

Girlfriends: Part Two

Out from the Shadows

Frances MacDonald McNair (1873-1921)

Frances MacDonald, younger sister of the better-known Margaret MacDonald, had an extensive painting practice at the turn of the 20th century; the two sisters were frontrunners of Art Nouveau, having influenced artists like Hans Hoffmann and Gustav Klimt. When the sisters enrolled at the Glasgow School of Art, they met architects Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Herbert MacNair, their future husbands; the four collaborated as the “Glasgow Four.” Meanwhile, the MacDonald sisters opened their own studio at 128 Hope Street, exhibiting across Europe and working professionally with textiles, illustration, metalwork and interior design.

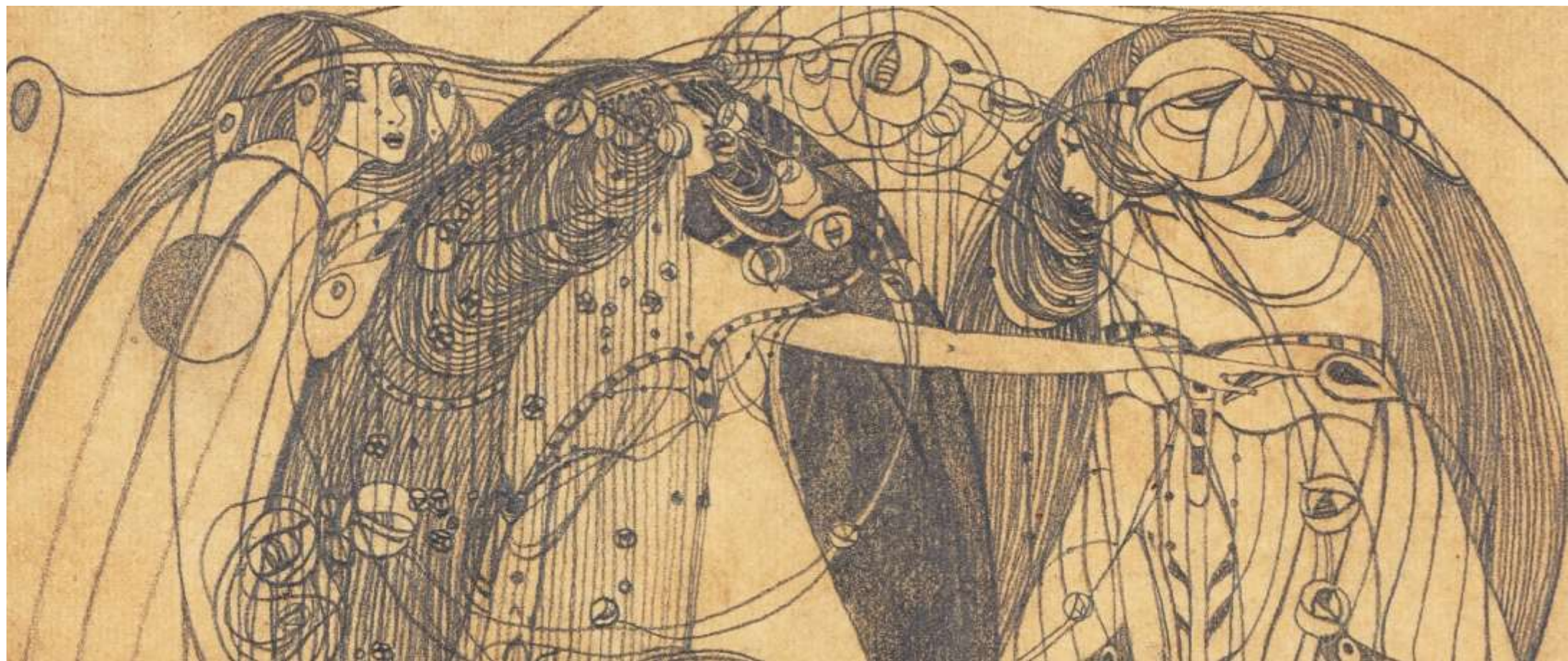
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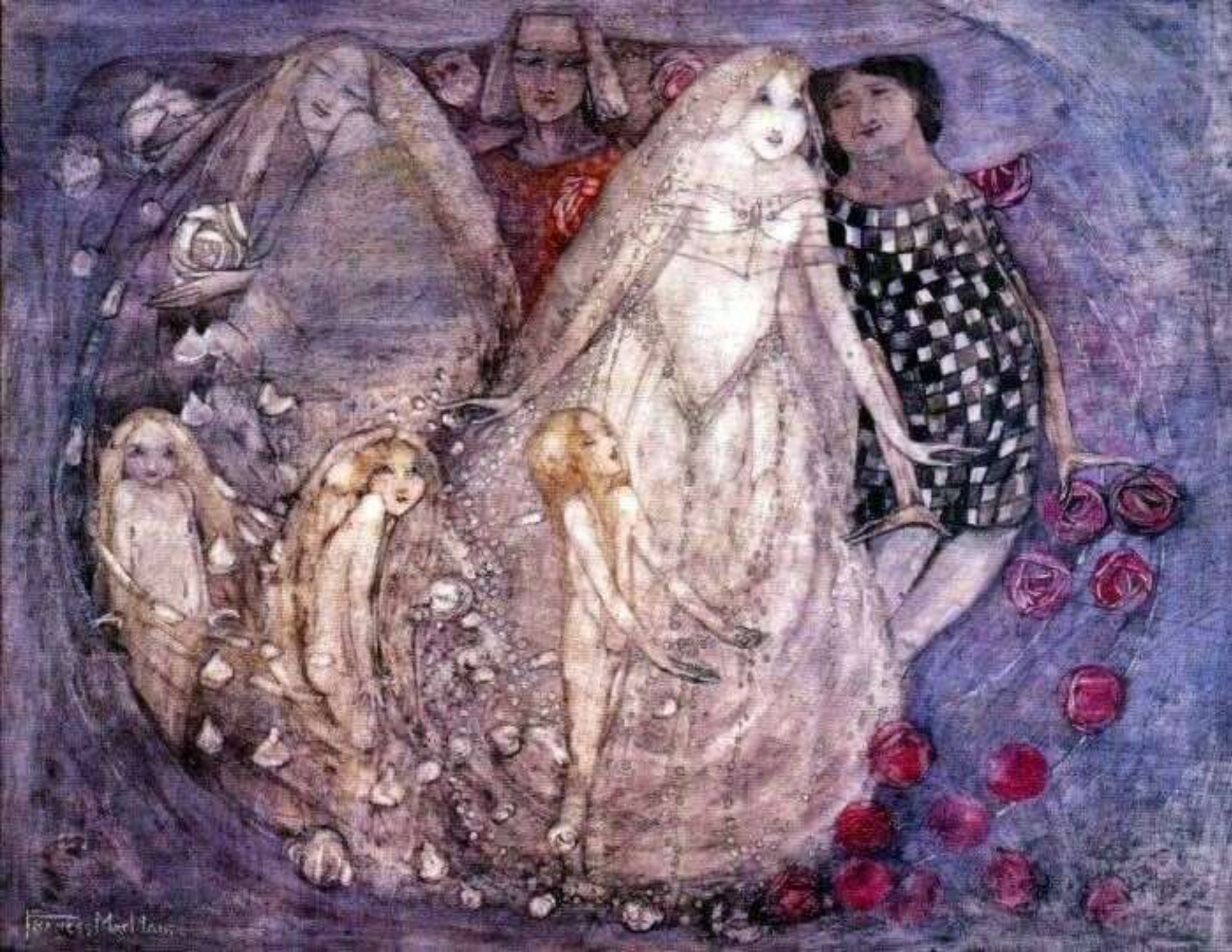
















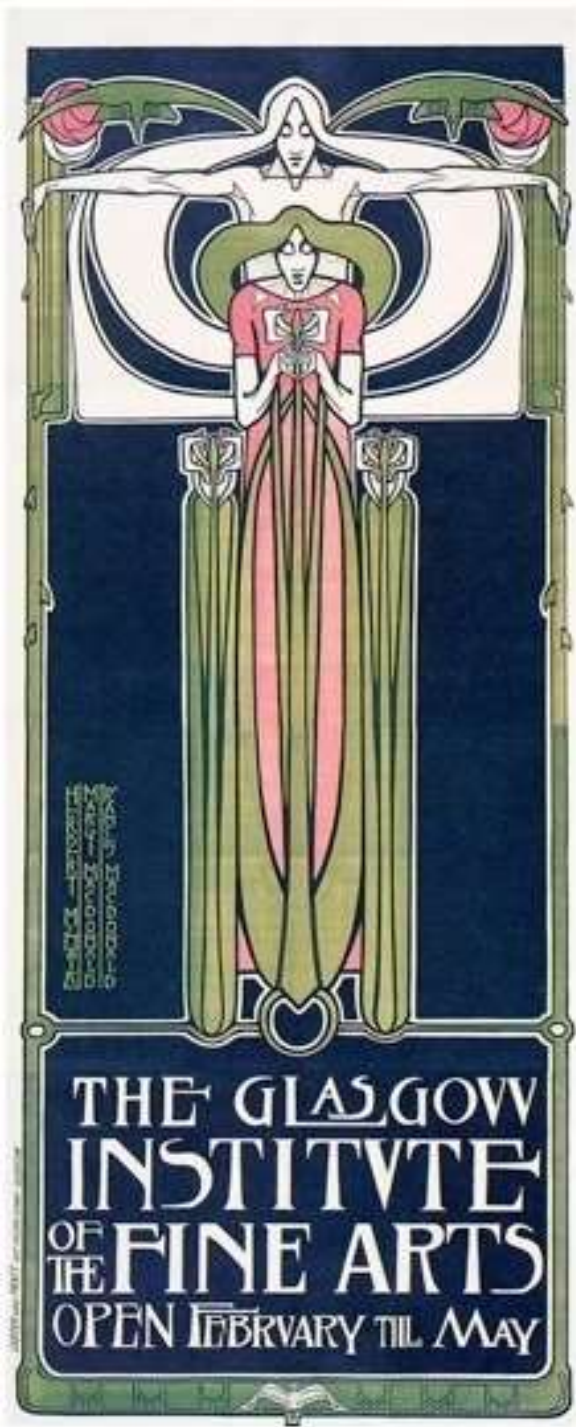
 NATIONAL GALLERIES SCOTLAND



Sleep, 1908, Frances Macdonald MacNair

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Ana Mendieta (1948-1985)

Ana Mendieta (November 18, 1948 – September 8, 1985) was a Cuban-American performance artist, sculptor, painter and [video artist](#) who is best known for her "earth-body" artwork. Born in [Havana](#), Mendieta left for the United States in 1961.

