

Emerson Woelffer
Untitled, 1977
Torn paper collage
23 ½ x 17 ½ inches
Collection of Michael and Ilene Salcman, Baltimore, Maryland

David Plumb
Cremation Triptych: David, Katherine, Jim, 1979
Graphite on paper
6 x 18 ¾ inches total
Academy Art Museum, Gift of the artist in honor of
Christopher J. Brownawell for his service to the museum

Vito Acconci
Untitled, 1983
Graphite on graph paper
12 x 11 inches
Collection of Susie Hennessy and Michael Harrigan

Michael Harrigan
it sometimes happens that way #3, 1983
Conté crayon, graphite, tracing paper, and ink on paper
11 x 14 inches
Collection of the artist

Michael Harrigan
it sometimes happens that way #7, 1983
Conté crayon, graphite, tracing paper, and ink on paper
11 x 14 inches
Collection of the artist

Susie Hennessy
Feast of St. Ambrose, 1986
Prismacolor and graphite on paper
60 x 40 ½ inches
Collection of the artist

Tim Rollins and K.O.S. (Kids of Survival)
Study for Amerika, 1988
Watercolor on printed paper
7 5/8 x 5 inches
Collection of Michael and Ilene Salcman, Baltimore, Maryland

Paul Jenkins
Phenomena Eastern Star, 1989
Watercolor on paper
30 x 22 inches
Collection of Robin Rowan Clarke and Thomas Crawford Clarke

James Plumb
Cero, 1992
Graphite on three-ply plate Bristol
21 ½ x 34 ½ inches
Collection of the artist

Grace Hartigan
Woman with Cowl, 1995
Watercolor on paper
29 x 29 inches
Academy Art Museum, Promised gift of Ken Warwick

Jacob Lawrence
Figure Study after Vesalius (Profile with Plumb-bob), 1996
Graphite on paper
9 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches
Courtesy DC Moore Gallery, New York

Claes Oldenberg
*Study for Poster of Dropped Bowl with
Scattered Slices and Peels*, 1998
Charcoal and pastel on paper
40 x 28 inches
Collection of Tom and Kitty Stoner

Mark Lombardi
*Ron Rewald & Bishop Baldwin Rewald Dillingham &
Wong of Honolulu c. 1978-83 (3rd version)*, 1999
Graphite on paper
18 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the artist's estate and Gallery Joe, Philadelphia

John Isherwood
Drawing, 2005
Acrylic and wax on paper
20 x 15 ½ inches
Academy Art Museum, Promised gift of Rima Z. Parkhurst

Susan Schwalb
Diary 2006, 2006
Leather box with 50 drawings, each mixed metalpoint
on clay-coated paper
Each drawing: 3 ½ x 3 ½ inches
Collection of the artist

Marietta Hoferer
13, 2008
Tape and pencil on paper
22 x 22 inches
Academy Art Museum, Gift of the artist

