

YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

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**Britain in the World**  
**1860–NOW**

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Second-floor galleries

REBECCA SALTER, BORN 1955, BRITISH

K37

1996, mixed media on canvas

The work of Rebecca Salter draws on a variety of artistic styles, media, and cultural traditions. Her distinctive approach was shaped primarily by the six years she spent in Kyoto, Japan, in the early 1980s, where she studied ceramics. She returned to her native London with a commitment to two-dimensional art and a particular interest in Japanese printmaking techniques and the subtle textures and surfaces of Japanese papers. In the late 1980s, however, she also began to make regular visits to the Lake District in northern England, taking inspiration from the austere landscape and ever-shifting weather conditions. Working within a tight tonal range and rarely letting one part of the canvas speak louder than any other, Salter's paintings are nonetheless quietly compelling: a suitable match for the architecture of Louis Kahn (designer of the Yale Center for British Art), in whose memory this painting was purchased.

Friends of British Art Fund and Gift of Jules David Prown, MAH 1971,  
in memory of Louis I. Kahn, B2011.8

SANDRA BLOW, 1925–2006, BRITISH

## Red Circle

1960, mixed media on board

Sandra Blow emerged in the 1950s as one of the most innovative figures in British abstract art. Blow built her reputation as an independent and pioneering force despite making and keeping a loose connection to the modernists at St. Ives, especially Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, and Patrick Heron. *Red Circle's* vivid band of color encircling concentric black rings on a monochrome field exemplifies her bold abstraction, which nevertheless references the natural world and organic forms. As a pioneering woman in a field still dominated by men, Blow challenged prevailing associations between abstract art and masculinity and thereby charted a path for other women to follow. This painting was given to the Center by the chemist and novelist Carl Djerassi in honor of another influential woman: the feminist scholar, poet, and literary biographer Diane Middlebrook.

Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Professor Carl Djerassi in homage to Diane Wood Middlebrook, Yale PhD 1968, B1995.11

DAME (JOCELYN) BARBARA HEPWORTH,  
1903–1975, BRITISH

## Sphere with Inner Form

1963, bronze

Barbara Hepworth was a prominent member of the Seven and Five Society in the 1930s. Although initially established to preserve traditional values in art, the arrival of Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, and Henry Moore transformed the group into a modernist hub for the promotion of abstraction. In 1939, Hepworth moved permanently from London to the village of St. Ives in Cornwall, where she lived and worked until her death in 1975. Her sculpture is notable for its oscillation between organic and geometric forms. In this bronze, an organic form is embedded within a hollow sphere. “All my life,” she once wrote, “I have wanted to put a form on a form on a form as an offering.”

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1966  
Paul Mellon Collection, B1984.6.2

JOHN GOLDING, 1929–2012, BRITISH

## CV

between 1972 and 1973, acrylic on canvas

John Golding's career as a painter is closely linked to his profession as a scholar of Modern European and American art. Alongside painting, he lectured at the Courtauld Institute of Art and became a lone voice in support of American abstraction in an otherwise European-centric institution. The scale and the passages of color in *CV* reflect similar concerns to artists such as Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko, whom he admired tremendously. Golding often likened his painting to the human body and tried to capture the way that "light falls on the body and explores surface." *CV* establishes tension between surface and depth as the two-colored panels reinforce the flatness of the canvas while also appearing to sit on top of the colored band that surrounds them. Golding marveled at the way cubist artists could "fold space," and here he uses light and color to play with spatial depth.

Gift of the John Golding Artistic Trust, 2017, B2017.15.4

JULIE ROBERTS, BORN 1963, BRITISH

## Gynæcology Chair

1994, oil and acrylic on canvas

Julie Roberts trained in London, Glasgow, and, Budapest and now lives and works in southern Scotland. *Gynæcology Chair* belongs to an early set of works, made in the early 1990s, which tackled the oppression of the female body. Here the gynecological chair is painted in almost uncanny realism yet floats untethered upon a blue ground so that, divorced from any medical context, it starts to resemble a weapon or an instrument of torture.

Roberts was inspired by the ideas of the then fashionable French poststructuralist thinker Michel Foucault and the work of contemporary feminist theorists, as philosophers such as Susan Bordo were focusing their critical writing in the early 1990s on the intersection of the female body and culture. The clinical scrutiny of the female body, while ostensibly therapeutic, simultaneously defines female bodies as objects to be disciplined and controlled.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1997.5

DAME (JOCELYN) BARBARA HEPWORTH,  
1903–1975, BRITISH

## Biolith

1948 to 1949, blue limestone (ancaster stone)

A biolith is a sedimentary rock formed from fossilized animal remains. In 1939, Barbara Hepworth relocated from London to St. Ives in Cornwall, where, surrounded by magnificent cliffs, crescent beaches, and ancient rock formations, she became fascinated by geology. Biolithic rock often contains imprints of the organisms trapped between the layers of sediment and forms a repository of thousands of years of history. Here the ancient and the modern are collapsed into one form. The two faces that emerge from the marbled surface evoke fossilized organisms but retain the modernist simplicity the artist explored in the 1930s. Hepworth's secretary at the time, David Lewis, wrote about this and similar pieces, saying that their "lithic forms" were "synonymous with the most ancient of man's symbols, the monolith, lonely and foreboding" and absorbed the "cromlechs and the stone circles and granite obelisks of the Cornish landscape of Penwith."

Gift of Virginia Vogel Mattern in memory of her husband,  
W. Gray Mattern, Yale College, Yale BA 1946, B2004.3

JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER, 1834–1903,  
AMERICAN, ACTIVE IN BRITAIN (FROM 1859)

## Nocturne in Blue and Silver

1872 to 1878, butterfly added ca. 1885, oil on canvas

In the 1870s, James McNeill Whistler exhibited a series of paintings depicting the Thames at night. He focused on the stretch of river in Battersea seen from his Chelsea home, a view dominated by the industrial buildings of Morgan's Patent Plumbago Crucible Company (whose clock tower can be seen to the left of the canvas). The artist used a limited palette, thin layers of paint, and simple compositions inspired by Japanese woodblock prints. Originally referred to as "moonlights," Whistler responded to his patron Frederick Leyland's suggestion that he retitle the paintings as "nocturnes," a phrase commonly associated with the music of Frédéric Chopin. Though first exhibited in 1878, Whistler did not add his famous butterfly signature to this painting until the early 1880s.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1994.19



FREDERIC LEIGHTON, 1830–1896, BRITISH

## Mrs. James Guthrie

1865, oil on canvas

Frederic Leighton trained in Frankfurt, Paris, and Rome, only settling in London in 1859, where he helped introduce Continental ideas about aestheticism and “art for art’s sake.” He became president of the Royal Academy in 1878. Leighton was selective about painting portraits but was sympathetic to Ellinor Guthrie (1838–1911), the daughter of James Stirling, the first governor of Western Australia. Born in Perth but raised partly in England, Ellinor married the Scottish merchant banker James Alexander Guthrie in 1856. The Guthries lived in the fashionable and affluent Portland Place in London, and, between 1857 and 1868, they had nine children. Sittings for this portrait took place after Ellinor had recovered from the birth of her fifth daughter in October 1864. In April 1865 she went into mourning when her father died, which may explain her somber, though luxurious, black dress.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1978

Paul Mellon Collection, B1978.43.10

SIR JAMES GUTHRIE, 1859–1930, BRITISH

## Street in Oban, Night

ca. 1893, oil on canvas

Sir James Guthrie became a leading figure in Scottish art in the late nineteenth century. Initially rejected by the conservative Glasgow Art Club for his expressive painting technique, he later became President of the Scottish Royal Academy (1902–19) and received a knighthood in 1903. An admirer of James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Guthrie favored naturalism over sentimentality and was among the first artists in Scotland to paint en plein air. The loose, gestural brush marks and passages of light and dark in this painting evoke the shift from day to nighttime. Inspired by contemporary French painting, Guthrie focused on capturing the everyday reality of rural communities, here depicting a working street in the small coastal town of Oban in Scotland, where the advent of a railway in 1880 had led to increased industry and tourism.

Gift of Isabel S. Kurtz in memory of her father,  
Charles M. Kurtz, B1989.17.2

GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, 1817–1904, BRITISH

## Hope

1891, oil on panel

By the 1880s, George Frederick Watts had become one of the most celebrated Victorian painters and aimed to restore allegorical painting to a prominent place in British art. Adopting a symbolist approach later in life, he declared, “I paint ideas, not things.” In this painting, Hope sits on a globe wearing a blindfold. She looks forlorn as she plucks at a broken lyre. This version is one of at least five painted by the artist and is the only one to include a rainbow behind the figure. It was purchased by Richard Budgett in memory of his late wife, who had been a keen admirer of Watts’s work. The rainbow, as a link between heaven and earth, hints at an enduring bond between the couple. Watts’s *Hope* was the subject of a sermon by the Reverend Jeremiah Wright that inspired future President Barack Obama and later prompted the title of his book *The Audacity of Hope*.

Gift of Claire and Albert J. Zuckerman,  
Yale School of Drama MFA 1961, DFA 1962, B2011.32

ALBERT JOSEPH MOORE, 1841–1893, BRITISH

## A Musician

ca. 1867, oil on canvas

A close friend of James McNeill Whistler, Albert Joseph Moore aimed to use color, line, and rhythmic balance of form to create beautiful visual art in the same way that music used rhythm and tone to create beautiful sound. This painting of two women entranced by a musician with his lyre derives from an ancient Roman wall painting from Herculaneum that Moore studied in the British museum. Here, the pair adopt an enervated, melancholy state, which suggests aesthetic ecstasy. But the classical references are balanced and adapted to the taste of the aesthetic movement with the addition of Japanese fans and unclassical wall decoration. The amoralism of the aesthetic movement, and absence of any narrative or moralizing content in the work of artists like Moore, aroused the suspicions of contemporary critics. Many of its leading members, such as Whistler, Walter Pater, and Oscar Wilde, were investigated, silenced, or jailed for their rejection of Victorian taste and morality and embrace of the cult of beauty.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1980.7

JOHN SINGER SARGENT, 1856–1925, AMERICAN

## A Javanese Dancing Girl, 1889

1889, oil on canvas

The cosmopolitan John Singer Sargent was born in Florence to American parents from old New England and Pennsylvanian families, grew up in Italy, and trained in Paris. Close to avant-garde artists and writers in France, including Claude Monet, Sargent's own paintings attracted scandal and admiration at the Paris Salons in equal measure. In 1885 he moved to London and slowly established himself as the foremost portrait painter of his generation. In 1889 he visited the Exposition Universelle in Paris, where a Javanese village had been re-created, complete with traditional dancers who performed to gamelan music. The dancers from Java, then a Dutch colony, fascinated Sargent, who made numerous studies, including this full-length in oil. Sargent, long familiar with orientalism, was so captivated by them that he declined an opportunity to visit his friend Monet, with whom he was then working to raise money to buy Édouard Manet's *Olympia* for the Louvre.

On loan from a private collection

GEORGE CLAUSEN, 1852–1944, BRITISH

## Schoolgirls

1880, oil on canvas

London's suburbs spread rapidly from 1850 on, with Londoners keen to escape the city for the pretense of something closer to nature. One such middle-class neighborhood was Haverstock Hill in South Hampstead, where the painter George Clausen rented a studio at a time when he was recording scenes of modern life in a manner inspired by the latest French painting. Here, a line of schoolgirls proceeds up the street, chaperoned by their schoolmistress. The apparent naturalness of the schoolgirls, and the unusual cropping of their figures, prompted a critic in the *Times* (London) to declare approvingly that “the whole composition seems so spontaneous and unforced.” Yet Clausen subtly probes at Victorian proprieties. There is a hint of sexual frisson in the schoolgirls' direct gazes, as well as lurking class conflict: the wealthy girls pointedly ignore the poor flower seller, while the aging milkmaid stares at them from the road with a look of undisguised contempt.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1985  
Paul Mellon Collection, B1985.10.1

