

James Matson
The Art of Curating Art – Semester Thesis
Dr. Cindy Falk
December 11th 2018

Adolph Gottlieb: Adjusting the Canon of Abstract Expressionism

Traditionally, art history has said, that as a professional painter, Adolph Gottlieb progressed between two distinct aesthetic styles over the course of his career. From the 1940s until the 1950s he painted “pictographs,” segmented canvases containing imagined symbols and hieroglyphic imagery. By 1957 Gottlieb had transitioned to producing work in his later style of “burst” paintings.¹ It is these later paintings, which have traditionally been upheld by art historians as Gottlieb’s “mature” style and his best contribution to the canon of abstract expressionist painting.² His earlier “pictographs” are subsequently viewed as those works, inspired by “primitive art” and mythology, that while bold and daring in their symbolism, pre-date Gottlieb’s development into an abstract expressionist.

This academic bifurcation of Gottlieb’s career, in order to place him within the canon of the New York school of abstract expressionism, contradicts the established timeline of that artistic movement, and discounts this artist’s own philosophical ideas. Scholars often book-end the abstract expressionist painting movement from the start of the 1940s until the end of the 1950s.³ However, this timeline doesn’t coincide well with Adolph Gottlieb’s burst paintings, which he didn’t fully transition to until 1957, and that he continued producing into the late 1960s.⁴ Histories of the abstract expressionist art movement, often reference Adolph Gottlieb’s writings, public statements, and participation in artists’ protests during the 1940s, as pinnacle

¹ Adolph Gottlieb, Robert M. Doty, and Diane Waldman. 1968. Adolph Gottlieb. [New York] Whitney Museum of American Art [1968]. Pg. 10.

² Eugene V. Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 44, no. 3 (1987): 47.

³ Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist", 49

⁴ Adolph Gottlieb, Robert M. Doty, and Diane Waldman. Adolph Gottlieb. Pg. 19-25

moments in the establishment of this artistic movement.⁵ However, the very works that Gottlieb was producing as a painter during this decade (his pictographs), don't fit the most basic aesthetic component that defines abstract expressionist painting;⁶ they were not non-representational abstractions. It is clear that Adolph Gottlieb's influence and presence as an artist during the mid-twentieth century was monumental. However, art historians will need to reevaluate how they define abstract expressionism if they wish to properly include Adolph Gottlieb's artistic works within its canon.

As the pre-eminent art museum in the United States, the Metropolitan Museum of Art has a special ability to influence the canon of art history. In 1987, the Met published its winter bulletin titled "The Abstract Expressionists," which tells the story of the abstract expressionist artists and details their work that was then included in the museum's collection and recent acquisitions. Not only does this document provide well catalogued and researched information about the artists, it also effectively serves to establish and define the canon of art known as "abstract expressionism". While telling the story of the abstract expressionist movement, this document has some trouble fitting Adolph Gottlieb's work into its narrative. Even though Gottlieb was clearly influential, and a highly involved member of this group of artists, while summarizing and outlining the abstract expressionist movement, this bulletin runs into conflict with both the timeline and aesthetic nature of Adolph Gottlieb's individual work.

Immediately upon opening the bulletin one sees an image of a Gottlieb burst painting: *Thrust* from 1959 (Figure 1).⁷ The result of this placement is to directly associate Gottlieb's burst

⁵ Stella Paul. "Abstract Expressionism." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Oct. 2004.

⁶ Merriam Webster, s.v. "abstract expressionism," <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abstract%20expressionism>.

⁷ Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist," pg. 8

style of painting with the title and subject of the bulletin, “The Abstract Expressionists.” The image of this abstract artwork is simply captioned with the information: “ADOLPH GOTTLIEB/*Thrust*, 1959/ Oil on canvas / 108 x 90 in.; 228.5 x 274.5 cm/ George A. Hearn Fund. 1959 (59.164)”⁸ This contrasts with the caption provided for a Gottlieb pictograph entitled *T*, which was painted in 1950 and is included on page sixteen and seventeen of the bulletin (Figure 2). The Metropolitan felt it was necessary to provide a brief explanation in the caption for this pictograph, which reads: “This painting, one of a series called Pictographs, is a classic example of Gottlieb’s sympathetic identification with primitive art.”⁹ Whatever the original intent, the resulting effect of having this additional note in the caption for the image sets this work apart from Gottlieb’s later *Thrust* and the majority of other paintings included in the bulletin, which do not have embellished captions. By explaining this work of art as a “classic example” of Gottlieb’s, the author creates the impression that this particular piece might belong to an older style of painting. Then, by qualifying the painting as a “sympathetic identification with primitive art,” the text continues to separate this work from the other paintings in the bulletin, based upon an assessment of its aesthetic qualities.

In June of 1943, Adolph Gottlieb, along with Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, wrote a letter to *New York Times* art editor Edward Jewell in response to the critic’s recent review of an exhibit featuring their work.¹⁰ The paintings that the artists were writing with regard to were not abstract works, but modern interpretations and presentations of ancient mythology.¹¹ Rothko’s *The Syrian Bull* (Figure 3) and Gottlieb’s *Rape of Persephone* (Figure 4) were created with the

⁸ Thaw, “The Abstract Expressionist,” pg. 9

⁹ Ibid, pg. 17

¹⁰ Edward A. Jewell, “‘Globalism’ Pops into View,” *New York Times* (New York), June 13, 1943.

¹¹ Bonnie Clearwater. “Shared Myths: Reconsideration of Rothko’s and Gottlieb’s Letter to The New York Times.” *Archives of American Art Journal* 24, no. 1 (1984): 23-25.

intent to capture and present the essence of ancient stories. Jewell took it upon himself to relate back to his readers almost the entire text of the artists' letter, thereby increasing the exposure and subsequent notoriety of this correspondence. The letter includes a list of five "aesthetic beliefs":

1. To us art is an adventure into an unknown world, which can be explored only by those willing to take the risks.
2. This world of the imagination is fancy-free and violently opposed to common sense.
3. It is our functions as artists to make the spectator see the world our way—not his way.
4. We favor the simple expression of the complex thought. We are for the large shape because it has the impact of the unequivocal. We wish to reassert the picture plane. We are for flat forms because they destroy illusion and reveal truth.
5. It is a widely accepted notion among painters that it does not matter what one paints as long as it is well painted. This is the essence of academicism. There is no such thing as good painting about nothing. We assert that the subject is crucial and only that subject matter is valid which is tragic and timeless. That is why we profess spiritual kinship with primitive and archaic art.¹²

Here, the artists, in their own words, explain the reasoning behind their aesthetic choices. In developing a history of abstract art, few things could be more useful. Points one through three define the artists' mindset, and point four describes their motivations for using certain aesthetic techniques, but the fifth and final point alludes to the contextual subject matter of their paintings, and also points out that the "subject is crucial". This aesthetic belief would seem to go against the tenant that abstract art is non-representational art. In spite of that, this letter has become an important and often referenced document when discussing the birth of abstract expressionism and the works of Gottlieb, Rothko, and Newman. For a scholar to reference this document, while ignoring these artists' emphasis on the importance of subject matter in their work, would be to misinterpret this statement from the artists.

The Metropolitan bulletin from 1987 makes reference to the 1943 Rothko-Gottlieb letter, and, supported by commentary from art critic Clement Greenberg, ascribes Gottlieb's sympathies with primitive art and the importance placed on subject, as part of the formative

¹² "A Letter from Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb to the Art Editor of the New York Times." Adolph Gottlieb and Marcus Rothko to Mr. Edward Alden Jewell. June 7, 1943. North-Eastern Illinois University.

years of the abstract expressionist movement during the mid 1940s.¹³ The story that the Metropolitan bulletin weaves, is that by the pinnacle years of the abstract expressionist movement, these artists moved on from works focused on subject matter and imbued with symbolism. However, because of Adolph Gottlieb's continued work on his pictograph series, his timeline does not quite comply with the one that the Met wants to present. In a section titled "The High Point," this conflict of narrative comes to a head, and the author has to admit that Gottlieb's pictographic work does not fit into the canon:

By 1950—the pivotal year that saw not only de Kooning's *Excavation* but Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm*—several other artists had reached their mature styles....Adolph Gottlieb, obsessed with primitive art, which he avidly collected, had not by 1950 emerged from the period of his "pictographs" (fig.11) and thus does not enter our story until the end of the decade.¹⁴

This definitive move to temporarily exclude Gottlieb from the abstract expressionist story is confirmation that the Metropolitan made a conscious decision not to include Gottlieb's pictographs within the "mature styles" of abstract expressionism.

By 1950, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman had both developed their "finalized style" of painting, which now fits within the color-field oeuvre of abstract expressionism.¹⁵ In contrast, Adolph Gottlieb was still working in his pictograph style, which bears much closer ties to the philosophy of the "subject" that he and Rothko wrote about in their 1943 letter. Gottlieb's pictographs continued to pay homage to "primitive and archaic art" in their aesthetic qualities, using imagined symbols and simple shapes. Even when the subject is not defined by a specific title such as the *Rape of Persephone*, the aesthetics of these paintings are of the kind that could

¹³ Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist," pg. 21-23

¹⁴ Ibid, pg. 29

¹⁵ Stella Paul, "Abstract Expressionism."

tell a story to the viewer. Gottlieb's use of shapes and representative forms, in a grid like format, are much like a modern story-board.

Vigil (Figure 5) by Adolph Gottlieb is certainly not devoid of representational forms. One of Gottlieb's paintings in the pictograph style, the canvas is broken up into a grid-like structure, each cell of varying size and containing different symbols. Prominent within this painting are the many ovoid forms that are representative of human eyes. In the left half of the canvas, this figural representation is made even clearer by geometrical portrayals of the human body and face. As the viewer moves from the left to the right of this pictograph, the symbols become more broken down in their structure, and they resemble the human form less and less. However, the symbol of the eye persists and again becomes prominent when enlarged and given its own separate cell in the right lower portion of the canvas.

Gottlieb's painting *Vigil* was included in the 1948 "*Life* Round Table on Modern Art."¹⁶ *Life* magazine brought together an international panel of prominent art critics, esteemed academic professors, and museum directors from highly regarded institutions, to debate on the aesthetic quality of the modern art of their time. The opinions of the art critics present were well balanced, as the panel included both outspoken conservatives and those known for supporting modern art. "The object was to obtain a discussion between persons whose knowledge of art could not be questioned, irrespective of whether one might or might not agree with their evaluations."¹⁷

A number of paintings were discussed by the men present for the roundtable debate. Among them were works by the "Young American Extremists,"¹⁸ included in a category of their

¹⁶ Russell W. Davenport, "A Life Round Table on Modern Art: Fifteen Distinguished Critics and Connoisseurs Undertake to Clarify the Strange Art of Today." *Life*, October/November 11, 1948.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 56

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 62

own. A two-page spread offered a debate on the aesthetic quality of the paintings of William DeKooning (*Painting, 1948*), William Baziotes (*The Dwarf*), Theodoros Stamos (*Sounds in the Rock*), Jackson Pollock (*Cathedral*), and Adolf Gottlieb (*Vigil*). The text of the critics' discussion was accompanied by images of the paintings, which dominate the space of the two pages.

The moderator of the article notes that when confronted with the work of these young American artists, the panelists were quick to form an opinion, but there seemed to be no clear criteria upon which their opinions were based. The vagueness and subjective nature of the debate was increased by the fact that these paintings caused members of the so-called "moderate" group and the "enthusiasts" to disagree among themselves. This apparent uncertainty on how best to judge these new works of art is well displayed by differences in response to the painting *Vigil* by Adolph Gottlieb.¹⁹ The panel was fairly evenly split, with different members having both positive and negative reactions to Gottlieb's pictograph.