Through the course of her career, Mendieta created work in Cuba, Mexico, Italy, and the United States.^[10] Her work was somewhat autobiographical, drawing from her history of being displaced from her natal Cuba, and focused on themes including [feminism](#), violence, life, death, identity, place and belonging. Her works are generally associated with the four basic elements of [nature](#). Mendieta often focused on a spiritual and physical connection with the Earth. Mendieta felt that by uniting her body with the earth she could become whole again: "Through my earth/body sculptures, I become one with the earth ... I become an extension of nature and nature becomes an extension of my body. This obsessive act of reasserting my ties with the earth is really the reactivation of primeval beliefs ... [in] an omnipresent female force, the after image of being encompassing within the womb, is a manifestation of my thirst for being."[[]During her lifetime, Mendieta produced over 200 works of art using earth as a sculptural medium. Her techniques were mainly influenced by Afro-Cuban traditions

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLDJk2pZQal&feature=emb_title

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/19/obituaries/ana-mendieta-overlooked.html>

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/art-photography/article/46290/1/this-new-exhibition-reframes-the-legacy-of-artist-ana-mendieta>

Ana Mendieta died on September 8, 1985, in New York City, after falling from her 34th-floor apartment in [Greenwich Village](#) at 300 Mercer Street, where she lived with her husband of eight months, [minimalist](#) sculptor [Carl Andre](#), who may have pushed her out of the window. She fell 33 stories onto the roof of a deli.^[50] Just prior to her death, neighbors heard the couple arguing violently.^[32] There were no eyewitnesses to the events that led up to Mendieta's death.^[51] A recording of Andre's 911 call showed him saying: "My wife is an artist, and I'm an artist, and we had a quarrel about the fact that I was more, eh, exposed to the public than she was. And she went to the bedroom, and I went after her, and she went out the window."^[52] In 1988, Andre was tried and acquitted of her murder. During three years of legal proceedings,^[51] Andre's lawyer described Mendieta's death as a possible accident or suicide. The judge found Andre not guilty on grounds of [reasonable doubt](#).













Anni Albers (1899-1994)

Anni Albers was a German-born American [textile](#) artist and [printmaker](#) credited with blurring the lines between traditional craft and art.

Her mother was from a family in the [publishing](#) industry and her father was a [furniture](#) maker. She painted during her youth and studied under [impressionist](#) artist [Martin Brandenburg](#), from 1916–19, but was very discouraged from continuing after a meeting with artist [Oskar Kokoschka](#), who upon seeing a portrait of hers asked her sharply "Why do you paint?"

At the Bauhaus she began her first year under [Georg Muche](#) and then [Johannes Itten](#). Fleischmann struggled to find her particular workshop at the Bauhaus. Women were barred from certain disciplines taught at the school and during her second year, unable to gain admission to a glass workshop with future husband [Josef Albers](#), Fleischmann deferred reluctantly to [weaving](#), the only workshop available to women. Fleischmann had never tried weaving and believed it to be too "sissy" of a craft. With her instructor [Gunta Stölzl](#), however, Fleischmann soon learned to appreciate the challenges of tactile construction and began producing geometric designs. In her writing, titled *Material as Metaphor*, Albers mentions her Bauhaus beginnings: "In my case it was threads that caught me, really against my will. To work with threads seemed sissy to me. I wanted something to be conquered. But circumstances held me to threads and they won me over.

In 1925, Fleischmann married Josef Albers.

