Valentin Bousch (French, 1490–1541)
The Creation and the Expulsion from Paradise, 1533
Stained glass
114 × 90 inches (289.6 × 228.6 cm)

This 16th-century stained glass window was created by Valentin Bousch, one of the most prominent stained glass artists of the time. The window reads as a single narrative spanning across the three lancets. From left to right, the work depicts Jesus Christ blessing the creation of the world, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and the expulsion of the couple after tasting the forbidden fruit. The *Creation and Expulsion* window is one of four surviving windows by Valentin Bousch. Of the other three, two are on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and one is installed in St. Joseph's Church in Stockbridge, MA. All four windows would have originally been displayed as part of a cycle of seven windows in the Saint-Firmin church in Flavigny-sur-Moselle.

The *Creation and Expulsion* window is permanently installed at the Hill Art Foundation. To read a scholarly essay about the work by Timothy Husband, explore a panel-by-panel virtual exhibition, and see a time-lapse of the installation, scan the QR code below:


Robert Bergman (American, born 1944)
Untitled, 1990
Inkjet on Arches Infinity 100% cotton rag, coated with BA/MMA copolymer and microcrystalline wax
23 3/4 × 16 inches (60.3 × 40.6 cm)

Untitled, 1990
Inkjet on Arches Infinity 100% cotton rag, coated with BA/MMA copolymer and microcrystalline wax
23 3/4 × 16 inches (60.3 × 40.6 cm)

Robert Bergman challenges conventions of street photography with his intimate portraits. This untitled work is from a series titled *A Kind of Rapture*, 51 portraits of people on the margins of American society. Bergman's instincts for framing, posing, and color palettes are in dialogue with the long history of painted portraiture stretching back to the Old Masters. In this stirring portrait, representative of the series, Bergman captures a single individual with remarkable empathy and depth.

Shot with a handheld 35mm camera, a man is presented in close-up, devoid of contextual surroundings. Through meticulous use of color and composition, Bergman invites viewers to contemplate the individual's identity and humanity. In the constant rush of urban life, where faces and individuals blur, Bergman humanizes people often ignored by the public. He challenges the audience to think differently about those photographed. The viewer is urged to release judgment, apply compassion, seek understanding, and develop admiration for his resilience in the face of adversity. This piece exemplifies Bergman's unique approach to portraiture, offering a profound consideration of the intersectionality of race, gender, socioeconomic status, and the anonymity of urban life.

—William Yuan & Sydney Gardiner, Teen Curators

Joos van Cleve (Dutch, 1480–1540)
Portrait of a Nobleman with a Beard, n.d.
Oil on oak panel
32 11/16 × 26 inches (83 × 66 cm)

Joos van Cleve's religious and royal portraits combine maximalism with realism. His skills as a portraitist led to a residency at the court of Francis I of France, where he depicted several royal subjects, one of whom is most likely the subject of *Portrait of a Nobleman with a Beard*. This painting has many of the hallmarks of a van Cleve masterwork: interplay of rich, contrasting colors; a single sitter; and a detailed background featuring intricate architecture. The portrait utilizes the *sfumato* technique, the juxtaposition of subtle shades of light and dark also used by Leonardo da Vinci, to impart a unique and intense emotionality.

Van Cleve presents a man of letters, leisure, and military acumen in this dynamic composition. In his right hand he holds a furled sheet of paper, which resonates with the books, flute, and handsome bird visible over his left shoulder. His left hand rests on the hilt of a sword, echoed in the armored gauntlets hanging over his right shoulder. His neck is embellished with glistening accents of gold, portraying the noble as a wealthy individual. The sleeves indicate that he is a member of the French court, with the velvet material synonymous with stylistic trends of the era. The green wallpaper directly contrasts with the subject's pink undertone and red hair, framing him as the subject of importance.

—Danna Rios-Sosa & Rina Chen, Teen Curators

Robert Gober (American, born 1954)
Untitled, 1978–2018
Copper, beeswax, forged iron, paper, soil, balsa wood, oil and acrylic paints, hand-printed silkscreen on paper
24 × 24 × 5 7/8 inches (61 × 61 × 15 cm)

Robert Gober's meticulously handcrafted work delves into sexuality, religion, and politics. *Untitled* is a boxed tableaux—a fairly new format for Gober—where each element is handmade, sometimes from unexpected materials, to achieve a convincing realism and provide a fresh perspective on ordinary domestic objects.

