

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

Press Release

Postwar Era. A Recent History

Homages to Jack Tworkov and Claire Falkenstein

January 23 – April 4, 2016

Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero

From January 23 through April 4, 2016, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection presents ***Postwar Era. A Recent History. Homages to Jack Tworkov and Claire Falkenstein***. Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero, this exhibition offers a fresh, analytical look at postwar American and European art through 1979. A selection of paintings and sculptures, works both from Peggy Guggenheim's collection and from donations to the Foundation's Venice museum since Peggy's death, some rarely exhibited, are assembled in clusters and arranged according to theme, style, affinity and an unconventional chronology, bringing together threads of sensibility that go beyond avant-garde movements and historical tendencies.

The exhibition progresses through eleven galleries, with several surprises, each gallery forming a coherent unit. It opens with early works of American Abstract Expressionism—works by William Baziotes, Robert Motherwell and Richard Pousette-Dart (2016 is the centenary of his birth) and moves into a room dedicated to the painting of the Polish-born American Jack Tworkov (1900–1982): a rich series of works on paper and five oil paintings documenting Tworkov's treatment of a female portrait in the stylistic and formal key of Abstract Expressionism. He had known and frequented Willem de Kooning from the 1930s and in the late 1940s the two artists occupied adjacent studios: together they explored a Cubist-expressionist treatment of the human figure, moving towards increasingly abstracted forms and gestural brushstrokes. This tribute to Tworkov celebrates the gift to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation from the Estate of Jack Tworkov in 2013 of his *Portrait of Z. Sharkey* (1948), and benefits from the support of the Estate of Jack Tworkov, New York, and of the American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich.

The narrative continues with the manifest impact of the American painting on Informal abstraction in Europe, with its prolific research into new pictorial mediums, gesture and the mark in the work of Italian artists such as Afro, Pietro Consagra, Bice Lazzari, Giuseppe Santomaso, Toti Scialoja, and Emilio Vedova. A gallery looks specifically at the work of Carlo Ciussi, whose painting expresses a geometry free of Euclidean coordinates and determined instead by a highly personal internalization of form as a visual equivalent of continuously evolving cosmic matter. A selection of works by postwar British artists—a little known aspect of Peggy's collection—documents the works of sculptors such as Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, and Leslie Thornton, and of painters such as Alan Davie and Graham Sutherland. Reminding us of Peggy's predilection for sculpture, this is followed by a series of works by Mirko Basaldella, donated to the Foundation by Vera and Raphael Zariski.

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One of the enduring memories of visitors to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection are of the metal and glass gates which greet them as they arrive, commissioned by Peggy in 1960 from the versatile American sculptor Claire Falkenstein (1908–1997), to whom this exhibition pays tribute with a dedicated section. With the support of Save Venice Inc., these gates will have undergone maintenance by the time *Postwar Era* opens. Falkenstein, expanding form, compressing space and experimenting with materials such as glass, metal and resin, explores the infinite possibilities offered by chance and free choice in the process of artistic creativity. Her art is enthralling as it seeks to render in the plastic arts the physical-mathematical theories of the expansion of the universe and of Einstein's relativity. The *hommage* benefits from collaboration of the Claire Falkenstein Foundation, Los Angeles, of the Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, of the Jack Rutberg Gallery, Los Angeles, and from the loan of works from United States museums.

Postwar Era. A Recent History. Homages to Jack Tworikov and Claire Falkenstein is supported by Intrapresæ Collezione Guggenheim, by Private Bank BSI, and by Regione del Veneto. In collaboration with Corriere della Sera.

The exhibitions of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection are made possible thanks to the support of its Advisory Board and:

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