An abstract drawing featuring a dense, chaotic mass of black lines forming a large, irregular shape that resembles a nest or a tangled web. In the center of this shape, there is a red crosshair composed of two intersecting lines. The background is white.

BETWEEN THE LINES

AMERICAN DRAWINGS FROM
THE COLUMBUS MUSEUM

MAY 8 - AUGUST 14, 2016



BETWEEN THE LINES

AMERICAN DRAWINGS FROM
THE COLUMBUS MUSEUM

Defined as unique works on paper created in media that include graphite, charcoal, watercolor, pastel, and cut paper, drawings have been recognized as the foundation of art since the Renaissance. Through a selection of works from The Columbus Museum's noted drawing collection, *Between the Lines: American Drawings from The Columbus Museum* reflects the diversity of techniques and thematic approaches among artists working in this fundamental medium.

The Columbus Museum began acquiring drawings through both gift and purchase shortly after opening to the public in 1953. In the 2000s, the drawing collection expanded significantly with the acquisitions of two major collections, those of Philip and Lorraine Brewer and Claire and Joseph Flom. Since 2001, the Brewers, who had already given the Museum four drawings in 1997, have donated 39 drawings to the Museum with 18 more still to come as promised gifts, and the Museum purchased 57 drawings from the Brewer collection in 2003. The acquisition of the Brewer collection greatly increased the depth of The Columbus Museum's holdings in drawings and led to a major exhibition that toured

nationally to the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts in Michigan, and the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock. Like the Brewers, the Floms were also major col-

"Drawing is the cornerstone of the graphic, plastic arts. Drawing is the coordination of line, tone, and color symbols into formations that express the artist's thought."

- John Sloan

lectors of drawings. They had acquired many drawings that had formerly been in the impressive collection of the late Paul Magriel. Knowing of the Museum's strength in drawing, in 2008 the Floms offered the Museum the opportunity to acquire their collection. Through the generous support of The 105 Society, formed to support acquisition of the Flom collection, The Columbus Museum was able to purchase this important collection.

In the years since 2008, acquisitions to the Museum's drawing collection continue through both gift and purchase. Noteworthy acquisitions include gifts in

2012 from Wynn and Sally Kramarsky, foremost collectors of American minimal and abstract drawings, who have donated groups of drawings to regional and university museums around the country. Kentler International Drawing Space, a non-profit venue for contemporary drawing in Brooklyn, donated a group of contemporary drawings to the Museum in 2011. Today, The Columbus Museum's collection of nearly 1,000 drawings encompasses every era of American art.

The artist John Sloan once said, "Think of drawing as a way of talking about the things that interest you." Following that idea, *Between the Lines* is organized by themes that interested the artists represented in the exhibition: American life, nature, portraits and figure studies, dance and movement, and abstraction. Drawings by sculptors and works created as part of a series are explored as well.

PORTRAITS AND FIGURE STUDIES

Portraiture dominated American drawings in the 18th and early 19th centuries just as it did in painting. Portraits done in pastels, such as the anonymous portrait of Jane Byrd Nelson, were a popular choice in the 18th century. Profile portraits were prevalent in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and continued through the 19th century as exemplified in *Profile of H. S. Mount* by William Sidney Mount and *A Woman's Head in Profile* by Thomas Hovenden. Nelson's pastel portrait is a finished work itself, while other drawings on view were created as preparatory studies.

John Singer Sargent, one of the greatest American portraitists, once said, "You can't do sketches enough. Sketch everything and keep your curiosity fresh." In contrast to traditional portraits, figure studies focus less on specific facial features, and artists often create them with great freedom of line. Figure studies are an important part of the traditional artistic education and remain a part of many artists' practice for the rest of their careers. As a means of understanding anatomy, these works can be

part of the process of making paintings or sculpture, with artists sometimes using figure studies to capture movement or musculature.



