

Press Release

## Philip Guston. Room, Sea & Sky

3 September – 26 October 2024  
Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street



**New York...**One of the most influential artists of the last century, Philip Guston (1913 - 1980) is renowned globally for his art's profound personal introspection and keen societal awareness. This fall, Hauser & Wirth New York will explore Guston's significant, yet often-overlooked, printmaking practice, filling a longstanding void in discussions of his work and its ongoing search for meaning.

Organized around three titular themes, 'Room, Sea & Sky' draws attention to the metamorphic qualities of Guston's art through his printmaking. In the final year of his life, after a heart attack made work on large-scale paintings impossible, Guston turned to printmaking with a renewed focus. It was then that he began his collaboration with famed print workshop Gemini G.E.L. and its co-founders Sidney Felsen (1924 – 2024) and Stanley Grinstein (1927 – 2014), creating a series of major prints that brought his practice to its most mature form.

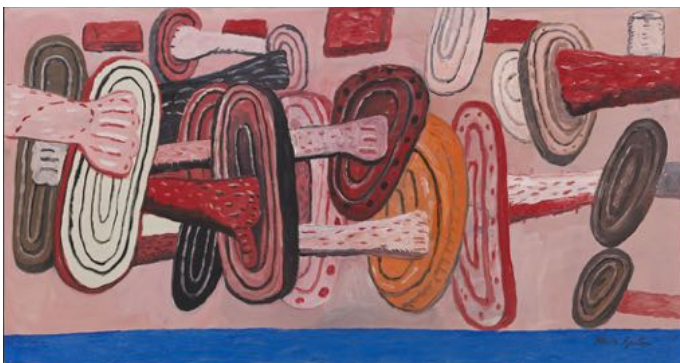
Interiors were among Guston's favorite subjects, often conveying themes of confinement and isolation. His repeated creation of these images yielded a distinctly iterative artistic process, as evident in 'Room' (1980). Sharing the same title as a 1976 painting, this work depicts a chair piled high with a tangle of disembodied legs. Guston arranges the objects as in a still life, although he avoids any clear narrative, instead creating a sense of tension and entrapment. By tilting the picture plane towards the viewer, Guston infuses this abstracted but still recognizable jumble of objects with a sense of urgency, heightening the sense of immediacy and confinement.



This kind of anxious energy can also be felt in Guston's renderings of the sky. The artist often used the sky as a backdrop for conflict, delving into its most evocative aspects in these late prints. Forms in works like 'Aegean II' (1977)—one of the two paintings on display in the exhibition—reappear in later prints such as 'Sky' (1980), where they are exploded, echoed and layered, as they become interconnected in their struggle against one another.

When Guston turns his focus to the sea, he depicts more subdued narratives of despair, but the conflicts are still evident. 'Sea Group' (1980) conveys a palpable tension, as if the forms might soon escape their confines. By contrast, 'Sea,' from the same year, with its group of heads floating in the placid water, offers a somewhat lighter, less angst-ridden image.

Possessing a physical presence that equals and at times rivals that of Guston's large-scale paintings, these prints impact the viewer with a mastery of effect derived from decades of the artist pushing his artistic and psychological boundaries. Representing a unique détente between figuration and abstraction, the works on view in 'Room, Sea & Sky' represent the culmination of a lifetime of artistic daring.



## HAUSER & WIRTH

### Public Programming

On Tuesday 15 October, the gallery will host a rare performance of Morton Feldman's 'For Philip Guston,' performed by the renowned artist collective [AMOC\\*](#), within the exhibition at Hauser & Wirth 18th Street. Composed in 1984, 'For Philip Guston,' a nearly five-hour trio, is Morton Feldman's poignant homage to Guston, touching on friendship, intransigence, affection, memory, loss and love.

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### Caption and courtesy information:

All images:

Philip Guston

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Room

1980

Lithograph

83.2 x 108 cm / 32 3/4 x 42 1/2 in

Photo: Thomas Barratt

Sky

1980

Lithograph

51.4 x 78.7 cm / 20 1/4 x 31 in

Photo: Sarah Muehlbauer

Aegean II

1977

Oil on canvas

91.4 x 177.8 cm / 36 x 70 in

Photo: Genevieve Hanson

Sea Group

1980

Lithograph

81.3 x 108 cm / 32 x 42 1/2 in

Photo: Thomas Barratt