

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Press Release

### *Mark Tobey: Threading Light*

May 6 – September 10, 2017

Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

#MarkTobey

*Mark Tobey: Threading Light* is the first comprehensive retrospective of the American artist's work in twenty years in Europe, and the first in Italy. Opening May 6, 2017, at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, the exhibition traces the evolution of the artist's groundbreaking style and his significant yet under-recognized contributions to abstraction and mid-century American modernism. With **66 paintings** spanning the 1920s through 1970, *Mark Tobey: Threading Light* surveys the breadth of Tobey's oeuvre and reveals the extraordinarily nuanced yet radical beauty of his work. *Mark Tobey: Threading Light*, organized by the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, and guest curated by the independent curator **Debra Bricker Balken**, will be on view at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection through September 11, 2017. Following its run in Venice, the exhibition will travel to the Addison Gallery, where it will be on view November 4, 2017–March 11, 2018.

One of the foremost American artists to emerge from the 1940s, a decade that saw the rise of abstract expressionism, Mark Tobey (1890–1976) is recognized as a vanguard figure whose “white-writing” anticipated the formal innovations of New York School artists such as Jackson Pollock.

When Tobey's small paintings composed of intricate, pale webs of delicate lines were first exhibited in New York in 1944, they generated much interest for their daring “all-over” compositions. His unique calligraphic renderings largely invoke the city—its dizzying, towering architecture, thoroughfares, and pervasive whirl of electric light. As such, they are the outcome of a lyrical combination of both Eastern and Western visual histories that range from Chinese scroll painting to European cubism. This unique form of abstraction was the synthesis of the artist's experiences living in Seattle and New York, his extensive trips to Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kyoto, and Europe, and his conversion to the Bahá'í faith. As curator Debra Bricker Balken explains, “Within this mix of sources, Tobey was able to skirt a specific debt to cubism—unlike his modernist peers—by fusing elements of like formal languages into compositions that are both astonishingly radical and beautiful.”

As the New York School emerged in the aftermath of World War II, Tobey was only marginally integrated into the movement because he was averse to the cultural nationalism and “American-ness” of the rhetoric imposed on its paintings. Unlike the brasher, more aggressive pictorial statements of Jackson Pollock and others, Tobey's quiet, inward-directed work could not easily be folded into the new critical discourse intent on the formulation of a national identity for American art. Tobey rejected scale and monumentality to create “microscopic” worlds and intimate compositions, based on an intense observation of nature, the city, and the flow of light. His signature “white writing” or labyrinths of interconnected marks and lines evoked the spiritual.

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

While he had always led a nomadic life, Tobey spent more time in Paris during the 1950s, and in 1960 he made his home in Basel, Switzerland where he set up a studio. He participated in numerous international exhibitions, and in 1958 he was awarded the City of Venice Prize at the Venice Biennale. During the last phase of his life, Tobey enlarged the scale of his painting, producing epic works that expanded on his signature concept of “white writing.” Like the inventive features of his earlier works, these larger canvases extend an aesthetic of transcendence and ethereality. As Tobey stated, his work was not bound by a geography or a country but aimed for a “higher state of consciousness.” Innovative and distinct in its influences and beauty, Tobey’s work bridges the international dimensions of mid-century modernism, a connection that has been previously unexplored in the discourse on postwar art. **Mark Tobey: *Threading Light*** re-examines and re-contextualizes the work and influence of this important painter, weaving in the rich but occluded histories of the global intersections of late modern art that have evaded many of the interpreters of culture in United States.

**Mark Tobey: *Threading Light*** is accompanied by a fully illustrated, 208-page scholarly catalogue, published by Skira Rizzoli in English and Italian, that documents many of Tobey’s most accomplished works and includes a comprehensive examination of Tobey and his cultural context by Balken, whose thorough and original research addresses the prescience of Tobey’s style and his unique place in American art.

The exhibition is made possible with generous support from the Sidney R. Knafel Exhibition Fund, Peter and Elizabeth Currie, Stephen C. and Katherine D. Sherrill, and the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation. An important contribution from Douglas and Janet True made the catalogue possible.

**Mark Tobey: *Threading Light*** in Venice is made possible by Lavazza as Global Partner of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. This four-year collaboration highlights how the avant-garde is a source of inspiration for Lavazza and an inherent value engrained in the company since its founding in Turin in 1895.

The exhibition program of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection is supported by the museum’s Institutional Patrons - EFG, Lavazza, and the Regione del Veneto, by Guggenheim Intrapresæ and by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection Advisory Board. Education programs surrounding the exhibition are funded by the Fondazione Araldi Guinetti, Vaduz.

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# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

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|------------------------------------|---|
| TITLE                              | <i>Mark Tobey: Threading Light</i>  |
| VENUE AND DATE                     | Peggy Guggenheim Collection<br>May 6 – September 10, 2017   |
| CURATOR                            | Debra Bricker Balken, independent curator   |
| WORKS                              | 66 paintings  |
| OVERVIEW                           | This is the first comprehensive retrospective of the American artist's work in twenty years in Europe, and the first in Italy. The exhibition traces the evolution of Mark Tobey's groundbreaking style and his significant yet under-recognized contributions to abstraction and mid-century American modernism. With 66 paintings spanning the 1920s through 1970, <i>Mark Tobey: Threading Light</i> surveys the breadth of Tobey's oeuvre and reveals the extraordinarily nuanced yet radical beauty of his work. The exhibition is organized by the Addison Gallery of American Art at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. Following its run in Venice, the exhibition will travel to the Addison Gallery, where it will be on view November 4, 2017–March 11, 2018. |
| CATALOGUE                          | Published by Skira Rizzoli New York, in separate English and Italian editions. Price in the museum bookshops € 48.  |
| ADMISSION TICKET TO THE COLLECTION | Regular euro 15; seniors euro 13 (over 65); students euro 9 (under 26 or with a student ID card); children 0-10 yrs and members free entrance (further information on membership: <a href="mailto:membership@guggenheim-venice.it">membership@guggenheim-venice.it</a> ). Admission tickets allow the public to visit the temporary exhibition, the permanent collection, the Hannelore B. and Rudolph B. Schulhof Collection and the Nasher Sculpture Garden. Free guided tours of the temporary exhibitions are daily at 3:30pm. Reservations are not required.   |
| HOURS                              | Daily from 10am to 6pm, closed on Tuesday and December 25   |
| INFORMATION                        | <a href="mailto:info@guggenheim-venice.it">info@guggenheim-venice.it</a> / <a href="http://www.guggenheim-venice.it">www.guggenheim-venice.it</a>   |
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| COMMUNICATION AND PRESS OFFICE     | Alexia Boro, Maria Rita Cerilli / tel. +39.041.2405404/415<br>Please, once published, send the article to: <a href="mailto:press@guggenheim-venice.it">press@guggenheim-venice.it</a>   |

When Mark Tobey (1890–1976) first displayed his paintings composed of intricate, pale webs of delicate lines in New York in 1944, he generated much interest with his daring “all-over” compositions. His “white-writing” eliminated narrative and three-dimensional space but retained references to the human figure. A vanguard painter who anticipated the formal innovations of Abstract Expressionism, Tobey emerged in the 1940s as one of the foremost artists of the era.

Tobey’s subtle calligraphic renderings invoke the city—its dizzying, towering architecture, thoroughfares, and pervasive whirl of electric light. They lyrically integrate both Eastern and Western visual histories and philosophies, ranging from Chinese scroll painting to European Cubism. His unique form of abstraction synthesized his experiences of living in both Seattle and New York, his extensive trips to Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kyoto, the Middle East and Europe, and his conversion to the Bahá’í faith, a belief system that emphasizes the oneness of both religion and humanity. Within this mix of sources, Tobey skirted a specific debt to Cubism—unlike so many of his modernist American peers—by fusing elements of like formal languages into compositions that are both astonishingly radical and beautiful.