SIR JOHN LAVERY, 1856–1941, IRISH

## Woman in Japanese Dress

1883, oil on panel

Painted shortly after his arrival in France, *Woman in Japanese Dress* reflects the vogue for Japonisme then sweeping Europe. Coined in 1872 by the French critic and collector Philippe Burty, the term broadly designates enthusiasm for all things Japanese, following the opening of Japan to Western trade with the Convention of Kanagawa in 1854. Indeed, the same year this picture was painted an enormous exhibition of Japanese art was held at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris, and the first *Salon annuel des peintres japonais* was launched at the Palais de l'Industrie. John Lavery's painting particularly suggests the influence of Japanese woodblock prints known as ukiyo-e ("pictures of the floating world"), which often depicted attractive young women dressed in the latest fashions.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1994.1

EDWARD ATKINSON HORNEL, 1864–1933, BRITISH

## Flower Market, Nagasaki

1894, oil on linen mounted on mahogany panel

Born in Australia, E. A. Hornel immigrated to Kirkcudbright, Scotland, as a young boy. Although he attended art school in Edinburgh and completed his training in Antwerp, he eventually rejoined his parents in Kirkcudbright and became part of a constellation of artists working there during the 1880s and 1890s. The self-described “Glasgow Boys” formed the loosely affiliated Glasgow School that took inspiration from James McNeill Whistler and collectively resisted the dominance of London and Edinburgh over the *fin-de-siècle* art scene. Hornel formed a particular friendship with George Henry, whose *Blowing Dandelions* is also in the collection and, like *Flower Market, Nagasaki*, reflects the group’s tendency to emphasize shape and color over realism, in a manner sympathetic to impressionism and postimpressionism. Hornel traveled with Henry to Japan for eighteen months in 1893–94 and, on unfamiliar ground, continued the close observation of daily life that had provided material for his popular landscape paintings in Scotland.

Gift of Isabel S. Kurtz in memory of her father,  
Charles M. Kurtz, B1989.17.9



GWEN JOHN, 1876–1939, BRITISH

## Study of a Nun

ca. 1915, oil on board laid to panel

Gwen John trained at the Slade School of Fine Art in London from 1895 to 1898, a school noted for its progressive teaching and acceptance of female students. She moved to Paris in 1903, where she remained for the rest of her life. A reserved but tenacious personality, she formed few but intense relationships, including with the poet Rainer Rilke and sculptor Auguste Rodin, for whom she served as the model for his unfinished monument to Whistler. She converted to Catholicism in 1913 during a time of intense anticlericalism from France's Third Republic. Portraits of nuns featured regularly in her studies of the life in and around the convent of the Dominican Sisters of Charity in Meudon, the suburb of Paris where she lived.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1966

Paul Mellon Collection, B1993.30.14

WALTER RICHARD SICKERT, 1860–1942,  
BRITISH, BORN IN GERMANY

## La Giuseppina

1903 to 1904, oil on canvas

Walter Richard Sickert spent the winter and spring of 1903–4 in Venice, where he had been a regular visitor since 1895. Forced indoors by the incessant rain that winter, he hired prostitutes to pose for him in the dingy apartment he had rented for the season near the Rialto, which served as his studio. He referred to each of them by a nickname. In this case he dubbed his model “La Giuseppina,” and she became his favorite, regularly sitting for him as he worked diligently from 9 to 11 am and 1 to 4 pm each day. In a letter to a fellow artist, Sickert described “the uninterrupted pleasure of these kind, obliging little models” and how they liked to amuse him “with smutty talk while posing like angels.” It was in Venice that Sickert first began painting figures in domestic interiors inspired by the example of his mentor, Edgar Degas.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1979.37.2

FREDERIC LEIGHTON, 1830–1896, BRITISH

## The Sluggard

ca. 1895, bronze

Frederic Leighton was one of the most influential figures in the late nineteenth-century art world and served as president of the Royal Academy from 1878 until his death. Although best known as a painter, Leighton also made a number of accomplished sculptures. This bronze was cast from a sketch-model, which Leighton developed into a full-size statue, shown at the Royal Academy in 1886. His *Sluggard* refers to indolence and lassitude, states that for Leighton and other artists associated with the aesthetic movement opened new and unexplored avenues of sensuality and beauty.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1982.17

HAROLD GILMAN, 1876–1919, BRITISH

## Sylvia Darning

1917, oil on canvas

Interiors, usually populated by a single figure, were a common theme in Harold Gilman's work, reflecting his early interest in the work of James McNeill Whistler and Edgar Degas. Following his exposure to postimpressionist painting in 1910, however, Gilman's interpretation of these scenes was enlivened by a bolder palette, as evidenced by the intense greens and blues of this particular canvas from 1917. The model for this painting was Gilman's second wife, the painter Sylvia Hardy, whom he had married that same year. Sylvia was a former student of Gilman's at Westminster School of Art.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1981

Paul Mellon Collection, B1981.25.735

WALTER RICHARD SICKERT, 1860–1942,  
BRITISH, BORN IN GERMANY

## The Trapeze

ca. 1920, oil on canvas

The young Walter Sickert worked in James McNeill Whistler's studio, even couriering Whistler's paintings to France for exhibition in the Paris salons. In 1883, Sickert carried a letter from Whistler to Edgar Degas, who befriended the young painter. Degas's advice and example would have a lifelong impact on Sickert. Degas encouraged Sickert to paint in places of popular entertainment, such as music halls, circuses, and at the ballet, and his influence is apparent in this daring depiction of a trapeze artist performing at the Cirque Rancy in Dieppe. Degas died in 1917, raising the possibility that this was intended as an homage, evoking Degas's own exploration of the theme in his earlier paintings of the trapeze artist Miss La La in the Cirque Fernando.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1966  
Paul Mellon Collection, B1981.25.568

