



Artists Documentation Program (ADP) Interview Video Index

Artist: Cy Twombly
Date: September 17, 2000
Location: The Menil Collection
Interviewer: Carol Mancusi-Ungaro
Video/Edit: Laurie McDonald
Total Run Time: 00:31:23

Abstract:

Cy Twombly speaks with Artists Documentation Program Founding Director and Menil Chief Conservator, Carol Mancusi-Ungaro. The conversation focuses on several of the artist's paintings, all owned by the Cy Twombly Gallery, Menil Collection. Twombly traces each work's provenance and describes the materials and techniques that he employed to create them. Throughout the interview, Twombly discusses his intent for the future conservation and exhibition of his works.

Controlled Access Headings (Library of Congress):

Corporate Name(s)

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Artists Documentation Program
Harvard University. Art Museums
Menil Collection (Houston, Tex.)
Whitney Museum of American Art

Genre(s)

Interviews
Oral histories

Personal Name(s)

Mancusi-Ungaro, Carol
McDonald, Laurie
Twombly, Cy, 1928-2011

Subject(s)

Art--Conservation and restoration
Art--Technique
Artists--Interviews
Artists' materials
Painting, American--20th century

Exhibitions/Works:

Names of exhibitions and works referenced during this interview appear below in gray cells.

Controlled Vocabulary:

Except where indicated, all keywords employ Getty vocabularies (AAT/ULAN/TGN). Those marked with (*) employ Library of Congress Authorities. Those marked with (**) employ local terms.

Time	Contents	Subject Keywords
00:00:01	Opening Credits	
00:00:44	(Image) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection (building exterior and pan of gallery interior)	
00:01:08	Historical Anecdote Twombly discusses the origin of one of his “chalkboard” paintings, <i>Untitled</i> , 1970, which was once part of another painting owned by the Museum of Modern Art, New York.	Museum of Modern Art Varnedoe, Kirk, 1946-2003* wash (coating)
00:01:13	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1970 Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:01:14	(Work Reference) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1970 Museum of Modern Art, New York	
00:02:06	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Twombly discusses the relationship between his “chalkboard” paintings and light, including the type of light in which he painted them and his preferences regarding their lighting during exhibition. He also describes the method by which he layered paint and <i>caran d’ache</i> . He and Mancusi-Ungaro discuss the paintings’ condition.	Caran D’Ache crayons (drawing material) daylight exhibiting lighting oil paint (paint) paint layers shipping visual inspection wash (coating)
00:02:34	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1971 (overview and details) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:03:33	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Twombly and Mancusi-Ungaro assess the condition of a group of	age discoloration

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	<p>paintings that Twombly created in the mid-1950s. They discuss the paintings' relative signs of aging and various choices that Twombly made in the creation of each work. Twombly compares the forms in one painting, <i>Volubilis</i>, to a form appearing in his sculptural work.</p>	<p>natural aging paint layers surface properties visual inspection</p>
00:03:33	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Volubilis</i>, 1953 (overview and details of surface) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:04:16	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i>, 1954 (overview and details of the surfaces of two works, identically titled) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:07:23	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Thermopylae</i>, 1992 Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:07:35	<p>Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Twombly and Mancusi-Ungaro assess the condition of the series of paintings to which <i>Hyperion (to Keats)</i>, 1962, and <i>The Age of Alexander</i>, 1959-60, belong. Twombly discusses the methods by which he prepared his canvases and his preferences for the paintings' conservation and cleaning. Mancusi-Ungaro describes a treatment in which she cleaned fingerprints from <i>The Age of Alexander</i>.</p>	<p>Belgian linen canvas cleaning cracking dry cleaning fluid** erasers fingerprints ground (material) paint layers primer (material) shipping stretching Utrecht Art Supplies**</p>
00:07:35	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Hyperion (to Keats)</i>, 1962 (overview and details) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:08:14	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>The Age of Alexander</i>, 1959-60 (overview and details) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	

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00:10:39	<p>Conservation Issues and Process of Creation Twombly continue to assess the condition of <i>The Age of Alexander</i> and discusses the circumstances surrounding its creation. He also assesses the condition of his “Lexington Paintings” series and describes their creation.</p>	visual inspection
00:11:01	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (The Lexington Paintings), 1959</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:11:40	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (The Lexington Paintings), 1959 (details of peapod)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:12:01	<p>Conservation Issues Twombly expresses his opinions regarding conservation issues in his “Lexington Paintings” series, including damages that occurred to the verso of one painting when it was on loan. Mancusi-Ungaro describes a treatment that she applied to the painting.</p>	abrasion (condition or effect) age cracks damage gouache (paint) restoration (process) shipping
00:12:23	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (The Lexington Paintings), 1959 (details of scratch)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:12:33	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (The Lexington Paintings), 1959 (details of cracks)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist</p>	
00:13:57	<p>Historical Anecdote and Conservation Issues Twombly and Mancusi-Ungaro trace the provenance and exhibition history of the “Lexington Paintings.” Twombly describes an occasion of damage and restoration to the works.</p>	Castelli, Leo damage floods (natural events) Goldreyer, Daniel lending Museum of Modern Art restoration (process)
00:15:06	<p>(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (The Lexington Paintings), 1959 (details of areas of</i></p>	

