

The Museum of Modern Art

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ANNOUNCES IMPORTANT ACQUISITION OF MAJOR WORKS BY WARHOL, ROSENQUIST, AND KELLY

Campbell's Soup Cans, F-111, and White Plaque: Bridge Arch and Reflection to become part of MoMA's Permanent Collection

Three major paintings, including two seminal works of the 1960s representing the apex of the Pop art movement, have been acquired by The Museum of Modern Art, it was announced today by Museum Director Glenn D. Lowry.

Two of the works, *Campbell's Soup Cans* (1962) by Andy Warhol and *F-111* (1964-65) by James Rosenquist, are masterpieces of Pop art, said Kirk Varnedoe, Chief Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art. The third painting is *White Plaque: Bridge Arch and Reflection* (1951-55) by Ellsworth Kelly, a classic example of early postwar, hard-edged abstraction.

"American Pop art of the 1960s was one of the key movements in art globally at the time," said Varnedoe. "*Campbell's Soup Cans* and *F-111* are crucial additions in our goal to make the Museum's collection of works from the 1960s as strong as our collection of New York School paintings from the 1950s."

Varnedoe called the Kelly painting an important addition to the permanent collection, which also includes the artist's *Colors for a Large Wall* (1951), Kelly's masterpiece from his Paris years of 1948-54 and a gift of the artist. "Together, these two works provide the Museum a superb representation of this period in Kelly's career," Varnedoe said.

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The Warhol painting was acquired as a partial gift from the collection of New York art dealer and collector Irving Blum. The Rosenquist piece was obtained from a private American collection through New York art dealer Jeffrey Deitch. The Kelly painting was acquired through London art dealer Waddington Galleries Ltd., from a private collection; it is a fractional and promised gift of Emily Rauh Pulitzer, a member of the Museum's Board of Trustees.

Lowry said the acquisitions illustrate the Museum's ongoing efforts to add defining works to its permanent collection that epitomize key moments in twentieth-century art.

"*Campbell's Soup Cans* and *F-111* represent two of the summits of 1960s Pop art," Lowry said. "They define the artists, the period, and, indeed, the generation in which they were created. We are extremely pleased that we were able to keep both works from going abroad, and that we could reach an agreement with the previous owners, both of whom felt the works should be in New York at The Museum of Modern Art." He added that *White Plaque: Bridge Arch and Reflection* represented an indispensable addition to the Museum's collection of pioneering masterworks from the 1950s.

Blum, who acquired *Campbell's Soup Cans* directly from the artist in 1962, said, "I am greatly pleased that this work will be readily available to the American public and shown and cared for by The Museum of Modern Art."

Campbell's Soup Cans, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, consists of thirty-two panels, each measuring 20 x 16 inches. Each panel portrays a different variety of Campbell's soup. In color and style, each panel is identical, the only difference being the name of the particular variety depicted in each one.

F-111 is a massive oil on canvas measuring 10 feet high and a staggering 86 feet wide. Like Warhol, Rosenquist once worked as a commercial artist, but with a twist. His

speciality was painting huge advertising billboards in New York City's Times Square and other locales. The billboard influence is readily apparent in the massive breadth of *F-111*, in which an F-111 fighter bomber serves as the central image, spanning an array of motifs ranging from popular consumer products to nuclear war.

White Plaque: Bridge Arch and Reflection, an oil on wood consisting of two panels separated by a wood strip, measures 64 x 48 x 1/2 inches. It will be on view in the upcoming exhibition *Ellsworth Kelly: A Retrospective* at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York from October 18, 1996, through January 15, 1997.

Campbell's Soup Cans and *F-111* will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art beginning November 15, in an exhibition of contemporary art from the permanent collection organized by Kynaston McShine, Senior Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture.

Douglas S. Cramer, a member of the Museum's Board of Trustees and the recently appointed Chairman of the Board's Committee on Painting and Sculpture, said the acquisitions announced today build upon other recent additions of singular, unique masterworks to the Museum's permanent collection. These include the 1995 acquisition of *18 October 1977* (1988) by Gerhard Richter; the 1996 addition of the entire series of *Untitled Film Stills* (1977-80) by Cindy Sherman; and the promised gift by Agnes Gund, President of The Museum of Modern Art, of Jasper Johns's *Untitled* (1992-95).

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The large structure on which the video is projected—roughly 12 feet high, 7 feet wide, and 3 feet deep—consists of layers of pink felt unevenly packed into an industrial metal frame.

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