

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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MINIMAL AND CONCEPTUAL WORKS FROM
THE JUDITH NEISSER COLLECTION ON VIEW AT THE ART INSTITUTE
Exhibition Celebrates Chicago Collector's 33 Extraordinary Gifts to the Museum

Contemporary Collecting: The Judith Neisser Collection

On View February 13–May 22, 2011

The Art Institute of Chicago is pleased to present ***Contemporary Collecting: The Judith Neisser Collection***—the first-ever public exhibition of works from Chicago collector Judith Neisser's outstanding private collection. Rooted in the 1960s and 1970s but continuing

through today's most contemporary works, this second installment of the series features 79 Minimal and Conceptual works by artists ranging from **Blinky Palermo** and **Robert Ryman** to **Eva Hesse** and **Roni Horn**. On view in the **Modern Wing's Abbott Galleries (G 182–184)** from **February 13 through May 22, 2011**, the exhibition brings these works to the public for the first time and also celebrates major gifts to the Art Institute from Judith Neisser and the Neisser family. The gift of 33 paintings, sculptures, and drawings is an acknowledgment of the museum's long history of exhibiting Minimal and Conceptual art and will propel the permanent collection forward by filling gaps in the museum's holdings and offering exemplary works by artists now synonymous with these movements.



“Taking a place among the Art Institute’s other great benefactors, Judy has made a contribution that will undoubtedly be felt for years to come in the Art Institute’s galleries of contemporary art,” said James Cuno, President and Eloise W. Martin Director of the museum. “Displayed in proximity to the museum’s other valued treasures, works from the Neisser Collection will provide our audience with an enhanced understanding of the advanced strains of art that were so revolutionary during the 1960s and 1970s, and which continue to influence artists to this day. For this, and for her continued generosity and dedication to the Art Institute, we owe Judy our deepest and most profound gratitude and admiration.”

Judith Neisser’s connection to the arts is deep and long-standing. Her love of minimal forms developed after she met her late husband, Edward Neisser, who first introduced her to the spare aesthetic of Japanese design. At home in Chicago, the Neissers visited museums and galleries regularly, and Judith soon began writing articles and reviews on architecture and design for such local and national publications as *Chicago* magazine, *Art and Auction*, *Inland Architect*, and *Architectural Digest*. Her involvement with museums and galleries deepened, and by the mid-1990s, she began to collect art in earnest, putting together an extraordinary selection of paintings, sculpture, and works on paper that is equally rigorous in visual and conceptual coherence, influenced, in part, by the “late-modern” architecture of her Chicago home.

Remarkable in its quality and focus, the Judith Neisser Collection gives special emphasis to a core group of artists emerging from the Minimal and Conceptual art movements of the 1960s, most notably **Sol LeWitt, Robert Ryman, Donald Judd, Brice Marden, Dan Flavin, and Blinky Palermo**. In Neisser’s own words, “I wanted to cultivate a collection that rejects singularity and essentially reflects some of the many roads an artist can take to achieve an abstract minimalist work.” As a result, the collection is rich in works that explore stark formal possibilities but leavened by the humor and wit of later-generation Conceptual art by such artists as **Sherrie Levine, Roni Horn, and Bruce Nauman**. The collection is particularly deep in works on paper, which for Neisser represent a more personal and accessible form of expression that she was drawn to in the midst of 20th-century rigor. Other artists from distinct but related traditions—such as **Lucio Fontana, Eva Hesse, Cy Twombly, and Ellsworth Kelly**, for example—have been wonderfully integrated into the collection based on shared uses of seriality, the monochrome, reductive geometric forms, and the grid.

Contemporary Collecting: The Judith Neisser Collection is accompanied by a 160-page, full-color catalogue, published by the Art Institute and distributed by Yale University Press. The publication includes an essay by independent art historian Annie Rorimer and a wide-ranging interview with Judith Neisser by James Rondeau, exhibition curator and Frances and Thomas Dittmer Curator and Chair of Contemporary Art at the Art Institute.

Contemporary Collecting: The Judith Neisser Collection is organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and curated by James Rondeau, Frances and Thomas Dittmer Curator and Chair of Contemporary Art.

IMAGE: Blinky Palermo. *Untitled*, 1972. Promised gift of Judith Neisser. © Blinky Palermo. © 2011 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

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MUSEUM HOURS

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

10:30 am–8:00 pm Thursday (and Fridays until February 25, 2011)

10:30 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

TARGET FREE THURSDAY EVENINGS AFTER 5:00 pm

FREE WINTER WEEKDAYS JANUARY 3 THROUGH FEBRUARY 4, 2011

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

ADMISSION

Adults \$18.00 Includes all special exhibitions

Children 14 and over, students, and seniors \$12.00 Includes all special exhibitions

Chicago residents receive a \$2.00 discount with proof of residency

Children under 14 always free

Members always free

Free Evenings are free to all. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a Museum Passport card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago.