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GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION

Judith K. Van Wagner
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Norman Geske
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GEOMETRIC

ABSTRACTION

GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION

catalogue by:

Judith K. Van Wagner, Assistant Professor,
Art History, University of Nebraska - Omaha

exhibition in cooperation with:

Norman A. Geske, Director, Sheldon Art Gallery,
University of Nebraska - Lincoln

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-Omaha: April 12 - May 2, 1974

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-Lincoln: May 14 - June 16, 1974

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Klopp Printing & Lithographing Company, Omaha, Nebraska

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Norman A. Geske for his advise and suggestions with regard to the catalogue and selection of works for the exhibition: Peter Hill for his enthusiasm and support in gaining funds for this project; Mrs. Betsy Laird for her efficient Interlibrary Loan service; and to Robert Grey Van Wagner for his editorial assistance and encouragement.

In addition we thank the following lenders to this exhibition:

Grace Borgenicht Gallery Inc., New York

Genise Rene Gallery, New York

Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa

Forum Gallery, New York

Noah Goldowsky Gallery, New York

Mr. Frederick Hammersley, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Washburn Gallery, Inc., New York

Zabriskie Gallery, New York

Also we thank the Sheldon Art Gallery for arrangements for and payment of shipping costs.

The publication of this catalogue was made possible through funding by the University of Nebraska-Omaha, the Nebraska Arts Council and the Student Government of the University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Part I. Historical Background

Art is art-as-art and everything else is everything else.¹

Prologue

It has been said often enough to be a cliché that those styles like abstraction which have characterized twentieth century art have begun nowhere and everywhere, because abstract and indeed geometrical elements have always played a lesser or greater part in works of art. As Thomas B. Hess put it, "Abstract art has always existed, but until this century it never knew of its existence."²

It may be argued that every work of art is an abstraction because it was created by man and exists only as an illusion of man's environment or thought. As Michel Seuphor defined abstract art, "I mean the apprehension of whatever it is which determines that art is art and not just illustration or education or propaganda or a substitute for literature or religion."³

The nature of twentieth century abstraction then involves the element of recognition of its existence and its independence from the traditional functions of art.

European Beginnings of Abstraction, 1910-15

Cubism may be seen as the direct ancestor of geometric abstraction. As early as 1906 and 1908 Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Georges Braque (1882-1963) respectively, had begun to simplify and subordinate subject to structure. During the early Analytical Period of Cubism, these artists broke down subject matter to a basic planar structure in which two-dimensional or arbitrarily modelled planes could be better integrated with the total picture space. Color was subordinated to geometrical structure. A limited sense of depth was achieved by overlapping, tilted and transparent planes. Along with depth, a sense of movement was also created by these shifting shapes. Artists attempted to create an artistic parallel to nature rather than an imitation. Conceptualization of subject matter allowed the artist to present what he knew about a given

topic. Thus the back, front and side views of a figure could be presented simultaneously as long as these elements fitted into a pictorial logic.

Textural interest was also freed from nature. Muted tones applied by separate, identifiable strokes of the brush created surface enrichment. During the Transitional Period of Cubism the collage was developed as bits of newsprint, wallpaper or other materials were added to the canvas adding real and simulated textures to the painted surface.

Within the Synthetic phase the creative process moved a step further. Rather than beginning with the object in nature, artists began with a planar structure that was given attributes identifiable in nature or man's environment.

Cubism's contribution to the development of abstract art consisted of an analysis of subject into planes and brushstrokes that established a pictorial reality which was independent, though derived from and parallel to nature.

About 1912 Cubist off-shoots in Paris included the Orphic movement of Robert Delaunay (1885-1941), in which color was made an independent structural factor.⁴ Before the period of Synthetic Cubism he brought intense colors back into the Cubist palette. With colored, mostly circular shapes he created a structure completely independent from nature.

In addition to Paris another center of abstraction was in Russia. Although more than one abstract trend was formulated in 1913, Suprematism is most directly related to our topic. The founder, Kasimir Malevich (1878-1935), gave that date for his Suprematist paintings that were based on Cubist work seen in Paris, in reproduction, and in Russian collections. It was at this time that he designed theater stage settings consisting of a black square on a white field. Thereafter he made drawings of a single black square, circle or cross on a plain field. Thus he became the first to use pure geometric forms in art. Because these forms were not found in nature, to Malevich they represented man's will dominate in his environment. Not only had Malevich carried art to a point completely free of nature but he

also carried geometric abstraction to its simplest state.

Malevich related these simplified geometrical forms to purified expressions of emotion (without sentiment). In his subsequent development he expanded the single form to include several squares, rectangles and circles diagonally arranged in a more dynamic organization. (fig. 1)

The third center of abstraction was Munich where as early as 1910 Vasily Kandinsky (1866-1944) had painted an abstract picture. However, instead of geometrical forms he utilized biomorphic, free-form shapes. Kandinsky like Malevich, connected abstraction with a more universal reality or feeling rather than with a particularized nature.

Not unlike other artists who became involved with abstraction, Kandinsky related abstract forms and paintings to musical sounds and compositions. Like other later artists Kandinsky saw music as the purest form of art because of its non-imitative and inherently abstract character. Indeed, Kandinsky titled many works "Improvisation," "Composition," or "Lyrical" relating visual with musical separateness from nature. Kandinsky felt that art should be related to the spiritual rather than to the material world. He felt that his own work, involving arrangements of forms without specific reference to nature, stated a spiritual conflict and resolution through line, color, space and movement.

During World War I, Kandinsky returned to his native Russia. Probably influenced by the work of Malevich and his later association with the Bauhaus, the forms in his paintings began to take on an increasingly geometric character. (fig. 2)

From 1910 to 1915 in Paris, Russia and Munich abstraction grew out of the basically classical and conceptual approach of Cubism and the more romantic and expressionistically based abstractions of Kandinsky. Unlike Cubism, Suprematism and the biomorphic abstractions of Kandinsky did not contain specific remnants of subject matter. Also, in spite of the basic geometric orientation of Suprematism as opposed to the looser shapes of Kandinsky both abstract tendencies viewed a non-imitative art as indicative of a

higher emotional or spiritual reality. This spiritual or mystical content was prevalent in subsequent developments.

Constructivism, The Bauhaus and De Stijl, 1915-25

Simultaneously with Malevich's early abstract statements, Vladimir Tatlin (1895-1956) founded the Russian constructivist movement. After seeing Cubist collages by Picasso in Paris, Tatlin returned to Russia to construct his first painting-relief of 1913. Made of bits of wood, metal, glass and other discarded materials and objects of an industrial age, these completely abstract reliefs dealing with space-time factors led to the dependent but separate Constructivist movement of Naum Gabo (b. 1890) and Anton Pevsner (1886-1962).

The basic philosophy of the latter movement contained in the Realistic Manifesto of 1920 renounced traditional concepts of descriptive line, color, mass and volume for the "real" elements of space and time. While Tatlin wanted to associate his art with the everyday life of an industrial age, Gabo and Pevsner sought a new Platonic artistic reality of forms and space apart from mere imitation of nature.

Das Staatliche Bauhaus (1919-33) was formed by the union of two Ducal schools of arts and crafts in Weimar by Walter Gropius. The curriculum of the school based upon craft and form problems indicated the basic philosophical intent of uniting practice with theory. Emphasis was placed upon materials and techniques as a source for practical experiments. This experimental attitude facilitated a flexible, progressive curriculum molded by the ideas and practices of its remarkable art faculty consisting of Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, Oskar Schlemmer, Gerhard Marcks, George Muche, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Johannes Itten and eventually Marcel Breuer, Herbert Bayer and Josef Albers. This curriculum eventually embodied the idea of design as a basis for the unity of painting, sculpture and architecture. Further relationships of art to industry were to an extent influenced by Constructivist ideas.

In the twenties, De Stijl geometric form and ideas concerning the potential effect of art on all of life's activity effected the Bauhaus esthetic. Simultaneously an international school of architecture was formulated

and geometric abstraction was prevalent in Bauhaus sculpture and painting.

Prior to 1912 and his arrival in Paris, the stylistic development of paintings by Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) had included an Expressionist phase based on the art of Vincent Van Gogh and a Symbolist period inspired by the work of fellow Dutch artists, Jan Toorop and Jan Thorn Prikker. Both stages were important in establishing the principle of abstraction from nature and the validity of two-dimensional surfaces in the work of Mondrian.

In Paris from 1911-14 Mondrian was deeply impressed with Cubist work. He felt that the individualistic element was too strong in his own work up to that point. Cubism offered an answer based upon the establishment of equivalents for nature through contrasting pictorial elements and the tensions of their relationships. By 1912 subject matter had been dissolved into a maze of horizontally and vertically oriented lines. By 1913 he reintroduced bright colors now associated with rectangular line formations.

Before the outbreak of the war, Mondrian returned to Holland. In 1914 the structure of his paintings had become predominately horizontal and vertical; however vestiges of subject matter interest remained. He analyzed favorite themes such as a church facade, tree or pier and ocean to achieve a simple pattern of short, straight lines resembling plus and minus signs. During this gestation period, flat and colored rectangles were added to the structure he found underlying natural appearances.

By 1916 Mondrian had met Bart Van der Leek (1876-1958). Within the framework of naturalistic painting, Van der Leek had developed a construction of imagery in terms of flat color planes. Furthermore, he had gradually simplified his palette to a dependence upon primary colors. From Van der Leek, Mondrian learned to use flat areas of pure color rather than a more emotional, restless, Impressionistic technique.

In 1915 Mondrian had met the painter-critic Theo van Doesburg (1883-1931) and in 1917, Van der Leek and Georges Vantongerloo (1886-1965), founded the movement and magazine known as De Stijl.

Notebooks of this early period reflected Mondrian's recognition of a basic vertical-horizontal opposition in nature and his proposal of the right angle as the basic form in nature. He noted a relationship between abstraction and a higher spiritual reality. He wrote, "To approach the spiritual in art, one will make as little use as possible of reality, because reality is opposed to the spiritual."⁵

From 1917 to 1920 Mondrian made use of colored rectangles defined by black lines against a grey, black or white background. In the early twenties he united the field by bringing rectangles of color or neutral tones together. Such specialized shapes appeared only as a result of the crossing of horizontal and vertical lines that occasionally moved through the rectangles to create a linear structure in tension with the color rectangles. Thus Mondrian reached the level of his mature style embodying a universal expression through dynamic balance of horizontal and vertical linear structure and fundamental hues of color. (fig. 3)

In 1920 Mondrian published his own writing entitled "Neo-Plasticism." In it he stated that the particularities of nature obscured a purer reality.

To create pure reality plastically, it is necessary to reduce natural forms to the constant elements of form and natural color to primary color. The aim is not to create other particular forms and colors with all their limitations, but to work toward abolishing them in the interest of a larger unity.⁶

Mondrian felt that Cubist artists had not carried their discoveries to the ultimate goal or a completely simple statement of the basic, dynamically balanced structure found in nature.⁷

Mondrian saw a Utopian future for culture as it evolved toward an equilibrium and he looked forward to the time when man would create a new reality based on equilibrium in opposition to an oppressive individualistic or uncontrolled nature. Thus Mondrian saw in his mature work a blueprint of a future society in which the individual would be at one with the universal. At that point there would be no need for the individual forms of art such as

sculpture, painting and architecture because "...we will live in realized art."⁸ Individual art forms like individual people would be an inherent part of a larger unity.

The Neo-Plastic esthetic and philosophy of De Stijl evolved out of the ideas and work of Mondrian. Its publications criticized traditional art forms involving sentiment and lyricism and emphasized the need for simplification and abstraction. As in the work of Mondrian the simplified form utilized by De Stijl artists possessed a larger and symbolic significance.

Also an important spokesman and propagandist for De Stijl was Theo Van Doesburg. A geometricizing tendency in his early work was upon the paintings of Cézanne. From 1917 to 1919 he worked closely with Mondrian and Van der Leek in establishing De Stijl style and esthetic.

After the war, Van Doesburg was instrumental in the spread of De Stijl ideas to the Weimar Bauhaus and to Berlin.⁹ The symbolic notions of De Stijl were altered to suit a Bauhaus aim of practical, functional application. The Bauhaus understood abstraction as a "modern" technique fitting in with an industrialized society. Thus De Stijl philosophy and form filtered through Bauhaus practicality had a great influence upon typography, furniture, light fixtures and other products of modern machine technology.

In an essay on Elementarism of 1924, Van Doesburg suggested that a right angle set at 45° be added to De Stijl principles to create a diagonal movement and thereby a more dynamic effect. Mondrian promptly left the movement.

Like the earlier developmental period of abstraction, three abstract movements arose in the years between 1915 and 1925. Most important to the context of this exhibition was the development of work by Mondrian and members of De Stijl. At his mature period in painting, Mondrian decided upon geometric forms and the balance of their oppositions as a basic statement of pure reality. His style and philosophy formed a basis for later developments in European and American abstraction.

Development of American Abstraction, 1913-45

America's first exposure to abstract art was through exhibitions at Alfred Stieglitz's Gallery 291 (1905-17) and later at his Intimate Gallery (1925-29). However the "eye opener" for large numbers of Americans was The Armory Show, an "International Exhibition of Modern Art" in 1913. Although this exhibition met successive storms of protest, it did serve to increase the public's exposure to new forms of art, including abstraction.

In addition there were early examples of abstract art in America. For example Arthur Dove (1880-1946) painted complete abstractions that he called "extractions" as early as 1910. Expressionist abstractions were painted by Marsden Hartley beginning in 1913. Lyonel Feininger (1877-1943) and Stuart Davis (1894-1964) produced Cubist based works. About 1915 in a vein paralleling the European Orphist group, Morgan Russell (1886-1953) and Stanton MacDonald-Wright (b. 1890) developed "Synchronism" proclaiming color as structure. However such examples were infrequent.

Support for early abstract art was limited. Then in 1920 Katherine Dreier and Marcel Duchamp founded the Société Anonyme that purchased abstractions¹⁰ and from 1927 to 1942 the A. E. Gallatin collection including abstract examples could be seen in the Gallery of Living Art in New York University. In general however, American artists received word of "modern" movements second-hand from European magazines.¹¹

In 1929 the Museum of Modern Art was founded in New York, but they showed only established European artists. Although the Whitney Museum was devoted to American Art, abstractions were not shown there until the thirties. Important to establishing the legitimacy of abstract art was the Whitney's 1935 exhibition, "Abstract Painting in America."

Generally, abstract art was not acceptable during a time of unemployment, Stalinism and Hitlerism. Abstract thought seemed to far from everyday realities and rather irresponsible.

Nevertheless in 1936 amidst a period of realistically oriented art including regionalism and social realism. The American Abstract Artists Group was organized. Harry Holtzman, friend of Mondrian, was a leader

in establishing this group. Original members included: Carl Holty, John Ferren, Harry Holtzman, Ibram Lassaw, George L. K. Morris, Karl Knaths, Jean Xceron, Charles Shaw, Balcomb and Gertrude Green, Ad Reinhardt, Byron Browne, Giorgio Cavallon and George McNeil. By 1937 there were 28 members and within the next two years the group included Josef Albers, Ilya Bolotowsky, Fritz Glarner, Burgoyne Diller, Alice Trumbull Mason, Albert Swinden, Irene Rice Pereira, Lee Krasner, William de Kooning and David Smith.¹²

Their first exhibition was held in the Squibb Building in April 1937 and biennials were held from 1939 at the Riverside Museum. Early A.A.A. supporters included painter critic George L. K. Morris and collector A. E. Gallatin who showed members' work at his New York University gallery. Also the Works Project Administration aided young artists, many who showed an abstract bent. In 1939 Solomon R. Guggenheim opened the Museum of Non-Objective Art, under the direction of Baroness Hila Rebay. Work shown tended toward the animated, curvilinear format of Kandinsky.

By 1940, A.A.A. felt strong enough to protest their virtual exclusion from exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and at the Museum of Non-Objective Art. Probably as a result of an A.A.A. letter of protest to Mayor La Guardia, the New York Worlds' Fair accepted an exhibition by members.¹³

In 1942 Peggy Guggenheim opened her "Art of this Century" Gallery that showed surrealist and abstract artists including work by Americans. A.A.A. efforts seemed to gain some success in 1944 when more than half of their work exhibited at the Mortimer Brandt Gallery was sold.¹⁴

Recent American Abstract Developments, from 1945

From 1945 on, the abstract movement gained strength. During the late forties A. A. A. members could show at the Dudensing Gallery, at the Pinacotheca (later Rose Fried) or at Curt Valentin's. By about 1949-50 the reputation of A.A.A. had become international and members were invited to show in Europe.¹⁵ Furthermore the Museum of Modern Art's 1951 "Abstract Painting and Sculpture in America" exhibition included twenty-seven A.A.A. works by members.¹⁶

Although the abstract movement was growing, these artists were still in the minority. The American group was given added impetus and inspiration by an influx of well known Europeans in the late thirties and forties. This migration offered the Americans new examples to study and direct contact with European painters. Among others Moholy-Nagy came in 1937; Fernand Léger visited in 1931, 1936 and 1938; Amedée Ozenfant migrated in 1938; Mondrian arrived in 1940; and Naum Gabo reached the United States in 1947.

Mondrian and his work had the greatest direct influence upon the development of Geometric Abstraction in America. As World War II approached, Mondrian moved first to London and finally to New York. Here he was greeted by an old American friend, Harry Holtzman as well as Fritz Glarner and Charmion von Wiegand.¹⁷

During his last years in New York, Mondrian's style underwent a change partially due to the artist's immediate love for and fascination with the city's lights and activities, including American jazz music. (Furthermore, he felt that this city offered the possibility for art and environment to become unified in accordance with his theories about the future of art). About 1941 he began to feel that solid lines were too oppressive. Accordingly he replaced the black line by a series of small colored rectangles as in "Broadway Boogie-Woogie," 1942-43, (fig. 4) forming a sense of staccato rhythm within an ordered structure. Mondrian explored this new phase of his career up until his death in 1944.

Although Mondrian was well-known, respected and admired by other artists, his first and only one-man show was held in 1942 at the Valentine Dudensing Gallery, New York. A year after his death a retrospective exhibition was presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and another in 1946 at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Since then other Mondrian exhibitions have been held in the United States forming a continuing influence.

In America, Mondrian was a tremendous inspiration to the relatively small number of artists interested in abstract painting. In addition to an admiration for his paintings, American artists appreciated the stamina and endurance of the man. Without public

recognition he moved toward a mature style.

As Robert Pincus-Witten recently wrote, "It was Mondrian who taught Americans that the art of art was in the thinking and not the doing."¹⁸ Eventually artists conceived of their work as an objective statement and the painting itself as a real object rather than a mere reflection of our environment. Instead of reproducing nature the painting became an independent object composed of an organization of color and line on a flat surface. Painting became a preconceived idea rather than consisting of concepts derived from nature. Whether artists were involved in geometric or other abstract idioms, they felt that art delivered from nature was also the most objective art because it referred to and centered in the art object itself.

Although geometric abstraction work was shown in the fifties, few artists were working in this style. Abstract Expressionism, derived in part from the work of Kandinsky, moved to stage center of the American art scene.¹⁹ However in the mid-fifties the rejection of a geometric approach subsided. Abstract expressionism was not wiped from the scene but was simplified.

In the sixties geometric work predominated in abstract painting.²⁰ Barnett Newman and Josef Albers influenced later geometric styles, especially the "hard edge" phase that formed a bridge between Abstract Expressionism and Minimal art. The "hard edge" style differed from traditional geometric art in the use of a simple form instead of related forms, its larger scale and frequently irregularly contoured form.

Recent work has held to "non-relational" ideas or to repetition and symmetry. Also, rather than subtracting, contemporary formalists have added shapes and ideas. Simple techniques are utilized "...for complex expression rather than pure design."²¹

Although the geometric tendency in abstraction has been influenced by European sources, the American phase has taken on a specific character. Inherent in the geometric style of painting is a wide range of possibilities available to individual artists. Whether dependent upon Mondrian or not, a general tendency may be observed toward

elaboration of forms with or without a symbolic meaning. Considering the interim period of Abstract Expressionism and concepts of an "open-field" in painting, subsequent American geometric development utilized a simple and in general an enlarged format to express more complicated meanings.

Part II. Specific Artists and Their Work

...in every period of art, the expressive means are used in common and it is not the expressive means but the use of them that reveals personality.²²

In today there is yesterday and there is tomorrow.²³

Albert Swinden

There has been little written about English born artist Albert Swinden's contribution to the development of geometric abstractionist painting in America.

Nevertheless as early as 1928, Swinden had begun to explore formal problems.²⁴ At first his work was derived from Synthetic Cubism, especially the paintings of Juan Gris. In these early experiments circular motifs dominated his compositions. When he turned toward Mondrian and a Neo-Plastic style is unknown because many of his extant works are not dated.

Swinden was an original member of the American Abstract Artists group. The first and subsequent meetings of the organization were held in his studio at 13 West 17th Street. When a tragic fire destroyed his studio in 1937 the valuable record of Swinden's early work was destroyed and the group had to move their meetings.

By the late thirties Swinden had entered a Neo-Plastic phase utilizing the straight line and right angle. Movement was created around the canvas between forms of the same color.

In 1955 Swinden turned to figure painting, stopped exhibiting and probably worked part time.²⁵ By 1960 he was again painting full-time in his Greenwich Village studio.

Swinden's "Abstraction," 1940 (fig. 5) shows Neo-Plastic influence. The artist has deviated from Mondrian's limited color scheme by adding shades of brown, green, orange, blue, blue-grey and grey.

There are no continuous lines but there are directional movements created by interrupted color areas. The largest areas of color, i.e. blue and ochre are concentrated near the center of the painting. Smaller yellow planes at right are balanced by red areas at left. White planes at the far left and right sides and in the center interrupt and relieve color interaction and lead the eye toward the center of the canvas.

Paint application is rather thick but edges are precisely executed.

In this painting, Swinden has worked within a geometric format to achieve movement through color placement.

Ralston Crawford

Ralston Crawford, painter, photographer, lithographer and teacher also worked in a geometric abstraction style.

This Canadian born artist lived in Buffalo from 1910 to 1926. After a short stint as a sailor he began painting in 1927.

Crawford commenced his study of art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and simultaneously attended lectures by Dr. Albert Barnes at the nearby Barnes Foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania. Paintings at the Barnes Foundation offered Crawford a contact with at late nineteenth and twentieth century European artists. He was most attracted to Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso and late Cubist paintings. As a result of his acquaintance with the ideas of Barnes and with these paintings he learned to recognize the formal qualities of a work of art. Initially he was attracted to the work of Cézanne because of the latter's consistent simplification of natural forms to emphasize the structure of his painting.

In subsequent work of the thirties Cézanne provided the greatest influence. In the early part of the decade Crawford spent eight months in Europe where he was offered a more extensive look at recent developments in art. During the latter part of this

decade Crawford began to use a diagrammatic perspective in reducing, abstracting and building forms. The observed object was translated on the canvas into a form-symbol. During this early period Crawford showed interest in the subject matter possibilities of modern industrial architecture, for example, ship's gear, docks, elevators, railways, bridges and highways. He also utilized numbers and letters in paintings of this time. In the thirties, then, Crawford absorbed the influences of Cézanne and European Cubists to achieve a geometric style based on the modern industrial landscape.²⁶ Basically he was concerned with traditional problems of spatial organization including the relationship between a two-dimensional surface and a three-dimensional illusion of space.

In 1942 he enlisted in the Engineer Corps and was transferred to the Weather Division, Army Air Force Headquarters in Washington D.C. His job was to describe weather conditions in pictorial terms that could be quickly and clearly understood. In such a situation, Crawford increased his ability to simplify, abstract and to express meaning.²⁷

Within the forties decade Crawford's work showed a greater feeling for the painting as an independent and autonomous object. Detail was eliminated through selection. James Johnson Sweeney described Crawford's work as "visual understatement" pointing to a lack of crowding or almost a sense of emptiness.²⁸ Color was made integral with other compositional elements rather than possessing an individual and separate appeal. Movement was created by color shapes that fluctuated in front of and behind one another. Perspective lines contrasted with these parallel, floating areas of color. In general, work of this period indicated the artist's sensitivity to pictorial structure and to form relationships.

In 1946 Crawford was commissioned by Fortune magazine to do paintings of what he had seen and felt as a witness of Test Able, the first atomic bomb explosion at Bikini. The only artist present on the press ship, he saw the detonation of the bomb in mid-air. In oil paintings and lithographs he showed the explosion and effects of the blast in terms of "paint symbols" such as jagged, explosive forms representing cracks in the earth. With these works he submitted

both a record and a synthesis based upon the event and his prior experience as an artist.

By the late forties and fifties Crawford had begun to use oblique and parallel shapes and a greater variety of color to compose more complex works. A counterpoint of line and plane was created. Through the use of tilted axes, Crawford tied occasionally symbolic, three dimensional forms to the two-dimensional picture plane.

In the sixties his work involved greater emphasis on the two-dimensional qualities of plane and line and a content of controlled energy inherent in broken or curving lines.

In reference to his own work the artist refuses to use criteria such as abstract or representational. He finds them invalid.²⁹ Inherent in other comments by Crawford is a basic individualism, expressionism and dynamism acceptable in American geometric work as opposed to the more purist European approach insistent upon absolute forms and right angles. Crawford has spoken of expressing his response to an environment and to the human logic behind that environment. Generally an abstract, geometric format connotes preclusion of an emotional statement. In this context Crawford feels that his work is expressive rather than geometric. He writes:

My work is usually charged with emotion and is not of a basically geometric character. I realize that this comment is quite at variance with many responses to my pictures (that they are strictly non-objective) but I am never concerned with a pictorial logic to the exclusion of feeling.³⁰

Indeed "New Orleans #5," 1954 (fig. 6) does not appear non-objective in comparison to work by Swinden, Von Wiegand and the others. Shapes and composition suggest architectural forms and relationships.

Diagonal lines create shallow perspective passages and play of three and two dimensional forms. Certain areas are pushed forward and pulled backward in space by Crawford's use of diagonals and overlapping planes. For example large white fields act as background and smaller white planes lie on top of other colors preserving a two dimensional sense.

Diagonal movements in the corners carry the eye toward the center of the canvas.

Thinly painted and precisely edged white areas appear brilliant and vivid among darker tones of blue, reddish-brown and yellow ochre.

A vital, energetic feeling suggestive of an industrial landscape is created through tonal contrasts and spatial movement.

Jean Xceron

At the age of fourteen Jean Xceron came to the United States from his native Greece. Prior to his first trip to Paris, Xceron studied and painted in New York. From 1927 to 1937 he lived and worked in Paris.³¹

Before departing for Europe Xceron had studied and struggled with the theories and images of Cézanne. During this early period he was interested in the structure inherent in the older master's work.

In Paris, Xceron's work was influenced by late paintings by Kandinsky, by Mondrian and by Synthetic Cubism.³² Early work of the thirties are indicative of Xceron's mixture of Cubist and Neo-Plastic styles by combining straight line and curvilinear form with tonal variety. In the early part of this decade his paintings were figurative; during the second half of the decade he became interested in light revealed within an abstract format.

"239B," 1938 (fig. 7) is exemplary of Xceron's style of this period. Having renounced figuration, he began to introduce atmosphere into his work through modelling or chiaroscuro. Modelling or gradation of tone from light to dark occurs from top to bottom or bottom to top of planes avoiding a sense of volume and keeping forms flattened to the surface. Tonal variations limited to planar areas add atmosphere. Secondary color rhythms and intervals are stressed within a format that emphasizes line over color. These horizontal and vertical linear elements connect planes in an arrangement of geometric forms on solid ground.

While preserving a feeling for geometric order like Mondrian, Xceron differs in his use of tonalities, curving lines and a figure-ground relationship.

A luminous, mystic feeling related to Kandinsky is tempered by his use of a few large, geometric shapes.

This early period reflects a combination of the logical and emotional approaches of Mondrian and Kandinsky respectively.

In the thirties Xceron returned to the United States, became a member of Abstract Artists of America and served as informant and interpreter of European styles to younger Americans.³³

In the forties Xceron's work showed a continuing interest in Neo-Plasticism and Kandinsky with the addition of an even greater interest in tonalities, brushwork and color variation.

In the fifties Xceron's work departed further from serenity and linear construction. A more romantic content was created by softened edges, a looser technique, transparencies reflecting his interest in light, a greater spontaneity of execution, modulated color and a lyrical or poetic feeling. A greater sense of depth was created and line was used as an accent rather than as architectural framework.

Work of the sixties continued the format of the previous decade with increased spontaneity and a more somber palette. Figurative images appeared more frequently. A reviewer commented on Xceron's "...ruminations on the principles of space and form construction from Cézanne to Mondrian..."³⁴ During this final period Xceron continued to base an architectural and lyrical style on interval and proportion.

Xceron absorbed a variety of European styles to achieve a personal lyricism evolved in a steady development toward maturity.

Although Swinden, Crawford and Xceron were early exponents of abstraction, none of these artists could properly be placed within the direct sphere of Mondrian and Neo-Plasticism. These men independently examined Cézanne and Cubism coming to abstract conclusions in their paintings. These visual statements paralleled those of De Stijl artists but lacked the austerity, limited vocabulary, and in the case of Crawford insistence upon right angles and straight lines as the sole basis of form.

Fritz Glarner

In comparison to the previously discussed artists, Fritz Glarner was directly and dramatically effected by Mondrian. However, like most American exponents of the style Glarner developed and personalized one aspect of the philosophy inherent in Mondrian's paintings.

In 1904 Glarner with his family moved from their native Switzerland to Italy. Glarner lived and studied in a Naples academy until 1922.

The following year he arrived in Paris. Almost immediately he met Van Doesberg, Vantongerloo, Helion, Calder, Arp, Delaunay and Léger. In spite of an early (1928) meeting with Mondrian in Paris, Glarner's work was not directly influenced by the older master until much later in New York.

During this Parisian period he painted mostly portraits and still life.³⁵ From 1931-36 he belonged to the Abstraction-Création group and commenced to reduce objects to simple forms, especially to rectangles and long diagonal shapes.

Glarner's middle period from 1936 to 1944 was spent in New York, where he worked to eliminate symbolism from his work and emphasize form. During this time Glarner's paintings preserved a distinction between figure and ground.

Then in 1943 Glarner met Mondrian in New York. Ensuing talks between the two men revolved about concepts of dynamic versus static equilibrium. Indeed Mondrian felt that only in his later American paintings had he achieved dynamic balance. These conversations seemed to have a profound effect upon Glarner. After Mondrian's death in 1944, Glarner stopped painting and drew for about a year throwing out most of his work. As a result of this transitional time of reflection and experimentation, he created "relational" painting and the tondo format. This mature period was marked by a concentration upon spatial organization, dynamic equilibrium and integration of form and background. To achieve the latter two states Glarner used the basic format of a rectangle divided by a diagonal to create slant and wedge shapes. In addition this "oblique" provided the possibility of relative degrees

of recession in space.

Glarner extended the range and role of the neutral tone or gray in his work. Many different tones of gray activate surfaces, provide sensations of recession and protrusion, and create positive and shadow forms. A sense of nuance and the presence of a symbolic duality is created by these greys. Glarner saw this duality as a basic element in life. He has said "...just as night and day make a whole, and just as everything in life goes in twos, painting expresses the whole of life."³⁶

By about 1947-8 primary colors and greys dominated in Glarner's paintings. Generally speaking the larger a grey area the lighter the tone.

In his development of "relational painting" Glarner worked toward an interdependence of various colors and forms on a plane and toward interplay and endless relationships of forms. Within the tondo format, Glarner attempted to proportion inner shapes to the periphery. His approach was based on intuition. He said "A visual problem is never put a priori as a mathematical problem, but is born in the process of painting and evolves in a state of unawareness of the painter."³⁷

In the late sixties Glarner was injured in a shipboard accident and painted very little thereafter.

When asked about his relationship to Mondrian, Glarner replied, "he was my friend," and after a short pause, "and he was my master."³⁸ Undoubtedly Glarner's contact with Mondrian caused a dramatic change in the younger artist's work, however Glarner's relationship to Mondrian is representative of other young American artists of the forties who tended to adapt some facet or part of Mondrian's form or aesthetic into their own personal vocabulary.

In general Glarner consolidated while Mondrian attempted to dynamically balance geometric form reduced from nature. Comparison of Mondrian's late diamonds to Glarner's tondos shows a concentration on closed space versus an open composition. Although Glarner moved close to the style of Mondrian he chose to use diagonals, circular compositions and colors other than primaries.³⁹ Glarner's in-

troduction of the acute angle created an expanding sense of movement.

The younger artist chose a format of interlocking planes rather than a grid. Mondrian simplified, Glarner became more intricate. Whereas Mondrian called "relationships" the basis of abstract art, Glarner referred to the repeated parallel planes or wedges in his work as "relational painting." In other words Mondrian spoke of universal meaning and Glarner of perceptual phenomenon.

Like Mondrian, Glarner used only straight lines and gradually worked toward the utilization of larger areas and lighter tones.

In Glarner's work an alternating sense of figure and ground throughout plus a general luminosity created by color areas that tend to slightly expand creates a sense of movement from what has been called "...a language of pumping planes."⁴⁰ In addition form seems to spin outward from a vortex. This spiraling movement adds a dynamic element.

When stared at, "Relational Painting #89," 1961 (fig. 8) seems to jump or bounce as the viewer perceives irregular jumps to related colors. Shades of grey and orange in the four corners offer a sense of balance and containment. Another stabilizer is the rectangular shape occupying one-third of the upper right corner. The prominent two-dimensional character of planes ties the picture down to the surface.

In this painting and in others by Glarner there are innumerable shades of grey adding a sense of atmosphere to the work. Glarner has claimed that he is a realist expressing basic dualities in terms of infinite nuance. These dualities include that of form and space as well as subjective and objective approaches to expression.⁴¹

Form and space areas are interchangeable in the artist's work. In fact Glarner has said: "My concern in painting has been to bring about a purer and closer interrelation between form and space..."⁴²

Glarner's work might be compared with that of Josef Albers. Whereas Albers limits form to concentrate on color variation, Glarner extends formal rhythms. Albers and Glarner both concentrated on the development

of a single idea. Within the context of the rapid flux of ideas today, such work functions as a stabilizing factor in maintaining a touchstone of aesthetic sensibility.

Charmion Von Wiegand

Whereas Glarner adopted Mondrian's use of geometric forms and dynamic relationships, Charmion von Wiegand in her own way preserved Mondrian's insistence upon the universal significance of form. She accepted the spiritual or less visual aspects of Mondrian.

After her meeting with Mondrian in 1941, von Wiegand worked closely with him until his death. She assisted him in the revision and translation of his writings.

In the late forties after Mondrian's death von Wiegand attempted to expand upon the "Boogie-Woogie" format. Using curves and ovals as well as triangles, rectangles and circles, she eliminated illusionistic space to achieve an all over two-dimensional design. She used carefully composed and varied colors to concentrate on the spiritual aspects often overlooked in Mondrian's work by other artists.

In the fifties Egyptian, Tibetan and Taoist religious and aesthetic concepts became significant to her work. She began to use the mandala, a spiral formed by squares and rectangles circled down to a center of intensity. Color choice was based upon pre-Confucian Chinese symbolism that used color to express four directions and four elements.⁴³

During this period of maturity, the artist linked the geometric form and universal aesthetic of Neo-Plasticism with the symbolic color figurations of Oriental philosophy. In writing about Tibetan mandala painting, von Wiegand points to a balance of color and line and the unity of opposites in equilibrium.⁴⁴

In defense of her abstract work, she pointed to the similarly abstract character of calculations and relationships involved in communications, finance, marketing and other facets of the contemporary world. She saw "a basic shift from a sensorial culture toward a new ideational one."⁴⁵ This search for a common denominator in the world as a whole is related to Mondrian's doctrine of

the universal significance of forms. There is also a parallel to Oriental thought. Man's place at the center of things was destroyed and he took his place among other creatures, systems and organisms of the earth. Von Wiegand saw abstraction as the only means of expressing this human position. She wrote:

...the ways of expressing this content (man's relationship to the universe) are ever-changing, varying with the epoch and the level of cultural development. From these arises the need to abstract from the visual appearance of nature, its underlying reality, laws and meaning.⁴⁶

The "Evolution," 1949-50 (fig. 9) appears to have been completed during the early part of the artist's career approximate to her close friendship with Mondrian. Forms are limited to squares and rectangles. Lines move through the picture space horizontally about one-third of the way up from the bottom edge and vertically down the center. These lines add compositional balance and unity.

Unlike Mondrian, Von Wiegand has added gray and blue-grey planes.

However, among paintings in this exhibition, Von Wiegand's remains closest to Mondrian's esthetic.

Ilya Bolotowsky

Although Ilya Bolotowsky uses an extensive palette as did von Wiegand, like Glarner, he is concerned with a more perceptual function of form.

In 1923 at the age of 16 this Russian born artist came to the United States. During his first ten years in this country he worked primarily in a figurative and semi-abstract manner.

The year 1933 was important for Bolotowsky because he saw work by Mondrian in the Gallatin Collection and by Miró at Pierre Matisse Gallery. From this point on he painted in an abstract manner. However the primary influences on his work of this time were Suprematism and Miró.

Near the end of the forties decade Neo-Plasticism had an important effect upon

Bolotowsky's work. During the next decade he moved toward a more geometrical format and toward the manner of Mondrian. About 1947 he was using pastel colors with primary hues and there were still some indications of spatial depth. These qualities are demonstrated in "Opalescent," 1947 (fig. 10). However, in the late fifties he began to use the outer edges of color rectangles to establish vertical and horizontal tensions related to the rim of the painting. Three dimensional space was eliminated and he began to explore diamond, circular and oval shaped canvases. His compositional resolutions within the diamond shape were assymetrical like those of Mondrian.

In 1961 Bolotowsky began to make painted columns.

By the mid sixties color areas were stronger and dominant. The white areas so important to the work of Mondrian diminish. In the latter part of this decade the artist broadens and simplifies luxuriant areas of color reducing black and white to narrow areas.

There are certain similarities and differences to the style of Mondrian. Bolotowsky uses a geometric grid but varies the rectangular format with diamond, circular and oval shaped canvases. He interplays horizontal and vertical tensions. In comparison Mondrian sought equilibrium.

Like most Americans influenced by Mondrian, Bolotowsky established an independent direction. By using recessive and projecting colors in parallel areas he achieved a syncopated rhythm at points of concentration and tension. Spiral rhythm and size progressions created a centrifugal movement.

Unlike Mondrian or Glarner, Bolotowsky used large planes of color with a lesser emphasis upon line. White areas spread apart colors that seemed to pull together. A complex series of rectangles were held in a state of tension. This more dynamic and expressive element contrasts with the balanced serenity of a painting by Mondrian. In reference to this point Bolotowsky wrote:

Neo-Plasticism can achieve unequalled tension, equilibrium and harmony through the relationship of the vertical and horizontal neutral elements.

My painting consists of several interweaving themes, each one composed of neutral rectangles of color. The negative spaces that are white, off-white and sometimes grey create an added tension by pulling apart color areas that by their nature are inclined to pull together. At times I allow a negative space to cut a painting entirely in two precisely in order to stress the feeling of the whole structure rebuilding itself together against obstacles. The purpose is to create visual poems of a lyrical, structural nature.⁴⁷

"Red Tondo," 1967-68 (fig. 11) exemplifies the use of luxuriant color characteristic of the artist's recent development. Warm and cool shades of red are separated by narrow, light yellow and white stripes.

Two relatively small areas at left are balanced by a larger area at right. A red stripe just to left of center separates two other planes of red.

Two horizontal lines at left and lower right seem to encourage the eye to move counter-clockwise. The composition is in turn stabilized by the narrow vertical planes.

On the whole this piece is intense, imposing and emblem-like.

Burgoyne Diller

Another early disciple of Mondrian was Burgoyne Diller.⁴⁸

Prior to his acquaintance with the work of the Dutch master Diller had studied Impressionist work. In the twenties he became aware of Cézanne and Cubism. While attending the Art Students League in the late twenties he experimented with Cubist principles of simultaneity and counterpoint. These formed important elements in Diller's later work.⁴⁹

About 1933-34 he became aware of the work of Mondrian and Diller began to explore a geometric, non-objective format based on Mondrian and Russian constructivist ideas. He became involved with the problem of volume construction on a two-dimensional sur-

face. In general a more lyrical tone and some constructed reliefs differentiate his work of this period from that of Mondrian.

During this early period Diller realized that by utilizing maximum contrast between primary or non-blending colors he could achieve an illusion of volume while preserving a two-dimensional surface.

Diller has divided subsequent development into three categories:

- 1) One or more rectangles were placed on a plane. Their shape, color, size and position were to be determined by a dynamic relationship to the two-dimensional background.
- 2) The original rectangle is submerged by adding other planes. Overlaps and lines helped to create a system of planes that redefined the surface. Although the rectangle was still identifiable, it possessed greater unity with the surface.
- 3) Within this phase the rectangle completely destroyed the picture surface in an active, complex composition involving numerous simultaneities.

Until 1951 Diller used these "themes" in a progression from one to three beginning again with the first in his conscious search for greater unity of surface.

In the forties rhythm, motion and counter-motion created through perpendicular forms and primary colors were indicative of the influence of Mondrian's New York work.⁵⁰ However, unlike Mondrian, Diller utilized a ground plane and contrast between positive and negative space. A balance of colored rectangles floated on a contrasting field.

About 1950 Diller's work began to reflect a synthetic and purifying process. Fewer rectangles were suspended on a colored ground.

In the mid-fifties Diller reached a mature phase marked by the use of asymmetrical space relations held in equilibrium. Color action and balance were achieved. In work of this period the eye can move diagonally from color plane to color plane as one is

arranged higher than the other. Varying intensities of color heighten movement. Diller described this as an "Angular opening" and stated that "No one primary is absolute; they are conceived only in relation to one another."⁵¹ This movement however is subordinated to the vertical/horizontal structure.

Diller spoke of the formal relationships he created as organic rather than geometric because the latter suggested measurement. Indeed Diller composed by a long process of shifting the alterations.⁵² One alteration effected the entire work.

In the sixties, Diller continued to be involved with color and spatial relationships in painting and in three-dimensional structures. "First Theme," 1960 (fig. 12) is characteristic of the early part of this decade when Diller was concerned with shapes that projected, receded and existed dynamically in a shallow space.

In the work of Diller the viewer experiences color-space as real and analogous to the principle of other natural sensations.

Diller's later work was important as a personal evolution out of Mondrian's principles of dynamic equilibrium toward the work of art as a separate, identifiable color-space.

Leon Polk Smith

In the early forties Leon Polk Smith became a full-time painter working in a semi-abstract manner involving rhythmic lines and fluctuating colors organized in elaborate designs. At this time his work was described as fantastic interpretations indicative of primeval forces involving human and animal life.⁵³ Using burlap and canvas for oil paintings, paper and Christmas wrapping for watercolors and gouaches, he juxtaposed glazed and scraped areas, thin washes and highly textured surfaces into abstract, anatomical shapes.

About 1945 Smith discovered Mondrian and began to utilize arrangements of colored and neutral toned rectangles on a white ground. Our painting, "New York City," 1945 (fig. 13) dates from this turning point in Smith's career. In spite of a general vertical arrangement, diagonal movements are cre-

ated through the association of right angles. Groupings of rectangles create vectors that define the surface. In spite of the serene shapes, a flickering surface arrangement is created relating to Mondrian's New York paintings.

At this stage Smith's work differed from that of Mondrian by a use of secondary colors, neutral tones and flat oblong shapes. During this early phase lasting until 1953, Polk demanded that edges begin to curve. This interest in the edge was derived from Cubism and continued to play an important part in Smith's work.

In 1954, Smith became interested in photographic closeups of tennis balls with enlarged stitching. As a result he began to attempt in his own work a translation of a spherical feeling to a flat rectangle.

In the late fifties Smith used hoops or stretchers with rounded edges. On these he painted irregularly curved Arpian shapes that jutted in from the sides. Two or three pure color areas disturbed perpendicular or parallel relationships. These color-shapes appeared to attract one another in a picture that recorded their slow movement.

In the 60's Smith's form shifted to the canvas itself in the form of round or bone-shapes. Clear, immaculately applied colors and a limited repertory of shapes created pulls and tensions. Taut relationships between two or three interacting colors often created impressions of more hues. Sinuous lines or edges and a precarious balance of forms confounded the figure-ground relationship. To the continuity of field, Smith opposed sets of positive-negative spatial relationships.

In 1966 Smith painted a series of "Correspondences" involving variant circle or square shapes in two colors. His stated purpose was to form "...a curved space all across the canvas, with only two colors to go by."⁵⁴

Recent canvases have been irregularly shaped and arranged in clusters. Tangential relationships created an interplay between outline and shape. These colored forms appeared weightless or even to lift themselves in space.

Since 1945 then Smith moved toward a greater interest in a curved space adjusted to a two-dimensional format.

Alice Trumbull Mason

In the early twenties Alice Trumbull Mason began to paint at the British Academy in Rome.⁵⁵ After about two years she returned to New York to study with the influential painter and teacher Charles W. Hawthorne. Her early canvases indicate the broad manner used and taught by Hawthorne, but an interest in light and structure reflected in this early work is prophetic of her later achievement. Her association with abstract painters Esphyr Slobodkina and Ilya Bolotowsky dates from this time.

Until last year Mason was virtually forgotten in American art. In May 1973 a retrospective exhibition of her work at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art brought her paintings back to public attention and exhibitions at several other museums have followed since.⁵⁶

In the Whitney catalogue, Robert Pincus-Witten puts forth the possibility that in the late twenties Mason encountered Kandinsky's Murnau landscapes. Pincus-Witten feels that this abstract interest was also strengthened through her study with Arshile Gorky.⁴⁶ During this early period there is a tendency toward geometrical simplification in her work.

Mason was an early member of the American Abstract Artists and participated in their first exhibition in 1937. Mason described her work of the late thirties and early forties as follows: "In painting, I developed through a biomorphic period to straight edges and angles, loosely and popularly called 'geometric.'"⁵⁸

Work of the early forties was characterized by flat, amoebic shapes and curvilinear lines reminiscent of the work of Miró as well as Arshile Gorky.⁵⁹ Through 1945 Mason's work exhibited her increasing consciousness of the two dimensions of the pictorial plane. Structural shapes, less amoebic and increasingly more geometric, related to the extremities or perimeter of the canvas. About mid-decade a purely geometric style emerged in Mason's painting. During this period she worked at Atelier 17 with Stanley Hayter

where she was to become an accomplished printmaker.

In the fifties there was an emphasis on verticality in the work of Mason. Subtle colors conveyed a sense of light, while overlapping shapes create a feeling of movement. "The Barbary Hedge," 1955 (fig. 14) involves a few shapes and diagonal lines forming triangular areas. An over-all two-dimensional composition emphasizes structural relationships realized on a rectangle of canvas.

In the sixties Mason continued to paint but it was entirely for herself because she had withdrawn from an art world that hadn't recognized her. In a series of modestly-sized canvases she made further experiments in rendering light on a two-dimensional plane.

Although she has received little recognition, Mason was undoubtedly one of the most gifted in American practitioners of geometric abstraction.

Irene Rice Pereira

Irene Rice Pereira began painting in a figurative manner. In 1932 she returned from a trip to Europe and North Africa where she was strongly impressed by the quality of light. Subsequently she began painting in a semi-abstract style not unlike Léger.

In 1935 she helped found and prepare courses for the Design Laboratory of the Works Progress Administration's Federal Arts Project. Here she taught and pursued her own researches with materials and textures until 1936. This experience was significant to Pereira's turn to a purely abstract style in 1937.

Although she used geometric shapes, Pereira did not evolve out of Mondrian's sphere. Instead of an interest in balance her early abstract work featured heavy textures and a concern for space, light and mood. Utilizing free-floating planes on colored grounds she attempted to create a fluid and dimensionless space. She had discovered that painted textures attracted luminous effects and she tried to heighten this factor.

In 1939 she created her first painting on glass.⁶⁰ She used parchment in 1941. During the forties she constructed paintings of superimposed sheets of glass, metal and masonite. Her purpose was to allow light to exist within the work rather than to paint its illusion.⁶¹ A continuous and infinite sense of movement could be created by refraction and reflection of light.

From commercial glass Pereira moved to polaroid glass. This was only a part of Pereira's extensive experiments with numerous materials including: hammered and corrugated glass, magnesite, corrugated and crumpled metals, glass beads, phosphorescent paint, mica dust, lacquer, silver and gold leaf, plastic paint, glyptal paint and cement.

"Transverse Parallels" 1946, (fig. 15) exemplifies Pereira's use of broken and refracted rays. A series of bright reflections are created as the spectator moves in front of the piece.

It is certain that Pereira's experimental approach to materials was facilitated by an abstract and semi-geometrical format. As early as 1947 she stated:

I employ the abstract idiom in painting rather than more traditional forms of expression because it offers me a wider range for experimentation. In these pictures I have endeavored to explore the formal possibilities of painting, with special emphasis on constructional ways of expressing space and experimenting with new use of materials, such as glass and parchment and new pigments.⁶²

In the fifties Pereira transferred knowledge gained from her constructions to oil paintings. She utilized a cross-like superstructure dividing the canvas into more areas and allowing light to come from behind a linear structure. In the latter part of the decade a lyrical feeling pervaded her work.

Pereira's work of the sixties was characterized by increasing rectangular complexity. In general the more open structure included a vertical with a top square at left and a bottom square at right. She continued to superimpose sheets of glass using its properties to create rhythmic movements of colored light in space. As the viewer changes posi-

tion the movement inherent in the art work shifts.

Pereira's architectural handling of space involved horizontal bands, trapezoids and rectangles floating on horizontal or perpendicular axes. Her use of rippling lines and surfaces add poetic, romantic elements. Since the fifties Pereira associated light with mystic sources. She wrote:

My paintings are a geometric contemplation of essences of thought. Unknowns and intangibles are given structure and dimensions. In this way, those aspects of experience which lie hidden from view are externalized by the mind and come into view as structure and form of thought.... Therefore, that which is "unknown" has the possibility of becoming "known" to consciousness.⁶³

Eventually she sought to express a space-time continuum simultaneously relating her compositions to cosmic principles.

Pereira's use of geometric form evolved out of her interest in materials and in establishing a physical light source and movement. Although her work reflects an early and continuous interest in a geometric format the results are more lyrical and expressionistic.

Charles Shaw

As early as 1934 Charles Shaw was working in a semi-abstract manner concentrating on light and two-dimensional patterns.

At the end of this decade Shaw began to make three dimensional constructions involving architectural shapes and utilizing some Arpian, amoeboid forms. "Construction," 1939 (fig. 16) a painted wooden relief is of this period and reflects Shaw's concern with architectonic elements.

At this time Shaw was a member of the Concretionist Group along with George L. K. Morris, John Ferren, Charles Biederman and Alexander Calder. All of these men were concerned with a non-objective format.

Since the late thirties Shaw illustrated of juvenile books. This experience apparently rubbed off on work of the mid-forties that was figurative and decorative in character.

In the late forties he also experimented with montages of playing cards, old prints and song sheets reflective of his continuing interest in old objects.⁶⁴

Works of the fifties were more austere revealing a marked interest in textured surfaces, secondary colors and references to nature. Geometric forms and spatial relationships are stressed in the second half of this decade.

Shaw's work of the sixties is still precise but color is bolder and content more lyrical. At this point Shaw appears to reinterpret Cubism in a romantic manner.

At the end of this decade, edges in Shaw's work harden and he became more preoccupied with problems of balance and symmetry.

Charles Biederman

Charles Biederman has been called "...one of the more neglected, most remarkable, and sustainedly radical artists of our time."⁶⁵ Indeed he chose to isolate himself from "establishment" centers in order to be closer to the nature that constituted a source for his art. He is unique because of a dogged, independent, and conscious development of his own statement in art.

Paintings and drawings of the late twenties were suggestive of Biederman's various interests in the work of Léger, Cubism and Cézanne. Cézanne's attempt to perceive a structure in nature was particularly important to Biederman.

In the thirties, Miró-like shapes were apparent.

About 1936-37 subsequent to a trip to Paris, Biederman began working in a Neo-Plastic manner.⁶⁶ After 1937 he began to concentrate on a relief format.

Back in New York he continued to study Mondrian. In the late thirties his work reflects a combination of the geometric elements of Mondrian and the three dimensional characteristics of Gabo and Pevsner.

From 1937-47 his work was influenced by Mondrian. However, during the latter part of this period he became increasingly concerned with producing a "natural" structure rather

than the ideal or absolute structure of Mondrian. In the early forties he moved to a rural community, Red Wing, Minnesota, in order to be closer to nature.

After a considerable period of endeavor, in 1948 he published "Art as the Evolution of Visual Knowledge," in which he pointed to Courbet and Monet as well as Cézanne and Mondrian as sources for modern art, particularly for his own direction. Monet's interest in the relationship of color to light and in time or a particularized impression of nature was significant to Biederman's ideas. He saw in Cézanne's work a method of planar organization and felt that Mondrian was heir to Cézanne's accomplishments.

Both Constructivism and de Stijl influenced Biederman's own work up until the late forties when he felt a greater closeness to the work of Cézanne.

After World War II his book had a great impact upon English artists, especially Victor Pasmore.⁶⁷ Many of them began to correspond with Biederman.

In 1952 he introduced the term "Structurism" to describe his work produced since the late thirties. In his words, "Structurist Art pursues an integral relationship to Nature's process of creation."⁶⁸ To Biederman nature was a source for creative accomplishment and he proceeded to study nature's "building methods."

In his work planar divisions defined spatial intervals. Color and color interaction created a sense of space and light. Natural as well as painted light provided movement in the form of changing formal relationships. Light was as important as any other factor in his work. Biederman offered the spectator a view of the structure he found in nature without jeopardizing the light effects that create the sense of change or movement inherent in nature.

These qualities are apparent in "Structurist Reliefs, Red Wing #50," 1960-66 (fig. 17). Smoothly painted, machine manufactured, aluminum shapes offer no interference for a total experience of light and color. A harmony of parts and relationships in addition to changing effects of light and color evoke intellectual and emotional responses from the viewer.

Biederman's interests in Monet, Mondrian and Constructivism coalesced into an independent format. Unlike Monet, Biederman displayed variables of light. Monet sought to capture these variables in a single form. Biederman abandoned Mondrian's doctrine of an absolute symmetry. Like Constructivist productions, Biederman rejected concepts of mass and affirms the kinetic potential of form. However, he has not become involved in the space-time factor emphasized by Constructivist artists. Also Structurism differed from Constructivism by the fact of its evolution from painting.

In spite of the high quality of Biederman's work he has not received wide recognition in the United States and particularly in the Middle West. The presence and strength of Biederman's work prompted at least one critic to comment with regard to the artist's position in today's art world: "Yet this much can be admitted: when an artist whose work shows such sustained invention and whose position is defined with such vigour and consistency appears peripheral, it may be that our own stance is askew."⁶⁹

Victor Pasmore

There is one work by an Englishman in our exhibition. Interestingly enough the writings of the American artist, Biederman, had a profound affect upon Pasmore's geometrical work.

As early as the twenties during his years at Harrow School, Pasmore showed a rather systematically developed interest in color and light. He read Chevreul on color and Leonardo's notebooks. He admired Rembrandt and made notes on Turner's work at the Tate Gallery.

As a student at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, Pasmore utilized a pronounced and rather Impressionistic brush-stroke.

In 1931 he opened a studio and began to paint full time in 1938.

In the late thirties his association with the Euston Road Group lead him to study Whistler, Courbet and Cézanne. Early figure studies show influence from the work of Bonnard, Degas and Whistler. During this early period there is also an abstract tendency reflecting the Fauvist and Cubist

styles of Matisse and Picasso respectively.

In the early forties he began a study of the old masters. Simultaneously he read writings by Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and also the philosophy of space-time. This was an experimental period. He made Impressionistic landscapes, spiral abstractions, transparent reliefs, projective paintings and screen printings. In the mid-forties a more constructed or structural emphasis occurs in his work.

About 1947-48 he turned to abstract painting. During the latter year he read Kandinsky, Mondrian and Arp. As he did with more realistic styles, the artist explored abstract tendencies in quite a systematic and philosophical manner. Also this year he began to utilize the collage technique. These collages (and paintings) were based on spiral motifs and constructed in wood and plastic. At the end of this decade he admired the work of Ben Nicholson whom he met in 1950 and worked near that summer. This period of geometric paintings and collages extended from 1948-1951.

The year 1951 was a significant one for Pasmore because he became aware of and read Biederman's book, "Art as the Evolution of Visual Knowledge." In his book Biederman called painting obsolete and stated that the future of art lay in creating reliefs. At the end of this year Pasmore created his first reliefs. Like Biederman he took a position against the illusionistic representation of space, simultaneously stating the necessity for constructions of actual dimensional structure.

Pasmore's early constructed reliefs were hand-made. Later they became impersonal, machine-made pieces involved with effects of transparency, reflection and texture. At this point Pasmore approached the Constructivist esthetic of "real" (rather than illusionistic) space, light and time conveyed through the use of contemporary industrial products.

In 1951 Pasmore, with Kenneth and Mary Martin, formed the British Constructivist Group and exhibited with several artists devoted to a more or less constructivist manner. At this time he participated in the publication of "Broadsheet No. 1" the first manifesto of abstract art in post-war England

At this time he felt that pure form should have a physical reality and that art should come to terms with a machine technique. The reliefs of 1956-57 could be mechanically repeated and usually were issued in editions of six to twelve. In 1955 he became a consultant architectural designer to Peterlee Company in Durham.

In 1956-57 he began to paint again and since 1964 has returned almost entirely to painting.

In the "Transparent Relief Construction in White, Black and Indian Red," 1960-61 (fig. 18) Pasmore preserved a sense of restrained counterbalance. The plastic material allows a full display of light effects. Interrelationships between light and space animate the simple structure. Complex shadow patterns animate surfaces and the wall beyond the piece. Effects of light, transparency and reflection are disassociated from familiar images and allowed to exist independently. Space, light and air are evoked rather than explicitly rendered. An inherent casualness allows for a color, line or shape to be imagined as well as deliberately stated.

Pasmore's method of working involved a preconceived process or method but not a preconceived idea. He has said, "My compositions are what I call organic. They arise and develop out of a basic unit, a module ..."⁷⁰

Dore Ashton has accurately described Pasmore as "a purifier, but not a purist."⁷¹

Josef Albers

In what appears to be a "minimal" range of options, today's art is characterized by a multiplicity of possible arrangements. Josef Albers like many younger American artists has tended to explore the stimulative powers of pure form rather than representational elements.

In the work of Albers there is both past and present. His famous "Homage to the Square" series was influenced by Suprematism and De Stijl, but its simple, direct statement of form is related to contemporaneous minimal form developments.

In 1908 before he began formal art

training, Albers had discovered Matisse and Cézanne. The latter's use of patches of color on one plane was particularly appealing. In Berlin about 1913 he discovered the more expressive content of Munch, Van Gogh and Die Brücke as well as work by Italian Futurist painters and the color abstractions of Delaunay. His own work during this early period was within an Expressionistic vein.

About 1916 to 1918 he began to synthesize structure in the manner of Cézanne. From 1916-19 he studied with the Dutch artist Thorn Prikker. (Mondrian was also interested in the work of this artist.) Albers became a member of the Dutch "Luminist" Group whose work resembled the earlier Neo-Impressionist phase of art. During this period Albers created a flat, decorative style reflective of an interest in light and color. His exposure to expressionistic elements, however, did not deter an innate sense of order.

In 1919 he studied briefly in Munich with the academician Franz Stuck. Then he went to the Bauhaus. In so doing he put aside previous academic training to rethink his position at an institution that put equal emphasis upon applied and fine art.

It should be noted that the Bauhaus curriculum was based upon problems of form and craft. The form course taught by Johannes Itten included specific problems dealing with patterns of squares or overlapping squares to teach color interaction. This course and later teachings by Albers himself seem to provide a source for his later "Homage" series.

As previously mentioned Bauhaus theory was to a large extent indebted to Dutch De Stijl and Russian Constructivist ideas. Modern materials and techniques were stressed. In the early twenties Albers composed abstract formats consisting of squares and rectangles of colored, cut glass.⁷² Even within this early period he worked in series.

In 1923 when the Bauhaus moved to Dessau, Albers was hired to teach basic design based upon an analysis of material and form; glass, furniture and wallpaper workshops; and color and drawing classes.

From 1925 Albers explored the possibilities of various forms materials and techni-

ques. In the late twenties he used the window as a theme and a format of grids of rectangles.

When Hitler closed the Bauhaus, Albers and his wife, Anni, a highly gifted textile designer, came to the United States. He began to work with oils again and resume a teaching career that was to make him one of the two most influential art teachers in the United States along with Hans Hofmann. Albers took over the experimental Black Mountain College in North Carolina where he introduced a Bauhaus-based core curriculum emphasizing abstract composition and design.

In the late forties Albers worked almost entirely with sharp-edged, geometrical shapes in largely monochromatic tones. About the middle of the decade he became interested in perceptual ambiguities and during the summer of 1949 he began the "Homage to the Square" series involving a simple form but a complex color arrangement.

Like Glarner, Bolotowsky and some younger non-objective artists, Albers developed a perceptual approach in contrast to the metaphysical, universal concepts of Mondrian or Malevich. As has been stated Albers involvement with design instruction probably prompted his interest in color interaction.⁷³

Other sources for the square series include Malevich's "Black Square" and later white on white paintings designed to evoke "pure sensation." Mondrian utilized the square as well as rectangular units. Constructivist influence included spatial interests as well as the idea of the series concept inherent in industrial processes.

Albers distinguished between the physical nature of color and its psychological effects. In "Study for an Early Diary," 1954 (fig. 19) Albers used the relative aspects of color to animate the painting. He wrote:

As a rule, I use either three or four colors in a painting. Merely by changing one color, a totally different climate is produced, though all the other colors in the work remain identical in area and hue. With two separate colors in no way overlapping, three are produced through inter-action. Each borrows from and

gives to the other. Where they meet, where they intersect, a new color results. In science, one plus one is two, but in art it can be three. Often I have to paint a picture ten different times before I reach a realization. I usually start with a very small sketch, then comes painting after painting until I realize what I'm after.⁷⁴

Although one's first impression is one of a calm, geometric order, the inherent dramatic action is soon apparent. Colors, their intensity and area, are chosen for mutual possibilities of change and interaction. Three or four squares are arranged on a perpendicular axis, but the steps create a sense of illusionistic space. Although colors meet one another only at the edges they modify and move in front of and behind one another. Greater width allowed at the bottom provides stability.

Two and three dimensional space are apparent as well as color transparency, translucency and movement. In this manner Albers points out and capitalizes upon the discrepancy between physical fact and psychic effect. He indicates the basic relativity and instability of colors as they become "social" in their relationships with neighboring hues. Structure appears to progress and recede in relation to the viewer. Light is created through the illusion of translucency and transparency. "Early Diary" exemplifies the hypnotic effect created by color interaction as the center blue square is projected and simultaneously retained by a middle yellow and outer warm, pink square.

Albers wrote about his use of color:

When I paint
I think and see
first and most - color
but color as motion

Color not only accompanying
form of lateral extension
and after being moved
remaining arrested

But of perpetual inner movement
as aggression - to and from the spectator
besides interaction and interdependence

with shape and hue and light

Color in a direct and frontal focus

and when closely felt

as a breathing and pulsating

---from within.⁷⁵

The technique or method used by Albers in the square series involves pure oil paint used on a masonite panel. He feels that a loss of color and light results from mixing colors. The wall-like character of the wooden panel attracts him and he often uses the wrong side. Several preparatory coats of zinc white are applied to the panel. No tape is used and a thin coat of paint is applied with a palette knife avoiding a textured or impasto surface. He leaves an outside edge of white to give the painting a beginning and an end.⁷⁶

Final execution of a painting is a form of reproduction not involving formal invention. All the problems have been solved in numerous sketches.

Coexisting with visual phenomenon expressed in the square series, Albers points to subjective qualities.

Color in my opinion behaves like man
- in two distinct ways: first in self-realization and then in the realization of relationships with others.⁷⁷

It must be noted that the square itself is a man-made form. Albers feels that order does not inhibit feeling but makes it significant.⁷⁸ Actually geometry is secondary to Albers.

For me, color is the means of my idiom. It's autonomic. I'm not paying 'homage to a square.' It's only the dish I serve my craziness about color in.⁷⁹

Albers decided upon the series format to achieve a greater meaning through the relationship of individual and separate paintings. Each painting is a variant rather than a solution. He does not expect to find an end or solution with any one painting. He has written, "...science aims at solving

the problems of life, whereas art depends on unsolved problems."⁸⁰ In much of today's art there is a tendency toward a series of works on a theme rather than an individual statement.

Alber's concern with a simplified geometrical format is also relative to work produced today as is his statement: "There is no extraordinary without the ordinary and the root of both is order."⁸¹ His work with a geometrical design and color interaction are also important to younger artists today. In surveying the total contemporary art scene, one could make a case for Neil Welliver's assertion that "Ratio is in - angst is out."⁸²

John McLaughlin

Today there has been a tendency to relate part to whole and image to edge. Unlike de Stijl or Suprematist masters, some younger artists use forms involving the whole picture area. Large, simple shapes create a sense of ambiguity and an optical drama. In contrast to the universal aspirations of Mondrian, the subject matter in a number of recent paintings as Lawrence Alloway has put it is "uncertainty, economically presented."

Before becoming a painter, John McLaughlin's background was a varied one. In 1916 he spent two years in the navy, then he became a real estate dealer first in Boston and then in Chicago. In 1935 he and his wife went to Japan to further their interest in the Japanese language and art. After a few years he returned to Boston opening a small shop dealing in Japanese prints. Recruited by the Marine Corps in 1941 as a language officer, he was sent to Honolulu where he studied Japanese at the University of Hawaii. In 1943 he was assigned to the Military Intelligence School in Minneapolis and was eventually sent to the China-Burma-India theater where he spent two years as an army language officer.

He had begun to paint in 1938, however upon his return to the United States he moved to California and began to paint full-time. He is self-taught.

In early works McLaughlin utilized Neo-Plastic and Suprematist devices to deal with a space that he felt had a metaphorical meaning.

As early as 1948 he had entered a mature style that was to be characterized by the use of neutral form, indeterminate color, dematerialized paint and the presence of large simple shapes.

While in the east the artist observed large empty spaces in Oriental art. Fifteenth and sixteenth century Japanese painters, especially Sesshu used a "marvelous void." In that connection McLaughlin cites Sesshu, Malevich and Mondrian as major influences.⁸³ McLaughlin has expressed in retrospect his initial reaction to these eastern paintings: "I could get into the pictures and they made me wonder who I was. Western painters, on the other hand, tried to tell me who they were."⁸⁴ McLaughlin felt that such pictures could engage the viewer by pure experience overcoming the limitations of a painting as an object.

In the fifties McLaughlin used primarily grey, blue, yellow and white to form more complex compositions. In order to rid his work of tangible substance, McLaughlin tried to reduce the physical presence of color. Gradually his reductive style became firmer and more taut. His work of the fifties anticipated the later hard-edge and minimal styles of Kenneth Noland, Gene Davis and Ellsworth Kelly in a general drift away from Abstract Expressionism. In a 1959 essay for the catalogue "Four Abstract Classicists," Jules Langsner first used the term "hard-edge" to describe McLaughlin's work and that of others in this show.

McLaughlin became an exponent of the primacy of the rectilinear field of the canvas. Generally he used flat rectangles in an asymmetrical division of the picture field. These rectangles were contained by surrounding space. Much like Albers' use of the square, McLaughlin used the rectangle as a neutral form unlike anything in nature.

McLaughlin's shapes are perpendicular with no curves, diagonals or other natural forms. Unlike Ellsworth Kelly, for example, McLaughlin is not interested in placement of an image according to canvas size. The controlling loci is not in the center of the work but the eye must physically move from left to right.

Balanced forms tend to neutralize one another in attaining the anonymity desired

by the artist. To the viewer equated negative and positive forms tend to oscillate. Langsner has pointed to the fact that McLaughlin's achievement of space is varied rather than fixed. In reference to this point "#1, 1965," (fig. 20) has no confining frame.

Hard edges give each surface an equal value. Even color is equated with shape to become "colorform." Langsner feels that McLaughlin has completed the problem of Mondrian and Malevich with figure-ground relationships.

Although the term "classicism" has been used to describe work by McLaughlin and other geometric abstractionists, their work differs from the historical context of the term by a lack of reference to the familiar world. Also the word must be used to describe structure rather than content that in McLaughlin's work involves a blend of non-objectivist and Oriental philosophy.

McLaughlin has increasingly concentrated on the primary colors plus black, white and grey.⁸⁵ Like Albers he applies oil paint with a palette knife and is careful not to leave brush marks. However in recent work he has explored the more sensuous aspects of paint as may be seen in the white areas of "#1, 1965."

The actual completion of a painting becomes the completion of an idea. McLaughlin tries out compositions by trial and error applying construction paper directly to the canvas. When a satisfying composition is found, he makes notes on placement, draws the design on the canvas and paints it. Color and form are intuitive selections. He has written:

I use my powers of selection (and rejection) to the full, but on the other hand I cannot explain why I accept a particular design as against one another. Nor, incidentally, do I employ logic as a means of realizing my objectives. I have no workable scheme or formula. If my work could be reasoned out and defined in terms of logic I have failed.⁸⁶

Like Mondrian, McLaughlin refrains from particularities, however, he does not seek a dynamic equilibrated state. McLaughlin's

work allows the viewer to directly respond to reality expressed by the void and anonymous form.

"...I do not hesitate to present an anonymous structure designed to provoke in him a desire to consider further and without restriction his relationship to nature."⁸⁷

McLaughlin sees particularized form as limiting and anonymous form as suited to the intensification of the viewer's natural desire for free contemplation. The desired goal is the viewer's intuitive apprehension of the significance of total experience.

Man's intellect or reasoning power is as human as his emotional side. McLaughlin's work represents the complete objectification of individual, subjective experience. The viewer is allowed to contemplate and experience this rational summary and relate it to his own feelings and conclusions.

Frederick Hammersley

Born in Salt Lake City, Hammersley was raised in Utah and Idaho. His study of art however was based in California, particularly at Chouinard Art Institute and Jepson School of Art in Los Angeles.

In 1952 he painted his first abstract work. During a subsequent early period of development he put colored areas directly on the canvas surface without executing previous plans or drawings. Initially placed shapes suggested subsequent ones as Hammersley worked toward clarification of his image.

With maturity his shapes have become simplified and colors more intense. Exemplary of this recent tendency is "Homerun," 1967-68 (fig. 21).

The format is based upon flat circles, squares, triangles and rectangles involving oppositions of positive and negative space. Smooth single tones are applied via a hard-edge, immaculately precise technique. Variation of shapes and colors are united by technique and a continuously interlocked space.

The austerity of the method is relieved by the artist's refinement and choice

of form and color. Jules Langsner goes so far as to state:

These "hard-edge" abstractions, far from austere, impersonal, cold and calculating, are expressions of genuine lyricism. For Hammersley the discipline imposed by precision, purity of form and color is an advantage, a liberating force, and not a constriction, not an impediment to the flow of ideas, just as the fourteen lines of a sonnet, in the hands of a genuine lyrical poet, result in a crystallizing expression in which not so much as an inflection can be changed.⁸⁸

Like McLaughlin, Hammersley shows a concern for order and a distilled emotional impact. Both utilize a hard-edge technique and areas of unmodulated color.

Langsner traces the hard-edge technique of McLaughlin and Hammersley to Mondrian and Malevich, however he points to the "unPlatonic" esthetic of the younger artists.⁸⁹ There are no universal precepts or goals. Furthermore, as Langsner has pointed out, geometrical form is not essential to the more recent hard-edge development.⁹⁰

Although both Hammersley and McLaughlin are concerned with relationships of part to whole, the format is larger and simpler in McLaughlin's work. Hammersley's paintings are more varied in form and color. Richer colors contribute a more lyrical feeling. In comparison McLaughlin's work seems more cold and impersonal.

Hammersley has said "Color is the reason for painting. Color is pleasure and satisfaction."⁹¹ This interest marks the distinctive feature of this artist's formal concerns.

Part III. Conclusion

"Thus the century marches, but it scarcely advances, despite this fantastic accumulation of new goods, despite its technical inventions that have changed our gestures and the setting of our lives, that are in the process of utterly transform-

ing social relations. The deep values hardly stir."⁹²

European influences, manifested through direct or indirect contact with artists and their work were important to the formulation of a geometric abstract trend in America. In at least one case, the relationship between Biederman and Pasmore, an American artist had an effect upon artists outside of this country.

Swinden, Crawford and Xceron came to abstract conclusions after an examination of Cézanne and Cubist principles. Parallels to and relationships with Mondrian existed, however the Americans did not see their less austere work as absolute statements.

Glarner, von Wiegand, Bolotowsky, Diller and Smith were directly influenced by Mondrian and his work especially that of the New York period. However, they all developed mature styles that are at best tangential to that of Mondrian. Problems concerning form and space relationships; color-space, as well as color symbolism and interaction; positive and negative space; and horizontal and vertical tensions occupied these artists providing them with a life time of possibilities.

Late work by Bolotowsky, Diller and Smith parallel and provide a bridge from European Geometric Abstraction to "hard-edge" and minimal developments of the sixties.

Although less directly effected by Mondrian, Mason and Pereira utilized a geometric format. Pereira's interest in materials resembles Bauhaus practices; however her romantic, lyrical concern for light differentiates her work from either European source.

Out of an interest in geometric shapes and in Mondrian, a few artists embarked upon construction of three-dimensional reliefs. Work by Shaw is architectonic in character. Biederman, like Pereira, was interested in physical light. However, Biederman preserved a purely geometric structure over which natural light may move in endless variations. Intellectual as well as emotional response is elicited. Pasmore's relief constructions resulted from his acquaintance with Biederman's book. Unlike Biederman's

regular juxtaposition of opaque planes, Pasmore's reliefs are more irregular in shape and outline and utilize effects of transparency. Pasmore titled his work "Construction" rather than "Structurist" showing influence from the European Constructivist movement.

Although Albers used geometric shapes, he was basically concerned with color interaction. His minimal shapes and more perceptual approach relate his work to contemporaneous trends.

The tendency toward simplification and reduction, repetition and symmetry is exemplified by the work of McLaughlin and Hammersley. McLaughlin achieved anonymous forms and complete integration of figure and ground. Hammersley's continuously interlocked space involves oppositions of positive and negative shapes, greater variety of forms and a richer color scheme.

Thus parallels to as well as direct and indirect relationships with Mondrian may be traced up to the present day. Although recent movements, such as "hard-edge" and minimal, are related to and in part a product of specifically American developments like Abstract Expressionism and Color-Field, geometric abstraction has and does function as a source and touchstone supporting and strengthening new tendencies.

FOOTNOTES

¹"Art-As-Art," Art International, VI (December 20, 1962), 35.

²Thomas B. Hess, Abstract Painting: Background and American Phase (New York: The Viking Press, 1951), 4.

³Michel Seuphor (Ferdinand Louis Berckelaers), Dictionary of Abstract Painting, with a History of Abstract Painting, trans. Lionel Izod, John Montague and Francis Scarfe (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1957), 10.

⁴Other artists working in an abstract manner in Paris at this time were Frank Kupka and Francis Picabia. Americans Morgan Russell and Stanton Macdonald-Wright working in Paris developed the Synchromist movement in 1912. Synchromism like Orphism explored structural possibilities of color.

⁵Michel Seuphor (Ferdinand Louis Berckelaers), Piet Mondrian, Life and Work (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1956), 114.

⁶Pieter Cornelis Mondrian, Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art 1937, and Other Essays 1941-1943 (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951), 10.

⁷Gradually I became aware that Cubism did not accept the logical consequences of its own discoveries, it was not developing abstraction toward its ultimate goal, the expression of pure reality. I felt that this reality can only be established through pure plastics. In its essential expression, pure plastics is unconditioned by subjective feeling and conception. It took me a long time to discover that particularities of form and natural color evoke subjective states of feeling.

Ibid.

⁸Ibid., 32.

⁹Michel Seuphor (Ferdinand Louis Berckelaers), Abstract Painting: 50 Years of Accomplishment from Kandinsky to the Present

(New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1961), 96. See also H. L. C. Jaffe, De Stijl 1917-1931: The Dutch Contribution to Modern Art (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1956), 33.

¹⁰The Société Anonyme purchased: Kandinsky 1923, 1924; Malevich 1922; Mondrian 1931; Schwitters 1922; El Lissitzky 1927.

¹¹De Stijl theories were known through publications, however Mondrian's work was represented only in Gallatin's collection.

¹²Barbara Rose, American Art Since 1900: A Critical History (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1968), 145-46. Other original members of A.A.A. were: G. E. Gallatin, Jeanne Carles, A. N. Christie, Marie Kennedy, Ray Kaiser, W. M. Zogvaum, Rosalind Bengelsdorf, Vaclav Vytlacil, Paul Kelpé, R. D. Turnbull, Frederick J. Whiteman, John Opper, George Cavallon, Leo Lances, Esphyr Slobodkina, Werner Drewes and Richard Taylor. See "Abstractionists Unite," Art Digest, XXI (May 1950), 9 and John Gordon, Geometric Abstraction in America (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1962), 12.

¹³American Abstract Artists (New York: The Association, 1938-46).

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Seuphor, Mondrian, 192.

¹⁸Post-Mondrian Abstraction in America, text by Robert Pincus-Witten (Chicago: Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, 1973).

¹⁹The influence of Mondrian may also be perceived in the tendency toward "all-over" painting in Abstract Expressionist work.

²⁰The Whitney's "Geometric Abstraction" show of 1962 was the first comprehensive exhibition of this type.

²¹Daniel Robbins, Cézanne and Structure in Modern Painting (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1963).

²²Pieter Cornelis Mondrian, Plastic Art and Pure Plastic Art 1937 and Other Essays 1941-1943 (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1951), 14.

²³The World of Abstract Art, ed. The American Abstract Artists (New York: George Wittenborn Inc.), 6.

²⁴Sidney Tillim, "Exhibition at Graham Gallery," Arts, XXXVI (May 1962), 86.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ralston Crawford, Oils and Lithographs, text by H. H. Arnason (New York: Nordness Gallery, 1963). See also Barbara Rose, Ralston Crawford: American Modernist (St. Louis, Missouri: The Helman Gallery, 1971).

²⁷For examples of these weather maps see "Thunder over the North Atlantic," Fortune, XXX (November 1944), 157 & 159.

²⁸Ralston Crawford, introd. by James Johnson Sweeney (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Art Gallery, 1950).

²⁹Crawford, Nordness 1963.

³⁰E. W. Watson, "Art of Ralston Crawford," American Artist, XXIV (April 1960), 49.

³¹During this period he wrote articles for the Paris edition of the Chicago Tribune and Boston Evening Transcript. James R. Mellow, "Jean Xceron at Seventy," Arts, XXXIV (June 1960), 30.

³²In Paris he met Mondrian, Kandinsky and Picasso. Ibid. Notebooks kept in the thirties indicate his interest in Synthetic Cubist experimentation. "Peridot-Washburn Gallery, New York, Exhibit," Art International, XV (December 1971), 53.

³³From 1939 he was among the staff of the Guggenheim Museum of Art. Mellow, 30.

³⁴Sidney Tillim, "Exhibition at Fried Gallery," Arts, XXXVIII (September 1964), 66.

³⁵Ashton feels that Glarner's sources were Impressionism and Post-Impressionism rather than the Cubist sources of most geometric abstractionist artists. Dore Ashton, "Fritz Glarner," Art International, VII (January 1963), 50.

³⁶Ibid., 51.

³⁷Fritz Glarner, "What Abstract Art Means to Me," Museum of Modern Art Bulletin, XVIII (1951), 10.

³⁸"Exhibition, Rose Fried Gallery," Art Digest, XXV (February 15, 1951), 20.

³⁹Glarner wrote about the use of the diagonal:

The slant or oblique which I have introduced in my painting...determines the space and liberates the form. This may be seen clearly in the circle, the strongest form symbol of oneness. A multiplicity of similar quadrilaterals, one side of each a segment of the circumference, establishes the structure and becomes one with the space. Differentiation is established by the opposition of color and space areas, and the receding and advancing properties of various colors which give a new kind of depth to the space. Differentiation of textures disturbs the unity of a painting of pure relationships. The same texture should be maintained throughout the work....

¹²Americans, ed. Dorothy C. Miller (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1956), 28.

⁴⁰Fritz Glarner, text Natalie Edgar (San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Art, 1970).

⁴¹Ashton, "Glarner," 49, 53, 55.

⁴²12 Americans, 28.

⁴³"Exhibition of Paintings at Heller Gallery," Art News, LIV (January 1956), 55.

⁴⁴Charmion von Wiegand, "The Adamantine Way: Exhibition of Tibetan Pictures and Sculptures at Asia House," Art News, LXVIII (April 1969), 22D.

⁴⁵Charmion von Wiegand, "The Oriental Tradition and Abstract Art," The World of Abstract Art (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, Inc., 1957), 58.

⁴⁶Charmion von Wiegand, statement, Réalités Nouvelles, no. 5 (1951), 88.

⁴⁷Bolotowsky, Recent Paintings and Columns (New York: Borgenicht Gallery, 1972).

⁴⁸Diller accompanied Holtzman to Paris to visit Mondrian.

⁴⁹In 1931 Hans Hofmann came to the

League and Diller got to know him. Burgoyne Diller: 1906-1965 (Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey State Museum), 1966.

⁵⁰In the forties Diller also begins to work with three-dimensional constructions.

⁵¹Elaine de Kooning, "Diller Paints a Picture," Art News, LI (January 1953), 55.

⁵²In her article, Elaine de Kooning describes Diller's working procedure. Ibid., pp. 29-29 & 55.

⁵³H. Boswell, "Fantasies at Pinacotheca," Art Digest, XVII (December 1, 1942), 18.

⁵⁴Nicolas Calas, "Exhibition at Galerie Chalette," Arts, XLIV (November 1969), 60.

⁵⁵Alice Trumbull Mason (1904-71), text Robert Pincus-Witten (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1973).

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Prior to her experiments, Duchamp, Moholy-Nagy, and Albers had worked with this material.

⁶¹Pereira's interest in utilizing actual light sources is reflected in a statement made by her in reference to her paintings on canvas:

In the canvases, in addition to expressing space relations on a two-dimensional surface, I have tried to exploit the possibilities of pigment to produce textural effects, vibrancy, luminosity, transparency, density of paint, the effect of light on incised and relief surfaces. I have tried to achieve results by developing a working process using the medium itself rather than by creating an illusionistic interpretation."

¹⁴Americans, ed. Dorothy C. Miller (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946), 44.

⁶²Irene Rice Pereira, "How I Work," Art News, XLVI (September 1947), 27.

⁶³John I. H. Baur, Nature in Abstraction (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1958), 78.

⁶⁴See Biographies, Shaw, Publications.

⁶⁵Robin Denny, "Charles Biederman: from the Actual to the Sublime," Studio, CLXXVIII (September 1969), 67.

⁶⁶In Paris, Biederman met Mondrian, Léger, Arp, Brancusi, Miró, Vantongerloo and later Pevsner. James Burr, "Hayward Gallery, London: Exhibit," Apollo, XC (October 1969), 335.

⁶⁷Other artists influenced were: Anthony Hill, Mary Martin, Peter Stroud and Gilliam Wise. George Rickey, Constructivism; Origins and Evolution (New York: George Braziller, 1967), 121.

⁶⁸Eli Bornstein, "Structurist Art and Creative Integration," Art International, XI, no. 4 (April 20, 1967), 32.

⁶⁹Stephen Bann, "The Centrality of Charles Biederman," Studio, CLXXVIII (September 1969), 74.

⁷⁰Charles S. Spencer, "Victor Pasmore: the Home-Coming to Paint," Studio, LCXVII (June 1964), 228.

⁷¹Dore Ashton, "New York: Pasmore Exhibition at Marlborough Gerson," Studio, LCXXV (January 1968), 39.

⁷²Josef Albers, Homage to the Square: Soft Edge-Hard Edge (New Haven, Connecticut: Ives-Sillman, 1965).

⁷³See text page 19. Rita Abbey maintains that his color experiments relate to Goethe's "Theory of Colors." Rita Ceanin Abbey, "Color: Man and Nature," Art Journal, XXXI (Fall 1971), 112.

⁷⁴Katharine Kuh, The Artist's Voice, Talks with 17 Artists (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 12.

⁷⁵Albers, Homage.

⁷⁶Kuh, Voice, 20.

⁷⁷Ibid., 11

⁷⁸"Think!" Time, LXIII (June 18, 1956), 80.

⁷⁹Neil Welliver, "Albers on Albers," Art News, no. 9 (January 1966), 68.

⁸⁰Elaine de Kooning, "Albers Paints a Picture: Homage to the Square," Art News, XLIV (November 1950), 58.

⁸¹"Josef Albers, Paintings, Prints, Projects," text George Heard Hamilton (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Art Gallery, 1956), 30.

⁸²Welliver, 69.

⁸³Joseph E. Young, "Landau Gallery, Los Angeles, Exhibit," Art International, XIV (October 20, 1970), 72.

⁸⁴John McLaughlin: Recent Paintings, text Jules Langsner (Los Angeles: Felix Landau Gallery, 1962).

⁸⁵According to an article by Edwin Land, the human eye can build colored worlds out of information and materials ordinarily thought to be dull or colorless. Edwin H. Land, "Experiments in Color Vision," Scientific American, CC (May 1959), 84.

⁸⁶McLaughlin, Langsner, 12.

⁸⁷A Retrospective Exhibition: John McLaughlin (Pasadena: Pasadena Art Museum, 1963).

⁸⁸Frederick Hammersley, Paintings (San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1962).

⁸⁹Jules Langsner, "Exhibition in San Francisco," Art in America, LI (February 1963), 130.

⁹⁰Ibid.

⁹¹Jules Langsner, Four Abstract Classicists (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1959).

⁹²Michel Seuphor, Construction & Geometry in Painting from Malevich to "Tomorrow." (New York: Galerie Chalette, 1960).

BIOGRAPHIES

JOSEF ALBERS (b. 1880)

Born Bottrop, Germany. Studied Royal Art School, Berlin 1913-15; School of Applied Art, Essen, 1916-19; Art Academy, Munich, 1919-20; and the Bauhaus, Weimar, 1920-23.

Member: Abstraction-Création, Paris 1934-38; American Abstract Artists, since 1938; National Institute of Arts and Letters.

Awards: Ford Foundation Grant 1959; Fellow and Grant, Graham Foundation 1962; Doctor of Fine Arts, Yale University 1962; Grand Prix, 3rd Biennale, Santiago, Chile 1968; Doctor of Fine Arts, University of Illinois 1969; Doctor of Fine Arts, Minneapolis Art School 1969.

Instruction: Bauhaus instructor 1923-33 (Dessau and Berlin); Head, Art Department, Black Mountain College, North Carolina 1933-49; Chairman, Department of Design, Yale University 1950-58; Visiting Critic, Yale School of Fine Art 1959-60; Seminars, special courses, Harvard University 1936-40, 1941, 1950; presently Professor Emeritus, Yale School of Fine Art.

One-man exhibitions: J. B. Neumann 1936 & 1945; Artists' Gallery 1938; Nierendorf 1941 and 1943; Place of the Legion of Honor, San Francisco 1947; Egan 1949; Cincinnati Art Museum 1949; Sidney Janis 1949, 1952, 1955, 1958, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1964; Art Academy, Honolulu 1954; Massachusetts Institute of Technology 1955; Yale University, retrospective 1956; Galerie Denise René, Paris 1957; Amerika-Haus, Berlin 1958; Landesmuseum, Münster 1959; Galerie Suzanne Bollag, Zürich 1960; Gimpel Fils, London 1961; Phillips Collection 1962; Kunsthalle, Hamburg 1963; Museum Folkwang, Essen 1963; Joseph Albers, Homage to the Square, Museum of Modern Art, shown in 8 capitals 1964; The Contemporary Arts Center of Cincinnati and Sidney Janis Gallery, Circ. U.S. 1965-6; San Francisco Museum of Art, 1966; Städtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf, retrospective 1970.

Selected publications: "Despite Straight Lines," Yale University Press, 1961. "Interaction of Color" Homage to the Square New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1964. Homage to the Square: Soft Edge Hard Edge. New Haven, Connecticut: Ives-Sillman, 1965. Yale University Press, 1971.

Public collections: Yale University Art Gallery; Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute; Los Angeles Museum of Art; Graduate Center, Harvard University; Whitney Museum of American Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim

Museum of Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Wadsworth Atheneum; University of Michigan Museum of Art; Carnegie Institute; Museum of Modern Art; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Corcoran Gallery; Detroit Art Institute; Denver Art Museum Institute; Duke University; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Mills College; University of Minnesota; San Francisco Museum of Art; Smith College; Smithsonian Institute; University of Wisconsin; Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Metropolitan Museum of Art and others.

CHARLES BIEDERMAN (b. 1906)

Born Cleveland, Ohio. Studied Chicago Art Institute School 1926-29. Resided Prague, Paris, New York.

Awards: Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Sikkens Award 1962; Ford Foundation Purchase Prize 1964; National Council of the Arts, 1966; Walker Biennial, Donors Award 1966; Minnesota State Arts Council 1969.

One-man exhibitions: Chicago Art Institute School 1929; movie theater lobby in Chicago 1930; Pierre Matisse Gallery 1936; Arts Club of Chicago 1941, Katherine Kuh Gallery, Chicago 1941; St. Paul Gallery 1954; Columbia University School of Architecture 1962; Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zürich 1962; Marlborough-Gerson Gallery Inc. 1964; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, retrospective 1965; Rochester Art Center, Rochester, Minnesota 1967; Hayward Gallery, London, retrospective 1969; Dayton's Gallery 12, Minneapolis 1971.

Selected Publications: Art as the Evolution of Visual Knowledge (Red Wing, Minnesota, 1948). Letters on the New Art (Red Wing, Minnesota, 1951). The New Cézanne: from Monet to Mondriaan (Red Wing, Minnesota, 1958).

Public collections: Chicago Public Schools; Des Moines Art Center; Museum of Modern Art; Philadelphia Museum of Art; City of Red Wing; Rijksmuseum Kroller-Muller; University of Saskatchewan; Tate Gallery; Walker Art Center and others.

ILYA BOLOTOWSKY (b. 1907)

Born Petrograd, Russia. Private instruction in classical tradition until 1919. 1920-23 attended College of St. Joseph in Istanbul. Travelled Russia, Europe, North America. In 1923 came to United States, citizen 1929. From 1924-30 studied at the National Academy of Design. In 1932 travelled France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Denmark, England.

From 1936-41 cultural director of WPA mural project. U.S. Air Force in 1942. Produced 16 mm experimental films.

Murals: Williamsburgh Housing Project, New York 1936 (one of first abstract murals); Hall of Medical Science, New York World's Fair 1939; Cinema I, New York 1962; Outdoor mural panel (now in theater), Southampton College 1968; Hospital for Chronic Diseases, New York; mosaic mural, Theodore Roosevelt High School, New York.

Member: American Abstract Artists 1936; Federation of Modern Artists and Sculptors 1940.

Awards: Two first prizes National Academy; Tiffany Scholarships 1929 and 1930; Yaddo Foundation Fellowship, Saratoga Springs, New York 1933; Guggenheim Fellowship 1941; Fellowship from the Museum of Non-Objective Painting 1942; Graduate School grant for experimental film work, University of Wyoming 1953-54; State University of New York Grant for film research 1959 and 1960; 1st prize painting, Sharon (Connecticut) Art Foundation, 1959.

Instructor: Art Department, Black Mountain College, acting head 1946-48; professor of art, University of Wyoming 1948-57; Brooklyn College 1954-56; Hunter College 1954-6, 1963-4; SUNY, New Paltz, 1957-65; Chairman, Art Department, Long Island University 1965-

One-man exhibitions: Gladys Roosevelt Dicks Studios, New York 1929; J. B. Neumann's New Art Circle 1946 & 1952; Pinacotheca Gallery, New York 1947 and 49; Pratt Institute, New York 1949; University of Wyoming, Laramie 1949; Grace Borgenicht Gallery 1954, 1956, 1958, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, New Paltz, New York 1959, 1960; Whitney Museum of American Art, 1962 and 1966; Buffalo State College 1966.

Public collections: Brandeis University; Chase Manhattan Bank; Harcourt Brace and World, Inc.; Museum of Modern Art; New York University; University of New Mexico; SUNY, New Paltz; University of North Carolina; Rhode Island School of Design; San Francisco Museum of Art; University of Texas; Union Carbide Corporation; Whitney Museum of American Art; Walker Art Institute; University of Wyoming; Yale University; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art; Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute; Sheldon Art Gallery; University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo and others.

RALSTON CRAWFORD (b. 1906)

Born St. Catharines, Ontario. Studied Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles (now Los Angeles County Art Institute). Pennsylvania Academy of

Fine Art and Barnes Foundation 1927-30. Breckenridge School, Gloucester, Massachusetts 1930-32. From 1932 to 1933 travelled and studied in Rome, Naples, Madrid, Florence and Paris (Academies Colarossi and Scandinave) and in 1933 at Columbia University. In 1942 member of the 63rd Engineers Camouflage Battalion, United States Army. In 1945 Chief of Visual Presentation Unit, Weather Division, Army Air Force assigned to China, Burma, India 1943-6. From 1943-6 covers and articles for Fortune Magazine; Associated Press Representative at Bikini, Atom Bomb test 1946. During the period from 1950 to 1961 trips to New Orleans to photograph life and music of American Negro. From 1951-2 intensive work on lithography in Paris.

Awards: Tiffany Foundation Fellowship 1931; Purchase prize for color lithography Metropolitan.

Instruction: Cincinnati Art Academy 1940-1 and 1949; Guest Director, Honolulu School of Art 1947; Instructor, Brooklyn Museum Art School 1948; University of Minnesota 1949; 1950 lecture tour to 28 colleges in the United States; New School for Social Research, New York 1952-7; 1956 lecture tour for American Association of Colleges; Hofstra College, 1960-2; Research Consultant to Tulane University's Archive of New Orleans Jazz, 1961; Visiting artist, Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska under Ford Foundation and AFA Grant 1965; Visiting artist, University of Illinois 1966.

One-man exhibition: Maryland Institute of Art, Baltimore 1934; Boyer Galleries, Philadelphia 1937; Philadelphia Art Alliance 1938; Flint Institute of Arts, Michigan 1941; Downtown Gallery, New York 1944, 1947 and 1950; Santa Barbara Museum 1946; de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco 1946; Portland Art Museum 1946; Seattle Art Museum 1946; Howard University, Washington D.C. 1947; Cincinnati Art Museum 1949; University of Minnesota 1949; MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois 1949; Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge 1950; Hofstra University 1952; University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa retrospective 1953; Borgenicht Gallery, New York 1954; Milwaukee Art Center, retrospective 1958; University of Kentucky, 65 lithographs, circulated 1961-2; Tweed Gallery, University of Minnesota, Duluth, retrospective 1961; Nordness Gallery, New York 1961, 1963; Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 1965; and 1974 (photographs); Creighton University, retrospective 1968; Helman Gallery, St. Louis, Missouri, 1971; Zabriski Gallery New York 1971, 1973; Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, photographs, 1974.

Selected publications: Climax 2, a selection of 8 New Orleans Jazz Photographs, Summer 1956.

Public collections: Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island; National Gallery;

Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Cincinnati Art Museum; University of Georgia; Hamline University; Hofstra University; Houston Museum of Fine Art; Illinois Wesleyan University; Library of Congress; Museum of Modern Art; University of Minnesota; University of Oklahoma; Vassar College; Whitney Museum of American Art; Walker Art Center; Metropolitan Museum of Art and others.

BURGOYNE DILLER (1906-65)

Born New York City. Studied: Michigan State College and Art Students League. Director of Mural Division of the Federal Arts Project, New York, 1935-40. Assistant technical director of the W.P.A. New York City Art Project, 1940-41. Director of the W.P.A. New York City War Service Art Section, 1941.

Member: American Abstract Artists, since 1936.

Awards: Ford Foundation Purchase Prize 1963.

One-man exhibitions: Contemporary Arts Gallery 1933; Theodore A. Kohn Gallery, New York 1934; Harvard University 1945 (two-man with Jose de Rivera); Pinacotheca Gallery 1946, 1949, 1951; Galerie Chalette 1961, 1962, 1964; New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, retrospective 1966; Noah Goldowsky Gallery 1968, 1969, 1972, 1973; Los Angeles County Museum of Art 1968.

Public collections: Corcoran Gallery; Museum of Modern Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art; New York University; Whitney Museum of American Art; Yale University; New Jersey State Museum, Trenton; The Newark Museum and others.

FRITZ GLARNER (1899-1972)

Born Zürich, Switzerland. Studied 1916-21 Institute Royale des Beaux Arts in Naples. Exhibited 1918-23 in Naples, Rome and Milan. From 1923-35 lived in Paris exhibited with Salon des Surindépendants and others. In 1936 came to United States.

Murals: Time-Life Building, New York 1958-59; Dag Hammarskjöld Library, United Nations, New York 1961; John D. Rockefeller dining room mural, New York 1963-4. Justice Building, Albany Mall, New York 1967.

Member: Abstract-Création 1931-36; American Abstract Artists 1938-44.

One-man exhibitions: Milan 1921; La Contemporain, Paris 1926; Galerie Povolotzky, Paris 1928 and 1930; Kootz Gallery, New York 1945; Rose Fried Gallery, New York 1949 and 1951; Musée Municipal, Tokyo 1953; Galerie Louis Carré, Paris 1962 and 1966; 34th Venice Biennale Swiss Pavilion, 1968; San Francisco Museum of Art, retrospective 1971; Gimpel Fils Gallery, London 1972. Kunsthalle, Bern, 1972.

Selected publications: "Recollections" (lithographs), Universal Limited Art Editions.

Public collections: Yale University; Museum of Modern Art; Kunsthhaus, Zürich; Whitney Museum of American Art; Brandeis University; New York University; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Museum of Winterthur, Switzerland; Rockefeller Institute; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Baltimore Museum of Art; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Chase Manhattan Bank; Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Smithsonian Institute; Walker Art Institute and others.

FREDERICK HAMMERSLEY (b. 1919)

Born Salt Lake City, Utah. Studied University of Idaho, Southern Branch 1936-38; San Francisco Junior College 1938-39; Academy of Advertising Art, San Francisco 1939-40; Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles 1940-42, 1946-47, with Henry McFee; Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris 1944; Jepson Art Institute, Los Angeles 1947-49 with Rico Lebrun.

Awards: Laguna Beach Art Gallery, First Prize 1949; Butler Institute of American Art, purchase prize 1961; City of Claremont, First Prize 1960; Butler Institute of American Art, Ohio, purchase prize 1961; 18th Annual, Newport Harbor, California 1963; Los Angeles All City Annual purchase prizes 1964 and 1966; Los Angeles Printmaking Society, purchase prize 1965.

Instruction: Jepson Art Institute, Los Angeles 1948-51; Pomona College 1953-62; Pasadena Museum School 1956-61 (children's painting class) 1963-73. Chouinard Art School, Los Angeles 1964-68; University of New Mexico 1968-71; Guggenheim Fellowship 1973.

One-man exhibitions: Fullerton, California Art Museum 1959; Pasadena Art Museum 1961; Heritage Gallery 1961, 1963; Occidental College 1962; California Palace of the Legion of Honor 1962; La Jolla 1963; Santa Barbara Museum of Art 1965; Hollis Galleries, San Francisco 1966; University of New Mexico, Albuquerque 1969.

Selected publications: "My Geometrical Paintings," Leonardo Magazine, April 1970.

Public collections: University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley; Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio; Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California; City of Claremont, California; United States Navy; University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico and others.

ALICE TRUMBULL MASON (1904-71)

Born United States. In Italy 1921-23, influenced by Renaissance and Medieval artists. Studied British Academy in Rome, National Academy of Design in New York. In 1928-9 returned to Italy to study Archaic Greek and Byzantine art. Studied with Stanley Hayter 1944-47.

Member: American Abstract Artists; Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors; Society of American Etchers; Society of American Graphic Artists.

Awards: Charles M. Lea Prize, 23rd Annual Exhibition of Print Club, Philadelphia 1946; Treasurer's Prize, The Society of American Etchers, The Pinacotheca 1948; The Silvermine Guild of Artists, Connecticut, award for oil painting 1952.

One-woman exhibitions: Wittenborn & Co. 1952; Hansas Gallery, New York 1959; San Francisco Museum of Art 1963; Fire House Gallery, The Nassau Community College, Long Island, New York, retrospective 1967, Whitney Museum of American Art 1973. Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln 1973; Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts 1973; University of Georgia Museum of Art, Athens 1973.

Public collections: Whitney Museum of American Art; Washburn Gallery, New York and others.

JOHN McLAUGHLIN (b. 1898)

Born United States. Attended University of Hawaii 1935. Traveled to Japan 1935. In 1943 Military Intelligence assigned to the China-Burma-India theater.

Awards: Tamarind Fellowship 1963; Bronze medal, Corcoran Gallery of Art 1967; National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Grant 1967.

One-man exhibitions: Felix Landau Gallery 1952, 1958, 1962, 1963 (graphics), 1966, 1970; Pasadena Art Museum 1956 and 1963; University of California, Riverside 1958; Long Beach Museum of Art 1960; K. Kasimir Gallery, Inc., Chicago 1964; Landau-Alan Gallery 1968; Occidental College, Los Angeles 1968; Santa Barbara Museum of Art (graphics) 1968;

Corcoran Gallery of Art 1969; Henri Gallery, Washington D.C. 1969; Jason Aver Gallery, San Francisco 1970; University of California at Irvine 1971.

Public collections: Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Addison Gallery, Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts; Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Brunswick, Maine; Corcoran; Long Beach Museum of Art; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum and Art Gallery of Stanford University, Stanford, California; Museum of Modern Art; Smithsonian; Oakland Museum of Art, California; Pasadena Art Museum; University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley; University Art Museum, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut and others.

VICTOR PASMORE (b. 1908)

Born England. Attended 1922-6 Harrow School. From 1927-38 clerk, London's County Hall. Studied L. C. C. Central School of Arts and crafts under A. S. Hartrick 1927-31. Assisted in founding Euston Road School 1937-9 and first post-war exhibitions of abstract art 1948-53. Consultant architectural designer to Peterlee Company, Durham 1955.

Murals: London Passenger Transport Board (relief) 1950; Regatta Restaurant (tile) 1951; Stephenson Engineering Building, University of Newcastle (reliefs) 1956; Reed Paper Group Stand at Packing Exhibition, Olympia, London 1957; L. C. C. Fairlawn Primary School, Forest Hill, London (mobile destroyed) 1958; L. C. C. Barnsbury Second School, London 1959-60; Civic Center, Newcastle upon Tyne, two murals 1961-63; Community Centre, Pilkington's Glass Works, St. Helens, Lancs., two murals and one relief 1962-64.

Member: London Artists' Association 1932-34; London Group 1934-52; Institute of Contemporary Art; Trustee, Tate Gallery 1963-66.

Awards: Guggenheim international award 1960; prize at Pittsburgh International 1964.

Instruction: Master of Painting at King's College (Durham University) 1954-61.

One-man exhibitions: Cooling Galleries, London 1933; Wildenstein Gallery 1940; Redfern Gallery 1943, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950-51, 1952, 1955; Institute of Contemporary Art, retrospective 1954; Ohana Gallery 1958; British Pavilion, Venice Biennale 1960; Marlborough New London Gallery 1961, and 1964; Kestner-Gesellschaft, Hanover, retrospective 1962; Galerie Charles Lienhard AG, Zürich 1963; São Paulo Biennale 1965;

Tate Gallery, retrospective 1965; Marlborough Gerson, New York, 1967 & 1968

Public collections: Tate Gallery, London; Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Arts Council, London; British Council, London; Victoria and Albert Museum; City Art Galleries in Southampton, Manchester, Derby, Leeds, Hull, Nottingham and York; Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool; Ferens Art Gallery, Hull; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh; Ulster Museum, Northern Ireland; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia; National Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; Rijksmuseum, Holland; Museum of Modern Art, Rome; Museum des 20. Jahrhunderts, Vienna, Austria; Museum of Modern Art; Boymans Museum, Rotterdam, Holland; Chicago Art Institute and others.

IRENE RICE PEREIRA (1907-71)

Born Boston, Massachusetts. Studied: Art Students League with Richard Lahey, Jan Matulka 1928-31; Traveled Europe, North Africa 1931-32. New York Progress Administration Project 1935-39. Lived England 1950-51.

Member: American Abstract Artists, since 1939.

Awards: Pepsi-Cola 1943.

Instruction: Pratt Institute 1942-43; Instructor New York Works Progress Administration Federal Project Design Laboratory 1936-39. WPA easel Division 1937-39.

One-woman exhibitions: ACA Gallery 1933, 1934, 1935, 1946, 1949; Howard University 1938; East River Gallery, New York 1939; Julien Levy Galleries, New York 1939; Art of This Century, New York 1944; Arts Club of Chicago 1945; San Francisco Museum of Art 1947; Barnett Aden Gallery, Washington, D.C. 1948; Andover/Phillips 1949; Santa Barbara Museum of Art 1950; Portland, Oregon 1950; de Young, 1950; Syracuse University 1951; Baltimore Museum of Art 1951; Ball State Teachers College 1951; Durlacher Brothers, New York 1951, 1953, 1954; Phillips 1952; Dayton Art Institute 1952; Whitney Museum of American Art, circulating 1953; Adele Lawson Gallery, Chicago 1954, 1956, Hofstra College 1954; University of Michigan 1954; Philadelphia Art Alliance 1955; Corcoran 1956; Wellons Gallery 1956; Lee Nordness Gallery, New York 1958, 1959, 1961; Rome-New York Foundation, Rome 1960; A.A.A. Gallery, Washington D.C. 1961; The Amel Gallery, New York 1961, 1962; Galerie Internationale, New York 1964 and 1970; Agra Gallery 1965; Distelheim Gallery 1965; Wilmington College, North Carolina 1968; University of North Carolina 1968; Charlotte/Mint 1968.

Selected publications: "How I Work," Art News, XLVI (September 1947), 27. "Light and the New Reality," The Palette, New York 1952.

Public collections: Arizona State College; University of Arizona; Atlanta University; Ball State Teachers College; Baltimore Museum of Art; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Boston University; Brandeis University; The Catholic University of America; Art Institute of Chicago; Connecticut College; Dallas Museum of Fine Arts; Detroit Art Institute; Finch College; Goucher College; Harvard University; Howard University; S. C. Johnson & Son, Inc.; Nelson Gallery of Art, Kansas City; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art; University of Minnesota; Newark Museum; SUNY, New Paltz; San Francisco Museum of Art; Smith College; Syracuse University; Toledo Museum of Art; Vassar College; Whitney Museum of American Art; Walker Art Center and others.

CHARLES SHAW (b. 1892)

Born New York City. Studied: Yale University, Ph.D.; Columbia University School of Architecture; Art Students League with Thomas Hart Benton; privately with George Luks. Traveled Europe extensively, Scandinavia, West Indies. Author of children's books, poetry and articles for "Vanity Fair," "The Bookman," "Smart Set," and other magazines.

Member: American Abstract Artists since 1937; Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors; Fellow of the International Institute of Arts and Letters.

Awards: Nantucket, first and second prizes; Century Association, Honorable Mention 1964.

One-man exhibitions: Curt Valentine Gallery, New York 1934, 1938; Museum of Living Art, New York 1935; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1940; Passadoit Gallery, New York 1945, 1946, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1956-59; American British Art Center 1949; Nantucket 1954-68; Albert Landry, New York 1960, 1961; Art Association of Newport, Rhode Island 1960, 1962; University of Louisville 1963; Southampton East Gallery, Southampton, New York 1963, 1964; The Bertha Schaefer Gallery 1963, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1971; Faure Gallery, La Jolla 1964; Century Association 1967.

Selected publications: "Before Kings and Queens had Two Heads," Connoisseur, CXXVIII (December 1951), 162-66.

Public collections: Atlanta University; Baltimore Museum of Art; Boston Museum of Fine Art; Brooklyn Museum; Chase Manhattan Bank; Art Institute of Chicago; Cincinnati Art Museum; Cleveland Museum of Art;

Corcoran; Dayton Art Institute; Denver Art Museum; Detroit Art Institute; University of Georgia; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; University of Louisville; Metropolitan Museum of Art; Museum of Modern Art; New York University; Newark Museum; University of North Carolina; Rhode Island School of Design; Riverside Museum; Rockefeller Institute; San Francisco Museum of Art; Whitney Museum of American Art; Walker Art Center; Wichita Art Museum; Yale University and others.

LEON POLK SMITH (b. 1906)

Born Chickasha, Oklahoma. Studied: Oklahoma State College, B. A.; Columbia University, M.A., with Eugene Ludins. Traveled Mexico, Europe, Canada, U.S.A., Venezuela, Cuba.

Awards: Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, 1944; Longview Foundation Grant, 1959; National Council on the Arts; Tamarind Fellowship.

Instruction: Oklahoma public schools, 1933-39; Georgia University System, Teachers Colleges 1939-42; State Supervisor, Delaware 1942-44; Rollins College, 1949-51; Head, Art Department, Mills College of Education 1952-58; Brandeis University, Artist-in-Residence 1968; University of California, Davis, Artist-in-Residence 1972.

One-man exhibitions: Uptown Gallery, New York 1941; Savannah/Telfair, 1941; Rose Fried Gallery, 1942, 1946, 1949; Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe 1943; Charles Egan Gallery 1945; Mills College 1955, 1956, Camino Gallery 1956, 1958; Betty Parsons Gallery 1957, 1959; Section 11 Gallery, 1958, 1960; The Stable Gallery 1960, 1962, 1963; Museum of Fine Arts, Caracas, 1962; Munson-Williams and Proctor Institute, Utica, New York, 1962; Galerie Muller, 1964; Museum of Oklahoma 1965; Galerie Chalette 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971; Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University 1968; Museum of Fine Arts, Fort Worth 1969; Galerie Denise René 1973.

Public collections: Cleveland Museum; Aachen Museum, Aachen, Germany; University of Sydney Museum, Sydney, Australia; Museum of Modern Art; Metropolitan Museum; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; Indianapolis Museum; Rose Museum, Brandeis University and others.

ALBERT SWINDEN (1899-1961)

Born Birmingham, England. Studied National Academy of Art and Art Students' League with Hans Hofmann.

Murals: Williamsburg Housing Project; Chilean Pavilion, New York World's Fair.

Member: American Abstract Artists.

One-man exhibitions: Graham Gallery, New York 1962.

Public collections: Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Whitney Museum of American Art and others.

CHARMION VON WIEGAND (b. 1900)

Born United States. Studied Barnard College, Columbia University and New York University.

Member: American Abstract Artists, president 1951-53; Le Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, Paris.

One-woman exhibitions: Pinacotheca, New York 1947 and 1948; Sardenberg Gallery, New York 1952; Heller Gallery, New York 1956; Howard Wise Gallery, New York 1961 and 1962.

Selected publications: "Meaning of Mondrian," Journal of Aesthetics, II (1943), 62-70. "The Oriental Tradition and Abstract Art," The World of Abstract Art, New York: Wittenborn, 1957. "The Vision of Mark Tobey," Arts, XXXIII (September 1959), 34-41. "Georges Vantongerloo," Arts, XXXIV (September 1960), 40-45. "The Adamantine Way: Exhibition of Tibetan Pictures and Sculptures at Asia House," Art News, LXVIII (April 1969), 38-41, 22B-74.

Public collections: Carnegie Institute; Museum of Modern Art; Whitney Museum of American Art; New York University; Newark Museum; University of Notre Dame; Cornell University; Container Corporation of America; University of Texas, Austin; Joseph Hirshhorn Collection, Washington D. C.; Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Seattle Art Museum and others.

JEAN XCERON (1890-1967)

Born Isari Greece. Studied The Corcoran School of Art, 1910-16. Resided Paris, 1927-37. Art reviewer for American newspapers from Paris, 1930-34.

Murals: Christian Science Chapel, Rikers Island, New York City 1941-42.

Member: American Abstract Artists; Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors.

Awards: University of Illinois, Purchase Prize 1951.

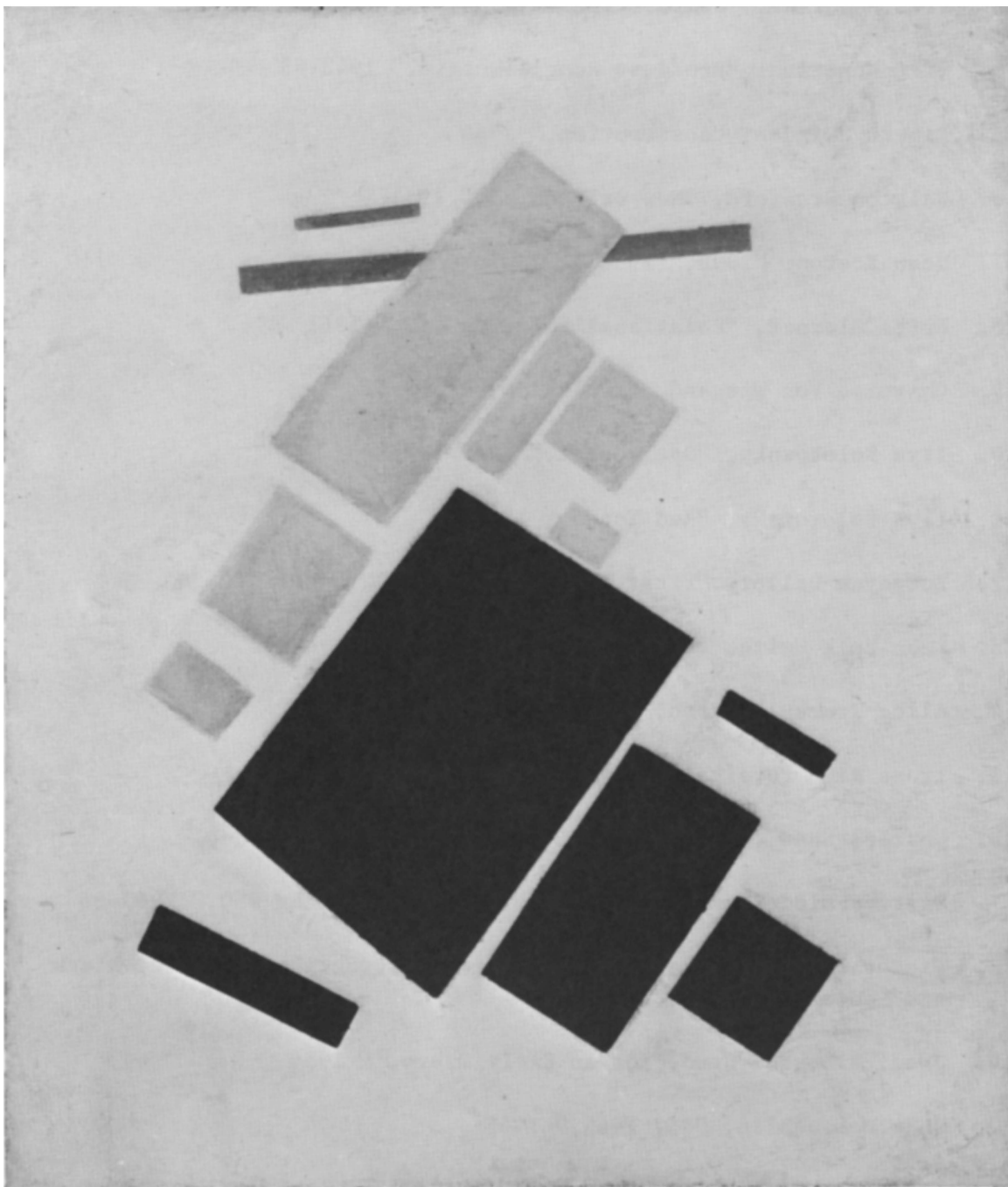
One-man exhibitions: Galerie de France, Paris 1931 (sponsored by Cahiers d'Art); Galerie Percier, Paris 1933; Galerie Pierre, Paris 1934; Garland Gallery, New York 1935; Nierendorf Gallery, New York 1938, Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont 1944; Retrospective traveled to Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe; University of New Mexico, Albuquerque; Carlsbad Library Museum, Carlsbad, New Mexico; Art Gallery, UCLA, Los Angeles; Art Center of Lo Jolla; Santa Barbara Museum; University of Washington, Seattle 1948-49; Sidney Janis Gallery, New York 1950; Rose Fried Gallery, New York 1955, 1957, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 and 1965; Newcomb College, Tulane University, New Orleans 1957; Goldwach Gallery, Chicago 1963; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum 1965; Peridot-Washburn Gallery, New York 1971.

Selected publications: "Neo-Plasticisme or Elementarist Art," The New Review, Paris, I (Winter 1931-32), 316-19. Chicago Tribune, Paris 1929-30. Boston Transcript, Boston 1930. Statement, Cercle et Carre, Paris, no. 2, April 15, 1930.

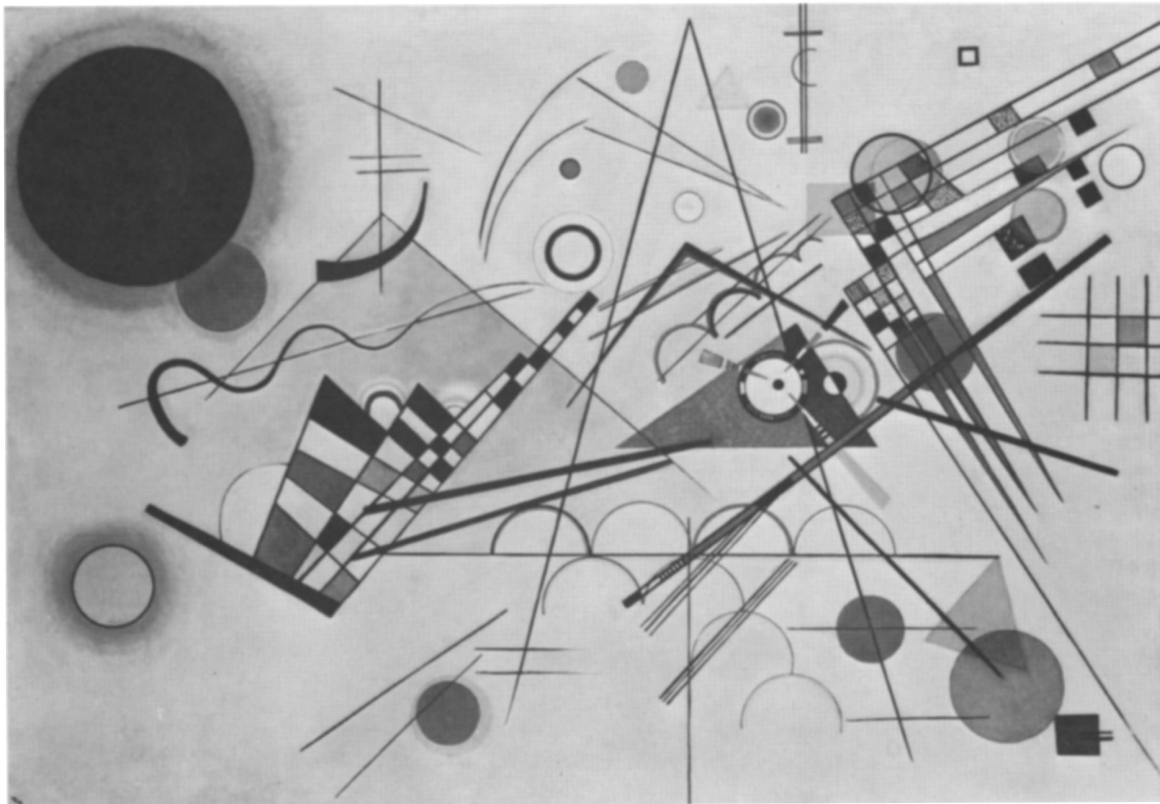
Public collections: Brandeis University; Carnegie Institute; University of Illinois; New York University; University of New Mexico; Washington University; Smith College; Wellesley College; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; The Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art and others.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

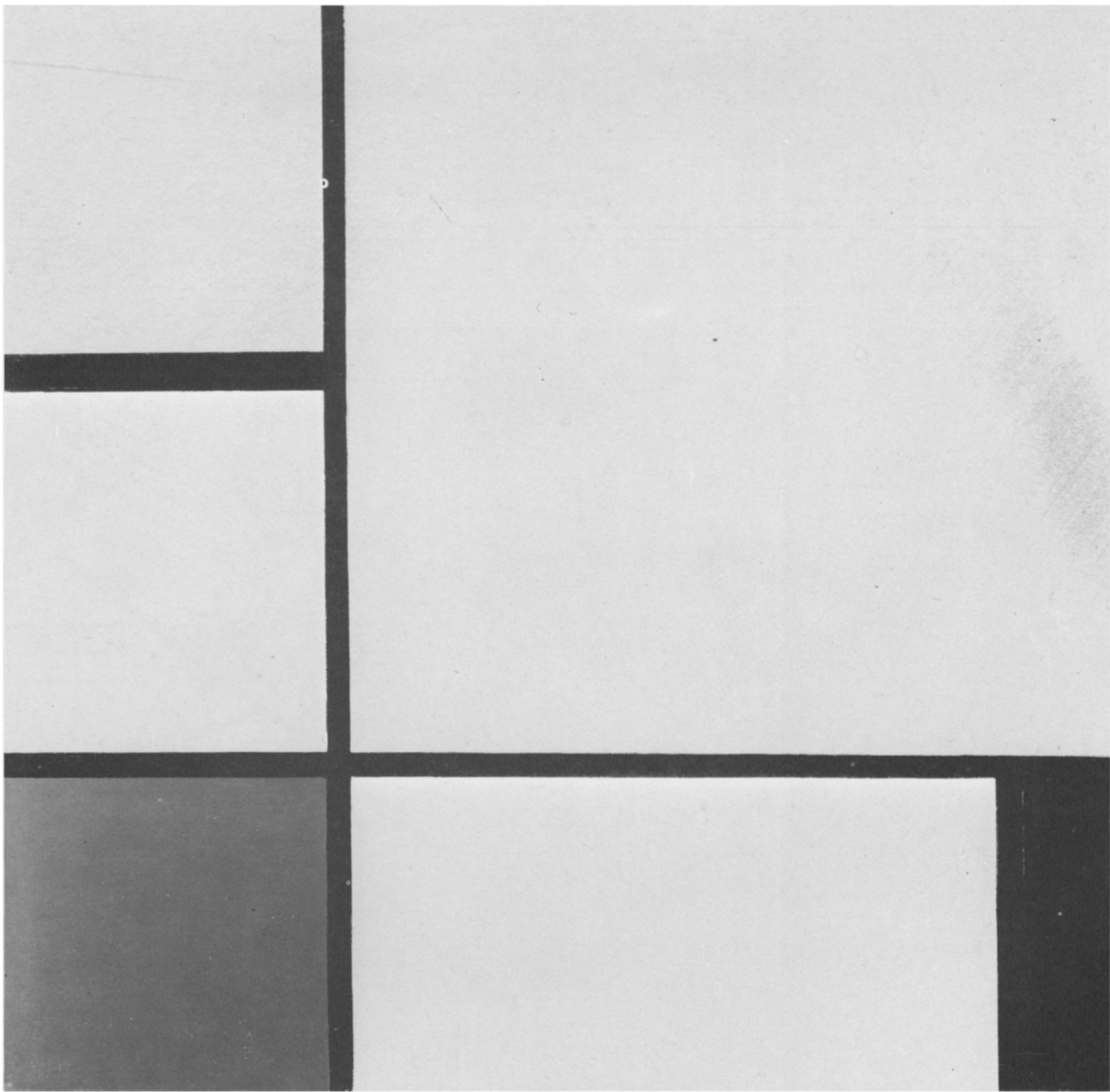
1. Kasimir Malevich, "Suprematist Composition (Airplane Flying)," 1914
2. Vasily Kandinsky, "Composition VIII, No. 260," 1923
3. Piet Mondrian, "Composition in a Square," 1929
4. Piet Mondrian, "Broadway Boogie-Woogie," 1942-43
5. Albert Swinden, "Abstraction," 1940
6. Ralston Crawford, "New Orleans #5," 1954
7. Jean Xceron, "239B," 1938
8. Fritz Glarner, "Relational Painting #89," 1961
9. Charmion Von Wiegand, "Evolution," 1949-50
10. Ilya Bolotowsky, "Opalescent," 1947
11. Ilya Bolotowsky, "Red Tondo," 1967-68
12. Burgoyne Diller, "First Theme," 1960
13. Leon Polk Smith, "New York City," 1945
14. Alice Trumbull Mason, "The Barbary Hedge," 1955
15. Irene Rice Pereira, "Transverse Parallels, 1946
16. Charles Shaw, "Construction," 1939
17. Charles Biederman, "Structurist Relief, Red Wing #50," 1960-66
18. Victor Pasmore, "Transparent Relief Construction in White, Black and Indian Red," 1960-61
19. Josef Albers, "Study for an Early Diary, " 1954
20. John McLaughlin, "#1, 1965," 1965
21. Frederick Hammersley, "Homerun," 1967-68



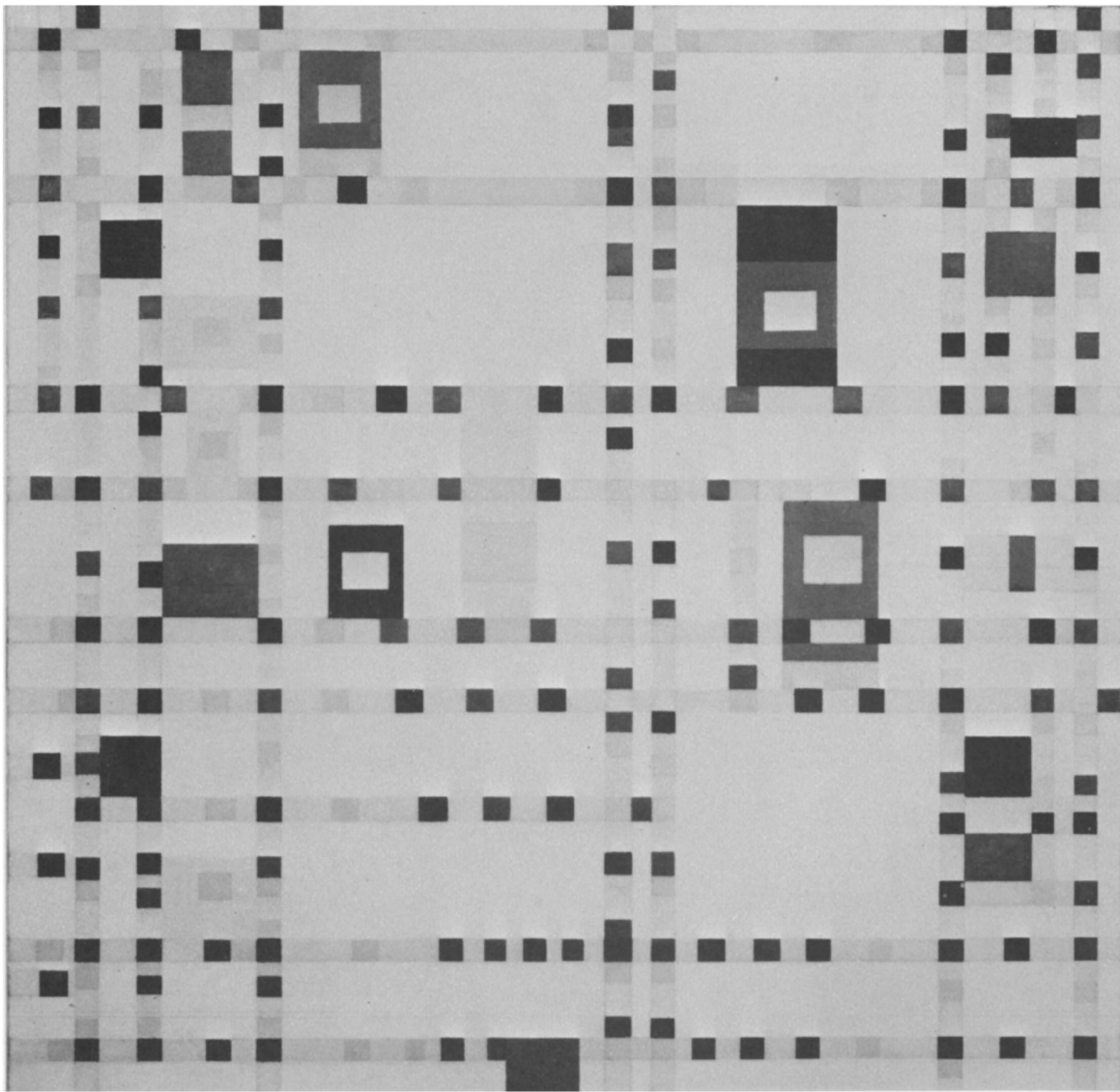
1. Kasimir Malevich, "Suprematist Composition (Airplane Flying)," 1914, 22 7/8 x 19", oil on canvas. Photograph courtesy of Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



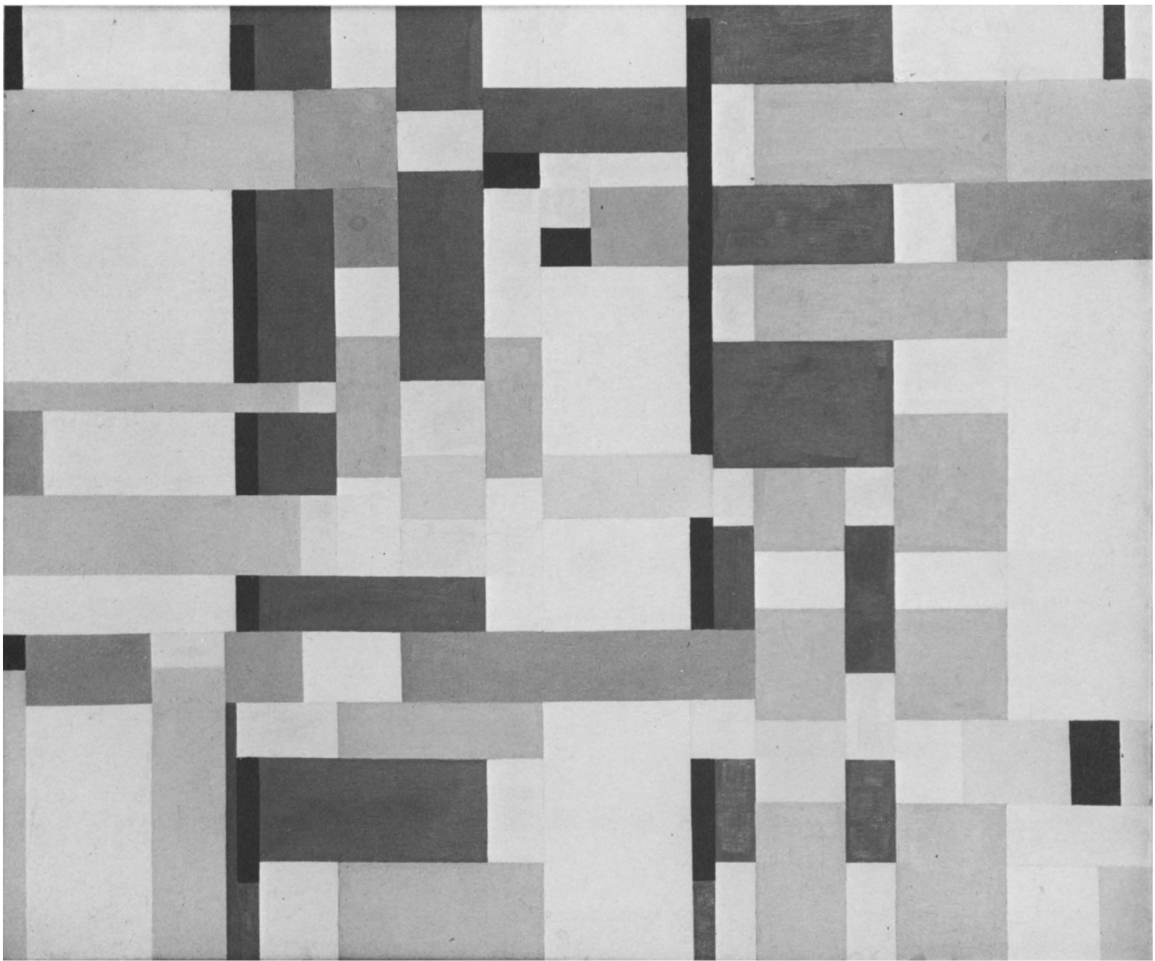
2. Vasily Kandinsky, "Composition VIII, No. 260," 1923. Photograph courtesy of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.



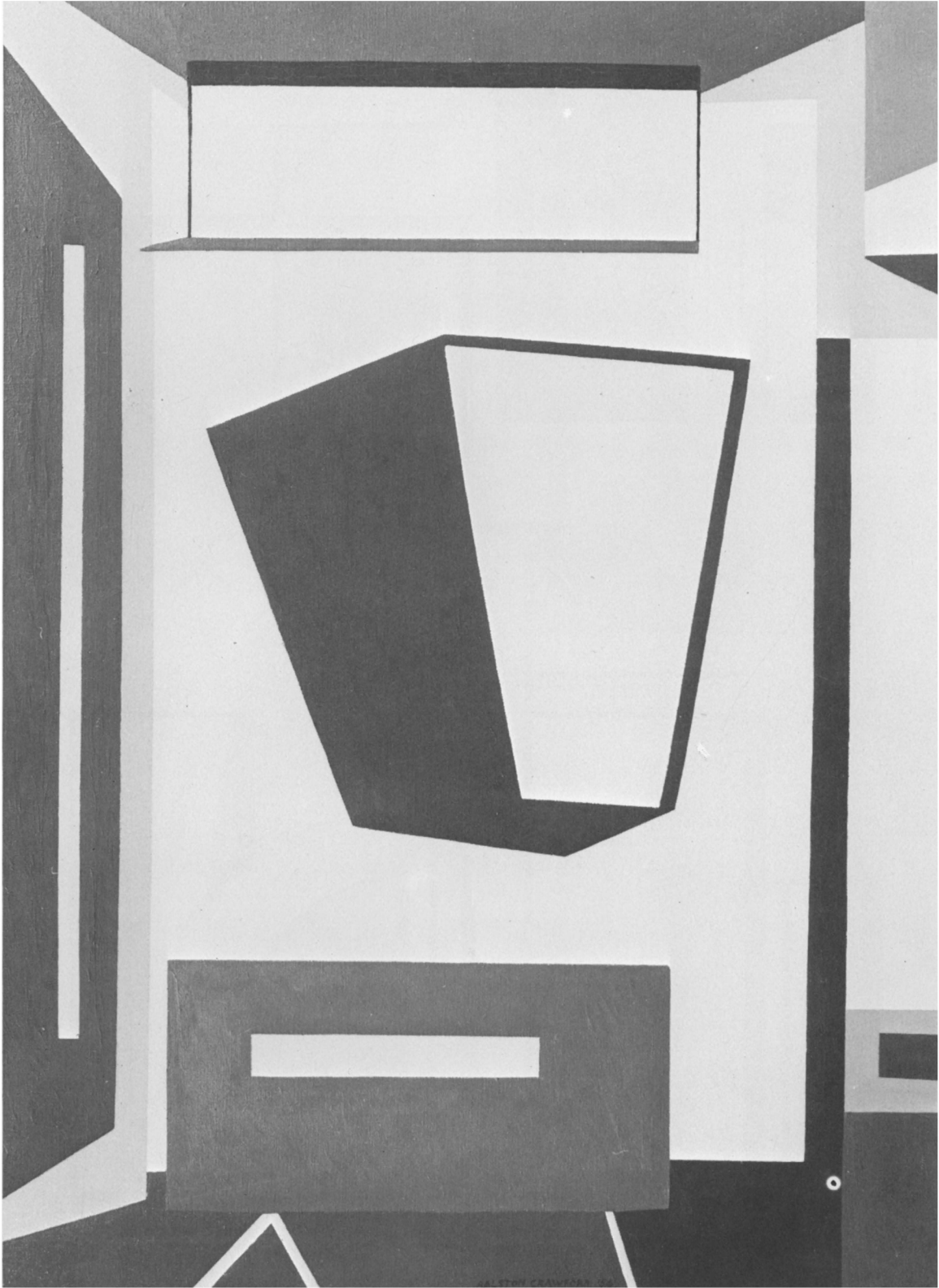
3. Piet Mondrian, "Composition," 19 7/8 x 19 3/4", oil on canvas.
Photograph courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of
Collection Société Anonyme.



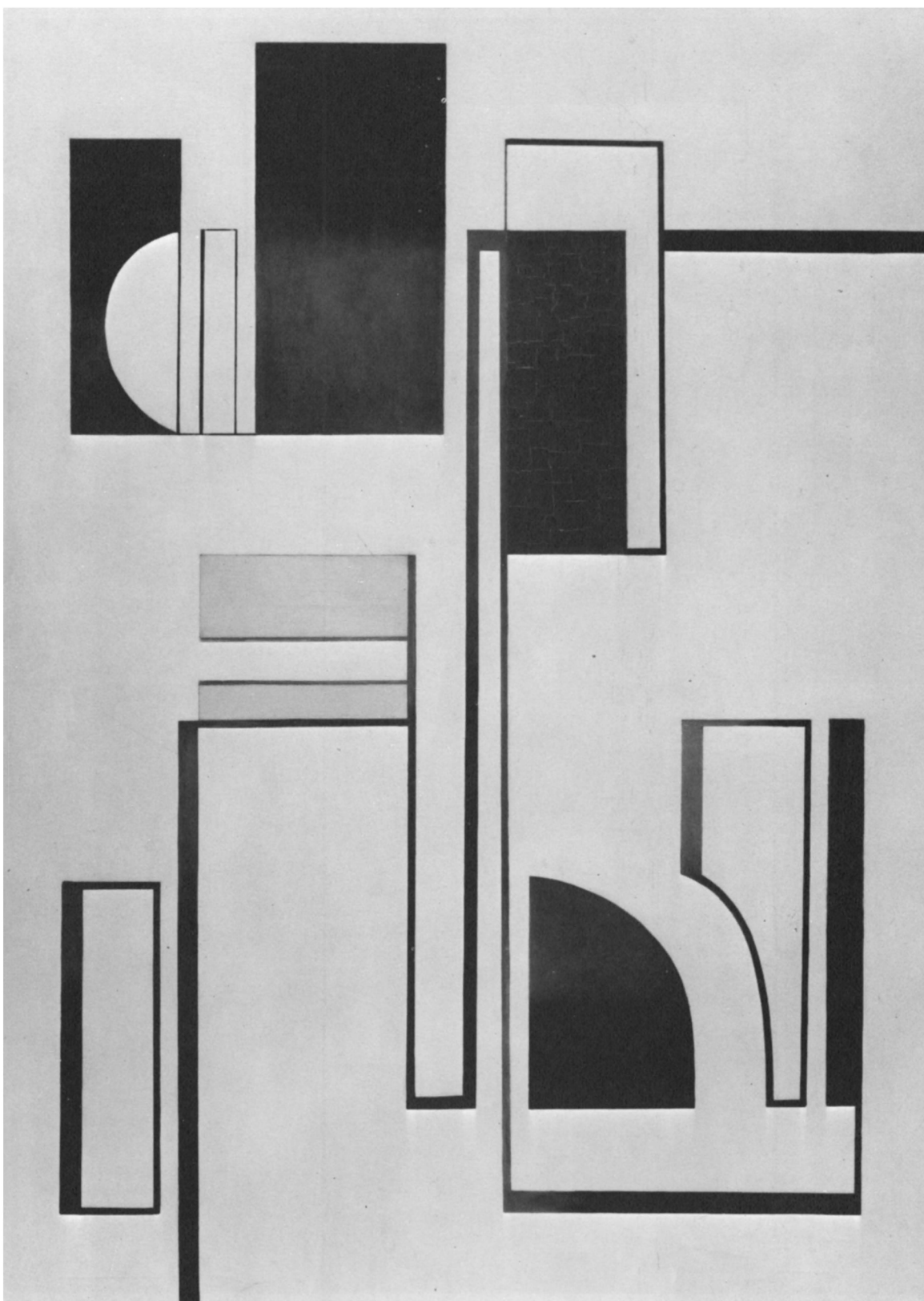
4. Piet Mondrian, "Broadway Boogie-Woogie," 1942-43, 50 x 50" oil on canvas. Photograph courtesy of Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



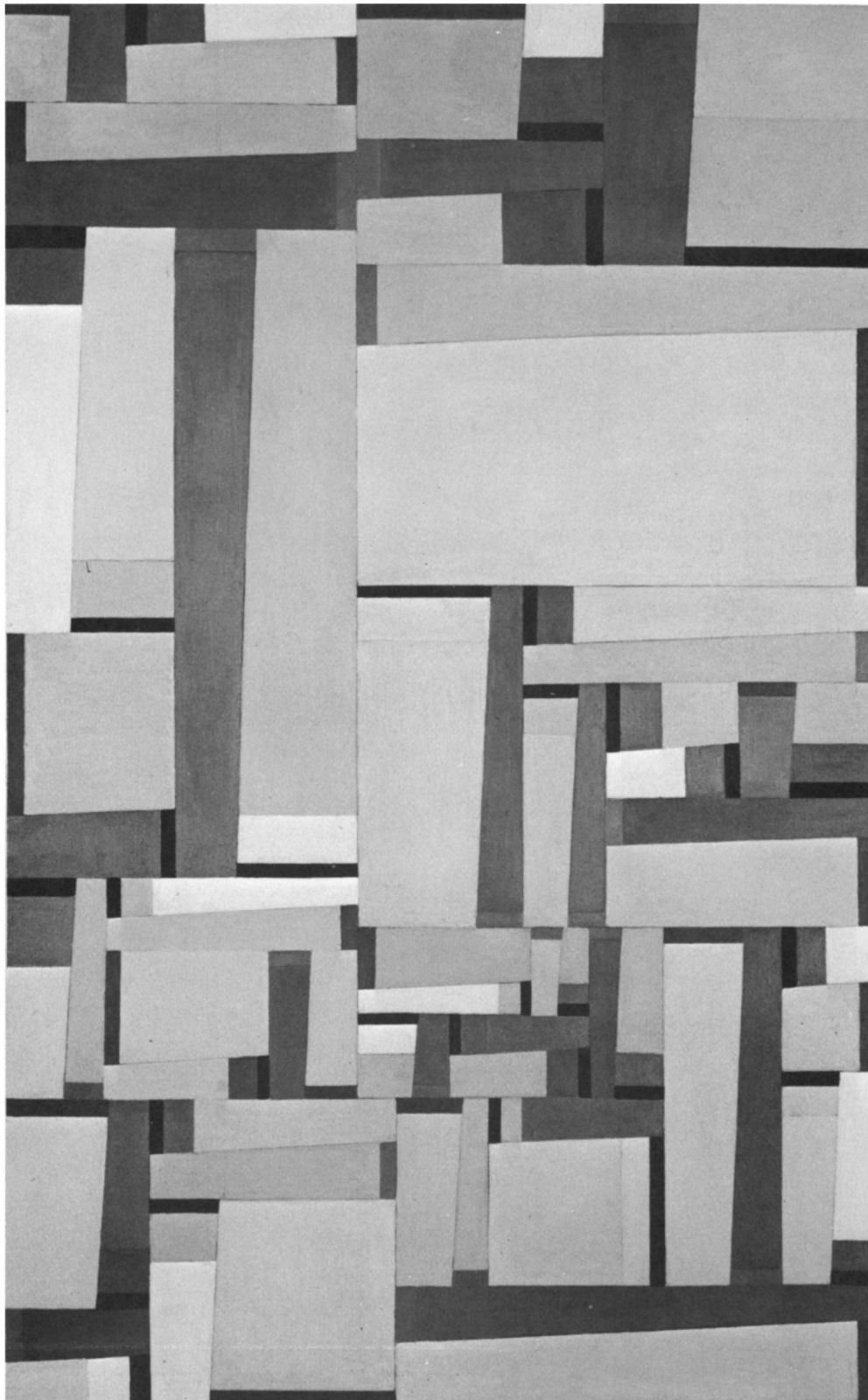
5. Albert Swinden, "Abstraction," 1940, 30 x 36", oil on canvas.
F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



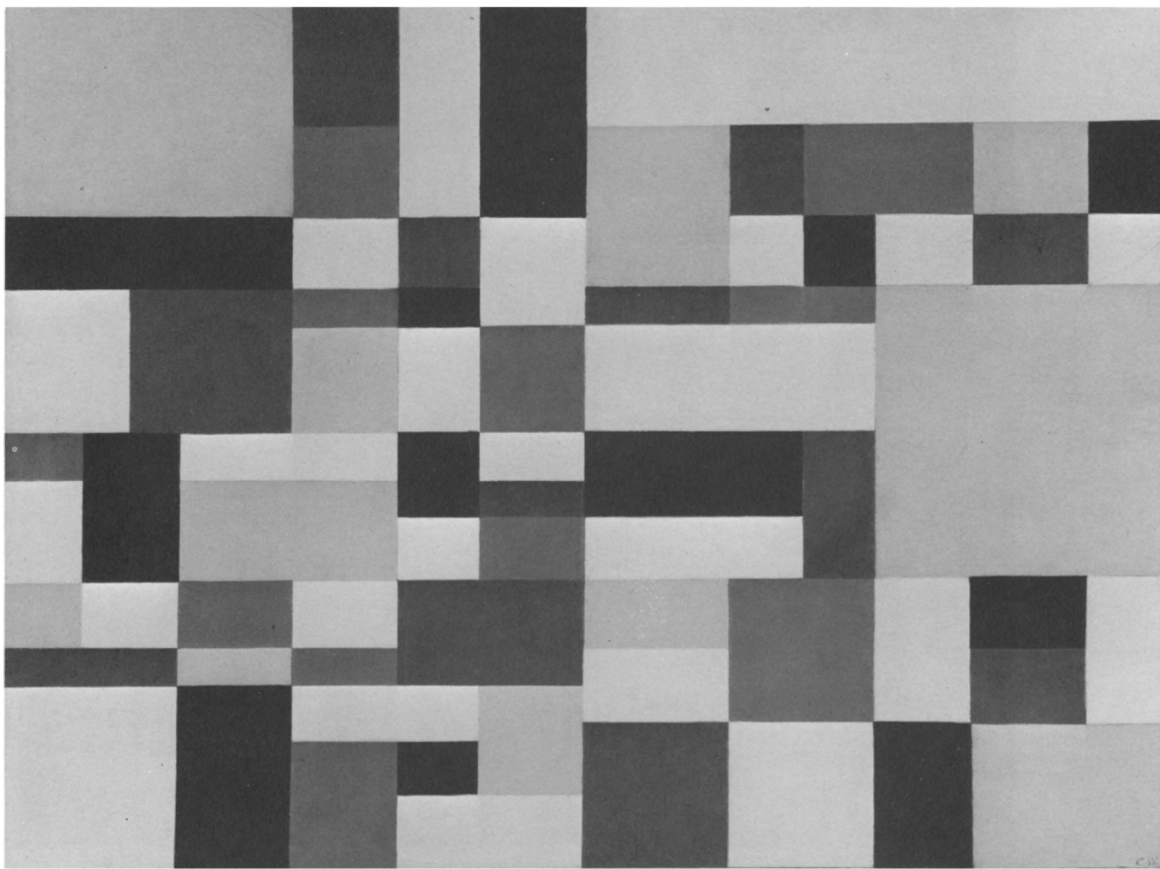
6. Ralston Crawford, "New Orleans #5," 50½ x 36½", oil on canvas,
F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



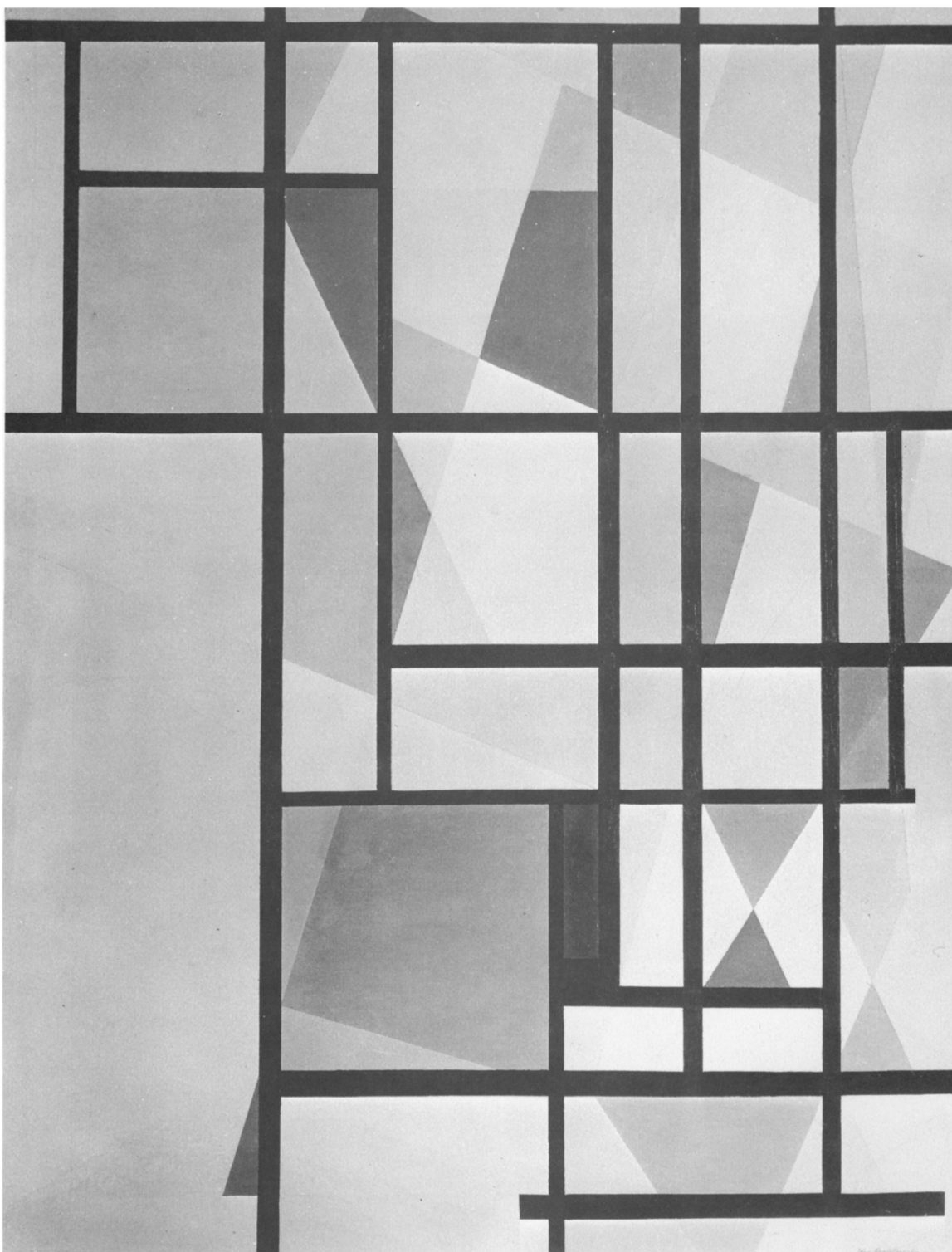
7. Jean Xceron, "239B," 1938, 58 x 38½", oil on canvas. Courtesy of Washburn Gallery, Inc., New York.



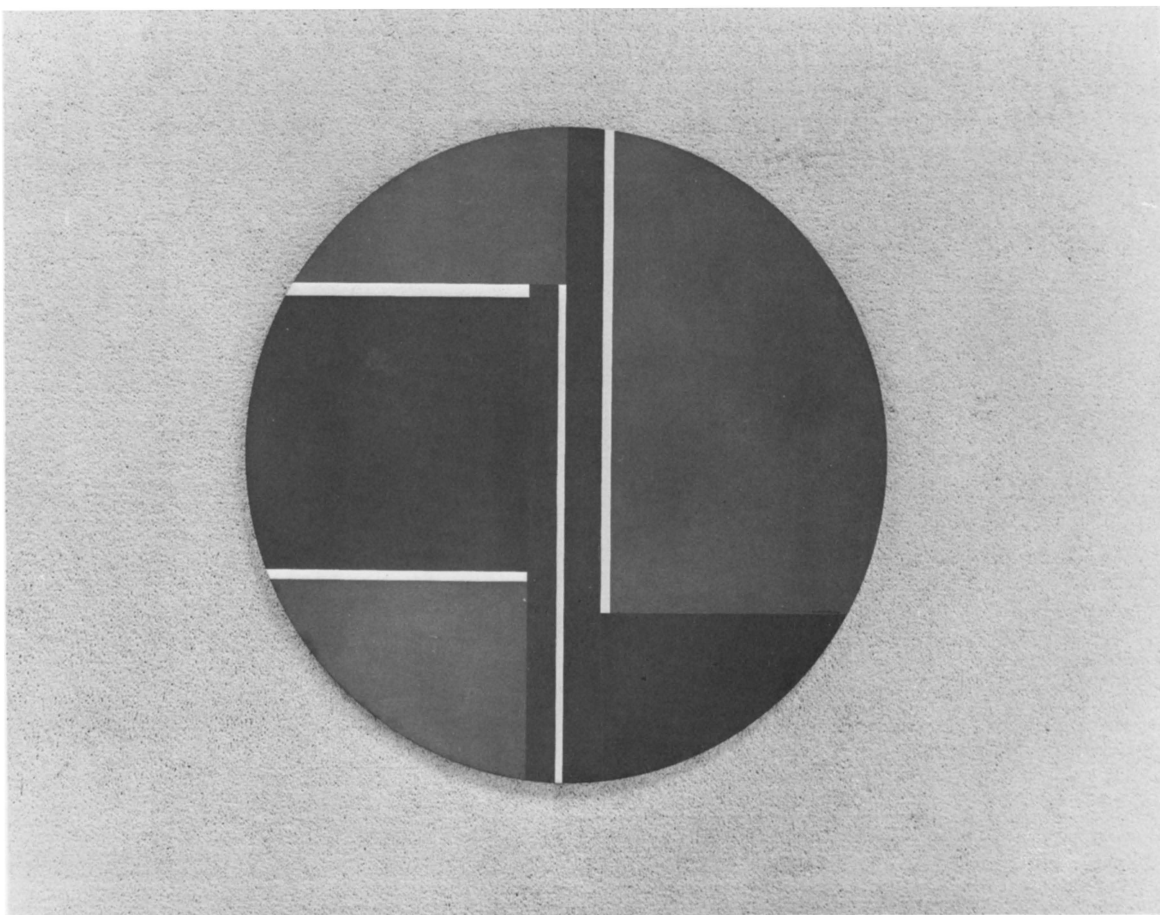
8. Fritz Glarner, "Relational Painting #89," 1961, 7 x 46 3/4", oil on canvas. F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



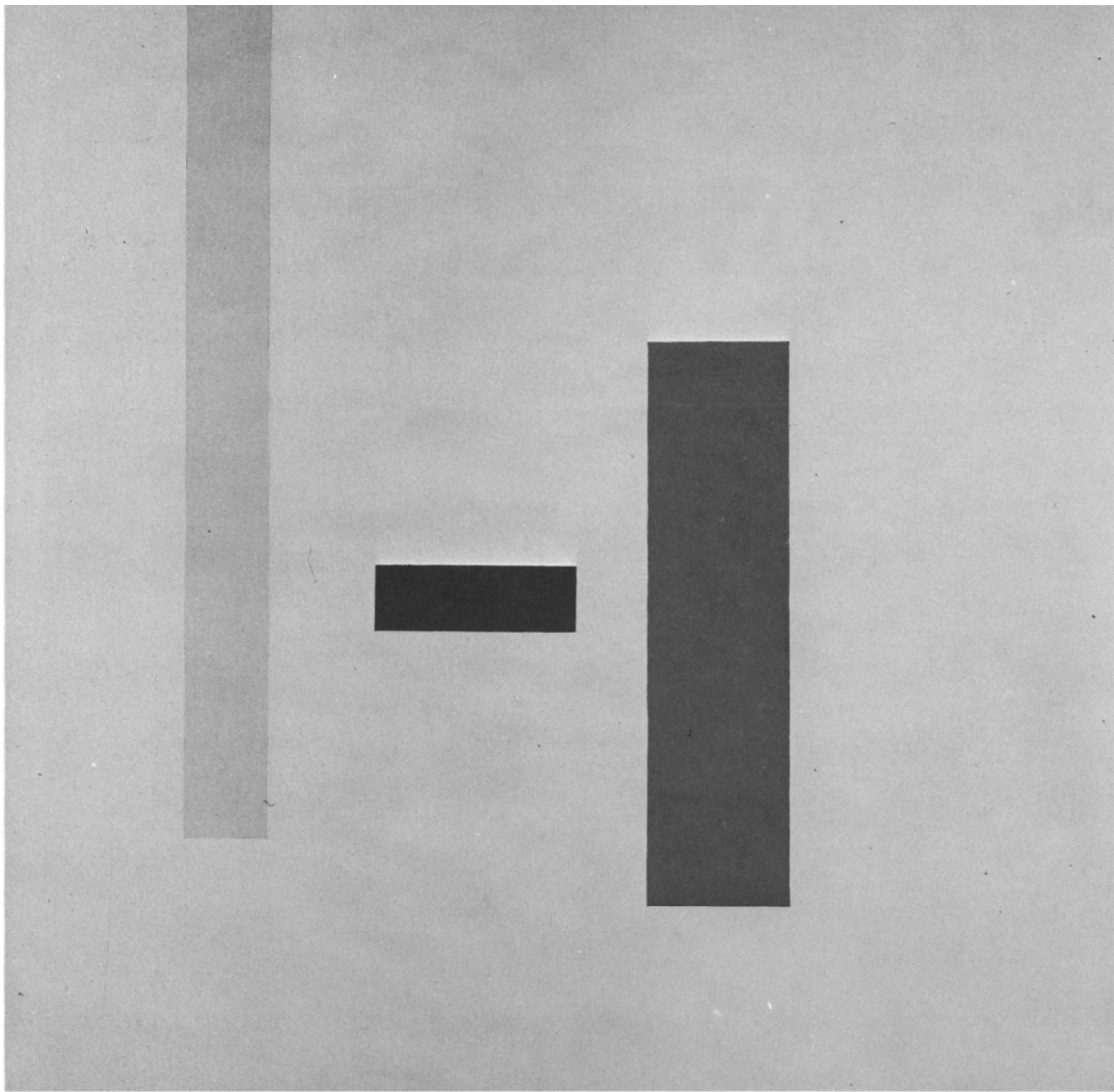
9. Charmion Von Wiegand, "Evolution," 1949-50, 27 x 36", oil on canvas. Anonymous loan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



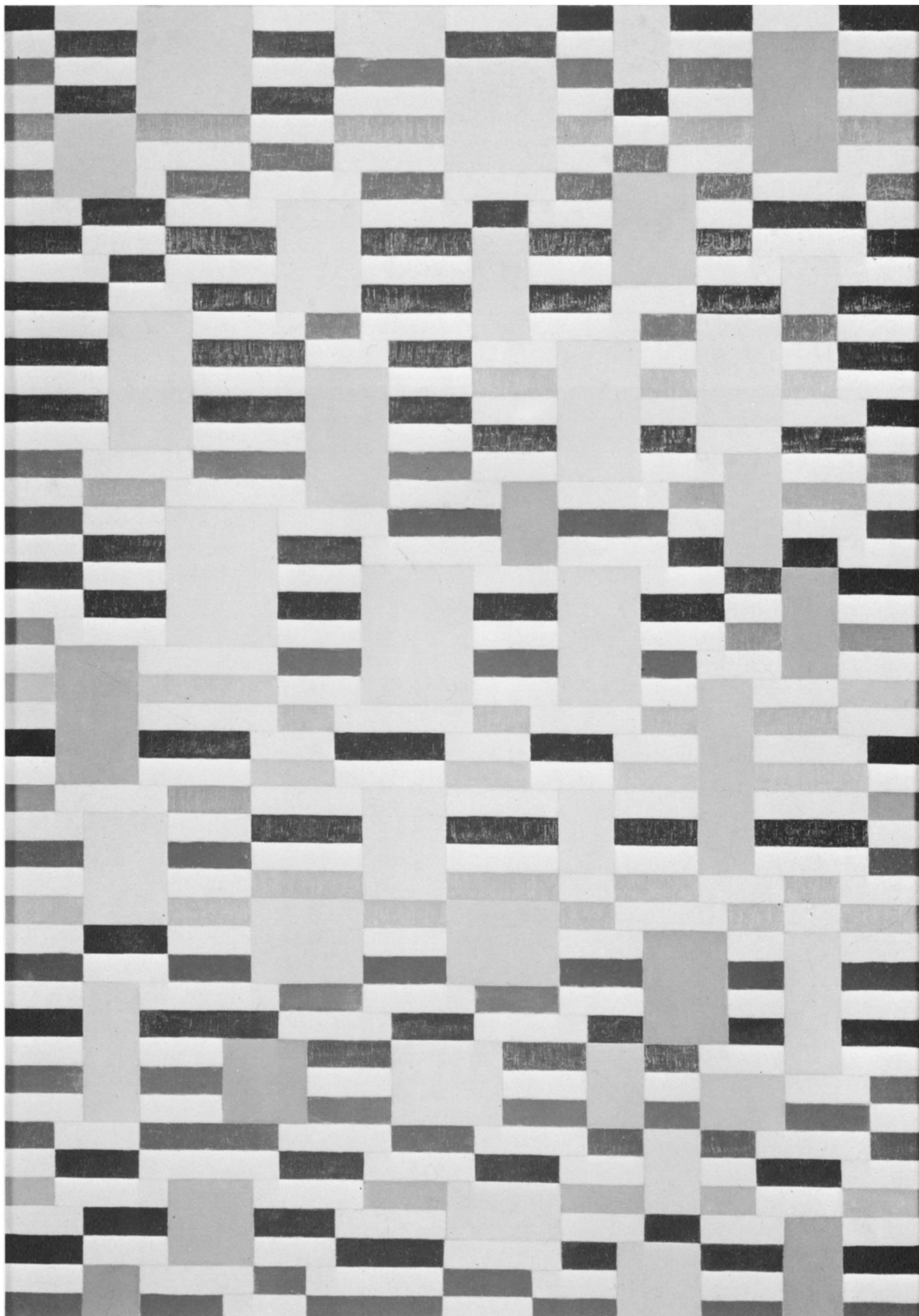
10. Ilya Bolotowsky, "Opalescent," 1947, 32 x 24", oil on canvas.
Courtesy of Grace Borgenicht Gallery Inc., New York.



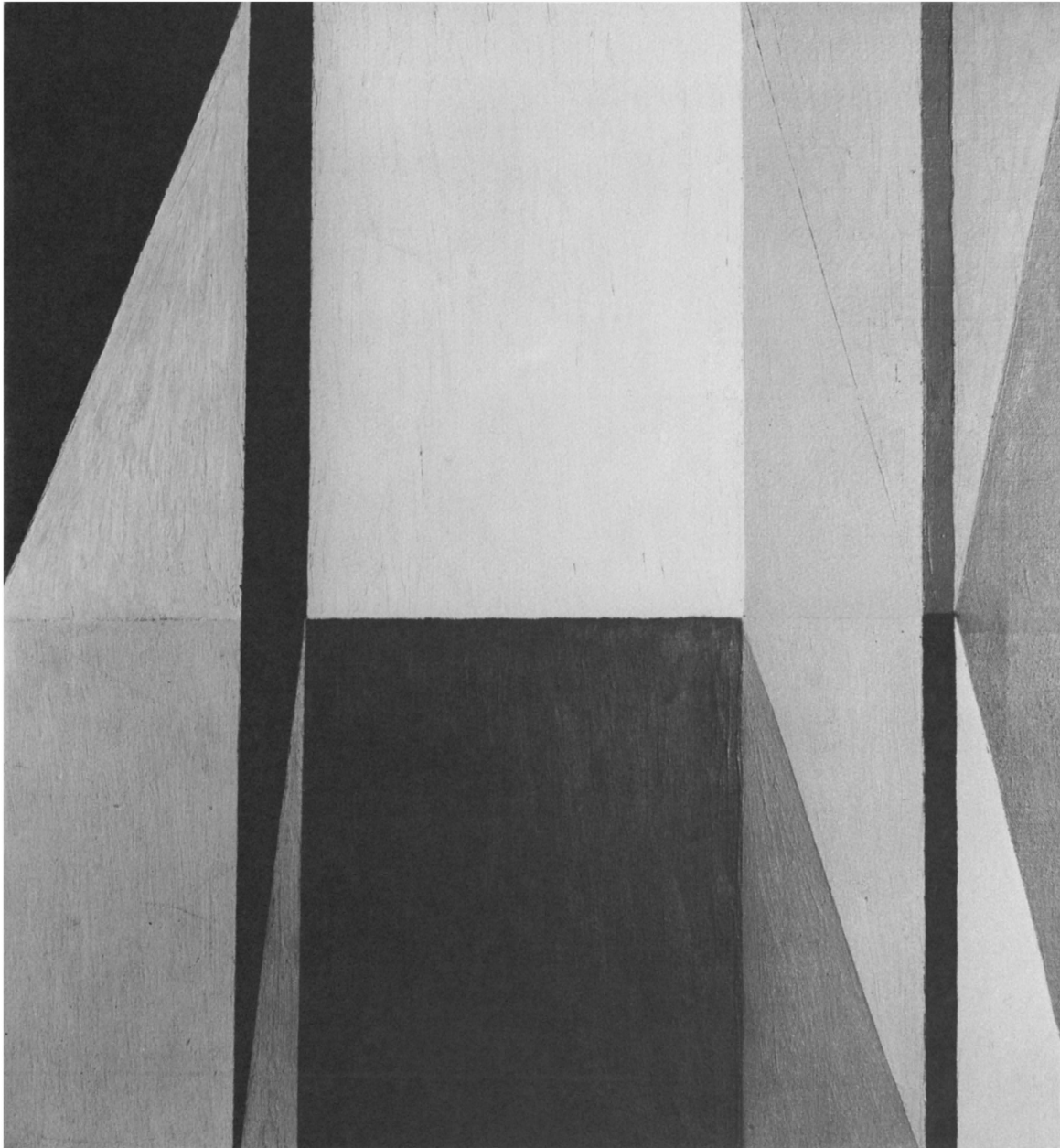
11. Ilya Bolotowsky, "Red Tondo," 1967-68," diameter 47½", oil on canvas. F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



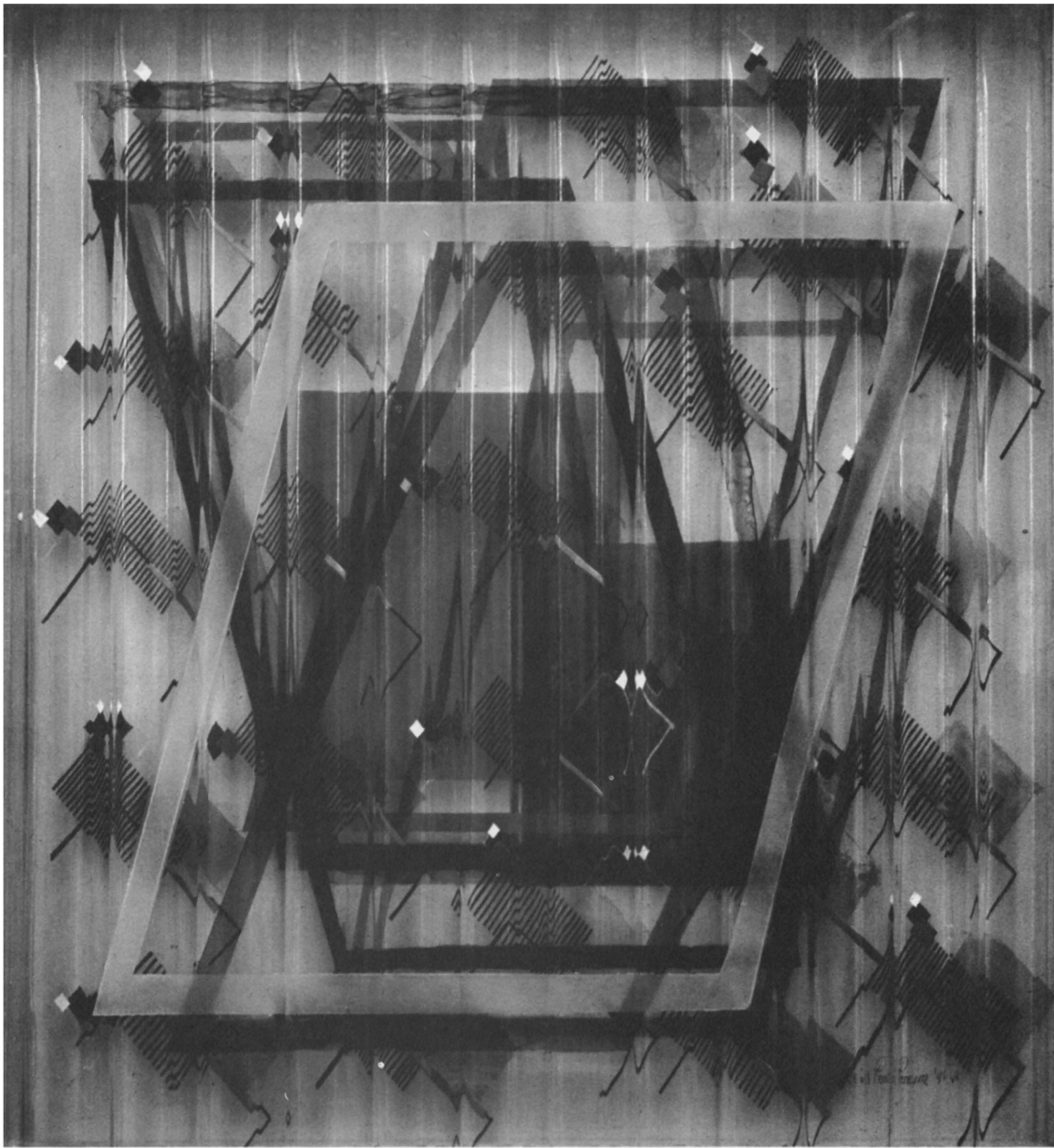
12. Burgoyne Diller, "First Theme," 1960, 34 x 34½" oil on canvas.
Courtesy of Noah Goldowsky Gallery, New York.



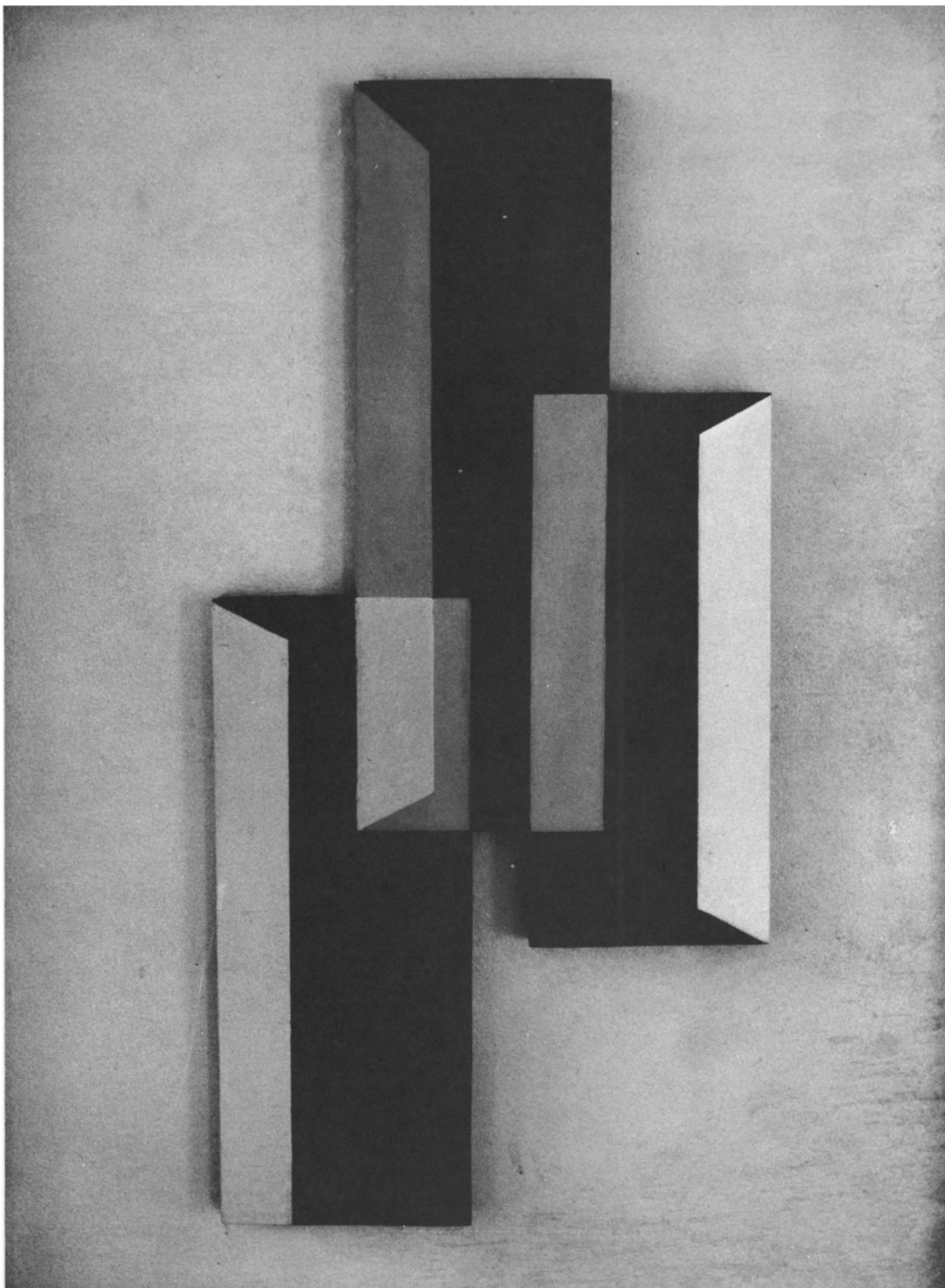
13. Leon Polk Smith, "New York City," 1945, 47 x 33", oil on canvas.
Courtesy of Genese René Gallery, New York.



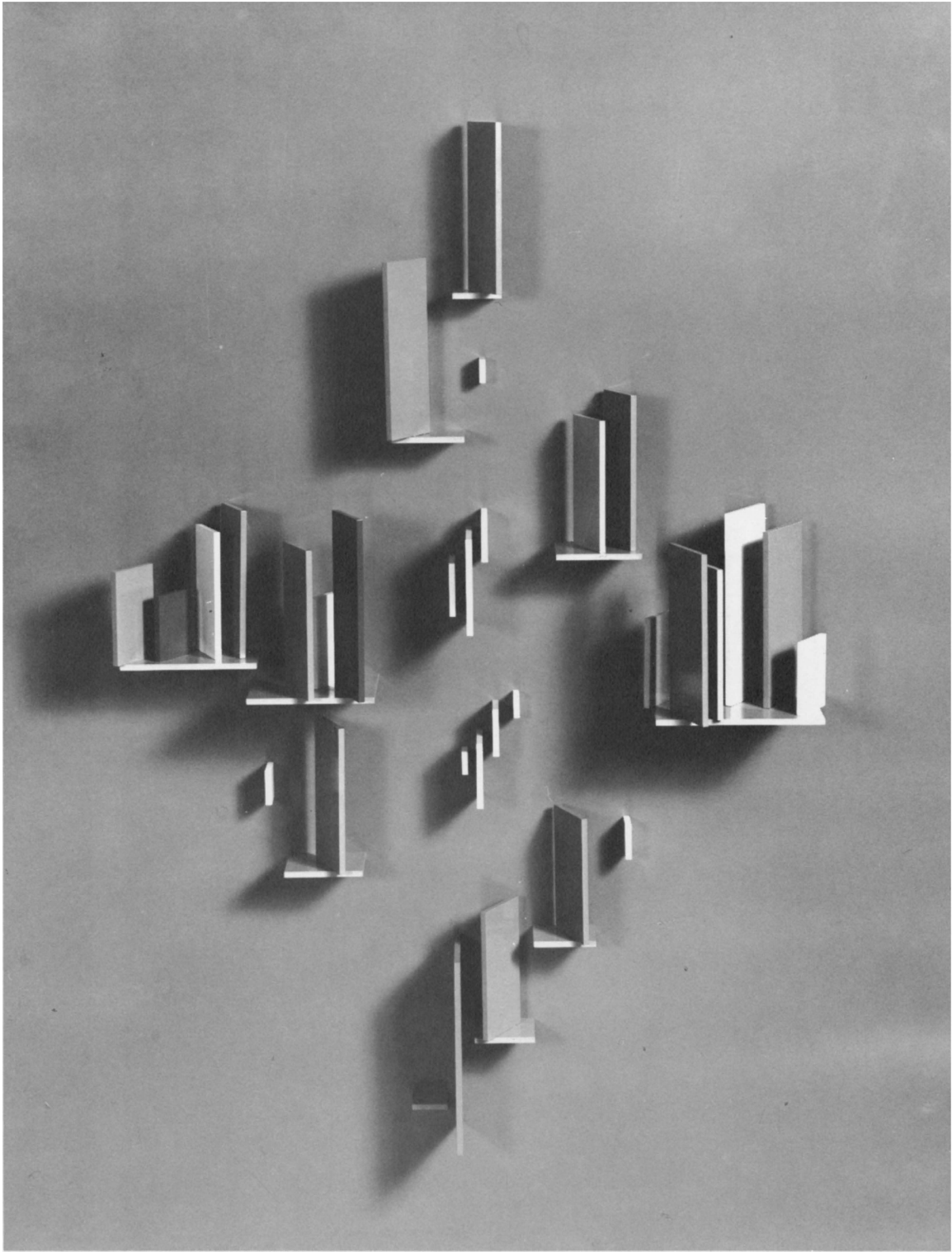
14. Alice Trumbull Mason, "The Barbary Hedge," 1955, $24\frac{1}{4} \times 22\frac{1}{2}$ ", oil on canvas. Courtesy of Washburn Gallery, Inc., New York.



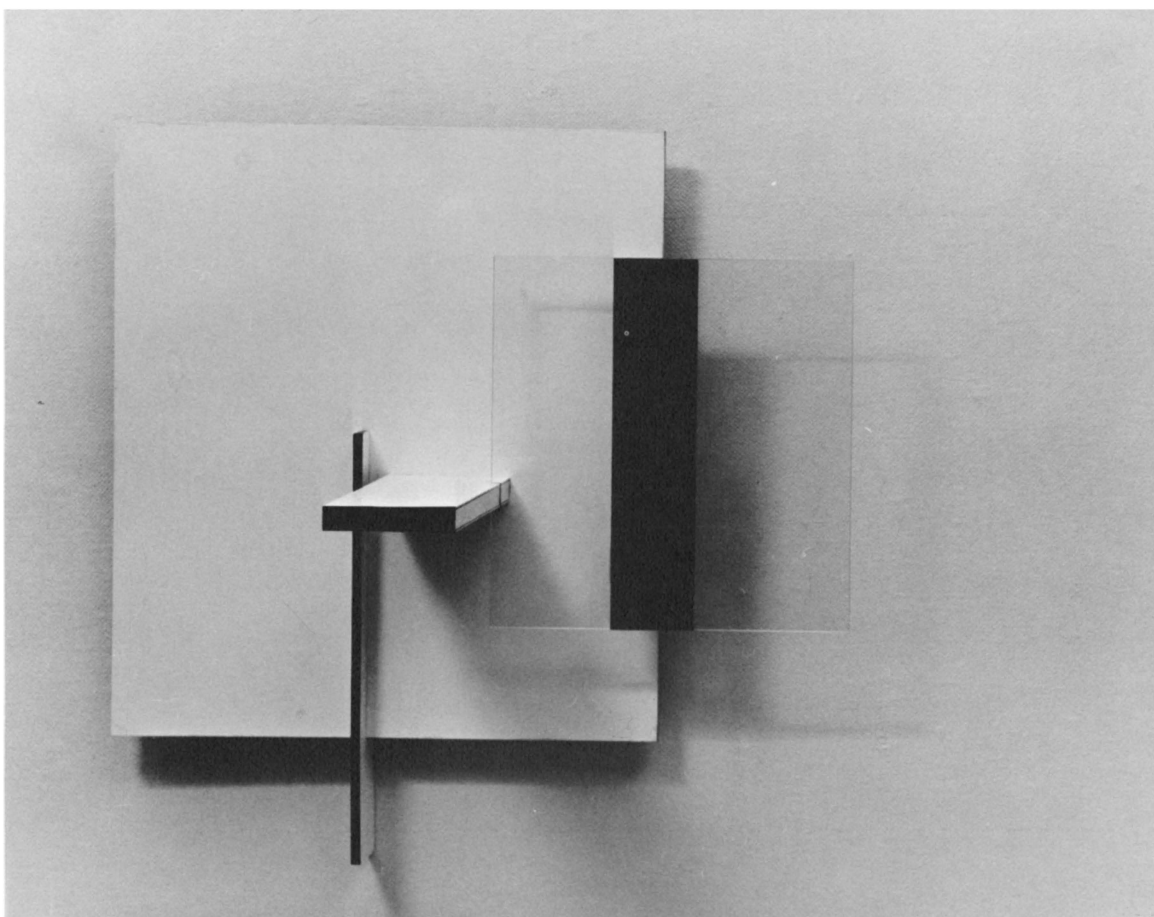
15. Irene Rice Pereira, "Transverse Parallels," 1946, 24 x 22", mixed media on two planes of corrugated glass, front plane sandblasted; back plane, oil on gesso board. Courtesy of Forum Gallery Inc., New York.



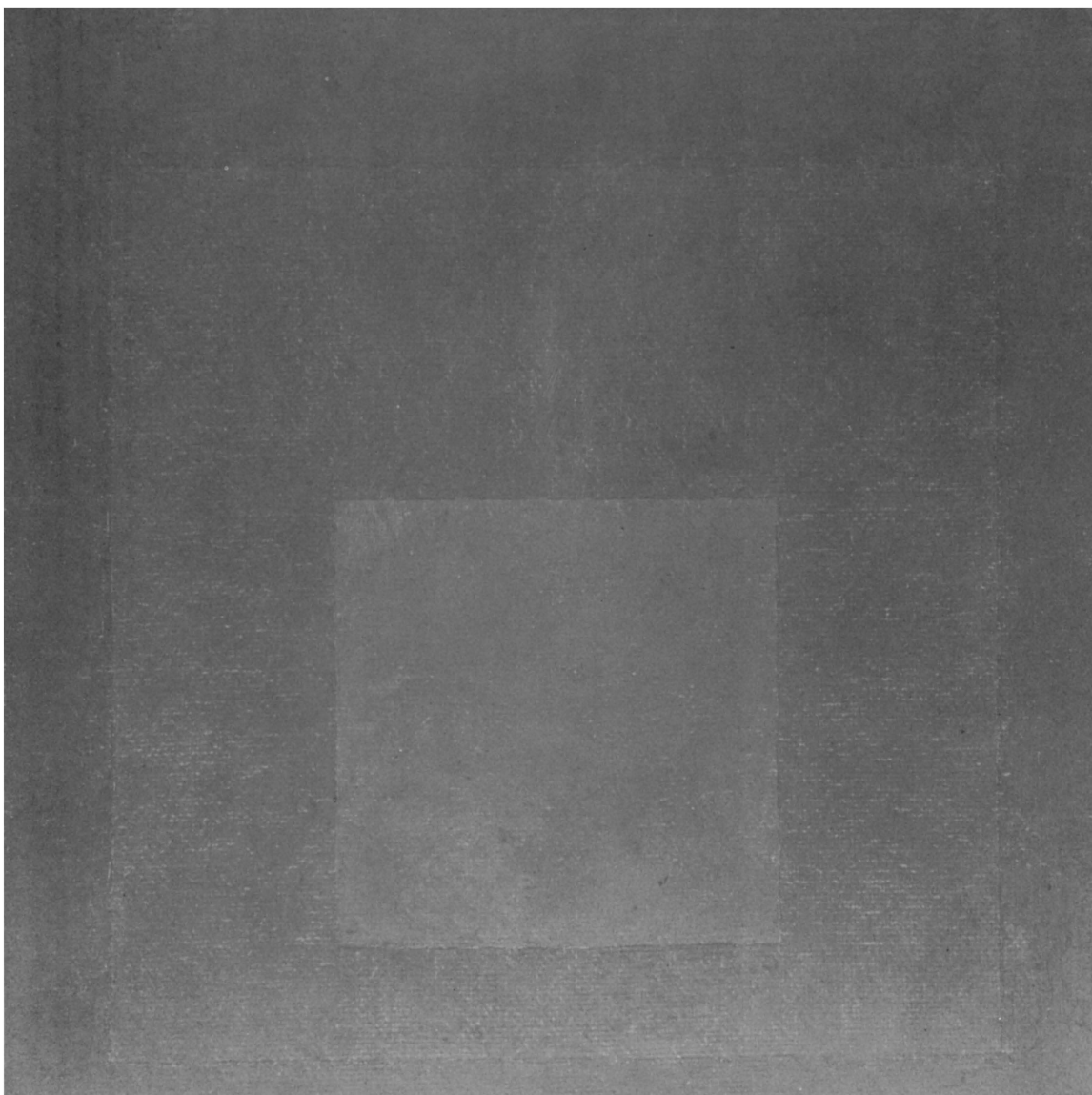
16. Charles Shaw, "Construction," 1939, $36\frac{1}{4} \times 26\frac{1}{4}$ ", painted wood.
Courtesy of the Zabriskie Gallery, New York.



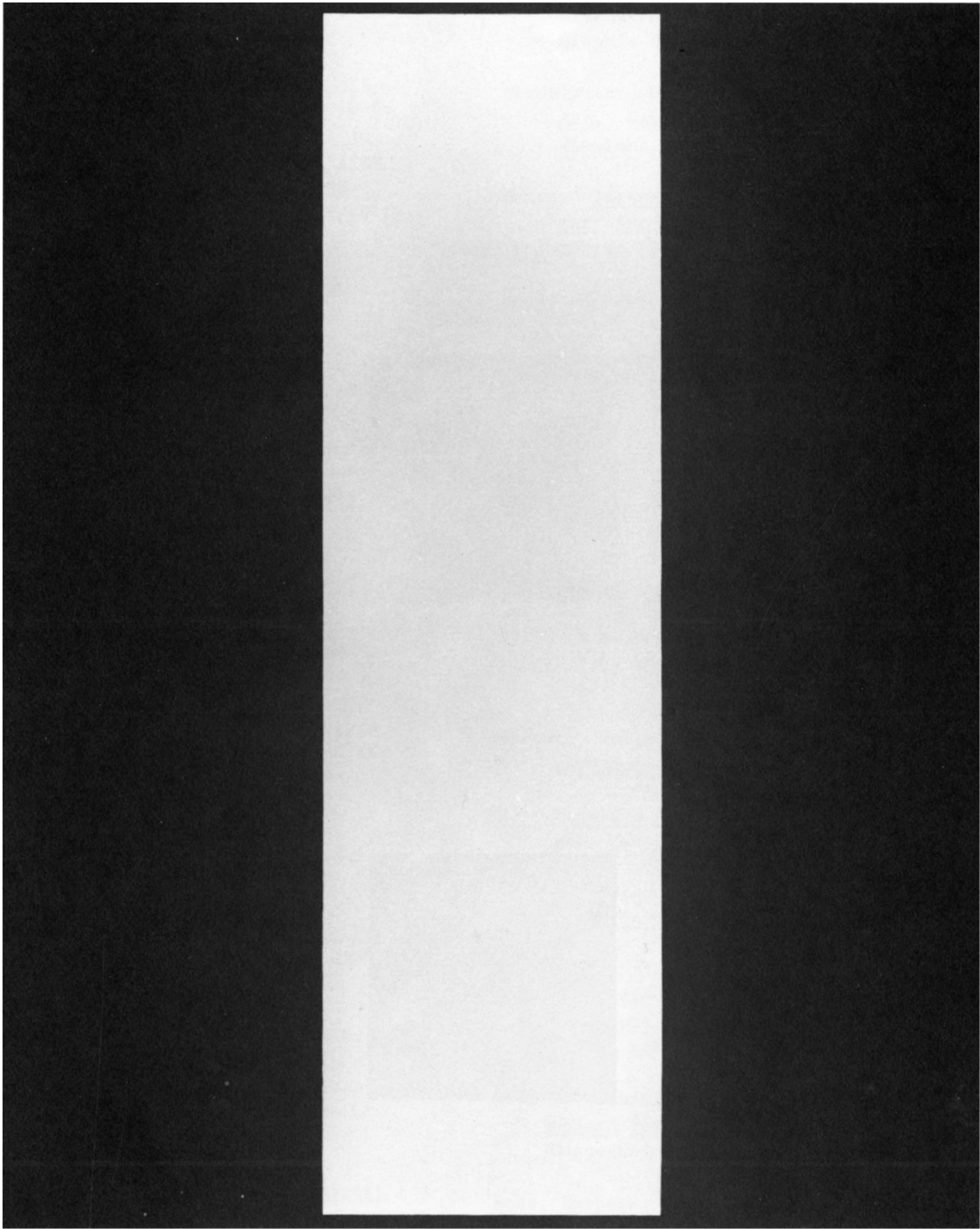
17. Charles Biederman, "Structurist Relief, Red Wing #50," 1960-66, 42 3/8 x 31 3/16 x 6 3/8", painted aluminum. Courtesy of Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, gift of Louise R. Noun.



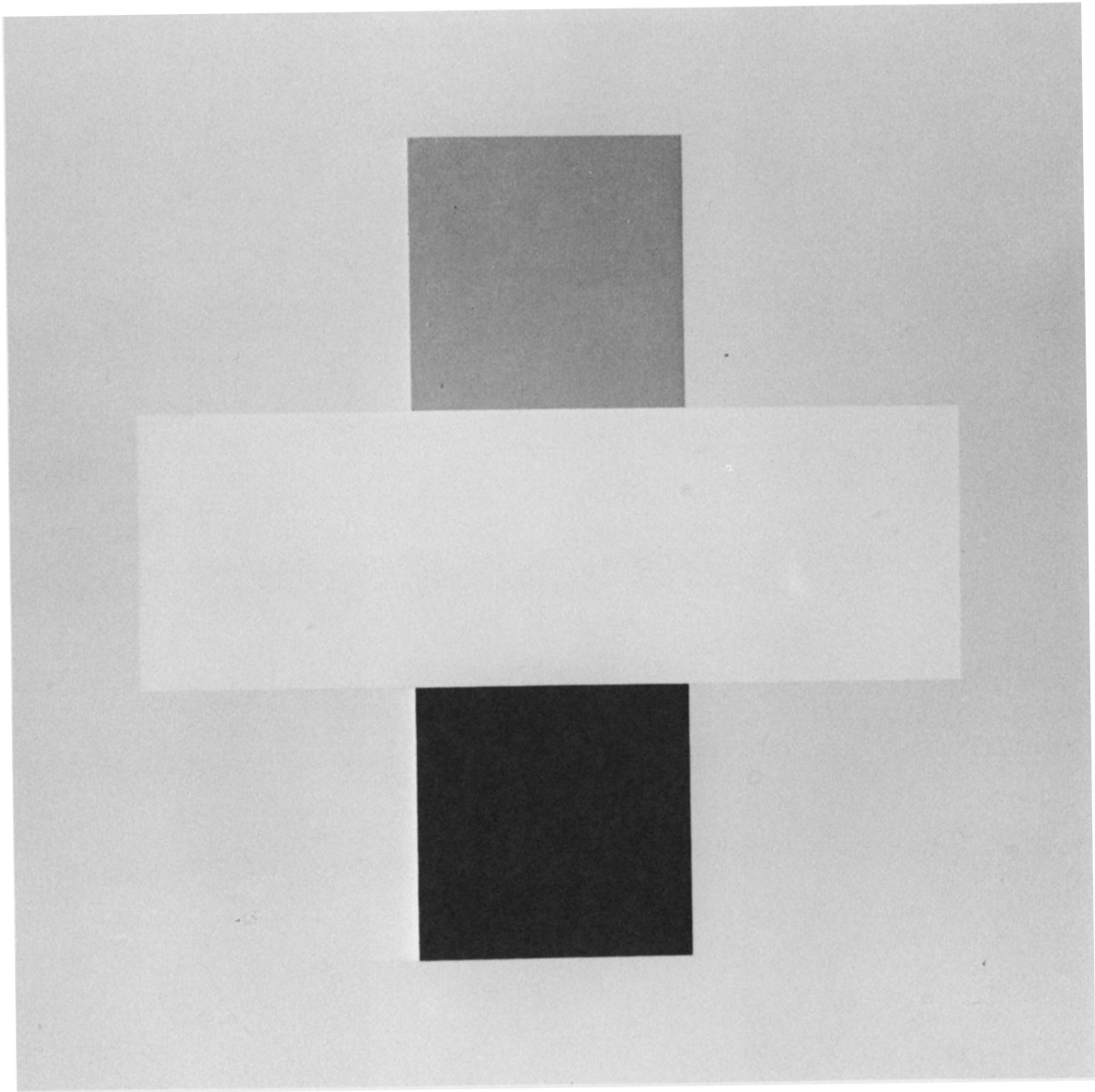
18. Victor Pasmore, "Transparent Relief Construction in White, Black and Indian Red," 1960-61, 23 7/8" x 24 1/4" perspex, wood and formica. Collection of University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Bertha Schaefer Bequest.



19. Josef Albers, "Study for an Early Diary," 1954, 15 x 15", oil on masonite, Nebraska Art Association, Thomas C. Woods Fund.



20. John McLaughlin, "#1, 1965," 1965, 60 x 48", oil on canvas, F. M. Hall Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



21. Frederick Hammersley, "Homerun," 1967-68, 42 x 42", oil on linen. Courtesy of the artist, Frederick Hammersley, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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