In this work, apples are suspended behind prison bars over a backdrop of lilacs and brown leaves, evoking both nostalgia and a sense of unease. The hand-painted floral wallpaper suggests a home—a place of comfort—juxtaposed with the dried leaves, which bring to mind death or change. In the bottom corners of the work are a small radiator and a cigarette box; two more objects that conjure the home and death, respectively. The apples seem to defy gravity while conjuring the biblical story of Adam and Eve, while the bars, a common motif for Gober, may symbolize a multitude of themes such as confinement, restriction, and societal constraints. The juxtaposition of objects in the vitrine create a poetic resonance.

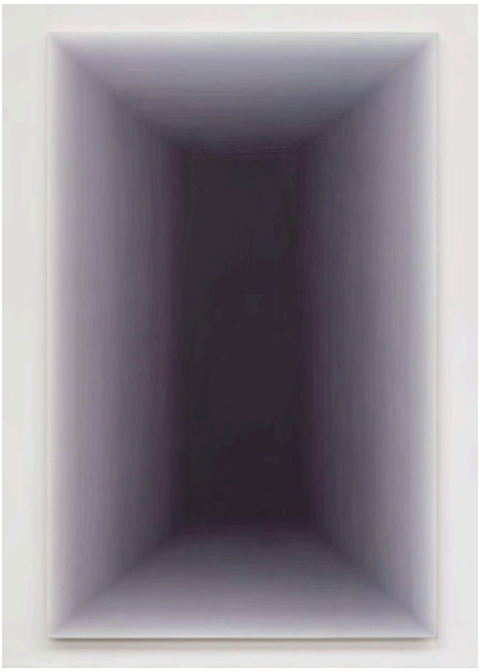
—Fatemah Mashuka & Fatiha Zzman, HAF Educators

Mark Grotjahn (American, born 1968)
Untitled (White Butterfly), 2002
Oil on linen
26 × 23 inches (66 × 58.4 cm)

Untitled (White Butterfly) is part of the important *Butterfly* series that Mark Grotjahn began in 2001. The painting features bands of white radiating from two uneven vanishing points on a central axis. While monochromatic, glimpses of bright red underpainting are visible around the edges of the canvas, hinting at unseen layers of paint below. The works in the series all share the same basic form—geometric "wings" extending from a stem-like vertical—but with each new *Butterfly* painting, Grotjahn adjusts color, scale, and composition, resulting in a cohesive body of work in which each individual painting is unique.

Taken together, they can be seen as experiments in perspective that reflect the influence of artists such as Piet Mondrian and Kazimir Malevich. Grotjahn has described himself as "obsessed with paint and the physicality of paint," which can be seen in this work in the thick, self-assured texture of the pigment. His *Butterfly* series playfully joins the natural world with rigorous formalism to engage critically with geometric abstraction.

—Namiya Bowen, HAF Educator



Wang Guangle (Chinese, born 1976)
180620, 2018
Acrylic on canvas
110 1/4 × 70 7/8 inches (280 × 180 cm)

Wang Guangle is a self-proclaimed “abstract-realist” artist. He was part of a generation that began to reject traditional art practices in 1970s China. As many artists were reconsidering how to include heightened emotion in their work, Wang began focusing on the concept of time. During his time at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, Wang organized the group N12 in defiance of the school’s traditionalist education. N12 pushed for a more diverse approach to art, utilizing abstract styles rather than focusing solely on figurative painting. When asked to describe his own art, Wang uses the phrase “conceptually abstract,” taking intangible facets of life, such as time, and rendering them into abstract pieces. Wang develops his artworks by layering various colors of acrylic paint onto one canvas, emphasizing the passage of time as essential to the development of the final painting. This technique of layering plays with depth and cultivates a sense of hollowness within the canvas, drawing viewers into the artwork. His process is influenced by Buddhist ideology surrounding the material world. He describes his art as concerning “how mechanical and repetitive labor can have its own meaning spiritually”—a core belief of Buddhism.

