AD REINHARDT



CONTENTS

IMPORTANT FACTS DETAIL IMAGES MARKET ANALYSIS MUSEUM COLLECTIONS HISTORY



AD REINHARDT (1913-1967)

Abstract Painting 1959 Signed corrugated backing board, "Ad Reinhardt" oil on canvas 108 x 40 in. (274.3 x 101.6 cm)



WATCH VIDEO

PROVENANCE

Mrs. Betsy Zogbaum Marlborough Collection, ca. 1970 Private Collection, Belgium

EXHIBITION

Frans Hals Museum, Hof, Haarlem, *Rendez-vous*, 29/03 - 30/09/2018 David Zwirner Gallery, New York, *Ad Reinhardt*, 7/11 - 8/12/2013 Josef Albers Museum, Quadratt Bottrop, Duitsland, *Last Paintings*. *Ad Reinhardt*, 26/09/2010-9/1/2011 Venice, Palazzo Fortuny, *In-Finitum*, 6/06-15/11/2009 Paris, Chapelle de l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, *Academia*: *Qui es-tu*? 10/09 -23/11/2008 Centro Cultural Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico, *Expressionismo Abstracto*, 10/10/1996 -12/01/1997, no. 89 The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, *Ad Reinhardt*, 13/10/1991 - 05/01/1992, ill. page 93 Museum of Modern Art, New York, *Ad Reinhardt*, 30/05 - 02/09/1991 Centre National d'Art Contemporain, Grand Palais Paris, *Ad Reinhardt*, 22/05 - 02/07/1973, no. 56

LITERATURE

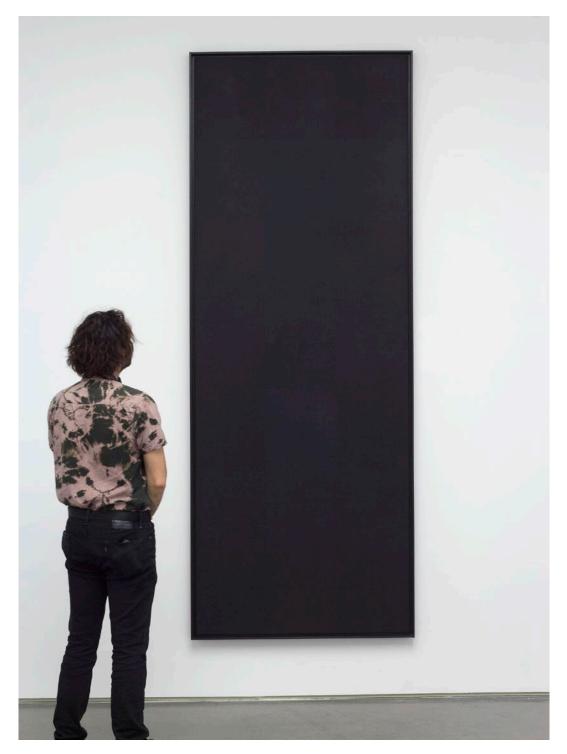
M. Corris, Ad Reinhardt, Reaktion Books Ltd, London, 2008

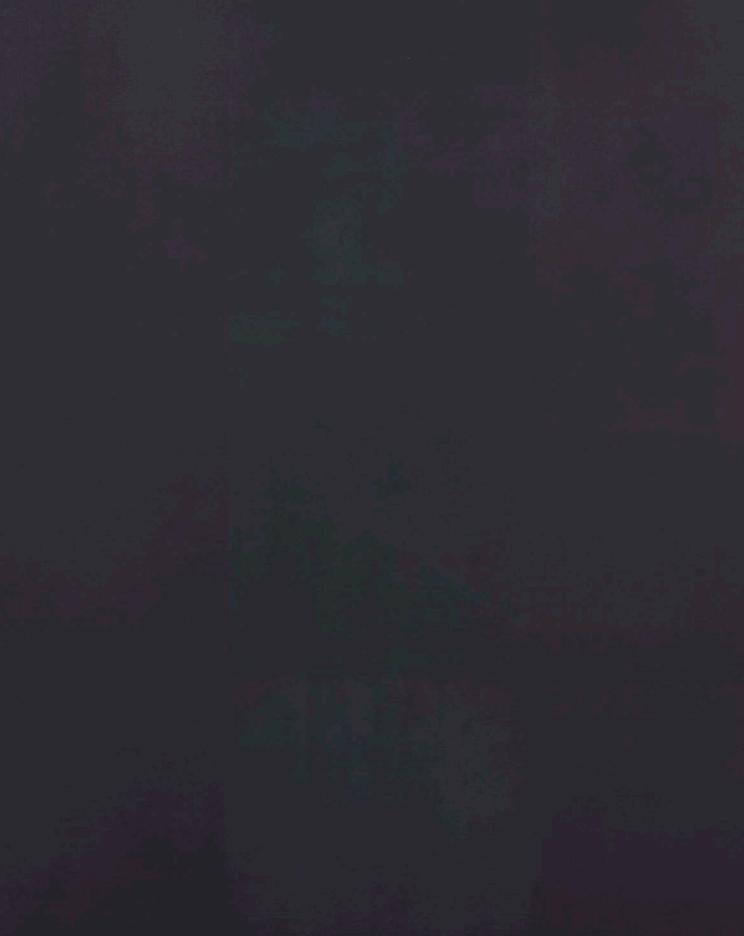
B. Rose, Monochromes. From Malevich to the present, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2006: pp. 202-204
B. Rose, Art as Art. The Selected Writings of Ad Reinhardt, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1991
M. Tuchman, The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Paunting 1890-1985, New York and Los Angeles: Abbeville Press and Los Angeles Country Museum of Art, 1986

