

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
January 1991

FACT SHEET

- EXHIBITION** **AD REINHARDT**
- DATES** May 30 - September 2, 1991
- ORGANIZATION** Coorganized by William Rubin, Director Emeritus, Department of Painting and Sculpture, The Museum of Modern Art, and Richard Koshalek, Director, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- SPONSORSHIP** The exhibition is supported by grants from The Henry Luce Foundation, Inc., and Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert H. Kinney. Additional support was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.
- CONTENT** The first major museum retrospective devoted to the work of American artist Ad Reinhardt includes approximately ninety-five paintings, collages, and gouaches. The exhibition reveals the pictorial development of the artist's *oeuvre* and its telling historical relationship to Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism.
- Ad Reinhardt (1913-1967) was born in Buffalo, New York. In the late 1930s, he began experimenting with geometric abstractions, moving increasingly in the 1940s toward all-over patterns. In the 1950s, he became one of the leading artists whose work challenged the Abstract Expressionist search for personal mythology and incorporation of a highly gestural style of painting. Instead, Reinhardt sought to eliminate from art concepts that might be verbalized in terms of "self-expression," "content," and "meaning," aspiring to distill painting to a single primary and uniquely visual experience. He limited his canvases to monochromatic fields of red, blue, and, finally, black.
- Around 1960, Reinhardt began to create the 60 x 60" square paintings that would occupy him until his death. At first sight, these "monochrome" paintings seem like unified color areas, but a closer look reveals a subtle geometrical structuring based on the form of a cross, delineated by almost subliminal shifts of color. His austere reductionist style was influential for a younger, emerging generation of Minimalist and Conceptual artists.

PUBLICATION

Ad Reinhardt. Preface by William Rubin. Essay by Yve-Alain Bois, Professor of History of Art, Johns Hopkins University. 192 pages. 95 color and 25 black-and-white illustrations. Copublished by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Hardbound, distributed by Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., \$45.00; paperbound, \$29.95; available in The MoMA Book Store.

TRAVEL

After its New York showing, the exhibition travels to The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (October 13, 1991 - January 5, 1992).

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For further information, contact the Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 212/708-9750.