—Victoria Dzyuba & Jason Otoo, Teen Curators

Caroline Kent (American, born 1975)
A Dark Hymn, 2021
Acrylic on unstretched canvas
103 1/4 × 81 1/4 inches (262.2 × 206.4 cm)

Caroline Kent's painting *A Dark Hymn* interrogates the relationships between visual and verbal language. Kent explains that her early interest in subtitled films placed her "on the outside of language," which later shaped her practice of replacing letters and words with uncommon forms and irregular geometries. The layering of organic shapes in *A Dark Hymn* connotes a conversation, with organic figures reacting to one another to form a dynamic composition. The repeated cursive markings are reminiscent of letters, creating a direct connection between writing and visual form. Kent invites her viewers to consider how visual language can be an open form of communication, operating more metaphorically than literally: "Just because I am the 'inventor' of it doesn't mean that I alone hold the keys to its translation."

A Dark Hymn is one of many Kent paintings with a black background, a feature that, for the artist, makes the work "unlocatable." This "unlocatable" setting, combined with unreadable writing, mines the space between legibility and illegibility, probing the difference between language and communication. Kent's work explores how abstraction's non-translatable and undefinable qualities can transcend the boundaries of dialect and language.

—Penny Shapiro, HAF Educator

Willem de Kooning
(American, born Netherlands, 1904–97)
Clamdigger, 1972
Bronze
59 1/2 × 29 × 23 3/4 inches (151.1 × 73.7 × 60.3 cm)

In 2021, Gary Garrels wrote a short essay on Willem de Kooning's *Clamdigger* for the Foundation's inaugural publication, *Highlights*. An excerpt is below; scan the QR code to read the full text.

The figure itself appears and feels primordial; Peter Schjeldahl likened it to "a stolid, glowering figure of Neanderthaloid maleness." The extremities—hands, feet, genitalia— are overlarge, swollen, in contrast to the attenuated arms and legs. The head feels almost shrunken, sinking into the body. *Clamdigger* is a figure of existential tension, recalling and renewing Modernist figurative sculpture in a lineage that stretches from Auguste Rodin to Alberto Giacometti. In his sculpture, de Kooning brings back the urgency and intense inventiveness of paintings by the first generation of Abstract Expressionists. Of these artists, de Kooning alone with his sculptures sustains and recaptures that spirit.

—Gary Garrels

Agnes Martin (American, 1912–2004)
Untitled, 1979
Watercolor and ink on paper
11 × 11 inches (27.9 × 27.9 cm)

Albert Oehlen (German, born 1954)
BBQ, 2008
Oil on canvas
82 11/16 × 102 3/8 inches (210 × 260 cm)

“I had always used color—but not with my heart, my eye, or my aesthetic judgment. Then came the moment when I thought, ‘What would happen if I *did* care about color?’”
—Albert Oehlen

In this monumental painting, Albert Oehlen replaces the colorfully loud connotations surrounding a barbeque with a defamiliarizing ashy gray-scale landscape. Having popularly emerged in association with the Junge Wilde (“Young and Wild”) artist movement of the 1980s, Oehlen reinvents Expressionism, defying the minimalist status quo imposed upon abstract artists. With his unique color palettes and smearing paint application, Oehlen courts “ugliness” in his paintings to confront viewers with the challenge of the visually disturbing and awkward. He frequently imposes strict aesthetic parameters on his work, including periodically restricting certain colors. *BBQ* exemplifies this “therapeutic” limitation to black, white, and gray, creating a hunger for color. Oehlen centers self-discipline to explore the history of abstraction and dissect its surrealist methodologies. *BBQ* transforms the well-known, well-loved barbeque into a space of yearning for color and beauty.

—Louise Amarel, HAF Educator

Adam Pendleton (American, born 1984)
Untitled (A Victim of American Democracy), 2017
Silkscreen ink and spray paint on canvas
84 × 60 inches (213.4 × 152.4 cm)

Adam Pendleton is an artist whose practice spans drawing, painting, sound, film, installation, and bookmaking. Through his exploration of abstraction, the artist engages the ontological concept of Black Dada: a term coined by poet Amiri Baraka in his poem *Black Dada Nihilismus*. Black Dada looks at blackness as an open-ended idea, acting as an iconoclastic retort to the rigidity of racialized identity. Pendleton approaches Black Dada as a critical articulation of blackness through the lenses of avant-garde, minimalism, and the historic black arts movement of the 1960s. His process incorporates literature and language through his constant reference to black theorists and activists. To create this work, Pendleton repeatedly spraypainted, photographed, laser-printed, collaged, and screen-printed the text "A VICTIM OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY," a phrase drawn from a 1964 speech by Malcolm X. Through this act of repetition, concrete language is rendered abstract. The compounding processes of the work speak to the layered nature of identity; while the high-contrast palette further emphasizes the stark difference between black and white experience in America. Pendleton's repetition of words is a tool of abstraction, enticing the viewer to seek meaning beyond the referentiality of language.

—Erinma Onyewuchi, 2023–24 intern

Rudolf Stingel (Italian, born 1956)
Untitled, 2012
Electroformed copper, plated nickel and gold in 4 parts
Each panel: 47 1/4 × 47 1/4 inches (Each panel: 120 × 120 cm)

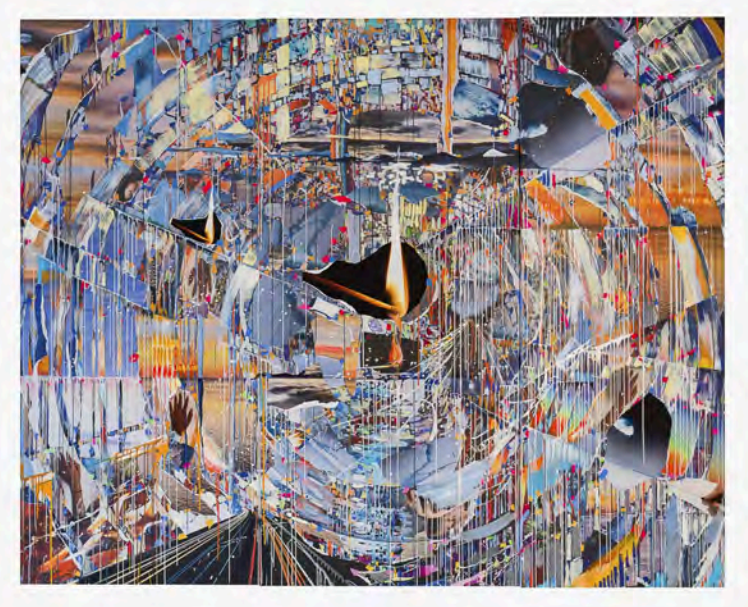
Rudolf Stingel is a conceptual artist who challenges expectations of painting. The construction of this 2012 work began with his 2007 mid-career retrospective exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and the Whitney Museum in New York. Visitors were invited to make their own markings on Celotex insulation paneling that lined the opening rooms. Following the exhibition, Stingel preserved selections of the inscribed panels, cast them in copper, and electroplated with gold. Stingel's playful combination of insulation paneling and gold plating eschews traditional art-making materials. By removing himself from the inscription process, the artist champions a shared, participatory viewing experience. This act subverts the relationship between art and the viewer and calls into question museum protocol; the etchings are not considered vandalism but works of high art. The large and luminous work conjures grandiose and majestic visions, all while dispelling the assumption that all that shimmers is without flaw.

—Savannah Nunez & Josiah Utak, Teen Curators

Antonio Susini (Italian, 1558–1624)
Cristo morto (Dead Christ), cast circa 1590–1615
Gilt bronze
12 1/2 × 10 3/4 × 3 inches (31.7 × 27.3 × 7.6 cm)

Antonio Susini was a sculptor and bronze caster mentored by the renowned artist Giambologna during the Renaissance. Susini's work captivated audiences because of his ability to imbue life into his sculptures. *Cristo morto*, Italian for "dead Christ," captures Jesus's crucifixion, though the cross has been lost. Giambologna sculpted the original form, likely in wax or clay, in 1588, and Susini later cast the work in bronze using the lost wax method: creating a mold from the original model and pouring molten bronze into it. Susini paid close attention to every detail, including the muscles and hair on the sculpture. The decision to gild the bronze gives the body a soft glow, emphasizing the divine significance of Christ's sacrificial death. Susini conveyed the agony and beauty of the moment by showcasing his skill in sculpting human anatomy: the subtle tilt of Jesus's head shows vulnerability, the prominence of veins emphasizes the physical strain, and the contorted form of the figure conveys movement and emotion. Inspired by Michelangelo's *Pietà* (1498–99), the sculpture captures the poignant moment of Christ's death.

