

An abstract painting by Marino Marini. The composition is dominated by a large, white, expressive brushstroke that sweeps across the upper half of the canvas. This white shape is accented with dark, angular shapes and a small, dark figure with a large head. Below this, the scene shifts to a landscape with a blue sky, green and yellow hills, and a small, colorful sailboat on the water. The overall style is gestural and dynamic, characteristic of Marini's work.

# MARINO MARINI





**MARINO MARINI (1901-1980)**

**Marino from Shakespeare I**

tempera over aquatint on paper

image: 19 1/8 x 15 1/2 in. (31 1/2 x 24 x 1 in.)

48.58 x 39.37 cm (80.01 x 60.96 x 2.54 cm)

1977

48167

**PROVENANCE:**

Fondazione Marino Marini, Pistoia

Private Collection, acquired from the above, 2006

Sotheby's, New York, November 14, 2023, lot 117

Private Collection, acquired from the above

**LITERATURE:**

Pierre Casè, ed., *Marino Marini*, Milan, 1999, p. 94, illustrated

Marino Marini's *Marino from Shakespeare I* (1977) is a vivid and psychologically charged work on paper, executed in tempera over aquatint and drawn from the artist's celebrated *Marino from Shakespeare* portfolio. In this variation, the equestrian figure is pushed to the foreground, its white, angular horse rearing across the composition with a sense of precarious motion. The rider is pared down to a mask-like head and simplified body, a formal reduction that places the figure in a state of fragile balance between control and collapse.

The chromatic structure is bold and instinctive. Fields of violet, coral, and blue form a textured ground, against which the stark white of the horse and the warm reds and oranges of the rider assert themselves with dramatic clarity. Marini's use of tempera over aquatint allows him to combine tonal depth with painterly immediacy: granular passages of aquatint dissolve into expressive sweeps of color, while linear accents stabilize the composition just enough to prevent it from tipping into chaos.

As in many of his most significant works, the equestrian motif functions symbolically rather than narratively. Though inspired in spirit by Shakespeare, the image does not illustrate a specific text, instead channeling the emotional intensity and existential unease associated with tragic drama. Marini famously described his horse-and-rider figures as expressions of modern anxiety, stating, "My equestrian figures are symbols of the anguish that I feel when I survey contemporary events." Here, that anguish is palpable in the strained geometry, unstable balance, and urgent movement of the forms. The print stands as a compelling demonstration of Marini's ability to translate his sculptural language into graphic form, using color and gesture to confront the fragility of human authority and control.

## ARTIST BIO:

Marino Marini was an Italian Expressionist sculptor, painter and graphic artist. He was instrumental in the revival of the art of portrait sculpture in Italy during the first half of the 20th century and particularly famous for his series of stylized equestrian statues that feature a man on a horse with arms outstretched.