SPENCER FREDERICK GORE, 1878–1914, BRITISH

## Ballet Scene from “On the Sands”

1910, oil on canvas

Spencer Gore frequented London’s music halls and theaters from an early age. The Alhambra Theatre of Varieties in Leicester Square, which boasted a lavish “oriental” interior, features in at least three of his paintings. In this work, two dancers in gypsy dress perform a scene from a comic ballet, but the focus is as much on the orchestra as it is on gaudy action of the stage. Although reminiscent of compositions by his contemporary Walter Sickert, Gore’s bright palette and use of flat, decorative patches of color, speak to his growing interest in the paintings of Vincent van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, whose work had been shown in Roger Fry’s exhibition, *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*, that same year.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1983.11.2

VANESSA BELL, 1879–1961, BRITISH

## Design for Overmantel

1912 to 1913, oil on paper

This painting is an early design for the wall above the fireplace in Vanessa Bell's own studio at 46 Gordon Square, in the heart of Bloomsbury, London, the house to which she moved with her siblings (including her sister, the novelist Virginia Woolf) in 1904. The house was later occupied by the economist John Maynard Keynes, himself a member of the Bloomsbury Group and lover of Duncan Grant. Domestic decoration was central to Bell's career. She was a key contributor to the short-lived Omega Workshops, a cooperative design workshop founded by her friend Roger Fry in 1913. Omega aimed to spread the Bloomsbury aesthetic through the applied arts and simultaneously break down the division between traditional notions of the fine and decorative arts. Although Omega went out of business in 1919, Bell continued to work as a designer and decorator in the interwar period.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1992.14.1

ROGER FRY, 1866–1934, BRITISH

## Still Life with blue bottle

1917, oil on canvas

Roger Fry was a prominent art critic and member of the group of liberal minded writers, thinkers, and artists known as the Bloomsbury Group. Like many in this elite circle, he was an advocate of French art and promoted the radical transformation of pictorial representation undertaken by artists including Paul Cezanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Pablo Picasso. In 1910 and 1912, he organized two influential exhibitions that introduced modern French art to a British public and inspired a generation of young artists to embrace modernism. This work draws on impressionist and postimpressionist innovations in color perception in the carefully applied patches of color that animate the scene and create texture and depth.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1991.25.2



GWEN JOHN, 1876–1939, BRITISH

## Still Life with a Prayer Book, Shawl, Vase of Flowers and Inkwell

late 1920s, oil on canvas

Gwen John left Britain for France in 1903 and lived and worked in Meudon, outside Paris, for the rest of her life. A private person with little appetite for social activity, John eschewed the bohemian artistic milieu of Paris but still gained exposure to the latest innovations in modern painting. The quiet, contemplative mood of this painting is coupled with a sense of artistic daring. The perspective of the table is so steep that the objects look like they might slide off. The striped wallpaper flattens the image to an even greater extent. The objects form a picture of the artist, with the prayer book, inkwell, shawl, and flowers evoking her pious nature, furtive mind, and melancholic sense of beauty.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1974

Paul Mellon Collection, B2014.5.2

DUNCAN GRANT, 1885–1978, BRITISH

## In Memoriam: Rupert Brooke

1915, oil and collage on panel

The young poet Rupert Brooke, famed for his idealistic war sonnets, died at sea in April 1915 on his way to participate in the disastrous British assault on Gallipoli during the First World War. His death sent shockwaves through the Bloomsbury Group. “It is too horrible,” wrote Duncan Grant, who had known Brooke since their school days: “May no other generation live under the cloud we have to live under.” Grant, a pacifist, made this painting as an act of homage. It neither glorifies Brooke’s death nor overtly explores his remarkable life but adopts instead the colorful abstract style with which Grant was experimenting during this period. A piece of silver foil was originally attached to the bottom of the painting, hinting at Grant’s fondness for cubist collages. The arched black structure at the center of the work, meanwhile, is reminiscent of a Gothic funerary monument and suggests the search for a commemorative mode suitable for modern abstract art.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1985.3.3

SIR STANLEY SPENCER, 1891–1959, BRITISH

## The Builders, Bird Nesting, Human Efforts

1935, oil on canvas

Trained at the Slade School of Art from 1908 to 1912, Stanley Spencer was the most important figurative painter in Britain between the First World War and the 1950s. An admirer of the Pre-Raphaelites, his paintings often contain detailed renderings of nature. His portraits and landscapes could be highly realistic, but his religious paintings were almost visionary in their representation of figures. Spencer claimed that this painting explored the “inner mysteries” of birds, for whom “the branches of trees and leaves would have the same significance as furniture.” The theme of building was requested by a patron, and some of the composition was taken from existing designs for an unexecuted mural of the Tower of Babel intended for the Cambridge University Library.

Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Stephen Carlton Clark,  
Yale BA 1903, 1958.4

HENRY MOORE, 1898–1986, BRITISH

## Interior Figure

between 1939 and 1940, lead

This small maquette represents a period in the late 1930s when Henry Moore was experimenting with surrealism. Although never officially a member of the surrealist group, Moore found an affinity with the movement's aim to liberate the subconscious from rational thought. He consistently exhibited in a surrealist context in the late 1930s and sustained a relationship with many artists associated with the movement. The title of this piece blurs the boundaries between the body and the psyche, reflecting surrealism's attempt to render the subconscious material. At this time, Moore also began to study oceanic sculpture and natural objects such as bones, pebbles, and branches, incorporating these forms into his figural pieces, as in *Interior Figure*. A decade later, Moore developed these concerns further in his large work *Interior/Exterior Figure* (1951).

Gift of Jeffrey H. Loria, Yale BA 1962,  
in memory of Harriet Loria Popowitz, B2000.13.1

STANLEY WILLIAM HAYTER, 1901–1988, BRITISH

## Work in Progress

1936, oil and casein on panel

This was one of eleven works by Stanley William Hayter that appeared in the International Exhibition of Surrealism held in London in 1936. Marking the official launch of the surrealist movement in Britain, this exhibition signaled a new era for surrealism, as artists from France, England, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, and what was then Czechoslovakia exhibited their work together for the first time. The exhibition was a bold display of international solidarity and a poignant defiance of the nationalist sentiment sweeping through Europe. Hayter moved to Paris in 1926 to establish the renowned printmaking studio Atelier 17, which moved to the United States in 1940 and became a hub for European émigré artists and a young generation of abstract expressionists. His emphasis on free-form engagement with the medium, without preconceived ideas or planning, echoed the surrealist practice of “psychic automatism” and is hailed as a significant influence on the abstract artist Jackson Pollock.