<https://theglasshouse.org/media/anni-albers-design-pioneer/>

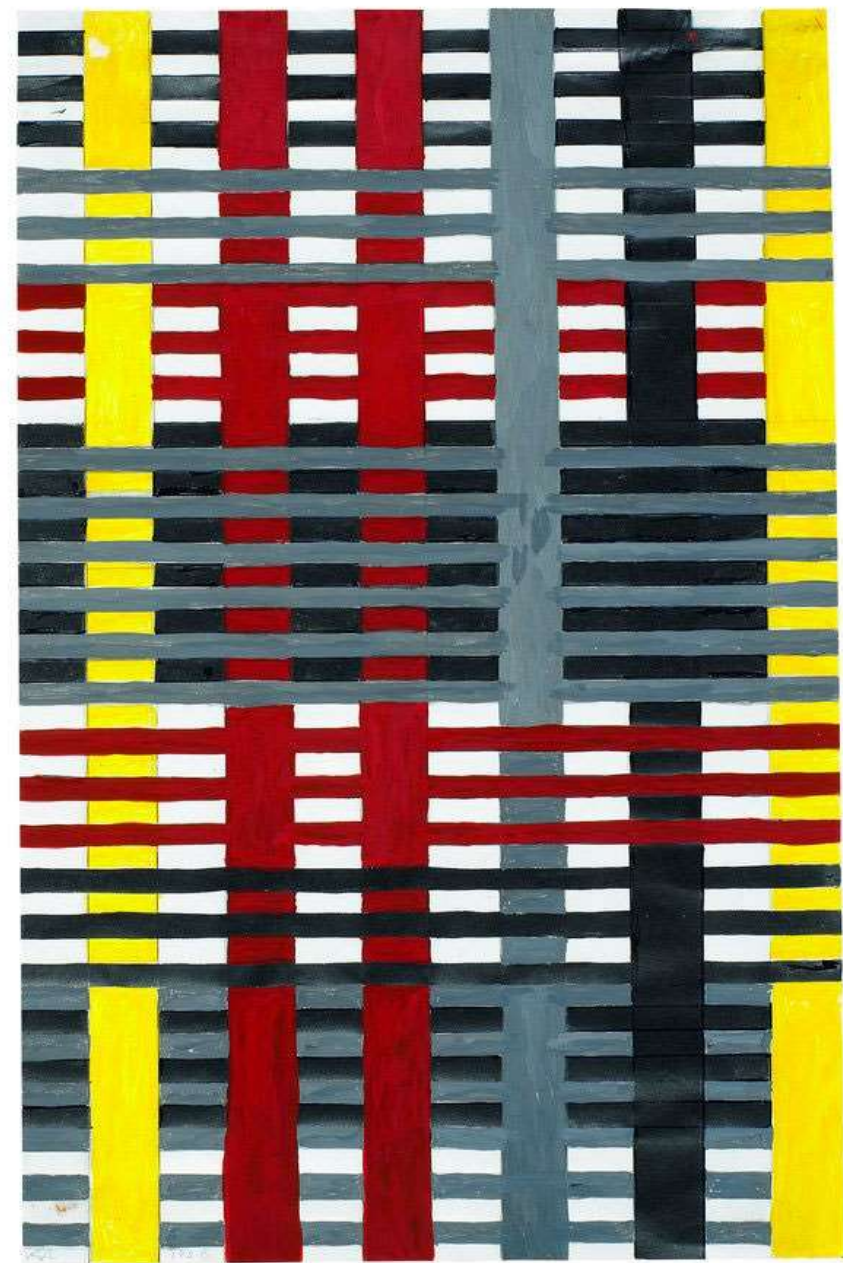
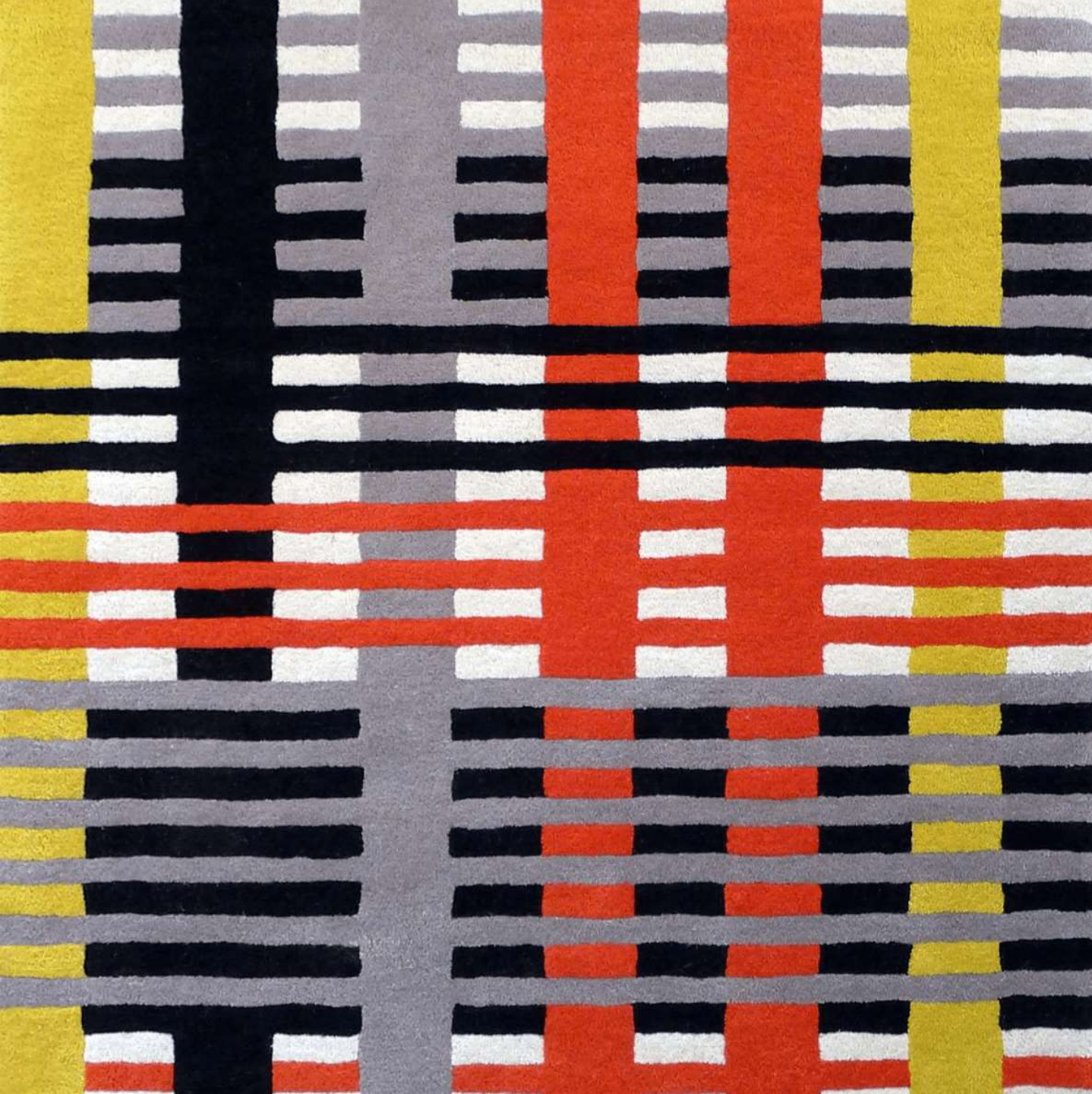
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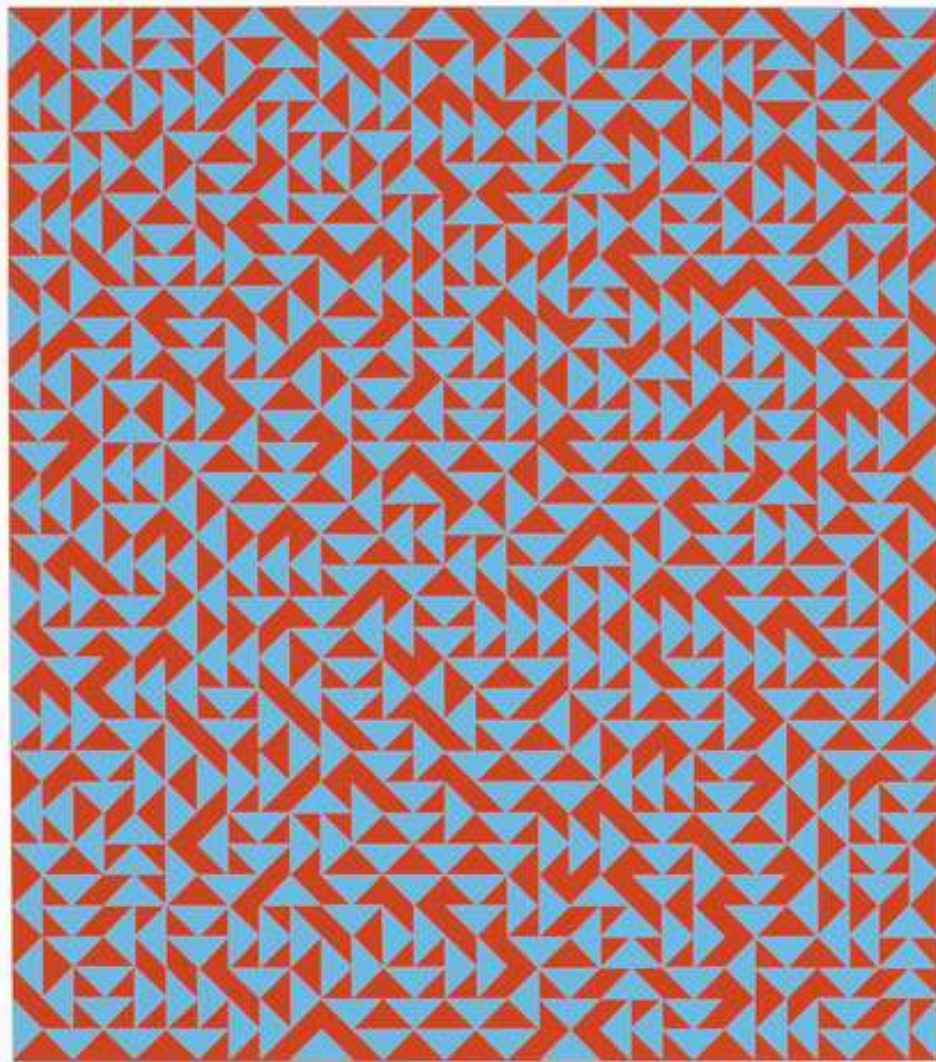
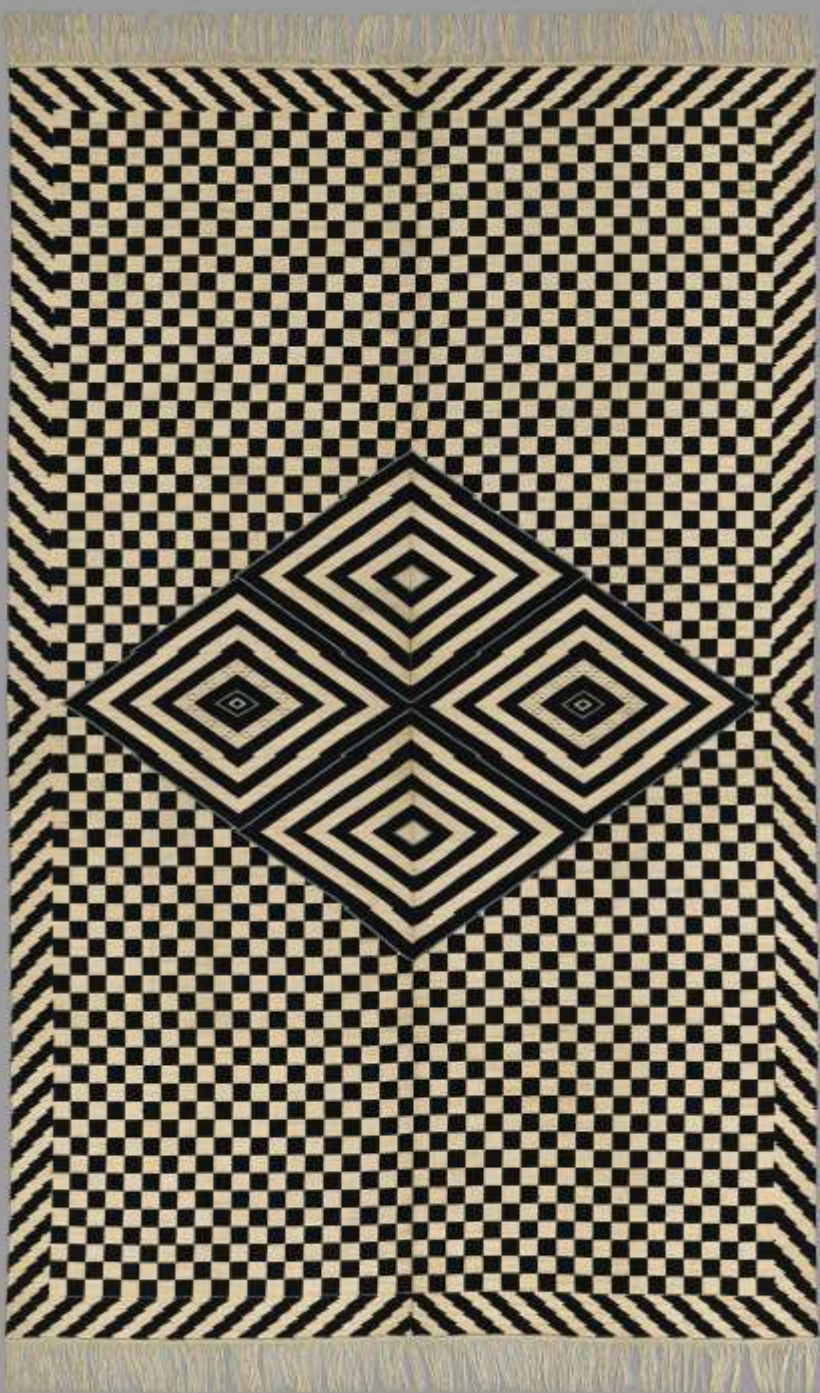


