

DECEMBER 4, 2019
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CUTTING EDGES: NORDIC CONCRETE ART FROM THE ERLING NEBY COLLECTION

The exhibition showcasing Nordic geometric abstraction continues at Scandinavia House with related programming through February 15, 2020

New York, NY—On view through February 15, 2020 at Scandinavia House, *Cutting Edges: Nordic Concrete Art from the Erling Neby Collection* presents concrete art from the Nordic countries in a collection never before seen in the U.S. Curated by Karin Hellandsjø, Director Emeritus of the Henie Onstad Art Centre, this exhibition presents over 30 key works from major artists in painting, drawing, and sculpture.

Recently featured in the *New York Times* Holiday Art Guide, the exhibition has been on view from October 12, 2019 and has had related programming including a opening night discussion with Norwegian collector Erling Neby and curator Karin Hellandsjø, and children's art workshops with Studio Finna, Sari Nordman, and Marte Ekhougen; a panel with various guest speakers will also take place on Saturday, February 1, 2020. An interactive walk-through of the Gallery is available online now at scandinaviahouse.org.

A practice that was developed before and after World War II, and devised to avoid ambiguity in the word 'abstract,' concrete art is characterized by combinations of simple geometric elements to create autonomous visual realities. The term "concrete art" was first used in 1929 by Theo van Doesburg and Piet Mondrian. Internationally recognized artists such as Victor Vasarely, Max Bill, Burgoyne Diller, Jesús Rafael Soto, and Josef Albers became exponents of the practice, which attracted the attention of Nordic artists visiting the Geometric and Concrete art scene centered around the Galerie Denise René in Paris.

Much like their contemporaries in the U.S. and Paris, these Nordic artists became interested in creating artworks that were both social and universal, using pure form and color based on mathematical principles. International exhibitions of concrete art also travelled to the Nordic capitals in the early years, leading to a dynamic, influential interaction that continues today. Artists in this exhibition include **Olle Bærtling, Lars Erik Falk** and **Lars Englund** (Sweden); **Richard Mortensen** and **Robert Jacobsen** (Denmark); **Kristján Guðmundsson** (Iceland); **Gunnar S. Gundersen, Arne Malmedal, Kristin Nordhøy, Aase Texmon Rygh** and **Bjørn Ransve** (Norway); and **Lars-Gunnar Nordström, Sam Vanni, Paul Osipow** and **Matti Kujasalo** (Finland). Works by these artists are distinguished by their use of bright colors and geometric edges.

Cutting Edges has been funded in part by the generous support of The Bergesen Foundation and The Nordic Culture Fund. Additional support has been provided by the following: ABG Sundal Collier, KEF Sound, and AXA Art Insurance.

WHERE: Scandinavia House
58 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016

GALLERY HOURS & ADMISSION October 12, 2019 through February 15, 2020
Tuesday through Saturday, 12—6 PM, free
Wednesdays, 12—7 PM, free



Olle Bærtling, *Reba*, 1965



Cutting Edges—Photo by Eileen Travell/ASF

ABOUT THE COLLECTOR

Erling Neby began collecting works by concrete artists in the early 1970s. Since then, he has built up a substantial and extraordinary collection of concrete art in paintings, sculpture and graphics, by both Nordic and international artists. Works from his collection have been exhibited internationally since the early 1990s at museums including the Centre Pompidou and the Whitney Museum. The Erling Neby Collection is small, concentrated and characterized by a deep personal engagement on the part of the collector, with works of outstanding quality and character. All the acquisitions are made by Neby. Apart from its strength in Nordic art, the collection includes key figures in concrete European art such as Auguste Herbin, Jean Dewasne, Alberto Magnelli and Victor Vasarely, alongside American concrete artists like John McLaughlin, Ludwig Sander, Leon Polk Smith and Burgoyne Diller.



Cutting Edges—Photo by Eileen Travell/ASF

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Karin Hellandsjø is Director Emeritus of the Henie Onstad Art Centre. She received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Oslo and began her career as Curator at the Henie Onstad Art Centre, where she worked for almost two decades before assuming the roles of Chief Curator and Head of the Museum Department at the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, from 1988 to 2005. In March 2005, she returned to the Henie Onstad Art Centre as Director. Hellandsjø retired in 2011 and is now working as independent scholar and art consultant. In 2005, Hellandsjø curated the show *NORGE. Contemporary Landscapes from the collection of Her Majesty Queen Sonja of Norway* at Scandinavia House, and she has since collaborated with the organization on several occasions, most recently as curator of the 2018 exhibition *Light Lines: The Art of Jan Groth, Inger Johanne Grytting, and Thomas Pihl*. She is a Knight, 1st Class, of the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav and Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, de la Republique Francaise.

THE AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN FOUNDATION

The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) promotes firsthand exchange of intellectual and creative influence between the United States and the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. A publicly supported American nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, ASF has an extensive program of fellowships, grants, intern/trainee sponsorship, publishing, and cultural activities. Headquartered in New York City, ASF has members throughout the United States, and alumni and donors worldwide.

For more information: amscan.org

SCANDINAVIA HOUSE

Scandinavia House was created by the American-Scandinavian Foundation to promote the artistic and intellectual influence of the Nordic countries. As the leading center for Nordic culture in the United States, Scandinavia House offers enriching programs that illustrate and illuminate the culture and life of the Nordic countries. The diverse programs include exhibitions, film series, concerts and other performances, readings, lectures, language courses, and activities for kids and families.

For more information: scandinaviahouse.org | Facebook | Twitter @ScanHouse



**Lars G. Nordstrom,
Composition, 1954**

To request visual materials and further press information, please contact:

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