Gottlieb's inclusion in this issue of *Life* is important because, having his painting printed in color in such well-read media would have brought a great amount of publicity for Gottlieb; this publicity consequentially would be associated between Gottlieb and his pictograph style of painting. Furthermore, this expose into the unfruitful deliberations of art world academics on the "Young American Extremists" gives us an insight into the general academic and public perception of these artists. The world was aware that Jackson Pollock and Adolph Gottlieb were both creating art that was new and "extreme," but the jury was still out on how to categorize or judge this new body of work.

¹⁹ Davenport, "A Life Round Table on Modern Art", Pg. 62

This apparent uncertainty comes in stark contrast to an assessment in the Metropolitan museum's 1987 bulletin, that the years from 1947-1950 were formative in establishing the "signature styles" of the abstract expressionist artists.

"From 1947 to 1950, during the years we have been discussing, the painters who had earlier addressed that famous letter to *The New York Times*, and whose work then had in fact little relation to the ambitions the letter expressed, were now finding the plastic means to explore their spiritual and metaphysical goals. First Clyfford Still and then Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman refined and then publicly exhibited the extremely simplified, large-format, color-dominated paintings that became their signature styles for the rest of their careers."²⁰

This passage of the bulletin bears witness to important elements that may be catalysts for the exclusion of Adolph Gottlieb's pictographs from the canon of abstract expressionism. Even as the Met makes reference to his 1943 letter as an aesthetic foundation for the movement, Adolph Gottlieb and his pictographs are excluded due to the fact that these images are not "extremely simplified" and were not his "signature [style] for the rest of [his career]". However, as promised the bulletin does chose to bring Gottlieb back into the story at the end of the 1950s when he begins his burst series.

Among the other members of a group of artists now dead, drifting apart, or pursuing separate, individual careers was Adolph Gottlieb. In the 1940s he was, along with Rothko and Newman, one of the would-be metaphysicians, and he continued until 1952 to work in a pictographic style ... based on his yearnings for what I see as a self-conscious sort of primitivism. Finally, in 1959, Gottlieb found his characteristic image—a sunlike disk above a Pollock-like scumble, both set against a white back-ground. He called these handsome paintings, which constituted a reduction and distillation of his earlier pictographs, Bursts, and he continued them, with variations, until his death in 1974.²¹

The fact that the bulletin uses the language "Pollock-like" to denote an aesthetic component of Adolph Gottlieb's "characteristic image" hints to a trend of 'branding' the abstract expressionists by their "signature styles". Perhaps it was this aesthetic preference, and near necessity, for the

²⁰ Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist", pg. 31

²¹ Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist", pg. 47

American artists of this era to gain recognition through a “reduction and distillation” of their style, that was responsible for excluding Gottlieb’s originally complex and figural pictographs from this sort of branding.

By the time that the Metropolitan’s summary bulletin on abstract expressionism finally gets around to including Gottlieb’s burst paintings, it has to jump ahead to 1959. However, by this year, its story of the abstract expressionist artist movement was coming, or already had come, to an end. The inclusion of Gottlieb’s later works within the canon would seem to contradict the bulletin’s own statement that: “After 1956 the Abstract Expressionist phase of American painting [came] to an end slowly.”²² All told, this bulletin on “The Abstract Expressionists” from the Metropolitan Museum of Art has gone to some lengths in order to both disassociate Gottlieb’s earlier pictographs, while at the same time including his later burst paintings within the canon of abstract expressionism.