gonache

amir alben





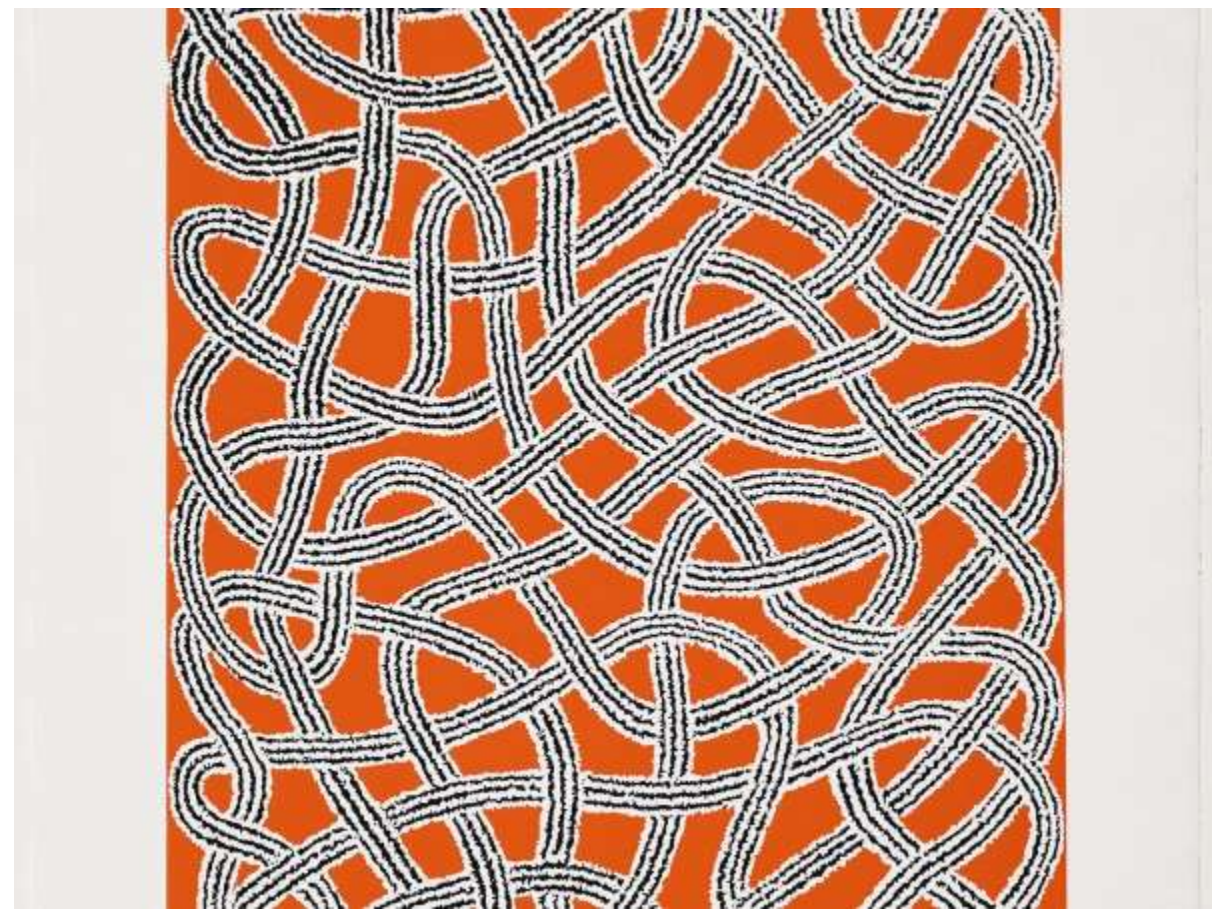
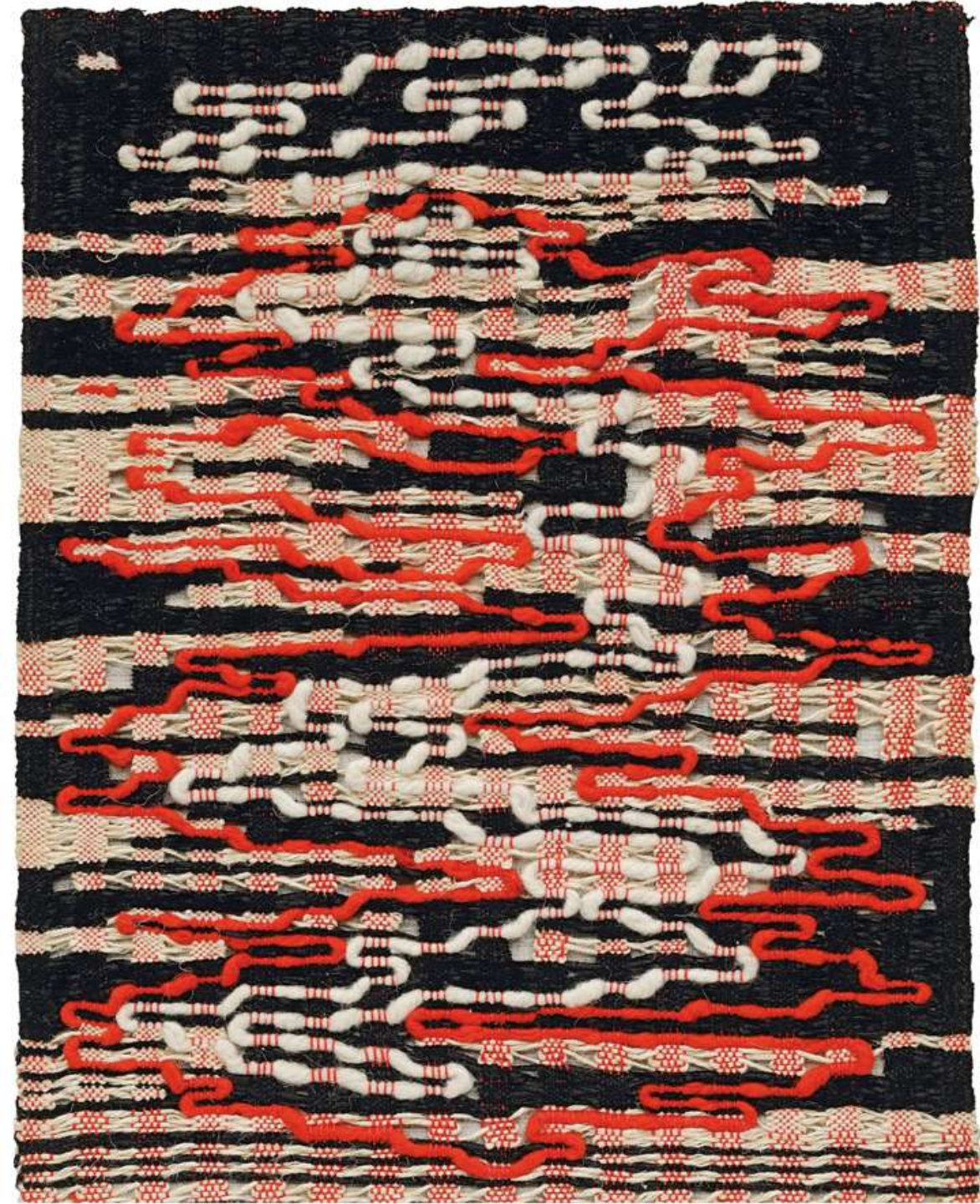


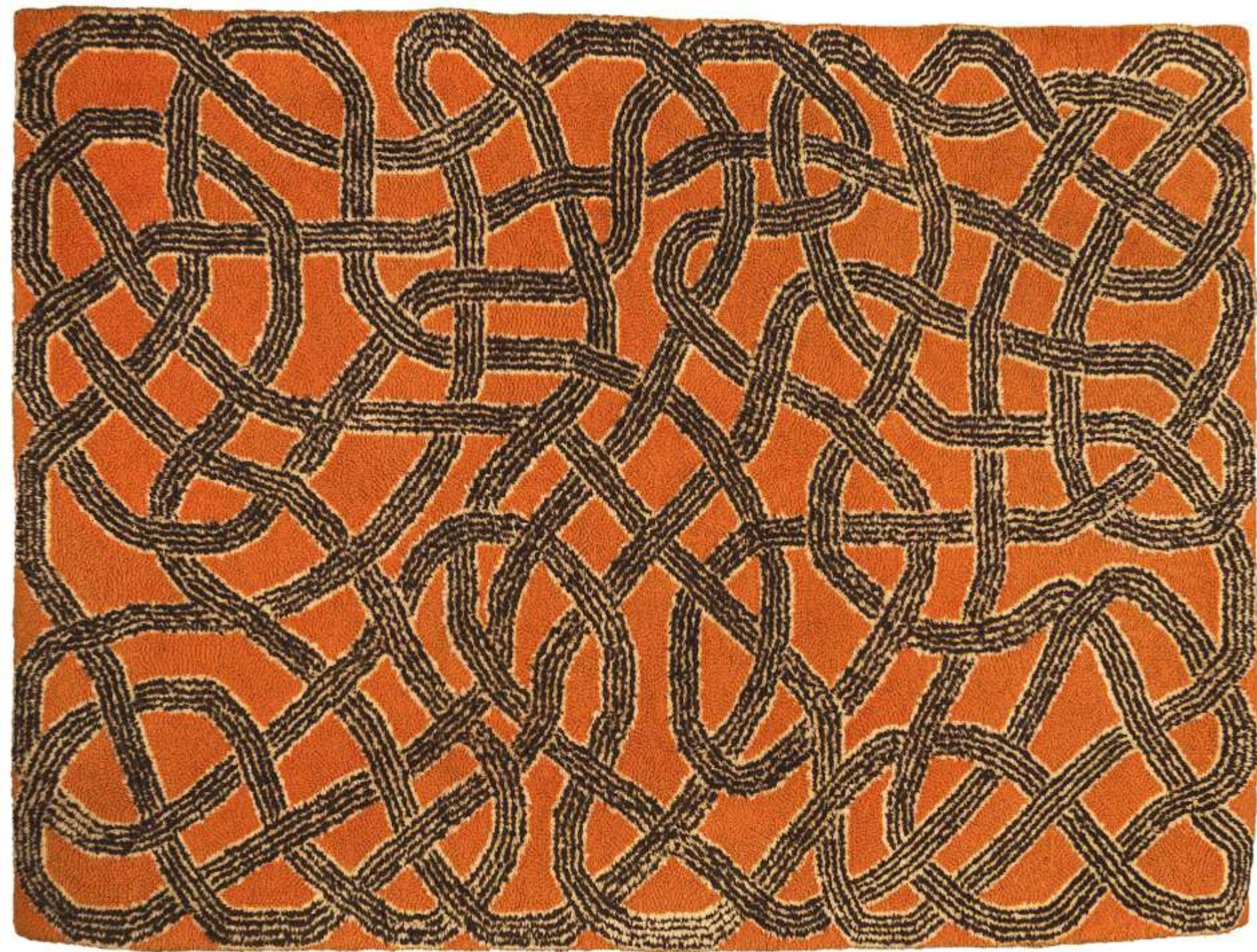
Black and white, 1977.

Red and blue, 1977.

