

THE 20TH  
CENTURY  
ARTBOOK

PHAIDON



# **The 20th-Century Art Book**

Phaidon Press Limited  
Regent's Wharf  
All Saints Street  
London N1 9PA

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Note
The publishers have made every effort to include dimensions wherever possible. As some installations illustrated fill entire rooms, the correct measurements have been impossible to acquire.
<i>abbreviations:</i>
<b>c</b> = circa
<b>b</b> = born <b>d</b> = died
<b>h</b> = height <b>w</b> = width <b>l</b> = length
<b>diam</b> = diameter
ARG = Argentina
ARM = Armenia
ASL = Australia
AUS = Austria
BAH = Bahamas
BAR = Barbados
BEL = Belgium
BR = Brazil
BUL = Bulgaria
CAN = Canada
CH = Chile
CHN = China
CI = Canary Islands
COL = Columbia
CU = Cuba
CZ = Czechoslovakia
DK = Denmark
FIN = Finland
FR = France
GB = Great Britain
GER = Germany
GR = Greece
HUN = Hungary
IN = India
IRE = Ireland
IS = Israel
IT = Italy
JAP = Japan
KOR = Korea
LAO = Laos
LEB = Lebanon
LIT = Lithuania
MEX = Mexico
MI = Marquesas Islands
MON = Principality of Monaco
MOR = Morocco
NL = Netherlands
NOR = Norway
NZ = New Zealand
POL = Poland
POR = Portugal
PRU = Prussia
ROM = Romania
RUS = Russia
SA = South Africa
SP = Spain
SW = Switzerland
SWE = Sweden
TAH = Tahiti
UG = Uganda
UKR = Ukraine
URU = Uruguay
USA = United States of America
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ZAI = Zaire

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More than any other era, the twentieth century offers us an unrivalled galaxy of styles and approaches to art. The last ten decades have been a fast-moving epoch of inventions, discoveries and political upheavals. As a result, the art scene has also radically changed: it has become more international, artists have experimented with new media, including oil paint, collage, sculpture, ready-made objects, installation and video, and the status of women artists has grown immeasurably. As we approach the year 2000, **The 20th-Century Art Book** offers an A to Z guide to the art of an extraordinary century. From old favourites such as Monet, Picasso, Dalí and Hockney to the most innovative contemporary artists, 500 full-page colour plates present celebrated works alongside future classics. Each image is accompanied by an incisive text, shedding light on the work and its creator. The alphabetical arrangement presents thought-provoking juxtapositions, while cross-references lead you through the century by subject matter, style or medium. Full glossaries of terms, artistic movements, and museums and galleries are included, creating a self-contained volume which presents a whole new way of looking at twentieth-century art.