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	water staining) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:16:19	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Twombly assesses the condition of <i>Untitled</i> , 1961 and describes the materials that he used to create it.	house paint industrial paint oil paint (paint)
00:16:19	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1961 (overview and details of cracks and clumps in paint) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:18:02	Technical Specifications and Concept/Nature of Work Twombly explains some of the techniques and imagery that he employed in <i>Untitled</i> , 1961.	literary history reworking
00:18:02	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1961 (detail of lake) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:18:13	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Bay of Naples</i> , 1961 (overview and details of lake) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:18:42	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Bay of Naples</i> , 1961 (details of reworked areas) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston	
00:19:01	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues Twombly assesses the condition of <i>Triumph of Galatea</i> and describes the materials that he used to create the work.	canvas color (pigment) house paint oil paint (paint) yellowing
00:19:01	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Triumph of Galatea</i> , 1961 (overview and details of colors) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:20:54	Technical Specifications and Conservation Issues	canvas

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	Twombly describes the materials that he used to create <i>Untitled</i> , 1985, and <i>Untitled (Analysis of the Rose as Sentimental Despair)</i> , 1985. Mancusi discusses a treatment that she undertook on the latter work, and Twombly expresses his wishes for both works' future conservation.	cracking flat (form attributes) frames (ornament areas) house paint moisture mounting nails plywood quarter rounds staples
00:20:54	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1985 (details of paint) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:21:30	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (Analysis of the Rose as Sentimental Despair)</i> , 1985 (overview and details of surfaces and frames) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:23:05	Technical Specifications Twombly continues to describe the materials that he used to create the painting series <i>Untitled (Analysis of the Rose as Sentimental Despair)</i> , 1985.	acrylic paint drawings (visual works) enamel paint gesso house paint water-base paint
00:23:05	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled (Analysis of the Rose as Sentimental Despair)</i> , 1985 (overview and detail of paint drips) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:24:12	Conservation Issues Twombly assesses the condition of his <i>Untitled</i> , 1988, paintings and describes the materials and techniques that he used to create them.	green (color) wash (coating)
00:24:14	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1988 (overview and details of paint) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:26:13	Conservation Issues	bronze (metal) paint

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	Twombly assesses the condition of <i>Untitled</i> , 1992 and discusses his use of paint on bronze sculpture.	stain (coating) white (color)
00:26:14	(Images) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1992 (overview and details of staining) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:27:06	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Thermopylae</i> , 1991 Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:27:16	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Thermopylae</i> , 1992 (details and overview) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:27:32	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> , 1983 (overview and details) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:27:44	Conservation Issues Twombly assesses the condition of <i>Untitled</i> [Green Oval with line from Rilke's "Moving Forward"], 1984 and expresses his preferences regarding its future conservation.	age cracks crackle lifting (surface changing process) plywood staples warping
00:27:45	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled</i> [Green Oval with line from Rilke's "Moving Forward"], 1984 (overview and details of areas of lift and areas of crackle) Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:28:28	Conservation Issues Twombly assesses the condition of <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts]</i> , 1994 and points out areas of specific conservation concern. He discusses another work owned by the Museum of Modern Art, New York in which he used similar materials.	Caran D'Ache Museum of Modern Art Varnedoe, Kirk, 1946-2003*

00:28:28	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (overview and details)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:28:52	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (installation view at Museum of Fine Arts, Houston)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:28:57	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (details)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:29:02	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (details of unexposed and light-exposed areas)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:29:49	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (details of drawing and painting passages)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:30:24	(Work Reference) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled, 1970</i> Museum of Modern Art, New York	
00:31:40	Process of Creation and Technical Specifications Twombly describes the circumstances that led to the creation of <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994</i> . He also discusses some of the techniques he employed, including his use of poetry in the	Pincus-Witten, Robert* poetry

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	work.	
00:31:40	(Image) Cy Twombly <i>Untitled Painting [Say Goodbye Catullus, to the Shores of Asia Minor] [A Painting in Three Parts], 1994 (details of drawing and painting passages)</i> Cy Twombly Gallery, The Menil Collection, Houston, gift of the artist	
00:34:40	Closing Credits	