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## ROY LICHTENSTEIN BEGINNING TO END

2007

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**"Generally recognized is the great difficulty in approaching an understanding of painting through the medium of words. The many volumes of work on the subject testify to this."**

So wrote the young Lichtenstein in 1949, adding:

**"It is my belief, however, that paintings themselves embody the process and direction through which they are achieved."**

Almost 70 years later, this catalogue undertakes its protagonist's suggestions and recreates for the public, from beginning to end and accompanied by the insightful words of recognized authors, the sophisticated process reflected in the works of one of the classics of 20th-century art:

### **Roy Lichtenstein.**

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY:

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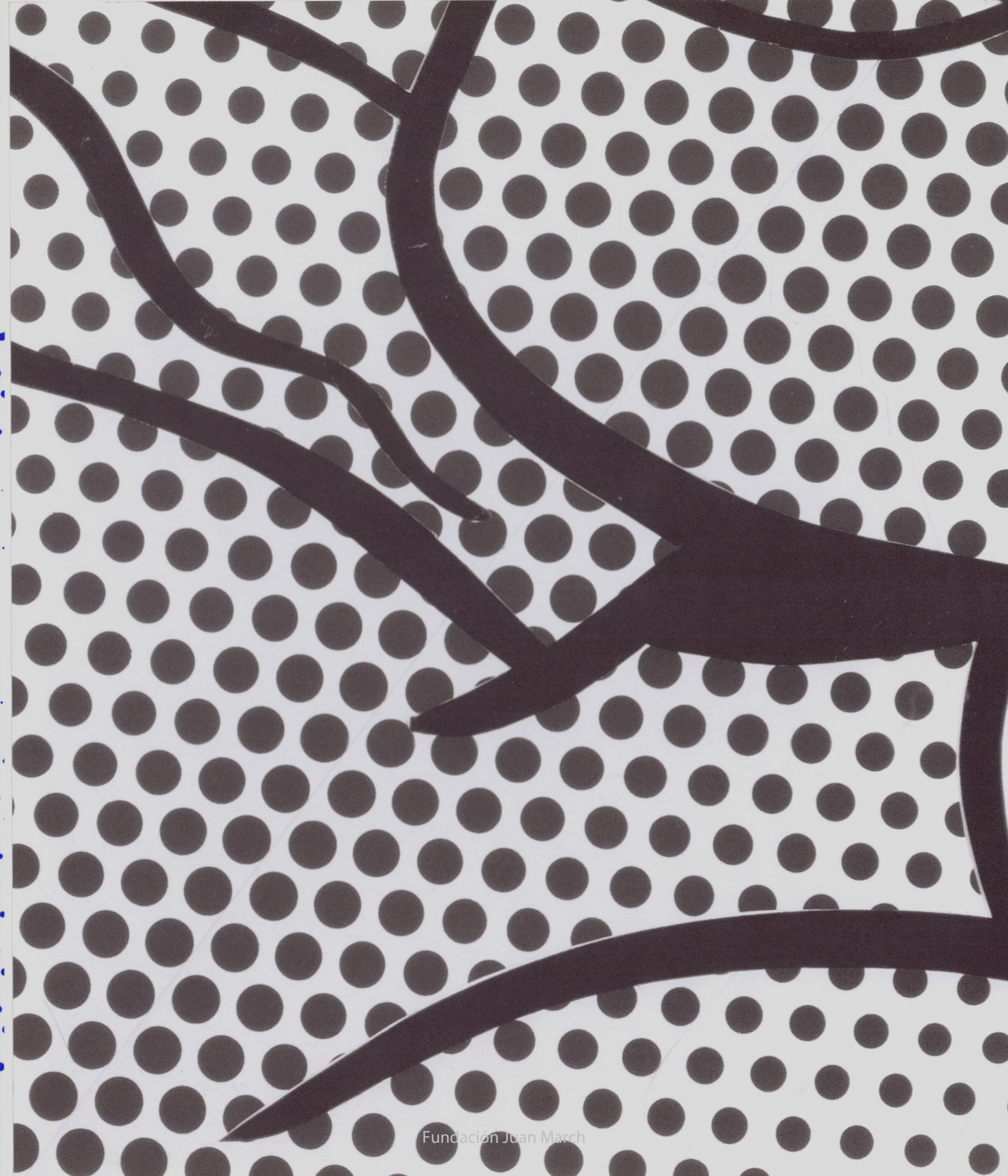


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ROY LICHTENSTEIN  
BEGINNING  
TO END







BEGINNING  
TO END

ROY LICHTENSTEIN

This catalogue, and its Spanish edition, are published on the occasion of the exhibition  
**Roy Lichtenstein: Beginning to End** at the Fundación Juan March, Madrid, February 2-May 20, 2007.

**Organized by:**

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Roy Lichtenstein Foundation, New York

Exhibition curator: Jack Cowart



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ROY LICHTENSTEIN

BEGINNING  
TO END



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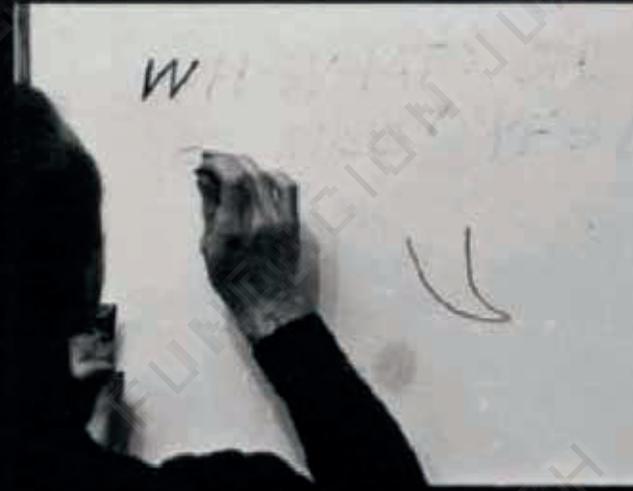
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KODAK SAFETY FILM



Lichtenstein in his studio at 36 West 26th Street, New York, ca. 1964. Photos by Ugo Mulas

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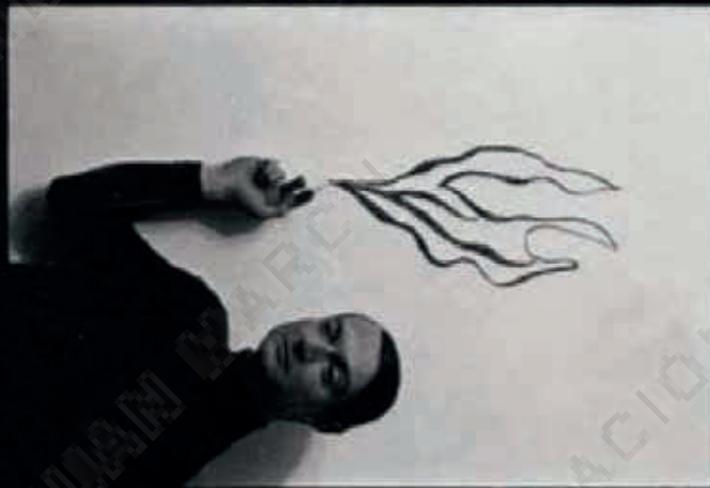


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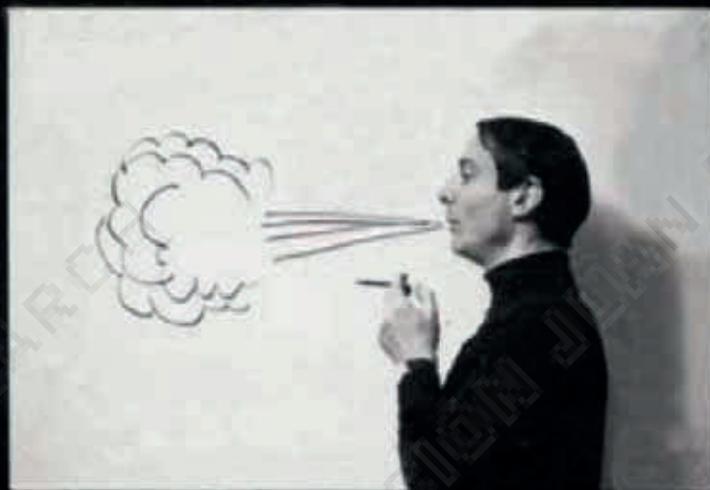
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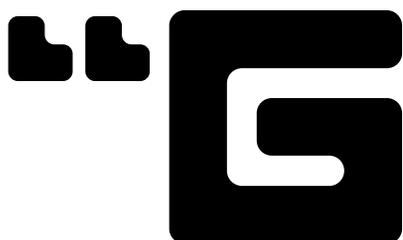
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M J G

## Roy Lichtenstein: Beginning to End

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enerally recognized is the great difficulty in approaching an understanding of painting through the medium of words. The many volumes of work on the subject testify to this.”

This is how Roy Lichtenstein began his brief *Paintings, Drawings, and Pastels*, the thesis he presented in 1949, “in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements,” at Ohio State University to obtain his Master of Fine Arts. He continued, “It is my belief, however, that paintings themselves embody the process and direction through which they are achieved.”

That conviction is exactly what the exhibition *Roy Lichtenstein: Beginning to End*, and these pages, want to make visible. Almost 70 years later, both undertake the young Lichtenstein’s suggestion and wish to illustrate and recreate, from beginning to end, the artistic process reflected in the works of this Pop master, to whom the Fundación Juan March devoted a monographic exhibition in Madrid in 1983—the first in Spain on the artist.

This second exhibition, organized in collaboration with the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation in New York and curated by Jack Cowart, presents, for the first time, a complete and unedited vision of the different stages of the artist’s work process. *Roy Lichtenstein: Beginning to End* completes and expands upon the smaller exhibition presented in 2005 and 2006 at the Fundación Juan March’s Museo de Arte Abstracto Español in Cuenca and the Museu d’Art Espanyol Contemporani in Palma. Titled *Lichtenstein, In Process*, that exhibition revealed the intermediate phase of the artist’s work process, related to his sketches, drawings and collages. This new exhibition goes further and seeks to reconstruct the distinct phases of the artist’s creation in its totality and evidence its evolution from his sources of inspiration to the final results—the completed works—revealing Lichtenstein’s incessant search among the different pathways of art. They are routes that at first appear mysterious but

that are gradually revealed by the very process of creation and development in the artist’s work over a span of four decades.

Roy Lichtenstein (New York, 1923-1997)—along with Andy Warhol one of the major exponents of American Pop art—abandoned Abstract Expressionism between the late 1950s and early 1960s in order to take up a new figurative incursion. Inspired by the images of mass culture—but not exempt from references to the tradition of high art—that new path would define his subsequent artistic production and would make it universal. His interest in mass media, graphic arts, advertising and comics, his process of citation, appropriation and liberal interpretation of images—those of North American cultural media as well as the canon of past masters—are manifested in a clear, characteristic and unmistakable style. However, it is a style filled with a subtle irony and a careful sophistication, qualities that, like “liquid mercury” (Jack Cowart), resist being defined by simple analysis.

Lichtenstein’s work process frequently begins with common images—comic strips, advertising announcements, artistic or photographic illustrations—that served as sources of inspiration and were given expression in preliminary drawings, small sketches and jottings of figures. These were repeated and collected in notebooks in rapidly executed drawings of a loose style, small format and a more intimate character, in which the theme, concept and composition were already defined, elements that were subsequently transferred to the resulting collages in the sequence. These were of large size, more defined and specific, true models of the finished works. Much of this material is presented in this exhibition and in this catalogue, along with the works that comprise the end of this process—prints, sculptures, collages, large-format canvases and even a tapestry—that is thus recreated and explained more lucidly than in “many volumes.”

The works featured offer scenarios that reveal Lichtenstein’s sources: there are popular figures

from the cartoon world such as Dagwood, Tintin and Donald Duck. There are protagonists from girls' comics like *Girls' Romances*, *Heart Throbs* and *Secret Hearts*, or true classic symbols such as the Hellenistic Laocoon, landscapes by van Gogh and Cézanne, bathers and portraits by Picasso, nudes and interiors by Matisse, Monet's water lilies and Brancusi's endless column. There are also diverse themes from art history, such as the landscapes of Chinese painting, still lifes and studio models, representations of interiors—that also allude to the artist's own interiority—and exteriors that refer to the public domain. They are references with which Lichtenstein dialogues, and to which he pays, with his characteristic appropriations, particular homage, thus managing to popularize themes of high culture, integrating it with the images of mass media and opening a pathway to new readings and perspectives.

In addition, the exhibition includes a film that Lichtenstein made in 1970, commissioned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art within the framework of an Arts and Technology program they developed between 1967 and 1971, and on which artists and advanced technology industries collaborated. With the help of Universal Film Studios, Lichtenstein conceived of, and produced, a film of marine landscapes directly related to a series of collages with landscape themes he created between 1964 and 1966, one of which also forms a part of our exhibition.

The exhibition, moreover, is accompanied by screenings of *The Drawings of Roy Lichtenstein, 1961-1986*, and *Roy Lichtenstein: Reflections*, two documentaries produced in 1987 and 1993, respectively, by the Checkerboard Foundation, Inc., New York.

The Fundación Juan March expresses its gratitude to the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation for their indispensable support of this project, especially to its president Dorothy Lichtenstein, for her generosity and enthusiasm; to its executive director Jack Cowart, who has placed his expert knowledge at the service of this fascinating project; to

its managing director Cassandra Lozano, for her help in the meticulous search for sources and her constant support; to its registrar Natasha Sigmond and to Angela Ferguson, for their efficient collaboration; to Clare Bell, in charge of research, for the biography, selected bibliography and filmography on the artist that she provided for this catalogue; to Shelley Lee, Intellectual Property Rights Manager for the Estate of Roy Lichtenstein, for the photographic material provided and her help in the laborious process of their identification; to James dePasquale, Senior Studio Assistant to Roy Lichtenstein, for his kindness and expertise, which has brought us closer to the artist; to The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Collection, Los Angeles; to Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York; and to the private collectors, for their generosity in lending the exhibited works; and to Juan Antonio Ramírez, Ruth Fine and Avis Berman, for their illuminating essays, whose perspectives newly enrich the substantial number of publications that exist on an artist who is, without doubt, a classic of the second-half of the 20th century.

Fundación Juan March

# Roy Lichtenstein Before the Beginning to Beyond the End

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oy Lichtenstein's art, as clear as it looks, can be curious and confusing. The Roy Lichtenstein Foundation began formal operation in 1999, and we have been working non-stop to facilitate access to, and expand the understanding of, Roy's art ever since. Yet the more we do, the more we find his art, like liquid mercury, slips through our pressing fingers. It, and he, refuse to be captured or too tightly defined.

I think we can now see that Roy had a public face and a larger, more elusive private world. As genial as he was, beneath that calm quirky exterior lay steely resolve, absolute ambition and a creative mind obsessed with working out questions about what is Art, what makes it right, how he could make it, the artifices of art history and criticism and the wonders of the eye, mind and memory. Roy Lichtenstein was a remarkably complex amalgamation of historical, sociological, personal and visual art and media influences.

Lichtenstein's art is both a critique and an incessantly curious homage further infused with autobiographical content and intention. All this eventually subverts our thinking into *his* terms more than our own. Beneath the forceful colors and lines there is an artist pushing the limits and conventions of visual culture and working against our own comfortable understanding. I hear him asking "Can I, or how can I, take this degraded or despised or ignored or odd idea or cliché or masterpiece and effectively, beautifully, convert it into my Art?"

The finished, final, large-scale works look so effortless, complete, impersonal and not handmade that the viewer rarely thinks of how they got to be that way. This special exhibition at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid is a rare opportunity to view this evolutionary, creative process. At the Fundación and in this catalogue one does see the selective, editorial artist at difficult work, effect-

ing his trademark transformation of a known or given form—or even a form he has thought up "freehand"—into something uniquely his own while pushing at the boundaries or capabilities of art media.

I think Lichtenstein's personal sourcebooks, clippings, sketchbooks and many, many extant drawings and collages offer some of the best clues to his thoughts and process, his hand, touch and eye. In these works he is planning and scheming, musing on composition and source, usually on a small sketchbook sheet. Almost every drawing has some other practical purpose: a painting, a print, a sculpture, even a film or kinetic work.

He only rarely made bravura independent drawings for the sake of drawing. I don't know why—after all, he did have a deft touch and a sense for all graphic media. This is frustrating. It is almost as if he didn't want us to see him working, or "wasting" time or energy on anything self-indulgent or virtuosic. He must/might have also made informal, less useful private drawings or free sketches, but where are they now? Were they shredded because they were thought to be too peripheral?

We are left with a known life's *oeuvre* of about three thousand sketches, drawings and collages dating between the years 1949 to 1997. In them we can infer a kind of "process" story, a private growth, an evolution into a more public product. We have focused the core of this exhibition on sequences from the 1970s to the 1990s of serial preliminary sketches that then led to collages, just before the finished paintings, prints or sculpture. Such series give a sense of the creative genesis or urgencies in the pure and personal hand and spirit of the artist. And then we have included various "*grandes finales*"—the final works—in their almost unimaginable and colorful large scale and high, technically brilliant finishes.

We trust that both art specialists and the general public will be engaged and inspired by these selections and by the inclusion of Lichtenstein's 1970 Art and Technology landscape film and his

own astonishing and never before seen 1995 studio documentary.

Superficially, approximately one half of the exhibition's works are "inside" depictions, suggesting an interior or a studio. The other works set figures or things "outside," in fictive landscapes. But, in the final analysis, everything Roy Lichtenstein did will always be very much *inside* his own creative intelligence and pantheon of artistic heroes. This leaves the uninitiated rather on the *outside*.

Thus the contemporary historical analyses in this catalogue by Professor Ramirez and the distinguished curator Ruth Fine and the oral historian Avis Berman's interviews of those around the artist when he worked (plus the critical support documentation supplied by our own Foundation's specialist staff) are admirable and essential to improving the global comprehension of Roy Lichtenstein. I should also add that even the design of this catalogue has re-created the artist's "process" with a suggestive *élan* and it represents a new high point in our visual comprehension.

We deeply thank the Fundación Juan March for giving us prior opportunities to show the works on paper in their museums in Cuenca and Palma de Mallorca and for their energetic expansion of the exhibition and of this catalogue, which documents this major and historic and multi-media presentation in Madrid.

**JACK COWART**

Executive Director  
Roy Lichtenstein Foundation

H P S

HYPERSENSITIVE



21A

22A



27A

28A

H P S

HYPERSENSITIVE



34A

Lichtenstein in his studio at 36 West 26th Street, New York, ca. 1964. Photos by Ugo Mulas

PANCHROMATIC



23A



24A



29A



30A



PANCHROMATIC



35A

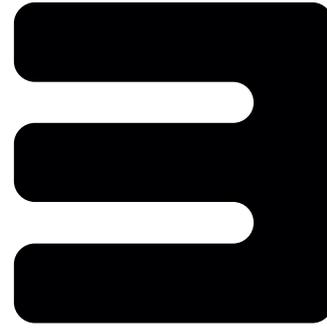


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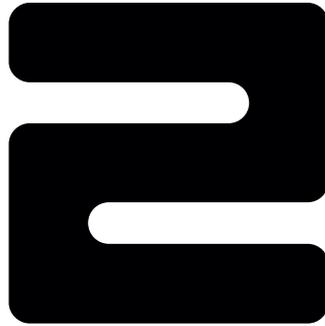




**LICHTENSTEIN, IN PROCESS**  
**JUAN ANTONIO RAMÍREZ**  
 A static, flat, impersonal execution? Never. The storyboard of Lichtenstein's art reveals its depth and the existential palpitation with which the artist anticipated the subsequent generation.  
 PAGE 14



**LICHTENSTEIN  
 STEP-BY-STEP**  
 James dePasquale, Roy Lichtenstein's veteran assistant, recounts to Cassandra Lozano, with the help of images from a studio documentary filmed in 1995, one of the master's sure-handed processes.  
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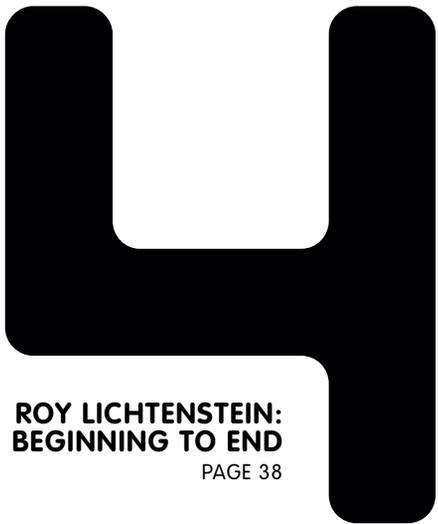


**YOUR MAKEUP  
 IS YOUR  
 FREEDOM;  
 YOUR PURPOSE  
 IS YOUR  
 CONTROL**  
**RUTH FINE**  
 Immersed from a young age in matters of style, art history, and scientific and technological evolutions, the artistic strategy of Roy Lichtenstein was a game—continuous and carefully calculated in its intent—of disciplined freedom.  
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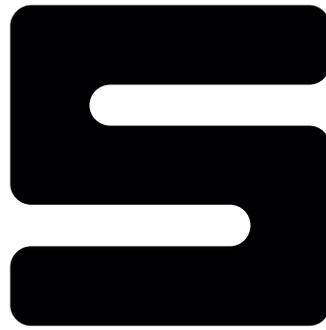
**FILMOGRAPHY**  
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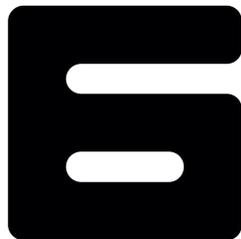
**ROY LICHTENSTEIN:  
BEGINNING TO END**  
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**AT CLOSE RANGE:  
ROY LICHTENSTEIN  
AT WORK**

AVIS BERMAN

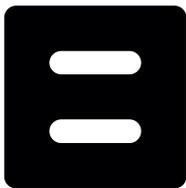
An intimate collage formed by the first-hand impressions and first-person accounts of those who saw Lichtenstein at work.  
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**ROY LICHTENSTEIN:  
A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY**

CLARE BELL

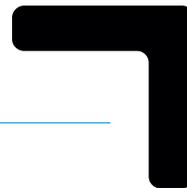
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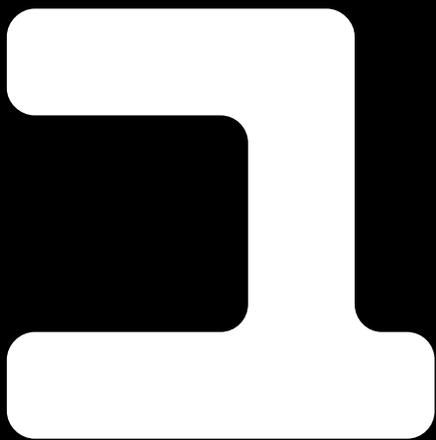
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**CATALOGUE**

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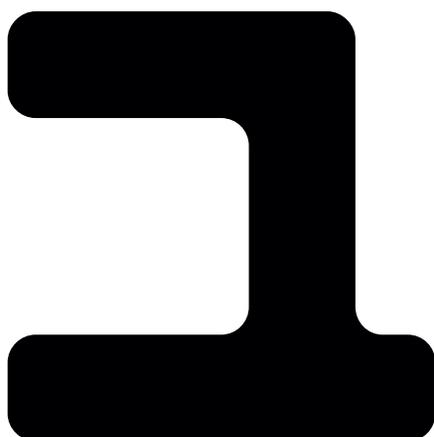


No matter how intently he was working, Lichtenstein—seen here in his Washington Street studio in New York—regularly stepped back to check that the colors were working together, his lines were not too thick or thin and all his elements were in balance, 1991.  
Photo by Bob Adelman



# LICHTENSTEIN, IN PROCESS

Juan Antonio Ramírez



## Opening Salvo

Cold, static, impersonal in execution: these are some of the terms commonly used by critics to describe the work of Roy Lichtenstein (1923–1997). Thus is projected upon this artist the entire range of Pop Art's stereotypes—its techniques and themes—and at the same time the supposed characteristics of the New York artist are cast upon that movement. Doesn't Pop Art, after all, concern itself with visual mass culture? Doesn't it feverishly work on the question of the “reproduced” image? Weren't those figurative artists a species of very humorous cynics with little sense of the tragedy of life? Well then, Lichtenstein is a textbook example confirming all that and more.

One can find in his biography a heroic rebellion against the visual poetry dominant in Abstract Expressionism, a phase in Lichtenstein's career with which we are only somewhat familiar, since the artist destroyed and, above all, hid some of the works from that era. We know that Lichtenstein attempted to forge a path, unsuccessfully, in the oversaturated world of Informal painting and, for over 10 years, survived by teaching. From that period, nonetheless, exist many pictorial remnants and numerous oral testimonies. Works like *Washington Crossing the Delaware I* (1951) appear



to be caricatures of the grand canvases of history painting. They are rather primitive and approach the child-like art of Dubuffet (the comic strips that Lichtenstein would later copy were also “for children”).

Dating to 1956 is the celebrated lithograph reproducing a ten-dollar bill, significantly anticipating a similar series of silkscreened canvases by Andy Warhol. Two years later, Lichtenstein would paint his first comic figures, but those artistic reinterpretations of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Bugs Bunny nonetheless appeared to emerge from an uncertain tangle of colorless expressionist strokes, radically contrasting with the sharp curves and brilliant coloring of the fictional models. This stylistic development must not be overlooked, as it will have implications in the elaboration of similar themes three years later. This is because it deals with the hypertrophy, or amplification, of the comic strip, better said: the enlargement in size of the cartoons, thus converting them into “paintings” (decontextualizing them from their narrative sequences). Lichtenstein deconstructed some of the processes of mass culture and also attacked the supposed aesthetics and directives of painting, as it was understood in the New York art scene of the time.

The year 1961 was a decisive one in the history of Pop Art. It is significant that two artists, as unknown as they were ambitious, each were discovered to have had the same idea of painting works based on cartoons. Andy Warhol was the other artist and we know that he immediately abandoned this topic upon realizing that it had been taken up by Lichtenstein. It does not appear to us now that they were doing exactly the same thing as we can detect several differences in their respective manners of “copying” comics. However, it must be understood that the creators (and gallery dealers) at the time, overwhelmed by the extraordinary novelty that it all represented, could not pay close attention to the particular nuances. There was a more genuine interest on the part of Lichtenstein for those themes than Warhol,

and the story, or legend, that Roy’s first cartoons were copied to demonstrate to his children that “he knew how to paint” is revealing. (This has emerged, quite lucidly, in the “oral histories” conducted by Avis Berman.) It appears evident that comic books were prevalent in that house and that they were read although their use as subject matter was initially doubted. According to eye witnesses, there was more than one version of *Look Mickey* and this work, like *Popeye*, incorporates numerous planes of color with a limited and rudimentary use of Benday dots. We should linger a bit on the cartoons painted in the first half of the 1960s as not only did they constitute an important revolution in the visual arts, more significant than what is usually thought, but were also decisive for Lichtenstein’s subsequent career. The issues that those works raise also hover over the artist’s other creations, and we can use them as a privileged vantage point from which to examine his work as a whole.

### Genre and “Genre-ization”

The paintings of Popeye, Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse are taken from the “humoristic” genres of mass culture. They were familiar cartoon characters, indiscriminately read by children and adults of both sexes and it is most likely that they were in the hands of Lichtenstein’s children who, in 1961, were five and seven years old. From that year date other works inspired by advertisements or representing such banal objects as a washing machine, sofa, frying pan, radio, calendar, electrical cord, garbage can, etc. We cannot escape the fact that they belong to the genre of “still life.” They are things that flirt with the idea of the Duchampian ready-made or with the (more surrealist) concept of the found object. They do so in dual senses, as we know that Lichtenstein did not appropriate the object itself as much as he did its image as reproduced in commercial ads. This return of the object to painting was problematic, because one doubted, rightly, whether the artist was



Clockwise, from left to right: **Washington Crossing the Delaware I**, ca. 1951; **Bugs Bunny**, 1958; **Look Mickey**, 1961; and **Popeye**, 1961.



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interested in the codified use of these things or their archetypal visual representations. I believe that this doubt reappears later in his sculptures, where he always played, as we will soon see, with the ambivalence between the flatness of the image and the three-dimensionality of the object displayed in real space.

In 1962 appear the paintings of comic strips with bellicose and romantic cartoon characters. Lichtenstein quickly learned the lessons of the previous year, transcending the familial connection, since even though it is possible that there were some military comic books in his house, it is unlikely that his children (both boys) were fans of feminine ones. It is worth remembering the strictness with which these comic book subcategories cultivated the two halves of their public, boys and girls, which obliges us to situate these works by Lichtenstein within the current panorama of genre studies. In effect, the World War II stories were aimed at boys, whose heroes were selfless North American soldiers. However, they revealed little psychological introspection and, instead of emphasizing the motivations of these figures (including the inevitable Nazi or Japanese villains), it was the military machinery, gunshots and explosions that were exalted. They were, at a subliminal level, ostensibly phallogocentric comic books with a constant display of highly “impactful” and colossal conflagrations. Lichtenstein exaggerated those characteristics. If *Mr. Bellamy* (1961), one of the first works of this type, is still considered an autobiographical joke on the art world, other paintings of the following year, like *Takka Takka*, take on all the characteristics discussed. The protagonism of the machine gun is obvious, and the same can be said of other paintings of somewhat later date like *Whaam!* (1963), or the triptych *As I Opened Fire* (1964). Still, I do not believe that those works reveal a position critical of the military politics of the United States and instead should be interpreted as an ironic comment on the fascistic machismo that prevailed in the masculine products of mass culture.

Lichtenstein’s appropriation of comics aimed at girls reveals that the ideological accent was repositioned: the protagonist of each painting-strip is usually represented as a female face, frequently in the foreground, with thought bubbles that allude to amorous desire or despair. A certain “Brad” is mentioned several times in the bubbles of these girls, suggesting the vague possibility that some of these paintings could be read as fragments extracted, more or less, from one story. In some cases that love appeared to be within reach (as in *The Kiss*, of 1962, and *We Rose Up Slowly*, of 1964). However, in other examples, like *Eddie Diptych* (1962) and *Drowning Girl* (1963), what emerges is the masochistic undercurrent that fed a great deal of the popular North American feminine subculture of the 1950s and 60s.

If all those works were understandable from a thematic viewpoint, it is because the stories from which they had been extracted were strongly codified. That is, they belonged to established genres whose codes were shared by all viewers, including those representatives of high culture to whom these paintings were initially directed. I am not referring to the difference between masculine and feminine but to the group of shared conventions or characteristics that permits the placement of each example of something in a series or a group. Lichtenstein learned from his work with comic books that “genre-ization” (conversion into genre) could be highly subversive. Didn’t Abstract Expressionism emerge from the supposition that each work obeys a “unique” impulse difficult to repeat? And is there any better criticism of this position than inverting it so that all the works appear to be part of a series? The case of the brushstrokes is exemplary.

Lichtenstein worked very hard to make sure that the enlarged images of these supposedly spontaneous pictorial characteristics were credible to the viewer, and could not be confused with strips of bacon, as he himself recalled on one occasion. That is, what was important was that they looked like brushstrokes, since they obviously

Clockwise, from left to right: **Mr. Bellamy**, 1961; **Whaam!**, 1963; **Drowning Girl**, 1963; **Yellow and Green Brushstrokes**, 1966; **We Rose Up Slowly**, 1964; and **The Kiss**, 1962

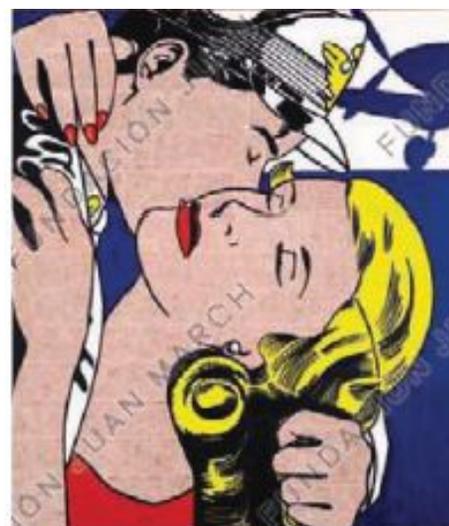


were not, amplified as they were to enormous sizes (*Yellow and Green Brushstrokes*, for example, measures 84 x 180 inches). We are unsure, looking at some of these works, if the artist invented these images or copied them from someone, but we immediately believe that they belong to a codified genre. Thus, it is clear that with the comic strips Lichtenstein worked to appropriate from existing genres, but once he discovered the method to do so he created series to thus convert such themes into types.

It was quite tempting to do this with great museum art, especially with some of the important figures of the historic vanguard. His preference for Picasso is interesting; to me it appears a logical consequence of the regard for this Spanish master as the archetypal artist of the 20th century. Upon translating the works of these artists into Lichtenstein's characteristic "comic book" language (with the Benday dots, orderly lines, sharp contours and flat tones), all these models' styles were obliterated. Emphasized, therefore, was the idea that they belong to genres of Impressionist, Cubist, and Abstract Expressionist painting or, rather, Mondrians, Picassos, Carrás, etc. The "genre-ization" worked as well with themes specifically his own, more or less hybridized with supposed previous models, as occurs with the "studies," Deco paintings, entablatures, mirrors, stretchers, landscapes and others.

### Copies and Transpositions

Many of the comic strips that influenced Lichtenstein from the 1960s on have been identified. As a result, we know that they were not exact copies but much more liberal interpretations of the models than some would have believed. The alterations are not arbitrary and reveal an intentionality that cannot be ignored by the art historian. There are some good examples of that visual artistry that led him to position a face in the immediate foreground, almost always cropped by the frame, and contrasting with something (or some-





one) situated in the background. It deals with a visual recourse often exploited in classic movies. Since the unique perspective of the camera did not provide the same sense of depth as ordinary binocular vision, it was essential to compensate with tricks like that of the radical differences in distance between things that appeared within the same frame. Some comic-book illustrators abused this, and we find it utilized as much in romantic as in war subgenres. However, Lichtenstein tends to reduce the frame in his own interpretations: the heroine who inspired *Blonde Waiting* (1964) was not blonde, but most interesting is that he simplified all the elements in order to accentuate the strange sensation of flatness. *Drowning Girl* (1963) was taken from a page in *Secret Hearts* (1962) drawn by Ira Schnapp, and although the copy was quite literal (including the bubble and tears unlikely in an aquatic environment), it was converted into a daring close-up that accentuated the psychological concentration of the young woman. A similar effect is found in *Hopeless* (1963) and *Tension* (1964). In the latter, the contradiction between the “zoom effect”—that exaggerates the contrast between the background and foreground—and the sensation of extreme flatness that he achieves with his Benday-dots technique, flat tones and extraordinary enlargement of the comic strip (it is a square measuring 68 inches on each side), was made more evident.

Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnick have analyzed the extremely interesting case of *Okay Hot-Shot* (1963), demonstrating how Lichtenstein integrated into one work elements from various comic strips. I believe that this associative liberty (a type of eclecticism of models) was much more systematic in the other series based on artworks or in those invented by him as imaginary pastiches (as could have been the case with the “studies”). All of this appears to lead us to the conclusion that his work fluctuated between the principle of the copy (with a reduction of the frame) and the art of the collage. However, it is important not to forget his heterogeneous manner of appropriat-

ing the processes of mass culture and integrating them within traditional painting. The incorporation of the gaze in his work, for example, comes from photography and cinema, these being areas where the use of zoom and cropping is customary. Developing a photograph or publishing it in a periodical almost always implies some type of reframing. But Lichtenstein had worked with projectors since his teaching days, casting onto his canvases the sketches or images that he wished to copy, thus departing from the use of the traditional grid. Therefore, between the comic strips and initial ideas and the finished works there was an interesting “cinematographic” mediation.

The exaggerated enlargement of the dots of photomechanical print processes thereby acquires its meaning. It is clear that it was not a “realist” operation, but a conventional and symbolic one, as was the case with the brushstrokes. The intent was to make them look like Benday dots, though they really weren’t, and so he was eventually able to paint them with punched-out stencils without needing to paint the presumed photographic enlargements of those processes. The fact is that Lichtenstein combined in his works many processes unique to mass media and it is rather reductive to view him as an artist who limited himself to enlarging comic strips or re-translating other works of art into the language of the comics.

Let us imagine the production process for any one of his large canvases: there might have been an initial model (strips or photographs), and from there came one or various successive sketches. It was not unusual to have this followed by a collage of specific dimensions that served as a veritable “maquette” of the finished work. All of these steps, of course, are well documented in the present exhibition. Then came the projection onto the canvas and its “industrial” execution, with the intervention of workshop assistants, the use of stencils for the Benday dots, etc. As we can see, it was a hybrid method of working for which various techniques and strategies of mass media were adopted for traditional painting on canvas.

Left to right: **Blonde Waiting**, 1964; **Hopeless**, 1963; **Tension**, 1964; and **Okay Hot-Shot**, 1963

However, the process did not end there as all of these works were tacitly destined for mass reproduction in books, catalogue exhibitions and art magazines. What originated in the media was returned to them via the literal processes of photography and real photomechanical means. It is surprising that critics have not focused more on this phase, which cannot be ignored, as Lichtenstein is probably the most reproduced painter in the history of art. It is not that printers have taken a special interest in him but that his works were destined to function quite well in this way, as they had been conceived as perfect echoes of reproduction. What appears to us in his works as a metaphor of mass media and of its processes is made literal upon passing through photomechanical and printing workshops. Those paintings are rather easily resurrected upon reappearing on the printed page or (today) on a computer screen, much more so than in Warhol's interventions, or in those of other great Pop artists, needless to say. This was because Lichtenstein's Pop works, born from comics, become them again, already "reproduced," and they improve so much upon their models (whether from high or low culture) that they pose other social and thought-provoking questions.

**Time Confronting Space**

We must say something more on the implications of that isolation of the comic strip, in the early 1960s, from the narrative sequence to which they belonged. They are moments in a fictional story in which can always be detected a certain temporal distension. It is not the same as in history paintings, which condense into one image the culmination of a theoretical episode. Neither can they be compared to instant photography because the comic strip almost always emulates the cinematographic "sequential plan." The words in the bubbles are unmistakable in their demand for a certain temporality, just as the images with text also contain, as is known, interesting chrono-





logical distensions and are iconographically deciphered from left to right and top to bottom. Those Lichtenstein works seduce us because they invite us to reconstruct stories with only marginal clues and starting with the inevitable questions: Who is Brad? What does the icy “hello” mean? Will the torpedo he is about to launch hit the target?

One might think that this temporalization of painting is more difficult to achieve in the other series not derived from comics, but careful observation allows us to see that Lichtenstein achieved it in almost all cases. Always represented in the brushstrokes is a current visual review: they are not frozen paintings but the provisional end of a process. One need not insist on the fact that temporality is the theme in his Rouen Cathedral series, Chinese landscapes (with the evanescent fog of Benday dots), and other homages to past artists, like *The Red Horseman* (that already implicitly contains that chronological distension with the multiplication of the horse’s legs as in the original work by Carrá), or the teardrop falling from surrealized pastiches like *Girl with Tear I* (1977), etc. Only the entablatures and some of his “abstract” paintings appear to escape that narrative will. But in every case the process appears emphasized by a working method that we do not hesitate to call “performative”: Lichtenstein creates various “strips” for each work, and all of them have an independent value as works of art; they are sequential planes of that part of his creative life. In a working process as industrialized as his, the sketches, drawings, and collages that comprise the present exhibition offer us the most intimate image of the artist, his personal and inimitable vision. They are like the storyboards of an imaginary movie. The narrative process (the extension or prolongation of the story) is clear in the themes (clouds, Laocoon fighting the serpents, water lilies, girls playing on the beach, a knife cutting through the air in front of Tintin, etc.). However, it is even more evident in the temporalization of his output that this display presumes in successive phases. Lichtenstein’s own works are converted

into tales, into stories about themselves. We can thus feel that the moment frozen in the final work recedes, as in an imaginary editing machine, and returns to us some fragments of life that most Lichtenstein exhibitions have kept from us.

For this reason it is important to conclude by discussing Lichtenstein’s mirrors, perhaps the genre by the artist that is least understood. *Mirror #1* (1970) appears to faithfully reproduce the hypothetical model that he might have copied, although with the usual enlargement in size that justifies the large Benday dots (it measures 36 inches in diameter). Nothing is reflected in it except the irregular, black-and-white “shimmer,” that indicates the impermanence of our position before the work. It is, therefore, an ephemeral instant that suggests the imminence of a subsequent composition: we will soon see the inevitable reflection of things. There is nothing so much the enemy of permanence as the mirror, so intensely temporal. For this reason, Lichtenstein created from the mirror, depicted without a reflection and with a T-shirt below it, an interesting self-portrait (*Self Portrait*, 1978). He also photographed himself before one of his grand oval mirrors, as if his physical presence was really presenting itself as the latent image in the paintings of those domestic objects. It was inevitable that he would paint reflected objects, as though they were emerging fleetingly from among the reflections and shimmers. His interpretations of some of Picasso’s works (like those seen in this exhibition) make us think that his appropriation becomes not a reinterpretation of a generic image, but a fragment of it, reflected.

And that is how we can finally approach one of Lichtenstein’s creative impulses. I refer to his extremely subtle play with the illusion of depth. The preoccupation with this subject was very Pop (remember Warhol’s advice to not search for him beyond the surfaces of his works), and it is highly likely that it was already manifested in a 1961 canvas titled *I Can See the Whole Room...and There’s Nobody In It!* Via a round peephole, a face looks into the blackness of an interior; but there is “someone”

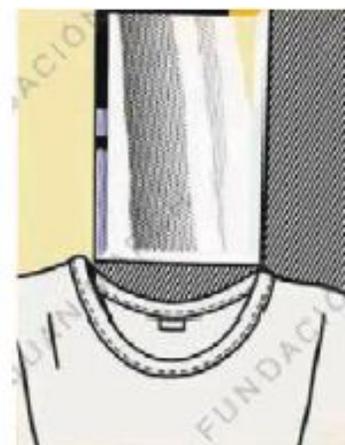
Below: *Girl With Tear I*, 1977.  
Above and right, clockwise:  
*Rouen Cathedral, Set V*, 1969;  
*Landscape with Scholar’s  
Rock*, 1997 (cat. 77); *The Red  
Horseman*, 1974; *Mirror #1*,  
1970; *Self Portrait*, 1978; *I Can  
See the Whole Room...and  
There’s Nobody In It!*, 1961

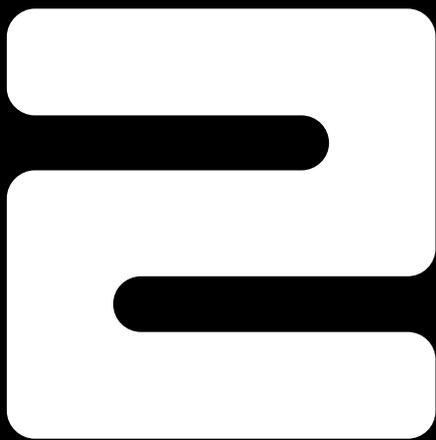




there, because the “room” is precisely the place where the viewer is situated. The dark room is our space, now made flat, negated by the artifice of the painter. It appears evident that Lichtenstein’s technique was heading towards a rejection of the illusion of spatial depth invented in Renaissance painting. His works confirm themselves as surfaces, following a thought process that does not appear to us any different from that of contemporary post-pictorial abstraction. They are in reality representations that suggest—more than total planarity—very little real depth. The fact is that the ambiguity of the process led him to create sculptures in which he brings to three-dimensional life those flat objects particular to his paintings. Jack Cowart has referred to the explosions and the absurdity of their domestication as objects of aesthetic contemplation: in a few differentiated planes (at times revolving), of little real depth, were represented what violently expands in all directions of space. The sculptural absurdity is also quite clear in *Airplane* (1990), an airplane in vertical descent firing its machine guns, 108 inches in height and the same front and back. *House* (1996 and 1997) was another picto-sculptural game that plays with the idea of illusory depth and forces us to think, once again, of how decisive the location occupied by the viewer was for the artist.

This is a physical subject, in the first place, but also an intellectual one. It is how Lichtenstein returned to the basic question with which he began the art cycle of the modern age, of which we are the inevitable heirs. But upon rejecting the primacy of illusory space, reaffirming in exchange, as we have already seen, the importance of time, he imbued his creations with what few could imagine: an existential pulse that anticipated the subsequent blooming on the artistic scene of process and presence. It is not a coincidence that Allan Kaprow was one of his first defenders. Flatness is nothing, is what Lichtenstein’s *oeuvre* seems to say, because it is what is behind it that is important: human beings and objects, in interiors and exteriors. All of it alive. In process ●



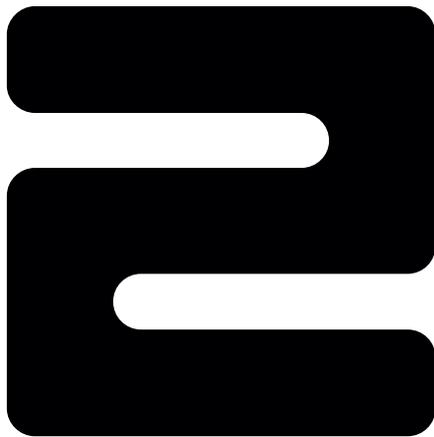


Lichtenstein in his  
studio, Columbus,  
Ohio, ca. 1949.  
Photographer unknown



**YOUR MAKEUP  
IS YOUR  
FREEDOM;  
YOUR PURPOSE  
IS YOUR  
CONTROL**

Ruth Fine



You need freedom; But  
freedom, itself, won't  
result in art action.

You must also have  
control;...Your  
personal makeup is  
your freedom....  
Your purpose is your  
control....<sup>1</sup>

The above lines are excerpted from Roy Fox Lichtenstein's 1949 master's thesis for Ohio State University, a presentation that included both visual and verbal components: seven paintings, two charcoal drawings, and one pastel were supported by nine prose-poems described by the young artist as "a general expression of my feelings about painting." Lichtenstein's poems herald several earlier masters as his guides, primarily French, or Paris-based, including two Pauls—Cezanne [described in the poem as stolid], and Gauguin [described as magical]; three Henris—de Toulouse-Lautrec, Matisse, and Rousseau [capable of bewitching]; Pablo Picasso, Vincent van Gogh [referred to as mad] and Ma Yuan (Chinese, c. 1160/65-1225). This last confirms Lichtenstein's early fascination with Chinese landscape painting, a late-career interest that is vividly revealed in this exhibition. Lichtenstein's initial wedding of art and art history was more a matter of happenstance than of strong personal commitment:

If you're taking studio art and devoting most of your time to painting, just seeing the work of the past and having an idea of historical position and iconography and so forth as really a separate kind of course isn't interesting except that being forced through it you do learn something and you have to connect it up yourself with the meaning of the work itself by something you have to bring to it.<sup>2</sup>

Among the texts cited in the bibliography of Lichtenstein's thesis are Walter Pach's translation of *The Journal of Eugène Delacroix*; catalogues published by New York's Museum of Modern Art for exhibitions celebrating Georges Rouault, Paul Klee, and Alexander Calder; John Dewey's *Art as Experience*, Susanne K. Langer's *Philosophy in a New Key*, and a study by his Ohio State faculty mentor, Hoyt L. Sherman, "Drawing by Seeing." Lichtenstein's early immersion in a stylistically broad history of art would serve him throughout his career, as would his interest in philosophies of art and studies of artistic process. He also was profoundly curious about cutting-edge developments in science and technology, perhaps stemming from frequent visits during his New York-based childhood to the Planetarium and the Museum of Natural History.<sup>3</sup>

Lichtenstein's master's thesis omitted examples of his work in printmaking and sculpture, both of which he had already engaged with and subsequently continued to explore.<sup>4</sup> His affinity for the indirectness of image-making inherent to print processes is apparent not only in his prints but also owing to the fact that print-related methodologies and materials had a critical impact on the overall direction of Lichtenstein's art.<sup>5</sup> Ties to printmaking may be seen in his use of masks and stencils, his strategy of working with image-elements that he knew in advance would later be removed, and his process of developing images as multiple layers, on transparent and translu-

cent sheets laid atop one another, each carrying a portion of the whole. In addition to tracing papers, another material he used was Mylar, a polyester sheeting developed in the early 1950s that came to be used in printmaking for tracing and other purposes. The many fragmented, multi-layered, and multi-media objects preliminary to final versions of paintings and sculpture that are highlighted in this exhibition enable us to better understand the roots of Lichtenstein's methodology.

Images that brought Lichtenstein renown in the early 1960s appear to be "simple" replications of commercially conceived icons. Most of the substantial body of work that followed, however, does not fit this mold, and such a limited and ill-conceived view continues to sabotage the possibility of understanding that this artist's practice is anything but simple and straightforward. Rather, it is rooted in a carefully calibrated process that generally takes an image or idea from a commercially printed source through several drawing and collage stages en route to finished paintings or sculpture. For the latter, Lichtenstein often made multiple three-dimensional maquettes of various materials following the drawings and/or collages. (To continue the suggestion of printmaking parallels, in prints, sequential versions of a work are called "states".) Regardless of medium, each subsequent stage of Lichtenstein's image or works in three-dimensions is more highly refined than the previous one, eliminating as much as possible any evidence of the artist's expressive engagement. "I am removed from the emotions I am depicting," he has said, "because they are usually ironic or are even silly.... The emotions I deal with are *placement* and a *kinesthetic* sense of position and color, character of shape, and that sort of thing..."<sup>6</sup>

Most likely starting about 1960, Lichtenstein carefully constructed "composition" books, the designation used by the Lichtenstein Foundation for lined student essay notebooks containing the artist's snippets from the commercially printed materials that interested him: newspaper and



magazine advertisements, comic books, sales and art museum catalogues. Five composition books are known. Undated, they reflect the changing focus of Lichtenstein's art and may (or may not) parallel in time these changes. Represented are commercially viable, commonplace, cliché-ridden quotidian motifs, schematically rendered or photographically kitsch; comic book frames from banal undertakings such as *Girls Romances*, *Heart Throbs*, *Young Romance*, and *Secret Hearts*; strips such as *Blondie* (Dagwood was one of Lichtenstein's particular favorites); and Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck.

Some composition book pages include an unfathomable mixture of objects among which no association is clear: a head of lettuce, a basket of knitting yarn, a fish, some pillows, a vase of flowers, a string of pearls, a sailboat, and curtains framing a window. Some pages carry multiple renditions of a specific object, e.g. chairs, of all styles and for all occasions—modern and traditional, handsomely designed and thoroughly kitsch, inexpensive and costly, upholstered and made of wood and/or metal or plastic. Featured as well are vacation sites; business interiors and office supplies, multiple examples of file cabinets, pencil sharpeners, smoke detectors; apartment floor plans; articles of clothing; bottles and boxes of foodstuffs, toiletries, and cleaning supplies; domestic living rooms, bathrooms, and kitchens, as well as the necessary furnishings and tools, individually depicted, such as an electric frying pan holding a grid of nine eggs, fried so their circular yolks create a Lichtensteinian dot pattern; luxury objects of cut glass and silver, their reflections related to Lichtenstein's mirrors and windows; numbers (often prices), words; and the occasional human figure.

The sheer quantity of image repetitions in the composition books suggests that Lichtenstein made an on-going selection of objects and motifs that suited his interests (they expanded in kind over the years), and then grouped selections together in schematic depictions of rooms, frag-

ments of rooms, and outdoor settings, at times populated with figures of art historical or cartoon origin. This approach would have freed him to consider his essential artistic concerns: "In painting you think of relationships or areas and not necessarily things and in fact you try not to think of things."<sup>7</sup> An additional alignment between printmaking and Lichtenstein's art in other media is supported by his use of the hand-printed sheets that played a critical role in his collages and in the collage stage of his canvases, described below. These papers carried patterns of dots and stripes, produced according to the artist's specifications at the Gemini G.E.L., Tyler Graphics Ltd., and Saff Tech Arts workshops, at which publishing establishments Lichtenstein alternated his collaborations on editions.

Through his highly personal choice of objects, relationships, and materials, Lichtenstein created an ironic iconography comprehensible within diverse contexts, both historical and contemporary. From that of seventeenth-century Dutch still life traditions to a twentieth-century American genre of existential solitude espoused, for example, by Edward Hopper, to contemporary popular culture with which Lichtenstein's art rightly remains inextricably associated.

When starting a canvas, Lichtenstein would make a graphite drawing based on an image projected from the most recent study (close examination of the finished works often reveals graphite lines adjacent to painted shapes). He then would refine the composition with a black-tape drawing, increasingly clarifying his line by carefully cutting away small pieces of tape, or adding tape to expand the line's thickness, or minutely to alter the location of an edge.<sup>8</sup> This critical attention to the tape line is analogous to Lichtenstein's precision in cutting linear relief areas for his woodcuts. There, details of the thick, undulating, printed outlines are essential to the overall sharpness of his images. Indeed, as early as 1964 the artist made such a comparison:



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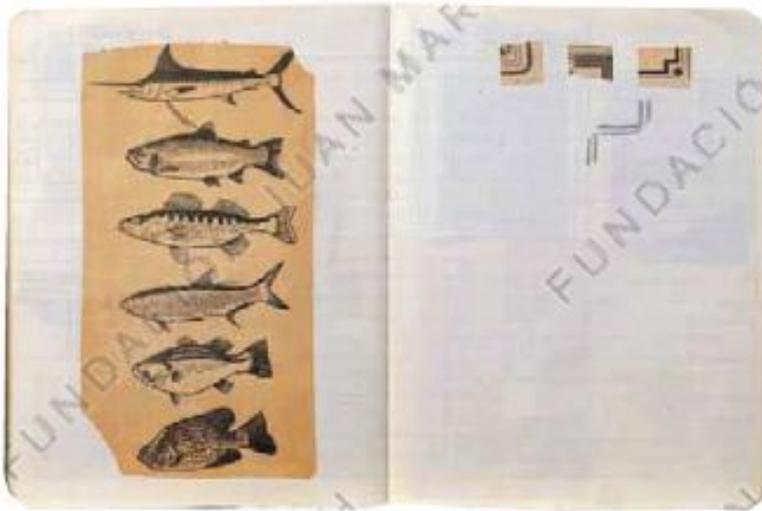
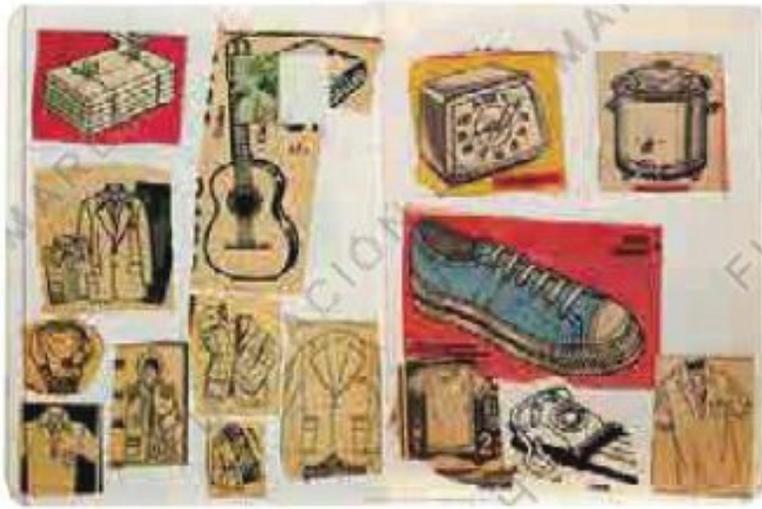
There's actually some sense of position and placement that can be used when you're just cutting the area with the razor blade in the same way that you might cut a woodcut that's already been drawn on the block and you cut it into the block and you get a little extra power out of having reinforced and redrawn the line.<sup>9</sup>

This initial line, whether on canvas or wood, was exceedingly important to Lichtenstein: "A lot of time is taken up with the drawing part and there's more work on the drawing part probably than is apparent."<sup>10</sup> With the tape structure completed, Lichtenstein would temporarily collage onto canvas flat color areas and papers imprinted with various sizes and densities of dots and diagonal stripes, which allowed him to view their impact at actual size. This stage (state) might lead the artist to alter details of the plan set out in the early projection, intuitively responding to the paper-covered canvas, the collage elements of which he would remove as he continued with painting,

according to the revised plan. This process is cogently described by Lichtenstein's studio assistants elsewhere in this volume.

The artist's changing trajectory while he was working was essential to what might be called the "felt rightness" of a work, per several comments from 1963/1964 that would have been equally apt decades later: "It wasn't so much that I intellectually wanted to keep [the painting] that way but I *felt* [author's emphasis] that's how much white would be needed to counteract the blue." It might be "a question of the color not being saturated enough for the painting or it wasn't occupying enough area of the canvas." Always, however, he tried "to make it look as though it were done at once and had no changes in it but sometimes there's considerable change [that] goes on."<sup>11</sup>

Lichtenstein worked in sketchbooks throughout his career, and images in twenty-six of them contributed to the works in this exhibition. There is no particular pattern to the books he used, the sizes of which vary substantially as does the level of quality and type of paper they contain—machine—and



hand-made, smooth and variously textured. Many have only a few pages drawn upon and some show evidence of pages having been removed by the artist, perhaps bearing drawings that now stand as independent sheets. Lichtenstein also cut areas from sketchbook pages, presumably considering these segments as stand-alone works, or in order to tack them up for easy viewing.<sup>12</sup>

The sketchbooks contain the occasional figure that appears to have been drawn directly from life, but primarily they are the site of Lichtenstein's earliest drawn thoughts about motifs derived from printed sources in his composition books. Most frequently, Lichtenstein used graphite, alone or combined with color pencils in the sketchbooks; infrequently he worked in pen and ink. The artist's sketchy marks vary substantially, depending both upon subject and the specific intention for a given area: suggestions of dot and diagonal stripe patterns are prevalent; but Lichtenstein also developed equivalents for his sponge-pattern foliage; a rather tight, squiggly line for Chinese landscape sketches; "painted" and cartoon brushstrokes. Changes to the scale

and density of the dot patterns that mark tonal shifts in paintings or sculpture are suggested in the sketches by alterations to the character of the graphite and color pencil markings, notably in the series of nudes, 1994, selections from which are included here. Shifts in line direction and depth of color (based on hand-pressure) play a role in the variations seen in the sketches.

From the sketchbooks, Lichtenstein would move to larger, more finished drawings and collages (and maquettes, if for sculpture), making diverse adjustments as he moved toward a final version. Colors change in ways both subtle (a modest shift in a hue's brightness) and radical (replacing one hue with another), as does his placement of pattern, and, as previously discussed, he refined the nature of the thick, black line that was a dominant feature of Lichtenstein's art until the last years of his life. Then, he incorporated a larger palette and altered the ways in which color was distributed, almost eliminating the black lines entirely, which radically altered the perspectival stance of certain categories of his constructed spaces.

For Lichtenstein, perspective “certainly adds a rational view...has a kind of geometry and everything that the Renaissance came to mean....And... a unity.”<sup>13</sup> This is a very different unity, of course, than is suggested by the vertical space in works inspired by Chinese landscape painting; or space constructed of mirror and window reflections; or the shifting planes rooted in Cubism; or the flat iconic imagery of the early Pop monoliths.

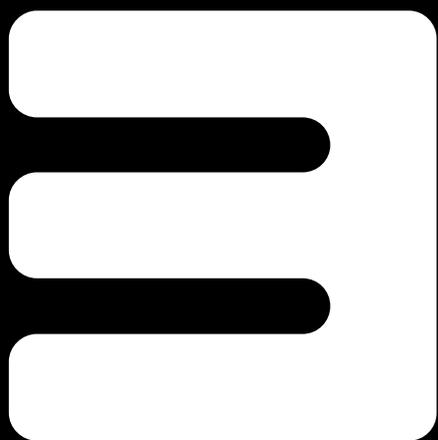
Lichtenstein’s artistic dialogue was with a history of art, his history of art, as well as a dialogue with the lived-in world as he embraced it, always inflected with humor: the freedom of knowing who he was in the service of an ever-increasing awareness of artistic purpose. His late work reflects back upon subjects and means dating to the 1950s, such as Native American themes, and abstract expressionist brushwork.<sup>14</sup> Picasso remained paramount among his artist-mentors, but Lichtenstein also addressed the art of his New York contemporaries such as Jasper Johns, whose own dialogue with Picasso created a shared point of reference.<sup>15</sup> While the tracks of Johns’ and Lichtenstein’s projects as well as their larger methodology are profoundly different, they do share a propensity to explore materials, processes, and structures rooted in printmaking.<sup>16</sup> The works in this exhibition suggest that Lichtenstein’s images are both rooted in printed materials and carry a parallel concern with printmaking practice, a concern that contributed immensely to the artist’s unique and enduring artistic project ●

1. Excerpt from Roy Lichtenstein’s master’s thesis, entitled *Paintings, Drawings, and Pastels*, p. 8. A copy is on file at the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation in New York, as part of the extraordinary archives the Foundation is developing to support research on the artist’s work. I would like to thank Jack Cowart, the Foundation’s executive director, and managing director, Cassandra Lozano, as well as others on the staff for their assistance with this and other research I have conducted on Lichtenstein’s art over the years. I also thank Dorothy Lichtenstein, the artist’s widow, for her devotion to Lichtenstein scholarship as well as her generous hospitality.
2. Roy Lichtenstein interviewed by Richard Brown Baker for the Archives of American Art (AAA interview), 10 and 20 November, 11 December 1963, and 15 January 1964, on two tapes. A transcription on file at the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation. Each tape

is separately paginated. This quotation is from tape 1, p. 64.

3. Lichtenstein mentioned these visits in the AAA interview, tape 1, p. 31, and his interest in science comes up on occasion throughout this document. It was my good fortune to share numerous lunch-hour conversations with the artist, and the most frequently approached subjects outside of art were science-related, often stemming from recent articles in *The New York Times* or *Science News* to which he subscribed. This interest seems relevant to his use of new and/or unusual materials in his art, such as Rowlux collage materials, Magna paints, Plexiglas substrates, and so forth.
4. By 1956, Lichtenstein had completed thirty-one prints, engaging all of these processes. The technical range of his practice as well as the close connections between his prints and his paintings was sustained throughout his career and is documented in Mary Lee Corlett and Ruth Fine, *The Prints of Roy Lichtenstein: A Catalogue Raisonné, 1948-1997* (New York and Washington, 2002; second, revised and updated edition). Among artists active in the print publishing workshops that proliferated in the United States starting about 1960, the depth of Lichtenstein’s early printmaking *oeuvre* is unusual.
5. The most recent comprehensive study of Lichtenstein’s art to date is Diane Waldman, *Roy Lichtenstein* (exh. cat., Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1994). It includes an extensive bibliography compiled by Julia Blaut. An updated bibliography by Clare Bell may be found on the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation website.
6. From *A Conversation with Roy Lichtenstein* by Melinda Camber Porter (MCP), 4, undated; on file in the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation Archives. The words “character of shape” are inserted by hand on the typed copy, which has many additions, deletions, and changes in the artist’s hand.
7. Lichtenstein in MCP, 13. This sentence is partially underlined, perhaps by the artist.
8. The importance to Lichtenstein of refining this black-tape drawing is vividly apparent in a 1995 video of the artist at work, made by his senior studio assistant James dePasquale, on file at the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation offices.
9. Lichtenstein in AAA interview, tape 2, p. 46.
10. Lichtenstein in AAA interview, tape 1, p. 64.
11. Lichtenstein in AAA interview, tape 1, p. 64; tape 2, p. 43; tape 1, p. 88.
12. My thanks to Cassandra Lozano, e-mail of 14 November 2006, for confirming information about the sketchbooks, and to Jack Cowart for discussing with me Lichtenstein’s use of the sketchbooks, and their number, as well as his astute observation, e-mail of 12 November 2006, that if the artist “took enough drawings out of a book, it would ‘disappear’ as a book.”
13. Lichtenstein in MCP, 22.
14. References may reflect Lichtenstein’s subtle sense of humor, as the one referring to Clyfford Still’s paintings in *Interior with Exterior (Still Waters)*.
15. See Michael FitzGerald, *Picasso and American Art* (exh. cat.: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2006), for a study of Picasso’s importance to artists in the United States.
16. Among the print-related aspects of Johns’ art are his use of image reversals, his method of screenprinting directly on canvas, and his embrace of Mylar as a drawing substrate.





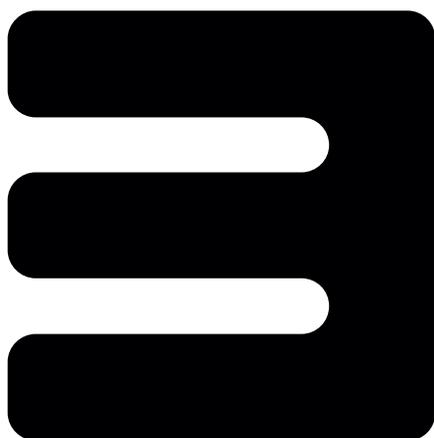
Lichtenstein in his  
studio at 36 West  
26th Street, New  
York, ca. 1964.  
Photo by Ugo Mulas

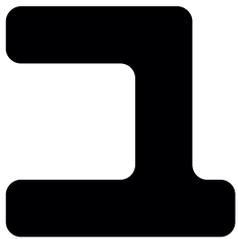


# **LICHTENSTEIN STEP-BY-STEP**

Nude with Yellow Beach Bag (1993–95)

JAMES DEPASQUALE, AS TOLD TO CASSANDRA LOZANO

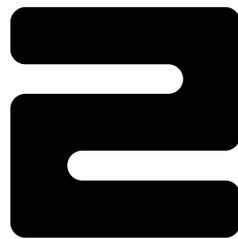




### DRAWING

Roy Lichtenstein would begin his process with a colored pencil drawing. Tracing paper was often used as a tool for color study, redrawing or correcting.

*Materials:* 3H pencil, colored pencils, No. 2 pencil, 3B pencil for black lines, paper, tracing paper.



### COLLAGE

The original drawing would be photographed in 35mm-slide format. The slide would be projected onto museum board up to 1/2 the scale of the painting. Dots and diagonals were done to scale, and casual lines were applied to get the placement of the image onto the board.

Next, Lichtenstein would redraw and “re-sense” the image into a completed pencil drawing. “Every time Roy put down a line onto a two-dimensional picture plane he would subtly change and perfect the composition as the work progressed through all the stages.”<sup>1</sup>

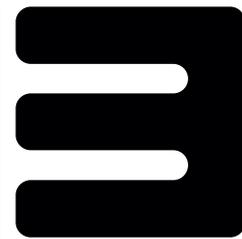
After the drawing was redrawn onto the museum board, black lines would be taped for the outline of the image or filled in with the black tape. Tracing paper was used to transfer design

areas for the colored collaging papers. The colored paper areas would be temporarily taped from behind onto the museum board drawing.

This was for Lichtenstein to see the finished collage and make changes before it was adhered permanently. Sometimes he would cut the same shape in various colors to test which worked best for the composition and for effect. The cut-out papers were then fit into the shape made by the black tape line and adhered permanently using double-sided adhesive tape.

If areas troubled him, Lichtenstein would use tracing paper and re-draw them. He did not worry about keeping the collage clean, he liked it “rough”. He would often remove a completed area or re-collage it on top of a previously collaged area.

*Materials for a collage:* acrylic-painted paper, pre-printed dots and diagonals, museum board, graphite, black photographer’s tape, double-sided archival adhesive tape for the verso of the dotted and diagonal-striped papers.

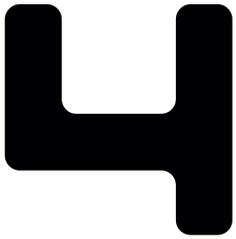


### CANVAS

The stretcher would be ordered based on the scale of the collage, usually employing an enlarging ratio of 2:1. Assistants would stretch and mount the canvas. They would apply multiple coats of gesso and under-painting white to the stretched canvas.

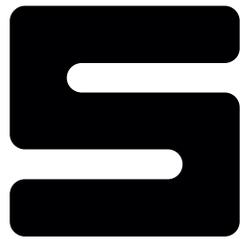
The prepared canvas was set up for projection of the finished collage, which had been previously photographed in a 35mm-slide format.

*Materials for painting:* Stretcher, Number 10 cotton duck, gesso, under-painting, white oil paint, acrylic paint (Bocour Magna or Golden MSA), graphite, Pink Pearl eraser, black photographer’s tape (1/4 inch to one inch), single-edge razor blade, guitar pick, masking tape, stencil papers, scalpel, straight edge, cutting mat, rotating easel.



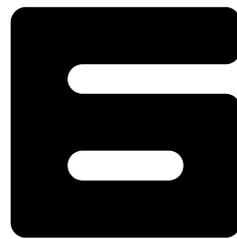
### TRANSFER AND REDRAWING

Lichtenstein often projected in the evening, transferring the collage image in the dark by graphite pencil. He would re-draw and “re-sense” the image, using pencil, erasing and remaking the lines each time. He would use a feather duster to sweep eraser shavings from the canvas. Throughout the process, Lichtenstein would often look at the stretched canvas from all orientations by using a fully rotating easel of his own design. He also utilized a mirror to develop his composition by viewing it in reverse and from “twice as far away.” He wore reading glasses and would peer at the composition over the top of his glasses to further gauge the “fuzzy” overall effect.<sup>2</sup>



### REDRAWING WITH TAPE

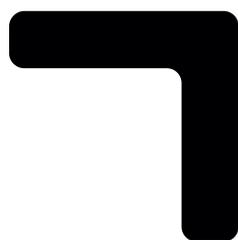
The painting would begin by taping in the black outlines. He used a single-edge razor to cut the photographer’s tape and a guitar pick to hone the edges down on the canvas. This process often took days for a single canvas and weeks for the series.



### DOTS

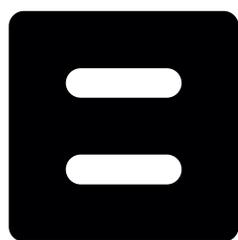
Next, dot stencils were placed onto specified areas. These stencils were made to replicate the gradations set by the finished collage. The stencil papers were cut with a scalpel for intricate detail and pieced together with 1/8-inch masking tape. By using a scalpel, Lichtenstein could cut between the dots carefully, often joining dot stencils that went with the grain to others that went against the grain. Two papers were often used together to register the grain of the dots. Lichtenstein would give directions to his assistants as to where the mid-point of the largest dot should go or where the smallest dot should be placed. He would then draw out and mask off the area to be painted. Once the stencil was ready its back was sprayed with aerosol adhesive.

Next, he would apply masking tape over the black-taped areas to keep the black tape dye from bleeding out onto the colors. The dot stencil would be firmly placed on the canvas (a backing board had been put behind the canvas to make the surface rigid) and burnished down with a guitar pick. Assistants used a stencil brush<sup>3</sup> and painted in a circular motion. The dots and diagonals were typically painted with oil color.<sup>4</sup> Oil paint for the dots was applied straight from the tube. If it was too thick a little linseed oil was used as thinner. To avoid getting paint under the edges of the stencil, they worked with as little paint as possible. Once oil was applied through the stencil, the stencil was removed and the paint was allowed to dry.



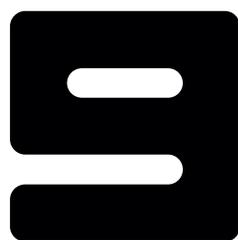
### MASKING

Lichtenstein masked off the areas for color. Acrylic was always used for these colors.<sup>5</sup> Under-painting white and oil paint were flat. Black paint lines were glossy and thinned with 100% acrylic medium glossy.



### COLOR

Multiple coats of acrylic paint were typically used. The first coat was thinned with 1/2 acrylic medium and 1/2 turpentine. The second coat (i.e. Mars Black) was thinned with 100% acrylic medium to make it glossy. If a third coat was necessary, it was thinned with 100% acrylic medium. RL generally used 2-3 coats of acrylic color with a coat of acrylic varnish between each coat. Blue could need 3 coats, yellow, 2-3 coats. Drip guards were used. Generally 2-3 coats of color were applied with a coat of Magna varnish between each coat of acrylic. Magna varnish was thinned 2/3-1/2 with denatured alcohol. There was ample drying time between coats of paint and varnish to avoid cracking.



### OUTLINES

Lichtenstein retro-taped over the oil and acrylic, then back-taped. Acrylic was then applied to that masking tape edge corresponding to the color beside the painted edge (to prevent black paint from bleeding under the masking tape). The masking tape on the color made for a crisp edge. Several coats of black acrylic paint were applied to the masked outline areas with a coat of Magna varnish in between each coat of color. Retro-tape was peeled away to reveal the crisp black outline and if there were areas of leakage under the tape they were touched up with a small brush. Finally, Lichtenstein signed and dated the canvas on its verso in Vine Charcoal and sprayed that area with charcoal fixative ●

1. Based on a conversation with James dePasquale in Southampton, New York, December 6, 2006. It is important to remember that Roy Lichtenstein characteristically devised elaborate, handmade and applied systems of working which, nonetheless, were intended to obscure his handwork and process as he strived to make all his work look "mechanical" and "printed." This is a fundamental and fascinating subversion.

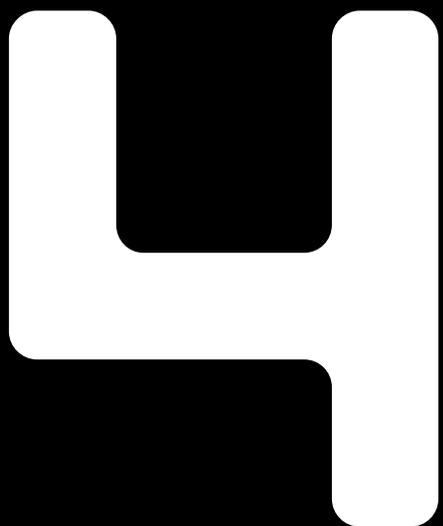
2. According to dePasquale, the artist considered his underdrawing "just a bunch of lines."

3. The artist preferred a stiff bristle brush such as a pig bristle brush to apply the oil paint.

4. Oil was preferred because it was easier to clear up mistakes than Magna which required re-varnishing of the under-painting.

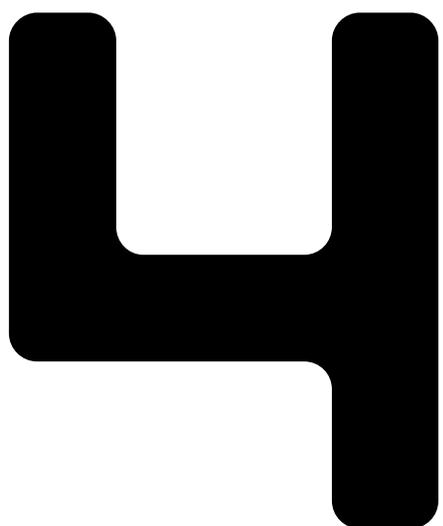
5. Lichtenstein used Bocour Magna paint until the late 1990's when he could no longer purchase their products. He contacted Mark Golden who made MSA (mineral spirit acrylic) and had special colors mixed. Magna is an acrylic resin paint, satin in surface and can be thinned with turpentine and removed completely. In 1960, Leonard Bocour developed a consistency for Magna favored by artists such as Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland that could be easily thinned in turpentine unlike water-based acrylics.

All photographs are excerpted from the film of Lichtenstein painting *Nude with Yellow Beach Bag*, 1995, shot by the artist's senior studio assistant James dePasquale. © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein



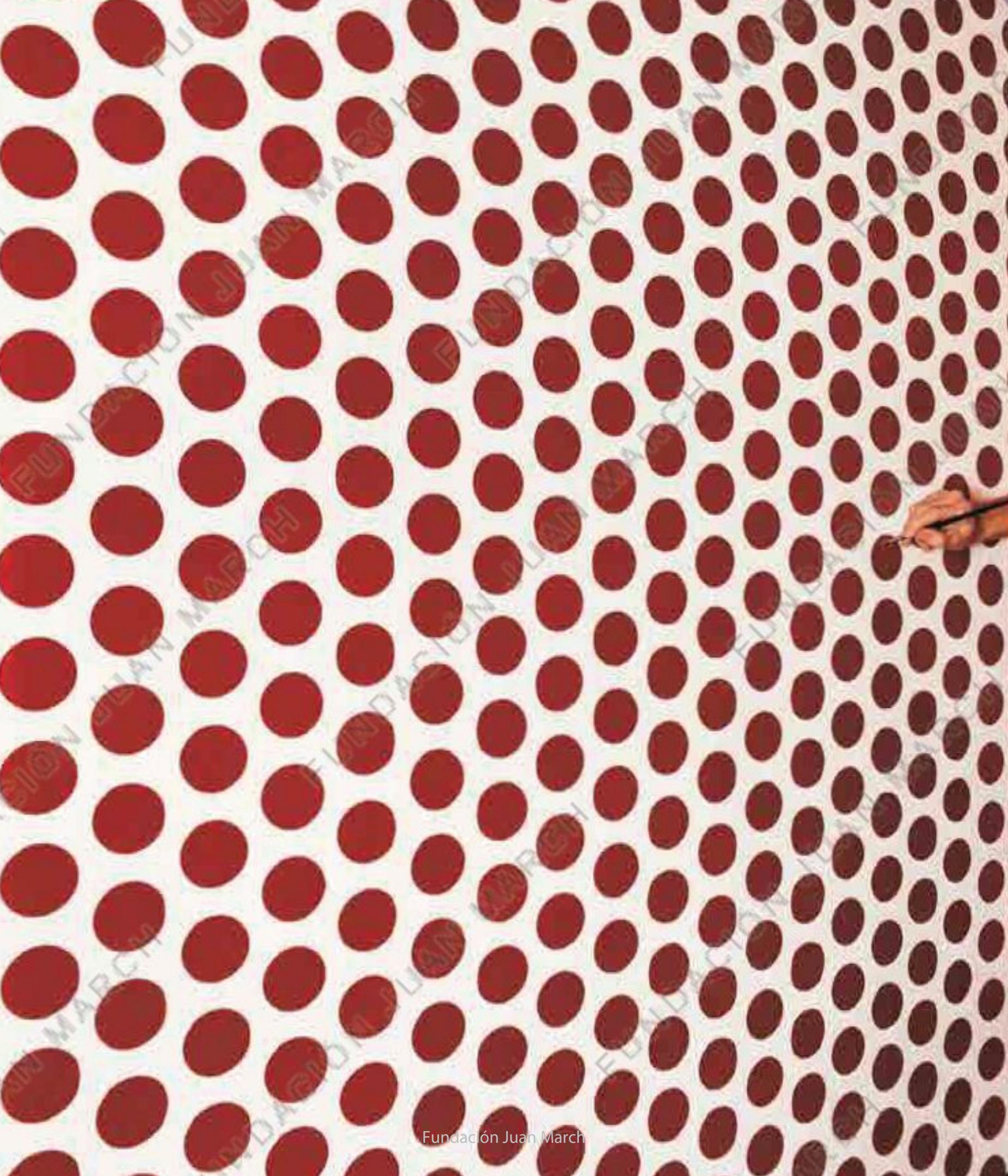
Lichtenstein finishing a  
morning jog on Gin Lane near  
his home in Southampton,  
Long Island, New York, 1990.  
Photo by Bob Adelman





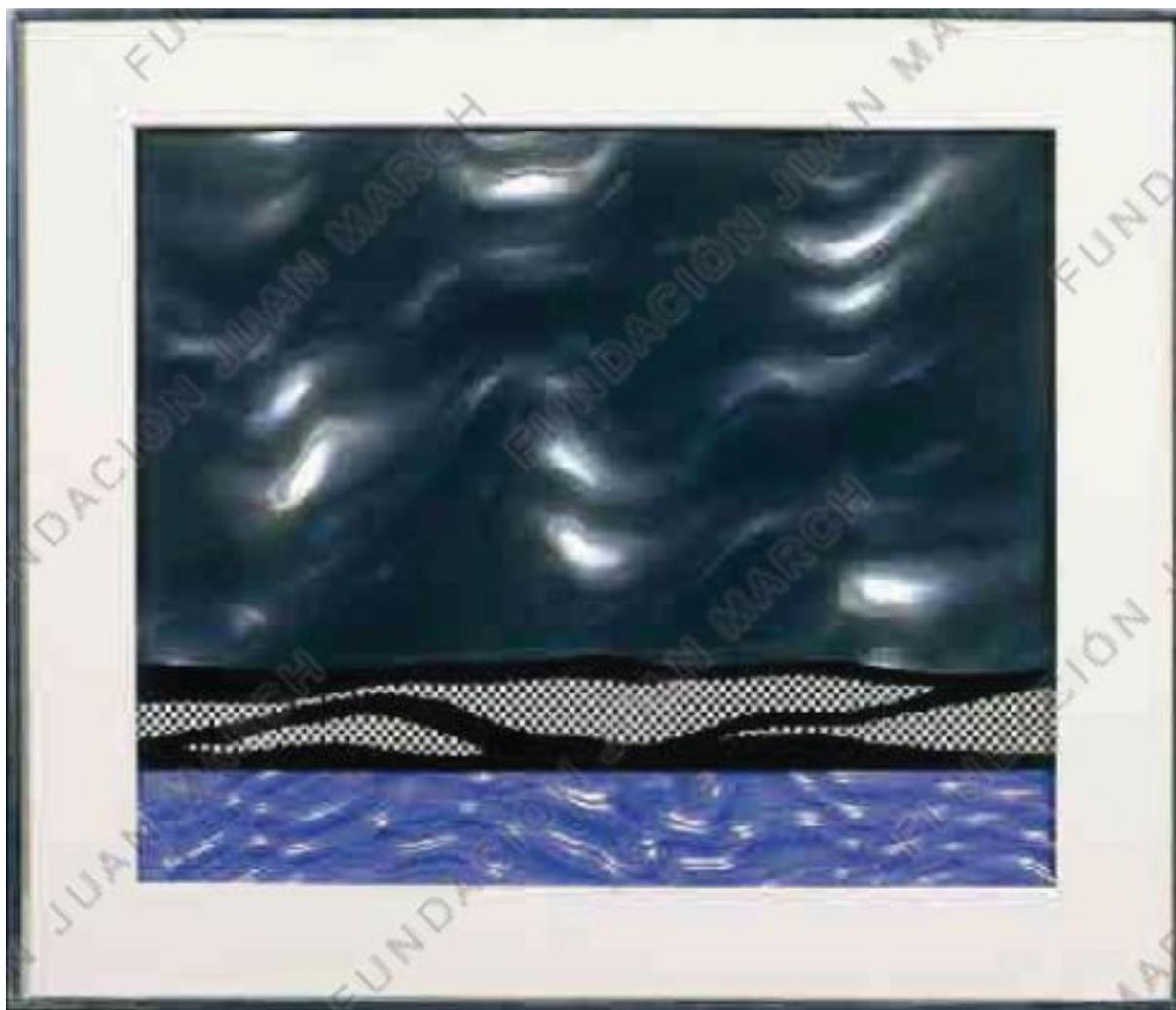
ROY LICHTENSTEIN  
BEGINNING TO END

Lichtenstein in 1986  
filling spots in the red Benday  
dots with a tiny spotting  
brush. He wanted his finished  
paintings to look cool, precise,  
seemingly machine made.  
Photo by Bob Adelman



## 1966 OCEAN MOTION

42



**Ocean Motion**, 1966. Rowlux, printed and cut paper, small motor. 22 1/2 x 26 1/4 inches. CAT. 1

*Ocean Motion* forms part of a series of collages with landscape themes that Lichtenstein created between 1964 and 1966. This series directly influenced his untitled film (1970), commissioned by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as part of their Art and Technology project (1967–1971), which brought together artists and advanced technology industries. Done in collaboration with Universal Film Studios and Joel Freedman of Cinnamon Productions, Lichtenstein's film, composed of 15 sequences of moving landscapes, alters the conventional nature of the medium in a decidedly anti-filmic manner. He combines real (the moving water) and artificial (the painted sky) elements to create an unconventional vista completely lacking in spatial recession, underscoring the flatness of the picture plane, one of the defining characteristics of his paintings.



Untitled Drawings for Film (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Orange marker, graphite and ballpoint pen on paper, 2 sheets; ballpoint pen on spiral-edged paper, 3 sheets; ballpoint pen on paper, 4 sheets. CAT. 2-4



43



Reference shots for Art and Technology project, 1970



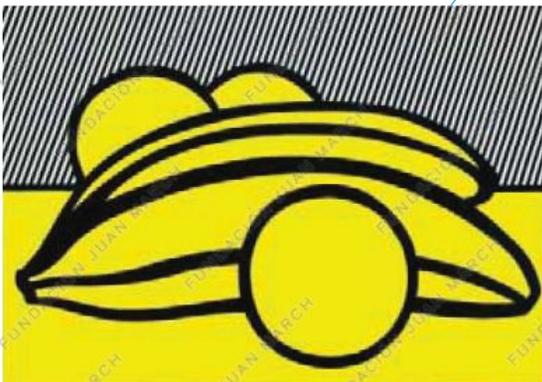
Film-Untitled (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Film, laser disc, VHS videotape. CAT. 5



Drawing for **Still Life with Pitcher**, 1972. Graphite and colored pencils on paper



Polaroid taken by Lichtenstein of Picasso's painting



**Bananas and Grapefruit III**, 1972. Oil and Magna on canvas



**Red and Yellow Still Life**, 1972. Oil and Magna on canvas



Drawing for **Still Life with Picasso**,  
ca. 1973. Graphite and colored pencils on paper.  
CAT. 6



Collage for **Still Life with Picasso**, 1973. Magic marker, tape, painted and  
printed paper on board. 28 1/2 x 21 inches. CAT. 7



**Large Spool**, 1963. Magna on canvas



**Curtains**, 1962. Oil and Magna on canvas



**Goldfish Bowl**,  
1977. Painted and  
patinated bronze.  
Edition of 3.

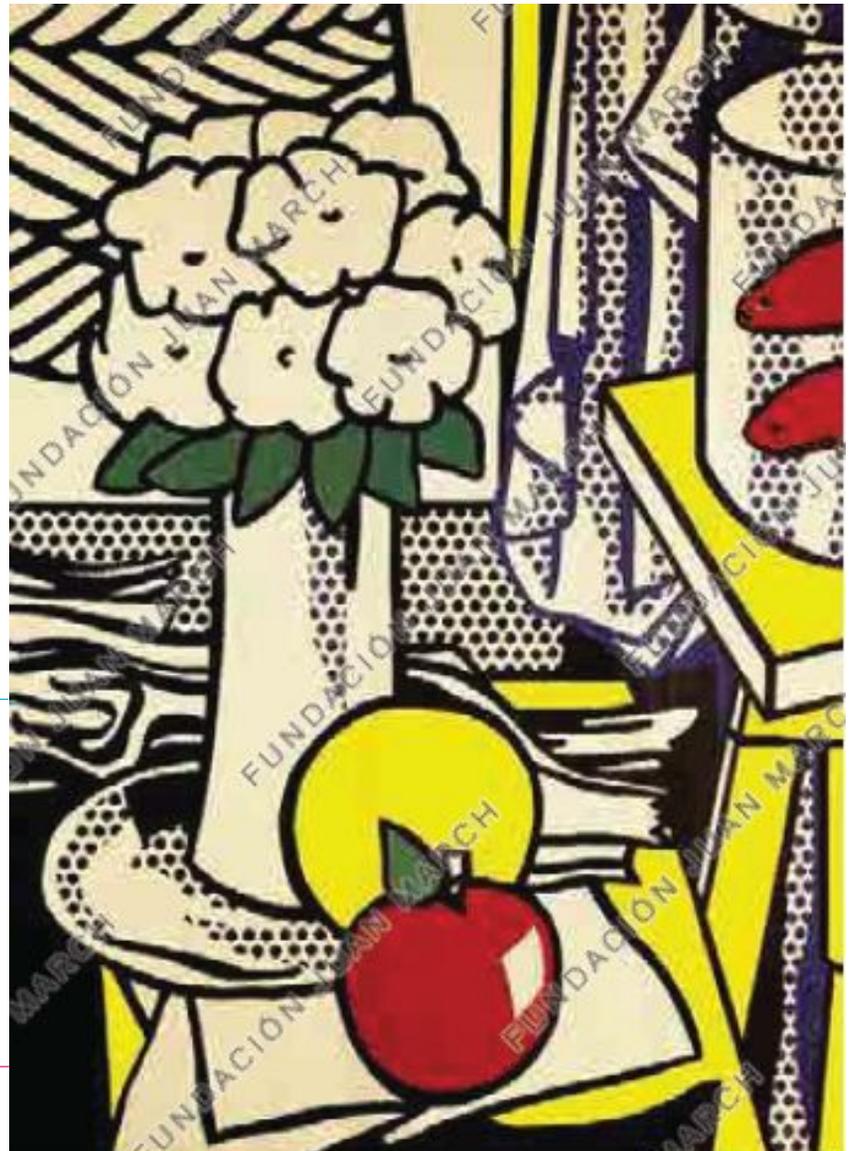


Drawing for **Still Life**, 1973.  
Graphite and colored pencils on  
paper. CAT. 8

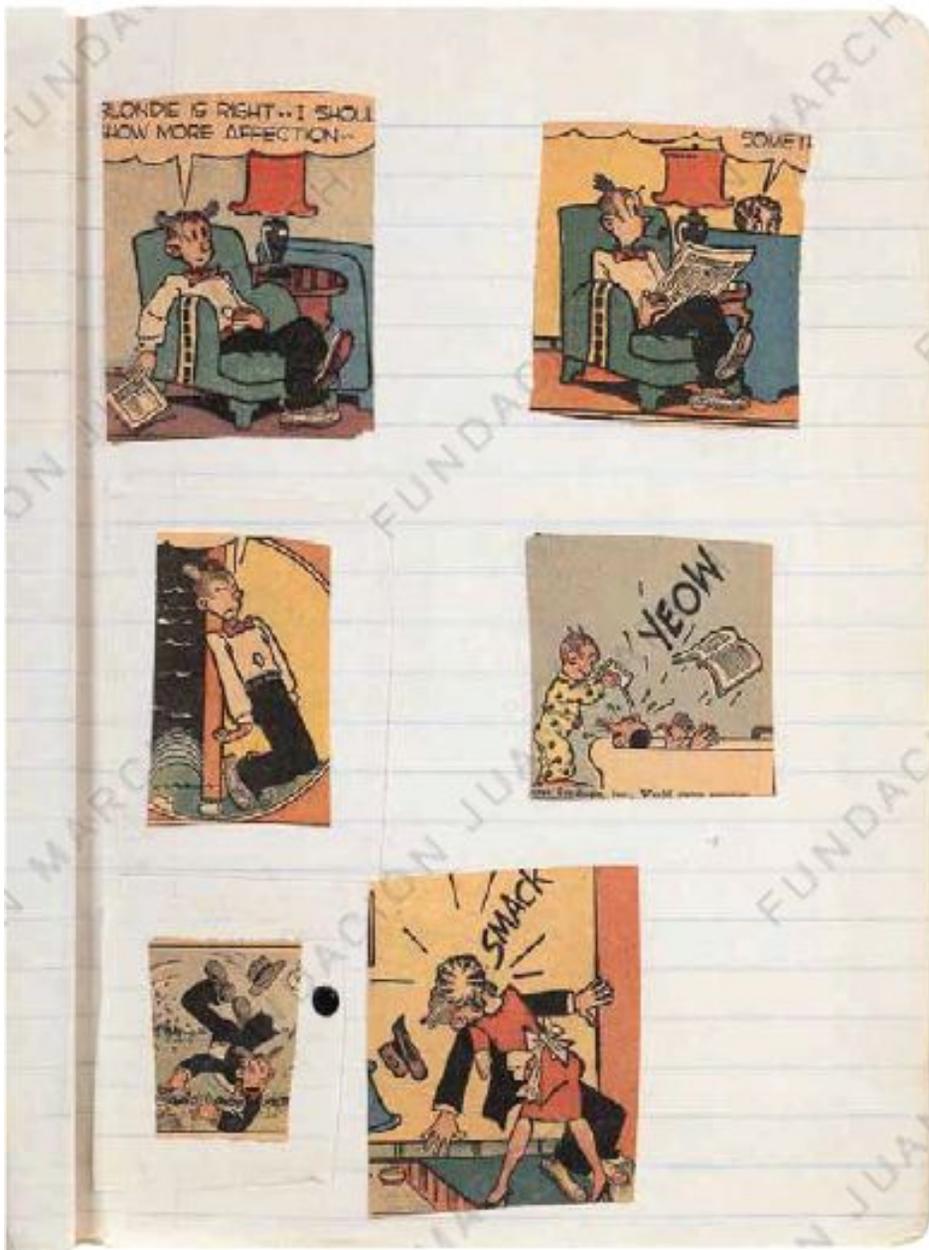
47



Collage for **Still Life**, 1973.  
Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 9



**Still Life**, 1973. Aubusson tapestry. Edition of 8.  
77 1/2 x 58 inches. CAT. 10



Vernon Royal Compositions notebook, page 34

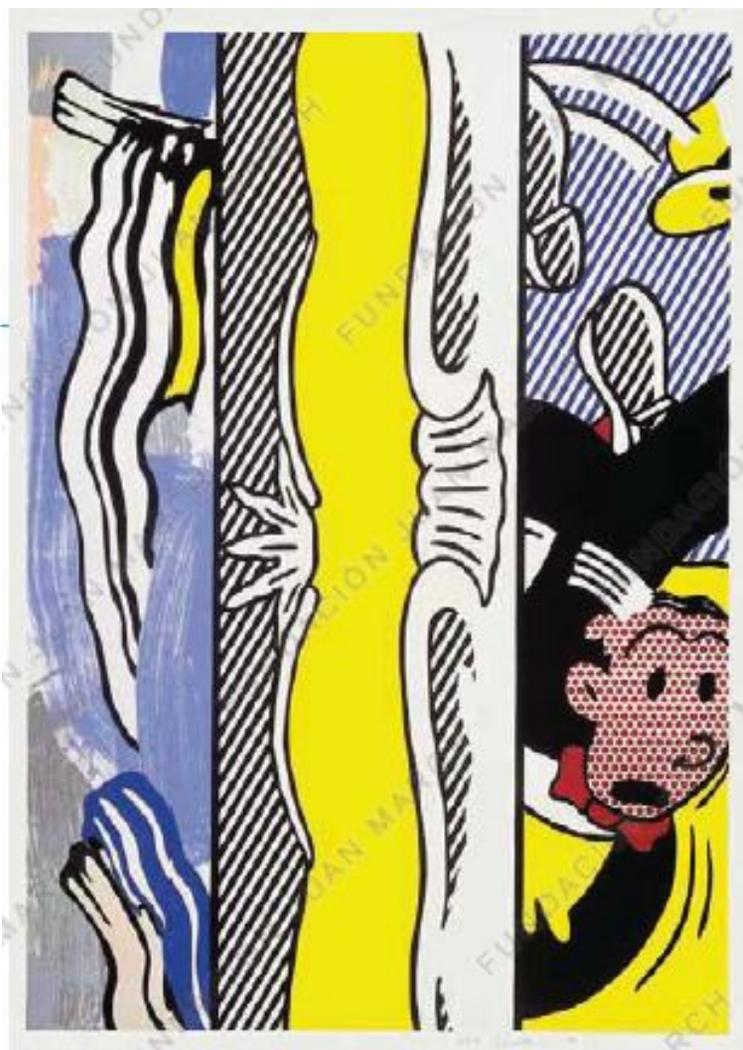


Drawing for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983.  
Graphite on yellowed matboard. CAT. 11

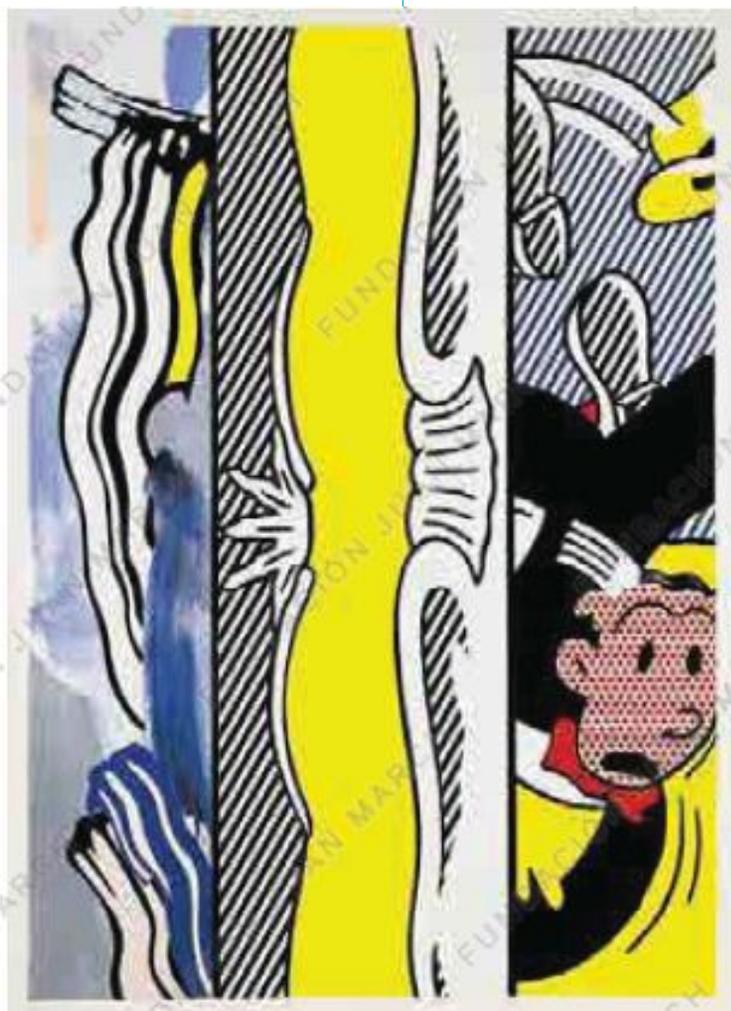
1983–84 TWO PAINTINGS: DAGWOOD



Drawing for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 12



**Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1984. Woodcut and lithograph on Arches 88 paper. Edition of 60. 53 7/8 x 38 15/16 inches. CAT. 14



Collage for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 13



Drawing for **Seascape**, 1984. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 15



Lichtenstein at Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles, working on his "Expressionist Woodcuts" series, 1980. Photo by Sidney B. Felsen

1984–85 **SEASCAPE**



Collage for **Seascape**, 1984.  
Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 16

51



**Seascape**, 1985. Lithograph, woodcut, and screenprint on Arches 88 paper.  
Edition of 60. 40 5/16 x 55 3/8 inches

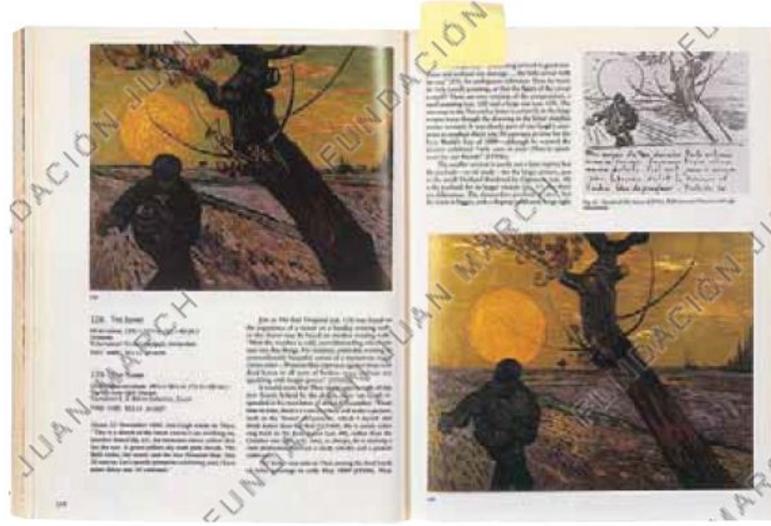
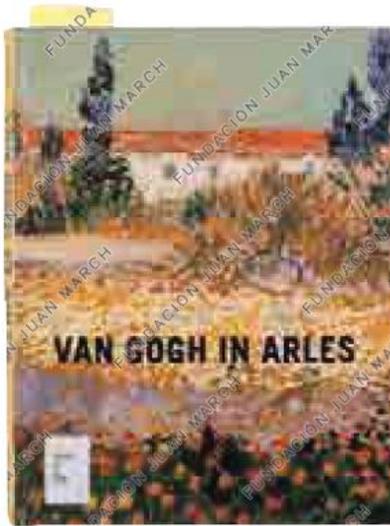
# MY USE OF EVENLY REPEATED DOTS

AND DIAGONAL LINES AND UNINFLECTED  
COLOR AREAS SUGGEST THAT MY WORK IS RIGHT WHERE IT IS,  
RIGHT ON THE CANVAS, DEFINITELY NOT A WINDOW  
INTO THE WORLD

ROY LICHTENSTEIN, "ABOUT ART," 1995 (SEE PAGE 128)

Lichtenstein  
making his film for the  
Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art's Art and  
Technology project,  
ca. 1970. Photo by  
Joel Freedman





Ronald Pickvance. **Van Gogh in Arles**. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1984. Pages 218-219



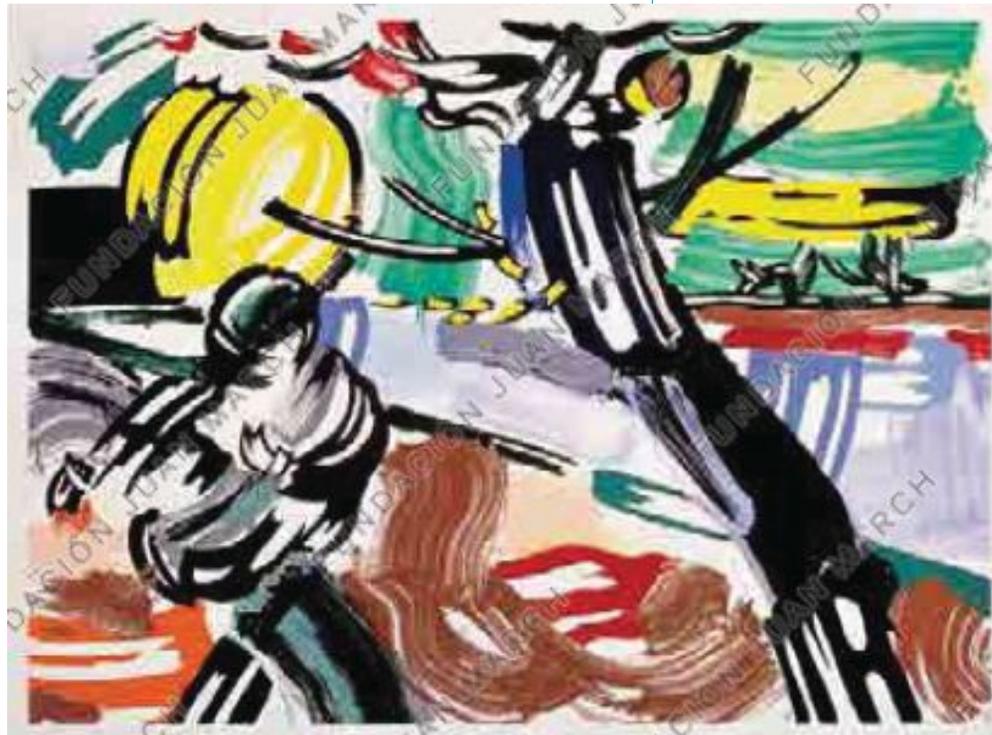
**The Sower** in progress in Lichtenstein's studio, 1985. Photo by Hans Namuth



Drawing for **The Sower**, 1984. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 17



Collage for **The Sower**, 1984. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 18



**The Sower**, 1985. Lithograph, woodcut, and screenprint on Arches 88 paper. Edition of 60. 41 3/16 x 55 1/2 inches. CAT. 19



H. W. Janson. **History of Art: A Survey of the Major Visual Arts from the Dawn of History to the Present Day.** New York/Englewood Cliffs: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. and Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966. Pages 120-121

56



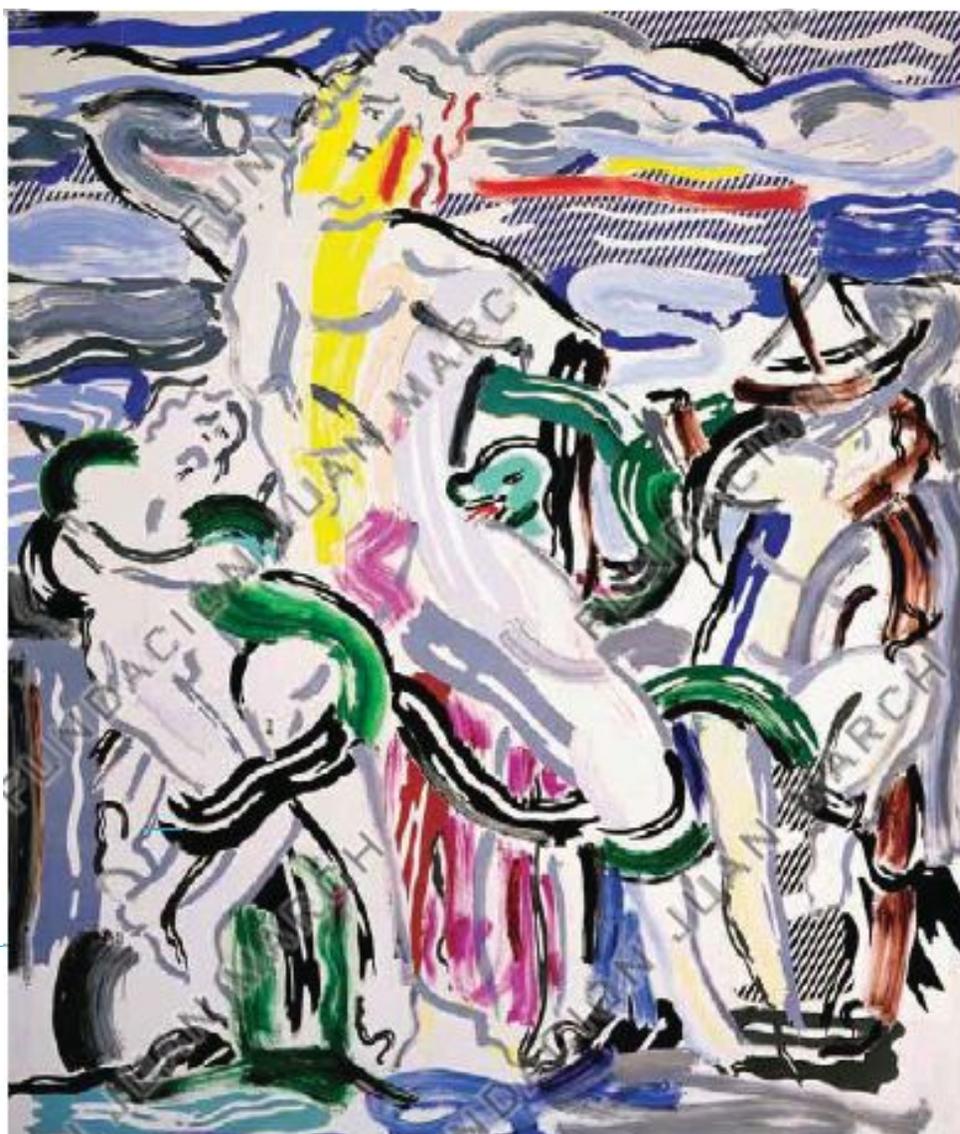
Drawing for **Laocöon**, 1988. Graphite on paper. CAT. 20



Drawing for **Laocöon**, 1988.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper.  
CAT. 21



Collage for **Laocoon**, 1988. Painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 22

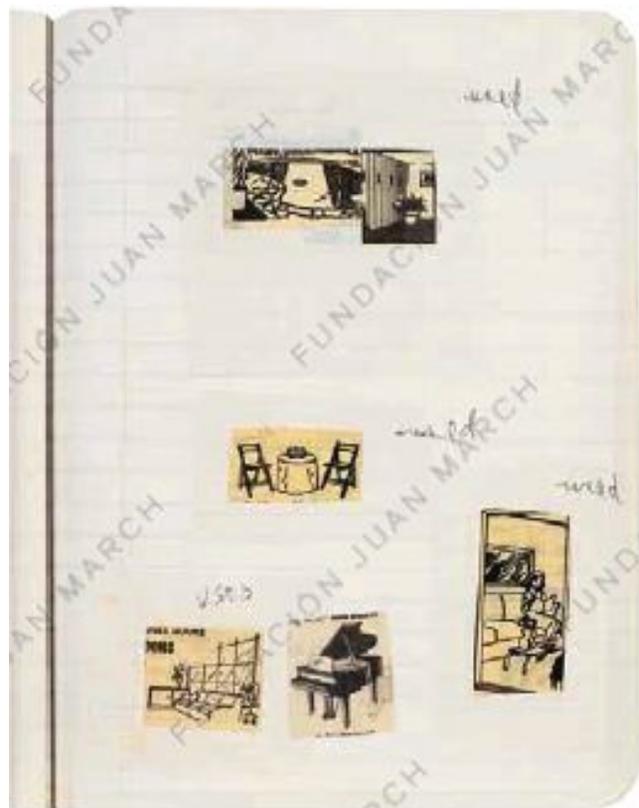
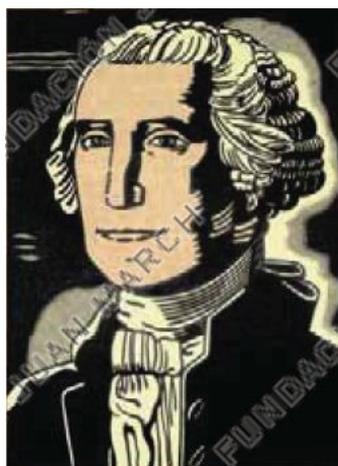


**Laocoon**, 1988. Oil and Magna on canvas. 120 x 102 inches. CAT. 23

Black minibook by PIGNA,  
Italian ads



George  
Washington, 1962.  
Oil on canvas



Compositions notebook,  
Interiors, page 30



Ben Heller. Clifford Still: **Dark Hues/Close Values**. New York: Mary Boone Gallery, 1990.