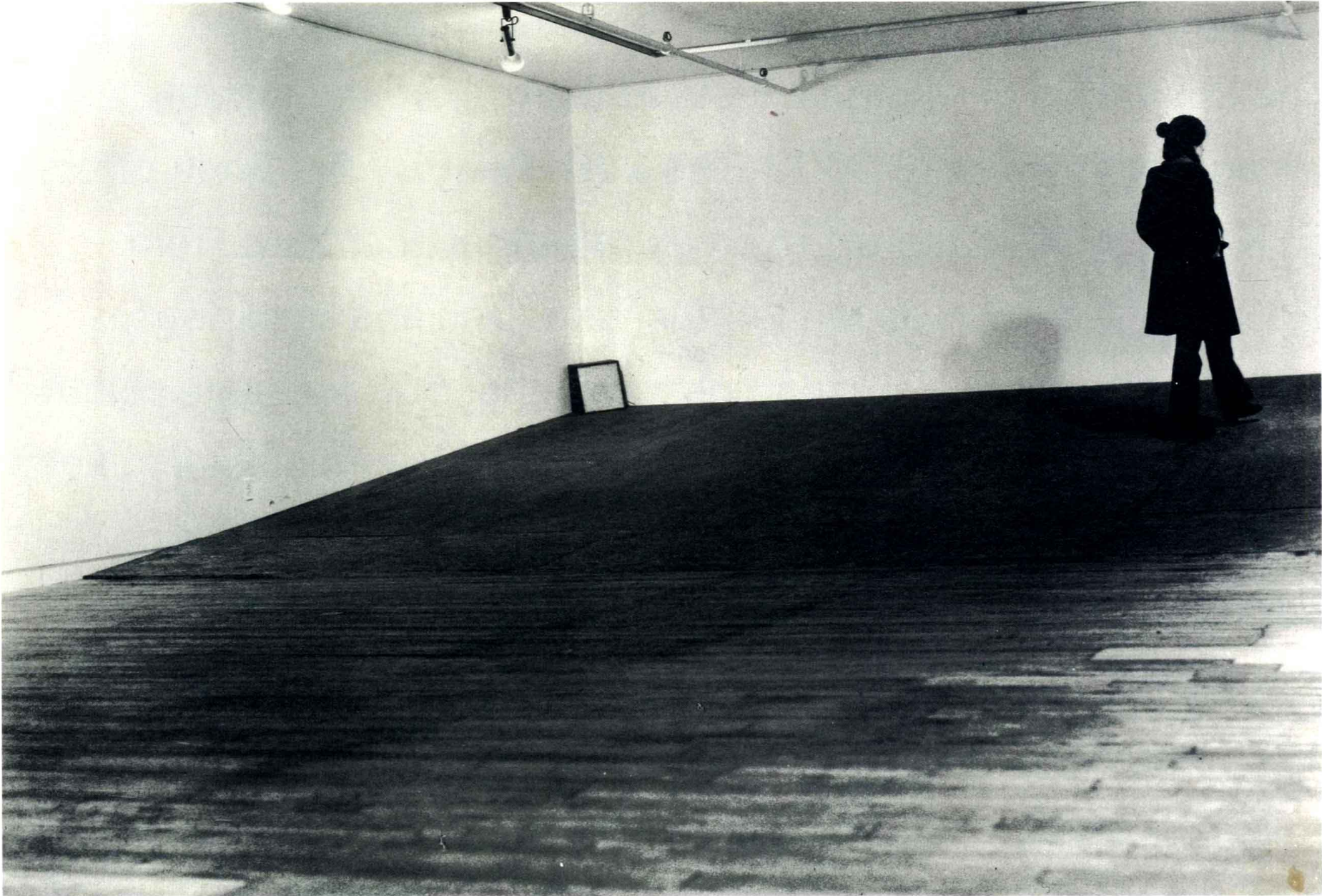


At the back of the gallery, concealed beneath a ramp, lurks Acconci who masturbates to fantasies about the viewer above. His thoughts are relayed via a speaker in the corner. Simultaneously addressing and alienating the gallery visitor, the work speaks of pleasure, contact and desire, and conversely of invisibility and failure, perhaps as a metaphor for artistic creation. *Seedbed* is

one of the most infamous performance pieces of the 1970s. As a reaction against the mathematical precision of Minimalist art of the 1960s, Acconci sought to fill his art with intensity and passion. He later devised methods of reaching a wider audience, such as his car roof racks which inflated to reveal huge penises. He assumed that an art which could be brought directly to the

public, and could not be sold, would cause the collapse of the gallery system. Ironically, his brand of Body Art, where he used himself as the subject of his work, was superseded by the 1980's gallery boom.

Andre, Burden, McCarthy, Nitsch, Pane, Rainer, Schneemann



Vito Acconci. b New York (USA), 1940. *Seedbed*. 1972. Photograph of a performance at the Sonnabend Gallery, New York