Friends of British Art Fund, B1999.14

PAUL NASH, 1889–1946, BRITISH

## Mineral Objects

1935, oil on canvas

In 1932, Paul Nash wondered “whether it is possible to ‘go modern’ and still ‘be British.’” He wrote, “the battle lines have been drawn up: internationalism versus an indigenous culture; renovation versus conservatism; the industrial versus the pastoral; the functional versus the futile.” Nash attempted to reconcile these binaries by developing a distinctively British form of surrealism in which mock monumental objects are set in the landscapes of southern England as if they were prehistoric megaliths. The objects stand out as gigantic, inexplicable presences and yet are deeply rooted in the landscape. *Mineral Objects* depicts pieces of bituminous shale (so-called coal money) from Kimmeridge, Dorset. The shale was worked to make jewelry and amulets in prehistoric and Roman times. When turned on a lathe, the discarded pieces were usually left with a square hole. These objects are, Nash wrote, “dramatic . . . as symbols of their antiquity . . . hallowed remnants of an almost unknown civilization.”

Paul Mellon Fund, B1998.21.1

BEN NICHOLSON, 1894–1982, BRITISH

## May 1955 (Gwithian)

1955, oil on canvas

During Ben Nicholson's second decade at St. Ives, in the later 1940s and 1950s, he produced a group of still-life paintings that rank among his most important works. This particularly fine example was painted in 1955 and develops concerns he had been engaging with since the early 1930s: fusing abstract sculptural or architectonic qualities with a commitment to representation, especially the still-life tradition. Gwithian is a village, a few miles east of St. Ives, where some of the earliest Neolithic remains in Cornwall have been found. The title suggests not only Nicholson's immediate sense of place in Cornwall but also a feeling for the timelessness of art.

Acquired by Paul Mellon in 1965  
Paul Mellon Collection, B1985.19.2

DAME (JOCELYN) BARBARA HEPWORTH,  
1903–1975, BRITISH

## Four Rectangles with Four Oblique Circles

1966, slate

In 1966, Barbara Hepworth was at the apogee of her fame, having recently completed the sculpture *Single Form* for the plaza of the United Nations Secretariat in New York. The viewing public had grown more receptive to abstract sculpture. In an interview in 1962, Hepworth said, “It is easy now to communicate with people through abstraction, and particularly so in sculpture since the whole body reacts to its presence . . . people become themselves a living part of the work.” Hepworth was speaking here primarily of the many over-life-sized sculptural groupings she created. But the viewer could also engage on a physical level with smaller tabletop works, such as *Four Rectangles with Four Oblique Circles*. Walking around the sculpture, the various elements rearrange themselves according to our angle of vision. And the eyelike holes in each element create different vantage points on the world around us.

Gift of Susan Morse Hilles, B1991.37



KEITH VAUGHAN, 1912–1977, BRITISH

## Harrow Hill after Snow

1968, oil on canvas

Keith Vaughan served in the Pioneer Corps during the Second World War along with fellow artist John Minton. The pair shared a studio after the war when they were both influenced by the neoromantic movement. In the 1950s, Vaughan discovered the work of Nicholas de Stael and explored a fusion of figurative and abstract art, which in the 1960s evolved into a series of ambitious landscape paintings. Harrow Hill refers not to the area in northwest London but to Vaughan's cottage in Toppesfield, in rural Essex. The level of abstraction in this painting is high; nonetheless, the vertical blocks across the canvas may refer to the windows, doors, and sloping roofs of local farm buildings, surrounded by patches of snow.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1998.17

ROGER HILTON, 1911–1975, BRITISH

## Painting, Summer 1963

1963, oil on canvas

Roger Hilton was one of several British artists to embrace abstraction in the early 1950s and visited St. Ives regularly from 1956 until 1965, when he settled in the Cornish town of St. Just. Hilton shared Terry Frost's habit of integrating coastal features such as boats, bathers, and rocks into his compositions. In the early 1960s he made a series of paintings that were more overtly figurative but were nevertheless limited to a few bold shapes, and a palette of three or four bright colors. The majority of Hilton's paintings were given pragmatic titles that refer, as does this one, to the date of their conception. *Painting, Summer 1963* was probably started while the artist was holidaying in Saint-Géry, a village in southwest France.

Paul Mellon Fund, B1998.30

JOHN BRATBY, 1928–1992, BRITISH

## Jean on a Step-Ladder in the Kitchen

1956, oil on masonite

John Bratby trained at the Royal College of Art in the early 1950s, where he was taught by Carel Weight. Upon graduating, Bratby found fame as the leading member of a group of painters who represented the gritty realities of postwar working-class British life. The press dubbed them the “kitchen sink school,” and Bratby became a household name. Like members of the School of London, such as Francis Bacon, Bratby developed a reputation for hard living: he drank heavily and lived an unconventional life by the standards of the 1950s. He had a tempestuous marriage to Jean Cooke, a fellow painter who is pictured here clambering on a ladder in a disorderly kitchen. Bratby’s work fell quickly out of fashion in the 1960s when enthusiasm for American consumer culture spawned pop art, and Britain attempted to shed the burden of austerity by cultivating an image of Swinging London.

