

Exhibition: *Frank Stella: Selections from the Permanent Collection*

On View: May 5–September 15, 2019

Location: BCAM, Level 1



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(Los Angeles—February 19, 2019) The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) is pleased to present *Frank Stella: Selections from the Permanent Collection*. Organized in loose chronological order, the exhibition features 10 works—many of which have not been on public view in over 30 years—that represent significant developments in the artist’s oeuvre. From an example of his groundbreaking Black Paintings of the late 1950s to his recent monumental sculpture, this exhibition will present a glimpse into the rich trajectory of Stella’s career. Drawn entirely from LACMA’s extensive holdings of Stella’s work, this exhibition assembles seminal examples of his artistic output that have never been shown together.

About Frank Stella

Frank Stella (b. 1936) has remained one of the most pivotal figures in the development of modern art since the 1950s. By the time he was 23, Stella’s art was already being recognized for its innovations. Several of his paintings were included in the 1959 exhibition *Three Young Americans* at the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College, as well as in *Sixteen Americans* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1959–60). Composed of parallel bands of flat black paint separated by thin lines of unpainted canvas, Stella’s iconic early series Black Paintings (1958–60) were a radical departure from Abstract Expressionism, the movement that dominated art in the previous decade. Eliminating illusionistic space and narrative or symbolic allusions, this series called attention to the physical properties of paint and canvas, conveying Stella’s statement at the time that “what you see is what you see.”

Stella’s Irregular Polygon (1965–66) and Protractor series (1967–71) further extended the concept of the shaped canvas that he had begun exploring in the early

1960s, and they anticipate his increasingly complex investigations into geometry and space that define his later work. In the mid-1960s, Stella also began his prolonged engagement with printmaking, working first with master printer Kenneth Tyler at Gemini G.E.L. in Los Angeles. Over the next decade, Stella's "maximalist" painting introduced relief into his art, which became known for its sculptural qualities. In the years that followed, Stella focused more on materials. His Polish Village series (1971–73), for example, incorporated wood, felt, paper, and other materials. Later on, he began using aluminum as the primary support for his paintings and works in high relief. As the 1970s and 1980s progressed, these became more elaborate and exuberant. His earlier minimalism took on baroque qualities in his Exotic Birds (1976–80), Malta (1983–85), and Scarlatti Kirkpatrick (begun 2006) series, marked by billowing and curving forms, Day-Glo colors, and scrawled brushstrokes.

In the 1990s, Stella began making freestanding sculpture for public spaces and developing architectural projects. In 1992–93, for instance, he created the entire decorative scheme for Toronto's Princess of Wales Theatre, which includes a 10,000-square-foot mural. In 1999, Stella's aluminum bandshell inspired by a folding hat from Brazil was built in downtown Miami; and in 2001, a monumental sculpture *Prinz Friedrich von Homburg, Ein Schauspiel, 3X* was installed outside the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Stella continues to live and work in New York.

Credit: This installation was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Bank of America is the presenting sponsor of *Frank Stella: Selections from the Permanent Collection*.



About LACMA

Located on the Pacific Rim, LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection of nearly 140,000 objects that illuminate 6,000 years of artistic expression across the globe. Committed to showcasing a multitude of art histories, LACMA exhibits and interprets works of art from new and unexpected points of view that are informed by the region's rich cultural heritage and diverse population. LACMA's spirit of experimentation is reflected in its work with artists, technologists, and thought leaders as well as in its regional, national, and global partnerships to share collections and programs, create pioneering initiatives, and engage new audiences.

Location: 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA, 90036. lacma.org

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Associates/LACMA; Frank Stella, *St. Michael's Counterguard*, 1984, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Anna Bing Arnold, © Frank Stella/Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA

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