IMPORTANT FACTS

- Ad Reinhardt's search for the "ultimate" painting—painting beyond the realm of tangible, easily comprehensible art—led to the creation of his black paintings, including this masterpiece. In *Abstract Painting* (1959) from this rare and coveted final series, the composition is reduced to flattened rectangles with barely legible distinction between the rich, profound purples, blues, and greens verging on cosmic black. All of these elements ensure a completely immersive, meditative, and intimate experience of what Reinhardt termed "slow art."
- Of the 14 black paintings to come up for auction in the past ten years, none were larger than 60 x 60 inches. The last time a Reinhardt black painting of this large scale came up for auction was 30 years ago, selling for \$2.5 million in 1990. This painting has changed hands only twice since it was created in 1959.
- All seven black paintings of this large size (108 x 40 inches) hung together at the artist's Museum of Modern Art retrospective in 1991. Other works from this series are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, among other major public institutions.

DETAIL IMAGES







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MARKET ANALYSIS



Ad Reinhardt began working on black paintings in the early 1950s, focusing on them exclusively from 1953 until his death in 1967. He created at least 50 black paintings in various sizes that have been documented in major Reinhardt exhibitions, and 18 of them are in permanent museum collections. Only 7 are of this large size (108 x 40 in.), two of which are held in museum collections: the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City and the Brooklyn Museum. The remaining 5, which include this example, are in private collections.

The last time a Reinhardt black painting of this large scale came up for auction was 30 years ago when *Abstract Painting* (1958) sold at Sotheby's New York on May 8, 1990 for over \$2.5 million USD.

REINHARDT PAINTINGS IN **MUSEUM COLLECTIONS**



Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art Kansas City

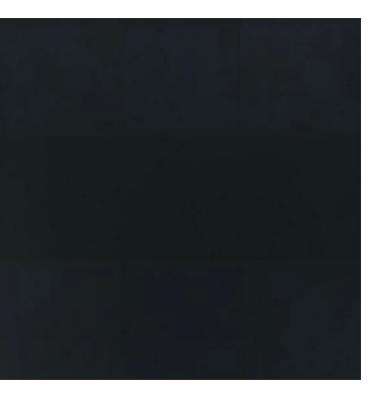
No. 10 1959 oil on canvas 108 x 40 in. (274.32 x 101.6 cm)



The Brooklyn Museum New York

Untitled (Composition #104) 1954-1960 oil on canvas 108 x 40 in. (274.32 x 101.6 cm)

REINHARDT PAINTINGS IN **MUSEUM COLLECTIONS**



Whitney Museum of American Art New York

Abstract Painting 1960-66 oil on canvas 60 x 60 in. (152.4 x 152.4 cm)

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum New York

Abstract Painting 1960-66 oil on canvas 60 x 60 in. (152.4 x 152.4 cm)



"As an artist I would like to eliminate the symbolic pretty much, for black is interesting not as a color but as a non-color and as the absence of color."

Ad Reinhardt

HISTORY



Ad Reinhardt at work in his studio

"One must turn away from everything else and concentrate on the picture as though peering through a window into the night." This is how writer Thomas Merton described the experience of standing in front of a Reinhardt black painting.

Ad Reinhardt was an abstract painter active in New York from the 1930s to the 1960s. A central figure of the movement that would come to be known as Abstract Expressionism, Reinhardt exhibited at the Betty Parsons Gallery alongside Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and

other influential members of the New York School.