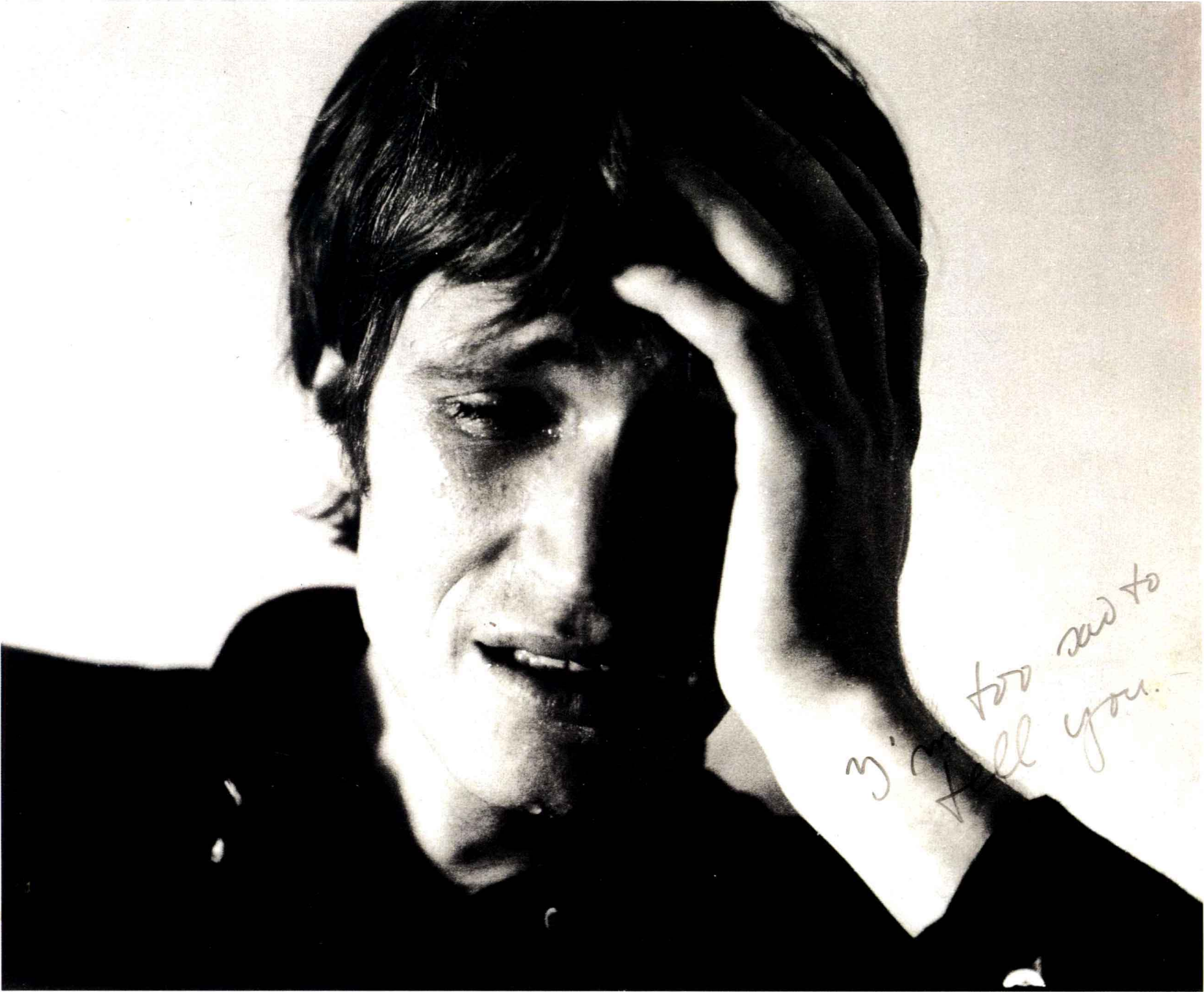


Raw emotion is dislocated from its source in this powerful black and white image. The work exists in three forms: as a film, a photograph and as a postcard sent to the artist's friends. The recipients were assured that this was a genuine expression of grief but were not given the cause. The sadness is thus more disturbing. Confronted by the tear-stained face of the artist, and

the caption, 'I'm too sad to tell you', which painfully expresses the loneliness of grief, the viewer recalls similarly distressing moments of his or her own life. In his modest output of low-budget Installation and Performance works, and his photographic pieces, Ader explored emotive subjects such as desperation, loss and departure. With a quiet yet eloquent voice, he reminds us of the

immeasurable divide between us all. In 1975, as part of his project *In Search of the Miraculous*, Ader set out from Cape Cod in a tiny yacht for a two-month voyage across the Atlantic. His boat capsized and he was never seen again.

➤ Burden, González, Longo, Rainer, Soutine





Gazing out at the viewer through half-closed eyes, this sculpture was modelled on Agar's husband. The stylized hair, which resembles Greek or Roman statuary, may reflect his keen interest in Classicism and mythology. As well as conjuring up the impression of a real person, this work is also partly abstract. The decorative swirl of orange round the eye and mouth, the spiral

lines incised into the chin and neck, and the stars above the lip and on the chin recall occult, mystic symbols. Born in Buenos Aires, but living for most of her life in London, Agar was a painter as well as a sculptor. Associated with the Surrealist movement, with whom she exhibited, she often exploited the unexpected conjunction of forms and objects in her work. However, like other

British Surrealists, she took little interest in the literary, political and psychological connections of that movement.

✦ Birch, Dalí, Laurens, A Piper





Naaotwa Swayne sits with her arms folded, gazing pensively into the mid-distance. Aitchison has simplified his subject into a subtle, decorative play of contrasting form and colour. There is little traditional modelling, and instead, clearly delineated flat shapes interact to give form to the composition. The warm colours of the sitter's flesh and dress are balanced against the dark background

and the white of her headdress and sleeves, giving the painting an exotic air. Aitchison's work is characterized by a gentle innocence which displays none of the self-conscious irony of much contemporary art. What is also increasingly rare in current practice is the artist's commitment to figure-painting from life, and to portraiture in particular. Aitchison belongs to a generation of British

artists, known as the School of London, who have distanced themselves from the more radical tendencies of contemporary art in order to develop the potential of figurative painting. He is also known for his large-scale paintings of Crucifixions.