As the New York School coalesced in the aftermath of World War II, Tobey was only marginally integrated into the movement because he was averse to the cultural nationalism and “American-ness” of the rhetoric imposed on its paintings. Unlike the brasher, more aggressive pictorial statements of Jackson Pollock and others, Tobey’s nuanced, quiet, inward-directed work could not easily be folded into the new critical discourse intent on the formulation of a national identity for American art.

Late in his career, Tobey’s work became more monumental in scale, a feature that resulted in the expansion of his seemingly limitless spaces and the density of his luminous swarms of lines. Like the inventive features of his earlier “white-writing,” these larger canvases extend an aesthetics of transcendence and ethereality. Or, as Tobey had already stated, his work was not bound by a geography or a country but aimed for a “higher state of consciousness.”

Tracing the path of Tobey’s groundbreaking style with works ranging from the 1920s to the 1970s, this exhibition, the first in more than twenty years, reveals the extraordinarily distinct and innovative beauty of Tobey’s painting, affirming his significant yet under-recognized contributions to abstraction and mid-century American modernism. The first American painter after James McNeill Whistler to win the City of Venice Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1958, it is both fitting and poetic that this exhibition should premier at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

Debra Bricker Balken, *independent curator*

Mark Tobey (1890–1976) espone per la prima volta i dipinti caratterizzati da reticoli leggeri di linee delicate nel 1944, a New York, generando subito un grande interesse per l’audacia di queste composizioni a tutto campo, nelle quali una “scrittura bianca” elimina la narrazione e lo spazio tridimensionale, pur mantenendo dei riferimenti alla figura umana. Pittore d’avanguardia che anticipa le innovazioni formali dell’Espressionismo astratto, Tobey emerge negli anni ’40 come uno dei maggiori artisti dell’epoca.

Le sue rese calligrafiche evocano la città, le architetture torreggianti e vertiginose, le grandi arterie stradali, i vortici intensi di luce. Sono l’integrazione lirica della filosofia e della storia visiva orientale e occidentale, dai dipinti cinesi su rotolo al Cubismo europeo. L’unicità della sua astrazione è la sintesi a cui giunge vivendo a Seattle come a New York, viaggiando a Hong Kong, Shanghai, Kyoto, nel Medio Oriente e in Europa, e convertendosi al credo Bahá’í, che enfatizza l’unità della religione e dell’umanità. Sulla base di fonti così diversificate, Tobey cerca di aggirare l’eredità del Cubismo, a differenza di molti altri modernisti americani, fondendo elementi di linguaggi formali analoghi in composizioni di grande innovazione e bellezza.

Con il formarsi della Scuola di New York negli anni successivi alla Seconda guerra mondiale, Tobey rimane ai margini del movimento, poiché avverso alla retorica del nazionalismo culturale e dell’“americanità” imposta alla pittura. A differenza delle dichiarazioni pittoriche ben più aggressive e vigorose di Jackson Pollock, i dipinti silenziosi, introspettivi e pieni di sfumature di Tobey non rientrano in un discorso critico intento a formulare un’identità nazionale per l’arte americana.

Con il trascorrere degli anni le opere di Tobey si fanno sempre maestose, con una conseguente espansione degli spazi all’apparenza infiniti e un addensarsi dei nugoli luminosi di linee. Anche queste grandi tele, come le opere precedenti a “scrittura bianca”, accentuano un’estetica della trascendenza e dell’etereo. Tobey afferma, infatti, che non si tratta di opere definite dalla geografia o dalla nazionalità, ma di opere che tendono a “stati di coscienza superiore”.

Nel tracciare il percorso dello stile rivoluzionario di Tobey attraverso dipinti che vanno dagli anni ’20 agli anni ’70, questa mostra, la prima dedicatagli negli ultimi decenni, rivela la bellezza straordinaria, personale e innovativa dei dipinti dell’artista e afferma il suo contributo significativo seppur sconosciuto all’astrazione e al modernismo americano di metà ’900. Primo pittore americano dopo James McNeill Whistler a vincere un premio della città di Venezia alla Biennale, nel 1958, risulta tanto appropriato quanto poetico che questa mostra sia presentata alla Collezione Peggy Guggenheim.

Debra Bricker Balken, *independent curator*

Prior to taking up painting in the mid- to late-1920s, Tobey worked as an illustrator and then as a portrait painter and caricaturist. While his career unfolded first in Chicago and then in New York, it was not until moving to Seattle in 1922 that he began to consider the new modernist art that he had seen in New York at the 1913 Armory Show and during later travels to Europe. Little of Tobey's work from the 1920s survives, making this a decade often referred to as a "dark period." But paintings such as *Near Eastern Landscape* (1927) and *Algerian Landscape* (1931) suggest his immersion in Cubism's fractured treatment of space.

While Tobey led a peripatetic life, he retained a distant fondness for the Midwest and for the banks of the Mississippi River in Wisconsin where he spent part of his childhood. Despite his memories of the lush vegetation and fireflies during summer nights, he never returned. Rather, as *Middle West* (1929) suggests, he viewed the region as a cross-roads from which to move on.

Prima di dedicarsi alla pittura nella seconda metà degli anni '20, Tobey lavora come illustratore, poi come ritrattista e caricaturista. Nonostante la sua carriera inizi a Chicago e prosegua poi a New York, è solo quando si trasferisce a Seattle nel 1922 che inizia a riflettere sull'arte modernista che ha avuto l'occasione di vedere all'Armory Show di New York nel 1913 e poi durante i viaggi in Europa. Sono giunte a noi solo alcune opere degli anni '20, un decennio che per questo motivo viene spesso definito il "periodo buio", ma dipinti come *Paesaggio del Vicino Oriente* (1927) e *Paesaggio algerino* (1931) suggeriscono l'immersione dell'artista nello spazio frammentato del Cubismo.

Nonostante una vita vagabonda, Tobey rimane legato al Midwest e alle rive del Mississippi in Wisconsin, dove trascorre parte della sua infanzia. Ma i ricordi di una vegetazione lussureggiante e di notti estive con le lucciole non sono abbastanza forti da farlo ritornare, anzi, come sembrerebbe suggerire *Middle West* (1929), Tobey guarda a quei luoghi come a un punto d'incrocio da cui partire.

While teaching for much of the 1930s at Dartington Hall—an experimental community of architects, artists, musicians, and philosophers in Totnes, England—Tobey began to consider his work and his response to modern painting. A momentous trip to Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Japan in 1934 opened his eyes to the possibilities that more than one culture could inform his aesthetic approach.

Introduced to Chinese calligraphy in Seattle in the mid-1920s by Teng Gui (1900–1980), an artist and student at the University of Washington, Tobey solidified his interest in this art form during his travels in China and Japan. Upon his return to Dartington, he actively incorporated the abstract, calligraphic lines associated with much Eastern art.

Even with new insight into the linear aspects of Asian art, Tobey continued to grapple with the Western emphasis on mass and volume. This struggle for reconciliation was essential to his growing identity as a modernist. Eventually, as he pondered the dichotomies between Eastern and Western art, he concluded that “the cult of space [in the West] can become as dull as that of the object.” Still, the answer, Tobey knew, was not to side exclusively with Asian tradition, what he sought was a “balance.” He gradually eliminated three-dimensional space in his work in the early 1940s, favoring a more metaphysical treatment, or what he termed “inner space,” one that also drew on his Bahá’í faith.

Negli anni '30, durante il periodo d’insegnamento a Dartington Hall, una comunità sperimentale a Totnes, in Inghilterra, dove si riuniscono architetti, artisti, musicisti e filosofi, Tobey inizia a riflettere sul proprio lavoro e sulla propria reazione alla pittura moderna. Nel 1934 un viaggio a Hong Kong, a Shanghai e in Giappone, risulta determinante per comprendere come anche altre culture possano ispirare e formare un approccio estetico.

Tobey scopre la calligrafia cinese verso la metà degli anni '20, quando a Seattle incontra Teng Gui (1900–1980), artista e studente dell’Università di Washington, e prosegue nello studio di questa forma artistica durante i viaggi in Cina e in Giappone. Al rientro a Dartington inizia a incorporare nelle opere linee calligrafiche e astratte associate all’arte orientale.

Nonostante questa nuova consapevolezza del ruolo della linea nell’arte orientale, Tobey continua a scontrarsi con l’enfasi che l’arte occidentale pone sulla massa e sul volume: la difficile riconciliazione di questo conflitto risulterà fondamentale nella costruzione di una sua identità modernista. La riflessione sulle dicotomie tra l’arte orientale e occidentale lo portano ad affermare che “il culto dello spazio [nell’Occidente] può risultare noioso tanto quanto il culto dell’oggetto”. Eppure, come ben sa, la risposta non è nemmeno da cercarsi unicamente nell’arte orientale, ma in un punto di “equilibrio”. Nei primi anni '40 Tobey elimina man mano lo spazio tridimensionale per ricercare un approccio più metafisico a uno “spazio interiore”, che prenda in considerazione anche il suo credo Bahá’í.

Although Tobey loved New York and referred to it as a “Mecca,” its density and energy overwhelmed him. He never lived there year-round, however tempted by its theater of ambition. While he had a base in Seattle, Manhattan was a place he experienced on a part-time basis. New York’s built environment informed the development of his signature idiom, “white-writing.” He remarked on the allure of the city: “[F]or a long time I had wanted to unite cities and city life in my work. At last I now felt that I had found a technical approach which enabled me to capture what I was especially interested in. Lights, threading traffic, the river of humanity chartered and flowing through and around itself imposed limitations not unlike chlorophyll flowing through the canals in a leaf.”

A radical invention, the swarm of tiny lines in his “white-writing” drew the attention of prominent New York critics such as Clement Greenberg. Yet, where Greenberg located the characteristics of an “American-Type Painting” in abstract expressionists Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko and others, Tobey had little interest in being assimilated into this paradigm and its nationalistic overtones. His *wanderlust* underscored a fierce independence as well as a global world view disaffected to post-World War II American ethnocentrism.

Tobey adora la città di New York, definita anche come una “Mecca”, ma si sente sopraffatto dalla densità e dall’energia. Pur tentato dalle opportunità che offre, non vi abita mai in maniera stabile, ma solo per alcuni periodi: mentre risiede a Seattle, Manhattan rimane un luogo dove si reca di tanto in tanto. Eppure è l’architettura urbana di New York a determinare lo sviluppo di quella “scrittura bianca” che contrassegna il suo linguaggio artistico. “Per molto tempo avevo desiderato incorporare la città e la vita della città nel mio lavoro”, afferma, parlando del fascino che la città esercita su di lui. “Alla fine sento di avere trovato una metodologia che mi permette di catturare ciò che più mi interessa. Le luci, il traffico incolonnato, i fiumi di gente incanalati che scorrono attraversandosi, impongono dei limiti analoghi a quelli dei canali linfatici percorsi dalla clorofilla in una foglia”.

Un’innovazione radicale come il reticolo di piccole linee della sua “scrittura bianca” attira l’attenzione dei maggiori critici newyorchesi, tra i quali Clement Greenberg. Ma Tobey non è molto interessato ad essere assimilato nei paradigmi e nei toni nazionalisti della “pittura americana” che Greenberg ritrova negli esponenti dell’Espressionismo astratto, da Jackson Pollock a Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko e molti altri. I frequenti spostamenti di Tobey sottolineano la sua grande indipendenza e la visione di un mondo deluso dall’etnocentrismo americano del periodo post-bellico.

Tobey continued to pursue “white-writing” into the 1950s. While the origins of the term are vague—perhaps put into circulation by a staff member of the Willard Gallery in New York where he exhibited as of 1944—he clearly liked its calligraphic evocations and employed it in his correspondence with various artists, writers, and dealers, as well as in interviews with the press. The designation became part of his artistic identification.

In contrast to the tropes commonly spun to describe and define American painting after World War II Tobey rejected scale and monumentality to create “microscopic” worlds, more intimate compositions, based on an intense observation of nature, the city, and the flow of light. His labyrinths of interconnected marks and lines were bound up with “spirit,” as he called it. And while his subject matter was to him indefinable, it also had its correspondences in tangible objects that Tobey located in urban environments. “Nothing interests me so much . . . as the walls and boards and fungi and all that sort of thing that lives,” he noted, “and the sidewalks with stuff left on them. And those little worlds—those little worlds everywhere. And if you take two inches of it, perhaps it’s a whole developed painting in itself.”

Tobey continua a dedicarsi ai dipinti a “scrittura bianca” fino agli anni ’50. Il termine sembra esser stato usato dal personale della galleria di New York dove espone nel 1944, la Willard Gallery. Tobey lo apprezza per le evocazioni calligrafiche e lo impiega nella corrispondenza che tiene con vari artisti, scrittori, galleristi e nelle interviste che concede alla stampa. La designazione entra così a far parte della sua identificazione artistica.

Contrariamente alla retorica comunemente impiegata per descrivere e definire la pittura americana del dopoguerra, Tobey rifiuta le grandi dimensioni e la monumentalità per dedicarsi, invece, alla creazione di mondi “microscopici”, di composizioni intime fondate sull’intensa osservazione della natura, della città, del fluire della luce. I suoi labirinti di tratti e linee interconnessi sono strettamente legati a ciò che egli definisce “spirito”. Il soggetto, pur se ineffabile, trova comunque corrispondenze in oggetti tangibili che Tobey ritrova nel contesto urbano. “Nulla mi interessa quanto . . . i muri e i tavolati e le muffe e tutto quel tipo di cose viventi”, afferma, “e i marciapiedi su cui sono state lasciate delle cose. E quei piccoli mondi, dappertutto quei piccoli mondi. Anche prendendo in considerazione solo qualche centimetro, con ogni probabilità vi si rintraccia un intero dipinto già sviluppato”.

Robert Gardner, an acclaimed ethnographer and filmmaker, befriended Tobey while attending graduate school at the University of Washington. Although Gardner trained to be an anthropologist, he turned to film while in Seattle and made Tobey one of his first subjects. Gardner's documentary follows Tobey wanderings from his neighborhood on Capitol Hill to the Pike Place Marketplace. It also includes footage from an opening of Tobey's paintings at Seattle Art Museum where the artist appears alternatively vibrant, ruminative, satirical, and whimsical.

Mark Tobey, who studied music theory at the Cornish School in Seattle, composed the film's score. The script also incorporates poems written by the artist. Unlike the fluid calligraphy of his "white-writing," his poems are disjunctive. Drawn from his musings on art, nature, technology and life, many of the lines are appropriated from conversation with colleagues and friends. Shortly after its release in 1952, *Mark Tobey* was screened at both the Venice and Edinburgh Film Festivals.

Gardner collected Tobey's work and produced a second film on the artist in 1973, at his home in Basel, Switzerland. The contrast between the two portraits is telling. Unlike the innovative, avant-garde nature of the earlier film, an aging, reflective artist considers modernist art in the later *Tobey Abroad*.

Robert Gardner, noto etnografo e regista, incontra Tobey negli anni del dottorato all'Università di Washington. Nonostante gli studi in antropologia, mentre è a Seattle decide di passare alla regia e dedicare a Tobey una delle sue prime produzioni. Il documentario segue Tobey dal suo quartiere a Capitol Hill fino a Pike Place Marketplace, e include anche spezzoni dell'inaugurazione di una sua mostra al Seattle Art Museum, in cui Tobey compare di volta in volta vivace, riflessivo, ironico o bizzarro.

La partitura musicale è composta dallo stesso Tobey, che studia musica alla Cornish School di Seattle. La sceneggiatura incorpora, inoltre, delle sue poesie, che sono frammentarie, senza la fluidità che caratterizza la calligrafia della sua "scrittura bianca". Ispirate a considerazioni sull'arte, la natura, la tecnologia, la vita in generale, includono estratti di conversazioni con amici e colleghi. *Mark Tobey* esce nel 1952 e poco dopo viene presentato al festival cinematografico di Venezia e poi di Edimburgo.