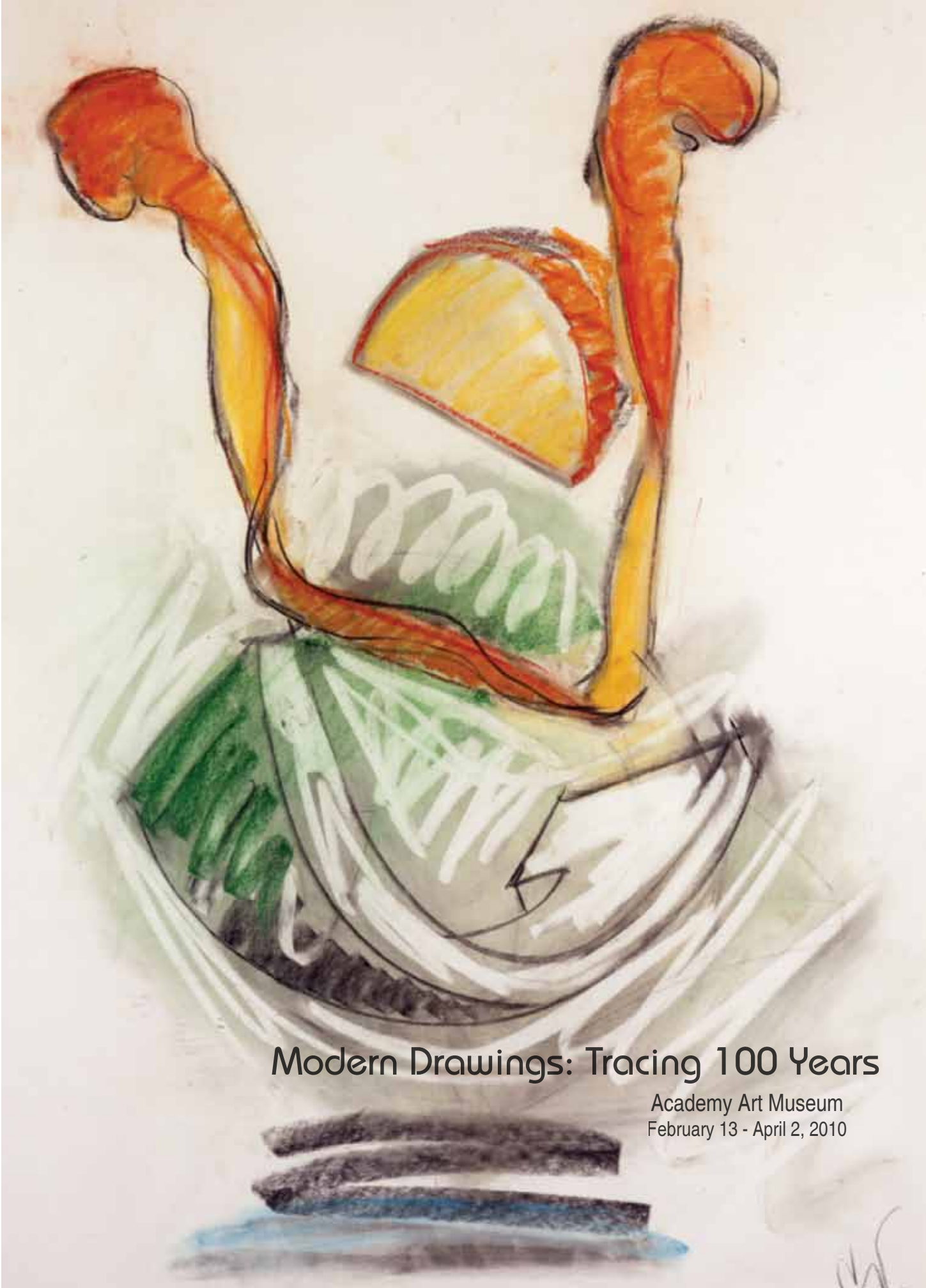
Nicole Phungrasamee Fein
1102008, 2008
Watercolor on paper
15 x 15 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Joe, Philadelphia

JK Keller
Echo #4
Oil and dirt on paper, 2005
8 ½ x 11 inches
Collection of the artist

JK Keller
Echo #12 (2009 04 22 - 2009 12 02)
Oil and dirt on paper, 2009
8 ½ x 11 inches
Collection of the artist

Sharon Loudon
Untitled, 2009
Watercolor and acrylic on paper
9 x 20 inches
Collection of the artist

Sharon Loudon
Untitled, 2009
Watercolor and acrylic on paper
9 x 20 inches
Collection of the artist



Modern Drawings: Tracing 100 Years

Academy Art Museum
February 13 - April 2, 2010

Modern Drawings: Tracing 100 Years

The inspiration for Modern Drawings: Tracing 100 Years began from a desire to display a group of the Academy Art Museum's recent acquisitions. In particular, the initial chronological bookends were two drawings: Pierre Bonnard's View of the Seine, from 1913, and Marietta Hoferer's 13, from 2008. While the Museum has a significant drawing collection, with the addition of loans, it became apparent that a more comprehensive exhibition could be displayed.