• Hartley, John, Laurens, Schjerfbeck



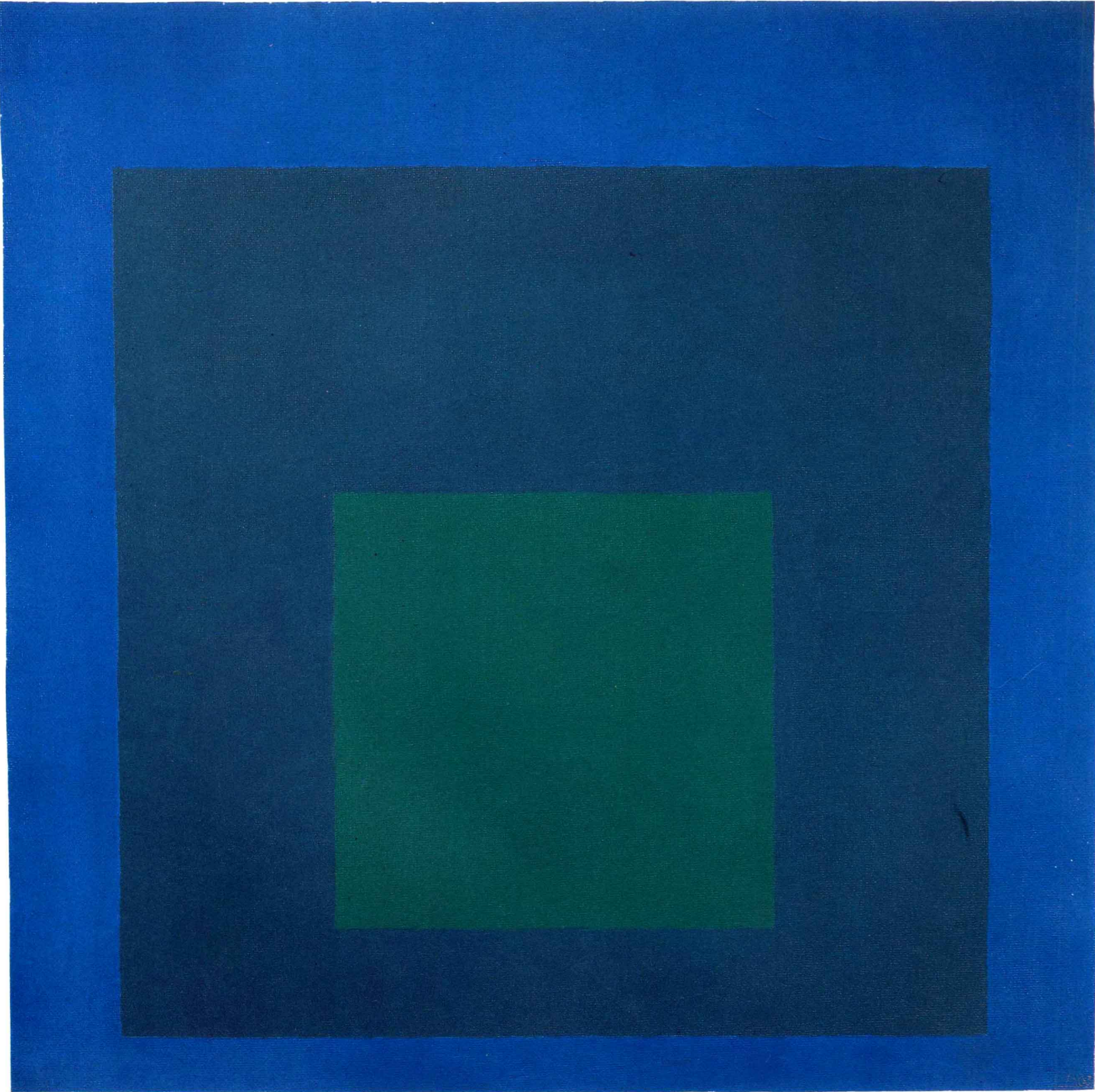


Three concentric squares are laid on top of each other in diminishing scale. The marine blue fills the outer rim while the smallest green square sits below the centre. The interaction of the colours is disorientating after long viewing, giving the illusion that the squares are moving in and out of the picture plane. In this sense the work prefigures Op Art, which experiments with visual

perception. Although Albers's geometric abstraction may have passing links with the Minimalist aesthetics of Stella and Judd, Albers's 'Squares' were part of an enormous series that was more concerned with the meditative potential offered by the interplay of colours, than with colour theory. Albers used colour as a metaphor for human relationships, wanting his work to be seen on an

informal, intuitive level, not as rigid visual geometry. A one-time member of the German Bauhaus school, he later emigrated to America to teach at the influential Black Mountain College. He also designed furniture and glass, and produced photographs.

