



Columbia Museum of Art

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mural is coming to the CMA in a landmark exhibition on view from Dec. 5 to May 19, 2019. The exhibit, featuring the single, iconic work as well as in-depth scientific research on it and its creation myth, is part of a whirlwind international tour that includes premier European and American museums.

Pollock is among the most influential painters in American history, and *Mural* is widely recognized as a watershed moment for the artist in 1943. *Mural* is Pollock's largest painting and was his first commission by legendary art collector Peggy Guggenheim, who wanted a site-specific work for the entry hall of her New York townhouse. Guggenheim moved to Venice, Italy, in 1947 and *Mural* was loaned to Yale University until it was donated to the University of Iowa in 1951. Since then, the painting has remained in Iowa and rarely traveled. In 2012, the work was sent to the Getty Conservation Institute for two years of analysis, which was followed by extensive cleaning, removing of a 1973 layer of varnish, and restretching the canvas to address sagging.

"Having this landmark painting at the CMA is an extraordinary opportunity," says Curator Catherine Walworth. "I get caught up in the exciting story of Pollock making *Mural* and what happened to the painting in the decades afterward. But I also want to encourage people to stop, sit down, and really enjoy looking at a painting for longer than perhaps they are used to doing."

Through advanced technical imaging, conservators studied and treated the painting, learning how it was created. Visitors are in for a unique treat as scientific results join the mural to fill two entire galleries with detailed looks into Pollock and his techniques.

"*Mural* is an operatic mass of brush-

strokes and flung paint on a field larger than the viewers themselves," says Walworth. "Pollock was putting everything he had onto this canvas, moving back and forth in front of it and even flinging paint in a way that would foreshadow his paintings laid on the studio floor that were entirely made with the famous drip technique."

Following the study and treatment, *Mural* embarked on a seven-city international tour with stops including the Royal Academy of Arts, London, Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and the National Gallery, Washington. Now, before returning to Iowa, *Mural* makes two last stops, the Columbia Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

"Jackson Pollock's *Mural* is the *Mona Lisa* of modern art - it changed the course of painting in the United States. Why? You'll have to come and see!," says Executive Director Della Watkins. "Expect a large, dynamic, and colorful visual experience, one that inspired the movement known as Abstract Expressionism, this country's most recognizable contribution to the history of art. The CMA is proud to bring this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to the Midlands."

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