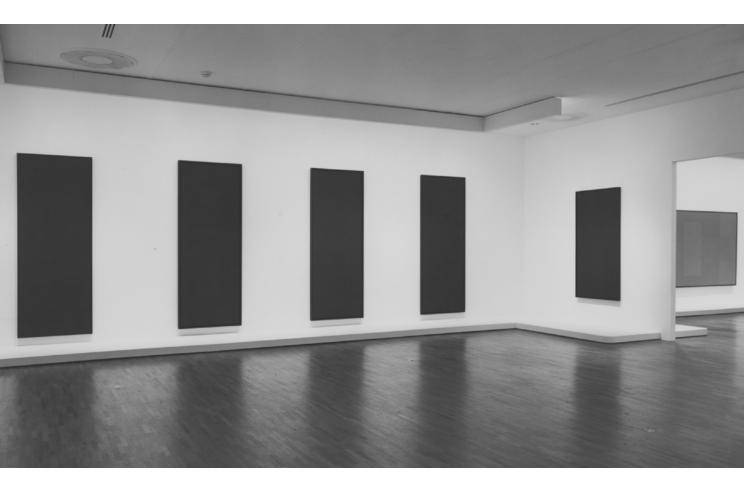
More so than most of his contemporaries, Reinhardt's dedication to pure abstraction had far-reaching influence on minimal and conceptual art movements. At the pinnacle of his career are the black paintings, also called ultimate paintings, which he claimed, in their pure abstraction, were the last paintings anyone could paint. Abstract Painting (1959) is a striking piece from this revered final series. At the large scale of 108 x 40 inches, it is a rare and immersive example of Reinhardt's work. Of the 14 black paintings to come up for auction in the past ten years, none were larger than 60 x 60 inches. A black painting of this large scale has not been in the public market for 30 years, and this painting has changed hands only twice since it was created in





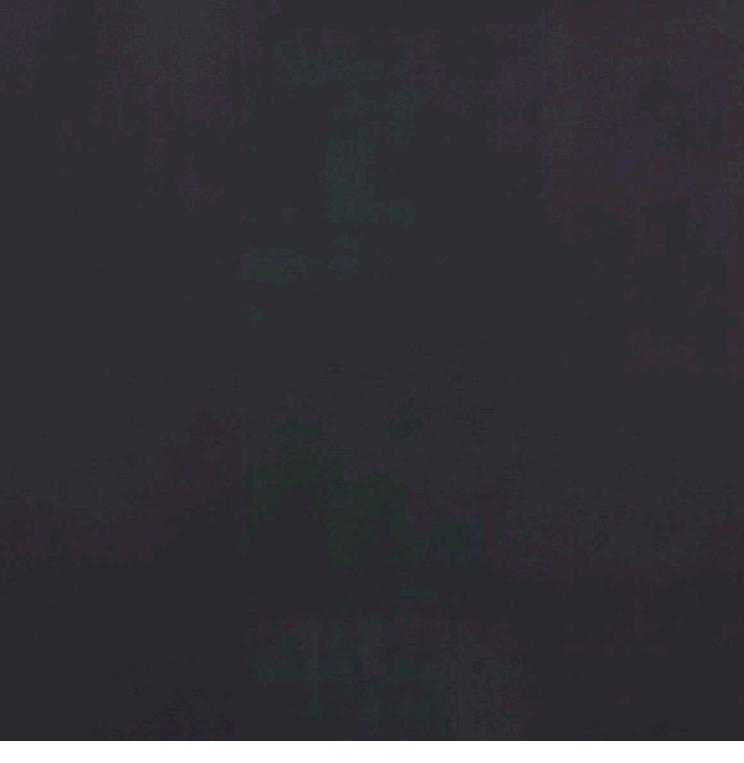
1959. This painting was exhibited in the 1991 Reinhardt retrospective, which traveled to the Museum of Modern Art and LACMA.

Reinhardt defines a black painting by invoking what it is not: the surface is "glossless" and "textureless," its image is "non-linear," with "no hard edge, no soft edge." In seeking pure abstraction, Reinhardt reduced painting to its elemental forms: basic geometric shapes and hues nearly void of color—until you look closely. The barely legible distinction between the rich, profound purples, blues, and greens verging on cosmic black ensure a completely immersive, meditative, and intimate experience of what Reinhardt termed "slowart." It is an unphotographable and unreproducible piece meant to be experienced in person. Art critic and artist Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe describes the black paintings as "a collection of colors so dark there is not one of them that can ground the others: no field, only figures...Nothing stands still because everything moves everything else, almost imperceptibly."



Installation view of the exhibition, "Ad Reinhardt" Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1991







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