Jane Byrd Nelson, ca. 1777, Pastel on paper mounted on board, Anonymous, Gift of Beatrice Plummer Potts Woodruff | G.2011.72.2



1

1. *Study for Thetis Bringing the Armor to Achilles*, 1802, Pencil and ink over pencil on laid paper, Benjamin West, Museum purchase made possible by a generous donation from Thornwill Farm, Harris County, Georgia G.2008.34.102

2. *Painting History VII*, 2003, Watercolor on Aquarelle Arches paper, Kevin Haran, Gift of the artist G.2005.17

3. *The Connoisseur*, 1885, Watercolor on paper, Francis Davis Millet, Museum purchase made possible by Daniel P. and Kathelen V. Amos at the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley G.2010.3

4. *Susanna*, ca. 1885-95, Charcoal and chalk on grey colored wove paper, Elihu Vedder, Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Philip L. Brewer G.2015.34.5



2

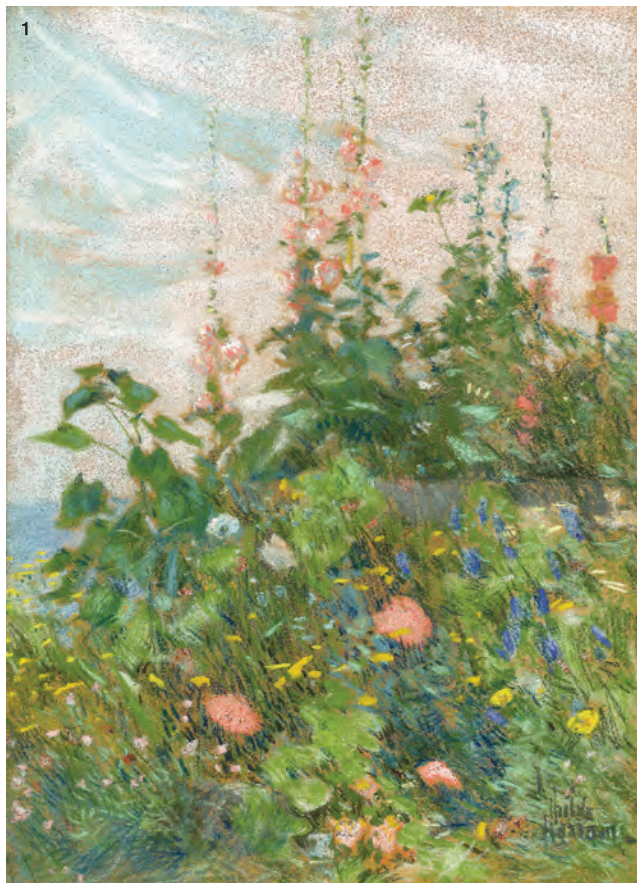
HISTORY, RELIGION AND ALLEGORY

Seventeenth-century European art academies created a hierarchy of subject matter that continued to have influence until the 19th century, placing history painting – a category that also included mythological and religious subject matter – at its apex. American artists in the late 18th and early 19th centuries who focused on history painting included Benjamin West and John Vanderlyn, both represented in the exhibition with preparatory drawings for history paintings. In contrast, late 19th-century drawings on view in the exhibition by Francis Davis Millet and Elihu Vedder focus on more intimate images of individual historical and allegorical figures.

Mythological and historical subject matter, rendered in a realist style, continued to figure in the work of early 20th-century artists working in conservative styles such as William Robinson Leigh and Kenyon Cox. Although historical subjects are less commonly found in contemporary art, 21st-century realist artists such as Kevin Haran continue this long tradition, approaching it from a contemporary perspective.



5. Martín Alonzo Pinzón - Drawing for the "Landing of Columbus", 1846, Brown and white chalk, and ink on tan paper, John Vanderlyn, Museum purchase made possible by the Endowment Fund in honor of D.A. Turner G.2011.53



1. *Celia Thaxter's Garden*, ca. 1890-93, Pastel on paperboard, Frederick Childe Hassam, Museum purchase made possible by the Ella E. Kirven Charitable Lead Trust for Acquisitions G.2013.24

2. *King Bird Or Bee-Martin*, ca. 1791 Watercolor on paper, John Abbot, Museum purchase G.1981.9

3. *Casco Bay*, 1914, Watercolor on paper, John Marin, Museum purchase made possible by the Art Acquisition and Restoration Fund and the Endowment Fund in Honor of D. A. Turner G.1982.1