## 1991 INTERIOR WITH EXTERIOR (STILL WATERS)

Left: Drawing for  
**Interior with Exterior**  
**(Still Waters)**, 1991.  
Graphite on paper.  
CAT. 24



Right: Drawing for  
**Interior with Exterior**  
**(Still Waters)**, 1991.  
Graphite on polyester  
tracing film. CAT. 25



59

Collage for **Interior with**  
**Exterior (Still Waters)**, 1991.  
Tape, painted and printed  
paper on board. CAT. 26



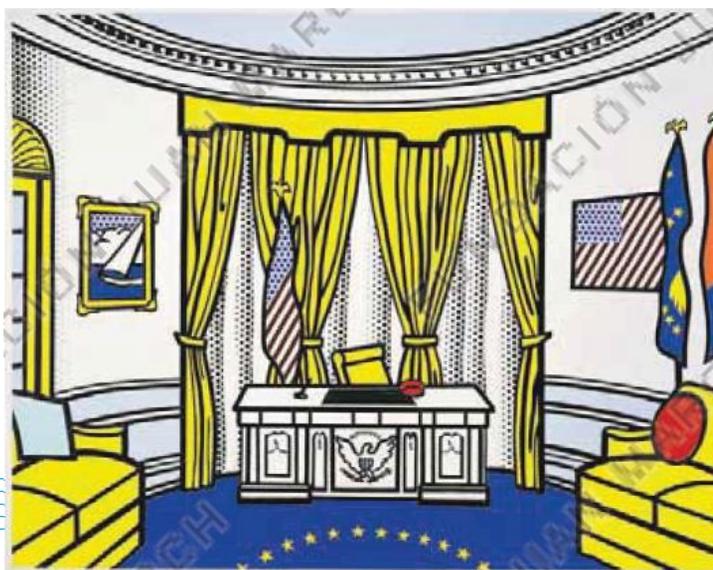
**Interior with**  
**Exterior (Still**  
**Waters)**, 1991. Oil  
and Magna on  
canvas. 102 x 173  
inches



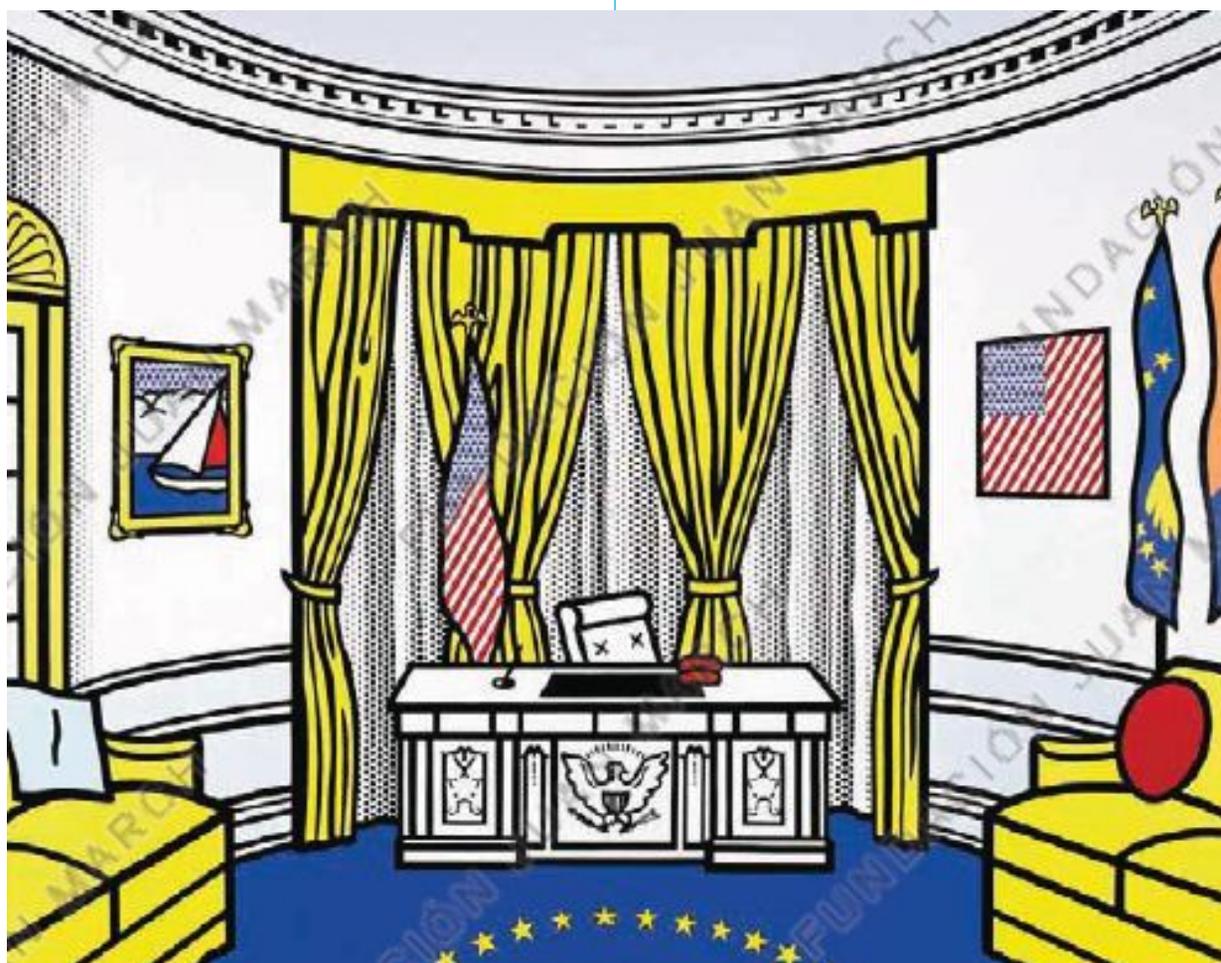


Source photos for Oval Office

1992-93 OVAL OFFICE



Collage for **Oval Office II**, 1992. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 27



**Oval Office**, 1993. Oil and Magna on canvas. 126 x 161 inches

Lichtenstein working  
on **Water Lilies**, 1990,  
in his Washington  
Street studio, New  
York, 1990. Photo by  
Laurie Lambrecht

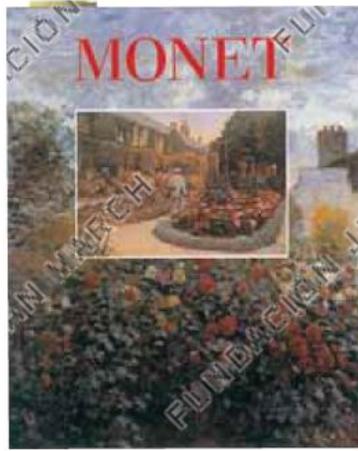
**GENERALLY,  
ARTISTS, WHEN  
THEY DRAW,**

**ARE NOT REALLY SEEING NATURE AS IT IS.  
THEY ARE PROJECTING ON NATURE THEIR FAMILIARITY  
WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S ART**

ROY LICHTENSTEIN, "ABOUT ART," 1995 (SEE PAGE 119)



Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge. **Monet**. New York: Abradale Press, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1989. Pages 208-209



64

Drawing for **Water Lilies-Blue Lily Pads**, 1991. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 28



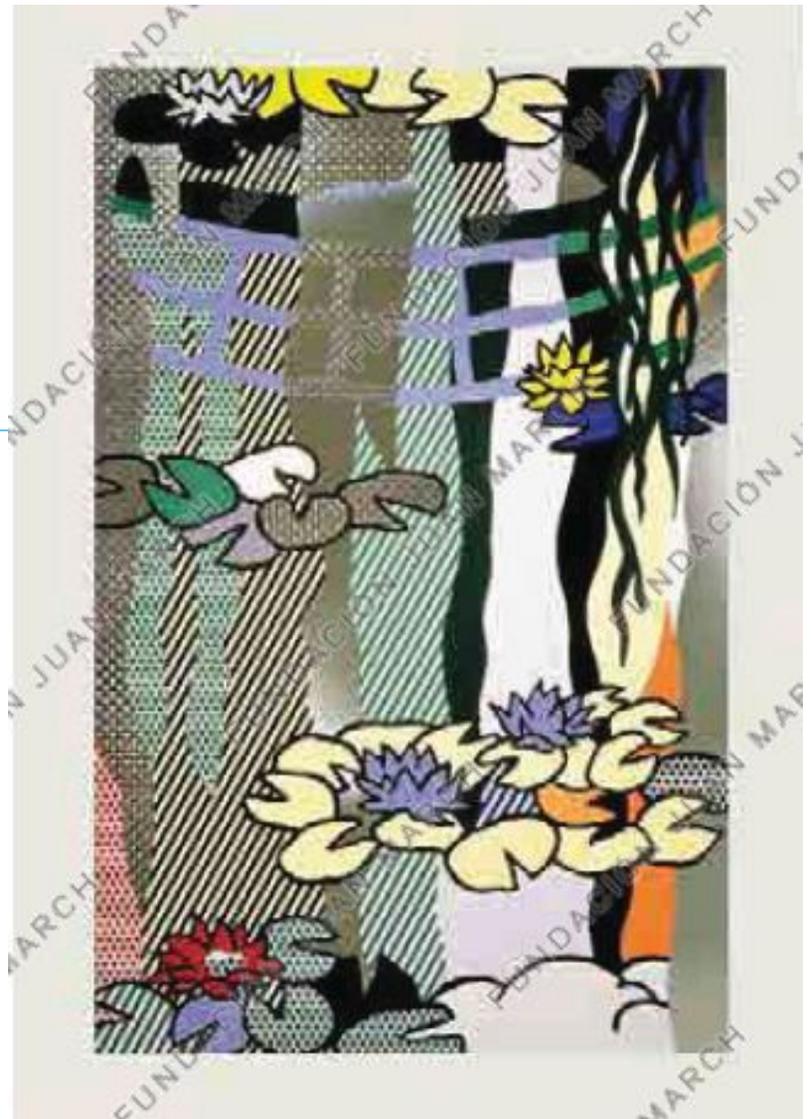
Collage for **Water Lilies-Blue Lily Pads**, 1992. Aluminum foil, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 29



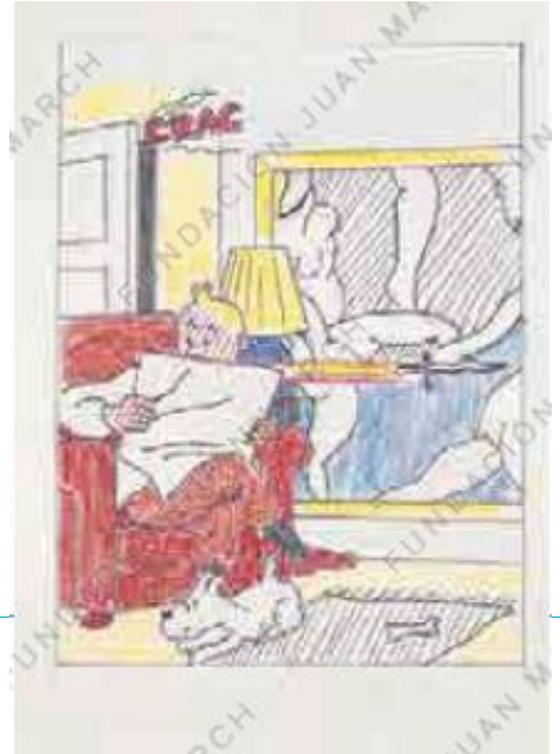
Drawing for **Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 30



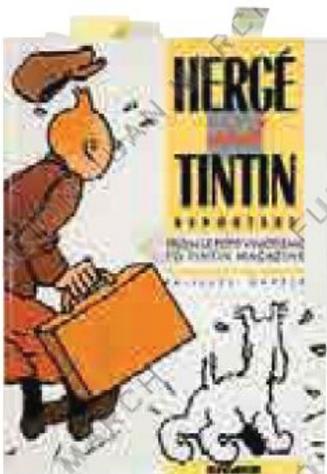
Collage for **Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992.  
Aluminum foil, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 31



**Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992. Screenprinted enamel on stainless steel,  
painted aluminum frame. Edition of 23. 83 1/4 x 58 inches. CAT. 32

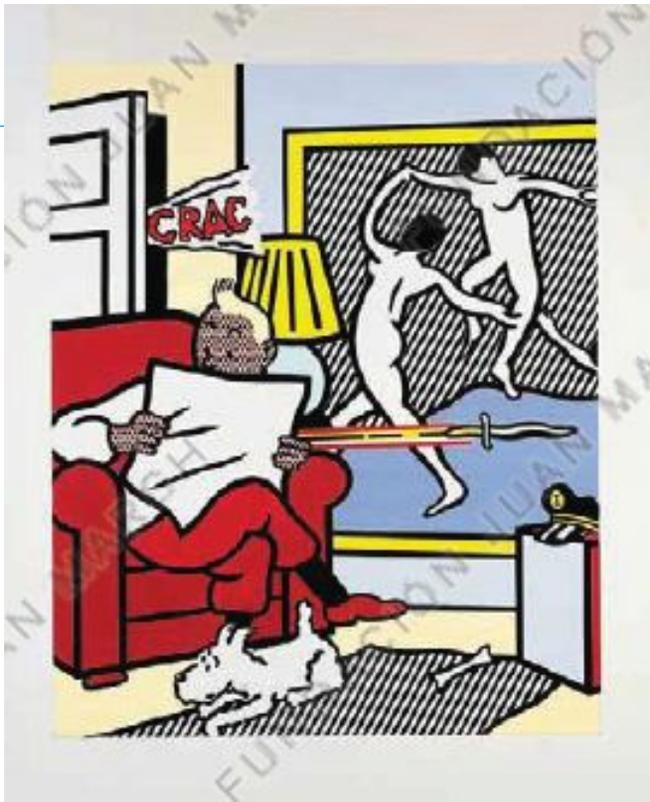


Drawing for **Tintin Reading**, 1992.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 33

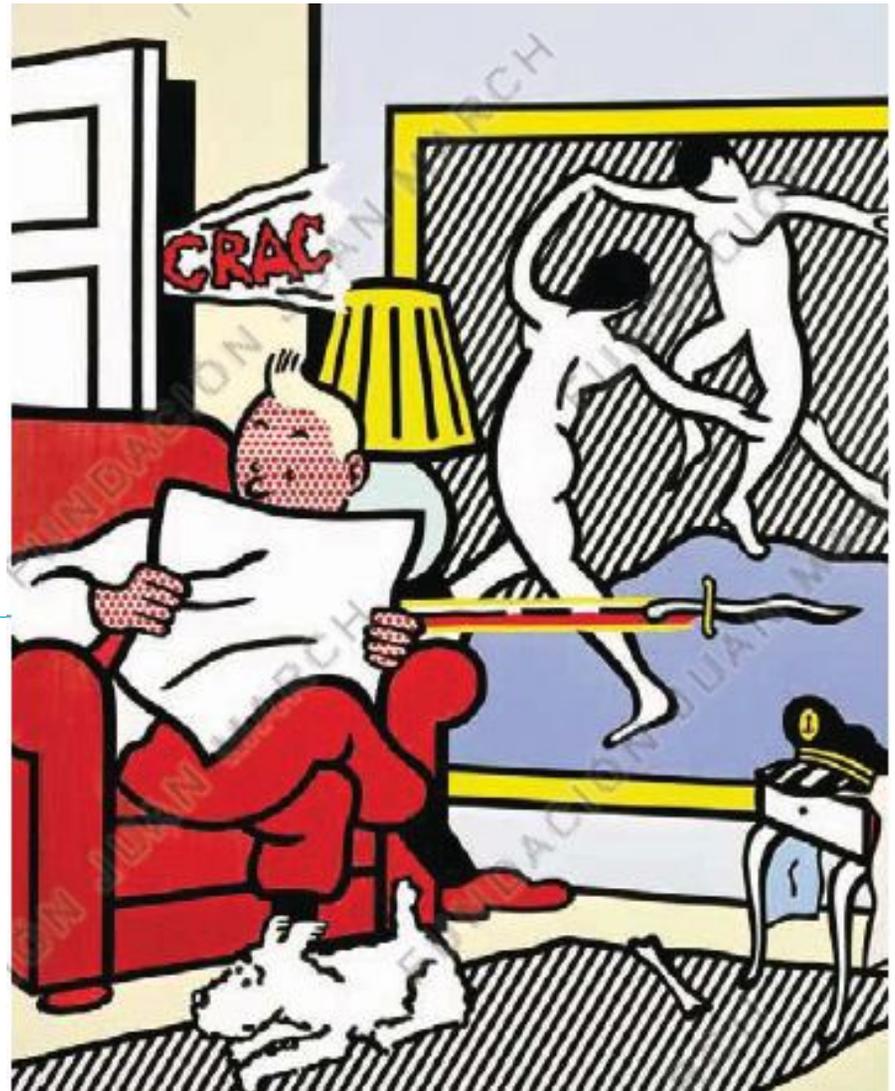


Philippe Goddin. **Hergé and Tintin Reporters: From Le Petit Vingtième to Tintin Magazine**. London: Sundancer Ltd., 1987. Pages 42-43, 218-219





Collage for **Tintin Reading**, 1993. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 34



**Tintin Reading**, 1993, Oil and Magna on canvas. 81 x 66 inches



68 Sketch for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Graphite on paper. CAT. 36



Sketch for **Brushstroke Nude** and **Chair, Table and Flower Pot**, 1992. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 37



Drawing for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Graphite on paper. CAT. 35



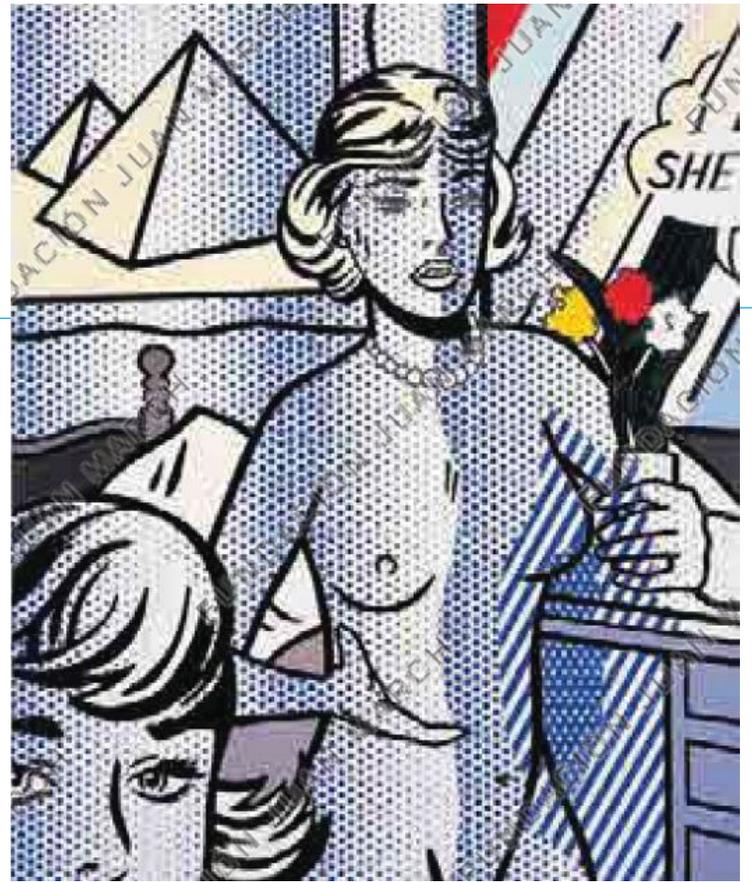
Maquette for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1992. Foam core, cheesecloth, glue, joint compound, paint, painted and printed paper on wood. CAT. 38

Final Maquette for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Painted wood. CAT. 39



**Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Painted cast aluminum. Edition of 3. 140 x 42 x 24 inches. CAT. 40

Drawing for **Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 41



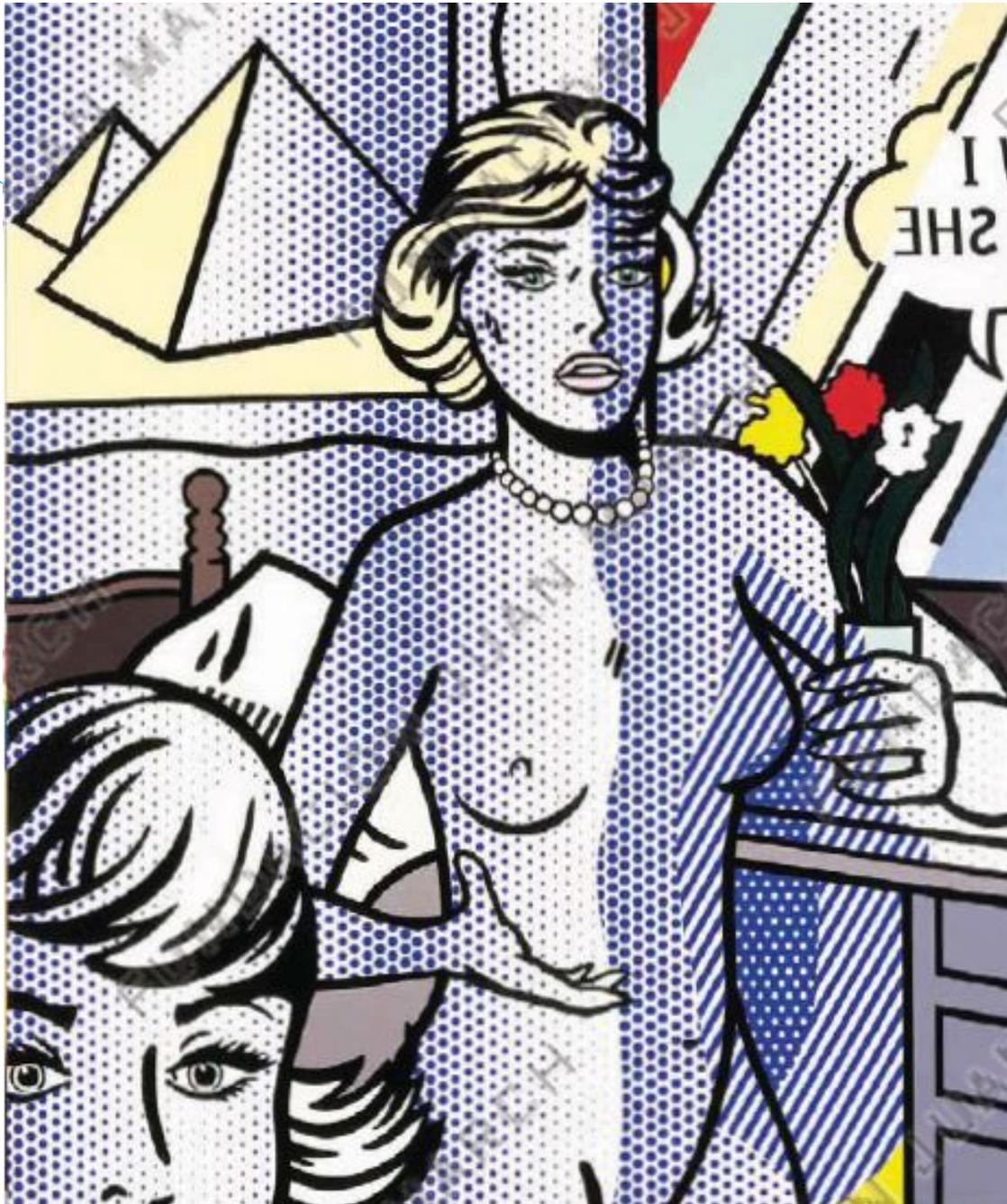
Collage for **Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 42



Source material Polaroid taken by Lichtenstein of **Pyramid**, 1968, 3D screenprints



Cover and two clippings, **Girls' Romances**, no. 97, December 1963



**Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Oil and Magna on canvas. 84 x 70 inches. CAT. 43



Cover and clippings, **Girls' Romances**, no. 97, December 1963



**Girl with Ball**, 1961. Oil on canvas



Advertisement from **The New York Times**, 1963



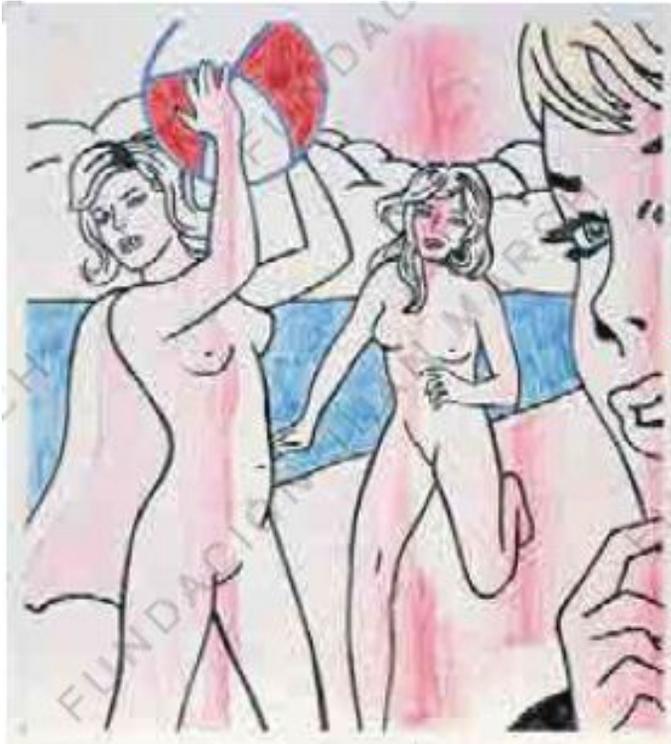
Unknown newspaper clipping



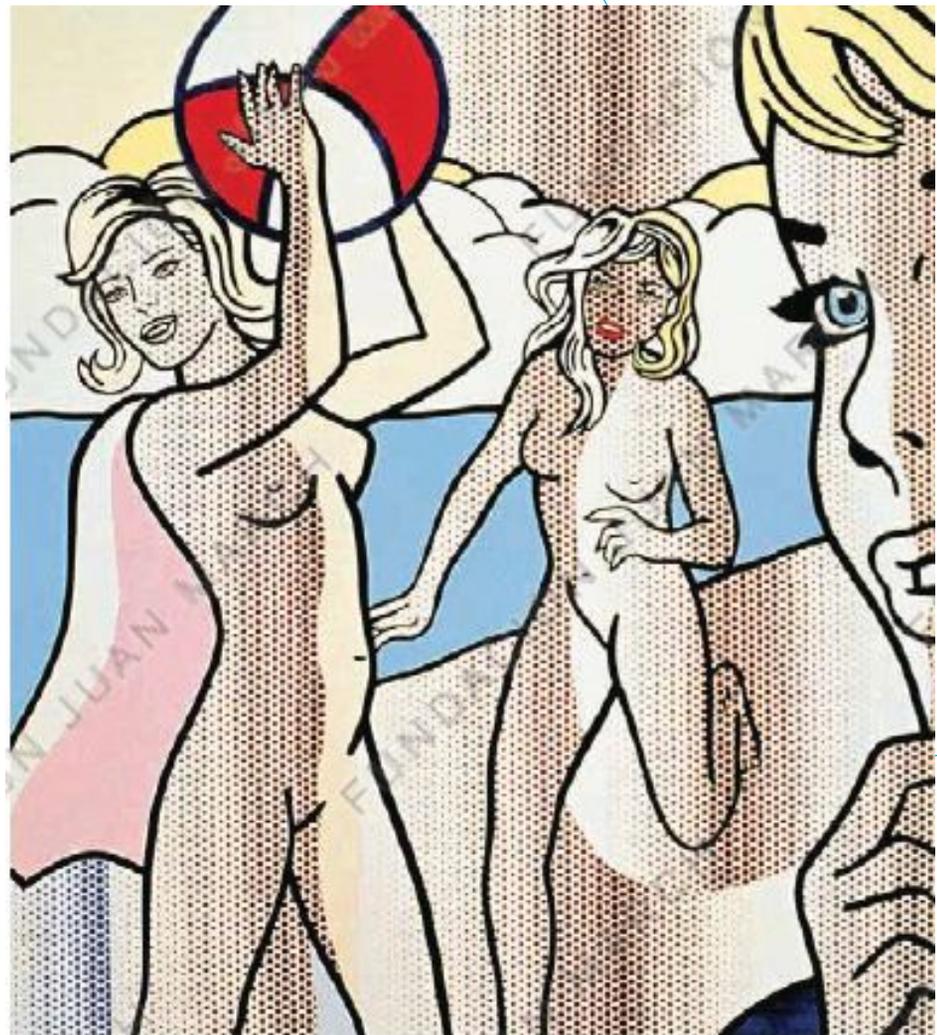
Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Graphite on paper, page from sketchbook. CAT. 44



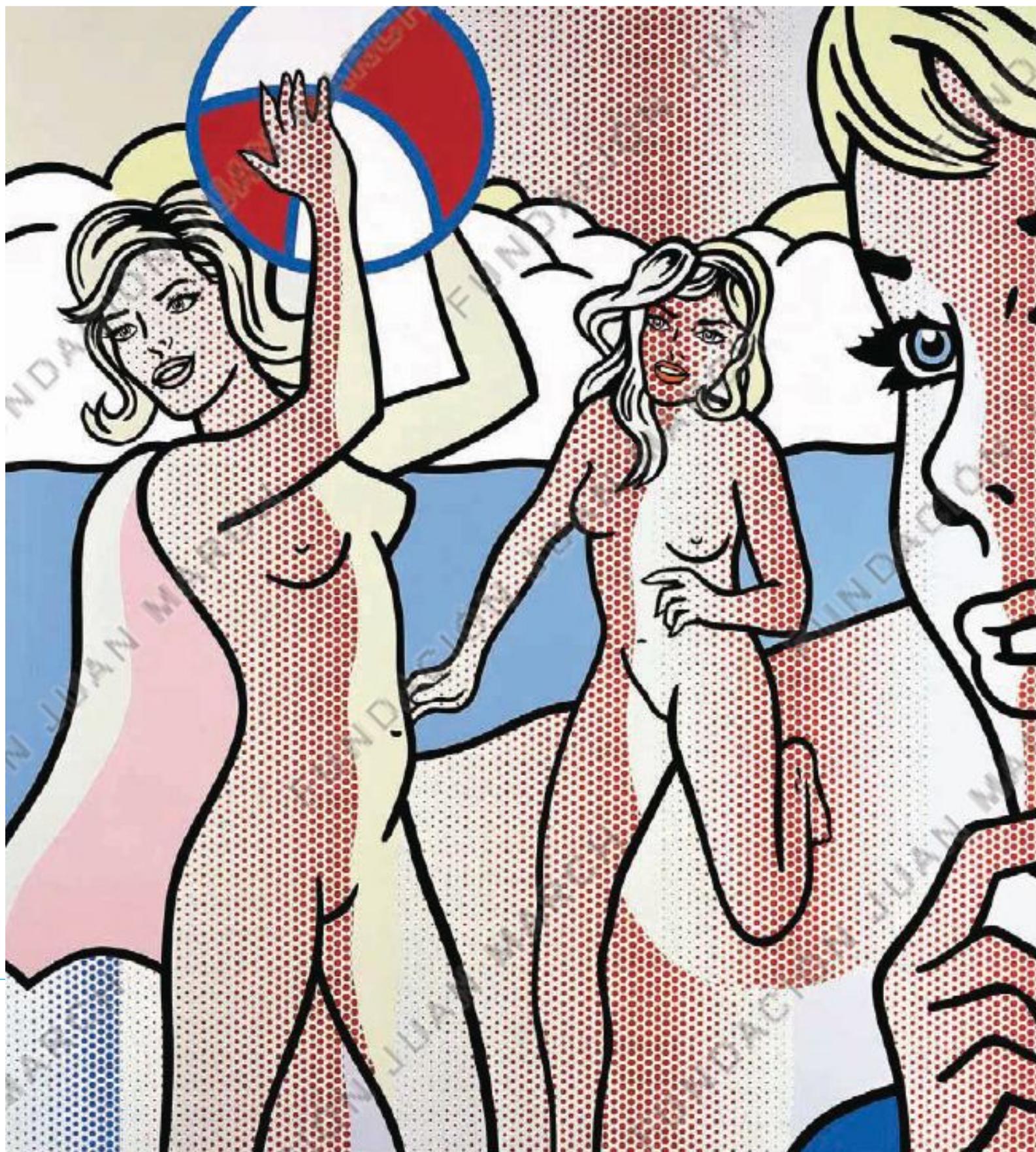
Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Graphite on tracing paper. CAT. 45



Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 46



Collage for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 47



**Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Oil and Magna on canvas. 118 1/2 x 107 1/4 inches. CAT. 48

Lichtenstein sitting on his  
couch in his New York  
studio sketching Drawing  
for **Nudes with Beach  
Ball**, 1994, CAT. 44. Photo  
by Bob Adelman

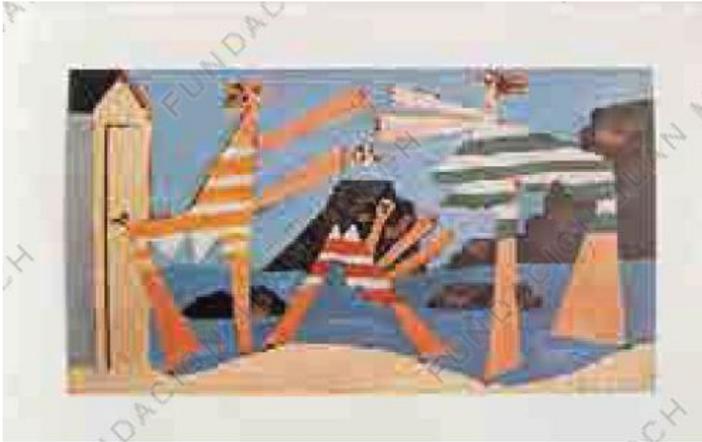
**IT WAS JUST  
LUCKY, BECAUSE  
I WAS ACTUALLY  
COPYING  
CARTOONS,**

**WHICH JUST DID IT AUTOMATICALLY, AT THE BEGINNING.  
BUT [I WANTED] TO BRING IT INTO HIGH ART [...]  
BUT NOT CHANGING ITS APPEARANCE VERY MUCH FROM  
WHAT SEEMED TO BE COMMERCIAL**

ROY LICHTENSTEIN, DISCUSSION WITH RICHARD HAMILTON, OXFORD, ENGLAND, 1988 (SEE PAGE 118)



Cover and clipping,  
**Girls' Romances**,  
no. 97, December 1963



Reproduction of  
Picasso's **Bathers  
with Beach Ball**, 1928



Cover and clipping,  
**Girls' Romances**,  
no. 107, March 1965



## 1995 BEACH SCENE WITH STARFISH



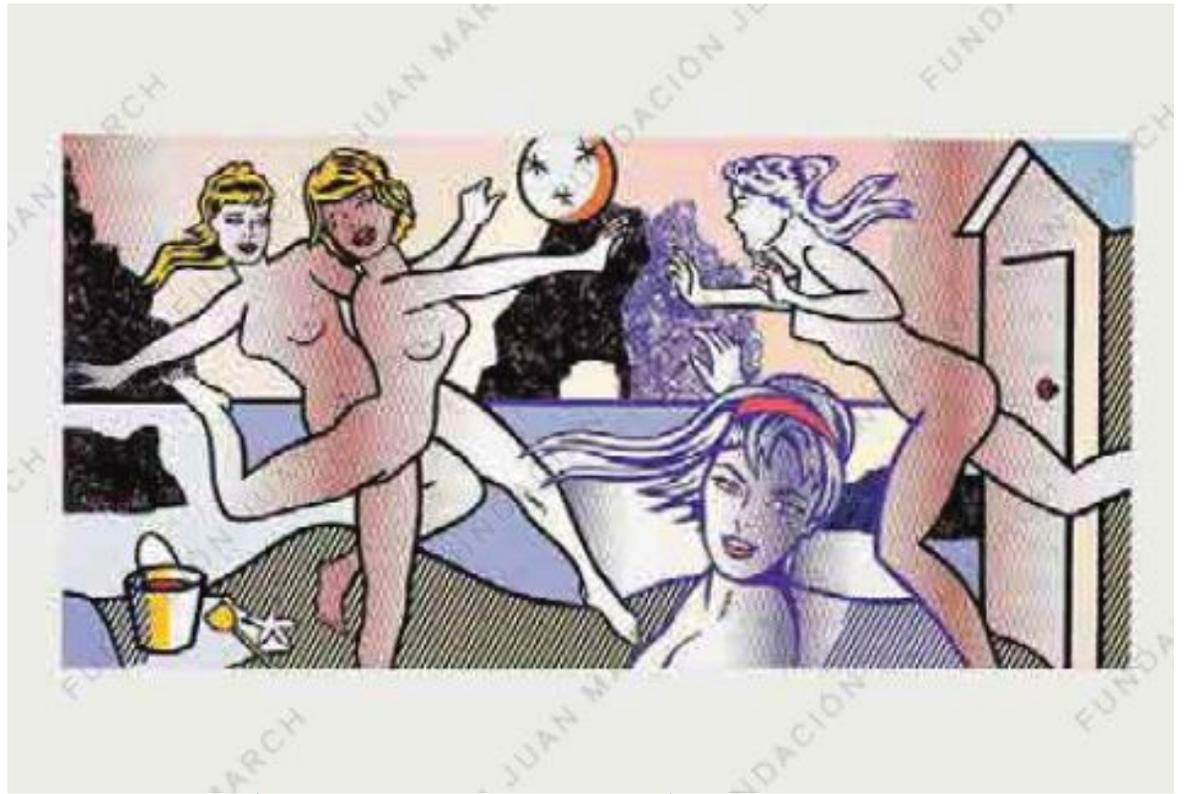
Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995.  
Graphite on paper. CAT. 49



Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995.  
Graphite on polyester tracing film. CAT. 50



Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Graphite on paper. CAT. 51



Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995.  
Graphite and colored pencils on rag tracing vellum. CAT. 52



Collage for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Tape, painted and printed paper on board

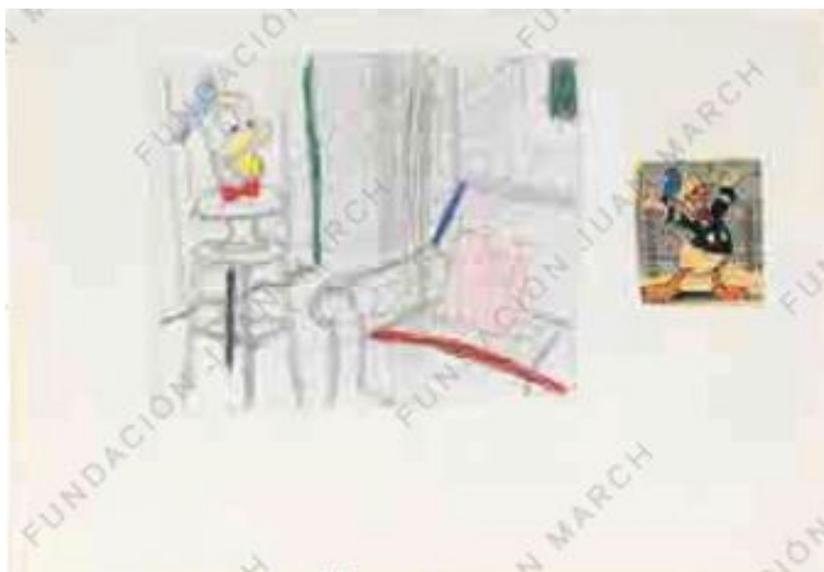
## 1995 BEACH SCENE WITH STARFISH

81

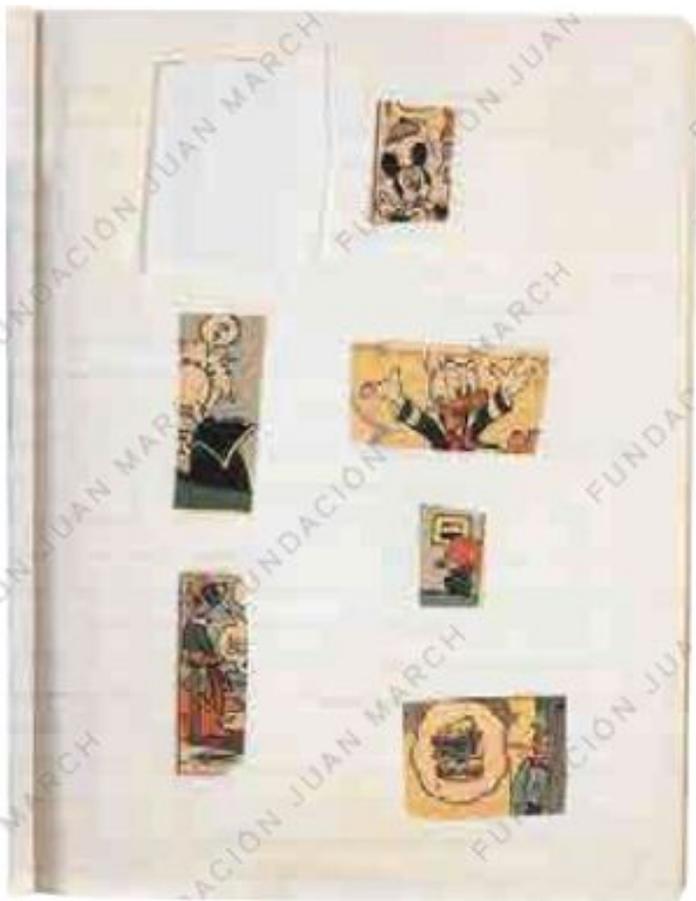
**Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Oil and Magna on canvas. 118 x 237 1/2 inches



Drawing for **Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 53



82



**Vernon Royall**  
**Compositions**  
notebook, page 33



Color reproduction  
from Lichtenstein's  
studio wall, ca. 1990

1995 VIRTUAL INTERIOR: PORTRAIT OF A DUCK



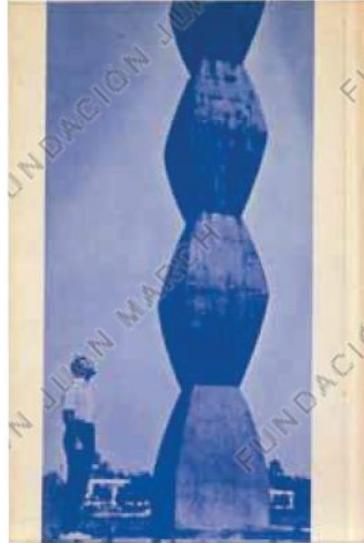
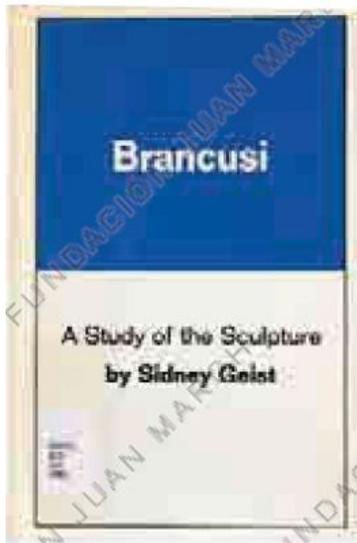
Collage for **Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995.  
Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 54



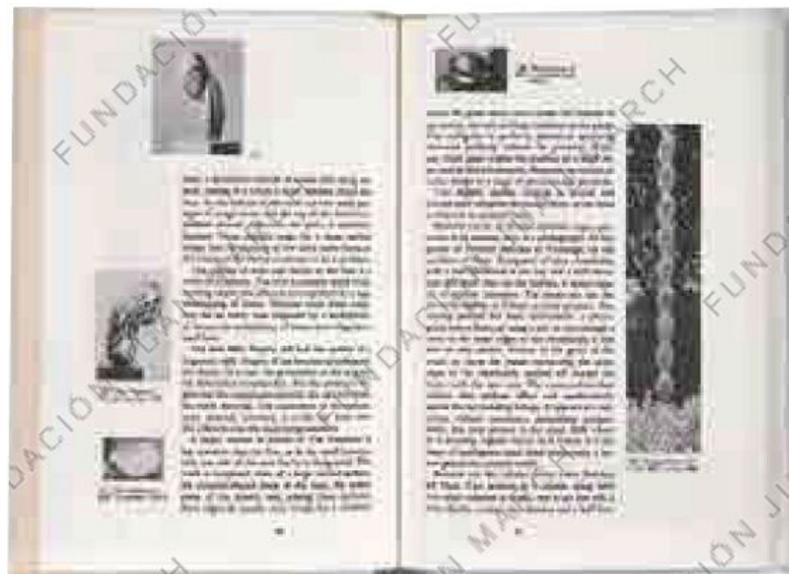
**Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995. Screenprint on 300-g/m<sup>2</sup> textured white Somerset paper. Edition of 60. 35 11/16 x 35 9/16 inches. CAT. 55



Collage for **Picasso**, 1990.  
Tape, painted and printed paper on board



Sidney Geist. **Brancusi: A Study of the Sculpture.** New York: Hacker Art Books, 1983. Pages 70-71



1995 **ENDLESS DRIP**



Drawing for **Endless Drip**, 1995. Graphite on paper. CAT. 56



85

**Endless Drip**, 1995. Painted and fabricated aluminum.  
Edition of 3. 142 1/4 x 13 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches. CAT. 57



Anita Ekberg in Federico Fellini's **La Dolce Vita**, 1960



Cover and clippings, **Secret Hearts**, no. 95, April 1964

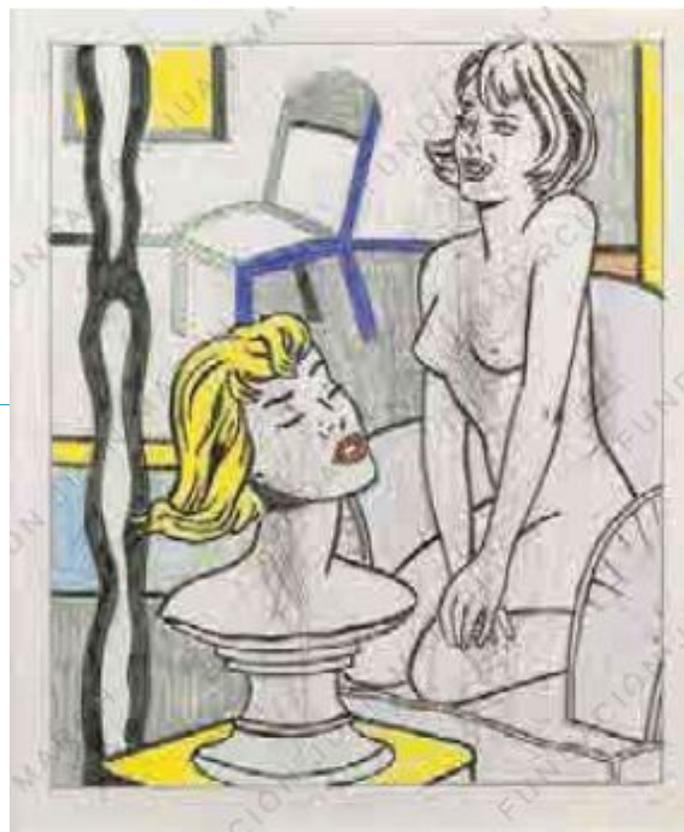


Cover and clipping, **Young Romance**, no. 127, December 1963 - January 1964





Drawing for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on polyester tracing film. CAT. 59



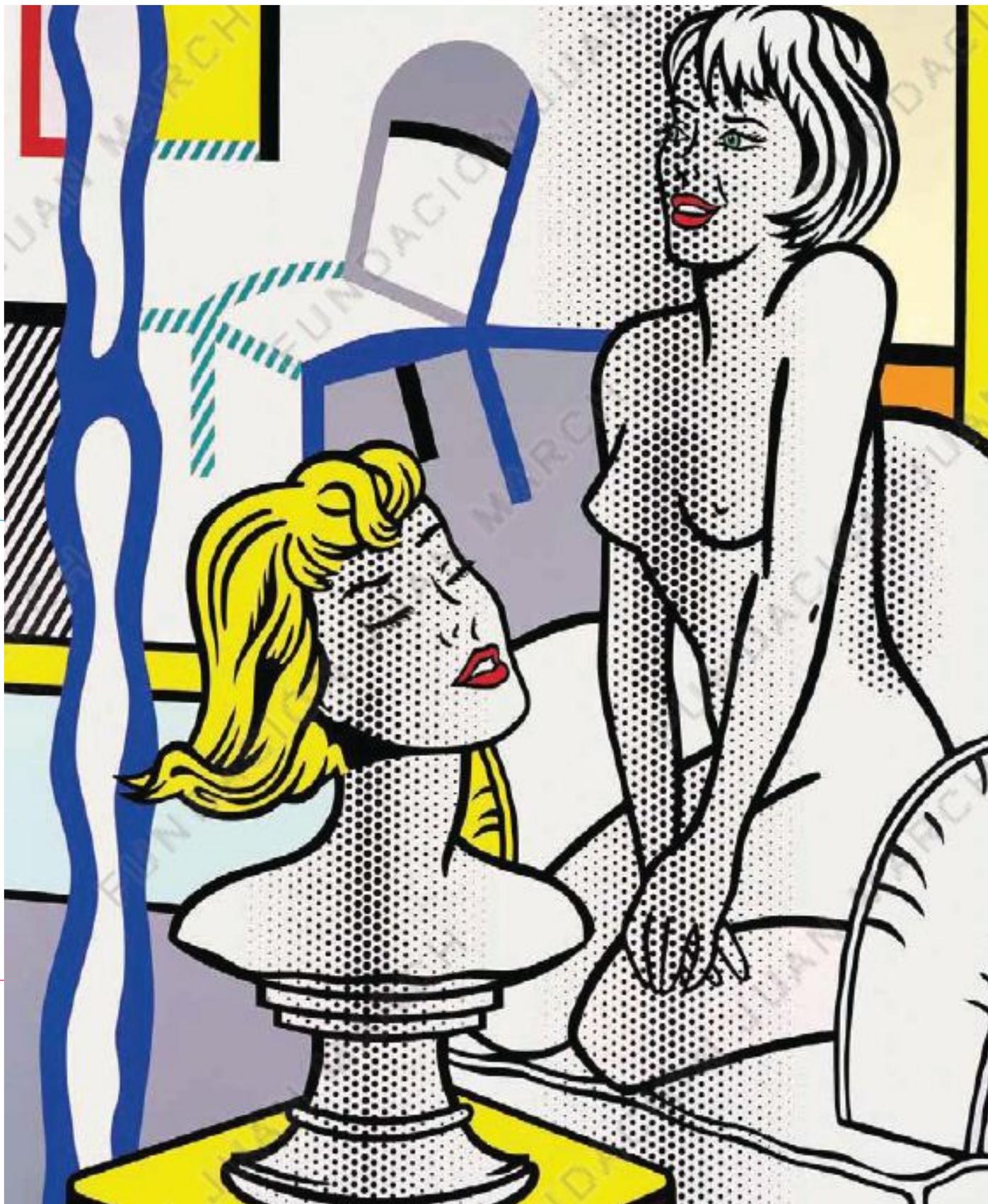
Drawing for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 60



Collage for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Tape, marker, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 61



Untitled Drawing for  
**Virtual Interior**, 1997.  
Graphite and colored  
pencils on paper. CAT. 58



**Nude with Bust**, 1995. Oil and Magna on canvas. 108 x 90 x 2 1/2 inches. CAT. 62



Sketch for **Nude with Bust**, 1995.  
Graphite on paper.  
CAT. 64



Study for **Nude with Bust**, 1995.  
Graphite on tracing paper. CAT. 63



Collage for **Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1995.  
Tape, painted and printed  
paper on board. CAT. 66



Drawing for **Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils  
on paper. CAT. 65



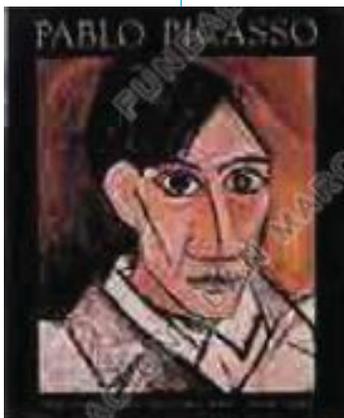
**Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1996. Painted and patinated bronze. Edition of 6. 39 5/8 x 25 1/4 x 1 1/8 inches. CAT. 67



Collage for **Art Critic**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 68



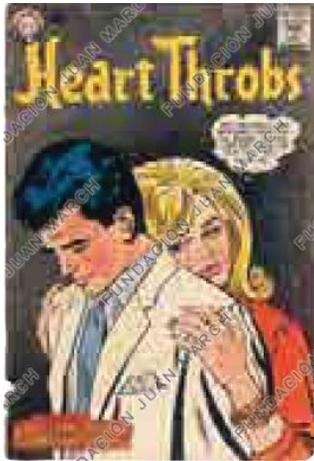
Drawing for **Art Critic**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on tracing paper. Cat.69



William Rubin. **Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective**. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1980. Pages 288-289



**Art Critic**, 1996. Silkscreen on 300-gram Somerset textured paper. Edition of 150. 26 x 19 1/8 inches



Cover and clippings,  
**Heart Throbs**, no. 88,  
February–March 1964



Drawing for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 71



Drawing for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on tracing paper. CAT. 70



Collage for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 72



**Seductive Girl**, 1996. Oil and Magna on canvas. 50 x 72 inches

Lichtenstein working  
on one of his Chinese  
Landscapes in his New  
York studio in 1994. His  
work was extremely  
detailed and precise.  
Photo by Bob Adelman

# VISIBLE BRUSHSTROKES IN A PAINTING

**CONVEY A SENSE OF GRAND GESTURE. BUT, IN MY HANDS,  
THE BRUSHSTROKE BECOMES A DEPICTION OF A  
GRAND GESTURE. SO THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN WHAT  
I'M PORTRAYING AND HOW I AM PORTRAYING  
IT IS SHARP. THE BRUSHSTROKE BECAME  
VERY IMPORTANT FOR MY WORK**

ROY LICHTENSTEIN, "A REVIEW OF MY WORK SINCE 1961," 1995 (SEE PAGE 133)



Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996.  
Graphite and colored pencils  
on paper. CAT. 73



Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Graphite on paper. CAT. 74



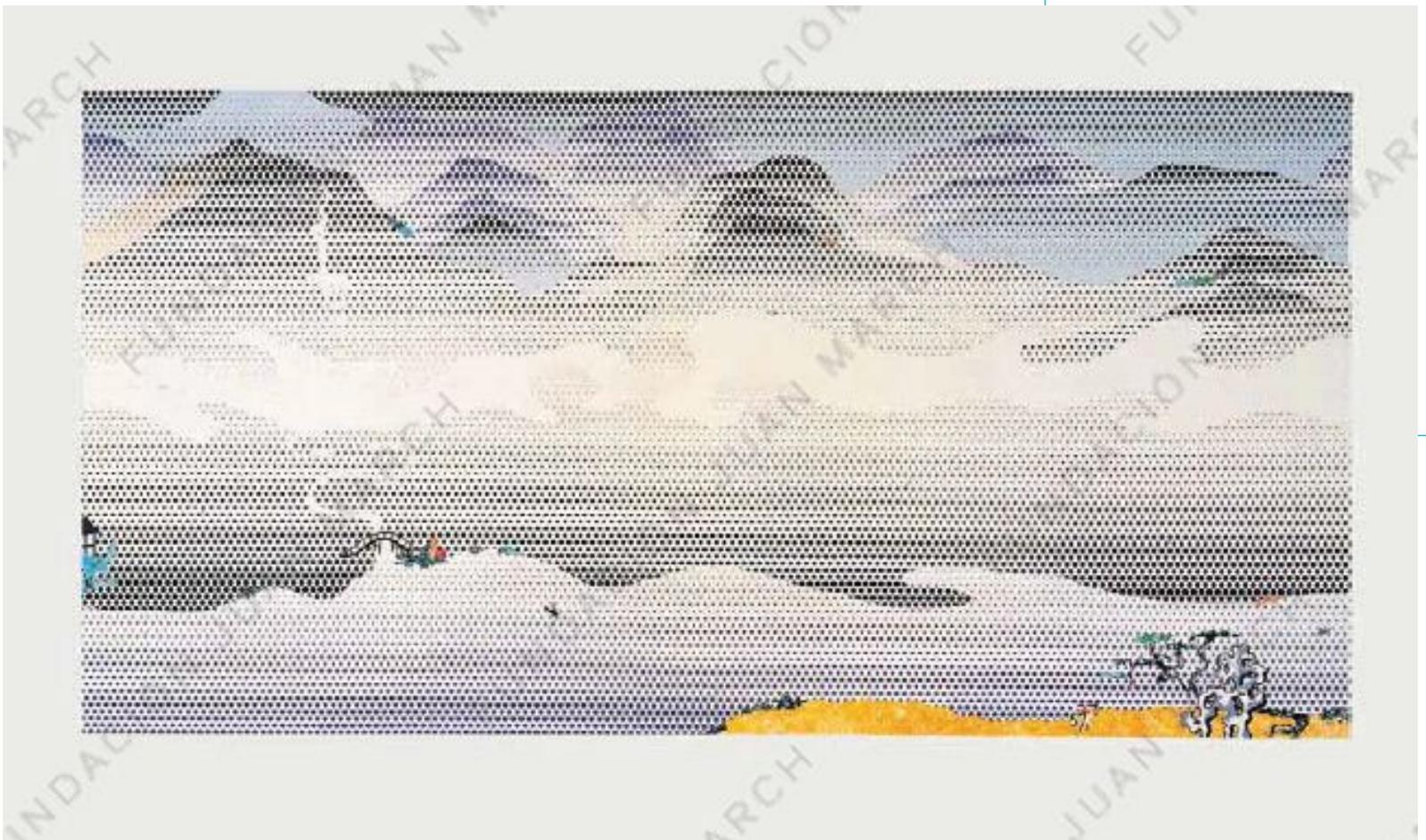
Hugo Munsterberg. **The Landscape Painting of China and Japan.**  
Rutland, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co.,  
1955. Pages 46-47, 68-69



Pierre & Susanne Rambach. **Gardens of Longevity in China and Japan: The Art of the Stone Raisers.** New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1987. Pages 82-83



Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 75



Collage for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 76



**Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1997.  
Oil and Magna on canvas.  
79 x 156 inches. CAT. 77





Drawing for **House with Gray Roof**, 1997.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 78



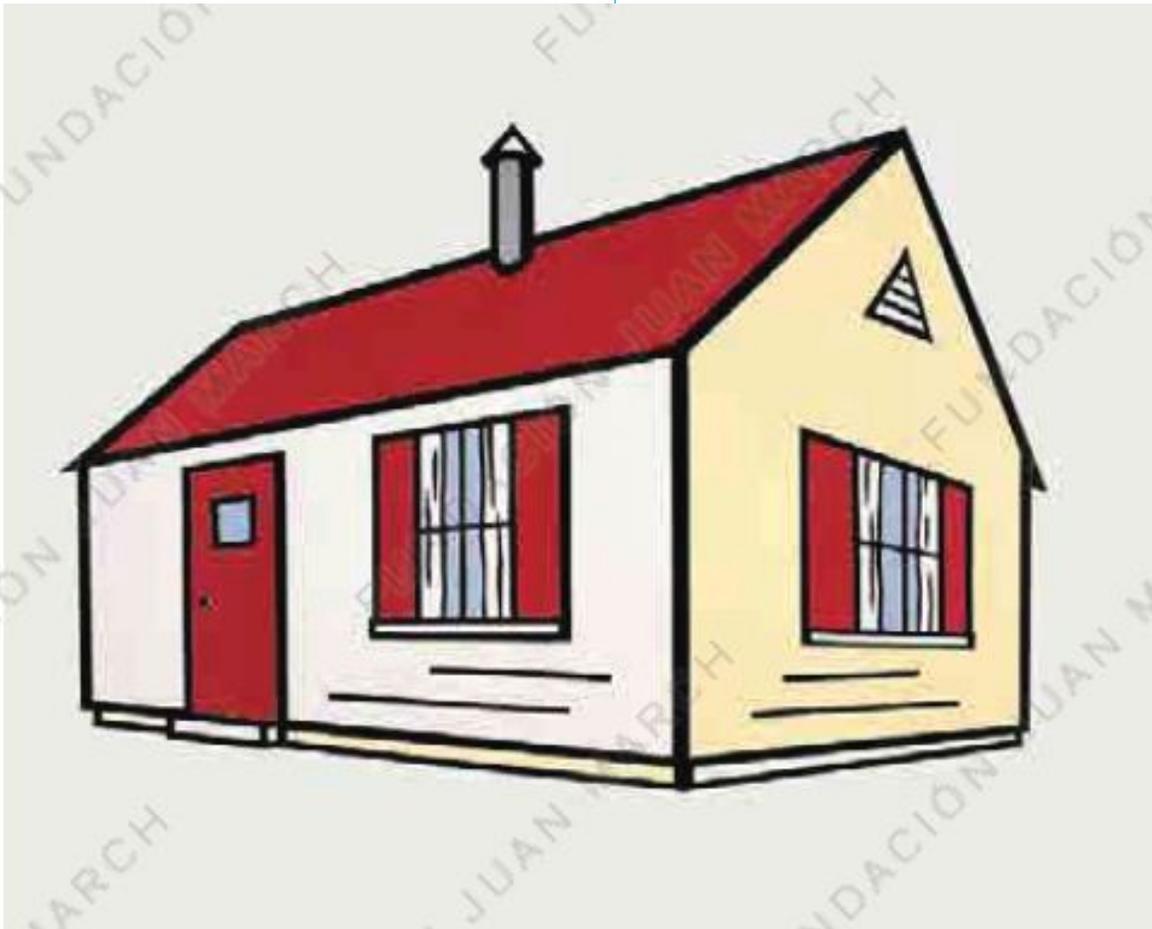
Polaroid of maquette for **House I** on Southampton  
studio lawn, ca. 1996



Full-scale Maquette for **House I**, 1996. Painted wood. 124 x 201 x 44 inches. CAT. 79



Drawings for **House II**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 80



Collage for **House II**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 32 1/2 x 39 1/4 inches. CAT. 81



105

Drawings for **House III** and **Landscape in Fog**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 82



Collage for **Small House**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 83



**Small House**, 1997. Painted cast aluminum. Edition of 8.  
17 7/8 x 26 7/16 x 8 1/2 inches. CAT. 84

Drawing for  
**Hologram**, 1996.  
Graphite and colored  
pencils on tracing  
paper. CAT. 85



**Black minibook** by  
**PIGNA**, page 5



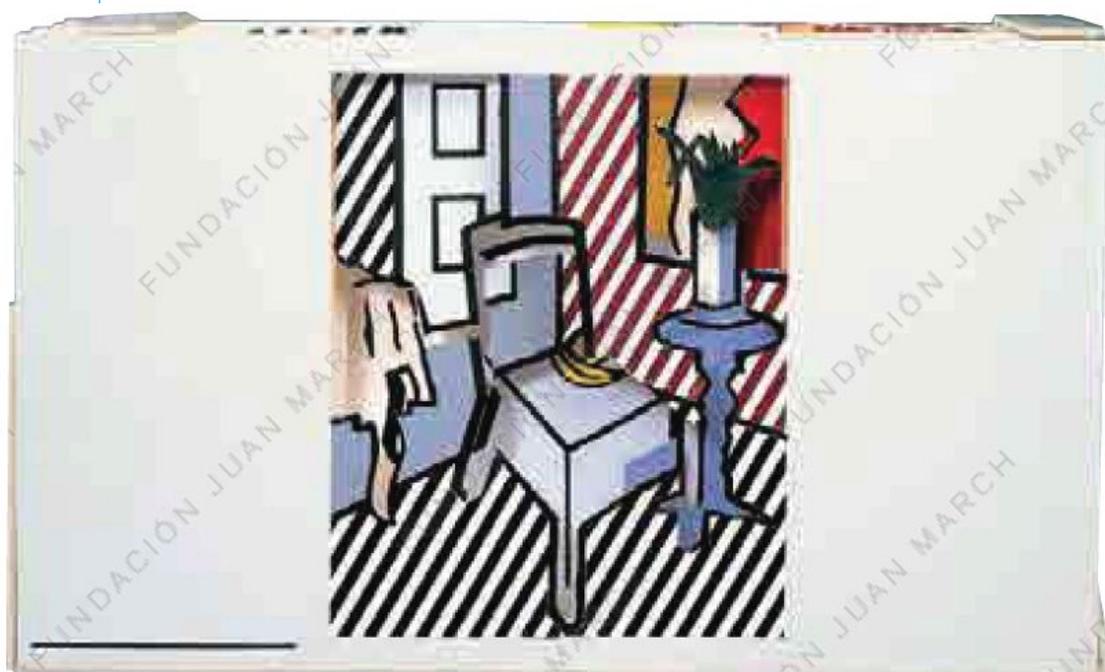
**Vernon Royal**  
**Compositions**  
**notebook**, page 5



Collage for **Hologram**,  
1997. Tape on board.  
12 3/8 x 10 inches.  
CAT. 88

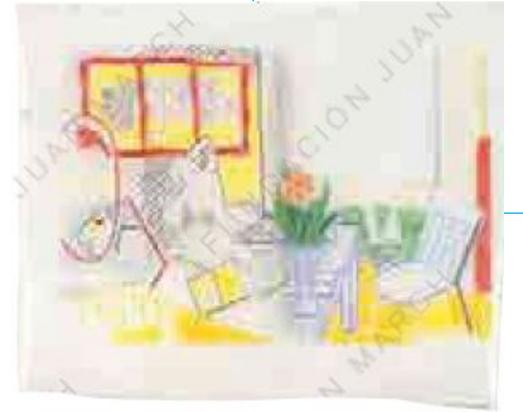


Collage for **Hologram**, 1997. Tape, graphite and black marker on board. CAT. 86

