

Art and Sculpture



Faith Ringgold

American People Series #4: The Civil Rights Triangle, 1963, oil on canvas

Lent by Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Faith Ringgold was inspired to create the *American People Series* about “the paradox of integration felt by many black Americans.” A white man is at the apex of this triangle, alluding to the longtime dominant white leadership in the NAACP. Two African American men in suits may refer to the prominent role of NAACP lawyers, as well as preachers in the black church. Two young black men anchor the base, perhaps members of the youth councils who were “foot soldiers” in the movement. Ringgold engages issues of identity and equality as an artist, writer, performer, social activist, and professor.



Sam Gilliam

Carousel Light Depth, 1969, acrylic on canvas

Lent by the artist

Sam Gilliam took artistic spontaneity to new levels, allowing thinned acrylic paint to flow across canvas like a river of colors. Then he liberated the canvas from the stretcher to float free, furling and folding in sensual arrangements. *Carousel Light Depth* is 75 feet of fabric—dazzlingly saturated with pinks, purples, greens, blues, and silver—gathered and draped, majestic in its vast expanse. Gilliam was fiercely committed to aesthetic abstraction during a decade wracked by racial tension. His expansive canvases and exuberant colors evoke the fresh optimism of John F. Kennedy’s youthful presidency. His art has been celebrated in museums and collections worldwide for decades.



Roy Lichtenstein

Brushstroke, 1996-97, painted aluminum, 32' high

Lent by the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

Roy Lichtenstein burst on the art scene in the early 1960s with paintings inspired by comic books; today they look disarming and playful, but when new, they seemed shockingly irreverent. For three decades, he amusingly used an isolated brushstroke as the emblem of high art. Then Lichtenstein created his first *Brushstroke* sculptures, giving fluid “paint” a free-standing physical presence. The monumentality of this example evokes the heroism of the abstract expressionist painters, while its rapid calligraphic energy belies its static form.



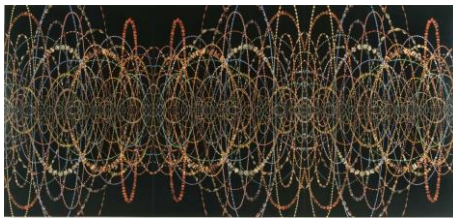
Mike Kelley

Memory Ware Flat #24 & Memory Ware Flat #25, 2001, mixed media on wood

Lent by Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Mike Kelley first encountered the southern folk tradition of memory ware in 2000. He loved the way these objects evoke the joys and traumas of past lives, “disconnected morsels of information” that tell incomplete stories. He made his own memory sculptures and wall pieces by assembling buttons, charms, beads, badges, bottlecaps, pins, and coins in collages that combine a thrift store sensibility with the visual sophistication of abstract art. Throughout his career, Kelley used the most disarming, delightful materials to challenge authorities of every type.

Fred Tomaselli

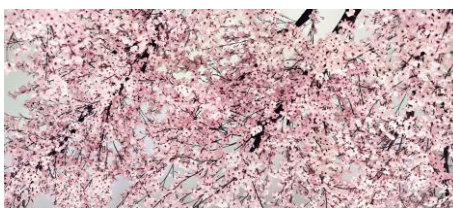


Flipper, 2008; leaves, photo collage, acrylic, and resin on wood panel

Lent by Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Flipper creates an immersive world, with looping rhythms that evoke sound waves traveling through space. Tomaselli builds this psychic space by affixing small leaves and flowers and cut-out printed images onto a wood panel, then embedding them in acrylic and polished resin. His works resemble reliquaries or insects fossilized in amber. Tomaselli grew up in California’s counter-culture world of music and experimentation—playing in bands, designing album covers, and making surfboards, while mastering techniques and ideas for his ambitious art.

Thomas Demand



Bloom, 2014, C print mounted on plexiglas

Lent by Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Thomas Demand meticulously constructs physical models from paper as subjects for his photographs. He destroys these hand-crafted models after photographing them. The photographs, then, are the artworks—elaborate artifices that question our relationship to truth. *Bloom* shows a lush profusion of cherry blossoms that traditionally signify spring’s arrival and the passing of time. Knowing that every petal was made by hand from paper gives the work a deeper resonance, trading “reality” for “illusion.” Like all Demand’s works, *Bloom* conceals a disquieting undertone; it shows blossoms seen over a fence at the home of the Boston Marathon bomber. In Demand’s world, beauty and evil co-exist.

Glenn Ligon



Untitled, (America), 2018, neon and paint

Lent by Glenstone Museum, Potomac, Maryland

Glenn Ligon uses texts by favorite authors to reflect on key fault lines in society, such as race and sexuality. Here the text is a single word, but one rich with myriad meanings for different groups: “America.” Spelled in all capital letters, in glowing red neon, and upside down, it conveys a sign of distress. Ligon’s works often address the aftershocks of slavery in American life and the continuing struggle for social justice. He says, “We always imagine that slavery is something in the past and that we as a society have gotten over it... But if you think about slavery as there when our laws and institutions are being created—when our Declaration of Independence is being written, when our courts are being formed—it is this moral dilemma at the core of our democracy and we still feel its effects.”

Deborah Butterfield



Milk River, 2019, painted bronze, 87” high

Gift of Samuel G. Rose

Deborah Butterfield assembled pieces of driftwood to create *Milk River*, then cast each piece in bronze, reassembled the metal pieces, and painted them. The sculpture is named for a river in Montana, where she works. Butterfield’s horses are unusual in that they are mares, not stallions as is more common in art. She says she wants to make “big beautiful mares that are as strong and imposing as stallions but capable of creation and nourishing life. It is a very personal statement.” The horse is among the most ancient and persistent images in art, familiar even in the caves at Lascaux. Within this long tradition, Butterfield’s mares occupy a special place; they are not work horses, nor transport, nor war horses. Her horses are thrilling and noble reminders of our once-close intimacy with nature.



Joel Shapiro

Blue, 2019, painted aluminum, 24’ high

Gift of the artist

Joel Shapiro’s sculptures explode with the exuberance of youth. Their simple rectangles are assembled like stick figures that magically come alive. *Blue* is poised in mid-kick, turning the surrounding landscape into a giant stage as it prepares to pirouette across the grass. Shapiro spent two years in India in the Peace Corps, where he was inspired by the integration of art and culture. His sculptures are installed in scores of cities around the world. They achieve the goal set centuries ago by Egyptian and Greek sculptors—to endow base materials with movement and spirit of life.