● Judd, Klein, Malevich, Riley, Rothko, F Stella, Turrell





# Alechinsky **Pierre**

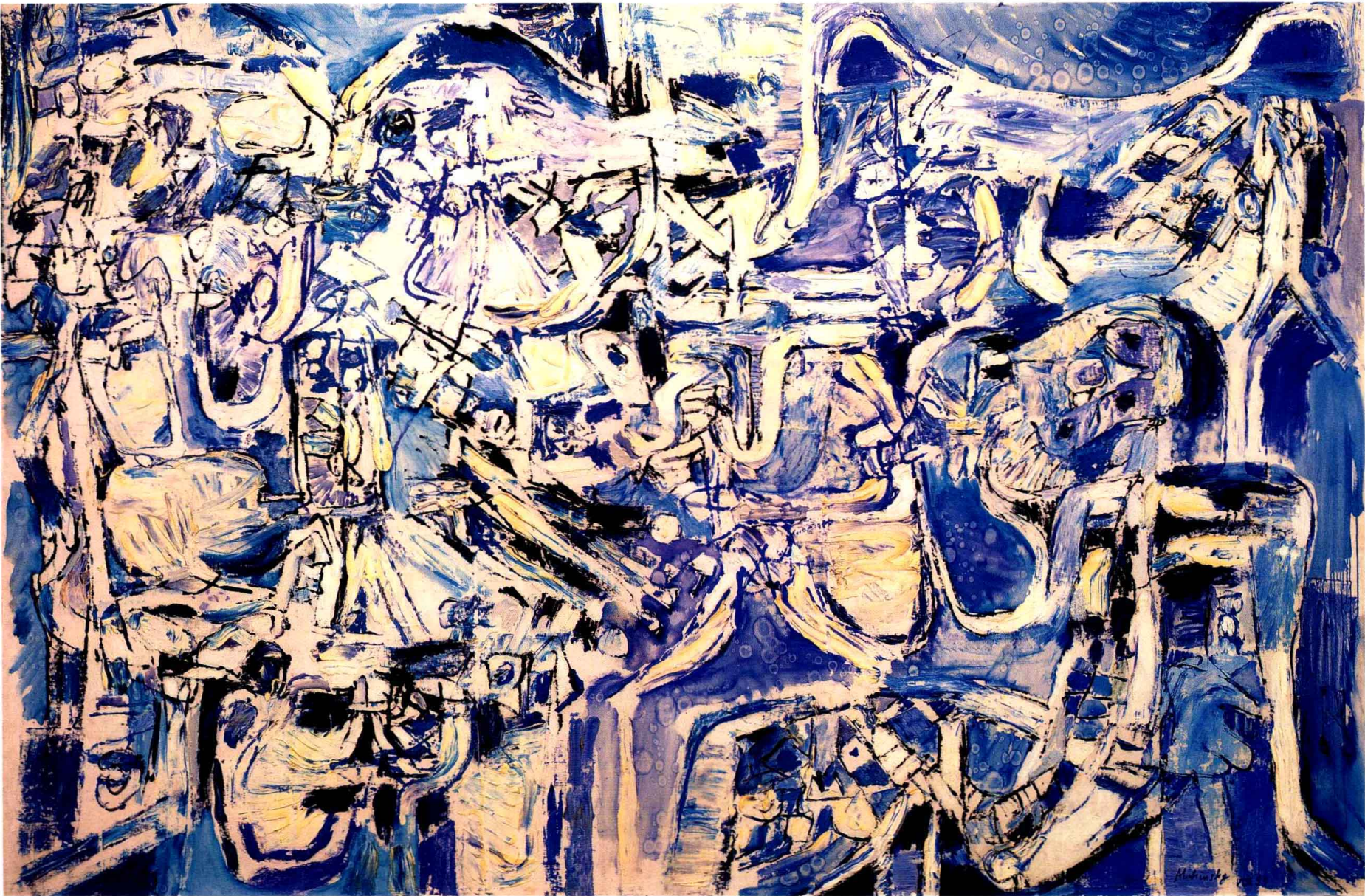
## The Large Transparent Things

A whirling ground of interlocking blue and white curves of colour fills the canvas to create a rhythmic, visual narrative. The title suggests that the work may represent people or objects, and some of the shapes could be interpreted as human forms. Alechinsky often used different shades of blue, giving a vibrant, painterly depth to his works. The spontaneous and dynamic

composition links his work to the Cobra movement, a group of artists who wanted to free themselves from the constraints of reason, producing compositions directly inspired by their subconscious. The name Cobra comes from the three cities where the artists were based – Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam. Alechinsky was a founder member of the group, along with Appel

and Jorn. He was also influenced by Japan, which he visited in the mid-1950s. Japanese calligraphy and the aesthetics of the performance-based Gutai group give his work its sense of balance.

➤ **Appel, Dubuffet, Jorn, Pollock, Yoshihara**





Thirteen rows of identical blocks of creosoted wood lie in low relief on the floor. Each unit can be dismantled and reassembled: Andre never uses adhesives or joints, relying instead on the inherent gravity of his medium for cohesion. Outside the gallery these materials would be almost indistinguishable from those used by a builder. Andre's use of industrial materials may owe something to

his experiences working on the Pennsylvania Railway. His austere sculptures display the Minimalist aesthetic which attempts to blur the boundaries of art and non-art, denying the importance of the role of the artist. The simplicity and geometric arrangement of the elements in this work harks back to Russian Constructivism and to the works of Brancusi. Andre's work has not always been well

received. His *Equivalent VIII* – a structure of house bricks – is perhaps the most controversial purchase ever made by the Tate Gallery in London. It was greeted by the public with unparalleled scorn.