Gottlieb was highly influential and well established among the abstract expressionists in the 1940s. He participated in discourse at a high level and was involved in an infamous boycott of a Metropolitan Art Museum’s show with seventeen other artists, who as a result gained publicity and notoriety as the core and avant-garde members of abstract expressionism.²³ However, unlike certain other members of this group, who began producing paintings in their mature style during the late 1940s, Gottlieb would continue to develop and change his style of canvas painting until the late 1950s. As a result of his relatively late evolution of style, art institutions and critics have had a more challenging time including Gottlieb’s work within the canon of abstract expressionism.

²² Thaw, "The Abstract Expressionist", pg. 49

²³ "18 Painters Boycott Metropolitan: Charge 'Hostility to Advanced Art,'" *New York Times* (New York), May 22, 1950.

Art history has traditionally viewed Adolph Gottlieb's artistic achievements through a bifurcated lens, analyzing either his pictograph or burst styles separately. However, it seems that this may have only come as a result of our current institutional and historical definitions and conceptions of what an abstract expressionist painting is. In his own words, when discussing his transition in style, Gottlieb himself stated that he saw a clear relationship between his pictograph and burst paintings:

I was interested in finding something else to say, to express. So it was necessary to find other forms, a different, changed concept. So I finally, after a certain period of transition, I hit on dividing the canvas into two parts, which then became like an imaginary landscape. However, while this seemed like a great break, it wasn't such a great break because in a philosophical sense what I was doing was the same. In other words, I've always done the same thing.²⁴

Recent art historical scholarship has continued to bring to light the philosophical importance and maturity of Adolph Gottlieb's pictograph paintings.²⁵ However, in order to properly assess the longevity and importance of this painter's work, scholars should stop studying his pictographs and burst paintings as separate eras of style, but rather as one continuous artistic statement. Perhaps, instead of crafting the story of this artist to fit the current prescribed definition of abstract expressionism, scholars may need to adjust how they define that artistic movement, in order to better include the complete works of Adolph Gottlieb.

²⁴ Oral history interview with Adolph Gottlieb, Oct. 25, 1967. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Pg. 19 of 25.

