well as a pioneer of an intimate, documentary-form color photography, Goldin recorded the lives and subcultures of her friends and lovers in New York City. The friends depicted in Goldin's photographs are often important figures in New York City's downtown scene, including the artist David Wojnarowicz and the actress Cookie Mueller, both of whom would later die of AIDS-related complications.

This selection of photographs brings together iconic works from the 1970s and 1980s that were featured in the artist's book and slideshow installation, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, 1986, as well as Goldin's important survey "I'll be Your Mirror" at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York in 1996. These works, such as *Greer and Robert on the bed, NYC*, 1982, depict moments of intimacy and the complexities of human relationships.

Self-portraiture has also been an important facet of Goldin's work. From her earliest photographs taken in the 1970s, Goldin chose to document not only her friends and community, but also herself, as exemplified by *Self-portrait in blue bathroom, London*, 1980. Goldin's self-portraits can be devastatingly honest and intimate, capturing moments of personal reflection.

Speaking about the poignant imagery captured in her photographs, Goldin said: "I want to show exactly what my world looks like, without glamorization, without glorification. This is not a bleak world but one in which there is an awareness of pain, a quality of introspection."





Nan Goldin *Self-portrait in blue bathroom, London* 1980 Cibachrome 30 x 40 inches; 76 x 102 cm



Nan Goldin *Picnic on the Esplanade, Boston* 1973 Cibachrome 30 x 40 inches; 76 x 102 cm



Nan Goldin *Greer and Robert on the bed, NYC* 1982 Cibachrome 30 x 40 inches; 76 x 102 cm