Gift of Robert P. Bunkin and Florence Exler  
in memory of Leon K. Baum, B1993.38

PETER DE FRANCIA, 1921–2012, BRITISH

## Vespa Couple

1963, oil on canvas

As an ardent Socialist, Peter de Francia regarded painting as a form of political activism. Although best known for his striking depictions of contemporary events, such as the *Bombing of Sakiet* (1959)—in which sixty-eight Tunisian civilians died at the hands of French forces in an act of colonial repression, he also captured more subtly politicized subjects like this one. In *Vespa Couple*, a pair of young lovers bask in the Mediterranean sun with their shiny Vespa moped propped up beside them. However, the work hints at a socioeconomic reality that threatens their reverie. The sneakers worn by the man are a product of post-Second World War consumerism, in which brands like Adidas became market leaders while local economies all but collapsed. The bag of apples tied to a post indicate that the man might be a hired agricultural laborer, perhaps one of the thousands of migrant workers who flocked to the South of France from Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria after liberation from French rule. The woman's open gait and garish makeup suggest she might be a prostitute. The painting invites contemplation of this loving repose without forgetting the material conditions of the couple's survival.

Gift of Alix de Francia, L.2019-46

LYNN CHADWICK, 1914–2003, BRITISH

## Two Figures

1971, bronze

Lynn Chadwick was one of eight talented young sculptors selected by Herbert Read in 1952 for his influential *New Aspects of British Sculpture* show at the Venice Biennale. The spiky and twisted forms that united the pieces were said by Read to belong to the “iconography of despair” and “geometry of fear” that encapsulated the early Cold War years. Chadwick himself had returned to win the International Sculpture Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1956. By the mid-1950s, abstracted animal forms had given way to human figures with surreal or mythological undertones. Draped figures with wings and either square (male) or pyramidal (female) heads dominated his later work. This sculpture is a small version of a series of large-scale compositions featuring two seated figures.

Having started out as a designer of showrooms and exhibition stands, Chadwick’s success as a sculptor enabled him to buy Lypiatt Park in Gloucestershire in 1958, where his larger pieces could be shown in a parkland setting. He opened his own foundry in 1971.

Gift of the Libra Foundation, from the family of  
Nicholas and Susan Pritzker, B2012.30.14

LUCIAN FREUD, 1922–2011, BRITISH

## Girl in a Dark Dress

1951, oil on canvas

Lucian Freud was born in Berlin, but in 1933 his Jewish family fled to Britain to escape the Nazis; his grandfather, the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, refused to leave Berlin until 1938, when he finally joined the rest of his family in London.

After training in several schools, in the 1940s Lucian Freud emerged in the circle of Francis Bacon as a surrealist artist committed to representation. By the 1950s he had become a figurative painter with an uncompromising eye. His paintings of this period are tightly handled and evoke the almost miniaturist quality of early Netherlandish painting but with an unmistakable air of tension or malaise that betrays their origins in postwar Europe. He explored portraiture regularly, but his sitters are often not named and instead are given generic titles, such as in this portrait where the young woman is scrutinized with an unsparing intensity and defined simply as a “girl in a dark dress.”

Lent anonymously

FRANCIS BACON, 1909–1992, IRISH

## Study of a Head, 1952

1952, oil on canvas

One of the great figurative painters of the twentieth century, the Irish-born Francis Bacon preferred to work from photographs or memories than from live models, often drawing together elements of several figures in one image. The multiple sources for this particular study include Diego Velázquez's *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (an image to which Bacon returned frequently in the early 1950s), stills of a screaming woman from Sergei Eisenstein's film *Battleship Potemkin* from 1925, and a book the artist owned on the diseases of the mouth. Bacon noted that he had "always been very moved by the movements of the mouth and the shape of the mouth and the teeth," speaking of his desire to "paint the mouth like Monet painted a sunset."

Gift of Beekman C. and Margaret H. Cannon, B1998.27

PATRICK HERON, 1920–1999, BRITISH

## Three Cadmiums

1966, oil on canvas

Patrick Heron was not only a leading abstract painter but a talented and forthright art critic who championed such contemporaries as Keith Vaughan and Roger Hilton. Heron's conversion to fully abstract painting came about in 1956, shortly after the influential exhibition *Modern Art in the United States* opened at the Whitechapel Gallery in London. The shift from figuration to abstraction brought with it "a sense of freedom quite denied me while I had to keep half an eye on a 'subject,'" said Heron. Nevertheless, he criticized the dominance of the New York art market and became an ardent advocate for British modernism. *Three Cadmiums* exemplifies his ambition to establish a "purely visual experience" through a bold use of color and simplified forms. The use of bright red may be intended as an homage to Heron's favorite painting: Henri Matisse's *The Red Studio* of 1911 (MoMA, New York).

Paul Mellon Fund, B1988.1



PATRICK CAULFIELD, 1936–2005, BRITISH

## Wine Bar

1983, acrylic on canvas

In the early 1960s, Patrick Caulfield rejected gestural painting for a more impersonal style influenced by commercial illustration. His carefully planned paintings were characterized by fields of flat color with objects defined by black outlines, calling to mind sign painting or comic strips. In the 1970s, Caulfield began incorporating other styles, including photorealism and trompe l'oeil, to create enigmatic, even disquieting, paintings that toy with the relationship between abstraction and representation, reality and perception. In *Wine Bar*, for instance, plant life and a salad appear at random while tabletops bathed in a sickly green light float mysteriously in midair. The word “Quiche” (phonetically close to “kitsch”) appears to be written in chalk on a signboard, yet it’s actually painted in oil. Such playfulness with language by Caulfield also points to the influence of the surrealist René Magritte (1898–1967), who earlier challenged the putative boundaries between word and image.

Gift of Samuel and Gabrielle Lurie in honor of Amy Meyers, B2018.9.1

IAN STEPHENSON, 1934–2000, BRITISH

## Diorama SS.6.67

1967, oil and enamel on two canvases

Emerging on the London art scene in the 1960s, Ian Stephenson was one of several British artists whose work featured in Michelangelo Antonioni's influential film *Blow-Up* (1966), alongside Alan Davie, whose work is displayed nearby. The following year he embarked upon a series of twelve dioramas, each consisting of two square canvases covered in small colored dots, in which the same image is repeated as if through an inverted mirror. Though Stephenson's abstraction is suggestive of postwar American painting, and even the pointillism of Georges Seurat, he preferred to see himself as part of a much longer tradition of British Romantic art. When making this diorama, Stephenson had in mind the line "the rainbow comes and goes" from the Romantic poet William Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," first published in 1807.