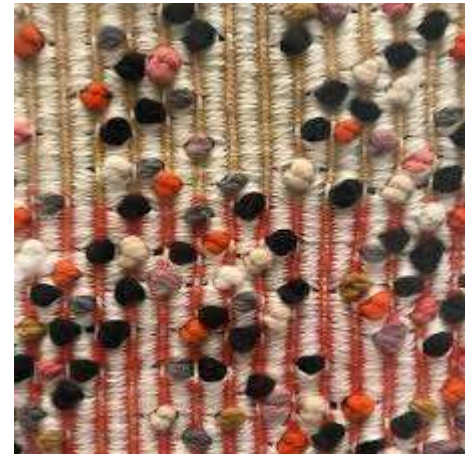
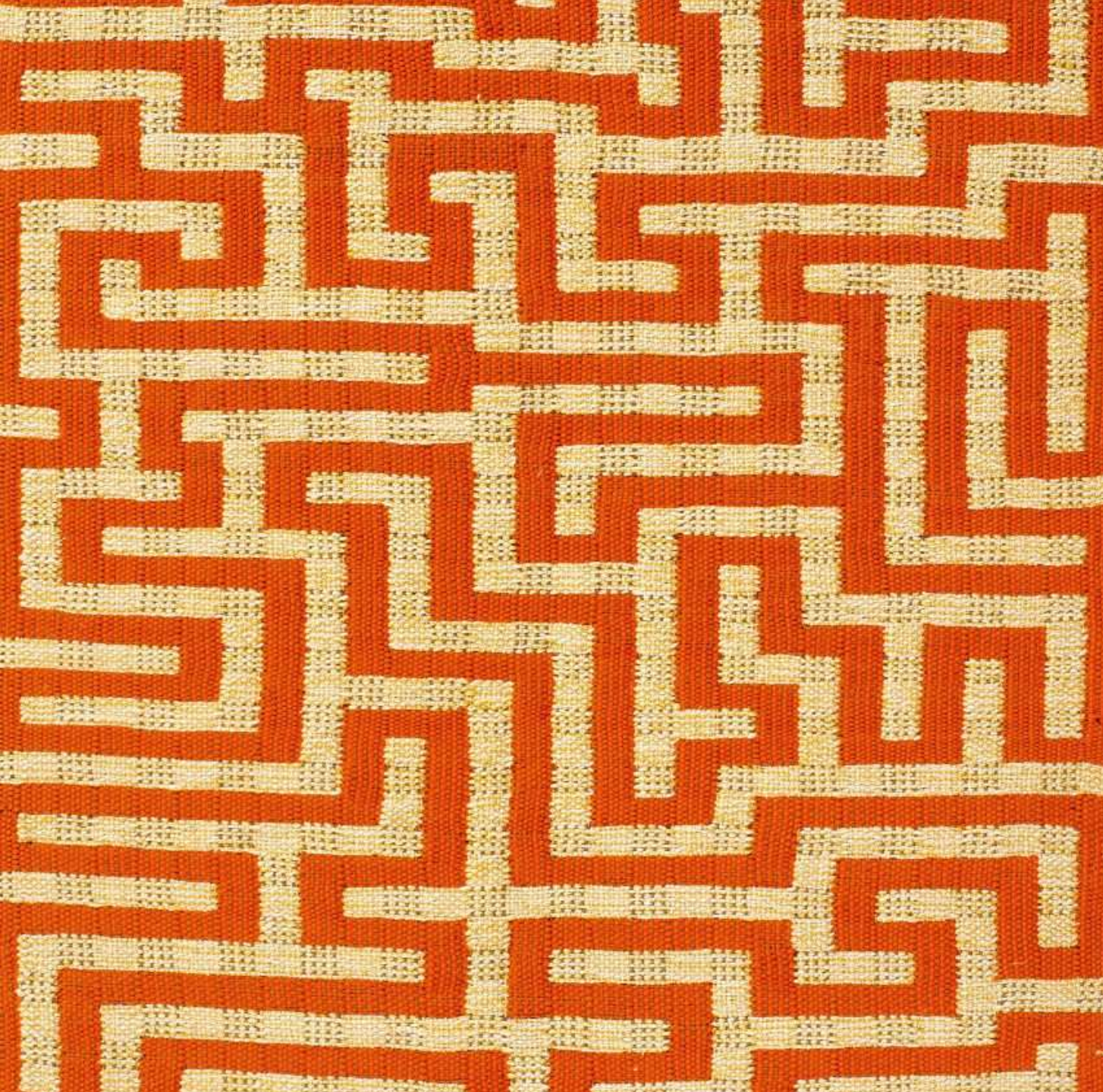


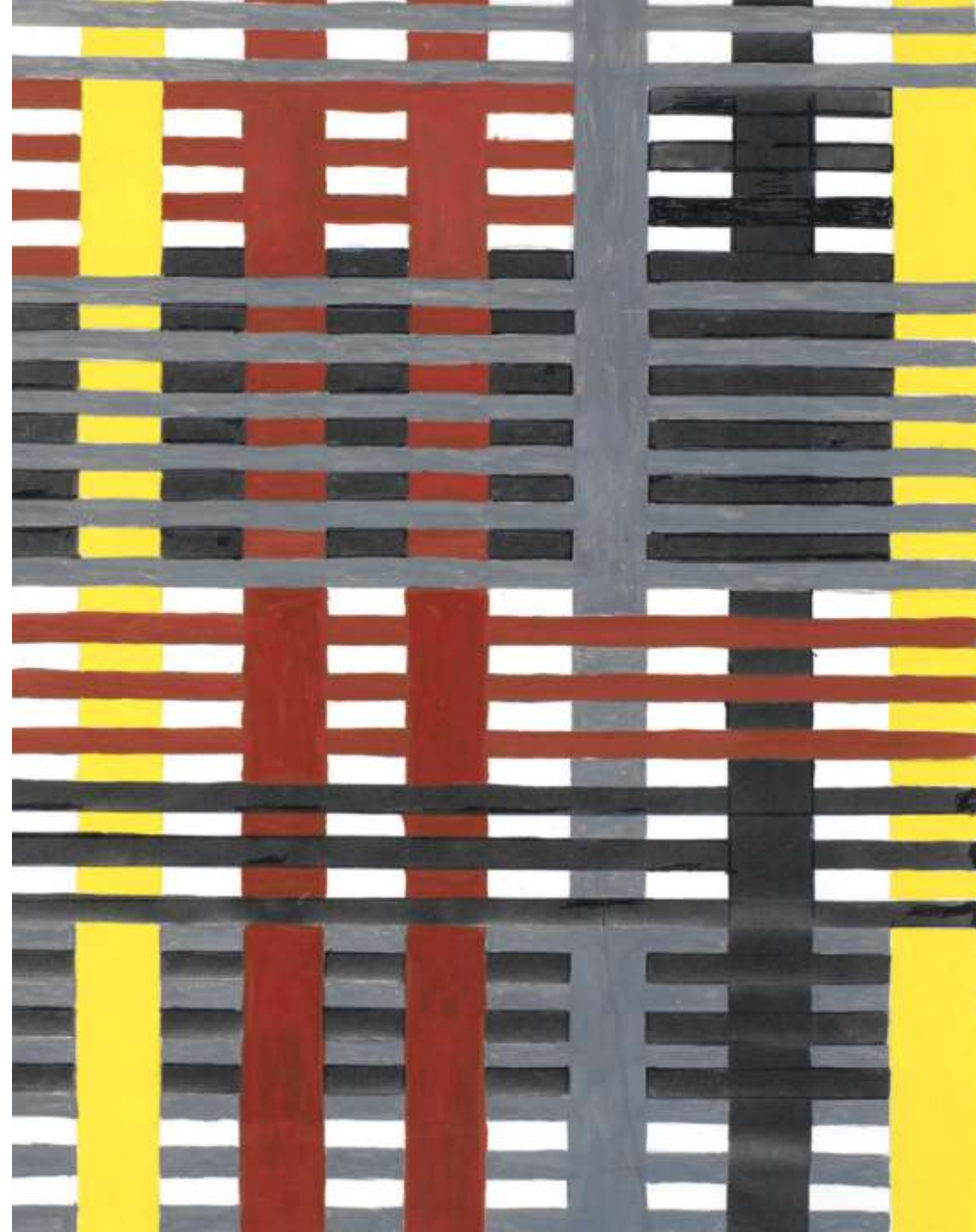


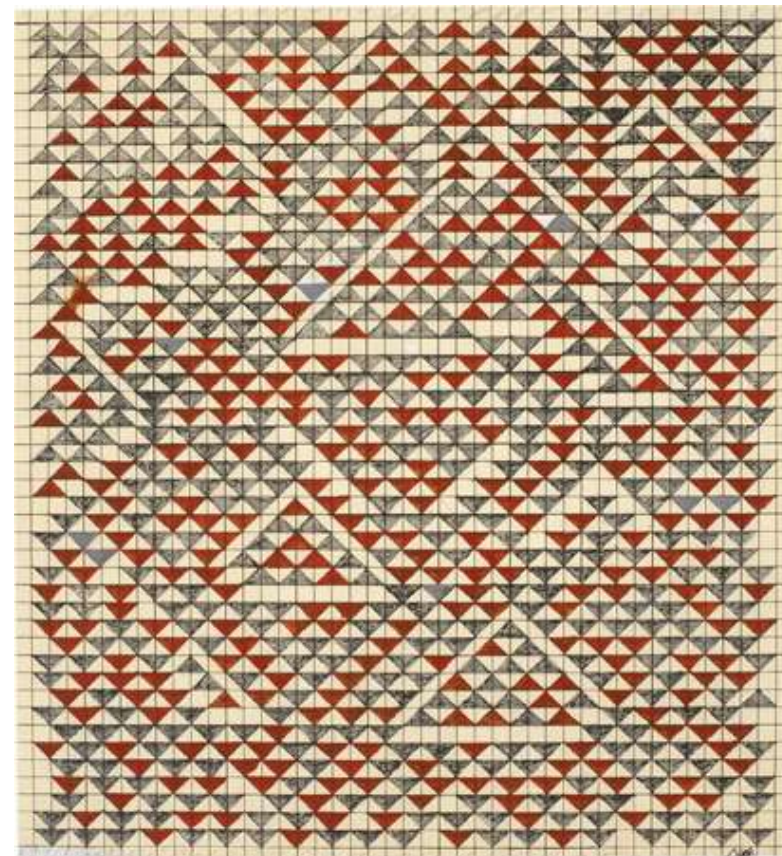
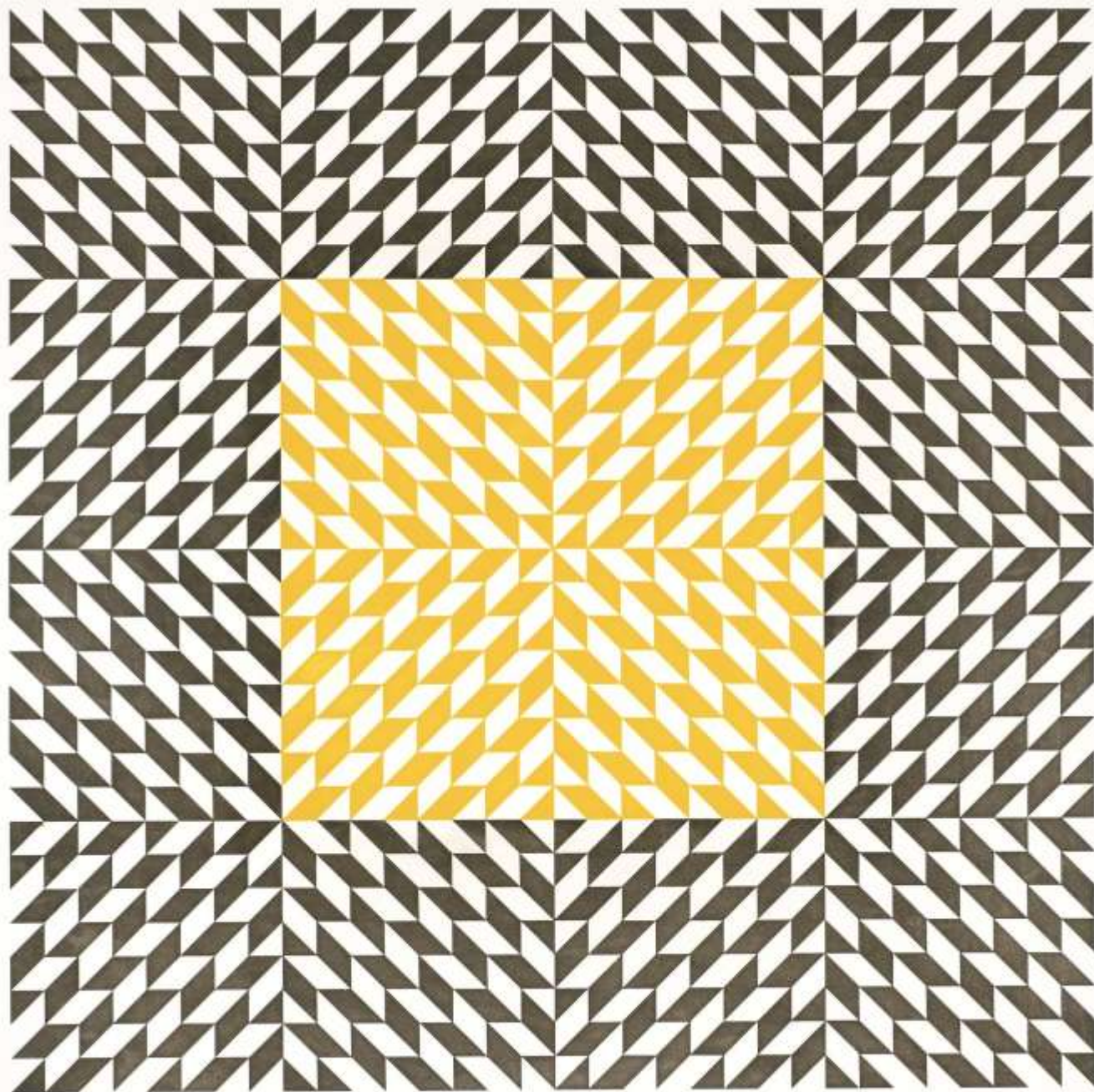












Dorothea Tanning (1910-2012)

Dorothea Tanning was an American painter, printmaker, sculptor, writer, and poet. Her early work was influenced by [Surrealism](#). Apart from three weeks she spent at the Chicago Academy of Fine Art in 1930, Tanning was a self-taught artist. The surreal imagery of her paintings from the 1940s and her close friendships with artists and writers of the Surrealist Movement have led many to regard Tanning as a Surrealist painter, yet she developed her own individual style over the course of an artistic career that spanned six decades.

- <https://www.dorotheatanning.org/>
- <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/dorothea-tanning> (video)











Transition

Like other Surrealist painters, she was meticulous in her attention to details and in building up surfaces with carefully muted brushstrokes. Through the late 1940s, she continued to paint depictions of unreal scenes, some of which combined erotic subjects with enigmatic symbols and desolate space. During this period she formed enduring friendships with, among others, [Marcel Duchamp](#), [Joseph Cornell](#), and [John Cage](#). She also designed sets and costumes for several of [George Balanchine](#)'s ballets, including *The Night Shadow* (the original version of his ballet [La Sonnambula](#), which premiered in 1946 at [City Center of Music and Drama](#) in New York), and performed in two of [Hans Richter](#)'s avant-garde films, [Dreams That Money Can Buy](#) (1947) and [8 x 8: A Chess Sonata in 8 Movements](#) (1957).

Over the next decade, Tanning's painting evolved, becoming less explicit and more suggestive. Now working in [Paris](#) and Huismes, France, she began to move away from Surrealism and develop her own style. During the mid-1950s, her work radically changed and her images became increasingly fragmented and prismatic, exemplified in works such as *Insomnias* (1957, [Moderna Museet, Stockholm](#)). As she explains, "Around 1955 my canvases literally splintered... I broke the mirror, you might say".

Abstraction

By the late 1960s, Tanning's paintings were almost completely abstract, yet always suggestive of the female form. From 1969 to 1973, Tanning embarked on what she described as "an intense five-year adventure in soft sculpture," concentrating on a body of three-dimensional works in fabric. Five of these sculptures comprise the installation *Hôtel du Pavot, Chambre 202* (1970–73) that is now in the permanent collection of the [Musée National d'Art Moderne](#) at the [Centre Georges Pompidou](#), Paris. During her time in France in the 1950s to 1970s, Tanning also became an active [printmaker](#), working in ateliers of Georges Visat and Pierre Chave and collaborating on a number of limited edition artists' books with such poets as [Alain Bosquet](#), [Rene Crevel](#), Lena Leclercq, and [André Pieyre de Mandiargues](#).^[17] After her husband's death in 1976, Tanning remained in France for several years with a renewed concentration on her painting. By 1980 she had relocated her home and studio to New York and embarked on an energetic creative period in which she produced paintings, drawings, collages, and prints.