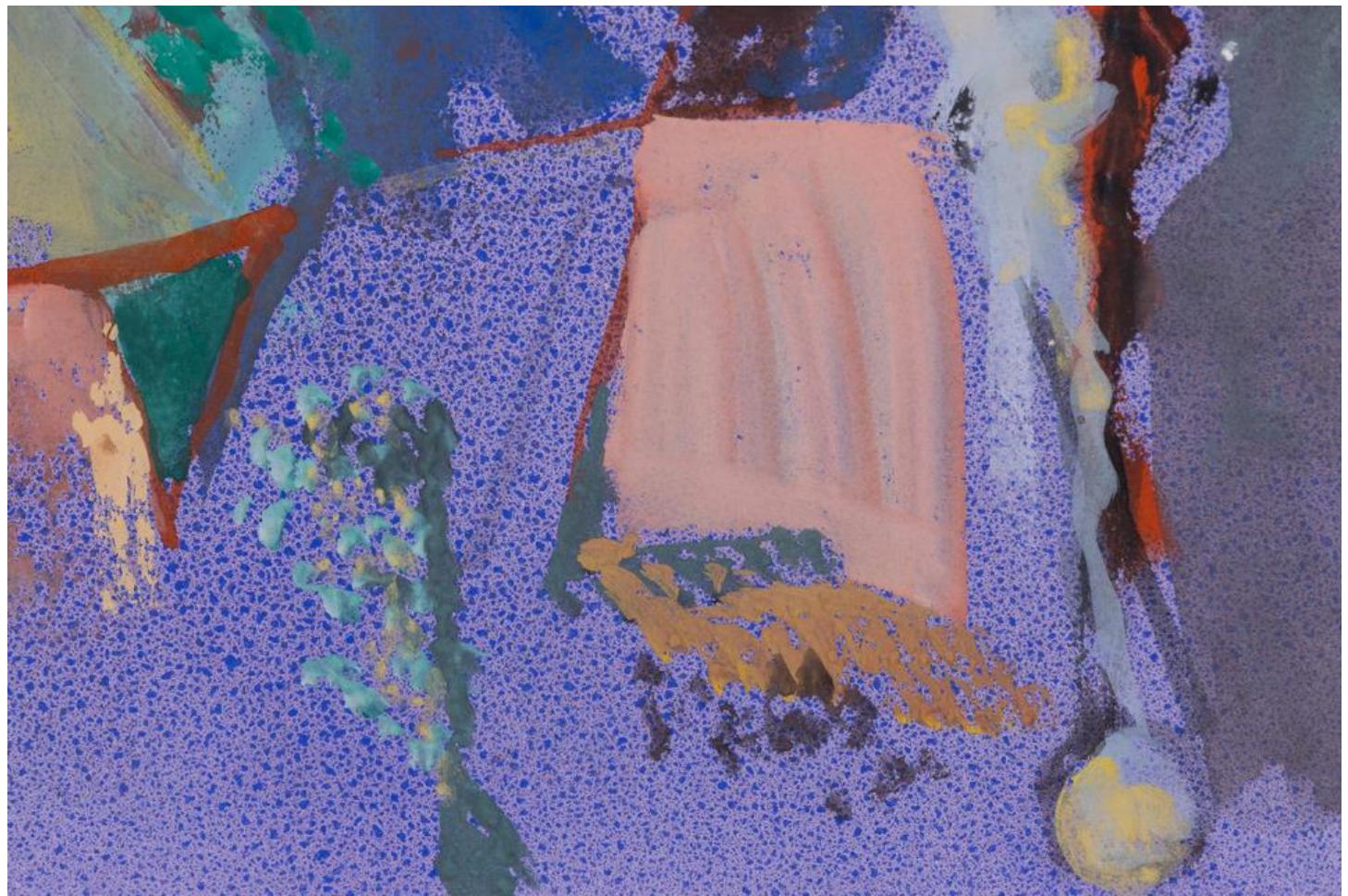
Marini studied painting and sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence and although he never abandoned painting, he devoted himself primarily to sculpture from about 1922. He consistently refined two major images, the female nude and the horse and rider. His sensitivity to form and surface owes much to the influence of Etruscan and Roman art, while the inner tension of his work reflects German Gothic sculpture. In 1946 the artist settled permanently in Milan and participated in Twentieth Century Italian Art at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1944 and exhibiting at Buchholz Gallery in New York in 1950. In 1951 a Marini exhibition traveled from the Kestner-Gesellschaft Hannover to the Kunstverein in Hamburg and the Haus der Kunst of Munich. He was awarded the Grand Prize for Sculpture at the Venice Biennale in 1952 and the Feltrinelli Prize at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome in 1954. One of his monumental sculptures was installed in the Hague in 1959.

