

Making Space: Women Artists and Postwar Abstraction

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MoMA



María Freire (Uruguayan, 1917–2015). *Untitled*. 1954. Oil on canvas, 36 1/4 × 48 1/16" (92 × 122 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Promised gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros through the Latin American and Caribbean Fund in honor of Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro, 2016

Exhibition

MoMA, Floor 3

Making Space shines a spotlight on the stunning achievements of women artists between the end of World War II (1945) and the start of the Feminist movement (around 1968). In the postwar era, societal shifts made it possible for larger numbers of women to work professionally as artists, yet their work was often dismissed in the male dominated art world, and few support networks existed for them. Abstraction dominated artistic practice during these years, as many artists working in the aftermath of World War II sought an international language that might transcend

national and regional narratives—and for women artists, additionally, those relating to gender.

Drawn entirely from the Museum's collection, the exhibition features nearly 100 paintings, sculptures, photographs, drawings, prints, textiles, and ceramics by more than 50 artists. Within a trajectory that is at once loosely chronological and synchronous, it includes works that range from the boldly gestural canvases of Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler, and Joan Mitchell; the radical geometries by Lygia Clark, Lygia Pape, and Gego; and the reductive abstractions of Agnes Martin, Anne Truitt, and Jo Baer; to the fiber weavings of Magdalena Abakanowicz, Sheila Hicks, and Lenore Tawney; and the process-oriented sculptures of Lee Bontecou, Louise Bourgeois, and Eva Hesse. The exhibition will also feature many little-known treasures such as collages by Anne Ryan, photographs by Gertrudes Altschul, and recent acquisitions on view for the first time at MoMA by Ruth Asawa, Carol Rama, and Alma Woodsey Thomas.

Organized by Starr Figura, Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints, and Sarah Hermanson Meister, Curator, Department of Photography, with Hillary Reder, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Drawings and Prints.