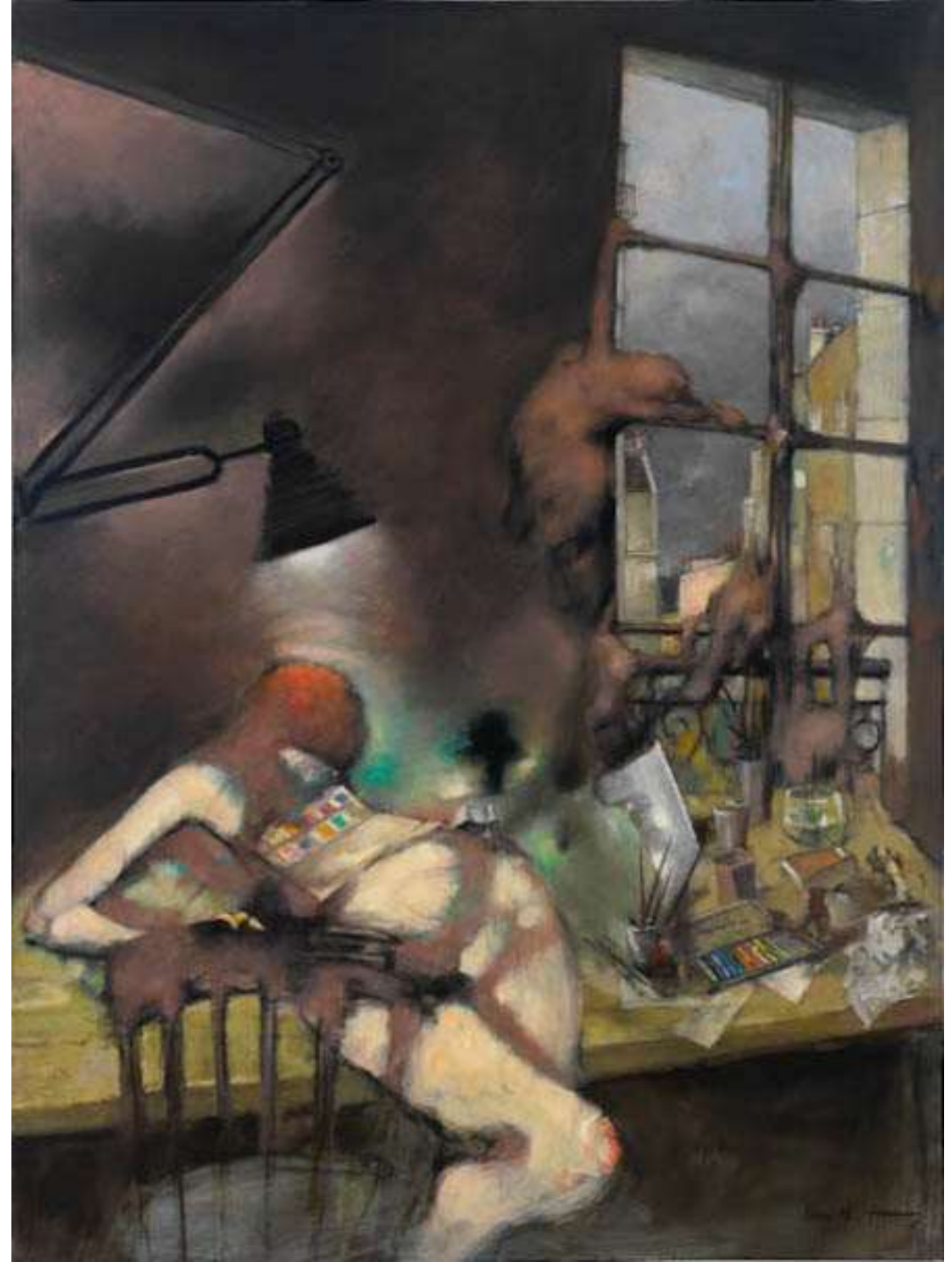
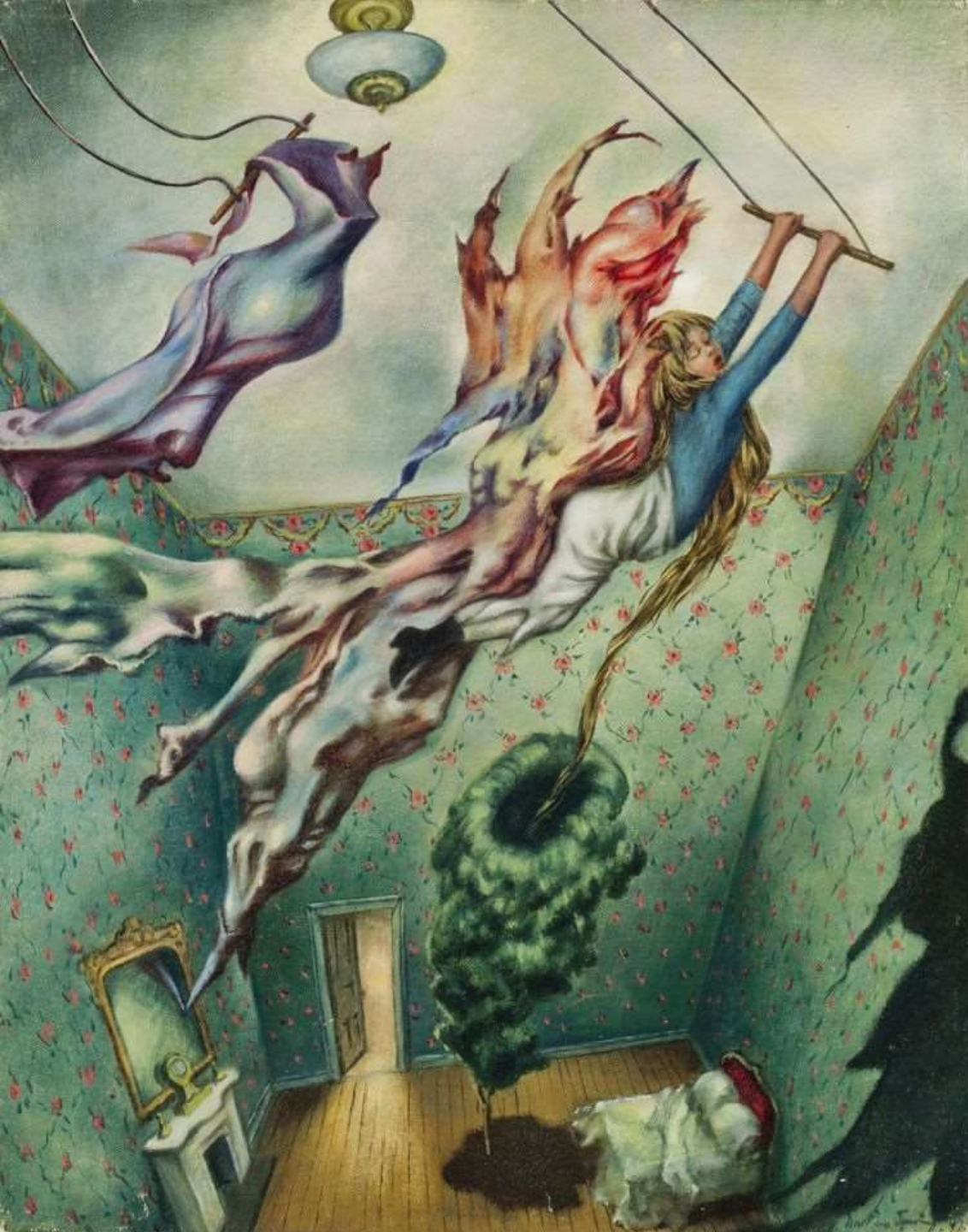
Tanning's work has been recognized in numerous one-person exhibitions, both in the United States and in Europe, including major retrospectives in 1974 at the Centre National d'Art Contemporain in Paris (which became the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1977), and in 1993 at the [Malmö Konsthall](#) in Sweden and the at the [Camden Arts Centre](#) in London. [The New York Public Library](#) mounted a retrospective of Tanning's prints in 1992,^[18] and the [Philadelphia Museum of Art](#) mounted a small retrospective exhibition in 2000 entitled *Birthday and Beyond* to mark its acquisition of Tanning's celebrated 1942 self-portrait, *Birthday*. In 2018, [Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía](#), Madrid, held a major exhibition of the artist's work,^[19] curated by Alyce Mahon, which travelled to the [Tate Modern](#), London in 2019.^[20]

Literary Career

Tanning wrote stories and poems throughout her life, with her first short story published in [VVV](#) in 1943^[21] and original poems accompanying her etchings in the limited edition books *Demain* (1964)^[22] and *En chair et en or* (1973).^[23] However, it was after her return to New York in the 1980s that she began to focus on her writing. In 1986, she published her first memoir, entitled *Birthday* for the painting that had figured so prominently in her biography. It has since been translated into four other languages. In 2001, she wrote an expanded version of her memoir called *Between Lives: An Artist and Her World*.

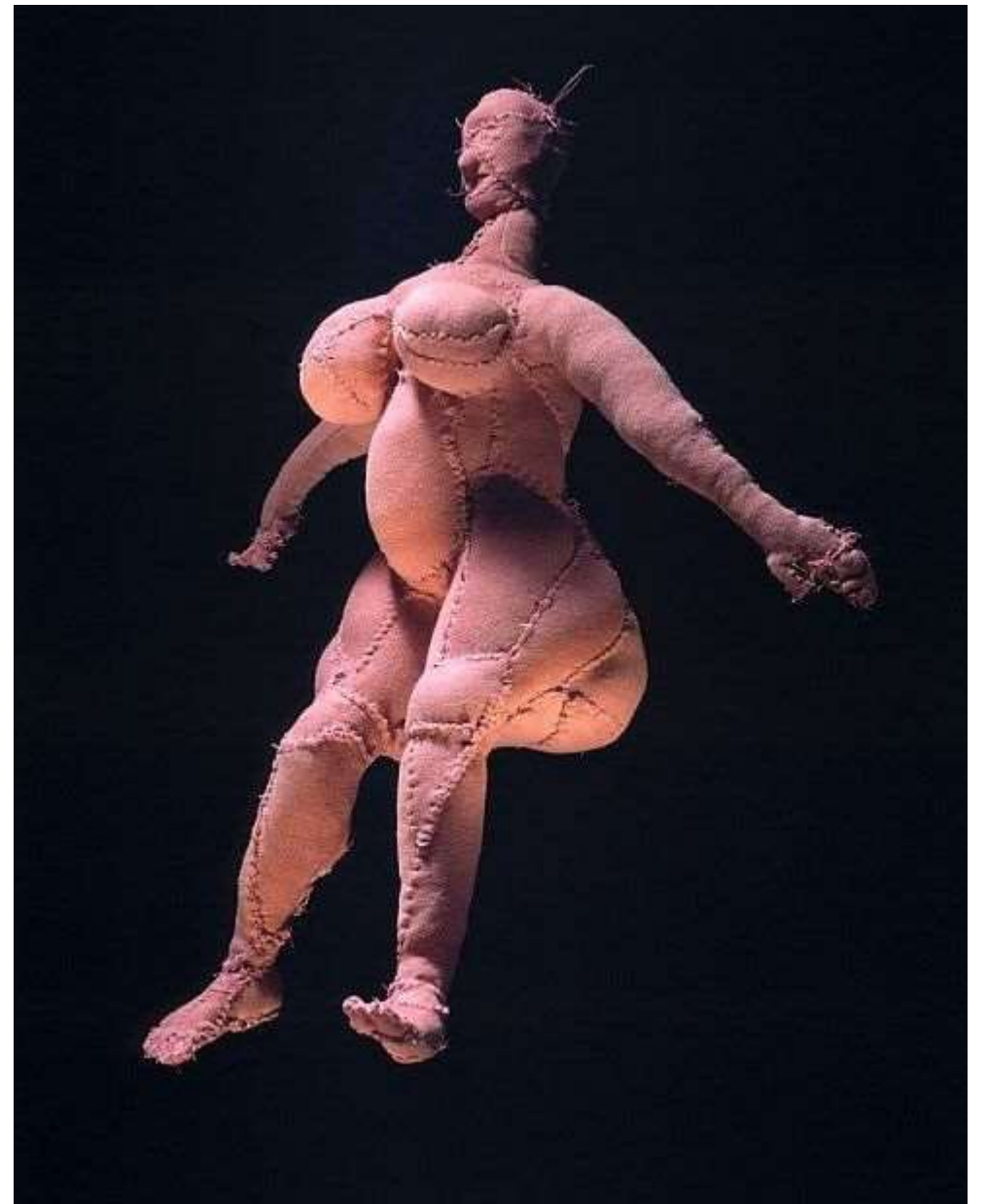
With the encouragement of her friend and mentor [James Merrill](#) (who was for many years Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets),^[24] Tanning began to write her own poetry in her eighties, and her poems were published regularly in literary reviews and magazines such as [The Yale Review](#), [Poetry](#), [The Paris Review](#), and [The New Yorker](#) until the end of her life. A collection of her poems, *A Table of Content*, and a short novel, *Chasm: A Weekend*, were both published in 2004. Her second collection of poems, *Coming to That*, was published by Graywolf Press in 2011.

In 1994, Tanning endowed the [Wallace Stevens Award](#) of the [Academy of American Poets](#), an annual prize of \$100,000 awarded to a poet in recognition of outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry.























Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975)

Dame Jocelyn Barbara Hepworth DBE was an English artist and sculptor. Her work exemplifies Modernism and in particular modern sculpture. Along with artists such as Ben Nicholson and Naum Gabo, Hepworth was a leading figure in the colony of artists who resided in St Ives during the Second World War.

Following her studies at the RCA, Hepworth travelled to [Florence](#), Italy, in 1924 on a [West Riding](#) Travel Scholarship.^[1] Hepworth was also the runner-up for the [Prix-de-Rome](#), which the sculptor [John Skeaping](#) won. After travelling with him to Siena and Rome, Hepworth married Skeaping on 13 May 1925 in Florence.^[2] In Italy, Hepworth learned how to carve marble from sculptor Giovanni Ardini. Hepworth and Skeaping returned to London in 1926, where they exhibited their works together from their flat.^[2] Their son Paul was born in London in 1929.^[1] In 1931, Hepworth met and fell in love with abstract painter [Ben Nicholson](#); however, both were still married at the time.^[8] At Hepworth's request, she and Skeaping were divorced that year.^[9]

Her early work was highly interested in abstraction and art movements on the continent. In 1931, Hepworth was the first to sculpt the pierced figures that are characteristic of both her own work and, later, that of Henry Moore.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/post-war-european-art/postwar-art-in-britain/v/barbara-hepworth>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJ7ByuUtoo0>

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/post-war-european-art/postwar-art-in-britain/v/barbara-hepworth-pelagos>





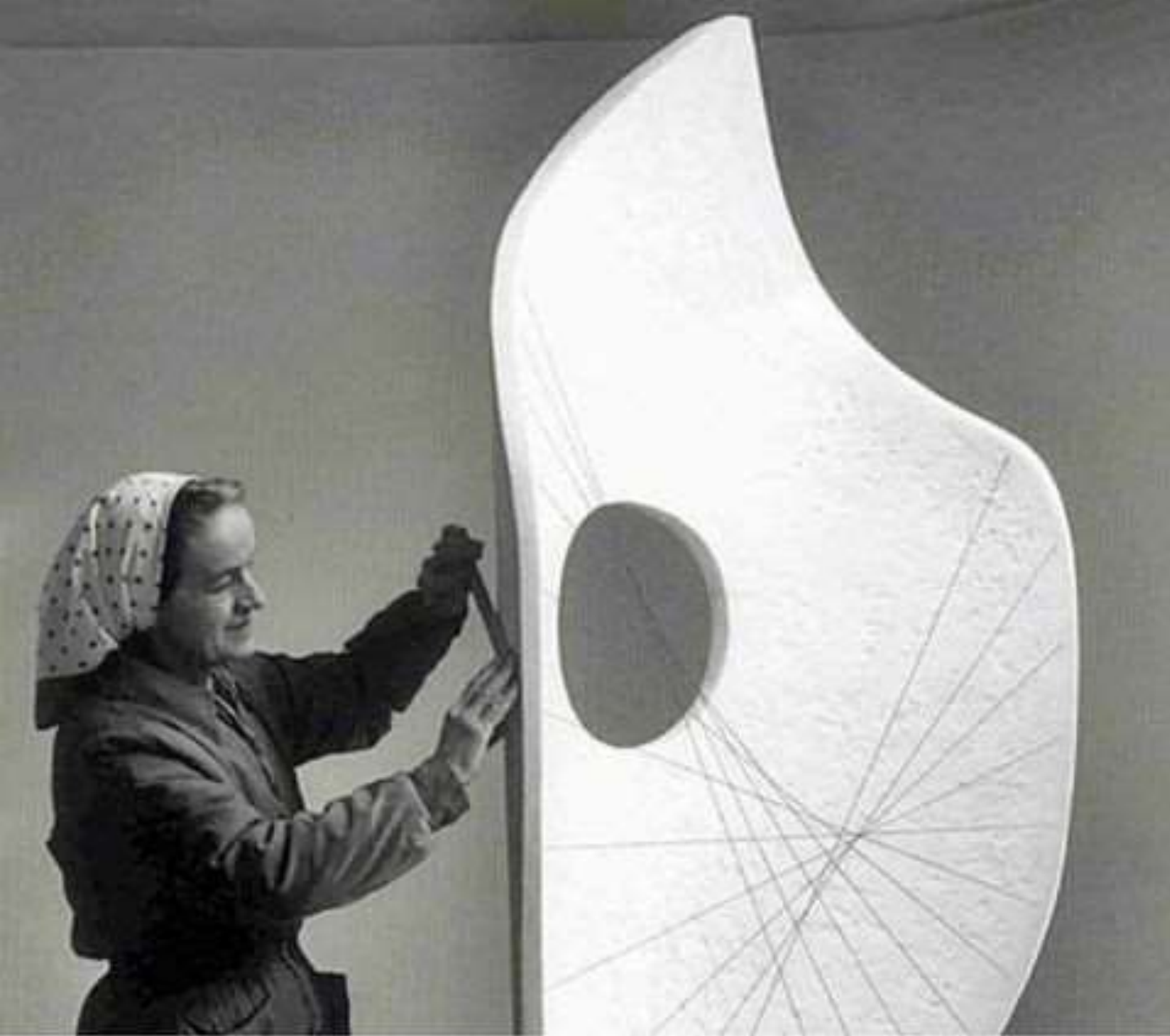




















Elaine De Kooning (1918-1989)

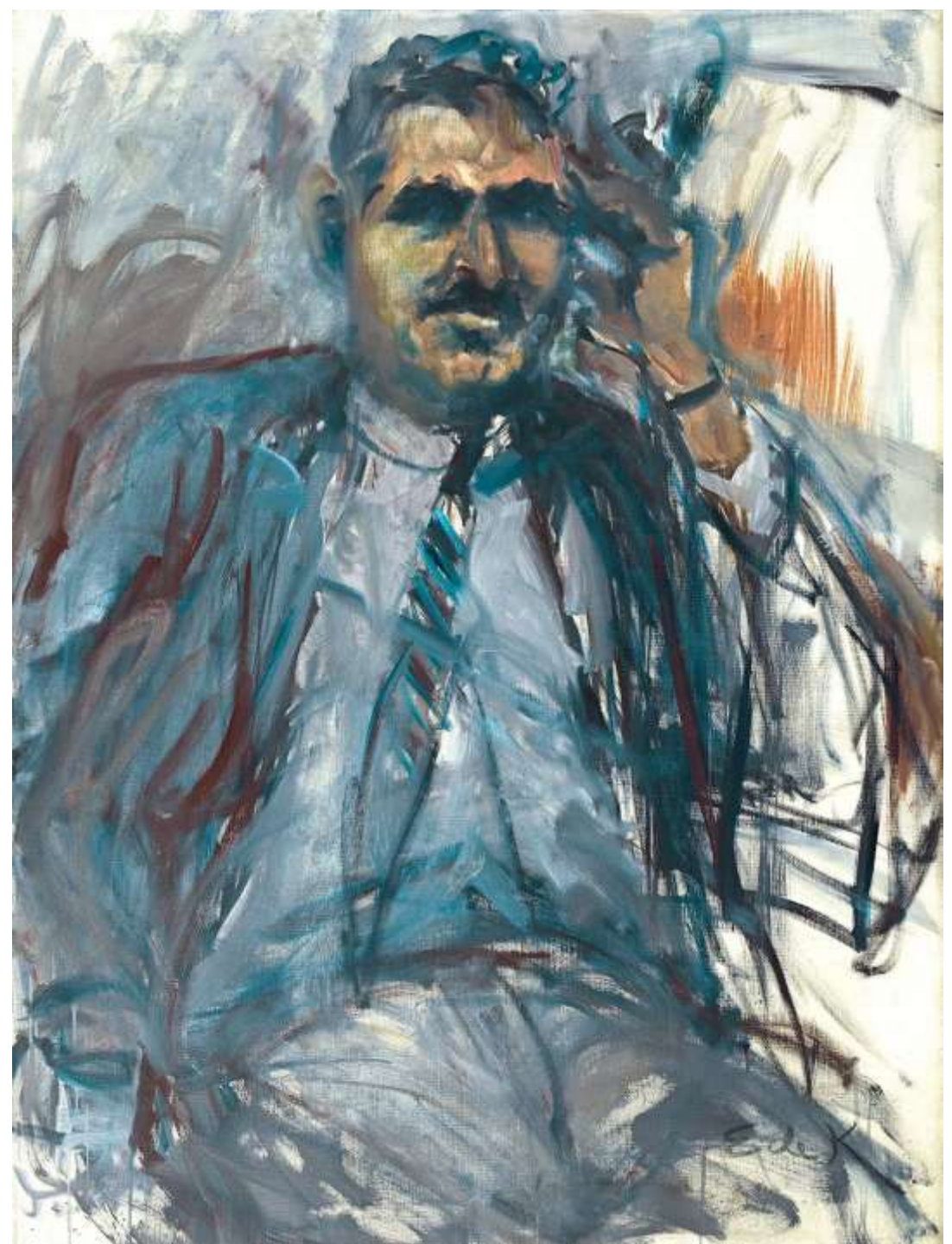
Elaine Marie Catherine de Kooning was an Abstract Expressionist and Figurative Expressionist painter in the post-World War II era. She wrote extensively on the art of the period and was an editorial associate for Art News magazine. On December 9, 1943, she married painter Willem de Kooning.

Elaine de Kooning was an accomplished landscape and portrait artist active in the Abstract Expressionist movement of the early twentieth century. She was a member of the Eighth Street Club (the Club) in New York City.^[11] The Club functioned as a space to discuss ideas. Among this group of artists were Willem de Kooning, Jimmy Rosati, Giorgio Spaventi, [Milton Resnick](#), [Pat Passlof](#), [Earl Kerkam](#), Ludwig Sander, [Angelo Ippolito](#), [Franz Kline](#), [Clyfford Still](#), and [Hans Hofmann](#). A membership position for a woman was rare at that time.

Elaine promoted Willem's work throughout their relationship. Along with her own work as a painter, she was committed to gaining recognition for her husband's work. Though she was very serious about her own work, she was well-aware that it was often overshadowed by her husband's fame. After showing their work in their 1951 exhibition at the [Sidney Janis Gallery](#), *Artists: Man and Wife*, which also included [Jackson Pollock](#) and [Lee Krasner](#), [Ben Nicholson](#) and [Barbara Hepworth](#), and [Jean Arp](#) and [Sophie Taeuber-Arp](#), Elaine said, "It seemed like a good idea at the time, but later I came to think that it was a bit of a put-down of the women. There was something about the show that sort of *attached* women-wives- to the *real* artists". Despite this effect on her own career, Elaine continued to promote her husband.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RkwjMFGVwo>

















Assignment Suggestions

- Create a silhouette (silhouette) a la Ana Mendieta
- Create an expressionistic portrait
- Use fabric and pattern to create a work of art