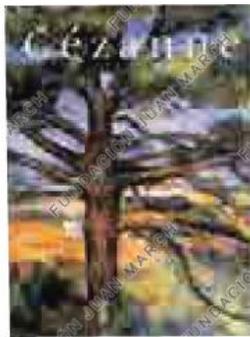


Maquette for **Hologram Interior**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on foam core. CAT. 87

Drawing for Reclining Nude I, Aurora, 1997. Graphite and marker on polyester tracing film. CAT. 89



Drawing for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on polyester tracing paper. CAT. 91



Collage for "The Leo Book ICI Salutes Leo Castelli". October 9, 1997. Tape on board. CAT. 93



Jane Watkins. **Cezanne**. Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1996. Pages 222-223

**Henri Matisse: Dessins et Sculpture**. Paris: Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou & Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1975. Pages 202-203



Drawing for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997.  
Graphite and colored pencils on paper. CAT. 90

## 1997 STILL LIFE WITH RECLINING NUDE

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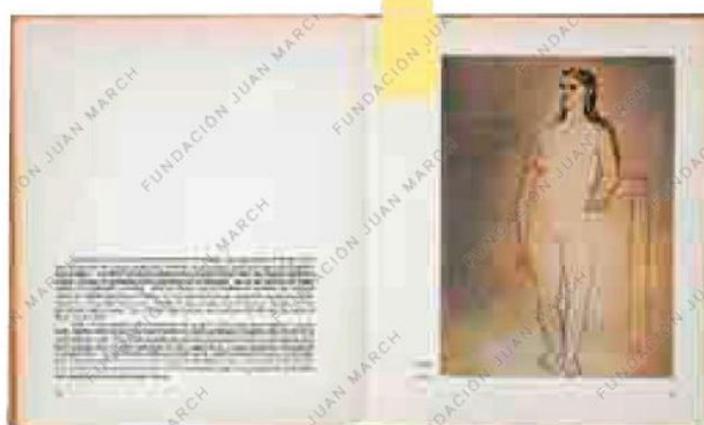
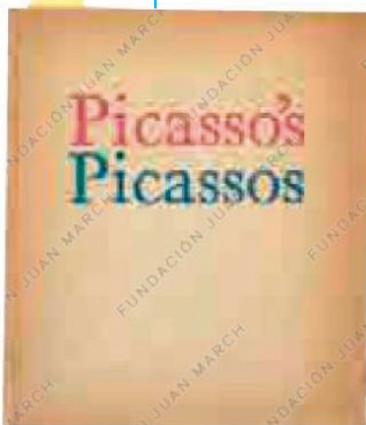


Collage for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997.  
Painted and printed paper on board.  
40 1/8 x 60 1/4 inches. CAT. 92

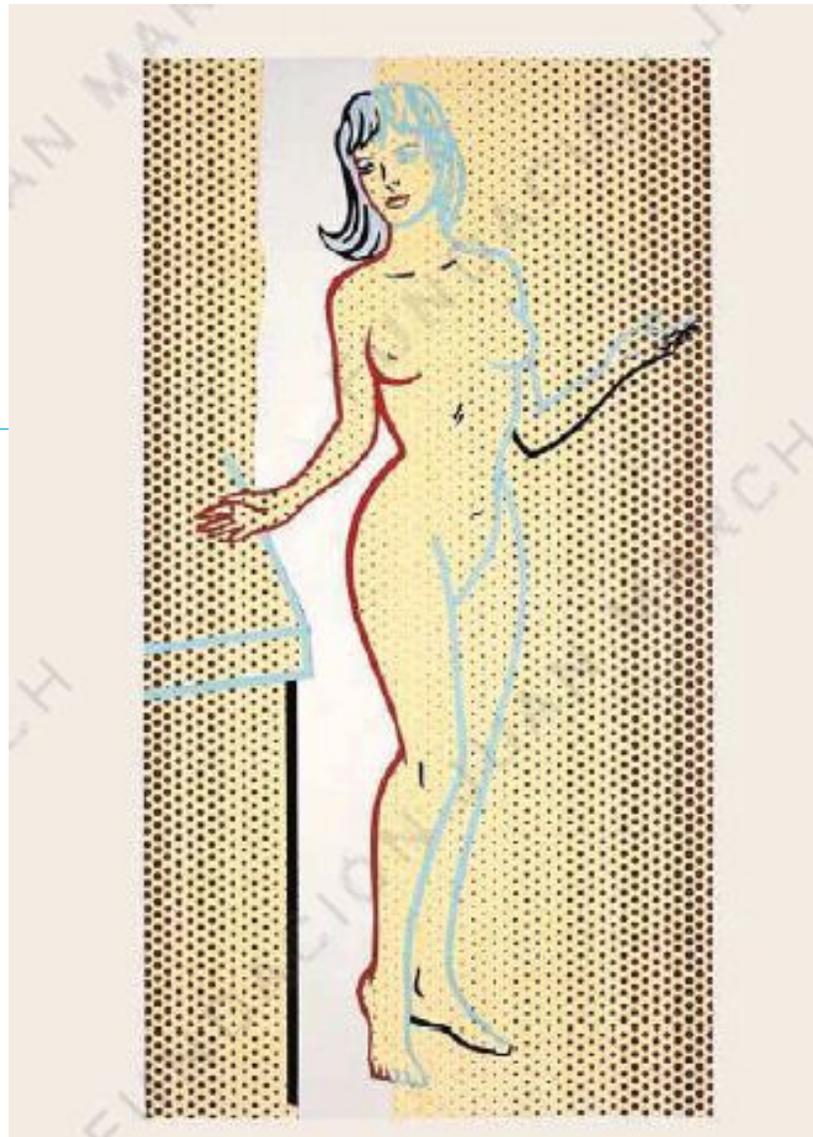
Drawing for **Nude**,  
1997. Graphite on  
tracing paper. CAT. 94



Drawing for **Nude**, 1997. Graphite on paper. CAT. 95



David Douglas Duncan.  
**Picasso's Picassos.**  
New York: Harper &  
Brothers, 1968

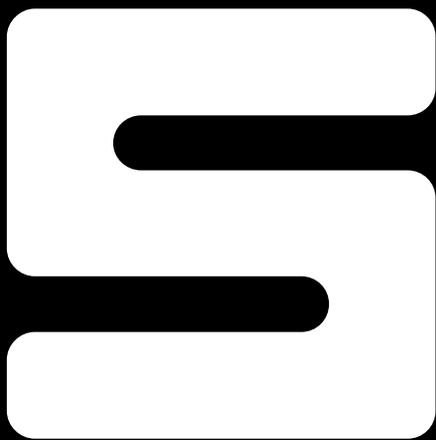


Collage for **Nude**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. CAT. 96



**Nude**, 1997. Oil and Magna on canvas. 82 1/2 x 45 inches. CAT. 97





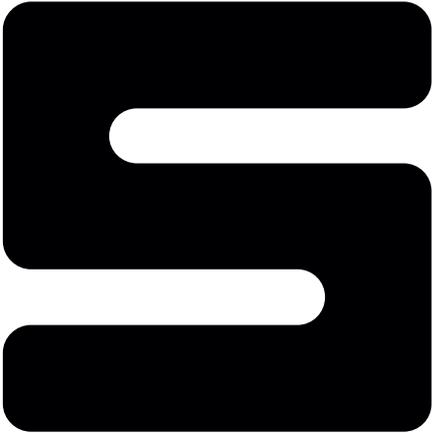
Lichtenstein in the back  
room of Leo Castelli's  
Broadway Gallery pulling  
out one of his Perfect/  
Imperfect paintings to be  
hung for a show, 1987.  
Photo by Bob Adelman

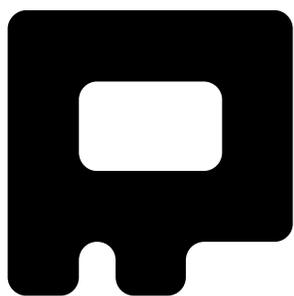


**AT CLOSE  
RANGE:  
ROY  
LICHTENSTEIN  
AT WORK**

Avis Berman

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oy Lichtenstein's creative and technical processes, his daily routines and his larger concerns, were observed at close range by a number of people. First among those who saw him at work and gained immediate knowledge of how he made his art were his studio assistants.

Artists themselves, these young painters and sculptors were every-day witnesses to what Lichtenstein painted and drew, what materials he used, how he ran his studio, and what mattered to him as an artist and as a man. He was an employer and a friend to them, not a mythological figure on a pedestal. They remembered him candidly and saw him at close range, and their recollections, which have been assembled as part of the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation's oral history program, are among the most effective and valuable in compiling a portrait of Lichtenstein as an artist dedicated to re-examining problems of form, composition, interpretation, and technique. Naturally, Lichtenstein himself also communicated his aims and interests in interviews, but he was even more expansive when he lectured and could express issues of paramount importance to him. Transcripts of published and unpublished interviews and lectures with Lichtenstein from 1962 to 1997 have been preserved in the Foundation's archives.

Just as the works of art in this exhibition are more revealing of the changes, variations, and hesitations than a display of finished paintings alone might be, the excerpts from the interviews, lectures, and oral histories by Lichtenstein and his assistants presented below also examine and elucidate in unusual detail the many stages, adjustments, and insights necessary for the artist to emerge with a full-blown aesthetic and a style that was deliberately made to look as if it were produced without sensibility or struggle.

# ORIGINS AND FIRST PRINCIPLES

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Above: Lichtenstein in a New York City supermarket, ca. 1962. Photo by Ivan Karp. Opposite page: Lichtenstein in his studio in New York with one of his "Picasso" paintings, 1990. Photo by Bob Adelman

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: [If you] take into account when I started and what the art world was like then [in the 1950s]—the calligraphic line and interesting modulation and surface were considered artistic—[...] to leave out those textures and make lines and surfaces seemed to have no beauty in those terms, [...] [yet] they started out the same way. Abstract Expressionists tried to put down the nastiest and most anti-art thing they could—Pollock with the footprints and the cigarette butts—but what seemed to be tough and difficult became kind of beautiful. And that seems to happen with every style. At the time it was a desire to re-think things and to make a tougher and more incisive statement. [...] Then there were the comics themselves and to do anything that was narrative was also considered non-art. It just seemed an area that broke all [...] rules, but I didn't feel they were rules. I also wanted a style that was more in touch with the environment [...]. We were not living in a beautiful environment—it was not Paris. It was an American kind of industrial environment and communication was done [...] with dots and printing. Printing meant that it's not genuine [...]. It's [...] not really art [...]. The reason it meant something to me was that I felt I could organize it and make a strong painting and say all these things.<sup>1</sup>

● R.L.: The change [from my earlier abstract work] worried me a little bit, because [I] really left a lot out. I think before I was trying to show everything I knew about art. I think [it] was almost the wrong pursuit [...] [to make] a painting that would embody all of my knowledge about art. But it didn't [...]. Now I'm willing to leave out, for a much more forceful expression [...] a lot that I know, and sacrifice something. But I think it has a unifying effect on the work, actually.<sup>2</sup>

● R.L.: I didn't do so much with [specific] brand-name consumer goods, but I used certain commercial references, and they were meant to be ambiguous. But I see it as a vernacular subject

being brought into high art [...] the high art of Abstract Expressionism against the low art of what we were doing. So I see the subject as vernacular, and the means, also, of portraying the subject as vernacular, to use instead of an Abstract Expressionist calligraphic line, which signified beauty and high art [...] a line, or a mark, or lack of modulation, or dots, or diagonals, or any of those symbols of commercial art. I used a vehicle or style that seemed also to be vulgarized [...] to make the subject and the technique compatible. It was just lucky, because I was actually copying cartoons, which just did it automatically, at the beginning. But [I wanted] to bring it into high art, through ordering it, through unifying it, but not changing its appearance very much from what seemed to be commercial.

● R.L.: I still think I have elements of that [...] same irony [...]. [I'm] still using symbols of printing. I think it's taken on a different kind of meaning, and it certainly doesn't look as different from other art as it did then. [But] I never thought that I was leaving the world of fine art when I did the first things.<sup>3</sup>

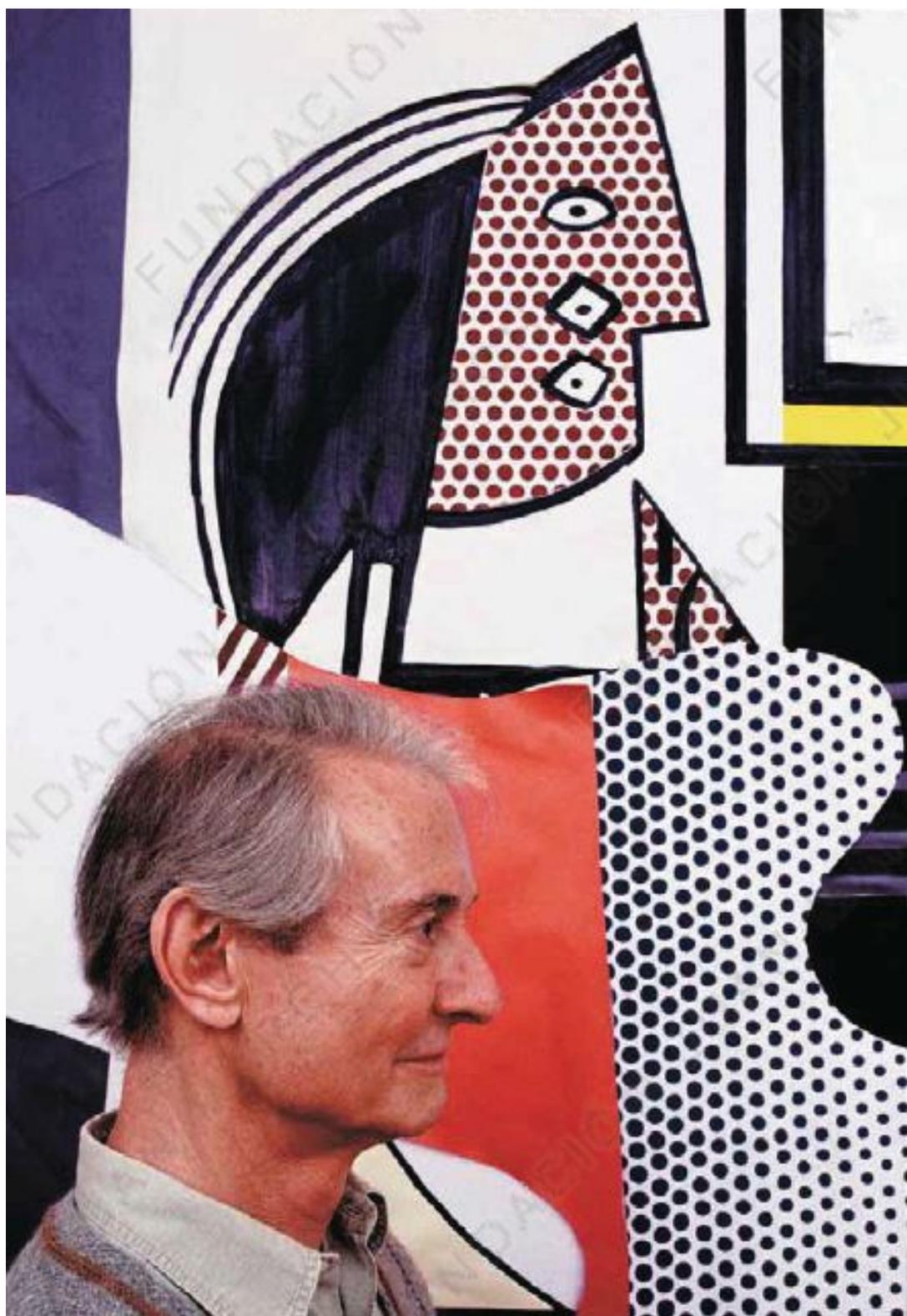
● R.L.: I think many people miss the central tendency of the work. [...] I'm interested not in the object—and I don't care what, say, a cup of coffee looks like. I only care about how it's drawn, and what, through the additions of various commercial artists, all through the years, it has come to be, and what symbol has evolved through both the expedience of the working of the commercial artists and their bad drawing, and the reproduction machinery that has gotten this image of a coffee cup, for instance, to look like through the years. So it's only the depicted image, the crystallized symbol that has arrived. In that sense, it's like classical art, in that there's a classical eye or classical nose that gets redrawn. [...] And although it's probably different in certain ads, we have a mental image of a sort of the commercialized coffee cup. It's that particular image that [I'm] interested

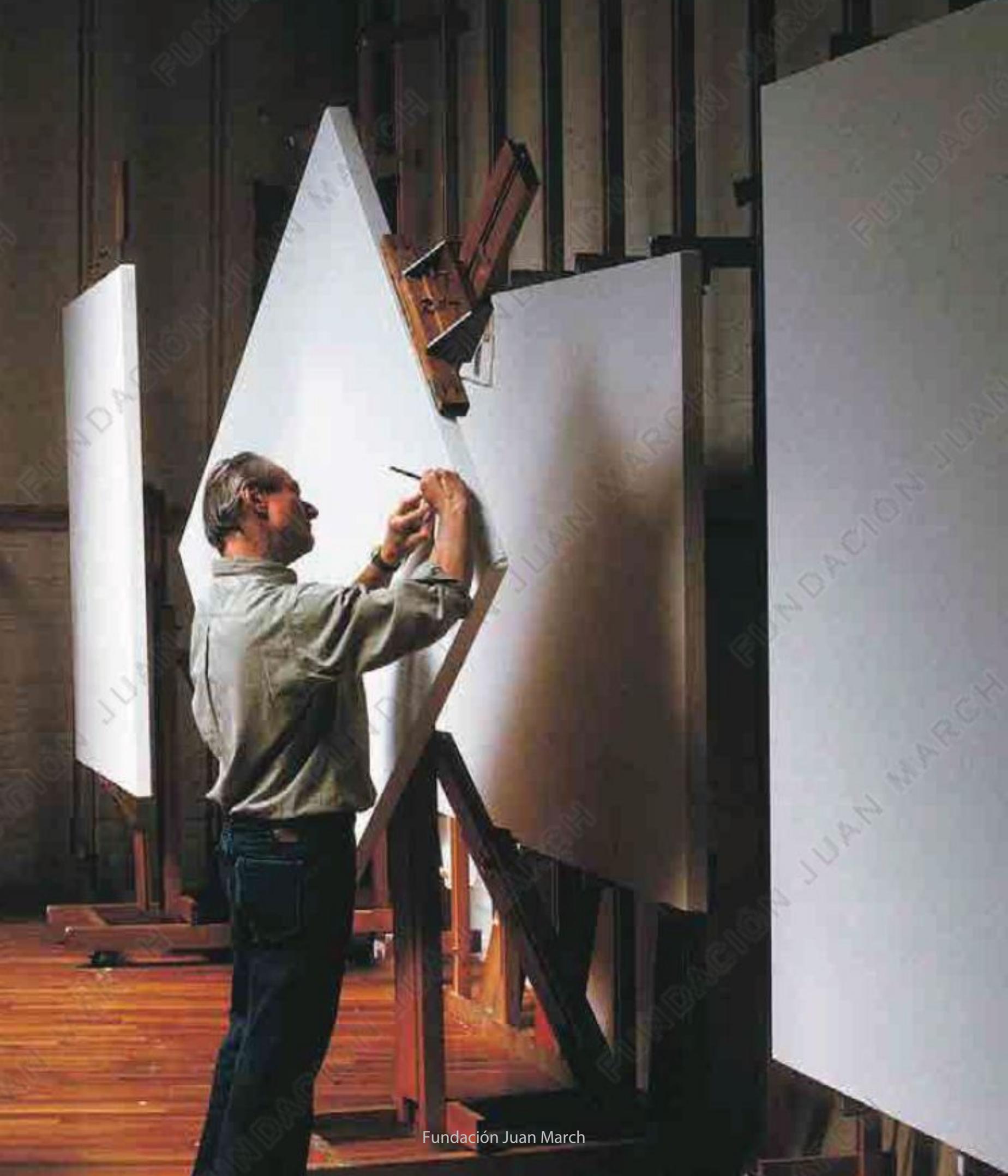
in depicting. I'm never drawing the object itself, I'm only drawing a depiction of the object—a kind of crystallized symbol of it.<sup>4</sup>

● R.L: Pop Art countered all of my training. Everything I did in school was involved in a direct, expressionist response to nature. Then it became more abstract, and had elements of Cubism [...]. When I said I was responding to nature, I was responding to Manet, or Cézanne, or van Gogh. [...] [B]ecause European art history is what I was grounded in [...]. Obviously, I didn't invent the idea of responding to nature in that way. It had been invented through a succession of artists through history, and I would be drawing like a child if it weren't for that. So the idea that you're responding to nature is something just in your head. You're actually responding to the history of art, the things you were taught, and what you think is a direct response to nature—which, in my case, was a direct response to [...] Manet or [...] Picasso.<sup>5</sup>

● R.L: Generally, artists, when they draw, are not really seeing nature *as it is*. They are projecting on nature their familiarity with other people's art.<sup>6</sup>

● R.L: I still have my early influence of Cubist Picasso, which I've been running away from all my life. I think that's the biggest influence of the twentieth century. It wasn't until I "did" a Picasso that I felt liberated from its presence, but I think some things of mine are still very influenced by Cubism anyway. My early works of separate objects on blank grounds were really an attempt to get away from Cubism. Using German Expressionist brushstrokes was another.<sup>7</sup>





# THE STUDIO AND ITS RHYTHMS

● CARLENE MEEKER: The studio was big and simple. Roy had a great big drafting table in the corner, and he used to spend a lot of time drawing there. [...] Roy had already designed the easels so that they were all attached to the wall [...] so that at any given moment, he could easily be working on anywhere between fifteen and twenty paintings, and they could all be in the studio. Then he had his own separate easel, which turned, and there could be a painting on that. Then he had a movable wall, which he designed, which was a white wall on wheels, so it would roll back against the other wall. We'd pull this wall out, and we could work on both sides of that, if we wanted to. He had very intelligently designed the space for maximum productivity.<sup>8</sup>

● RICHARD KALINA: Roy was an exceedingly hard worker. He would be there in the studio working. He wasn't on the telephone, making deals. He had a great sense of humor but he was very serious about what he did, and he always had multiple projects going. [...] He was able to separate his work into logical and discrete phases of conception and execution. I had never really been the kind of person who could just stand in front of a blank canvas and make paintings, so I was very comfortable with the way Roy went about things—his orderly, separated, rational procedure, but, still, with a great deal of the hand. It was logical and predictable, but it was a real sensibility too. It always struck me as a very good way to get a lot of work done.

● R.K.: He seemed to have a general idea of what he was doing, and then he would work on drawings, and then a series of paintings—if they were paintings. He was also working on multiples and sculptures and prints [...]. Working with Roy showed me how an utter professional operated. [...] There were tasks that the assistants did and then there were tasks that Roy did. Essentially, the mechanical tasks were the tasks that Roy left to others, and the ones that required the hand and drawing were invariably his.<sup>9</sup>

● CAREY CLARK: I understood how his hand was always there. [...] Roy would make an opaque projection on the canvas and then rework the whole thing that was projected. The assistants never participated in the initial drawing. Then when you would start laying in the color, he would mark out what the colors were. The assistants would paint flat areas within the drawing and he would go in and start making the changes and painting the lines. He was really controlling the process even though the assistants were doing the manual work. I never felt they participated in the design or drawing process.<sup>10</sup>

● RICHARD DIMMLER: We worked from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and we would have lunch there. There would always be sandwiches. Roy liked a silly kind of ham-and-Swiss-on-white-bread kind of sandwich. Roy was very basic about certain things. He always had cups of coffee going, all day long. All Roy wanted to do was paint. That's it. He got up, we had to have lunch during the day, but otherwise he went back and painted until Dorothy told him he had to stop and do something social for the evening.

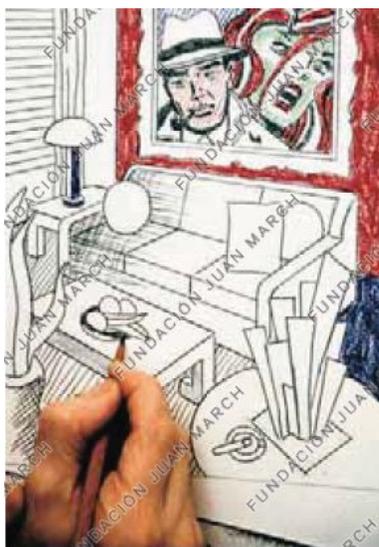
● R.D.: Roy would start by doing a drawing. Everything from Roy came from the sketch in the morning he made at his drafting table or the cartoon he might do at night. I know he and Dorothy would watch TV, and he had sketch pads and he would churn out [...] ideas. Then he would put them up and turn it into a drawing. Every painting started off with a cartoon, every sculpture started off with a cartoon, and got revised, enlarged, and continued down the process.<sup>11</sup>



Above: Lichtenstein sketching in his studio in New York, 1990. Opposite page: Lichtenstein paints on his rotating easel in his New York studio, 1990. Photos by Bob Adelman

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDEA

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Above: Lichtenstein in his New York studio coloring in the drawing that will become the maquette for his Large Interior with Reflections (Revlon) mural, 1993. Photo by Bob Adelman. Opposite page: Lichtenstein in his studio at 36 West 26th Street, New York, 1962-63. Photo by Ken Heyman

● CARLENE MEEKER: Roy simply preferred to work on more than one project at once, and if that meant that that particular project had fifteen paintings, I think that's the way that he wanted to do it [...]. He saw it in his mind.

● C.M.: He would work on a series of sketches. That's usually how it started. He would work at his drafting table on sketches. I would see a lot of them just hit the floor, a lot of them hit the garbage basket. One of his habits was to pick up a drawing, crunch it up, and throw it on the floor. I learned that any time Roy ever did that, it was garbage. It was really garbage. So if I did any cleaning up in the studio, it went in the garbage.

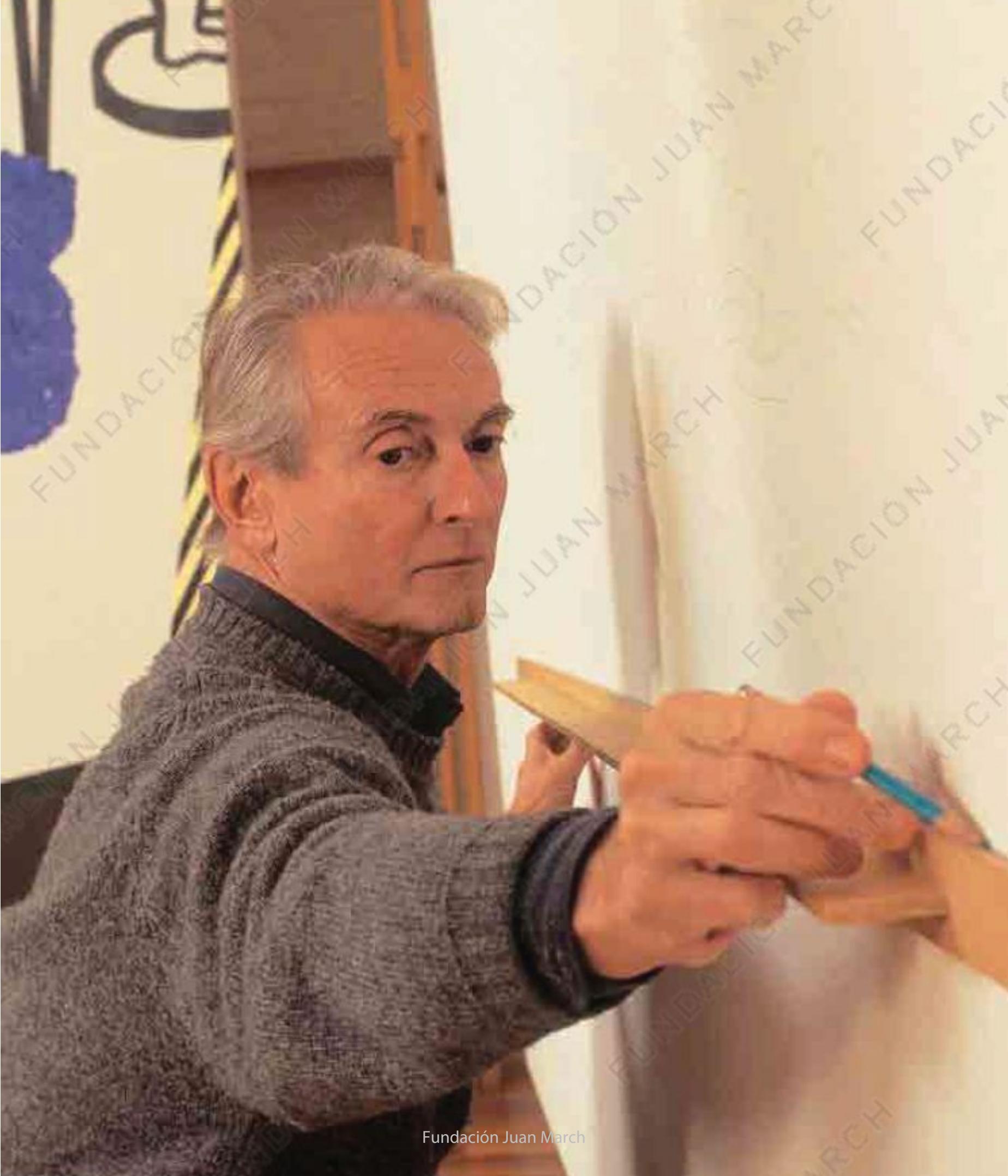
● C.M.: He would generate these drawings, and I know he had the whole thing in his head. It was already there. He just had to find the way to do it. He was never worried about the way to do it. What was important was the idea. The idea was the most important thing of all. So he would spend far more time working on the idea for a series or a project than anything else. It really didn't make any difference which series it was, it was all there.<sup>12</sup>

● CAREY CLARK: It was always a struggle deciding on the next group of paintings. That would be an anxiety-ridden period for him. Because he was always afraid of repeating himself or becoming formulaic. That made him very anxious.<sup>13</sup>

● CARLENE MEEKER: For his sources, he had mountains of magazines and [...] comic books. He had tons of books [...]. He loved images, and anything could be subject matter for him—even though he said subject matter wasn't important. [...] He collected enormous amounts of material. He also sent me to the New York Public Library. I had to do research for him in the picture files.<sup>14</sup>

● CAREY CLARK: For all his sophistication, Roy could be like a kid. He loved to go through catalogues for something like an appliance store, where they had all these stupid little drawings, with his scissors and composition books, cutting them out. He got this childlike relaxation out of what he was doing. I teased him once about getting so excited over these banal references, and he said, "I know. Can you believe they pay me to do this?"<sup>15</sup>





# DRAWING

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: In the beginning I didn't even keep drawings. They just fell on the floor and were swept up [...]. They went out with the trash [...] because they show a kind of give-and-take and change—adjustments—that disappears. My style is not one of having give and take, it just comes out miraculously. It's just the style, but it isn't the way it happens. I collage these paintings over and over again, so I'm really working with it in the same way you would with an expressionist work, but I don't want traces of all that activity going on.<sup>16</sup>

● RICHARD KALINA: At the time I was there [1968-69], Roy seemed to make a point of saying that he really didn't do much in the way of drawing. A drawing for Roy seemed less an end in itself and more—and this is just my impression—a way of conceptualizing the painting that was coming. Drawing was also important as a working process, although the drawings were real things. They were there and were kept. I know that people were very interested in them.<sup>17</sup>

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: [The drawings don't] look as hard as the paintings, or as complete [...]. Because changes occur in the drawings, and the composition is worked out, usually in the drawings, more the way it would be in classical art than in the way it would be in Expressionist art, where it isn't just the interaction, it's fairly well worked out before it gets to the painting. It's continued on the painting, but I have a fair idea of what it will be. I do a lot with collage, and try purposely not to show the tracks of my work in the finished painting—which, again, is in opposition to Abstract Expressionism, which really went out of its way to show this interaction. [...] I think you actually have to be quite giving, and understanding about change when you do work on a painting. Otherwise, you really can't get it together.<sup>18</sup>

● R.L.: like to do the drawings for the paintings, where I begin to organize the material and get the idea for the material [...]. That's always pleasurable. Redrawing it when it's on the canvas is something I like to do. When I project it, I try to draw it again, trying not to copy the projection. [...] I redraw the position of each line. I know approximately where it's going to be. Then I redo that. I semi-erase the whole thing, and I draw it again.

● R.L.: I'm trying to make the drawing as powerful as possible. I start with the color, which I have already visualized, but it usually changes, because the drawing that I've done is not really like the painting. The quality of the colored pencil is not the same as the paint. Also the thickness of lines changes. Because of the dots and the diagonal lines and unmodulated color, I work in a color key that I love to play with. I try to make it different from painting to painting. You do whatever is required to make more of a color or make it brighter or duller or whatever you have to do to give you the sense of wholeness.<sup>19</sup>



Above and opposite page: Lichtenstein at work in his studio in Southampton, Long Island, New York, 1991. Photos by Michael Abramson

# COLLAGE

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Above: Lichtenstein pasting down a paper cutout for an interior collage in his New York studio, 1993. Photo by Bob Adelman. Opposite page: Lichtenstein at work in his studio in Southampton, Long Island, New York, 1991. Photo by Michael Abramson

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: I do a lot of [collaging] in the paintings. I start something and keep adding to it—putting pieces of paper down temporarily and looking at the image [before coloring the area with actual paint]. Because to do all those graduated dots and dotted areas and diagonal areas and then take them all off and redo the painting is punishing work [...]. It's just much easier to try it out first in collage to get everything I want.<sup>20</sup>

● RICHARD DIMMLER: Roy's way to create something was by drawing and then by collage, putting it up and taking it down. He would have different pieces of colored paper—we'd paint up sheets of paper. He would go to the cabinet if he wanted a red, yellow, or blue, and cut a piece of paper to a shape that he might insert into that area, put double-sided tape on the back, and put it in. He would contemplate it, let it stay, work on another painting, and then come back to it. I learned from Roy that you always should have multiple paintings going at once, because you never got lost or had a difficult moment with the paintings. If you got jammed or stuck at that moment, you started on the next one, and made headway. Meanwhile, what's happening is that your subconscious is resolving the problem that you hadn't solved at that moment.

● R.D.: Cutting pieces of paper out in a proposed shape proved to me that Roy really wasn't an expressionist at all. He didn't go back, attacking the canvas over and over again. It was so rare that we would take an area out, because it had been resolved by the appliqué process—the collage.

