

The Menil Collection

NEWS RELEASE

The Menil Collection Announces *The Gift of Drawing: Cy Twombly*

*A selection of works gifted to the museum by the Cy Twombly Foundation
will open at the Menil Drawing Institute on March 27, 2026*



HOUSTON—January 29, 2025— The Menil Collection is pleased to announce *The Gift of Drawing: Cy Twombly*, on view at the Menil Drawing Institute March 27–August 9, 2026. The presentation features a selection of some thirty works gifted to the museum by the Cy Twombly Foundation that underscores the Menil’s importance as an international destination for the study, presentation, and appreciation of Twombly’s work. Those highlighted in the exhibition cover three decades of the artist’s activity, from the 1950s to the 1980s, and feature a broad range of materials, from graphite to oil paint; techniques such as drawing and collage; and themes that are fundamental to his entire practice, such as classical antiquity, eroticism, and nature.

The Foundation's landmark gift to the Menil in 2025 of 121 of Twombly's drawings vastly expands the museum's holdings and transforms its ability to exhibit and study this aspect of the artist's practice. It celebrates the museum's nearly two decades of investment through the Menil Drawing Institute in elevating the visibility of drawing, its centrality in artists' lives, and its crucial role in modern and contemporary artistic culture.

Edouard Kopp, John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation Chief Curator, Menil Drawing Institute, said, "The exhibition celebrates the Cy Twombly Foundation's generous donation, which now allows the Menil to represent the full range of Twombly's considerable talents in the field of drawing. His experimental mark-making makes him one of the most innovative and consequential draftspeople of the 20th century."

The works in this show, none of which have ever been exhibited in the United States, include a series of lush and unrestrained landscapes from 1986 that verge on pure abstraction, two untitled works from 1970 that are related to the artist's "blackboard paintings" on view at the Menil's Cy Twombly Gallery, and *Narcissus*, 1975, a collage of paper, with oil, charcoal, and wax crayon on paper inscribed with the title of the work in large capital letters across the bottom.

The Gift of Drawing: Cy Twombly is curated by Edouard Kopp, John R. Eckel, Jr. Foundation Chief Curator, Menil Drawing Institute.

About The Menil Collection

Philanthropists and art patrons John and Dominique de Menil established the Menil Foundation in 1954 to foster greater public understanding and appreciation of art, architecture, culture, religion, and philosophy. In 1987, the Menil Collection's main building opened to the public. Today, the Menil Collection consists of a group of art buildings and green spaces located within a residential neighborhood in central Houston. The Menil remains committed to its founders' belief that art is essential to human experience and welcomes all visitors free of charge. menil.org

About the Menil Drawing Institute

The Menil Drawing Institute was established in 2008 in recognition of drawing's centrality in the lives of artists and its crucial role in modern and contemporary artistic culture. The Drawing Institute has since developed an international profile for exhibitions, scholarship, and collaboration. In 2018, a dedicated building for the Menil Drawing Institute, designed by Johnston Marklee was inaugurated. It is now the site of regular drawings exhibitions, an annual monumental wall drawing commission, public programs, and study.

Funding

Major funding for this exhibition is generously provided by Sheila Noeth and Ted Dohmen. Additional support comes from Eddie and Chinhui Allen; Clare Casademont and Michael Metz; Suzanne Deal Booth; Hilda Curran; Barbara and Michael Gamson; Leslie and Shannon Sasser; and the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance.

Image

Cy Twombly, *Untitled*, 1986. Acrylic and oil on handmade paper, 21 × 28 in. (53.3 × 71.1cm). The Menil Collection, Houston, Gift of the Cy Twombly Foundation. © Cy Twombly Foundation

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