68th AMERICAN EXHIBITION
The Art Institute of Chicago
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August 19th through October 16th, 1966
THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

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FOREWORD

At no time in the history of the United States has there been a greater interest and attention focused on the arts, in particular the visual arts, than there is today, and certainly at no time has there been greater diversity of expression on the part of our artists. The present exhibition assembled by A. James Speyer, Curator of Contemporary Art, attempts to show some of the facets of the art of our times. That the artist reflects his environment is self-evident, and some of the works contained in the present exhibition reveal the tensions, frustrations and unrest which exist throughout the world today. Others reflect a kind of order and simplicity with which we attempt to regularize our lives, and some create, independently of time and environment. Indeed the complexity of new art forms is manifest in the extraordinary variety of expression to be found today in contemporary art.

Assisting Mr. Speyer in the exhibition have been Carole Herman and Anselmo Carini of the staff of the Art Institute of Chicago, who have seen the catalogue through the press and attended to many other details. Harold Buddenbohm, Superintendent, and his staff of maintenance personnel, have contributed much to the installation of the exhibition.

We are deeply grateful to our distinguished jury, James Elliott, Director of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Martin L. Friedman, Director of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and Porter A. McCray, Director of The JDR 3rd Fund for selecting the prize awards.

C. C. Cunningham, Director
INTRODUCTION
This present 68th American Exhibition shows the work of twenty artists, each with a kind of complete, individual exhibit, rather than a single, specific painting or sculpture. There are no easel paintings, no sculptures on bases—nothing, finally, of traditional scale. The works on view range from straight, stark, abstract paintings on canvas and geometric sculpture to intricate, three-dimensional figurative compositions. Traditional media of painting and sculpture are frequently extended to include the use of odd objects, mechanical paraphernalia, cinematic projection, sound, electric lighting, and even odors. It would be meaningless to attempt categories, but perhaps the exhibits most easily divide themselves into two general areas: those absolutely concrete and structural, and others of a contradictory realism. Where the artist is primarily concerned with structure, it is interesting that this expression in no wise relies on the exposure of the skeleton frame, but rather on the architectonic problem of a covering skin—whether stretched, wrapped, or constructed as volumes. Where the work is figurative, the expression is devoid of conventional romanticism; the idea may be highly romantic, but the result is a contradiction in fact. However super-real the final effect, it is opposed by emphatic discrepancies of form, function, or scale. There is evident a particular interest in scale in all the works in this exhibition, a scale that affects space in new ways, whether by virtue of enormity, ambiguity, or diminuation. However, all these exhibits share a similar quality of being ultimately factual and non-illusionistic—they share a physical insistence and vital presence which assumes environmental stature.

A. James Speyer
PETER AGOSTINI

RONALD BLADEN
Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 1918. Studied at Vancouver School of Art and California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco. Lives in New York City.

CHRISTO
Born in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, 1935. Studied at Fine Arts Academy in Sophia, Bulgaria; in Prague, Czechoslovakia; at Vienna’s Fine Arts Academy, Vienna, Austria; and in Paris, France. Lives in New York City.

CHRYSSA
4. The Gates to Times Square, 1966, welded stainless steel, neon and plexiglass, 120 x 120 inches. Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Albert List, Byram, Connecticut.

RED GROOMS
5. Loft on 26th Street, 1965-66, mixed media, 30 x 70 x 35 inches. Lent by the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York.

CHARLES HINMAN

DAVID JACOBS
Born in Niagara Falls, New York, 1932. Studied at Brandt-Dike School of Art; Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa, California; Los Angeles State College, California. Lives in Long Island, N.Y.
7. Man Monument, 1963-64, welded aluminum, 84 x 72 x 24 inches. Lent by the Kornblee Gallery, New York.

ELLSWORTH KELLY

EDWARD KIENHOLZ

9. The Beanery, 1965, fiberglass, paint, varnishes, shellacs, wood, bottles, metal, cast plaster figures, clothing, juke box, tape recorder, and odor-producing chemicals, 84 x 72 x 264 inches long. Lent by the Kleiner Foundation, Beverly Hills, California.

JUNE LEAF

10. The Vermeer Box, 1965, mixed media, 24 x 24 x 26 inches. Lent by the Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago.

LEN LYE


MARISOL


ROBERT MORRIS
Born in Kansas City, Missouri, 1931. Studied at the University of Kansas City; Kansas City Art Institute; California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco; Reed College, Portland, Oregon; Hunter College, New York City. Lives in New York City.

13. Untitled, 1966, painted wood, two elements, each 96 x 96 x 24 inches. Lent by the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

LOUISE NEVELSON


LARRY POONS

15. Northeast Grave, 1964, 90 x 80 inches; Sicilian Chance, 1964, 72 x 144 inches; Via Regia, 1964, 72 x 144 inches, liquitex on canvas. Lent by the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, New York.
ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG


JAMES ROSENQUIST

Born in Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1933. Studied at the Minneapolis School of Art and the University of Minnesota. Lives in New York City.

17. Untitled, 1966, oil on canvas and mylar, fifteen panels, 132 x 264 inches. Lent by the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

GEORGE SEGAL

Born in New York City, 1924. Studied at New York University and Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Lives in North Brunswick, New Jersey.


FRANK STELLA

Born in Malden, Massachusetts, 1936. Studied at the Phillips Exeter Academy; and Princeton University, New Jersey. Lives in New York City.

19. De La Nada Vida A La Nada Muerte, 1965, metallic paint on canvas, 81 x 293 inches. Lent by the Leo Castelli Gallery, New York.

ROBERT WHITMAN


20. Dining Room Table, 1964, mixed media, 30 x 60 x 60 inches. Lent by the artist.

JURY OF AWARD

James Elliott, Director of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut

Martin L. Friedman, Director of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Porter A. McCray, Director of The JDR 3rd Fund, New York

The Art Institute of Chicago extends its thanks to the lenders to the 68th American Exhibition. Prizes awarded by the jury of the exhibition are listed on the accompanying insert. The lender’s name is listed with each catalogue entry.
11 Len Lye: Fountain, 1963, stainless steel
Chryssa: The Gates to Times Square, 1966, welded stainless steel, neon and plexiglass
1. Peter Agostini: Balloon Fountain, 1964, reinforced plaster
David Jacobs: Man Monument, 1963-64, welded aluminum
Charles Hinman: Three Towers, 1966, acrylic on canvas
Robert Morris: Untitled, 1966, painted wood
Louise Nevelson: Homage to the World, 1966, painted wood
3 Christo: Storefronts, 1964-65, mixed media
James Rosenquist: Untitled, 1966, oil on canvas and mylar
George Segal: The Truck, 1966, plaster, metal, glass, wood, plastic, and moving picture
9 Edward Kienholz: The Bravery, 1965, fiberglass, paint, varnishes, shellsac, wood, bottles, metal, cast plaster figures, clothing, juke box, tape recorder, and odor-producing chemicals
5 Red Grooms: Loft on 26th Street, 1965-66, mixed media
2 Ronald Bladen: Untitled, 1965-66, wood and aluminium
Frank Stella: *De La Nada Vida A La Nada Muerte*, 1965, metallic paint on canvas
Larry Poons: Via Regia, 1964, liquites on canvas
8  Ellsworth Kelly: Red-Yellow-Blue, 1966, acrylic on canvas