Gardner colleziona opere di Tobey, a cui dedica un secondo film nel 1973, questa volta girato nella casa dell'artista a Basilea. Il contrasto tra i due film è rivelatore: il primo è innovativo e d'avanguardia, il secondo, *Tobey Abroad*, mostra un artista invecchiato e pensieroso, che riflette sull'arte modernista.

Around 1945, Tobey wondered if there was “much future for the white-writing.” He knew that his near elimination of space represented a bold pictorial departure, yet he also missed painting the body. And the implications of painting in a near-serial format proved daunting. In a letter to the American artist Lyonel Feininger, a lifelong friend, he revealed his longing for the figure: “It has been interesting but I often wonder about its themes . . . perhaps I refuse to accept its limitations and make something of them but I do still like to paint a good leg-thigh or some part of the human organism.”

“White-writing” did win out and supplanted his figurative impulses, although the body occasionally appeared as a tiny fragment in the fissures of his abstractions until the early 1950s, when it disappeared almost entirely. Feininger replied to Tobey’s dilemma by asserting that his work represented “the handwriting of the painter... who...has created a new convention of his own, one not yet included in the history of painting.” He focused on the “spiritual” content that imbued Tobey’s work, a trait that directed his own painting and offset the more formal innovations associated with Cubism.

While there was little consensus as to what “spirituality” actually meant in the early- to mid-twentieth century, there was general agreement among artists that the term proposed an alternative to the materialistic orientation of modern culture. However, Tobey’s notion of the spiritual was also partially grounded in his religion: the luminosity of his mark-making was not only a reference to electricity, neon lights, and the night-sky but to an elusive godhead.

Verso il 1945 Tobey inizia a chiedersi se vi sia “un futuro per la scrittura bianca”. È consapevole che l’eliminazione parziale dello spazio rappresenta una svolta audace, ma sente la mancanza della rappresentazione della figura umana ed è scoraggiato dalle conseguenze del ricorso a uno schema quasi seriale. In una lettera all’amico e artista americano Lyonel Feininger, ammette il desiderio di riprendere la figura: “È stato interessante, ma spesso mi interrogo sui temi . . . forse rifiuto di accettarne i limiti e trarne qualcosa, ma mi piace ancora molto dipingere una bella gamba o una coscia o altre parti del corpo umano”.

Nelle astrazioni dei primi anni ’50 il corpo viene in alcune occasioni inserito sotto forma di minuscoli frammenti, ma pian piano scompare e la “scrittura bianca” avrà il sopravvento sugli impulsi figurativi. Nel rispondere al dilemma posto da Tobey, Feininger afferma che il lavoro a cui è giunto rappresenta “la grafia del pittore . . . che . . . ha creato una nuova prassi, non ancora entrata nella storia della pittura”. Feininger si concentra sul contenuto “spirituale” che pervade l’opera di Tobey, l’elemento guida della sua pittura, il tratto che gli permette di controbilanciare gli impulsi più formali del Cubismo.

Nonostante nella prima metà del ’900 non vi sia in questo campo un consenso unanime sul significato della parola “spiritualità”, gli artisti tendono a interpretarla come un’alternativa all’orientamento materialista della cultura moderna. La nozione di Tobey affonda in parte le radici nella religione: la luminosità dei suoi tratti non è un mero riferimento all’elettricità, alle luci al neon, ai cieli notturni, ma a un divino inafferrabile.

By the early 1950s, Tobey was a highly visible artist. Not only had he participated in Dorothy Miller's *Fourteen Americans* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1946, where he appeared alongside of Arshile Gorky, Robert Motherwell and Isamu Noguchi among others, but his work was routinely folded into thematic shows internationally that addressed the state of contemporary art mid-century. While Tobey continued to spend time in Seattle, he eventually resisted the notion of a Northwest School, finding the designation provincial. Yet the question as to whether he fit into a specific movement such as Abstract Expressionism would continue to elude both him and the critics.

As of the fall of 1954, Tobey spent a year in Paris, where he was heralded as master or "maître," a forerunner of Tachisme, or *Informel*, a group of abstract painters that included Jean Dubuffet, Hans Hartung, Georges Mathieu, Henri Michaux, Pierre Soulages and Wols. Mathieu, in particular, had earlier written in *Art Digest*, that "Tobey may be considered [America's] greatest innovator. The solitary of Seattle . . . has begun to awaken Paris . . . to the most original mode of expression the U.S. has given us." Mathieu continued to expound on these accolades in a letter to Tobey wherein he declared, "Your influence over the New York painters is obvious and I understand very well why they resent it. The works of Pollock seem interesting—only in their demeanor, anyway—in as much as their link with your work is unknown." Still, Tobey resisted association with any artistic collective, be it American or French, maintaining that his work defied cultural boundaries through its mix of Asian and Western aesthetic elements.

Nei primi anni '50 Tobey è ormai un artista di primo piano. Le sue opere non sono solo esposte alla mostra di Dorothy Miller, *Fourteen Americans*, al Museum of Modern Art di New York nel 1946, dove affiancano quelle di Arshile Gorky, Robert Motherwell, Isamu Noguchi e altri ancora, ma anche in numerose esposizioni internazionali dedicate all'astrazione di metà '900. Tobey rimane a Seattle e alla fine resiste all'idea di una Scuola del Nord-Ovest, una designazione che gli pare provinciale, nonostante la domanda se egli appartenga o meno a un movimento specifico, come quello dell'Espressionismo astratto, continui a eludere sia l'artista sia i critici.

Nell'autunno del 1954 si trasferisce per un anno a Parigi, dove viene riconosciuto come un maestro, un *maître*, un precursore del *Tachisme* o dell'Informale, il gruppo di pittori astratti che comprende Jean Dubuffet, Hans Hartung, Georges Mathieu, Henri Michaux, Pierre Soulages e Wols. In un articolo su "Art Digest", Mathieu scrive che "Tobey può essere considerato il maggiore innovatore [d'America]. L'eremita di Seattle . . . ha iniziato a risvegliare Parigi . . . con la modalità espressiva più originale che gli Stati Uniti ci abbiano dato", e in una lettera a Tobey prosegue nel suo encomio: "la tua influenza sui pittori di New York è evidente e ben comprendo che se ne risentano. Le opere di Pollock sembrano interessanti – solo nell'approccio, comunque – solo finché non se ne conosce il legame con la tua opera". Ma Tobey è restio ad essere associato a un gruppo artistico, americano o francese che sia, poiché la sua opera, afferma, sfida i confini culturali con l'integrazione di elementi estetici occidentali e orientali.

En route from Europe to Seattle in 1955, Tobey read Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery*, a book that extended his ongoing interest in Japanese thought and primed him for a new body of work: the so-called *Sumi* paintings produced in the spring of 1957. He also found himself fascinated by Japanese author D. T. Suzuki, who had written the foreword for Herrigel's volume, as well as his own influential tome *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (1938). Back in Seattle, Tobey's output dwindled for more than a year. He spent the period leading up to works such as *City Reflections* (1957) and *Lumber Barons* (1957) playing the piano, studying with Zen master Takizaki, and learning the sumi flung-ink style from fellow artists Paul Horiuchi and George Tsutakawa. He ruminated not only on the meanings of the nuclear age, but on his origins as an abstract painter, feeling the two were entwined.

Japan surfaced as a crucible yet once again for Tobey, its sumi brush painting an invention that he linked with contemporary iterations of modernism. After he had produced more than a hundred of these paintings, he wrote to Marian Willard, his life-long dealer: "I want an all black and white show . . . Takizaki here says no one in Japan has done what I have done. I know that [Franz] Kline exists and Pollock, but I have another note." These spontaneous, intuitive works, which reversed the palette and assiduous design of his "white-writing" were a limited project, never yielding the luminosity that characterized works such as *Prophetic Light-Dawn* (1958) in which his calligraphy congeals into a network of minuscule marks. Tobey might have investigated the bold skeins of paint and predominantly black color scheme that Pollock had utilized, but "Action Painting," especially as the critic Harold Rosenberg had typified the work of American artists, was never his goal; its emphasis on the existential plight of the artist was neither a part of Tobey's aesthetic approach nor his mind set.

