

# GAGOSIAN

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Gagosian to Present *Willem de Kooning: Endless Painting*, Opening April 15 in New York

Curated by Cecilia Alemani, Exhibition Features Works Spanning Five Decades of the Artist's Career

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Willem de Kooning, *Untitled XIX*, 1984, oil on canvas, 80 × 70 inches (203.2 × 177.8 cm)  
© 2025 The Willem de Kooning Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo: Maris Hutchinson

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**NEW YORK, April 3, 2025**—Gagosian is pleased to present *Willem de Kooning: Endless Painting*, opening on April 15 at 555 West 24th Street. The exhibition is organized with the support of The Willem de Kooning Foundation and curated by Cecilia Alemani, director and chief curator of High Line Art. It comprises paintings dating from 1944 through 1986 and two sculptures: *Clamdigger* (1972), and the monumental *Standing Figure* (1969–84). This will be the first presentation at the newly renovated Chelsea gallery and follows *Willem de Kooning and Italy*, a significant presentation of paintings, sculptures, and drawings at the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice last summer.

A pioneering figure of the postwar era, de Kooning probed the expressive potential of color, line, and space and continuously challenged the boundaries between figuration and abstraction. Through the considered placement of late paintings including *Untitled V* (1982), on loan from the Museum

of Modern Art, New York, and *Untitled XIX* (1984) among works of the preceding decades, the exhibition foregrounds visual motifs that recurred throughout de Kooning's career. This arrangement reflects Alemani's close investigation of the 1980s paintings through which she identified an expansive repertoire of human forms—elbows, knees, mouths, eyes—that can be traced as far back as the artist's works of the 1930s and 1940s that drew on Cubism and Surrealism.

In *Montauk II* (1969), flesh-toned biomorphic shapes dance in and out of focus, while profiles and limbs appear amid the slippery brushstrokes of . . . *Whose Name Was Writ in Water* (1975), on loan from the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. In *Untitled XIV* (1986), the exhibition's latest work, undulating arms extend energetically across the canvas, mirroring the outspread limbs of *Standing Figure*, a monumental bronze sculpture on view indoors for the first time in nearly three decades.

De Kooning often reworked his canvases, reincorporating passages from earlier compositions by tracing shapes he wanted to preserve onto vellum, and even changing their orientation multiple times during their gestation. It was through revisiting and revising his compositions that he developed a consistent but flexible vocabulary of colors and gestures rooted in figuration. "A restless explorer of the canvas, de Kooning never stopped interrogating the possibilities of what painting could be," Alemani notes. "As a curator, it is deeply rewarding to grapple with the constant process of artistic reinvention and self-interrogation that animates his creative trajectory, especially through closer examination of his late works." The exhibition's title, *Endless Painting*, references this enduring, ever-evolving visual language and the artist's professed decision to "just stop" rather than formally finish paintings, perhaps seeking a more expansive definition of the medium itself.

*Endless Painting* is the sixth solo exhibition of de Kooning's work presented by Gagosian, with the first organized in 1987. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue featuring essays by Cecilia Alemani and John Elderfield, curator of *de Kooning: A Retrospective* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2011–12). On May 15, Alemani will moderate a conversation exploring the continued impact of de Kooning's paintings and working methods on artists today.

For Willem de Kooning's biographical information and exhibition history, [please visit gagosian.com](http://gagosian.com).

#WillemdeKooning

## **WILLEM DE KOONING**

*Endless Painting*

Curated by Cecilia Alemani

Opening reception: Tuesday, April 15, 6–8pm

April 15–June 14, 2025

555 West 24th Street, New York

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