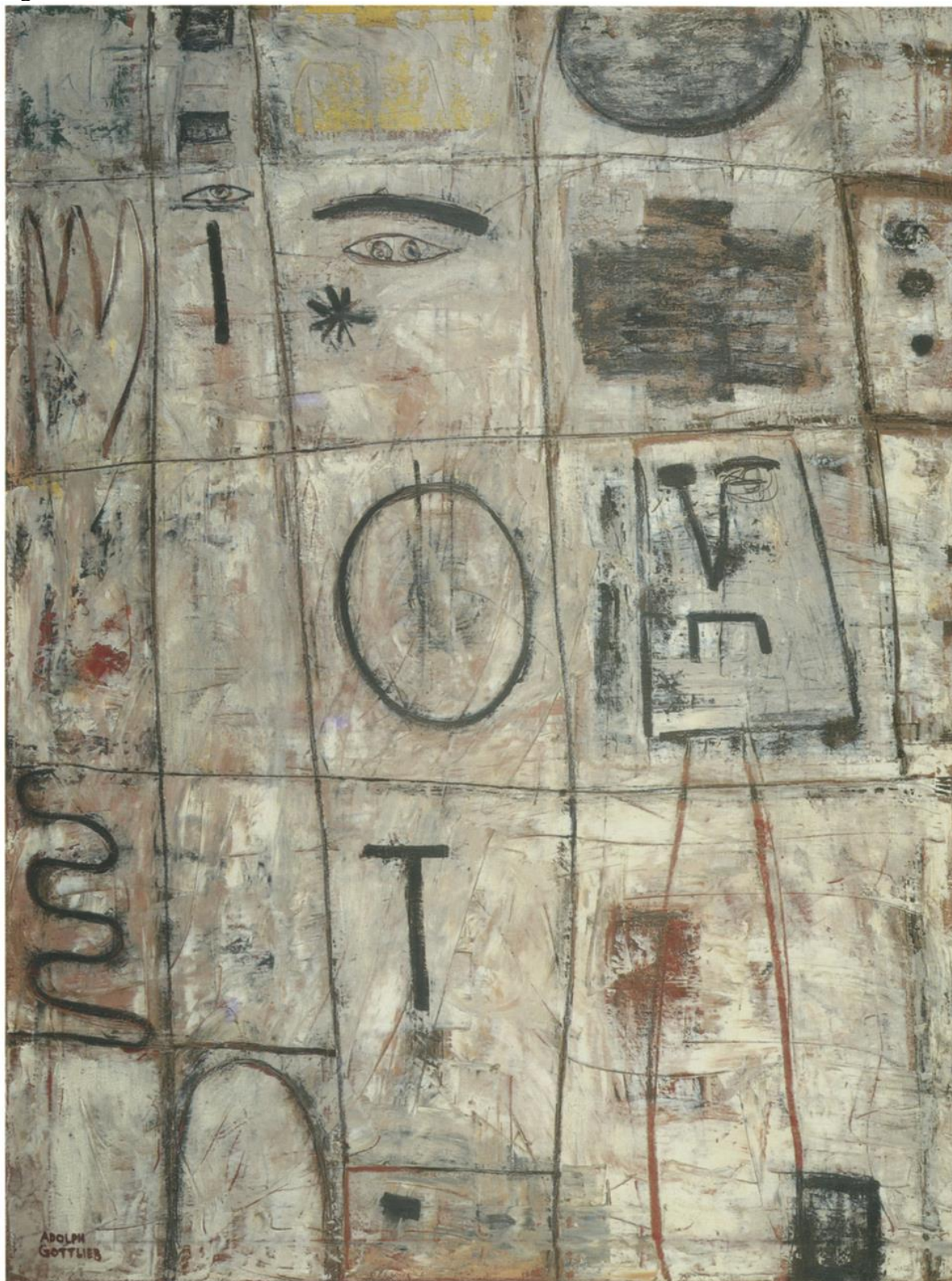
²⁵ Karen Wilkin. 1995. "The 'Pictographs' of Adolph Gottlieb." *New Criterion* 13 (10): 15.

Figure 1:



Gottlieb, Adolph. *Thrust*, 1959. Oil on canvas, 108 x 90 in. (274.3 x 228.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y.

Figure 2:



Gottlieb, Adolph. *T*, 1950. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in. (121.9 x 91.4 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y..

Figure 3:



Rothko, Mark. *The Syrian Bull*, 1943. Oil and graphite on canvas, 39 3/8 x 27 7/8 in. (100 x 70.7 cm). Allan Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin OH.

Figure 4:



Gottlieb, Adolph. *Rape of Persephone*, 1943. Oil on canvas, 33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm). Allan Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, Ohio.

Figure 5:



Gottlieb, Adolph. *Vigil*, 1948. Oil on canvas, 36 × 48 in. (91.4 × 121.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.

Works Cited:Primary Resources:

"18 Painters Boycott Metropolitan: Charge 'Hostility to Advanced Art'." *New York Times* (New York), May 22, 1950. Retrieved from Proquest: Historic New York Times. (1923-Current File).

"A Letter from Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb to the Art Editor of the New York Times." Adolph Gottlieb and Marcus Rothko to Mr. Edward Alden Jewell. June 7, 1943.
<http://homepages.neiu.edu/~wbsieger/Art201/201Read/201-Rothko.pdf>.

Jewell, Edward A. "Modern Painters Open Show Today." *New York Times* (New York), June 2, 1943. Retrieved from Proquest: Historic New York Times. (1923-Current File).

Jewell, Edward A. "'Globalism' Pops into View." *New York Times* (New York), June 13, 1943. Retrieved from Proquest: Historic New York Times. (1923-Current File).

Jewell, Edward A. "End-Of-The-Season Melange." *New York Times* (New York), June 6, 1943. Retrieved from Proquest: Historic New York Times. (1923-Current File).