Nel 1955, durante il viaggio che dall'Europa lo riporta a Seattle, Tobey legge il libro di Eugen Herrigel *Lo Zen e il tiro con l'arco*. La lettura rafforza l'interesse per il pensiero giapponese e lo prepara a un nuovo corpus di opere, i cosiddetti dipinti *sumi*, che produce nella primavera del 1957. Rimane, inoltre, affascinato dall'autore giapponese D. T. Suzuki, che firma la prefazione al libro di Herrigel, e dal suo volume *Lo Zen e la cultura giapponese* (1938). Una volta a casa, per più di un anno la sua produzione diminuisce. Tobey trascorre il periodo che precede opere come *Riflessi della città* (1957) e *I re del legname* (1957) a suonare il piano, a studiare con il maestro zen Takizaki, a imparare lo stile *sumi* a spruzzo d'inchiostro dagli artisti Paul Horiuchi e George Tsutakawa. Inoltre, riflette sulle implicazioni dell'era nucleare e sulla propria pittura astratta, ben sapendo che le due questioni sono collegate.

Il Giappone ritorna ad essere per Tobey un crogiolo e la pittura *sumi* un tramite creativo che egli collega alla produzione modernista contemporanea. Dopo aver prodotto più di un centinaio di immagini *sumi* scrive a Marian Willard, la sua gallerista di una vita: "Voglio una mostra tutta in bianco e nero . . . Takizaki dice che in Giappone nessuno ha fatto quello che ho fatto io. So bene che esistono [Franz] Kline e Pollock, ma il mio stile è diverso". Queste opere spontanee e intuitive, che sovvertono la tavolozza e la densità di quelle a "scrittura bianca", costituiscono un progetto limitato, che non porterà mai a quella luminosità che caratterizza opere come *Luce-Aurora profetica* (1958), dove la calligrafia si coagula in un reticolo di segni minuscoli. Tobey avrà anche voluto esaminare i grovigli audaci di colore o la gamma dei neri dominanti impiegati da Pollock, ma l'*Action painting*, soprattutto nell'accezione data dal critico Harold Rosenberg nel definire il lavoro degli artisti americani, non è un suo obiettivo, così come l'enfasi da questa posta sulle difficoltà esistenziali dell'artista non è parte dell'approccio estetico o del pensiero di Tobey.

By the time Tobey's work was shown at the Venice Biennale in 1958, where he appeared alongside of artists such as Mark Rothko in the United States Pavilion, he began to rethink the issue of scale in his work. How to revitalize "white-writing" especially in the late 1950s, when the once radical abstraction had settled as an accepted avant-garde idiom?

Marian Willard had written to Tobey earlier urging him to increase the size of his work, which he initially resisted. However, Rothko's monumental paintings at the Venice Biennale may have spurred him to abandon the intimate scale of his works. He fretted about a comparison, fearing the critical outcome.

Even after he received the City of Venice Prize for Painting, the question of scale prompted a regenerative impulse in the 1960s, and he painted much larger works. While he continued to work in tempera—the medium to which he had been drawn since the mid-1930s—the fluidity of oil paint better enabled the new monumentality of his canvases.

On the coverage of the XXIX Venice Biennale, Patrick Heron, a British critic and painter, wrote, "A case could be made out claiming Tobey is one of the most influential painters now living, he is the forerunner of Pollock."

Quando espone alla Biennale di Venezia del 1958, al padiglione degli Stati Uniti, insieme ad artisti come Mark Rothko, Tobey inizia a ripensare la scala delle sue opere. Come poter rivitalizzare la "scrittura bianca" soprattutto a fine anni '50, quando l'astrazione radicale è ormai accettata come un linguaggio d'avanguardia?

Marian Willard gli aveva già scritto di aumentare le dimensioni delle opere, ma il consiglio non era stato accettato. È probabile che siano le opere monumentali di Rothko esposte alla Biennale, e la preoccupazione di un confronto e di eventuali critiche, a convincerlo ad abbandonare le dimensioni intime dei dipinti.

Dopo avere ricevuto il Premio della città di Venezia per la Pittura, la questione della scala delle opere provoca un impulso rigeneratore nel corso degli anni '60. Tobey dipinge opere sempre più grandi e pur continuando a dipingere a tempera, la tecnica che lo accompagna sin dalla metà degli anni '30, è la fluidità dell'olio che gli permette di raggiungere questa nuova monumentalità.

Tra le recensioni sulla XXIX Biennale, il critico e pittore inglese Patrick Heron scrive: "C'è una buona ragione per affermare che Tobey sia uno dei pittori viventi più autorevoli: è il precursore di Pollock".

While he had always led a nomadic life, Tobey spent more time in Paris during the 1950s, and in 1960, after wrangling with the Internal Revenue Service. He made his home in Basel, Switzerland where he set up a studio and where audiences for his painting expanded. Still, he returned to Seattle and New York periodically.

During this last phase of his life, Tobey enlarged the scale of his painting, producing epic works that expanded on his signature concept of “white-writing” by spreading his cosmologies, or tiny clusters of lines, over large surfaces. His acclaim as an artist continued during the decade with retrospective exhibitions awarded by the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Dallas Museum of Art. It was only with the onset of dementia in the early 1970s that his output began to dwindle.

Tobey had always resisted the names that were projected on mid-century American art such as Abstract Expressionism, Action Painting, and the New York School. But he thought deeply about his place within these histories, especially after Georges Mathieu claimed him as a connection to *Informel*, the French analogue of Abstract Expressionism. He never completely resolved where he belonged aesthetically, if at all. In a response to Harold Rosenberg’s much discussed notion of action, Tobey responded in 1958: “we hear some artists speak today of the *act of painting*, but a State of mind is the first preparation and from this action proceeds. Peace of Mind is another ideal, perhaps the ideal state to be sought for in the painting and certainly preparatory to the act.” That his work emanated from his thinking both on Asian philosophies, aesthetics and Bahá’í texts, as well as on Western visual models, was the difference that set apart his wondrous “white-writing.”

Dopo una vita nomade, negli anni '50 Tobey inizia a trascorre molto tempo a Parigi e nel 1960, a causa di una controversia con l’agenzia delle entrate, decide di trasferirsi in Svizzera, a Basilea, dove organizza lo studio e dove ha modo di ampliare il proprio pubblico. Saltuariamente ritorna a Seattle e a New York.

Durante quest’ultimo periodo Tobey ingrandisce la scala delle opere, creando dipinti epici che accrescono la nozione caratteristica di “scrittura bianca”, propagando le cosmologie o i piccoli grovigli di linee su ampie superfici. I riconoscimenti continuano ad essergli tributati nel corso del decennio, con retrospettive al Musée des Arts Décoratifs di Parigi, al Museum of Modern Art di New York, al Dallas Museum of Art. Solo nei primi anni '70, con l’inizio di una demenza senile, la sua produzione inizia a diminuire.

Tobey, che si è sempre opposto a venire etichettato come appartenente alle tendenze astratte americane di metà '900, come l’Espressionismo astratto, l’*Action painting* o la Scuola di New York, riflette comunque sul suo ruolo nel loro ambito, soprattutto dopo che Georges Mathieu lo identifica come il collegamento all’Informale, l’equivalente francese dell’Espressionismo astratto, ma non risolverà mai la propria appartenenza estetica. In risposta al controverso concetto di azione espresso da Harold Rosenberg, nel 1958 afferma: “Oggi alcuni artisti parlano dell’*atto del dipingere*, ma l’azione procede da una preparazione precedente e primaria, lo Stato d’animo. La Pace interiore è un altro ideale, forse lo stato ideale da ricercare nel dipinto e certamente lo stato preparatorio all’azione”. Quel che distingue la sua straordinaria “scrittura bianca” è, in fin dei conti, il fatto che le sue opere sono emanazioni di un pensiero che guarda alla filosofia e all’estetica orientale, ai testi Bahá’í, ai modelli visivi occidentali.

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## ABOUT THE CURATOR

Independent curator **Debra Bricker Balken**, an expert in this period of art history, has organized exhibitions on subjects relating to American modernism and contemporary art for major museums nationally and internationally. Her books include Philip Guston's *Poor Richard* (2001), *Abstract Expressionism: Movements in Modern Art* (2005) and exhibition catalogues *Dove/O'Keeffe: Circles of Influence* (2009), *John Storrs: Machine-Age Modernist* (2010), and *John Marin: Modernism at Midcentury* (2011). Recipient of an Inaugural Clark Fellowship at the Clark Art Institute (2001), a Senior Fellowship from the Dedalus Foundation (2002), and a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (2006), Balken has taught at Brown University, NYU's Institute of Fine Arts, RISD, and Williams College.

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## ABOUT THE ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART

Devoted exclusively to American art, the **Addison Gallery** acquires, preserves, interprets, and exhibits works of art for the education and enjoyment of all. Opened in 1931, the Addison has one of the most important collections of American art in the country that includes more than 17,500 works by prominent artists such as George Bellows, John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Winslow Homer, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker, as well as photographers Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Eadweard Muybridge, Cindy Sherman, and many more. The Addison Gallery, located in a stand-alone building on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, offers a continually rotating series of exhibitions and programs, all of which are free and open to the public. Phillips Academy welcomes visitors to its beautiful, walkable campus year-round.

For more information, call 978.749.4015, or visit the website at [www.addisongallery.org](http://www.addisongallery.org)



TORINO, ITALIA, 1895

## LAVAZZA ANNOUNCES MULTI-YEAR COLLABORATION WITH THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION IN VENICE

***A Guggenheim New York partner since 2014, the Global Italian Family Coffee Company Expands its Valued Collaboration to Venice, Leading with Support for the First European Mark Tobey Retrospective in More than 20 Years***

**Venice, Italy (May 5, 2017)** – Today, Lavazza took another major step in its ongoing commitment to helping promote the arts and culture around the world with the announcement of a multi-year collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. The strategic alliance comes on the heels of the launch of “Visionaries: Creating a Modern Guggenheim,” a remarkable exhibition sponsored by Lavazza currently on view at the Guggenheim New York, shown during the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. Indeed, Lavazza has a strong link with the organization, having partnered with the Guggenheim New York since 2014 as Global Partner with an onsite product offering and sponsorship of four critically-acclaimed exhibitions to-date. The new alliance with the Peggy Guggenheim in Venice provides Lavazza the opportunity to serve its quality authentic Italian coffee experiences on-site with a Lavazza café, as well as help bring to life impactful exhibitions.

Coffee itself has been one of the main “supporters” of culture and the first “social media network” in history. Indeed, the drink is a symbol of sharing that has brought about the creation of countless ideas and works of art. This is a mission which Lavazza, as a global coffee industry leader, has opted to embrace by way of collaborations, initiatives and important art and cultural projects. With Italy arguably being the cradle of culture, Lavazza naturally has within its DNA an innate sensibility and passion for the arts. A love that has over the years sparked collaborations with some of the globe’s leading contemporary photographers and led unique cultural programs.

Francesca Lavazza, Lavazza Board Member and Member of the Guggenheim Board of Trustees states, “I am pleased to announce our new collaboration with the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, an iconic institution founded by a woman who I deeply admire.” She added “I am also delighted that we at Lavazza have grown our support for the Guggenheim Foundation, which began in 2014 with the Guggenheim New York. With this latest collaboration in Venice, our company is taking yet another crucial step in developing our role as a global driver for the arts and culture. We are proud of Lavazza’s history of more than two decades of supporting photography projects, cultural institutions and other initiatives that not only strategically align our products with a key audience segment, but more importantly help generate unique and thought-provoking programs.”

The first exhibition Lavazza supports at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection is “Mark Tobey: Threading Light.” The show will be on view from May 6, 2017 - September 10, 2017, with its first weeks opening to the public during the famed Venice Biennale, the leading contemporary art show. It was Mark Tobey himself who nearly 60 years ago in 1958 received the City of Venice Prize at the Venice Biennale. And now, the first retrospective in more than 20 years explores and re-contextualizes a selection of 66 works by this major American painter whose influence on the movement towards a national modern art identity was in the past overlooked.

Additionally, since 2015, Lavazza has had a partnership with the Civic Museums of Venice, an organization that oversees and operates the most iconic institutions in the city. It was through this relationship that Lavazza was also able to work with the Fortuny Museum in Venice and realize a retrospective exhibition on this visionary artist at the Hermitage State Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia where Lavazza is also a strategic partner as of December 2016.



TORINO, ITALIA, 1895

### **LAVAZZA and its commitment to promoting art and culture**

Lavazza has a long history of promoting the arts and culture. From its first steps taken with revolutionary campaigns created by the undisputed Italian advertising genius Armando Testa, through to the celebration of artistic creativity represented by the Lavazza Calendar, the company has always been a pioneer in the visual arts. From photography and design to fine advertising graphics, today Lavazza is a partner of leading international art museums. These include: the Guggenheim Museum in New York (USA), the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (Venice), the Musei Civici Veneziani in Venice (Italy), and the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg (Russia). Lavazza also offers its support to the MUDEC (Museum of Cultures) in Milan, the Merz Foundation, Camera (the Italian Center for Photography) and Circolo dei Lettori in Turin and to top international art and photography events worldwide, including the Mia Photo Fair in Milan and exhibitions by Steve McCurry, the author of the ¡Tierra! series of photographs shot in Honduras, Peru, Colombia, India, Brazil, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Vietnam, taking us on a journey to discover coffee trading routes and communicating all the passion and commitment that the Lavazza Foundation invests in coffee-producing communities. This is all of course enhanced by a more than 20 year history of working with some of the world's leading photographers on the Lavazza Calendar projects, with the likes of Helmut Newton, Annie Leibovitz, David LaChapelle, Thierry Le Gouès and more.

*Established in Turin in 1895, Lavazza is an Italian coffee producer owned by the family of the same name for four generations. The world's sixth ranking coffee roaster, today the Group has operations in more than 90 countries, through associated companies and distributors, and exports 53% of production. Lavazza employs about three thousand people and has a turnover of 1,473 million euros (2015 financial statements). Lavazza started out life by inventing the concept of coffee blending, or the art of combining different varieties of coffee from different geographical areas, in a process that remains a feature of most of the company's products. The company also has a tradition stretching back over more than 25 years in the production and marketing of portioned coffee systems and products and is Italy's leading player in the espresso capsule system segment, with operations in all business areas: home, away from home and office, with a focus, as always, on innovative technology and consumption systems.*