➡ Brancusi, Duchamp, Judd, LeWitt, Morris, F Stella





# Appel Karel

## Hip Hip Hooray

Painted with thick brushstrokes and a childlike naïveté, a group of strange figures dance across the canvas. These masked men and fantasy animals seem to hover between anguish and jubilation. The vibrant colours, deformed figures and sheer love of excess are key features of the Cobra movement. Named after the three cities (Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam) where its key members

were based, the Cobra group was founded in 1948 by a band of painters who wanted to be free from debates about the relative merits of abstraction and figuration, believing in instinct over reason. Rather than trying to reproduce the world around them, they aimed to exploit the free expression of their unconscious. They painted images that were both abstract and figurative,

demonstrating that energy and spontaneity were more important than rationality and design. The English art historian Herbert Read wrote that looking at Appel's paintings gives one the impression 'of a spiritual tornado that has left these images of its passage'.

Baselitz, Jorn, De Kooning, Tamayo





# Archipenko Alexander Standing Nude

The stylized form of a woman emerges from a block of warm, reddish wood. This work combines elements of both figuration and abstraction. The woman's face, breasts and thighs are concave, instead of convex, exhibiting Archipenko's revolutionary approach to sculpture. Abandoning Classical forms, Archipenko has tried to suggest curves by means of hollows, reconstructing the woman's

body in terms of geometrical volumes, and juxtaposing curved and straight lines to suggest movement. The woman's hips and lower body face one way, while her shoulders are twisted in the opposite direction. This combination of different viewpoints owes much to Cubism, a movement which rejected traditional forms of representation and modelling. Archipenko was born in the Ukraine,

but later moved to Paris where he came across Picasso and the Cubists. He subsequently went to Berlin, where he opened an art school, finally settling in New York.

➤ González, Lipchitz, Moore, Popova



Alexander Archipenko. b Kiev (UKR), 1887. d New York (USA), 1964. Standing Nude. c1921. Wood. h44.5 cm, h17½ in. Private collection



