



Adolph GOTTLIEB
b. 1903- d. 1974

Adolph Gottlieb was active in the first generation of abstract expressionist artists in New York. Though commonly recognized as a leader in Lyrical Abstraction and color field painting, his work spanned various media including aluminum and stained glass. Gottlieb studied at the Art Students League of New York before dropping out of school to travel around Europe. While abroad, he spent the majority of his time visiting various art museums and galleries. Gottlieb returned to New York to pursue his interest in the arts, later attending the Arts Students League, Parsons School of Design, Cooper Union and the Educational Alliance.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Gottlieb formed strong relationships with fellow abstract expressionist artists as Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman. He later moved to Arizona in 1937 to focus on his work. It was during this retreat that the artist drastically altered his approach to painting and began experimenting with surrealism and symbolism in his work. Gottlieb's experimentation culminated in 1941 with his series "Pictographs," which he focused on until 1954. Gottlieb incorporated elements of biomorphism and automatism in his work, drawing inspiration from his unconscious. He avoided using

known symbols and encouraged personal interpretation through emotion. In 1956, Gottlieb developed the “Burst,” which later turned into a significant series of work. Aside from his sculptures of the late 1960s, the artist focused the remainder of his career on “Burst” and “Imaginary Landscape” paintings until his death in 1974.

Gottlieb has received countless awards and honors during his lifetime and posthumously. He was the first American artist to be awarded the Gran Premio of the Sao Paulo Bienale in 1963. In 1972, he was voted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. The Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation was formed in 1976 as per the artist’s will.

During his career, Gottlieb had 56 solo exhibitions and participated in over 200 group exhibitions. In 1968, New York’s Guggenheim Museum and Whitney Museum hosted a retrospective on the artist, filling both museums with his work. To date, Gottlieb’s retrospective remains the only collaborative project between the museums. His work is collected extensively, including by the Guggenheim Museum, the MoMA, the Walker Art Center and the Tate Gallery in London.

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