Gift of Samuel and Gabrielle Lurie, B2012.29.14

TONY CRAGG, BORN 1949, BRITISH

## Grey Container

1983, wood, ceramic, glass, and crayon

The sculptor Tony Cragg is best known for his exploration of different materials, notably manufactured objects and waste products. Initially a technician in a biochemistry laboratory, Cragg adopted scientific methods in his artwork. *Grey Container* is consistent with the body of works he produced during the 1980s, comprising a systematic arrangement of recognizable objects. Made of individual elements that are not evidently joined, *Grey Container* appears precariously balanced. Yet, compositionally, it reads like a piece of domestic furniture, such as a cupboard or shelving unit. Rows of green bottles are deployed as supports for a shelf-like structure incorporating boxes, a plank, and a brick. The surfaces of these disparate objects are covered in white wax crayon scribbles, which personalize these manufactured materials with the artist's hand. According to Cragg, furniture is "an extension of human beings and reflects their activities." He is interested in the ability of domestic furniture to humanize our environment.

Gift of Gerald W. and Jean W. Bush, B2000.11.1

ROBYN DENNY, 1930–2014, BRITISH

## “Over Here, Over There”

1982 to 1983, acrylic on canvas

Born in Abinger, Surrey, Robyn Denny studied at the Royal College of Art, where he began producing bold gestural paintings influenced by American abstract expressionism. Success came rapidly after graduation—by 1966 he was representing Britain at the Venice Biennale, and in 1973 he became the youngest artist to be honored with a Tate retrospective. At the time that he painted “*Over Here, Over There*,” Denny was living in Los Angeles, producing huge near-monochrome paintings animated by a central skein of acrylic paint. The title of this work likely refers to one of the most popular songs in Britain and America during the Second World War that then became linked in the 1970s to the Vietnam War and American soldiers fighting in a faraway country. The title may also refer to the fact that Denny himself was a British expat artist influenced by mid-century American painting and living in California.

Gift from the Collection of Doreen Gehry Nelson, B1998.33

JOHN HOYLAND, 1934–2011, BRITISH

## Devilaya 28.12.77

1977, acrylic on cotton duck

Heavily influenced by the exhibition of new American painting in London in the late 1950s, John Hoyland soon established himself as one of Britain's most prominent abstract painters. Among the first British painters to use acrylic paint, following its arrival on the market in the 1960s, his work is typified by its vibrant, often luminous, colors and, especially toward the end of his career, energetic handling of paint. Hoyland's stated influences were wide-ranging, from the paintings of J. M. W. Turner and John Constable to the culture of the Caribbean, jazz music to snorkeling, and poetry to pottery. Above all, he wished his art to appeal to the viewer's senses without the national limitations inherent in speech or text. He strived to make paintings that "could cross social, linguistic and cultural barriers in the way that music does." *Devilaya* is representative of his work from the late 1970s when he began deploying a more varied vocabulary of forms, incorporating triangles and diamonds that divided the canvas in interesting ways.

Gift of Samuel and Gabrielle Lurie, B2012.29.2

SIR ANTHONY CARO, 1924–2013, BRITISH

## Table Piece CII

1970, painted stainless steel

With encouragement from the art critic Michael Fried, the sculptor Anthony Caro began in 1966 to produce a series of “table pieces”; small-scale sculptures made from recycled, welded steel that balanced precariously on top of a surface. Caro had already radically redefined the boundaries of sculpture in the late 1950s, removing the plinth so that his objects occupied the same floor space as the viewer. The *Table Piece* series, initially regarded by some contemporary critics as a return to the distancing reverence of the plinth, is now seen as an advancement of Caro’s mission to engender intimacy between the object and viewer. The scale allows the viewer to get up close, peer over and around the piece, while its dynamic forms, which spill over the edge of the table, has led Caro to liken such works to drawings in space.

Yale University Art Gallery, Katharine Ordway Fund, 1983.29

ALAN DAVIE, 1920–2014, BRITISH

## The Yellow Phantom, Harold William

between 1957 and 1958, oil on masonite

Alan Davie was one of the most admired and original British artists of the 1960s. He began visiting New York in the late 1950s and met and befriended such artists as Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock. “It was American artists who were the first to really appreciate what I was doing,” Davie reflected in 2000. Like many of these artists, he developed an improvisatory process, in which multiple canvases were laid out on his studio floor and worked up simultaneously. Davie’s interests were wide, incorporating African and Pacific art, Zen Buddhism, and poetry and jazz (of which he was a talented practitioner). These interests are reflected in his busy, colorful canvases, which combine elements of figuration with passages of bold abstraction.

Gift of Nicholas and Susan Pritzker, B2017.4.1

JOHN WALKER, BORN 1939, BRITISH

## Hannah's Blues, 1976

1976, acrylic, chalk, gel on canvas

The Birmingham-born John Walker has been recognized as one of Britain's leading abstract painters since the 1960s. Much of his career has been spent in the United States, including a visiting professorship at Yale in 1989 and over twenty years teaching (1993–present) at Boston University. Walker became known for reinvigorating cubist collage, here, producing a collage effect with the heavily outlined shapes layered on top of one another. “Collage,” Walker wrote, “enables me to feel the structure while I’m doing the painting,” providing a set of prescribed limitations that allowed the artist to “move in the painting.” This work was produced in the same year that Walker won first prize at the John Moores biennial exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool.

Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Gifford Phillips, Yale BA 1942, B2008.25



STEVEN CAMPBELL, 1953–2007, BRITISH

## Eagles are Attracted by Disaster

1983, oil on canvas

Steven Campbell was one of the “New Glasgow Boys” who rose to international fame in the early 1980s. His theatrically staged paintings depict a shifting cast of characters navigating absurd and perplexing situations. The tweed-clad man with hunting paraphernalia depicted here frequently appeared in his work from the early 1980s, when Campbell was living in New York City. The archetypal British gentleman is endowed with all the eccentricity and ridiculousness of a character from a P. G. Wodehouse novel, making a mockery of an outdated, gentrified society to which Campbell, as an ex-steelworker from Glasgow, had no part. The work evokes the feeling of chaos Britain experienced as Margaret Thatcher entered her second term as prime minister and unemployment soared to record levels. The artist’s interest in the breakdown of meaning is displayed in the painting’s incongruous narrative, which deploys ambiguous symbolism to convey the gap between signs and their meanings.