● R.D.: There might be anywhere from four to eight pieces in process at any one time. The studio was set up with the easel system that Roy designed and built. It was a very clever idea—he could take a painting and rotate it, and stop in any position. [...] He would use those for the line work, because you could move one to any position [...]. So the

painting was always centered on the easel, and you could adjust the height of the easel, and you could adjust the [vertical] angle as well. He would constantly be working in a vertical, so that if any paint dripped, it dripped down—instead of doing horizontal lines, which were harder to do.<sup>21</sup>

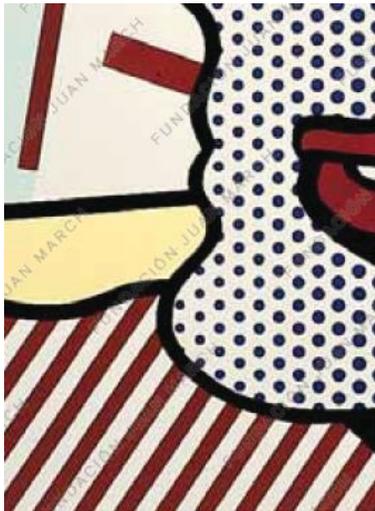
● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: [T]he drawing and the collage [are] done in the same spirit that I am working on in [the] painting. I [...] take a slide of the collage and project it onto the canvas. I [...] draw the work in pencil on the canvas. So what is generally to be done on this painting is already there for me to see. But I like to start anew, putting marks on the canvas that I feel are related to one another in a way that has nothing to do with the subject matter that the mark represents. For that reason, I [...] put the painting sideways. I usually put it sideways or upside down, or in some other position, in an effort to suppress the influence of the subject matter and illusory space on the marks I'm making.

● R.L.: I make the mark in black tape and I start almost anywhere, usually on the periphery, because I like to form from the outside in. [...] I put a mark down and try to sense its position relative to the other marks. There is nothing rational about their placement. This sense is intuitive [...]. And the more marks that occur the more complex the relationship becomes. This process [...] [b]uilds in your mind as you do the work. You are re-wiring your brain, which is true for all learning.<sup>22</sup>



# COLOR, DOTS AND DIAGONALS

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Above: Detail of *Art Critic*, 1996. Opposite page: Lichtenstein touching up an area of one of his *Chinese Landscape* paintings in his New York studio, 1996. Photo by Bob Adelman

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: I limited my colors and the work has a certain appearance that may be striking because of it [...]. When de Stijl painters like Mondrian have used more pastel colors, I don't think it's successful [...]. If you have off-colors in a rigid style, there's sort of an inconsistency there [...] when you do it.<sup>23</sup>

● RICHARD DIMMLER: Only in the mid-1970s did Roy step out of his very singular palette. Before he had the primaries and green. In 1974 is the first time I see a kind of a tone, and a slightly pinky-ochre color. His palette before was all about the printing process—everything could be broken down into the printing inks, the red, yellow, blue, and occasionally the green. By keeping it to that, he kept the images strong, and he never had to get into the painterly aspects of the nuances and the color and this and that. Because he was going for the transferable public image, which was based on newspaper printing and Benday dots.<sup>24</sup>

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: I think there is something more incisive about a six-color palette—I'm thinking of red, blue, yellow, green, black, and white—that I began with. [...] [Now] I have thirty to forty, but I like to keep them looking primary. It is tougher to use fewer, and more interesting to use other colors, but I don't want it to get pretty.<sup>25</sup>

● R.L.: In painting, modulated color is usually interpreted as atmosphere, and therefore suggests the distancing of the painting's subject matter from the viewer. My use of evenly repeated dots and diagonal lines and uninflected color areas suggest that my work is *right where it is*, right on the canvas, definitely not *a window into the world*. Also, the dots and diagonals and unmodulated color suggest that my sources are two-dimensional. [...] I think everyone's sources are two-dimensional; [...] that's a principal idea in my work. Even my early pre-Pop work was mostly about other people's work and historical paintings. Also, the use of black lines and dots or

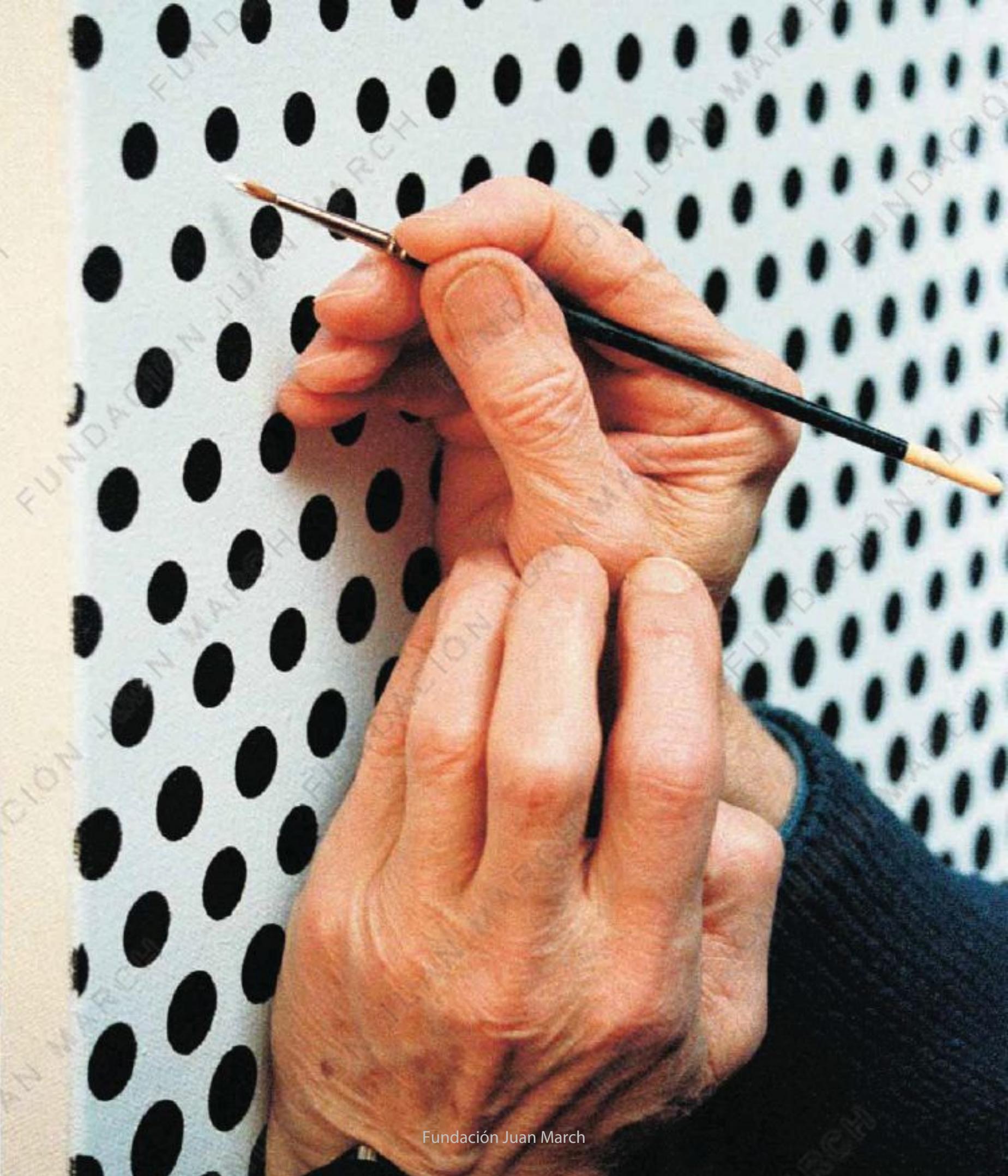
diagonals and unmodulated color afford me the opportunity to produce an unusual personal color key. And imitation printing, as a style, affords me a modern, non-European way of painting. The enlargement of these comic book devices make obvious that we take for reality configurations that are very abstract [...]. I do this partly because I don't think the importance of the art has anything to do with the importance of the subject matter. I think importance resides more in the unity of composition and in the inventiveness of perception.<sup>26</sup>

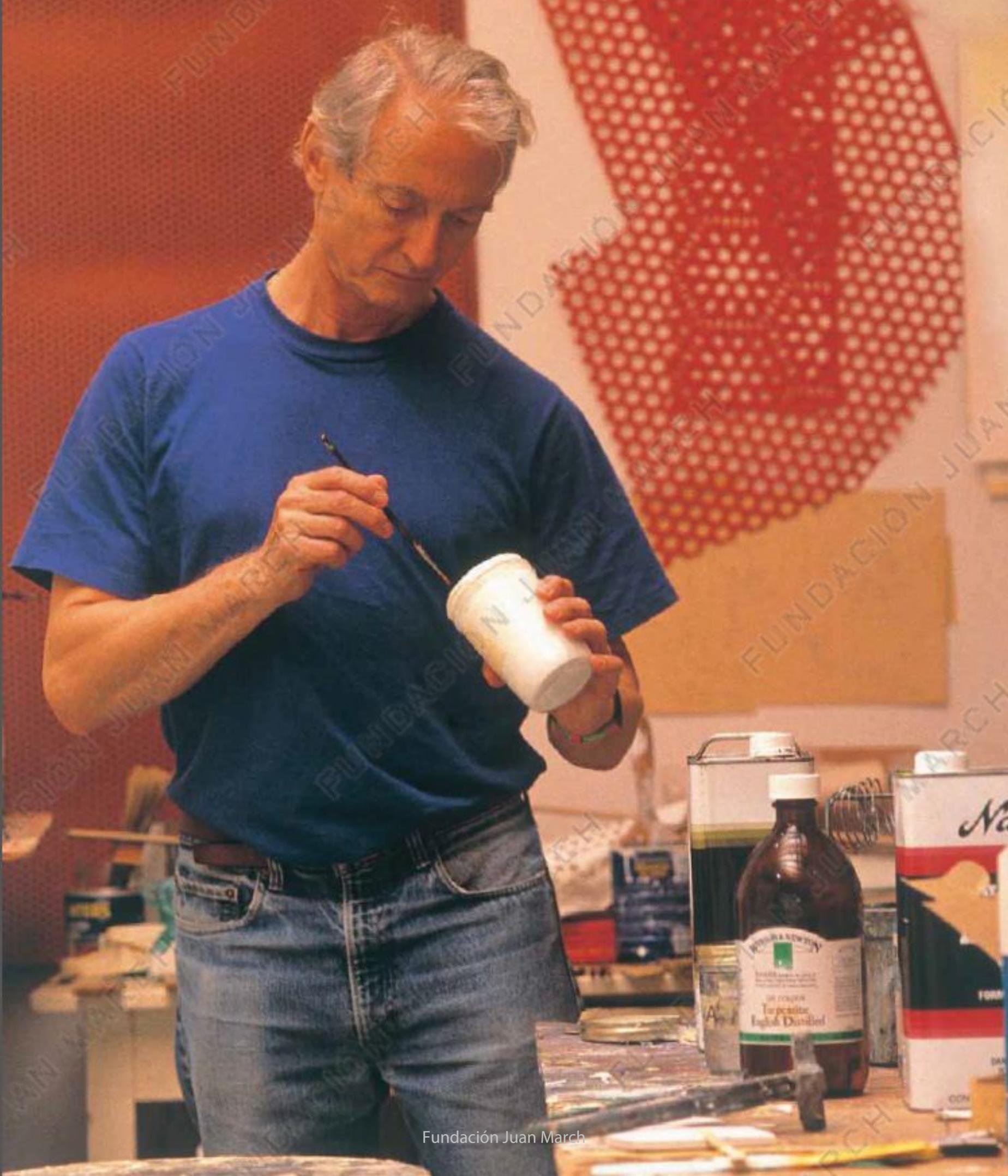
● RICHARD KALINA: Once Carlene Meeker came along, Roy never put the dots in again. Roy's technical production of the dots evolved over the years. He started out first with hand-painted dots and then switched to metal screens, and then to custom-made, dotted stencil papers. The dotting became more and more formal and rationalized. Actually, I think at first they were fill-ins for the face, and then they became structural objects in themselves. They had to be done perfectly.<sup>27</sup>

● CARLENE MEEKER: Roy had dotted his earlier paintings with this metal screen [...]. Perhaps watching me struggle with it [...] gave him the idea to find a company that could make these dots on paper. When he finally did, he just ordered tons of it.

● C.M.: I was supposed to put the dots on all the paintings. Roy never put the dots on the paintings. And I mixed the paint always. The work that I was doing for him was a young person's job. [...] It was very time-consuming, and it was enormously labor-intensive. [...] Roy had gotten to a point in his life where he really wanted to work on the ideas for the paintings. He did not want to do the production work.<sup>28</sup>

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: The dots became more and more perfected. You see them become larger as things go on and I develop different means of painting the dots.<sup>29</sup>

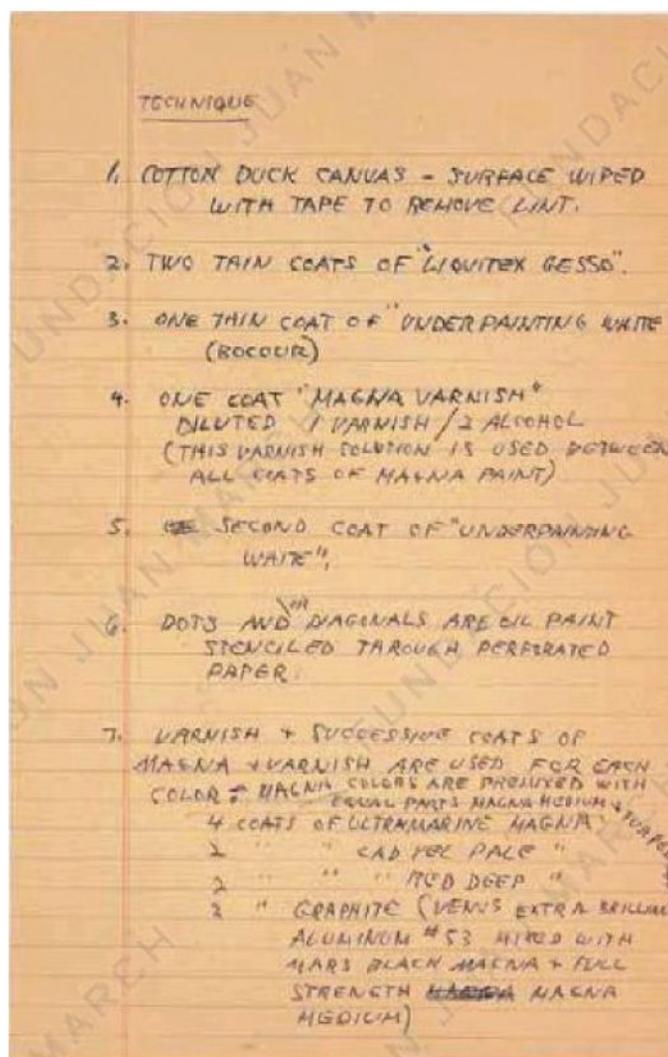




# MATERIALS

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: I used a material called Rowlux, which is a trade name for a lenticular plastic that has the characteristic that as you move it, it seems to move. [T]hese pieces of plastic seemed perfect for sky and water, which seem to move or change their appearance constantly as you look at them. It seemed to be the perfect quotidian way of producing the appearance of a landscape that seemed, on the one hand, to be more real because it moved, but obviously less real because you knew it was made of a material that produced this particular trick.<sup>30</sup>

● CARLENE MEEKER: The dots were always done in oil paint, no matter what the color, and the ground and solid tones were always done in magna. Magna dries very fast, and Roy loved that quality. He also loved the very flat, opaque quality of the magna. [...] Magna dries within seconds, which would have been unworkable if we had tried to use it for the dots.<sup>31</sup>



Left: Lichtenstein at work in his studio, 1991. Photo by Michael Abramson.  
Right: Lichtenstein's handwritten notes on "Technique," undated

# THEMES AND SUBJECT MATTER

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**Above:** Lichtenstein in his Southampton studio working on *Interior with Three Hanging Lamps*, 1991. **Photo by Michael Abramson.** **Opposite page:** Lichtenstein applying one brushstroke to *Painting with Statue of Liberty*, 1983. **Photo by Kan Okano**

## Interiors

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: [The “Interiors” were] an idea I kept having about the way rooms look in the yellow pages of the phone book. That’s mostly where they come from, usually from ads for mirrors, upholstery, or something of that kind.

● R.L.: When I was in Italy [in 1989] I noticed a sign along the highway about furniture that had the right appearance, and that spurred me into thinking about this imagery again. [...] I was at the American Academy in Rome. That’s when I did this valuable research in the yellow pages of the Rome telephone book.

● R.L.: I maintained the corner of the room situation and its perspective. [...] I might add a mirror where there wasn’t one, or I would substitute a different painting, or add a second painting. The little objects were usually different, but the basic concept was very much the same.<sup>32</sup>

● R.L.: I put paintings on the walls of the “Interiors” that usually would never be in the same collection. The “Interiors” were ways of trying out kinds of paintings that I probably wouldn’t have painted as separate works, but which interested me. [...] The earlier ones were about the spare, deadly quality hotel and motel rooms seem to have. Later they turned into a collector’s living room. But the collections were put together in my mind.

● R.L.: What I liked about putting other paintings in my paintings, which I’ve done ever since *The Artist’s Studio* of 1970, is the trickiness of the situation. [...] Your impulse is to make the little painting function successfully for itself. But that is unimportant. Each contrast must work again within the larger whole.<sup>33</sup>

## Nudes

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: *Nude with Beach Ball* ... is a painting that is supposed to echo *Girl with Ball* that I did in 1961, but it’s an entirely different composition. Large areas of these paintings have dots, graduated in size, which represent *chiaroscuro*. Other areas have unmodulated color. This inconsistency is rarely seen in painting, but it’s something I’m interested in exploring. That is the art idea I have in mind. *Beach Scene with Starfish* refers to the group of small surrealist paintings by Picasso, his “On the Beach” series done in 1928 in Ginard. The same mix of areas of graduated dot size and unmodulated color is seen in this painting.<sup>34</sup>

● CARLENE MEEKER: The idea of a painting was always more important than the subject matter. Therefore [...] whatever idea you have, that governs everything. There are some artists where the subject matter is the absolute, most important thing they are doing. [...] But Lichtenstein didn’t want his art to be viewed that way. He wanted his work to be viewed as an idea—the idea being [not nude women, but] this style that he developed, based on commercial imagery. In his lifetime of work, it covered a huge span.<sup>35</sup>

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: I think there is a virtue in working a lot, and constantly re-examining a problem. You can get better at it.<sup>36</sup>

● R.L.: I don’t think you can determine any position for yourself [in the history of art]. History will define that for you.<sup>37</sup>



## Brushstrokes

● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: In 1965, I started to do “brushstroke” paintings. The first brushstroke painting came from a cartoon of a man painting a fence. The cartoon in the comic book depicted a hand, a paint brush, and paint strokes on a fence.<sup>38</sup> I did a painting from that and then decided to leave the hand and brush out of subsequent paintings and to focus on the brushstroke, because brushstrokes have such an important history in art. Brushstrokes are almost a symbol of art. These brushstroke paintings also resembled Abstract Expressionism.

● R.L.: Of course, visible brushstrokes in a painting convey a sense of grand gesture. But, in my hands, the brushstroke becomes a depiction of a grand gesture. So the contradiction between what I’m portraying and how I am portraying it is sharp. The brushstroke became very important for my work. I later did still lifes, portraits, and landscapes using cartoon brushstrokes, sometimes using a combination of cartoon and real brushstrokes.<sup>39</sup>

● R.L.: The color becomes more modulated and varied in the real brushstrokes [...]. And it was a more realized way of working. Then I mixed the two—cartoon brushstrokes and real brushstrokes. That allowed me to seem more painterly, and yet there was a reason for it. The real brushstrokes are just as pre-determined as the cartoon brushstrokes.<sup>40</sup>

● CAREY CLARK: When Roy started introducing the real brushstrokes he was really experimenting with a radical change, because he was introducing a gestural element. They were more structural than the flat planes, the way they were made, but they always looked very gestural.<sup>41</sup>

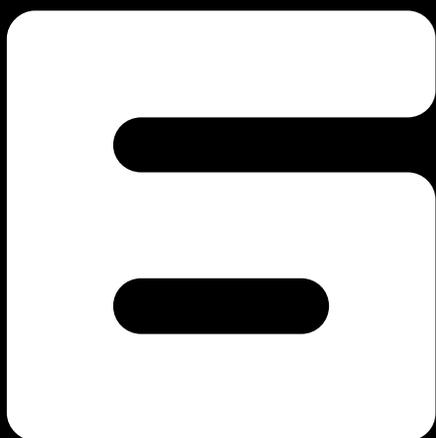


● ROY LICHTENSTEIN: *Laocoon*, which is a fairly large canvas, was done from the well-known sculpture [...]. I thought that all the curvilinear movement of the sculpture seemed to be in character with the brushstrokes I was using.<sup>42</sup>

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS  
AND NOTES**

I am grateful to Carey Clark, Richard Dimmler, Richard Kalina, and Carlene Meeker for sharing their memories of Roy Lichtenstein and permitting me to publish them for the first time in this essay. All quoted material from Lichtenstein's former staff members is drawn from my taped interviews conducted for the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation between 2003 and 2006, as part of its ongoing oral history project. The recordings have been transcribed, edited, corrected, and deposited in the Foundation's archives for final processing. It should be emphasized that because of time and space limitations, the testimony of some of the artist's long-time studio assistants who made important contributions to the production and completion of his work, most notably James dePasquale, Robert McKeever, and Carlos Ramos, could not be solicited for this essay. However, their recollections will be sought and included by the Foundation not only for its archives, but also in any future discussion of Lichtenstein's creative process. I also take pleasure in thanking my colleague Clare Bell, who directed me to several of Lichtenstein's most salient lectures and interviews and helped me to sort out various versions and sources of them.

1. Roy Lichtenstein, quoted in Charles A. Riley II, "Interview with Roy Lichtenstein at his Manhattan studio, June, 1992," in Michetti-Prod'Hom, Chantal et al., *Roy Lichtenstein* (Pully/Lausanne: FAE Musée d'Art Contemporain, 1992), p. 22. All taped interviews and/or transcripts as well as published sources cited in this essay are in the Foundation's archives.
2. Roy Lichtenstein, interview with Bici Hendricks [Nye Ffarrabas], December 7, 1962. Tape recording courtesy of Nye Ffarrabas.
3. Roy Lichtenstein, discussion with Richard Hamilton, moderated by Marco Livingston, Oxford, England, 1988. *Audio Arts* magazine, vol. 9, no. 2; tape recording courtesy of *Audio Arts*.
4. Lichtenstein, interview with Hendricks, 1962.
5. Lichtenstein, *Audio Arts* interview, 1988.
6. Roy Lichtenstein, "About Art" [typewritten remarks for a slide-assisted workshop given on November 12, 1995, in Kyoto, Japan].
7. Roy Lichtenstein, quoted in Mark Rosenthal, *Artists at Gemini: Celebrating the Twenty-fifth Year* (New York and Los Angeles: Harry N. Abrams with Gemini G.E.L., 1993), p. 105. Although many of Lichtenstein's pre-Pop paintings, pastels, and prints were based on a Cubist grid and facture, the first translation of a specific work of art by Picasso into a comic-strip mode took place in 1962 with the painting *Femme au Chapeau*. See *Lichtenstein's Picassos: 1962-1964* (New York: Gagosian Gallery, 1988) and Michael FitzGerald, *Picasso and American Art* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2006) for more information on Picasso and Lichtenstein.
8. Carlene Meeker, interview with author, August 13-15, 2003. A painter and writer, Carlene Meeker was a studio assistant for Roy Lichtenstein from 1968 to 1980.
9. Richard Kalina, interview with author, May 11, 2004. A painter and critic, Richard Kalina was a studio assistant for Roy Lichtenstein from 1968 to 1969.
10. Carey Clark, interview with author, November 10, 2006. A painter and framer, Carey Clark made frames for Roy Lichtenstein from 1981 to 1997.
11. Richard Dimmler, interview with author, January 28-29, 2006. A painter and sculptor, Richard Dimmler was a studio assistant for Roy Lichtenstein from 1969 to 1973.
12. Interview with Meeker.
13. Interview with Clark.
14. Interview with Meeker.
15. Interview with Clark.
16. Lichtenstein, quoted in Riley, 1992, p. 22.
17. Interview with Kalina.
18. Lichtenstein, *Audio Arts* interview, 1988.
19. Roy Lichtenstein, quoted in Milton Esterow, "How Could You Be Much Luckier Than I Am?," in *Roy Lichtenstein: Interiors: Collages* (Vienna: Galerie Ulysses, 1992), p. 9. This article, an interview with the artist, was originally published in the May 1991 issue of *ARTnews*.
20. Lichtenstein, quoted in Rosenthal, 1993, p. 105.
21. Interview with Dimmler.
22. Lichtenstein, "About Art," 1995.
23. Lichtenstein, interview with Hendricks, 1962.
24. Interview with Dimmler.
25. Lichtenstein, quoted in Riley, 1992, p. 24.
26. Lichtenstein, "About Art," 1995.
27. Interview with Kalina.
28. Interview with Meeker.
29. Roy Lichtenstein, "Commemorative Lecture: 'A Review of My Work Since 1961'—a slide presentation" [typewritten remarks transcribed from audio tapes for a speech given on the occasion of receiving the 1995 Kyoto Prize on November 11, 1995, in Kyoto, Japan].
30. *Ibid.*
31. Interview with Meeker.
32. Lichtenstein, quoted in Rosenthal, 1993, p. 91.
33. Lichtenstein, interview with Mink, 1994.
34. Lichtenstein, "A Review of My Work Since 1961," 1995.
35. Interview with Meeker.
36. Lichtenstein, interview with Hendricks, 1962.
37. Lichtenstein, interview with Mink, 1994.
38. The source for the brushstroke paintings to which Lichtenstein alludes is a panel from the comic strip "The Painting," in Charlton Comics' *Strange Suspense Stories*, no. 72 (October 1964). The image was reproduced in Diane Waldman, *Roy Lichtenstein* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1993), p. 151.
39. Lichtenstein, "A Review of My Work Since 1961," 1995.
40. Roy Lichtenstein, interview with Janis Mink, English-language transcript, August 10, 1994. Mink published a version of the interview in German: "In meinem Innersten bin ich ein Abstrakter Expressionist," in *Vernissage Köln. Roy Lichtenstein in München*, No. 9/94 (Bonn: VG Bild-Kunst, 1994), pp. 48-54.
41. Interview with Clark.
42. Lichtenstein, "A Review of My Work Since 1961," 1995.



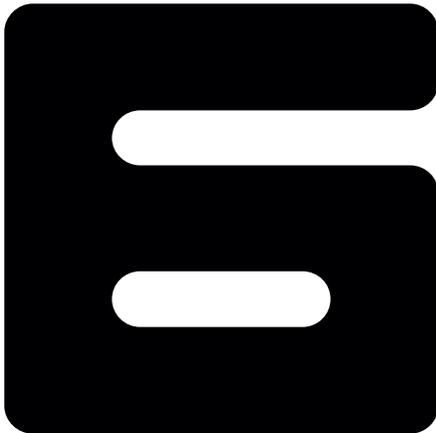
Lichtenstein, in his New York studio, looking in a mirror covered with printed elements he used in his maquettes that allowed him to see how his work looked reversed, 1988.  
Photo by Bob Adelman



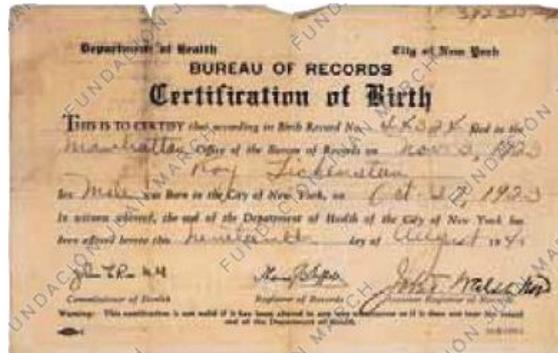
# ROY LICHTENSTEIN: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Clare Bell

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1923 Lichtenstein's  
birth certificate



ca. 1939 With his mother,  
Beatrice, on Broadway  
and 77th/78th Street  
(New York)



1940



1940 Franklin High School Yearbook photo



1945 Private Lichtenstein in Paris after World War II



1944-45 Reclining Man

1948 Isabel Wilson and Lichtenstein at King Family Farm in Ohio

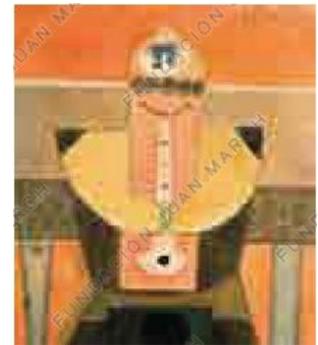


1943 Untitled (Portrait of a Man)

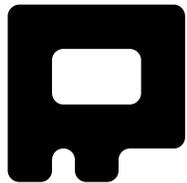
1946-47 Standing Figure



1949 Announcement for group show at Ten-Thirty Gallery in Cleveland



1948 The Musician



oy Fox Lichtenstein is born on October 27, 1923. His father is a real-estate broker for Garage Realty near 40th street and Broadway in Manhattan and his mother is a homemaker. The family resides on the Upper West Side and Lichtenstein grows up on West 86th Street with his sister, Renée, four years his junior. Lichtenstein attends elementary school at P.S. 9 located nearby on West 84th Street and West End Avenue. Drawing, playing marbles and roller-skating in Strauss and Riverside Park are among his favorite pastimes. Science becomes a lifelong intrigue and his mother often takes him to

the Museum of Natural History, which is close by his apartment. During his youth, Lichtenstein develops a strong interest in drawing and spends time designing and building model airplanes. His favorite radio shows include *Flash Gordon* and *Mandrake the Magician*.

At the age of 13, Lichtenstein is enrolled at Franklin School for Boys, a private school close to home. There his studies focus on the natural sciences. No art classes are offered at Franklin so Lichtenstein takes Saturday morning watercolor classes at Parsons School of Design in the city. At Parsons, he paints still lifes and flower arrangements. By high school, Lichtenstein develops a passion for jazz music and forms a small band with several other students where he plays clarinet, piano and flute. His student works include

renderings of generic jazz musicians inspired by those he has heard play at the infamous clubs around East 52nd Street. George Gershwin's musical *Porgy & Bess* inspires another series of drawings, which he later destroys.

In 1940, Lichtenstein graduates from Franklin and during the summer before college, he attends Reginald Marsh's painting class at the Art Students League on West 57th Street. Rarely there, Marsh employs substitute teachers to instruct in anatomical drawing and techniques such as glazing and underpainting, but the class's insistence on technique over process is dissatisfying to Lichtenstein.

That fall, Lichtenstein begins his freshman year at Ohio State University in Columbus, a college where his parents felt he could pursue his interest in art, while earning a Bachelor's Degree. Early on, he studies Elementary Design and Freehand Drawing among other courses such as Botany, Literature and History. His own works during this period include portraits and still lifes styled after Picasso and Braque. He takes a course in sculpture and, using a homemade electric kiln, begins to create animal forms in ceramic and enamel. In 1942, Lichtenstein enrolls in Professor Hoyt L. Sherman's *Drawing by Seeing* course where students sit in the dark and are expected to draw objects that have been set up or suspended in the middle of a room and flashed with light for just a second. Sherman's theories on "organized perception" or visual and perceptual unity form

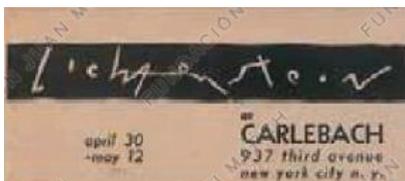


1953 The  
Cattle Rustler

1960 Outside with  
David and Mitchell in  
Highland Park, NJ



1959 Untitled



1952 Announcement  
for Lichtenstein's  
first solo show at the  
Carlebach Gallery in  
New York



1953 Announcement for  
solo show at John Heller  
Gallery in New York

1958 Mickey  
Mouse I



the basis for Lichtenstein's work from that point forward.

In February 1943, Lichtenstein is drafted into the United States Army and leaves OSU to report for active duty. As part of his military training, his unit is enrolled at De Paul University in Chicago, Illinois, and he takes courses in engineering. Following the completion of this Army Special Training Program, he goes to Biloxi, Mississippi, where he briefly enters a pilot/navigator-training program, which is then canceled. In a subsequent assignment, as a clerk and draftsman, he enlarges cartoons from the Army newspaper *Stars & Stripes* for

his commanding officer. Due to the need for more combat soldiers overseas, in December 1944, Lichtenstein's Engineer Combat Battalion is shipped to England and then to France, Belgium and Germany. He keeps a sketchbook and draws landscapes and portraits of other soldiers. Letters home evidence his buying of illustrated art books and a desire for more paper and drawing materials during his overseas duty.

By the fall of 1945, he gains entry to history and French-language classes at the Cité Universitaire in Paris. By December of that year, Lichtenstein is sent home because his father is gravely ill. In January 1946, following his father's death, he receives an honorable discharge from the Army and is given the American Service Medal among other distinctions.

In March of that same year, Lichtenstein returns to OSU and completes his Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts in June. His extant works from the time include Precolumbian-styled sculptures carved from stone or done in terracotta or ceramic.

Lichtenstein accepts a position as an art instructor at OSU in September 1946. Among the classes he teaches is Design 423 where he employs a "Flash Lab" similar to Sherman's and asks students to draw the afterimage of objects hastily lit using big blocks of charcoal or crayon on newspaper. In January 1947, he enters the graduate program at OSU. The following year, Lichtenstein is included

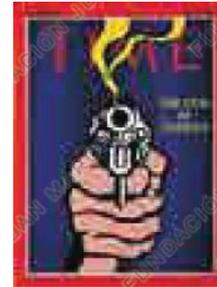
in a group show at an artists' cooperative, the Ten-Thirty Gallery in Cleveland, where he meets his future wife, Isabel Wilson, the gallery assistant. He exhibits paintings of musicians, street workers, a racecar driver and even a deep-sea diver that are composed of simple biomorphic shapes and drawn outlines that embody the whimsical, child-like style of Paul Klee. A year later, his portrait types are replaced by fairy-tale-inspired subjects, which he surrounds with an array of surrealist flora and fauna. In August of 1949, Lichtenstein is included in a group show at the Chinese Gallery in New York; the gallery typically shows the work of the American Abstract artists as well as Chinese classical pieces.

1960



1965 With Dorothy at Bianchini Gallery in New York for opening of Bob Stanley's show

1968 *The Gun in America*, cover illustration for *Time* magazine



1970

1970 *Mirror #1*



1970 Exterior of Southampton studio, Long Island, New York

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1964 Exterior of Highland Park studio, New Jersey



1964 *Girl in Window* (Study for World's Fair Mural)

1969 *Cathedral #5*, one of the Rouen Cathedral series of prints



1961 *Look Mickey*, Lichtenstein's first classic-cartoon work to feature the half-tone effect of Benday dots



1967 Pictured with "Modern Painting" series in his studio at 190 Bowery, New York



Birds and insects are prominently featured in Lichtenstein's surreal-inspired paintings by 1950. Knights and maidens, castles, dragons and medieval saints replace those subjects, rendered in muted pinks, blues and mauves around 1951. Carved wood totems and playful assemblages depicting kings, horses and warriors made from metal and found objects such as screws and drill buffers are shown with his paintings in April of 1951 at the Carlebach Gallery, Lichtenstein's first solo show in New York City. In June, his contract is terminated at OSU, and he and his family move to Cleveland where Isabel's work as a contemporary interior

decorator can expand and Lichtenstein begins a series of *ad hoc* commercial engineering and drafting jobs.

At the beginning of 1952, Lichtenstein joins the stable of artists at the John Heller Gallery in New York and shows mischievous, flatly patterned renditions of prominent nineteenth-century American genre paintings. Cowboys and Native American motifs are another prominent subject of Lichtenstein's during his pre-Pop period. Like much of Lichtenstein's production they are featured in a variety of mixed media—oils, pastels, watercolors, ink, pencil and in woodcut or linoleum prints. He invents a rotating easel so he can paint upside-down and sideways. He wins several awards for works he submits to regional and national

juried print and sculpture competitions. His works are exhibited at Heller and in Cleveland at the Art Colony Gallery. In 1954, his first son, David, is born in Cleveland. Around 1955, he returns to the idea of assemblage with abstract wall constructions of painted plywood, string and canvas. In 1956 his second son, Mitchell, is born.

In the fall of 1957, Lichtenstein accepts an assistant professorship at the State University of New York in Oswego, in northern New York State. His work becomes more abstract and expressionistic. By 1958, images of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Bugs Bunny can be deciphered as hidden imagery in some of the work.

Others may have been used as drop cloths and destroyed. His brightly colored heavily impastoed abstract paintings are shown at the Condon Riley Gallery in New York in June of 1959.

By 1960, Lichtenstein resigns from his Oswego teaching post to become assistant professor of art at Douglass College, the women's college of Rutgers State University of New Jersey in New Brunswick, New Jersey, not far from New York City. At Rutgers, he meets Allan Kaprow who introduces him to Claes Oldenburg, Lucas Samaras, George Segal, Robert Watts, Robert Whitman and others involved in the Happenings art scene. During his first year at Rutgers, Lichtenstein's work is abstract. His paintings are created by dragging rags dipped in paint across the canvas to create ribbon-like

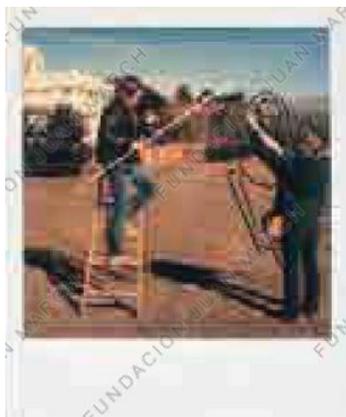
1972 Still Life with Plums



1975 Trompe L'oeil with Leger Head and Paintbrush



1975 The Atom



1977 Polaroid by Lichtenstein of his assistants outside his Southampton home with bronze sculpture

## 1980

1981 Two Yellow Apples



1986 Collage for Portrait



1983 Roy Lichtenstein at the Fundación Juan March



1980 Expressionist Head

bands. Sometime in the early summer of **1961**, Lichtenstein paints "Look Mickey," his first classic cartoon work to feature the half-tone effect of Benday dots created by dipping a dog-bristle brush in oil paint. Later that year, Lichtenstein begins to use a handmade metal screen and a paint roller to create the Benday dots effect on canvases that feature cartoons and consumer product imagery. In the fall of **1961**, Leo Castelli agrees to represent Lichtenstein's works. Sales quickly follow. Following a trial separation from Isabel, Lichtenstein moves from his home in Highland Park, New Jersey, to Broad Street in New York, but they soon reconcile.

In February of **1962**, Leo

Castelli showcases Lichtenstein's works in a solo show featuring paintings based on serial comic strips and the rudimentary advertising images of newspaper copy. Over the course of that year, Lichtenstein's Pop work is featured in six major exhibitions around the country. The following year he takes a leave of absence from Douglass, separates again from Isabel and moves his residence and studio to West 26th Street where he begins a series of soap opera women and World War II combat motifs he finds in the pages of D.C. Comics serials. He enlarges his colored-pencil studies onto his canvas using an opaque projector and begins to use quick drying turpentine-soluble acrylic paint called Magna for large areas of the canvas but, because it dries too quickly, he continues to paint the Benday

dots in oil now using store-bought metal perforated screens.

In **1964**, Lichtenstein returns to invented imagery with a series of horizon landscape paintings comprised primarily of Benday dots. Editioned enameled wall works of landscapes and comic-book imagery along with enameled standing explosions are included in his third show at Castelli in October of that year. Lichtenstein's first mural is installed at the Flushing Meadows Fair Grounds for the **1964 World's Fair**.

In **1965**, separated from Isabel (they officially divorce in **1967**) he moves to the 3rd floor of a former German bank in New York's Bowery. He begins a series of ceramic heads and stacked cups and saucers. At the same

time, he is making oils featuring the conceit of giant brushstrokes across the canvas. The following year, he creates land and seascapes using industrial material such as Plexiglas, metal, motors, lamps and multi-lensed plastic called Rowlux, which gives the illusion of shimmer. In **1967**, he begins his Modern paintings series inspired by the Art Deco motifs of Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan's Rockefeller Center and introduces the look of graduating Benday dots in his work. That fall, he creates his first large-scale editioned sculptures in brass and tinted glass based on Deco patterns. Modular paintings soon follow with repeated design imagery.

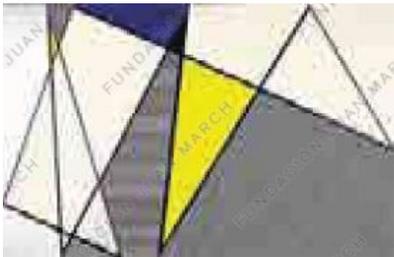
In **1968**, Lichtenstein marries Dorothy Herzka whom he had met earlier at the Bianchini Gallery in New York. Lichtenstein's work appears twice on the cover of *Time* magazine that year. In **1969**, inspired by

1990



1988 Reflections: Art

1985 Perfect Painting #1



1990 With his assistant, James dePasquale, working on Reflections or the Gift, in Southampton studio



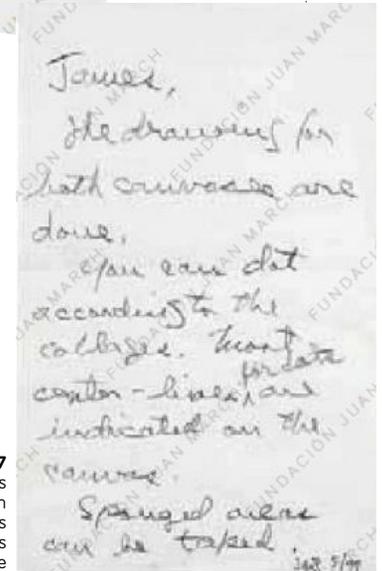
1992 Interior with Skyline



1992 With his assistant, James dePasquale, working on Interior with Bathroom Painting, in Southampton studio



Polaroid of drawing state for Nude, in progress



1997 Lichtenstein's handwritten note to his assistant, James dePasquale

serial imagery of Claude Monet, Lichtenstein introduces the subject of haystacks and Rouen Cathedral seen at different times of day. The motif launches his return to printmaking in earnest and begins his long-term collaboration with Gemini G.E.L. in California. He also makes his first and only film for LACMA's Arts and Technology project.

Mirrors and entablatures dominate his production in 1970. The following year, Lichtenstein leaves Manhattan to live and work full time in Southampton, on the eastern end of Long Island. Borrowing motifs from the works of Modern masters, Lichtenstein spends the next years creating still

lives that synthesize his, and their, signature styles. He also begins to experiment with new colors and surface textures in his paintings. Bronze enters his repertoire of materials in 1977 in the form of painted large-scale sculptures of illuminated lamps, pitchers on tables, and steaming cups of coffee. The following year, he reintroduces Native American subjects to his oeuvre. By the end of the decade, Lichtenstein's Still Lives, Heads and Landscape studies have run the gamut of stylistic conceits from Cubism to Surrealism and German Expressionism.

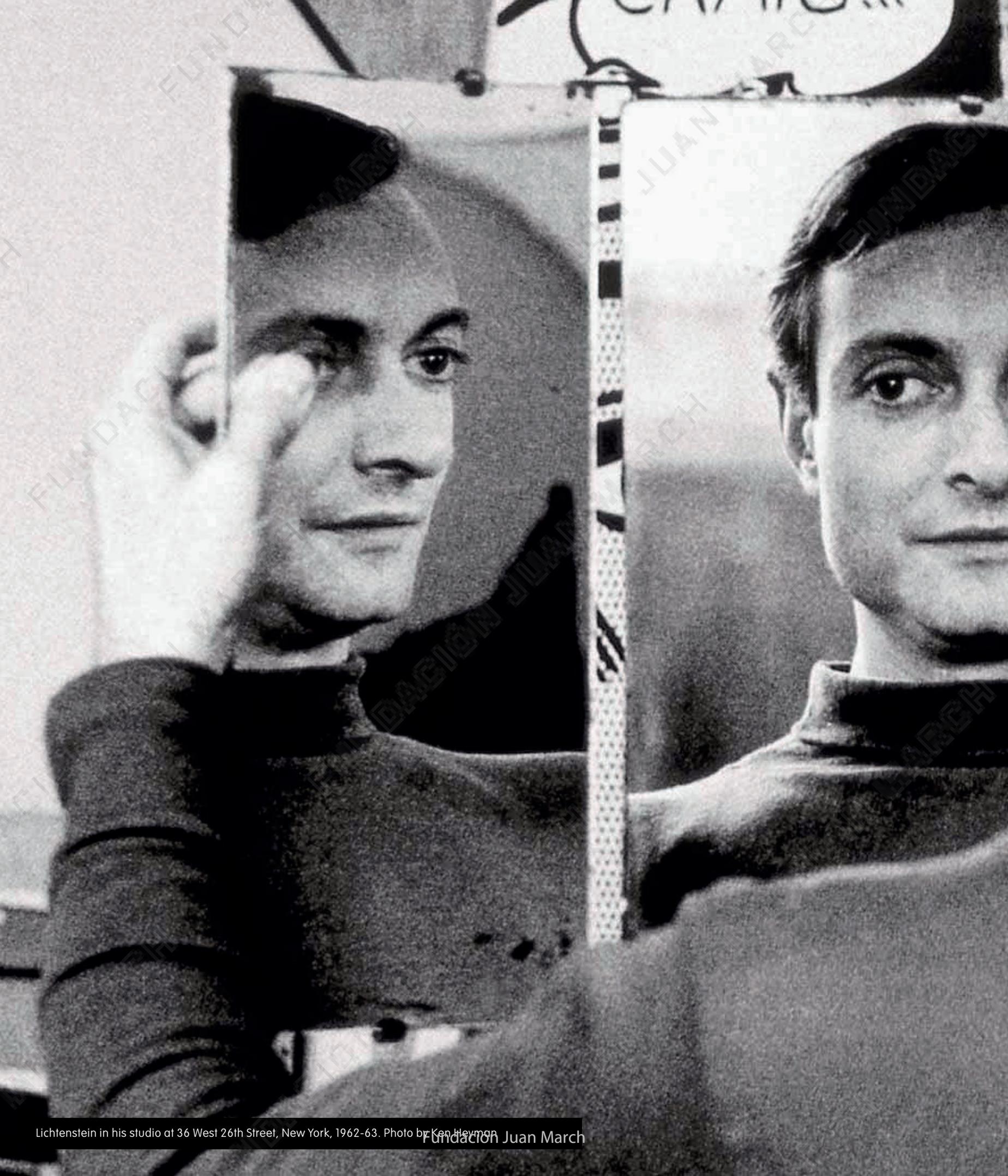
In the 1980s, Lichtenstein decides to re-establish a studio in Manhattan, first taking space on East 29th Street and later buying a building in Manhattan's West Greenwich Village meatpacking district. He turns his focus to the markings of abstract style. Exploring ideas about Abstract Expressionism, he juxtaposes

unstructured brushwork alongside his signature replicas of brushstrokes. Several years later, beginning in 1985, geometric abstraction receives similar attention in his Perfect, Imperfect and Plus and Minus series. By the decade's close, reflection is a predominate theme of his work where iconic and less familiar motifs of his Pop art repertoire are reconfigured in a bold new compositional format.

Colossal home interiors culled from small ads in the telephone yellow pages are Lichtenstein's next new series of the 1990s. Frolicking nudes follow these by the middle of the decade. The decade also witnesses his completion of a number of public and private large-scale sculptural and painting projects.

Lichtenstein's investigations of illusionism, abstraction, serialization, stylization and appropriation continue in every media in the 1990s. As a distinguished painter, sculptor and printmaker he receives numerous honorary degrees and international prizes. He is awarded the National Medal of Arts in 1995. At the time of his death in 1997, at age 73, he had just begun investigating another new fabricated reality, so called "virtual paintings."

Coda: Early in the 1990s the artist and his family made provisions for the eventual establishment of a private operating foundation to facilitate public access to his art and the art of his time. The Roy Lichtenstein Foundation was formally staffed and launched in September 1999 ●



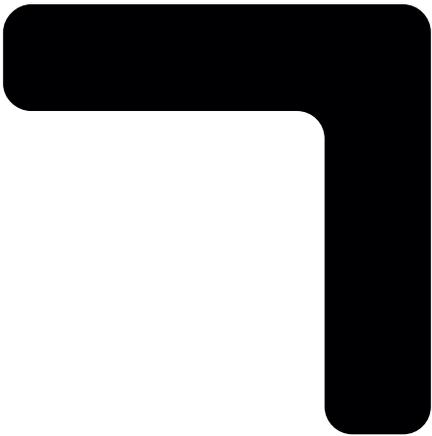
Lichtenstein in his studio at 36 West 26th Street, New York, 1962-63. Photo by Ken Heyman

Fundación Juan March



# CATALOGUE

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**1**  
**Ocean Motion**, 1966. Rowlux, printed and cut paper, small motor. 22 1/2 x 26 1/4 inches. Private collection



**2**  
Untitled Drawings for Film (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Ballpoint pen on paper, 4 sheets. 8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches each. Private collection.

**3**  
Untitled Drawings for Film (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Orange marker, graphite and ballpoint pen on paper, 2 sheets. 10 7/8 x 8 3/8 inches each. Private collection

**4**  
Untitled Drawings for Film (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Ballpoint pen on spiral-edged paper, 3 sheets. 8 x 6 1/8 inches each. Private collection.

**5**  
Film-Untitled (LACMA'S Art and Technology project), 1970. Film, laser disc, VHS video tape. Private collection



**6**  
Drawing for **Still Life with Picasso**, ca. 1973. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 1/4 x 5 1/16 inches (irregular). Private collection

**7**  
Collage for **Still Life with Picasso**, 1973. Magic marker, tape, painted and printed paper on board. 28 1/2 x 21 inches. Private collection



**8**  
Drawing for **Still Life**, 1973. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 1/4 x 5 1/16 inches (irregular). Private collection

**9**  
Collage for **Still Life**, 1973. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 35 5/8 x 24 1/2 inches. Private collection

**10**  
**Still Life**, 1973. Aubusson tapestry. Edition of 8. 77 1/2 x 58 inches. Private collection



**11**  
Drawing for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983. Graphite on yellowed mattboard. 7 3/4 x 4 inches. Private collection

**12**  
Drawing for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 3/4 x 5 1/2 inches. Private collection

**13**  
Collage for **Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1983. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 54 3/4 x 40 inches. Private collection

**14**  
**Two Paintings: Dagwood**, 1984. Woodcut and lithograph on Arches 88 paper. Edition of 60. Publisher and Printer: Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles. 53 7/8 x 38 15/16 inches. Private collection

All works in this series:  
Blondie and Dagwood ©  
King Features Syndicate Inc.

**15**

Drawing for **Seascape**, 1984. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 7 1/2 x 10 5/8 inches. Private collection

**16**

Collage for **Seascape**, 1984. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 39 3/4 x 55 inches. Private collection

**17**

Drawing for **The Sower**, 1984. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 7 3/8 x 10 3/8 inches. Private collection

**18**

Collage for **The Sower**, 1984. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 40 3/4 x 55 inches. Private collection

**19**

**The Sower**, 1985. Lithograph, woodcut and screenprint on Arches 88 paper. Edition of 60. Publisher and Printer: Gemini G.E.L., Los Angeles. 41 3/16 x 55 1/2 inches. Private collection

**20**

Drawing for **Laocoon**, 1988. Graphite on paper. 42 3/4 x 30 3/4 inches. Private collection

**21**

Drawing for **Laocoon**, 1988. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 11 x 11 inches. Private collection

**22**

Collage for **Laocoon**, 1988. Painted and printed paper on board. 54 3/8 x 47 3/8 inches. Private collection

**23**

**Laocoon**, 1988. Oil and Magna on canvas. 120 x 102 inches. Private collection

**24**

Drawing for **Interior with Exterior (Still Waters)**, 1991. Graphite on paper. 6 x 5 1/2 inches. Private collection

**25**

Drawing for **Interior with Exterior (Still Waters)**, 1991. Graphite on polyester tracing film. 25 5/8 x 46 1/2 inches. Private collection.

**26**

Collage for **Interior with Exterior (Still Waters)**, 1991. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 24 5/8 x 42 1/2 inches. Private collection

**27**

Collage for **Oval Office II**, 1992. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 29 1/2 x 37 1/2 inches. Private collection



**28**  
Drawing for **Water Lilies-Blue Lily Pads**, 1991. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 5 3/8 x 5 7/8 inches (irregular). Private collection

**29**  
Collage for **Water Lilies-Blue Lily Pads**, 1992. Aluminum foil, painted and printed paper on board. 40 x 30 inches (oval). Private collection

**30**  
Drawing for **Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 9 3/4 x 6 1/2 inches. Private collection

**31**  
Collage for **Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992. Aluminum foil, painted and printed paper on board. 71 1/4 x 46 1/2 inches. Private collection

**32**  
**Water Lilies with Japanese Bridge**, 1992. Screenprinted enamel on stainless steel, painted aluminum frame. Edition of 23. 83 1/4 x 58 inches. Private collection



**33**  
Drawing for **Tintin Reading**, 1992. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 7 x 5 1/4 inches. Private collection

**34**  
Collage for **Tintin Reading**, 1993. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 49 1/2 x 33 inches. Private collection



**35**  
Drawing for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Graphite on paper. 52 x 32 inches. Private collection

**36**  
Sketch for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Graphite on paper. 8 1/4 x 5 3/4 inches. Private collection

**37**  
Sketch for **Brushstroke Nude and Chair, Table and Flower Pot**, 1992. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 30 1/4 x 22 5/8 inches. Private collection

**38**  
Maquette for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1992. Foam core, cheesecloth, glue, joint compound, paint, painted and printed paper on wood. 56 1/2 x 13 x 10 inches. Private collection

**39**  
Final Maquette for **Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Painted wood. 57 1/2 x 14 1/2 x 13 inches. Private collection

**40**  
**Brushstroke Nude**, 1993. Painted cast aluminum. Edition of 3. 140 x 42 x 24 inches. Private collection



**41**  
Drawing for **Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 11 3/8 x 9 1/2 inches. Private collection

**42**  
Collage for **Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 27 1/2 x 22 3/4 inches. Private collection

**43**  
**Nude with Pyramid**, 1994. Oil and Magna on canvas. 84 x 70 inches. The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Collection, Los Angeles



**44**  
Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Graphite on paper, page from sketchbook. 8 15/16 x 6 inches. Private collection

**45**  
Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Graphite on tracing paper. 16 7/16 x 19 5/8 inches. Private collection

**46**  
Drawing for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 15 1/2 x 18 3/4 inches. Private collection

**47**  
Collage for **Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 39 1/4 x 35 5/8 inches. Private collection

**48**  
**Nudes with Beach Ball**, 1994. Oil and Magna on canvas. 118 1/2 x 107 1/4 inches. Private collection

**49**

Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Graphite on paper. 5 7/8 x 12 3/8 inches. Private collection

**50**

Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Graphite on polyester tracing film. 9 1/2 x 16 1/8 inches. Private collection

**51**

Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Graphite on paper. 11 5/16 x 18 1/4 inches. Private collection

**52**

Drawing for **Beach Scene with Starfish**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on rag tracing vellum. 5 1/2 x 11 1/4 inches. Private collection

**53**

Drawing for **Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 4 x 4 3/4 inches. Private collection. Donald Duck © Walt Disney

**54**

Collage for **Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 28 x 28 1/2 inches. Private collection. Donald Duck © Walt Disney

**55**

**Virtual Interior: Portrait of a Duck**, 1995. Screenprint on 300-g/m<sup>2</sup> textured white Somerset paper. Edition of 60. Publisher: The Walt Disney Company, Burbank. Printer: Noblet Serigraphie Inc. 35 11/16 x 35 9/16 inches. Private collection. Donald Duck © Walt Disney

**56**

Drawing for **Endless Drip**, 1995. Graphite on paper. 13 1/2 x 9 3/4 inches. Private collection

**57**

**Endless Drip**, 1995. Painted and fabricated aluminum. Edition of 3. 142 1/4 x 13 1/2 x 4 1/2 inches. Private collection

**58**

Untitled Drawing for **Virtual Interior**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 7 15/16 x 8 13/16 inches. Private collection

**59**

Drawing for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on polyester tracing film. 15 5/8 x 9 3/8 inches. Private collection

**60**

Drawing for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 13 3/8 x 9 13/16 inches. Private collection

**61**

Collage for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 53 7/8 x 44 7/8 inches. Private collection

**62**

**Nude with Bust**, 1995. Oil and Magna on canvas. 108 x 90 x 2 1/2 inches. Private collection

**63**

Study for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite on tracing paper. 8 5/8 x 5 1/8 inches. Private collection.

**64**

Sketch for **Nude with Bust**, 1995. Graphite on paper. 9 3/4 x 13 3/8 inches. Private collection

**65**

Drawing for **Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1995. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 13 1/4 x 9 3/4 inches. Private collection

**66**

Collage for **Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1995. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 59 1/2 x 35 3/4 inches. Private collection

**67**

**Woman: Sunlight, Moonlight**, 1996. Painted and patinated bronze. Edition of 6. 39 5/8 x 25 1/4 x 1 1/8 inches. Private collection

**68**

Collage for **Art Critic**, 1994. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 19 3/4 x 13 1/4 inches. Private collection

**69**

Drawing for **Art Critic**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on tracing paper. 5 x 8 inches. Private collection

**70**

Drawing for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on tracing paper. 10 11/16 x 13 inches (irregular). Private collection

**71**

Drawing for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 10 x 13 1/2 inches. Private collection

**72**

Collage for **Seductive Girl**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 25 x 36 inches. Private collection

**73**

Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 9 x 12 1/4 inches. Private collection

**74**

Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Graphite on paper. 9 1/8 x 12 15/16 inches. Private collection

**75**

Drawing for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 9 1/2 x 13 inches. Private collection

**76**

Collage for **Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 42 1/4 x 83 7/8 inches. Private collection

**77**

**Landscape with Scholar's Rock**, 1997. Oil and Magna on canvas. 79 x 156 inches. Private collection

**78**

Drawing for **House with Gray Roof**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 x 8 3/4 inches. Courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, USA

**79**

Full-Scale Maquette for **House I**, 1996. Painted wood. 124 x 201 x 44 inches. Private collection

**80**

Drawings for **House II**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 x 8 1/2 inches. Private collection

**81**

Collage for **House II**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 32 1/2 x 39 1/4 inches. Private collection

**82**

Drawings for **House III** and **Landscape in Fog**, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 10 x 13 inches. Private collection

**83**

Collage for **Small House**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 40 x 60 inches. Private collection

**84**

**Small House**, 1997. Painted cast aluminum. Edition of 8. 17 7/8 x 26 7/16 x 8 1/2 inches. Private collection

**85**

Drawing for **Hologram**, 1996. Graphite and colored pencils on tracing paper. 7 1/4 x 7 1/8 inches (irregular). Private collection

**86**

Collage for **Hologram**, 1996. Tape, graphite and black marker on board. 13 3/8 x 11 3/8 inches. Private collection

**87**

Maquette for **Hologram Interior**, 1996. Tape, painted and printed paper on foam core. 14 1/4 x 24 1/4 x 6 inches overall. Private collection

**88**

Collage for **Hologram**, 1997. Tape on board. 12 3/8 x 10 inches. Private collection

**89**

Drawing for Reclining Nude I, Aurora, 1997. Graphite and marker on polyester tracing film. 22 3/4 x 20 3/4 inches (irregular). Private collection

**90**

Drawing for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on paper. 8 3/4 x 12 inches. Private collection

**91**

Drawing for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997. Graphite and colored pencils on polyester tracing paper. 7 1/8 x 8 3/4 inches. Private collection

**92**

Collage for Still Life with Reclining Nude, 1997. Painted and printed paper on board. 40 1/8 x 60 1/4 inches. Roy Lichtenstein Foundation Collection

**93**

Collage for "The Leo Book ICI Salutes Leo Castelli" October 9, 1997, 1997. Tape on board. 23 5/8 x 12 1/8 inches. Private collection

**94**

Drawing for **Nude**, 1997. Graphite on tracing paper. 5 1/4 x 2 3/4 inches (irregular). Private collection

**95**

Drawing for **Nude**, 1997. Graphite on paper. 30 x 22 1/2 inches. Private collection

**96**

Collage for **Nude**, 1997. Tape, painted and printed paper on board. 41 3/8 x 22 3/8 inches. Private collection

**97**

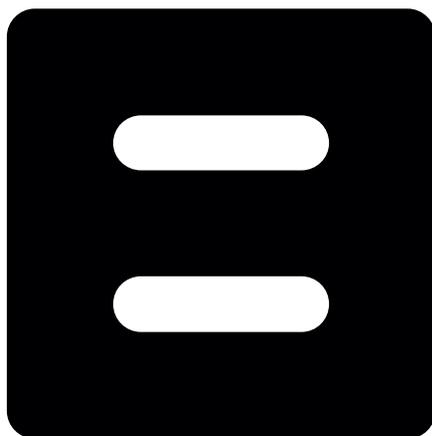
**Nude**, 1997. Oil and Magna on canvas. 82 1/2 x 45 inches. Private collection



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Clare Bell

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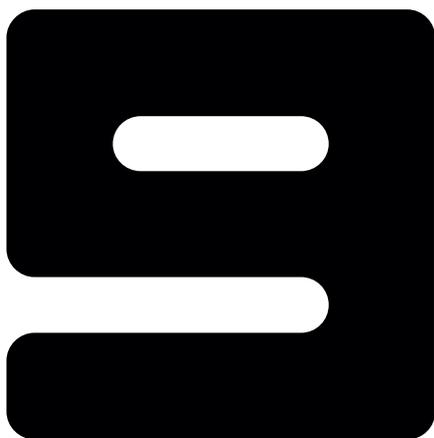
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# FILMOGRAPHY

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**1966****ART SCENE, U.S.A.**

United States (English)  
 17 min. / color / 16mm  
 Director: Ed Emshwiller  
 Prod. agency: United States Information Agency  
 Sources (U.S.): National Audiovisual Center  
 (Foreign distribution) / Rental-see Educational  
 Film & Video Locator  
 Intl. source: Central Film Library (GB) (Rental)

**ANDY WARHOL AND ROY LICHTENSTEIN**

United States (English)  
 Series title (U.S.): Artists  
 30 min. / B&W / 16mm  
 Director: Lane Slate  
 Prod. agency: NET  
 Sources (U.S.): Indiana University Audio Visual  
 Center / Rental-see Educational Film & Video  
 Locator  
 Intl. source: British Film Institute (GB)

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**1968****LICHTENSTEIN IN LONDON**

Great Britain (English)  
 20 min. / color / 16mm and video  
 Director: Bruce Beresford  
 Prod. agency: British Film Institute for the Arts  
 Council of Great Britain  
 Sources (U.S.): The Roland Collection / Kent State  
 University Audio Visual Services (16mm)  
 Intl. sources: Anthony Roland Films (GB) /  
 Arts Council of Great Britain (GB)

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**1972****ROY LICHTENSTEIN: STILL LIFE PAINTINGS**

United States (English)  
 20 min. / B&W / video  
 Producer: Hermine Freed  
 Sources (U.S.): Video Data Bank / Hermine Freed

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**1973****AMERICAN ART IN THE SIXTIES**

United States (English)  
 57 min. / color / 16mm and video  
 Director: Michael Blackwood  
 Prod. Michael Blackwood  
 Prod. agency: Blackwood Productions Inc.  
 Sources (U.S.): Michael Blackwood Productions  
 Inc. / Rental-see Educational Film & Video  
 Locator

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**1974****TWELVE AMERICAN PAINTERS II**

United States (English)  
 30 min. / color / video  
 Prod. agency: Virginia Museum  
 of Fine Arts/TEAMS  
 Source (U.S.): Virginia Museum of Fine Arts/  
 TEAMS (Free loan in VA)

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**1987****THE DRAWINGS OF ROY LICHTENSTEIN****1961-1986**

United States (English)  
 13 min. / color / video  
 Directors: Edgar B. Howard, Seth Schneidman  
 Producer: Edgar B. Howard  
 Prod. agency: Checkerboard Foundation, Inc.,  
 in association with The Museum of Modern Art  
 Sources (U.S.): Checkerboard Foundation, Inc. /  
 Museum of Modern Art Circ. Film Library

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**1993****ROY LICHTENSTEIN: REFLECTIONS**

United States (English and Italian with English  
 subtitles)  
 30 min. / color / video  
 Directors: Edgar B. Howard, Seth Schneidman  
 Producer: Edgar B. Howard  
 Prod. agency: Checkerboard Foundation, Inc.  
 Sources (U.S.): Museum of Modern Art Circ.  
 Film Library / Checkerboard Foundation, Inc. /  
 Crystal Productions

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**1994****ROY LICHTENSTEIN: UN POINT, C'EST TOUT**

France (French and English with French subtitles)  
 52 min. / color / 16mm  
 Director: Andre S. Labarthe  
 Producer: Vincent Roget  
 Prod. agency: Les Films du Bief; La Sept  
 Intl. source: Les Films du Bief (FR)

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**1995****ROY LICHTENSTEIN: TOKYO BRUSHSTROKES**

United States (English)  
 30 min. / color / video  
 Director: Mark Trottenberg  
 Producer: Edgar B. Howard  
 Prod. agency: Checkerboard Foundation, Inc.  
 Source (U.S.): Checkerboard Foundation, Inc.

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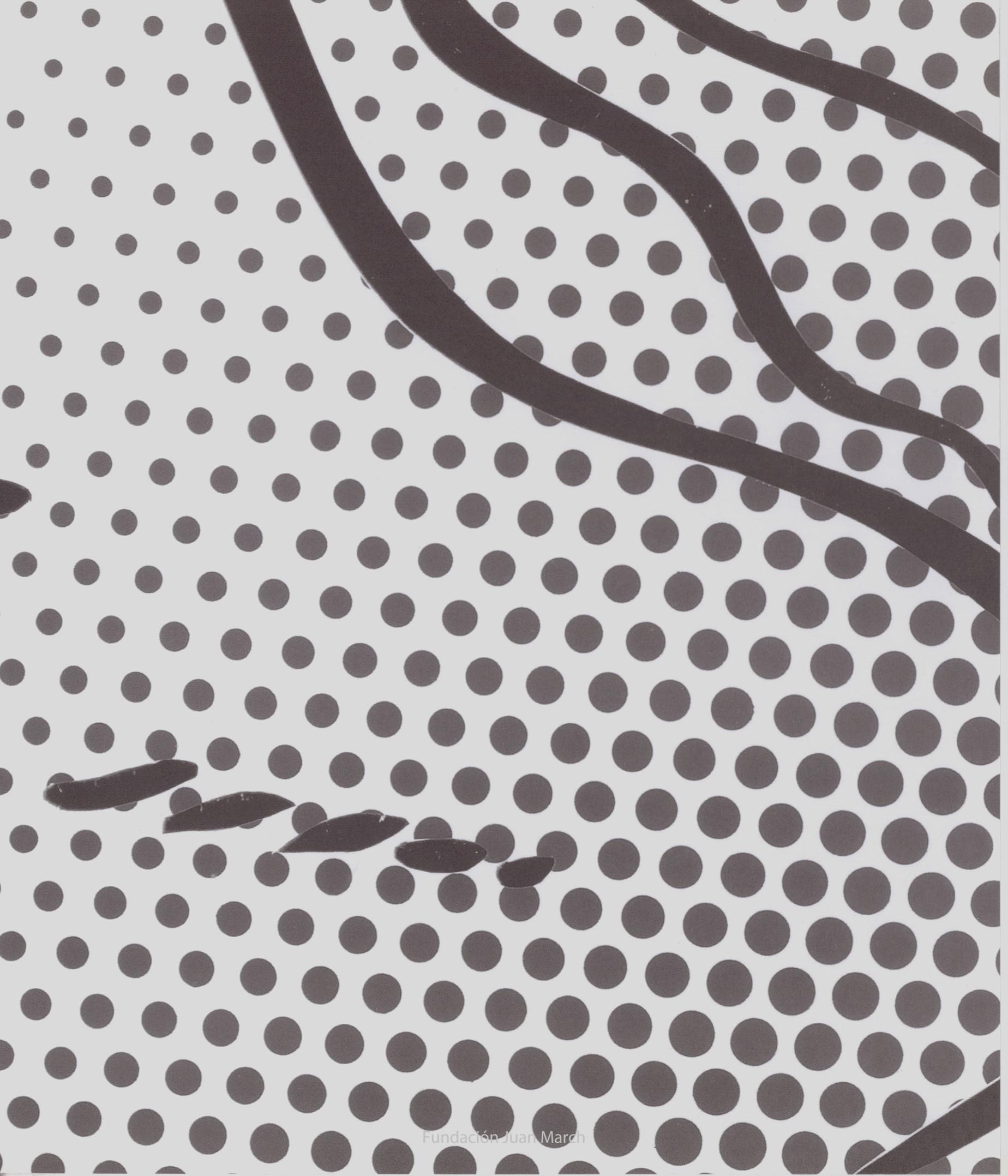
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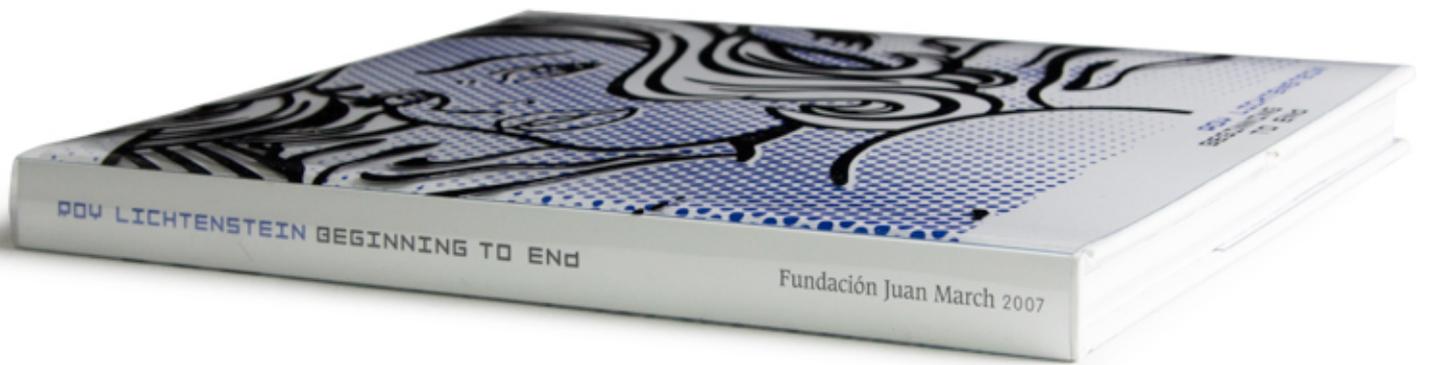
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