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# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Near Eastern Landscape</i>, 1927<br/>Gouache on paper<br/>11 1/4 in. x 16 5/8 in. (28.58 cm x 42.23 cm)<br/>Seattle Art Museum, Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection</p>  |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Middle West [American Landscape]</i>, 1929<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>37 x 59 1/8 in. (94 x 150 cm)<br/>Seattle Art Museum, Gift of Mrs. Thomas D. Stimson,</p>   |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Interior</i>, 1930<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>17 1/4 in. x 21 in. (43.82 cm x 53.34 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Dem Licht Entgegen (Toward the Light)</i>, c. 1930<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>20 1/16 in. x 16 1/8 in. (50.96 cm x 40.96 cm)<br/>Collection of the University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson; Museum Purchase with Funds Provided by the Edward J. Gallagher, Jr. Memorial Fund</p> |  |
| <p><b>Edward Weston</b><br/><i>Tobey, Carmel, California</i>, 1931<br/>Gelatin silver print<br/>9 1/2 x 6 3/4 in. (24 x 17 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York</p>  |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Algerian Landscape</i>, 1931<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>17 1/2 x 21 5/8 in. (44 x 55 cm)<br/>Seattle Art Museum, Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection</p>                             |  A cubist landscape painting with geometric shapes and a muted color palette of browns, greys, and blues, depicting a scene with a large, light-colored structure in the foreground. |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Broadway</i>, 1935-1936<br/>Tempera on Masonite<br/>26 in. x 19 1/4 in. (66 x 49 cm)<br/>The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1942,</p>       |  A dense, abstract painting with a complex, multi-colored composition of overlapping lines and shapes, primarily in shades of blue, purple, and white.                              |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Northwest Still Life</i>, 1941<br/>Tempera on board 19 x 25 5/8 in. (48 x 65 cm)<br/>Seattle Art Museum, Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection,</p>                               |  A dark, abstract painting with intricate, swirling lines and a rich, dark brown color palette, creating a sense of depth and movement.  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>The Void Devouring the Gadget Era</i>, 1942<br/>Tempera on board<br/>21 7/8 in. x 30 in. (55.56 cm x 76.2 cm)<br/>The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of the artist,</p> |  A dark, abstract painting with a complex, multi-colored composition of overlapping lines and shapes, primarily in shades of blue, purple, and white.                              |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Threading Light</i>, 1942<br/>Tempera on board<br/>29 1/4 in. x 19 3/4 in. (74.3 cm x 50.17 cm)<br/>The Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York, Purchase</p>                |  A dark, abstract painting with intricate, swirling lines and a rich, dark brown color palette, creating a sense of depth and movement.  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Fog in the Market</i>, 1943<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>21 5/8 in. x 27 1/2 in. (54.93 cm x 69.85 cm)<br/>Alvin E. Friedman-Kien and Ryo Toyonaga collection</p>  |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Gothic</i>, 1943<br/>Ink and opaque and transparent watercolor on Crescent wood pulp board<br/>28 1/4 x 22 in. (72 x 56 cm)<br/>Seattle Art Museum, Bequest of Berthe Poncy Jacobson,</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Western Town</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on cardboard<br/>12 3/4 x 18 3/8 in. (32 x 47 cm)<br/>Portland Art Museum, OR. Bequest of Edith Feldenheimer,</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Untitled</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>20 1/4 in. x 14 in. (51.44 cm x 35.56 cm)<br/>Alvin E. Friedman-Kien and Ryo Toyonaga Collection</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Crystallizations</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on board<br/>18 in. x 13 in. (45.72 cm x 33.02 cm)<br/>Iris &amp; B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University, Mabel Ashley Kizer Fund, Gift of Melitta and Rex Vaughan, and Modern and Contemporary Acquisitions Fund 2.2017.24</p> |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Eventuality</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>10 in. x 14 15/16 in. (25.4 cm x 37.94 cm)<br/>Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, bequest of Edward Wales Root<br/>1957.37</p>                            |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>The Way</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>14 x 22 1/8 in. (36 x 56 cm)<br/>The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Muriel Kallis Steinberg Newman Collection, Gift of Muriel Kallis Newman, 2006, 2006.32.61<br/>2.2017.29</p> |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Fata Morgana</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on gray cardboard<br/>14 in. x 22 1/8 in. (35.56 cm x 56.2 cm)<br/>The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection, 657.1967<br/>2.2017.26</p>                         |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Remote Field</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera, graphite, and ink on board<br/>28 x 30 in. (71 x 76 cm)<br/>The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jan de Graff, 143.1947<br/>2.2017.28</p>                                     |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Tundra</i>, 1944<br/>Tempera on board<br/>24 x 16 1/2 in. (61 x 41.9 cm)<br/>Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, State University of New York, Gift of Roy R. Neuberger<br/>2.2017.88</p>                                      |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Happy Yellow</i>, 1945<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>16 in. x 22 5/8 in. (40.64 cm x 57.47 cm)<br/>Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Rhodes Johnson<br/>1964.4</p>                              |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Lines of the City</i>, 1945<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>17 7/8 in. x 21 3/4 in. (45.4 cm x 55.25 cm)<br/>Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, Bequest of Edward Wales Root<br/>1957.36</p>                                |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Red Man- White Man- Black Man</i>, 1945<br/>Oil and gouache on paperboard 25 in. x 28 in. (63.5 cm x 71.12 cm)<br/>Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, Room of Contemporary Art Fund, 1946, RCA1946:4<br/>2.2017.34</p>                 |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>New York Tablet</i>, 1946<br/>Opaque watercolor and chalk on paper<br/>24 7/8 in. x 19 in. (63.18 cm x 48.26 cm)<br/>Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Museum of Art, Utica, New York, Edward W. Root Bequest,<br/>57.263<br/>2.2017.35</p> |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Transit</i>, 1948<br/>Tempera, ink, wash, and chalk on paper<br/>24 1/2 in. x 19 in. (62.23 cm x 48.26 cm)<br/>The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, George A. Hearn Fund, 1949<br/>49.160.1<br/>2.2017.36</p>                                |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Awakening Night</i>, 1949<br/>Opaque watercolor on Masonite 20 x 27 1/8 in. (51 x 69 cm)<br/>Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Museum of Art, Utica, New York, Edward W. Root Bequest,<br/>57.262<br/>2.2017.37</p> |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Space Intangibles</i>, 1949<br/>Tempera on academy board<br/>27 x 43 in. (69 x 109 cm)<br/>Ogunquit Museum of American Art, ME<br/>2.2017.40</p>  |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Point of Intersection</i>, 1949<br/>Tempera on panel<br/>19 in. x 21 5/8 in. (48.26 cm x 54.93 cm)<br/>Tacoma Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hollis Day<br/>2.2017.39</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Universal Field</i>, 1949<br/>Tempera, opaque watercolor, and fiber-tipped pen on cardboard<br/>27 7/8 x 44 5/8 in. (71 x 113 cm)<br/>Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Purchase,<br/>50.24<br/>2.2017.41</p>     |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>White Writing</i>, 1951<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>43 11/16 x 27 15/16 in. (111 x 71 cm)<br/>Kunsthaus Zürich, Gift Hanspeter Bruderer,<br/>1989<br/>2.2017.44</p>  |  |