Davenport, Russell W. "A Life Round Table on Modern Art: Fifteen Distinguished Critics and Connoisseurs Undertake to Clarify the Strange Art of Today." *Life*, October/November 11, 1948.

Gottlieb, Adolph, Robert M. Doty, and Diane Waldman. 1968. Adolph Gottlieb. [New York] Whitney Museum of American Art [1968].

"The Metropolitan and Modern Art." *Life*, January 15, 1951.

Museum of Modern Art (New York, N.Y.). International Program. The New American Painting, as Shown in Eight European Countries, 1958-1959. Garden City, N.Y: Museum of Modern Art, Distributed by Doubleday, 1959. www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1990.

Seckler, Dorothy, Oral history interview with Adolph Gottlieb, Oct. 25, 1967. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-adolph-gottlieb-12369>

Thaw, Eugene V. "The Abstract Expressionist." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 44, no. 3 (1987): 1+8-56. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3258715>.

Secondary Resources:

Clearwater, Bonnie. "Shared Myths: Reconsideration of Rothko's and Gottlieb's Letter to the *New York Times*." *Archives of American Art Journal* 24, no. 1 (1984): 23-25.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1557346>.

Collins, Bradford R. "Life Magazine and the Abstract Expressionists, 1948-51: A Historiographic Study of a Late Bohemian Enterprise." *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (1991): 283-308. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3045794>.

Dembart, Lee. "Adolph Gottlieb, Abstractionist, Dies." *New York Times*, March 5, 1974. <https://www.nytimes.com/1974/03/05/archives/adolph-gottlieb-abstractionist-dies.html>.

Fitzsimons, James. "Adolph Gottlieb." *Everyday Art Quarterly*, no. 25 (1953): 1-4. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4090776>

Millard, Charles W. "Adolph Gottlieb." *Hudson Review* 35, no. 4 (1982): 613-18. doi:10.2307/3850971. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3850971>

Sandler, I. *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

Paul, Stella. "Abstract Expressionism." In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, October 2004. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/abex/hd_abex.htm

Wilkin, Karen. "The 'Pictographs' of Adolph Gottlieb." *New Criterion* 13 no.10 (1995): 15. <https://login.ezproxy.oneonta.edu:2443/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lfh&AN=9507111405&site=eds-live>.

Works of Art:

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Vigil*, 1948. Oil on canvas, 36 × 48 in. (91.4 × 121.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.. <http://collection.whitney.org/object/2287>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Burst I*, 1964. Acrylic on paper, 26 1/8 × 20 in. (66.4 × 50.8 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, N.Y.. <http://collection.whitney.org/object/8137>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Apparition*, 1945. Etching and aquatint on paper, 22 1/4 x 17 1/4in. (56.5 x 43.8cm). Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, N.Y.. <http://collections.mwpai.org/objects/4966/apparition?ctx=0bcd7091-c328-4f84-9e8a-ab5d35523faf&idx=4>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Grey and Black (former title 'Black-Light')*, 1965. Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in. (61 x 76.2cm). Munson Williams Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, N.Y.. <http://collections.mwpai.org/objects/11246/grey-and-black---former-title-blacklight?ctx=28750840-c6c9-4630-b8d3-bbdf8644dc21&idx=1>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Thrust*, 1959. Oil on canvas, 108 x 90 in. (274.3 x 228.6 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y.. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/489059>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *T*, 1950. Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in. (121.9 x 91.4 cm). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, N.Y.. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/488697>

Gottlieb, Adolph. *Rape of Persephone*, 1943. Oil on canvas, 33 x 25 in. (83.8 x 63.5 cm). Allan Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin Ohio. http://www2.oberlin.edu/amam/Gottlieb_Persephone.htm

Rothko, Mark. *The Syrian Bull*, 1943. Oil and graphite on canvas, 39 3/8 x 27 7/8 in. (100 x 70.7 cm). Allan Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin OH.
http://www2.oberlin.edu/amam/Rothko_SyrianBull.htm