



Dorothy Hood, *Clouds*, 1970. Oil on canvas, 120 × 96 in. (304.8 × 243.8 cm). The Menil Collection, Houston, Purchased with funds provided by Janet and Paul Hobby, Linda and George Kelly, Franci Neely, Westwood Wealth Management, Poppi Massey, Mark and GERALYN Kever, and Susanne and William E. Pritchard III. © Dorothy Hood. Photo: James Craven



New Exhibition

# Abstraction after Modernism: Recent Acquisitions

April 26–August 25, 2024  
Main Building

*John and Dominique de Menil believed that abstract art offered alternative and spiritual ways of approaching reality. “In a world cluttered with images,” Dominique de Menil said, “only abstract art can bring us to the threshold of the divine.”*

Abstract Expressionism, a modernist approach to artmaking that rose to prominence in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s, intrigued John and Dominique de Menil. Their patronage of several of these artists, such as Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko, has famously become a pillar of the museum’s collection today.

*Abstraction after Modernism: Recent Acquisitions* highlights work made by succeeding generations of artists, who forged new paths in their approaches to non-representational art. The exhibition brings together acquisitions made by the Menil over the past fifteen years, including work by Agnes Denes, Suzan Frecon, Ellsworth Kelly, Rick Lowe, and Richard Serra.

Abstraction remains a vital tool of artistic expression, one which contemporary artists continue to explore in new ways. Two galleries of the exhibition will be devoted to individual artists—Leslie Hewitt and Richard Tuttle—both of whom will install their pieces at the Menil. The exhibition also will include works by Sam Gilliam and William T.

Williams, participants in *The De Luxe Show*, a 1971 Houston exhibition underwritten by the Menil Foundation that stimulated conversations around race and hard-edge abstraction.

Over the past decade as the Menil has actively grown and deepened its collection through acquisitions, promised gifts, and bequests, the museum has acquired significant works by women and artists of color, many of which will be on view.

*Abstraction after Modernism: Recent Acquisitions* is co-curated by Michelle White, Senior Curator, The Menil Collection, and Kelly Montana, Assistant Curator, Menil Drawing Institute.

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