LANDSCAPES, NATURE STUDIES, AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Drawings of nature can be a more spontaneous expression of artists' experience of their environment than the formal large-scale paintings that often follow the sketches made on site. Scientific documentation of flora and fauna had begun by the late 18th century with works such as *King Bird or Bee-Martin* by John Abbott. The American wilderness became favored subject matter for American artists in the 1820s, as they found in the nation's distinctive topography and flora

and fauna a source of pride, spirituality, and national identity. Their drawings of nature included panoramic views and sketches for use as a memory aid in the studio; *Men by a Lake* by Alvin Fisher, ca. 1820, dates to this early period of American landscape drawings. By the late 19th century, a younger generation of artists had begun making subjective and intimate views of nature seen in works such as in *Celia Thaxter's Garden* by Childe Hassam. With the rise of modernist art movements in the 20th century, drawings could offer a more



3

abstract interpretation of the land, exemplified in *Casco Bay* by John Marin.

Many American artists traveled extensively, often in conjunction with studies at European art schools, particularly after the Civil War, and the

exhibition includes a selection of drawings created by artists on their travels abroad. These works sometimes were preparatory studies for paintings created in the studio, like *Study of the Acropolis, Athens* by Sanford Gifford.

AMERICAN LIFE

American life, at work, home, play, and rest, in cities and in the country, has been the subject of many artists' drawings since the 19th century. The years following the Civil War saw substantial population increases as immigrants moved to America. Artists became increasingly interested in depicting the lives of ordinary people in both

urban and rural areas, here and during their studies abroad. These images are intriguing for what they tell us about an earlier time and how artists both bore witness to and interpreted the life they saw around them.

The relationship between children and their mothers and caregivers was a common subject in drawings of the 19th and early 20th centuries as



1. *Cleaning Cotton*, 1938, Pencil and gouache on paper, Philip Evergood. Gift of Mrs. Richard Jennings by exchange G.2009.39

seen in works such as *Sara and Her Mother with the Baby* by Mary Cassatt and *Changing Position* by Henry Casselli. These scenes emphasize the relationship between the figures during the everyday activities depicted. Other, more intimate scenes include women reading and sewing or gathering flowers for the home, giving us insight into the domestic tasks and daily life experienced by women and children.

In the early 20th century, artists such as George Luks began creat-

ing scenes of everyday urban life rather than the mythological scenes or pastoral landscapes that were favored by art academies of the day. Later generations of artists have continued in this vein, showing Americans bustling from work, as in *Subway* by Peggy Bacon, working in adverse conditions such as that shown in Philip Evergood's *Cleaning Cotton*, and engaged in new leisure activities such as being *At the Health Club* depicted by George Grosz.



2. *Sara and Her Mother with the Baby (No. 1)*, 1901, Pastel on paper, Mary Cassatt, Museum purchase made possible by a Friend of the Museum G.2005.14

3. *Subway*, ca. 1935, Charcoal on paper, Peggy Bacon, Museum purchase made possible by a generous donation from Susan U. Buck and Thomas B. Buck III G.2008.34.4



4

4. *The Dancer (Ruth St. Denis)*, 1931, Pencil on paper, William L'Engle, Museum purchase made possible by a generous donation from Barbara B. Page in honor of her husband W. Marion Page for his 90th birthday G.2008.34.54

DANCE AND MOVEMENT

The French Impressionist Edgar Degas was the most famous artist to depict dancers, but he was not alone in being interested in depicting dancers' movements. Drawings about dance and movement in The Columbus Museum's collection range from images of anonymous people enjoying a dance to those of famous dancers such as modern dance pioneer Ruth St. Denis and Russian prima ballerina Anna Pavlova.

Images of dancers also appeal to many viewers, including those with special interest in the dance, such as collector

Paul Magriel, from whom Claire and Joseph Flom acquired much of their drawing collection. An expert on dance, Magriel had been the librarian at ballet impresario Lincoln Kirstein's American School of Ballet and later was curator of the dance archives at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Magriel also edited the magazine *Dance Index* and books such as *Chronicle of the American Dance*, *Nijinsky*, *Isadora Duncan*, and *Pavlova*. Two works in the Museum's collection, *The Dancer (Ruth St. Denis)* by William L'Engle and *Three Nymphs Dancing* by Hananiah Harari, were in Magriel's drawing collection.



1

DRAWINGS BY SCULPTORS

Sculptors often use drawing in their artistic practice, and many are gifted in this two-dimensional medium, seen in examples from the Museum's collection by artists such as Isamu Noguchi, Dorothy Dehner, and Theodore Roszak. Drawings can be used in preparation for creating a sculpture, as in Burgoyne Diller's *Study for a Wall Construction*. Sculptors' interest in the medium of drawing goes beyond the process of designing a sculpture. The sculptor Dorothy Dehner was well known for her superb drawings and watercolors, yet she never used drawings to create sculpture: "...in my material, in larger pieces, the usual props are not sufficient, nor are they satisfactory, as I want to be able to SEE my work as I make it. I do not make models, first, or drawings." The works in the exhibition reveal differing approaches among the sculptors to the drawing medium,

from the interest in mass, form, and structure in Theodore Roszak's *Cosmic-Scape* to the spare, elegant lines of *Untitled (Reclining Female Nude)* by Louise Nevelson.

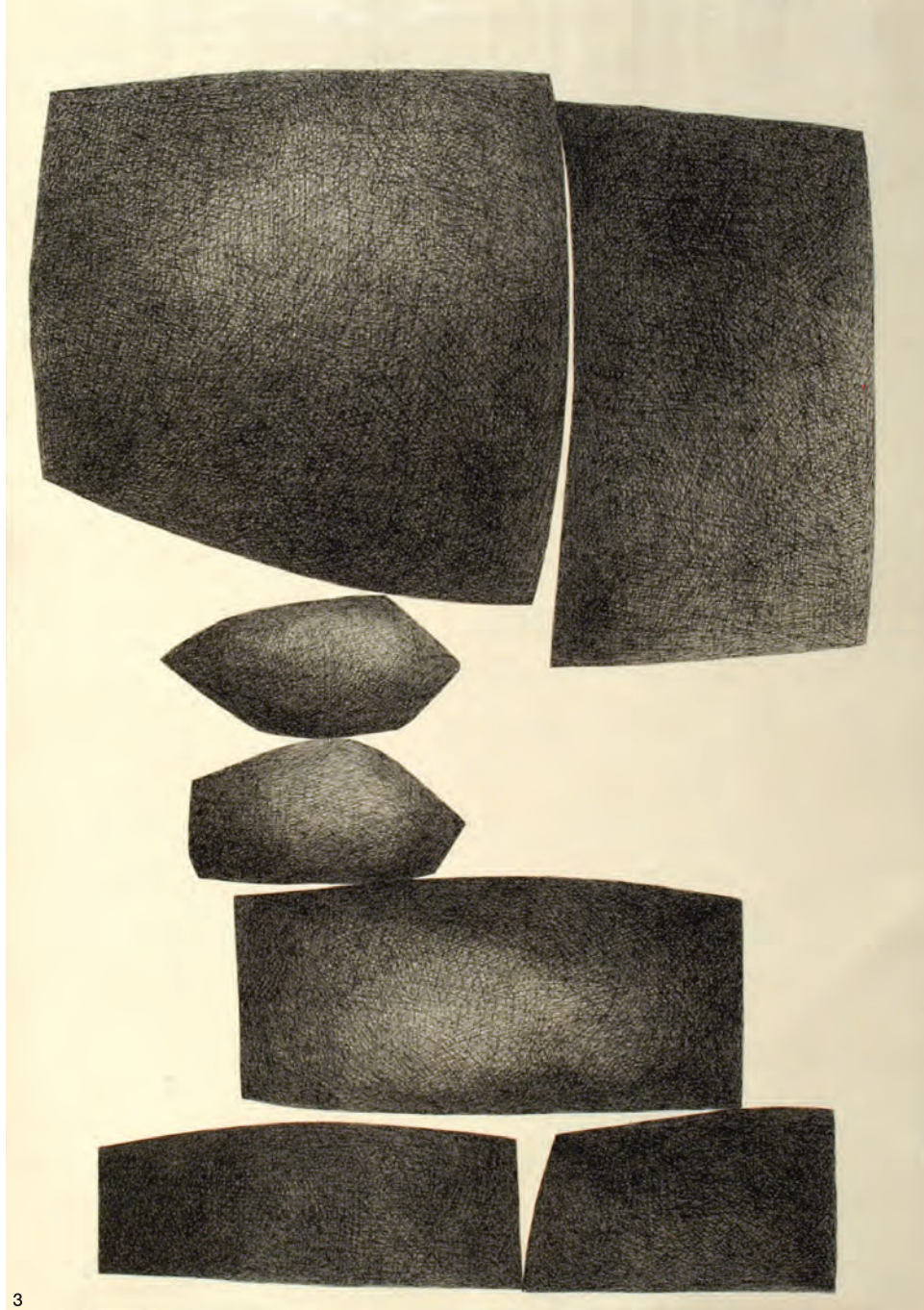


2

1. *Untitled (Reclining Female Nude)*, 1935, Pencil on paper, Louise Nevelson, Museum purchase made possible by the Edward Swift Shorter Bequest Fund G.2002.2

2. *Study for Wall Construction*, 1950 Graphite and crayon on tissue paper, Burgoyne Diller, Gift of halley k harrisburg and Michael Rosenfeld, New York G.1998.8

3. *Untitled*, 1963, Ink on paper, Dorothy Dehner, Gift of The Dorothy Dehner Foundation for the Visual Arts G.2010.142

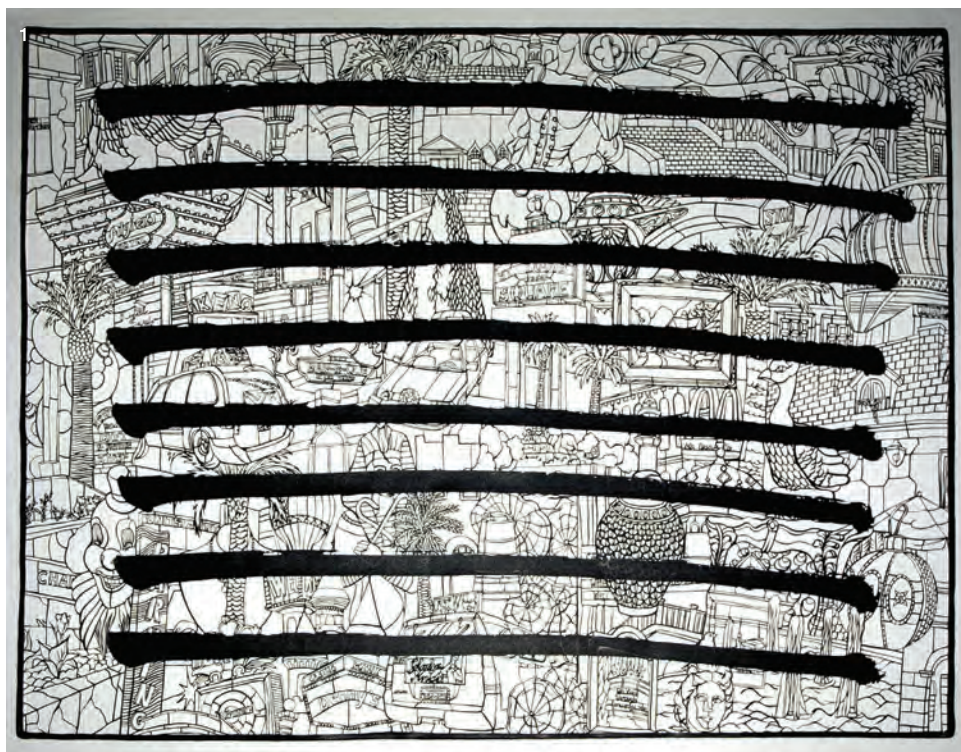


3

ABSTRACTION

In the early 20th century, American artists became acquainted with modern European art movements first through travels abroad and then through avant-garde exhibitions, culminating in the 1913 Armory Show.

Held at New York's 69th Regiment Armory and subsequently seen in Boston and Chicago, the Armory Show introduced a wide group of artists and the public to modern art. In the following decades, artists became split between those focused



on an “American style,” typically realist, and those who participated in the international movement of modernism. Assisted in part by the teachings of noted European émigrés such as Joseph Albers and Hans Hofmann, by the end of World War II the modernism faction predominated and since then has had a strong presence in American art.

Abstract works in the exhibition include examples by early pioneers such as Dorothy Dehner, mid-century giants such as Alma Thomas and Sam Francis,

and recent work by Annabel Daou and Sang-ah Choi. The Museum’s collection of abstract work is indebted to the generosity of artists’ foundations, including the Sam Francis Foundation and the Dorothy Dehner Foundation for the Visual Arts, noted collectors Sally and Wynn Kramarsky and the Kentler International Drawing Center, and Miss John Maurice Thomas, who donated a large body of work by her sister, the nationally acclaimed, Columbus-born artist Alma Thomas.

THE SERIES AS A DRAWING PROJECT

The Columbus Museum’s collection includes a number of drawings by artists that are part of a larger series. Some artists make these works to document a specific place or time of day over

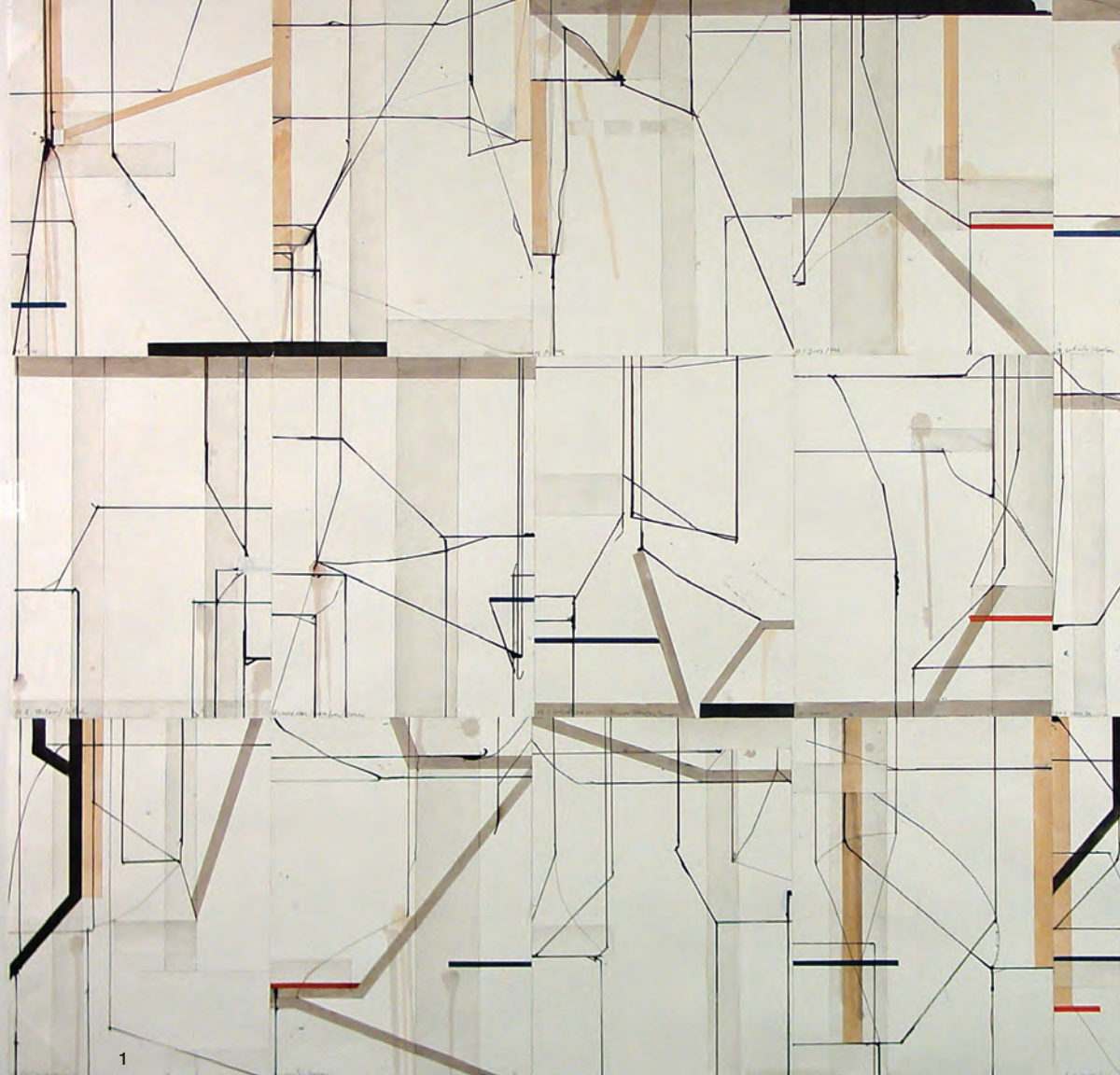
time, explore a process, or develop a system of symbols. The conceptual artist William Anastasi has several ongoing series of “unsighted,” or automatic drawings, in which his drawings consist of the involuntary marks



2

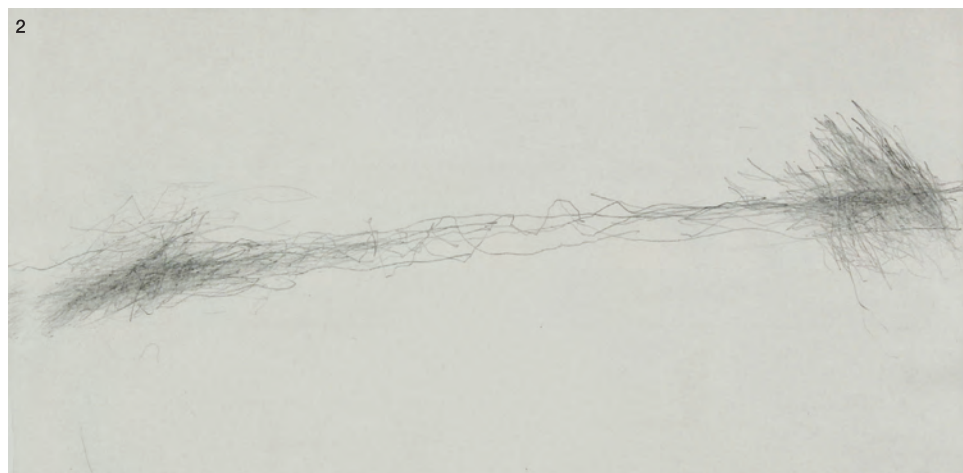
1. *Meditation 1*, 2006-09, Sumi ink on hand-cut paper, Sang-ah Choi, Museum purchase made possible by the Art Acquisition and Restoration Fund G.2010.10

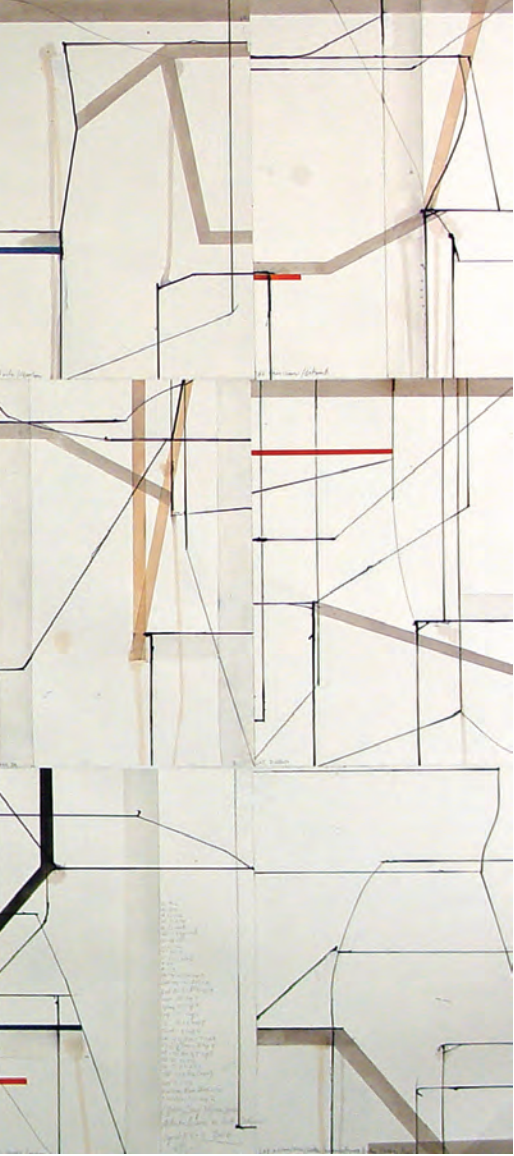
2. *Lyric Suite*, 1965, Ink on rice paper, Robert Motherwell, Gift of the Dedalus Foundation, Inc. in honor of Tom Butler G.2000.13.13