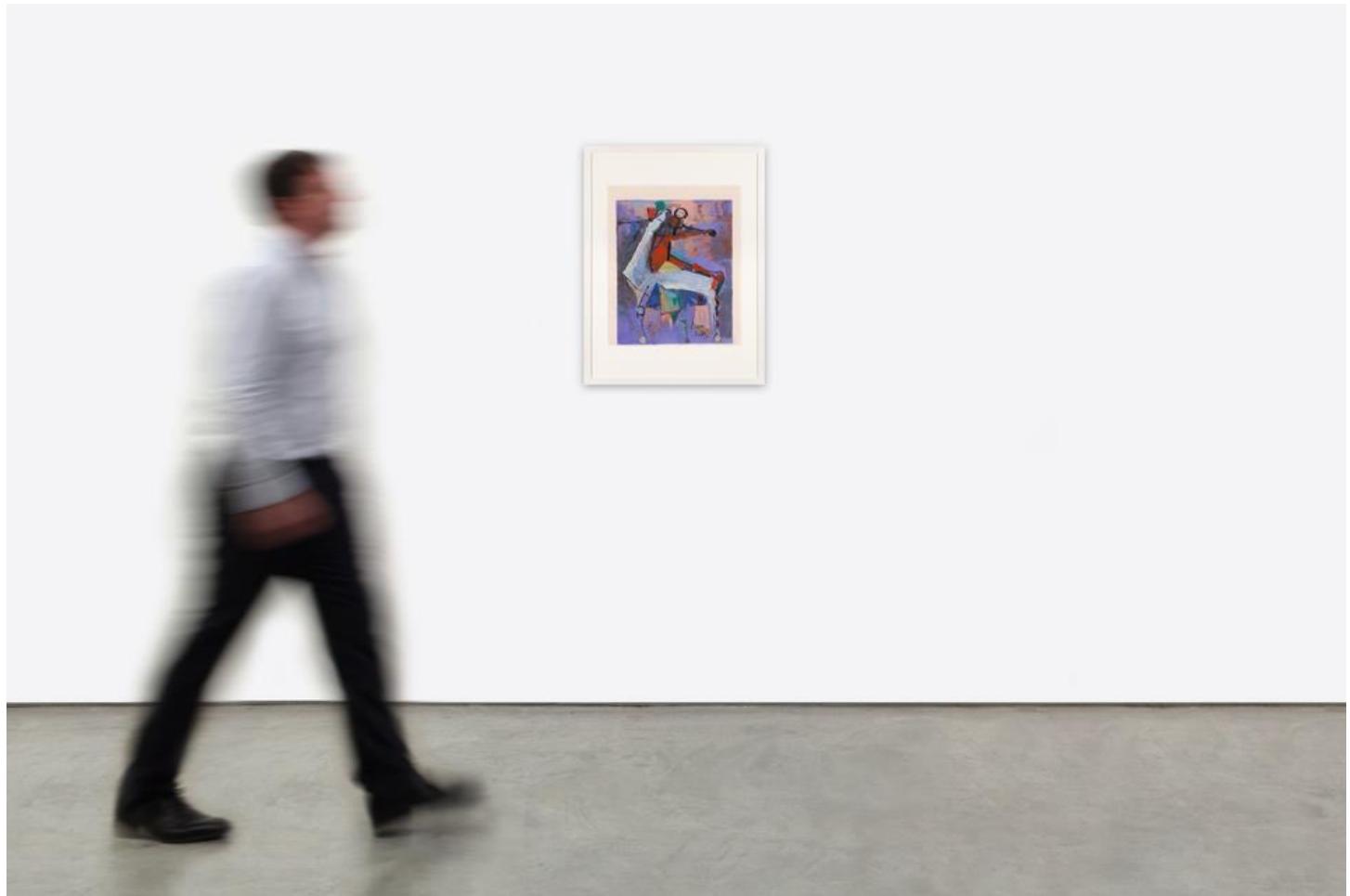
Retrospectives of Marini's work took place at the Kunsthaus Zürich in 1962 and at the Palazzo Venezia in Rome in 1966. His paintings were exhibited for the first time at Toninelli Arte Moderna in Milan in 1963-64. In 1973 a permanent installation of his work opened at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan, and in 1978 a Marini show was presented at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo. There is a museum dedicated to his work in Florence; his work may also be found in museums in Italy and around the world, such as the Civica Galleria d'Arte Moderna in Milan and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. Marini's work is authenticated by the experts at the Marino Marini Foundation in Pistoia, Italy.

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Marina Marin  
Stansporth  
1907. 88

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