The earliest sheet in *Modern Drawings* is Claribel Cox John Steuart Curry Schofield's *Pregnant Woman* from 1896. *State Fair #1*, 1940 Watercolor Academy Art Museum purchase with support from the Acquisition Fund

study from an art studio setting. Such studies are meant to strengthen an artist's grasp of human anatomy to create credible figurative works depicting historical and religious narratives, portraits and genre scenes. In contrast, another long-standing theme is the pure landscape. The sheets by Charles Dorman Robinson, Bonnard and Arthur Bowen Davies depict immediate surroundings and locales. Yet, each drawing is executed in a distinctly different manner. The six finished pastels by Robinson, from 1906, depict the devastating aftermath of the San Francisco earthquake and its subsequent fire. Through the use of shimmering pastels, viewers can sense the power of the flames that engulf the city. Bonnard's work, in contrast, was rapidly executed with pencil to record broad elements of a scene that he would utilize in subsequent paintings. Davies' depiction of Venice has the economy of the Bonnard, but with restrained color to suggest this extraordinary waterway.

Davies, along with Walt Kuhn, was a principal organizer of the Armory Show in 1913 that introduced New York audiences to modern European and American art including paintings and sculpture by Picasso, Bonnard and dozens of others. In addition, Davies was a member of The Eight along with John Sloan and Everett Shinn and others. These artists were best known for their depictions of gritty urban life including New York. In *Children at Dusk*, we sense an evolution in Davies' style that presents a flattening of space and an infusion of pictorial mystery with its unidentified figures. If Davies offers a glimpse of twentieth-century modernity,

Picasso has come to epitomize it. Picasso's *Seated Acrobat* is a drawing that belongs to a phase of the artist's career that is among his most revered: the Neoclassical period. While Picasso fashioned visual fracturing in his Cubist phase early in the twentieth century, this *Acrobat* shows a mastery of economy and line. With a single contour Picasso imbues the acrobat with a presence and palpable mood. Then with a quick succession of strokes he reinforces volume and shadow to underscore the ironic quiet of this isolated performer. Similarly, Keith Morrow Martin's *Gladys Phillips #4* from a decade later employs a similar shorthand, but with color. Still, the mood is eerily similar.

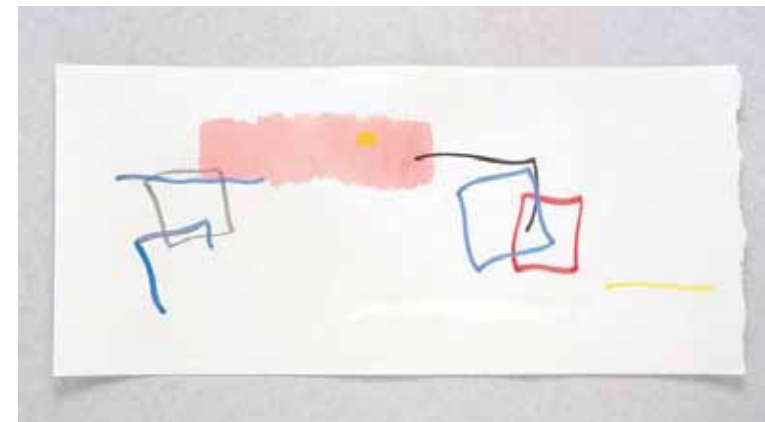
Following the infusion of pictorial modernism in the United States, many of its prominent artists, including John Steuart Curry and Robert Riggs retreated to a style called Regionalism. Through WPA projects, including murals and prints, Regionalism returned to the narrative and embraced purely American subjects. Curry's *State Fair #1* is a mural study executed in Wisconsin, far from the glare of New York. Here Curry mapped out a metaphorical story meant to encourage young people to work the indigenous land of the United States. The precise, faint pencil grid indicates that the drawing is "squared for transfer" a device to visualize the composition on a much larger scale. Also Regionalist, Robert Riggs' study is more finished than Curry's and with its national pastime it, too, is uniquely American.

While Regionalism competed with modern trends throughout the United States, it is clear that some artists' work fell in between. Dwight Williams, Walt Kuhn and Isabel Bishop seem to distill the lessons of their predecessors in their subjects and approach. Williams embraces the sparse execution, but shows an urban Baltimore harbor; Kuhn with his rich watercolor picks up on Picasso's vibrant circus theme, but now it's the Ringling Brothers; and Bishop rapidly moves thick pigment to create a quintessentially New York subject such as the Subway.