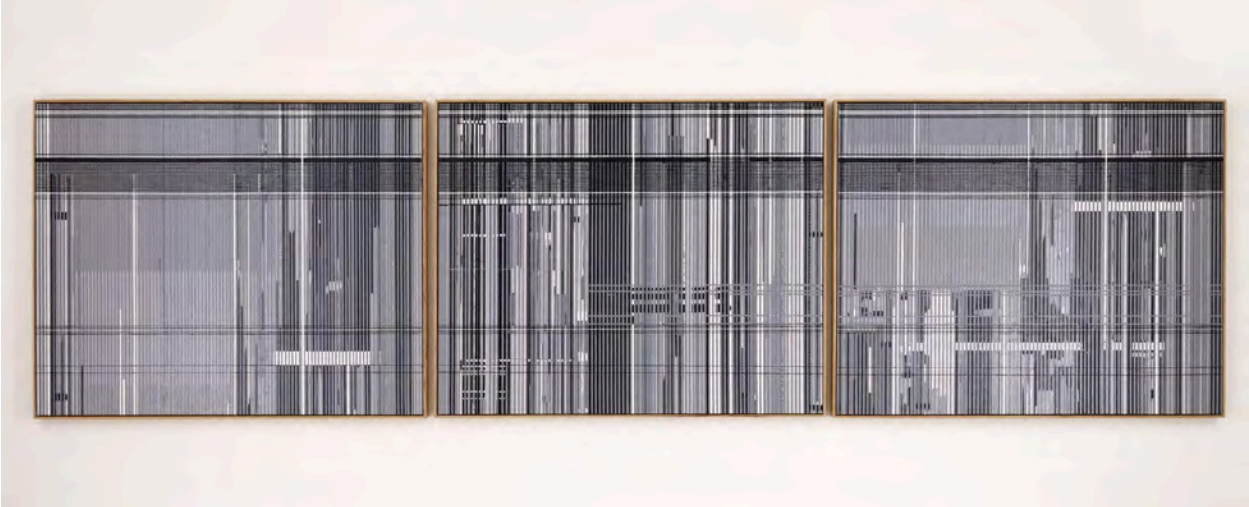
—Meidjina Adonis, HAF Educator



Sarah Sze (American, born 1969)
Flicker, 2023
Oil paint, acrylic paint, archival paper, acrylic polymers, ink, diabond, aluminum and wood.
97 × 120 ½ × 3 inches (246.4 × 306.1 × 7.6 cm)

Sarah Sze's paintings and sculptures explore the continual generation and transformation of images in the digital world. The disorienting composition and layered images of *Flicker* evokes the proliferation or permeation of images in one's everyday experience. Sze uses sharp brushstrokes and collaged images to distort the central image of the lit match, conveying how difficult it is to focus on one image online when being constantly fed information. In an interview with *Art 21*, Sze states that painting today may be used to "claim a space for interiority," as opposed to the public-facing nature of social media. By incorporating painting in her two- and three-dimensional work, Sze attempts to reclaim her interiority, using the medium to make sense of the constantly regenerating images on the internet. Sze's brushstrokes distort the images and guide the viewer's eye, shaping their interpretation. With *Flicker*, Sze creates a space for herself among the chaos of the digital world.

—Lauren Clare Doros, HAF Educator



Liu Wei (Chinese, born 1972)
Colors No. 13, 2013
Oil on canvas
53 1/8 × 198 13/16 inches (135 × 505 cm)

Liu Wei's painting, photography, and installation art explores themes of urbanization in China. Growing up in Beijing, Liu experienced the rapid expansion of cities, influencing him to make buildings and cityscapes his main subjects. He started his career with a group of artists exploring what they termed "post-sense sensibility." Responding to a period of overconsumption and consumerism, these artists sought to create work that reflected everyday life and raw emotions through engagement with nontraditional, and sometimes outlandish, subjects. Many of these artists sought to shock the viewer with spectacle, such as Liu's own *Hard to Restrain*, a looped video displaying contorting nude bodies, or obscurity, such as Zheng Guogu's deep-fried toy tanks. The post-sense sensibility artists pushed viewers to move past their initial emotional responses to their avant-garde work and begin to rationally process art experiences that were new and novel.