Bequest of William S. Lieberman, transfer from the Harvard Art Museums,  
B2010.15

MAGGI HAMBLING, BORN 1945, BRITISH

## Excavations at the Royal Mint

1985, oil on canvas

In the early 1980s, archaeologists began excavating a medieval burial ground on the site of the old royal mint in East Smithfield, London. The skeletons uncovered were the remains of more than two and a half thousand Londoners, all victims of the Black Death that decimated the city's population in 1348–50. The burial ground was opened specifically to cope with this epidemic, with each body being buried in a narrow grave in row after row. Hambling saw a photograph of the excavations in a newspaper and made this large canvas in response to that powerful image, later describing it as a pivotal painting in her career that took death as its explicit subject. As she once put it: “You can fight against the inevitability of death or you can accept it. I think it’s a mistake to ignore it. The greatest art has always been about life and death.”

Gift of the artist, B1991.27

R. B. KITAJ, 1932–2007, AMERICAN, ACTIVE IN BRITAIN  
(1958–97)

## School of London Diasporists

1988–2004, oil on canvas

This late painting by R. B. Kitaj began its life in 1988 as an elevation in blues of the modernist Cohen house by the architects Erich Mendelsohn (1887–1953) and Serge Chermayeff (1900–1996) in Old Church Street, Chelsea, just around the corner from where Kitaj was then living and working in London. In 2004, by now transplanted to Los Angeles, Kitaj completed the foreground. He writes: “It is a strange painting, done in stages over many years. It is a sort of frieze showing a few painters in my London circle in a free-form kind of style. . . . The initials stand for Kitaj, [Lucian] Freud, [Frank] Auerbach, my late wife Sandra Fisher, and [Leon] Kossoff.” Notably, all of these painters were either not born in Britain or had parents who fled to London to escape persecution in their former homelands. The harsh execution and high-keyed colors belie an elegiac quality, and more than a hint of affection, in these brisk characterizations of some of the most important people in his life, partly visualized from, partly obscured by, the distant vantage point of Southern California.

Gift of the artist, B2007.17

HENRY MOORE, 1898–1986, BRITISH

## Working Model for a Two Piece Reclining Figure: Cut

1979, bronze

The Pritzker Architecture Prize was established in 1979 by Jay and Cindy Pritzker and is awarded annually to a living architect whose work “demonstrates a combination of those qualities of talent, vision and commitment, which has produced consistent and significant contributions to humanity and the built environment through the art of architecture.” The first nine recipients of the award—who included Philip Johnson and I. M. Pei—also received a limited edition cast of this sculpture by Henry Moore. In 1962, Moore reflected upon his decision to break the reclining figure into two: “Once these two parts become separated you don’t expect it to be a naturalistic figure; therefore, you can justifiably make it like a landscape or a rock. If it is a single figure, you can guess what it’s going to be like. If it is in two pieces, there’s a bigger surprise.”

Gift of Gail and Michael Klebanoff in honor of Arthur M. Klebanoff, Yale BA 1969, and Susan J. Klebanoff, Yale BA 1974, B2009.4

GEORGE SHAW, BORN 1966, BRITISH

## Möcht' ich zurücke wieder wanken

2015–16, enamel on canvas

This painting is the central picture from a triptych George Shaw made as an associate artist at the National Gallery, London, from 2014 to 2016. The triptych alludes to Titian's mythological narratives of Diana and Actaeon and their themes of voyeurism and punishment, themselves derived from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Here the woodland floor is littered with the kind of pornography the young artist found in the woods near his childhood home. The woods have become eroticized in Shaw's imagination, and the dark void in the undergrowth here suggests both a secret adolescent den and also a metaphor for the female body. The *Winterreise* tells the story of a jilted lover fleeing into the landscape to escape his lonely sorrows; here Shaw suggests modern parallels, and the German title provides him with an irresistible pun for the English speaker.

On loan from a private collection

EUAN UGLOW, 1932–2000, BRITISH

## Double Square

1999–2000, oil on canvas laid to panel

Euan Uglow studied at the Camberwell School of Art and the Slade School in the early 1950s and quickly made a reputation for his studies of the nude, with figures posed in irregular attitudes in carefully chosen domestic settings. A meticulous and precise painter, Uglow worked very slowly, expecting his models to stay in position for hours on end and to return regularly over the course of many months, sometimes even years. “It was an endurance test for both of us,” recalled one model who patiently sat for him one winter. When Veera, the model for this painting, could not be present, Uglow replaced her with a cube created out of copper rods, signaling at his lifelong preoccupation with the geometry of the human body. A recent gift to the Center, *Double Square* was one of the last paintings Uglow completed before his death from cancer in 2000.

Gift of Dorothy C. Weicker in honor and memory of her parents, Beatrice Trostel and Frederick E. Weicker, Yale, Sheffield Scientific School, Class of 1931, B2015.14

CELIA PAUL, BORN 1959, BRITISH

## Annela

2000–2001, oil on canvas

Celia Paul was born in Trivandrum, South India, where her parents were Anglican missionaries, but the family moved back to Britain when she was five years old, in response to Celia's poor health. She entered the Slade School of Art at the age of just seventeen. While a student, she found herself lacking inspiration until she began painting studies of her mother. Ever since, her paintings have been most often images of women, mostly people she knows well, be they family or close friends. Each represents an alternative and counterintuitive idea of power inflected deeply by her Christian faith, representing the contemplative tradition within Christianity in contrast to the active life. Her work echoes that of artists like Gwen John a century earlier (whose work is shown elsewhere on this floor) in its understatement and in the sense of painting as a vocation rather than a mere profession or trade.

Gift of Hansen, Jacobson, Teller, Hoberman, Newman, Warren, Richman, Rush & Kaller, LLP, B2013.37.5