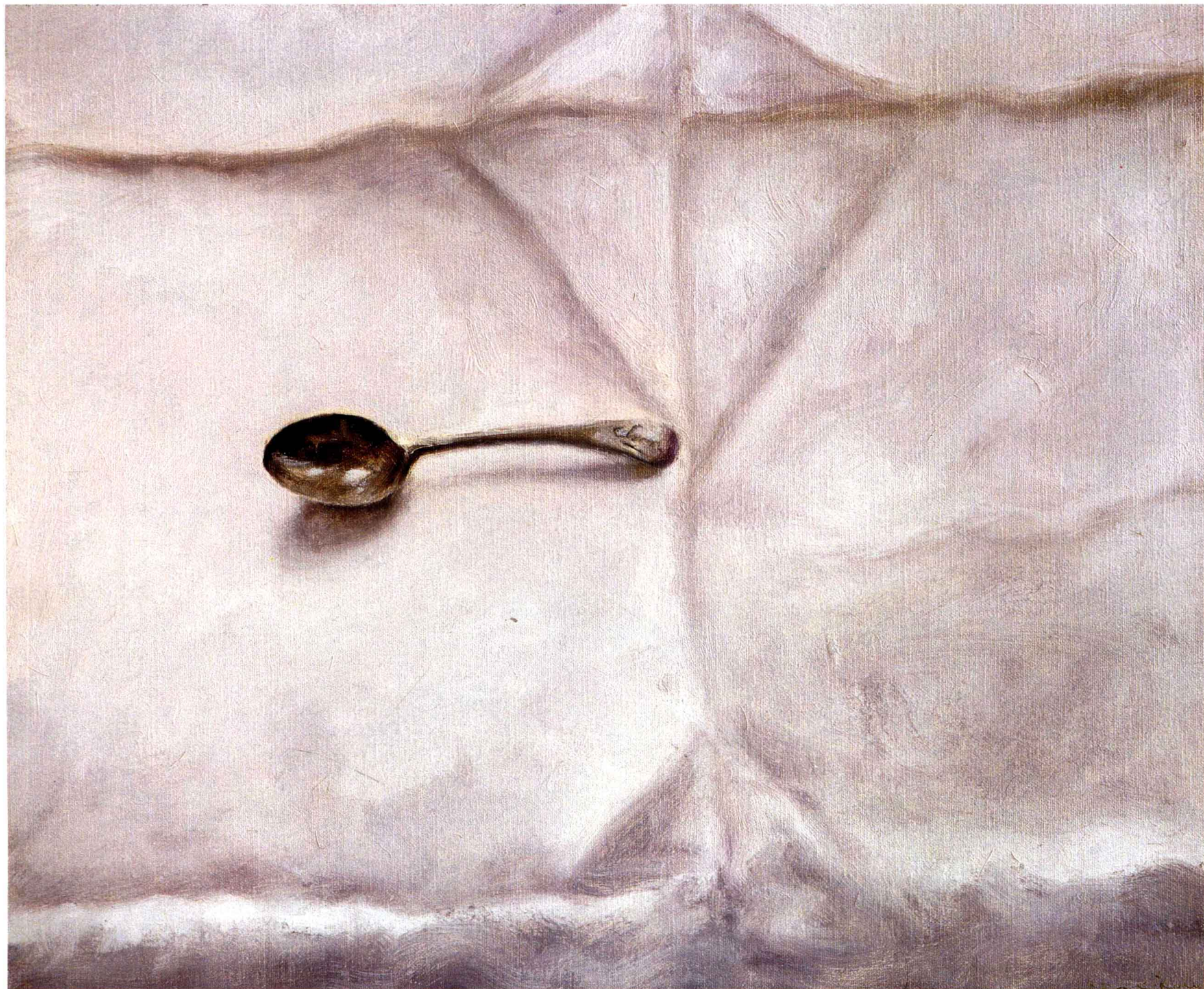
Sam’s Spoon

The name ‘Sam’ is just visible, engraved on the handle of a small silver spoon. Placed on a creased white napkin, it is the focus of this intensely studied and carefully constructed painting. *Sam’s Spoon* is a tribute to Arikha’s friend, the celebrated writer Samuel Beckett, and was painted on the first anniversary of his death. The christening spoon is Beckett’s own, which he had given to Arikha’s

daughter on her birth. Born in Romania, Arikha was imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp as a child during the Second World War. He subsequently moved to Israel, and then to Paris, where he established himself as an abstract painter. He abandoned abstract art after seeing an exhibition by the sixteenth-century Italian painter Caravaggio in 1965. He is now best known for his

intimate still lifes of fruit and vegetables and everyday objects, and for his striking portraits of public figures, including the Queen Mother and the former British Prime Minister Lord Home.

☛ Caulfield, Hockney, Hopper, Morandi, Spoorri, Wyeth





Stacks of paint brushes are attached to the canvas in almost military formation, their silver-coloured handles and black bristles forming an abstract design. The title of the work – *Crusaders* – personifies the brushes, all pointing in the same direction, as daring adventurers with a holy mission. In his work, Arman explores the beauty in gathering together a number of similar

objects. Taking the Dadaist idea of the elevation of banal objects to works of art, he explores the diversity of man-made things by collecting them together in large quantities or by fragmenting and reassembling them. Arman's assemblages of accumulated objects reflect our throwaway society, offering a fetishistic portrait of how we live and document our lives. He uses a variety of

materials, including bottle tops, crank shafts, glass eyes, hypodermic needles, bullets and cigarette butts. His focus on everyday life, rather than more abstract themes, links him to the Nouveaux Réalistes.

➤ Beuys, Cragg, Duchamp, Manzoni, Rauschenberg, Spoerri