Colors No. 13 by Liu Wei embodies a similar relationship with emotion and rationality. The painting consists of a series of overlapping vertical and horizontal lines in gray, black, and white. The repetition and limited color palette bring an authoritative and architectural air to the work, which is immediately underlined by irregularly sized and chaotically placed verticals and horizontals. This contrast embodies the contradictions and restrictions of the built environment.

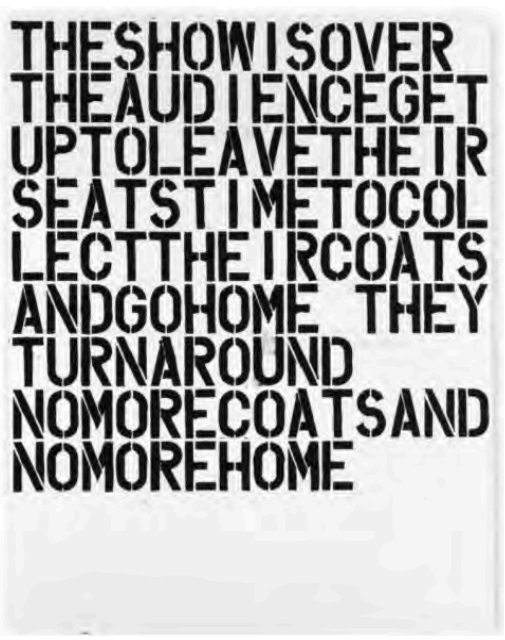
—Galo Sanchez, HAF Educator

Ed Ruscha (American, born 1937)
17th Century, 1988
Acrylic on canvas
56 × 134 inches (142.2 × 340.4 cm)

Ed Ruscha's first job was at an advertising agency, one factor that led him to focus on commercial logos, onomatopoeia, and popular diction in his text-driven art. He takes words and phrases out of context, enlarges them, and reproduces them using precise lettering, combining image and language. In the painting *17th Century*, Ruscha incorporates six words punctuated by exclamation points—War, Taxes, Alchemy, Plague, Damsel, Melancholia, and Firewood—against a backdrop featuring a hazy, desaturated landscape. Ruscha's use of bold fonts and words, along with the combination of light and darkness, create a somber and tumultuous atmosphere.

The use of text in twentieth-century art may be traced back to Cubist painters, but playing with language was central to Dada artists with their radical, often humorous use of words. In order to play with the legibility and permanence of the letter forms, Ruscha would use unusual materials like blackberry juice, chocolate, egg yolk, shellac, and gunpowder. Ruscha paid close attention to typography to highlight the embodied and sonic nature of language. In *17th Century*, he hand-painted text in a Gothic typeface, experimenting with how the appearance of words affected their tone.

—Svea Van de Velde & Kingsley Otoo, Teen Curators



Christopher Wool (American, born 1955)
Untitled (You make me), 1997
Enamel on paper
31 ¼ × 23 ¼ inches (79.4 × 59.1 cm)

Untitled, 1990
Enamel on paper
52 × 40 inches (132.1 × 101.6 cm)

Christopher Wool moved to New York from Chicago when he was 18. He was interested in the gritty aesthetic of city life as well as the anarchic Punk and No Wave movements flourishing throughout New York City during the ’70s and ’80s. His practice spans many mediums including photography, film, music, and painting.

Wool’s word paintings feature enigmatic phrases stenciled in block letters against a stark white background. The resulting smudges, drips, and erratic spacing from the spray-painting process push words towards abstract shapes and create distance between the viewer and the artist. Wool is interested in the ways different environments can recontextualize familiar language. He gravitates towards words and phrases that can feel tense or ominous.

—Justin Valentin and Soefi Eusebio, Teen Curators