

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
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Tue–Sat 10:00am–6:00pm



CY TWOMBLY

Thursday, April 23–Saturday, June 20, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, April 23rd, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

Each line is now the actual experience with its own innate history. It does not illustrate—it is the sensation of its own realization.

—Cy Twombly

Gagosian New York is pleased to present a group of the last paintings and sculptures of the late Cy Twombly, many of which have never been seen publicly.

Throughout his sixty-year career, Twombly infused the physical and emotional aspects of Abstract Expressionism with a wealth of historic and mythic allusion. He combined elements of gestural abstraction, drawing, and writing in a highly idiosyncratic and potent expression. At once epic and intimate, his work is steeped with references to poetry, classical mythology, and history. The alternation between the visible and the hidden, between present and past, and the struggle between memory and oblivion are unifying themes in his work.

The *Bacchus* series (2004–08) is charged with visceral energies. In huge arcs and drips of sanguine paint, sensation courses through the annals of myth and history. In later untitled works, cursive white lines against dark blue fields similarly describe the gestural force that first appeared in the “blackboard” paintings of the 1960s and early 1970s. *Blooming* (2001–08) is an efflorescent ten-panel painting spanning more than sixteen feet in width. Twombly captures and memorializes in patches of lush crayon and paint, and drips and flows of startling color, the fragile, heady nature of the peony flowers so revered in Japanese aesthetic contemplation.

From 1946 until his death in 2011, Twombly created sculptural assemblages from found materials and objects—kitchen utensils, cardboard, leaves, and other debris—unifying the final form with a coat of dry white paint. In 1979 he began to cast some sculptures in bronze, thus preserving and transforming the disparate elements. The surface and patina of these cast bronzes evoke weathered artifacts exhumed from the earth; some contain allusions to Egyptian and Mesopotamian sculpture. In works such as the obliquely stacked form of 2009, components have been merged and abstracted in the casting process; in others, such as *Untitled* (2004–09), there is an ecology of carefully balanced objects—a broom inside a funnel resting on a cylinder. Never before seen, *Untitled* (2004) is a sculptural monochrome of cast plaster and wooden elements, painted freely in brilliant sky-blue.

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Twombly's enduring importance to the art of the present is attested to by recent survey exhibitions in leading international museums. He has been a cornerstone to Gagosian Gallery since its opening in New York in the 1980s, and many exhibitions of his work have been presented over the last twenty-five years, each one as memorable as the other, from "Bolsena Paintings" (1989–90) and "The Coronation of Sesostris" (2000–01), to "Lepanto" (2002), "Bacchus" (2005–06), and "The Rose" (2009). "Ten Paintings and a Sculpture" (2004), "Three Notes for Salalah" (2007–08), "Leaving Paphos Ringed with Waves" (2009), and "Camino Real" (2010) inaugurated new galleries in London, Rome, Athens, and Paris respectively. Twombly's exhibitions "The Last Paintings" and "Photographs" toured Gagosian Los Angeles, Hong Kong, London and New York in 2012.

The exhibition is presented in collaboration with the Cy Twombly Foundation.

Cy Twombly (1928–2011) was born in Lexington, Virginia. He studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (1947–49); the Art Students League, New York (1950–51); and Black Mountain College, North Carolina (1951–52). In the mid-1950s, following travels in Europe and Africa, he emerged as a prominent figure among a group of artists working in New York that included Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. Major retrospectives were held at the Whitney Museum (1979); Kunsthaus Zürich (1987, traveled to Madrid, London, Düsseldorf, and Paris); and Museum of Modern Art, New York (1994, traveled to Houston, Los Angeles, and Berlin). In 1995, the Cy Twombly Gallery opened at The Menil Collection, Houston, exhibiting works produced by Twombly since 1954. The European retrospective "Cy Twombly: Cycles and Seasons" opened at Tate Modern, London in 2008 and traveled to Bilbao and Rome. "Cy Twombly: The Natural World, Selected Works 2000–2007," Art Institute of Chicago (2009) and "Sensations of the Moment," MUMOK, Vienna (2009) were important surveys. In 2010, his permanent site-specific painting *Ceiling* was unveiled in the Salle des Bronzes at the Musée du Louvre. At the same time he was made a Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur by the French government. Twombly died in Italy in 2011.

Selected recent exhibitions include "Cy Twombly: Sculpture," Museum of Modern Art, New York (2011); "Cy Twombly Photographs 1951–2010," Museum Brandhorst, Munich (2011); "Cy Twombly: Sculptures," Philadelphia Museum of Art (2013); "Cy Twombly: Paradise," Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2014); and "Cy Twombly: Treatise on the Veil," The Morgan Library & Museum, New York (2014).

"Cy Twombly: Paradise," a career-spanning exhibition of paintings and sculptures, will open at Ca'Pesaro, Venice on May 6 and remain on view until September 22, 2015.

For further information please contact the gallery at newyork@gagosian.com or at +1.212.744.2313. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagosian.