

IN HONOR OF ELLSWORTH KELLY'S 90th BIRTHDAY, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART REUNITES THE CHATHAM SERIES PAINTINGS OF 1971

Ellsworth Kelly: Chatham Series

May 23–September 8, 2013

The Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Painting and Sculpture Galleries, fourth floor

New York, May 16, 2013—In celebration of Ellsworth Kelly's 90th birthday, The Museum of Modern Art presents *Ellsworth Kelly: Chatham Series*, an exhibition that reunites, for the first time in 40 years, the first series of paintings the artist made after leaving New York City for Spencertown, in upstate New York, in 1970. On view from May 23 through September 8, 2013, the exhibition is organized by Ann Temkin, the Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art.

After working for about a year in a studio he found in the nearby town of Chatham, Kelly (American, b. 1923) embarked upon an ambitious series of 14 paintings that he would name for the town. Each of the works in the Chatham Series takes the form of an inverted ell made of two joined canvases, each a different color: black, white, red, yellow, blue, or green. These compositions grew from an intuitive process rather than a system: the final paintings are based on studies Kelly made by manipulating paired pieces of colored paper, adjusting the colors and their proportions until he was pleased.

By the time he created the Chatham Series, Kelly was well established as an artist. Born in Newburgh, New York, and trained at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, he first developed his abstract vocabulary of line, form, and color while living and working in Paris, from 1948 to 1954. Resolving to make what he described as "anonymous" work, Kelly aimed to suppress the presence of personal painterly gesture in his canvases. During this formative period Kelly began to explore the joining of monochrome expanses together to create multipanel works, an approach that has endured throughout his career.

The Chatham Series was first exhibited at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, in 1972, one year after the series' completion. At the close of that exhibition, the 14 paintings went their separate ways. Reuniting this landmark series for the first time provides a welcome opportunity to revisit a key moment in Kelly's artistic development.

SPONSORSHIP:

The exhibition is supported by BNP Paribas.
Additional support for the accompanying publication is provided by Agnes Gund.

PUBLICATION:

Ellsworth Kelly: Chatham Series illustrates the complete group of paintings and includes an essay by Ann Temkin, the Museum's Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Chief Curator of Painting and Sculpture, that provides an in-depth look at this significant period in Kelly's work.

72 pages, 30 illustrations. \$22.95, hardcover. 9.5 x 11". Published by The Museum of Modern Art and available at the MoMA Stores and online at MoMAStore.org. Distributed to the trade through ARTBOOK|D.A.P. in the United States and Canada, and through Thames & Hudson outside the United States and Canada.

No. 22

Press Contact: Margaret Doyle, (212) 408-6400, margaret_doyle@moma.org
For downloadable high-resolution images, register at MoMA.org/press.

Public Information:

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019, (212) 708-9400, MoMA.org.

Hours: Saturday through Thursday, 10:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Friday, 10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Museum Admission: \$25 adults; \$18 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$14 full-time students with current I.D. Free, members and children 16 and under. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs). Free admission during Uniqlo Free Friday Nights: Fridays, 4:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

MoMA.org: No service charge for tickets ordered on MoMA.org. Tickets purchased online may be printed out and presented at the Museum without waiting in line. (Includes admittance to Museum galleries and film programs).

Film and After Hours Program Admission: \$12 adults; \$10 seniors, 65 years and over with I.D.; \$8 full-time students with current I.D. The price of an After Hours Program Admission ticket may be applied toward the price of a Museum admission ticket or MoMA Membership within 30 days.

[MoMA/MoMA PS1 Blog](#), [MoMA on Facebook](#), [MoMA on Twitter](#), [MoMA on YouTube](#), [MoMA on Flickr](#)

#