By the late 1940s, Regionalism waned and abstract works captured the attention of many viewers, critics and museums. While Franz Kline, William Baziotas, Emerson Woelffer and Paul Jenkins can be counted among the front runners of post-war abstraction, each retained a distinctive style for their paintings and works on paper. Regarding the latter, Kline was known for having a limited palette with a predilection for black, Baziotas infused his work with surrealist elements, and Woelffer embraced torn paper and collage for an organic aesthetic. Paul Jenkins' *Eastern Star* shows his embrace of the

fluidity and brilliance that watercolor can convey. In 2005, the sculptor John Isherwood reminds us that abstraction is now an accepted exercise in media beyond painting. If the late 1940s and 1950s ushered in abstraction, it is worth noting that previous traditions were not abandoned en masse. Many artists retained their allegiance to realism. Among those, Elisabeth Frink, Jacob Lawrence and Philip Grausman unfailingly found inspiration in the figure. Whereas Grausman's drawings have been called "essays in pure line," Frink and Lawrence use bolder strokes to reflect on the frailty of the condition. James and David Plumb, two long-standing painters, demonstrate their mastery of time-honored artistic skills and practice: observation, understanding of the old masters, and drawing.

Through the 1960s, 1970s and later, the encompassing art historical categories of abstraction and realism were splintered into countless art movements. While it is not possible to give an example of every trend, this exhibition does present a sliver of those produced during the aforementioned decades. Claes Oldenburg's study for a bowl of fruit depicts a pottery shard and an orange after they dropped to the ground and bounced up. This playful study and its subsequent commission have their roots in Pop Art where ordinary objects can take on unexpected prominence. Susie Hennessy, not unlike Oldenburg, depicts common objects and returns their scale to the ordinary, similar to her contemporary Photorealists. In a break from the straightforward, the hues in Hennessy's *Feast of St. Ambrose* are given intensity with Prismacolor pencils. In Robert Smithson's study for *Spiral Jetty*, we have the pleasure of seeing the genesis of one of the most famous works of Earth Art (the realized piece is 1500 feet long) in its infancy as the artist crystallizes an idea onto the sheet. Acconci is a well-respected Conceptual artist who challenges ideas and questions conventional practice. Acconci liked to bridge the gap between the visual arts and literature. In his untitled sheet depicting the letter "E," we see one letter of many in preparation for a large-scale, eight-foot aquatint. Yet, as with many works in this show, his print production began with modest drawings such as this. Tim Rollins and the K.O.S. work as a team, but in their case, *Amerika* was conscious effort to illuminate issues brought forth from Kafka's book of the same name.



Sharon Loudon *Untitled*, 2009 Watercolor and acrylic on paper, 9 x 20 inches Collection of the artist



Jacob Lawrence *Figure Study after Vesalius (Profile with Plumb-bob)*, 1996 Graphite on paper 9 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches Courtesy DC Moore Gallery, New York

As such, this drawing and others serve as the physical manifestation of the desire to bring social awareness to the viewers.

Mark Lombardi and JK Keller further advance the umbrella term of Conceptual Art. For example, imagine asking a perplexing question such as, "How would you draw a Ponzi scheme or what would it look like?" In the hands of Lombardi, it becomes a linear constellation of the names linked in a financial quagmire. Keller's output differs in spirit. *Echo #4* and *#12* are sheets of paper that temporarily stood in for his mouse pad. As such the oil and accumulation on his hand "created" the image. Because Keller chose the medium and used the mouse, the works cannot be seen as accidental but they did correspond to his deliberate movements.

Fittingly, and chronologically, Nicole P. Fein, Sharon Loudon, Susan Schwalb and Michael Harrigan finish the exhibition. While these artists share a passion for creating abstract work on a modest scale, they are united in another aspect: they make drawings as a principle medium. This loosely-knit group made drawings for their own right exploring the very media they employ. The technical control displayed in Fein's watercolors are nearly beyond description; Loudon understands the sanctity of the white sheet acting in concert with the brightly made marks; Schwalb embraces the warmth and patina of metalpoint, a medium that occupies rarified air; and Harrigan extracts the richness of conté crayon and contrasts it to the delicacy of pale coloring. Together, the work of these four and all of the aforementioned have given a glimpse of the richness and vastness that encompasses the term "drawing."

Brian Young
Curator, Academy Art Museum

Cover:

Claes Oldenberg, *Study for Poster of Dropped Bowl with Scattered Slices and Peels*, 1998, Charcoal and pastel on paper, 40 x 28 inches, Collection of Tom and Kitty Stoner