he makes. The abstract expressionist Robert Motherwell used automatic drawing and spontaneous gesture to create *The Lyric Suite*. Tad Mike creates series documenting a locale on a

specific date, while Lee Walton's *Opening Day 3 Game Series, Atlanta Braves vs. L.A. Dodgers, April 3, 4, 5, 2006* is part of the artist's series responding to specific ballgames.



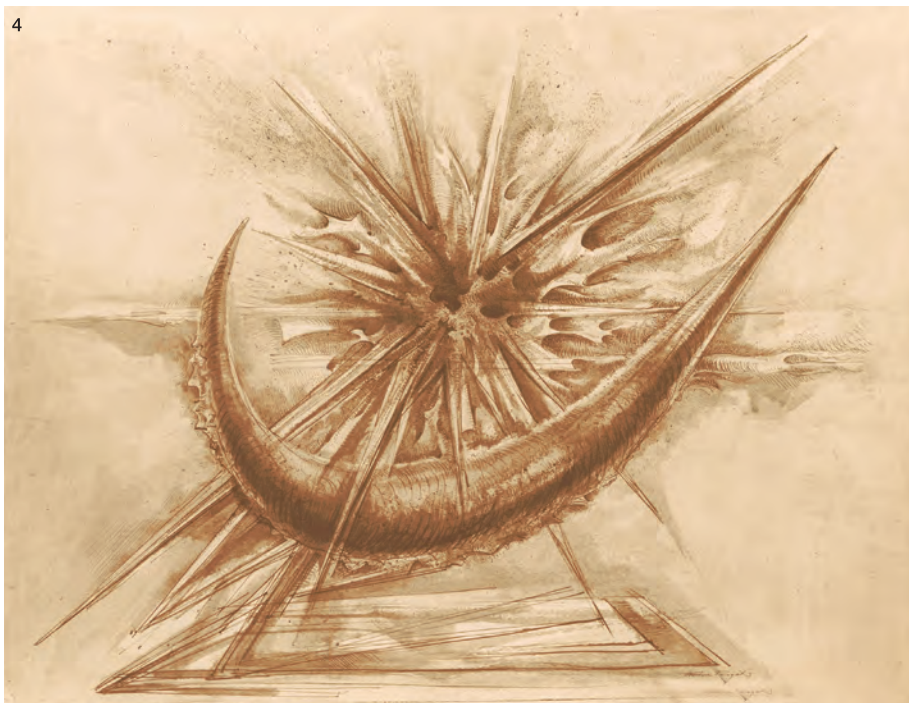


1. *Opening Day 3 Game Series, Atlanta Braves vs. L.A. Dodgers, April 3, 4, 5 2006*, 2006, Ink on paper, Lee Walton. Museum purchase made possible by the Edward Swift Shorter Bequest Fund G.2006.40

2. *Untitled (Subway Drawing)*, 2008, Graphite on wove paper, William Anastasi. Gift of Sally and Wynn Kramarsky in honor of the Museum's 60th Anniversary G.2012.45.2

3. *Boryon Preserve, Westport Island, Maine*, 2007, Walnut ink on paper, drawn with hemlock new growth and needles, Tad Mike. Gift of Sally and Wynn Kramarsky in honor of the Museum's 60th Anniversary G.2012.45.16

4. *Cosmic-Scape*, ca. 1964, Brown ink and wash on wove paper, Theodore Jacob Roszak. Museum purchase made possible by the Ella E. Kirven Charitable Lead Trust for Acquisitions G.2003.1.41





 THE COLUMBUS
MUSEUM

columbusmuseum.com

This exhibition is generously underwritten by

Aflac®