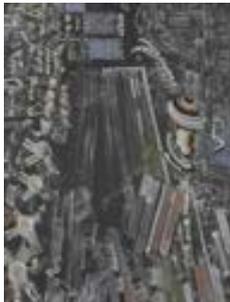
# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Voyage of the Saints</i>, 1952<br/>Opaque watercolor on cardboard 22 in. x 27 7/8 in. (55.88 cm x 70.8 cm)<br/>Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute,<br/>Museum of Art, Utica, New York, Edward W.<br/>Root Bequest,<br/>57.267<br/>2.2017.45</p>     |    |
| <p><b>Robert Gardner</b><br/><i>Mark Tobey</i>, 1952<br/>Color film, 19 min.: script and music for piano<br/>by Tobey played by Berthe Poncy Jacobson<br/>Private collection<br/>2.2017.98</p>  |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Northwest Fantasy</i>, 1953<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>43 x 48 in. (109 x 122 cm)<br/>Tacoma Art Museum, Gift of Anne Gould<br/>Hauberg,<br/>2013.14.101<br/>2.2017.116</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Space Lines [Hollyhocks I,II,III]</i>, 1953<br/>Watercolor on paper<br/>23 1/8 x 5 7/8 in. (59 x 15 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York<br/>2.2017.49.1-3</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Window</i>, 1953<br/>Casein on board<br/>44 3/8 x 28 1/2 in. (112.7 x 72.4 cm)<br/>Anderson Collection at Stanford University,<br/>Gift of Harry W. and Mary Margaret Anderson,<br/>and Mary Patricia Anderson Pence,<br/>2014.1.014<br/>2.2017.101</p> |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Five A.M.</i>, 1953<br/>Tempera on black-faced paperboard<br/>39 1/2 in. x 29 1/2 in. (100.33 cm x 74.93 cm)<br/>The Baltimore Museum of Art, Edward Joseph Gallagher III Memorial Collection, BMA 1960.3<br/>2.2017.47</p> |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Canticle</i>, 1954<br/>Casein on paper<br/>17 3/4 x 11 5/8 in. (45 x 30 cm)<br/>Smithsonian American Art Museum,<br/>Washington, DC, Gift of the Sara Roby<br/>Foundation,<br/>1986.6.79<br/>2.2017.118</p>                 |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Movimento</i>, 1954<br/>Oil on composition board<br/>12 7/8 in. x 9 7/8 in. (32.7 cm x 25.08 cm)<br/>Tacoma Art Museum, Gift of Col. and Mrs. A.<br/>H. Hooker,<br/>1964.16<br/>2.2017.52</p>                               |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Arctic Plane</i>, 1954<br/>Gouache and graphite on paper<br/>12 5/8 in. x 8 1/2 in. (32.07 cm x 21.59 cm)<br/>The Menil Collection, Houston<br/>2.2017.50</p>   |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Fragments in Time and Space</i>, 1956<br/>Gouache on paper<br/>23 7/8 in. x 35 7/8 in. (60.64 cm x 91.12 cm)<br/>Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,<br/>Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift<br/>of the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1966,<br/>66.4941<br/>2.2017.55</p> |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Pacific Circle</i>, 1956<br/>Tempera on board<br/>44 x 34 3/4 in. (111.8 x 88.3 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York<br/>2.2017.108</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Above the Earth #5</i>, 1956<br/>Tempera on panel<br/>11 3/4 in. x 17 3/4 in. (29.85 cm x 45.09 cm)<br/>Collection of Janet and Doug True<br/>2.2017.53</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Battle of the Lights</i>, 1956<br/>Opaque watercolor on paper<br/>44 x 35 3/8 in. (112 x 90 cm)<br/>Whitney Museum of American Art, New York,<br/>Gift of Lydia Winston Malbin in honor of Walter<br/>Fillin,<br/>89.34<br/>2.2017.102</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>City Reflections</i>, 1957<br/>Ink on paper<br/>23 5/8 x 34 1/4 in. (60 x 87 cm)<br/>Collection of Janet and Doug True<br/>2.2017.115</p>  |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Sumi (D26)</i>, 1957<br/>Ink on paper<br/>15 3/4 x 11 in. (40 x 28 cm)<br/>Courtesy Galerie Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris<br/>2.2017.117</p>   |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Calligraphy in White</i>, 1957<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>37 x 25 in. (94 x 64 cm)<br/>Dallas Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs.<br/>James H. Clark, 1971.88<br/>2.2017.58</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Untitled (Sumi Drawing)</i>, 1957<br/>Ink on paper<br/>20 3/8 x 28 1/2 in. (51.8 x 72.4 cm)<br/>The Martha Jackson Collection at The<br/>Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY,<br/>1974:8.37<br/>2.2017.103</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Head in Landscape</i>, 1957<br/>Ink wash on paper<br/>20 3/4 in. x 29 1/8 in. (52.71 cm x 73.98 cm)<br/>Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,<br/>Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift<br/>of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966,<br/>66.4938<br/>2.2017.60</p> |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Lumber Barons</i>, 1957<br/>Ink on paper<br/>24 1/16 in. x 34 1/16 in. (61.12 cm x 86.52 cm)<br/>The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of Solomon<br/>Byron Smith and Barbara Neff Smith<br/>2.2017.61</p>   |  |

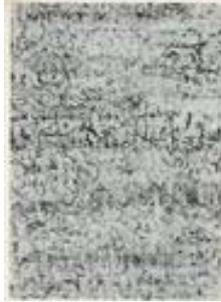
# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Prophetic Light – Dawn</i>, 1958<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>60 1/4 in. x 35 in. (153.04 cm x 88.9 cm)<br/>The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Museum purchase,<br/>64.3<br/>2.2017.66</p>                    |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Northwest Drift</i>, 1958<br/>Tempera and gouache on paper 44 11/16 in. x 35 5/8 in. (113.5 cm x 90.5 cm)<br/>Tate, London, Presented by the American Friends of the Tate Gallery 1961<br/>2.2017.59</p> |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>World</i>, 1959<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>11 3/4 in. (29.8 cm) diameter<br/>Private collection, New York<br/>2.2017.67</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Wild Field</i>, 1959<br/>Tempera on board<br/>26 5/8 x 27 5/8 in. (67.6 x 70.2 cm)<br/>The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection,<br/>658.1967<br/>2.2017.91</p>       |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Trembling Space</i>, 1961<br/>Tempera and pencil on paper<br/>27 x 20 in. (68.6 x 50.8 cm)<br/>The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation,<br/>Hannelore B. and Rudolph B. Schulhof<br/>Collection, Bequest of Hannelore B. Schulhof,<br/>2012<br/>2.2017.92</p> |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Magic Woods</i>, 1962<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>42 x 32 in. (107 x 81 cm)<br/>Dallas Museum of Art, Gift of Mr. and Mrs.<br/>James H. Clark, 1971.87<br/>2.2017.68</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Red Rift</i>, 1962<br/>Oil on linen<br/>36 1/4 in. x 46 in. (92.08 cm x 116.84 cm)<br/>Private collection<br/>2.2017.69</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Time of Tides</i>, 1963<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>39 1/2 in. x 28 in. (100.33 cm x 71.12 cm)<br/>Philadelphia Museum of Art, Purchased with<br/>the Edward and Althea Budd Fund, 1974-177-<br/>1<br/>2.2017.70</p>  |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

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|---|--|
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Advance of History</i>, 1964<br/>Gouache and watercolor on paper 25 5/8 x 19 11/16 in. (65.1 x 50 cm)<br/>The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation<br/>Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, 1976<br/>2.2017.93</p>                                      |    |
| <p><b>Charles Seliger</b><br/><i>Studio, Mark Tobey, Basel</i>, 21 June 1965<br/>Ink on paper<br/>10 x 6 1/4 in. (25 x 16 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York<br/>2.2017.97</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Unknown Journey</i>, 1966<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>81 1/2 in. x 50 3/8 in. (207.01 cm x 127.95 cm)<br/>Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre<br/>Pompidou, Paris, Purchase from the estate,<br/>1968, attribution 1976,<br/>1976-1026<br/>2.2017.73</p> |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Magic Eye [The Magic Eye]</i>, 1966<br/>Tempera on board<br/>44 1/2 in. x 32 1/2 in. (113.03 cm x 82.55 cm)<br/>Collection of Janet and Doug True<br/>2.2017.72</p>   |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Escape from Static</i>, 1968<br/>Tempera on paper<br/>26 3/8 x 19 1/8 in. (67 x 49 cm)<br/>Courtesy Galerie Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris<br/>2.2017.109</p>  |    |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>White World</i>, 1969<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>60 in. x 35 7/8 in. (152.4 cm x 91.12 cm)<br/>Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,<br/>Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift<br/>of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1972,<br/>72.294<br/>2.2017.75</p> |   |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Silver Space</i>, 1969<br/>Oil on canvas<br/>69 in. x 41 in. (175.26 cm x 104.14 cm)<br/>Private collection, New York<br/>2.2017.74</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Mark Tobey</b><br/><i>Coming and going</i>, 1970<br/>Tempera and pastel on cardboard 39 1/2 in. x<br/>27 1/2 in. (100.33 cm x 69.85 cm)<br/>Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York,<br/>Charles Clifton Fund, 1970,<br/>1970:10<br/>2.2017.76</p>                 |  |

# PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

## Mark Tobey: Threading Light – 06.05–10.09.2017

**Mark Tobey**

*Moving Moments*, 1970

Oil on canvas

62 x 38 in. (157 x 97 cm)

Seattle Art Museum, Gift of the Marshall and Helen Hatch Collection, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum

2009.52.78

2.2017.77

