

NEWS RELEASE



Montclair Art Museum

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For Immediate Release

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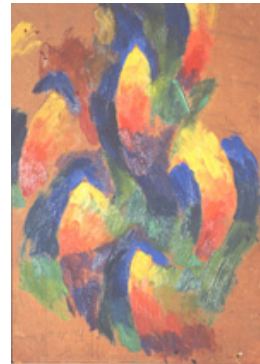
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James Abbott McNeill Whistler
(1834–1903), *The Sea*, ca. 1865, oil
on canvas.



Morgan Russell
(1886–1953), *Study for
Synchrony*, ca. 1913,
oil on board.

**THE MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM PRESENTS
*PATTERNS, SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES: ABSTRACTION IN AMERICAN ART***

Exhibition Showcases the Museum's Permanent Collection

On View December 3, 2011 – May 19, 2013

MONTCLAIR, NJ, December 1, 2011—The Montclair Art Museum (MAM) proudly presents *Patterns, Systems, Structures: Abstraction in American Art*. The exhibition will open in two phases. Part One opens December 3, 2011, in the McMullen Gallery with works from the late 19th century through the 20th, including Native American art; Part Two opens February 12, 2012, in Lehman Court and the Shelby Gallery with additional works representing 20th-century abstraction. The exhibition runs through May 19, 2013, and is organized by MAM's chief curator, Gail Stavitsky.

The exhibition is drawn entirely from the permanent collection of the Montclair Art Museum and explores the rich variety of approaches to abstraction in American art. Since the late

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19th century, painters and sculptors have not always aimed to depict persons and objects representationally. Artists moved toward abstract visual expression as they experimented with unconventional materials and techniques and developed visual languages of form, color, and line that exist independently from their subjects' natural appearance. Some artists deliberately altered appearances by stretching or bending forms, breaking up shapes, and giving objects unlikely textures or colors. Others looked to aspects of our person-made world, such as architecture, to invest their compositions with a sense of solidity, monumentality, and structure. Artists have made these transformations in an effort to communicate universal or unseen spiritual aspects of existence and of modern life that they cannot convey through representational treatments.

Stavitsky said: "This exhibition has provided a great opportunity to re-examine the permanent collection and show works that have seldom or never been exhibited before. It offers new perspectives by juxtaposing historical and contemporary art. Rarely, for example, do you see the 19th-century masters Inness and Whistler in the company of American modernists like Morgan Russell and Joseph Stella, nor mid-century artists like Joseph Albers and his student Richard Anuskiewicz with the current artist James Siena."

Group Tours

Group tours may be booked by calling 973-259-5136 or by emailing tours@montclairartmuseum.org.

Online Press Site

The Museum will maintain a site dedicated to the exhibition for journalists seeking further information, including a checklist and images. Please visit montclairartmuseum.org and click on For the Media.

Visit Montclair

For more Montclair experiences, visit websites for the Montclair Center Business Improvement District (www.montclaircenter.com/) and Destination Montclair (www.destinationmontclair.com).

About the Museum

The Montclair Art Museum, a notable, community-based institution with an international reputation, boasts a renowned collection of American and Native American art that uniquely highlights art making in the United States over the last three hundred years. The collection includes more than 12,000 objects: paintings, prints, original works on paper, photographs, and sculpture by American artists from the 18th century to the present, as well as traditional and contemporary Native American art and artifacts representing the cultural developments of peoples from all of the major American Indian regions. The Museum's education programs serve a wide public and bring artists, performers, and scholars to the Museum on a regular basis.

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MAM's Yard School of Art is the leading regional art school, offering a multitude of comprehensive courses for children, teens, adults, seniors, and professional artists.

The Montclair Art Museum is located at 3 South Mountain Avenue in Montclair, N.J. Information and directions are available on the Museum website, montclairartmuseum.org, or by calling 973-746-5555. MAM is open Wednesdays through Sundays, Noon – 5 p.m., and closed on Mondays, Tuesdays, and major holidays. Museum admission is \$12 for nonmember adults, \$10 for senior citizens and students with I.D., and free for members and children under 12.

All Museum programs are made possible, in part, by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, and by funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Vance Wall Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and Museum Members.

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