

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

BREAK + BLEED TO OPEN AT SAN JOSÉ MUSEUM OF ART ON JUNE 4, 2021

New exhibition will feature artists who exemplify the spirit of post-painterly abstraction.

For Immediate Release

San José, California (February 10, 2021) — During the late 1950s and 60s, artists began to diverge from the painterly, gestural approaches of Abstract Expressionism in favor of what the American art critic Clement Greenberg in 1964 called “post-painterly abstraction.” *Break + Bleed*, a new exhibition presented by the San José Museum of Art (SJMA) from June 4, 2021 through January 31, 2022, features paintings and works on paper by historically significant artists who exemplify the spirit of post-painterly abstraction. Organized by SJMA curator Rory Padeken, the exhibition will present an expansive range of styles including hard-edge abstraction, Color Field painting, Op art, Minimalism, and soft-edge abstraction.

Drawn primarily from SJMA’s permanent collection, the artworks in this exhibition feature biomorphic and geometric shapes, angular and wavy lines, and lively planes of color. The exhibition demonstrates how artists moved in a variety of directions, some in pursuit of paintings pure in color and open in composition while others toward structured, linear designs using familiar geometric shapes. Rejecting a loose application of paint—these artists stained their unprimed canvases or created flat planes of color devoid of any distinctive mark making.

“Like the break of a line or page and the bleed of various elements beyond the edge or boundary of a certain area, the artworks in *Break + Bleed* oscillate between ideas of linearity and geometry and overlapping planes of color,” shared Rory Padeken, SJMA curator. “*Break + Bleed* provides a broad overview of various trends in abstract painting that emerged in the late 50s to the present day, demonstrating the incredible variety and richness of self-expression that artists found through abstraction.”

For example, Josef Albers’ celebrated series “Homage to the Square” explored opticality and the subjective experience of color and may be the most recognizable. Whereas, for Karl Benjamin, interlocking and sometimes twisted shapes created energetic color associations and incongruous patterns. Today, contemporary artists like Linda Besemer, Patrick Wilson, and others are pushing post-painterly abstraction into new territories using digital technologies and unconventional tools.

The exhibition also features work by Joachim Bandau, Ilya Bolotowsky, Naomi Boretz, Guy John Cavalli, Mary Corse, Tony DeLap, Sam Francis, Stephen French, Sonia Gechtoff, Amy Kaufman, Patsy Krebs, Helen Lundeborg, Brice Marden, John McLaughlin, Winston Roeth, Fred Spratt, Ted Stamm, Frank Stella, Amy Trachtenberg, Don Voisine, and Robert Yasuda, among others. Also included are key loans by Nicole Phungrasamee Fein from the Bay Area and Los Angeles based–artist Eamon Ore-Giron, as well as a recently acquired multi-panel painting from 1975 by San Francisco–born artist Leo Valledor.

Support

Break + Bleed is supported by the SJMA Exhibitions Fund, with a generous contribution from Tad Freese and Brook Hartzell.

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SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California near the Plaza de César Chavez. The Museum is temporarily closed, following the Santa Clara County orders to Shelter in Place due to COVID-19. SJMA continues to offer programming online and has expanded digital content by creating a Museum from Home page, found here: sjmusart.org/museum-from-home. Updated weekly, the section features behind-the-scene explorations of exhibitions, art-making videos, educator lesson plans, a Curators' Dashboard, and more. For up-to-date information about when SJMA will reopen, please visit SanJoseMuseumofArt.org. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and free to members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and schoolteachers (with valid ID). For more information, call 408.271.6840 or visit SanJoseMuseumofArt.org.

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