

## New Hood Museum Exhibition Expands Conversations Around American Modernism

*Always Already: Abstraction in the United States*, the first in a series of exhibitions to come in 2026 acknowledging the 250th anniversary of the United States, features important new acquisitions alongside collection favorites



*Always Already: Abstraction in the United States* installed at the Hood Museum of Art. Photo by Rob Strong.

**May 22, 2025—Hanover, N.H.**—Building on the observation that abstraction existed long before the 20th-century art movement arose, *Always Already: Abstraction in the United States* highlights abstraction in North America from Native American ceramics to contemporary painting. The exhibition, opening at the Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth, on April 26, 2025, was co-curated by the Hood Museum's Virginia Rice Kelsey 1961s Director John Stomberg, Barbara C. and Harvey P. Hood 1918 Senior Curator of Academic Programming Amelia Kahl, and Associate Director of Curatorial Affairs and Curator of Indigenous Art Jami Powell. *Always Already* expands conversations related to "American abstraction," exhibiting collection highlights by Indigenous artists, both past and present, alongside other artists working in the United States since the mid-20th century. The artists include Alexander Calder, Adolph Gottlieb, Lucy Lone Dog, Maria Martinez, Nampeyo and family, Georgia O'Keeffe, Marc Rothko, Mary and Edwin Scheier, Fritz Scholder, Frank Stella, and Kay Walkingstick. It will also feature prominent new acquisitions by Louisiana Bendolph, Dan Namingha, Barbara Takenaga, Malcolm Wright, Toshiko Takaezu, and Jordan Ann Craig.

*Always Already* will be the first of eight exhibitions acknowledging the nation's 250th anniversary in 2026, each focused on an aspect of the larger American story told through art. Powell explains, "In recent years, the Hood Museum has taken part in ongoing dialogues to expand the 'American art' canon in ways that acknowledge, critique, and celebrate the multiplicity and complexity of our nation and its histories. The 2026 slate of exhibitions builds on this work and acknowledges the vital role artists have always played in helping us contextualize the past and imagine possible futures. We look forward to inviting audiences to participate in these dialogues with us."

*Always Already* celebrates diverse approaches to color, geometry, and composition, highlighting a wide range of media. In addition to paintings and drawings, textiles, ceramics, and sculpture will also be highlighted. While the works of art featured in *Always Already* emerge from a wide variety of artistic impulses and inspirations, the overarching strength of the visual relationships suggest the merit of a much broader history of American abstraction than one confined to issues of legacy or influence. Kahl notes, "This show allows visitors to think about abstraction non-linearly. How do the shapes and colors of a 100-year-old ceramic relate to a contemporary painting aesthetically and culturally? How can their different stories enrich each other?"

"Celebrating a wide variety of objects in this way," Stomberg adds, "including work from within the 'art world' along with those from the much broader 'world of art,' normalizes both the presence and practice of abstraction in the United States."

### **About the Hood Museum of Art**

The Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth, centers art and people in teaching and learning through inclusive and robust academic, cultural, and civic engagements with art and its histories. Dartmouth's collections are among the oldest and largest of any college or university in the country, but it was not until 1985 that they were all housed under one roof and made available to faculty, students, and the public. For four decades, the Hood Museum has sought to advance learning, care, and connections through the reach and relevance of visual art and material culture as a nexus for the exchange of ideas.

The 68,000 objects in the Hood Museum's collection represent the diverse artistic traditions of six continents, including, broadly, Native American, European and American, Asian, Indigenous Australian, African, and Melanesian art. The museum collects,

preserves, and makes available for interpretation these works in the public trust and for the benefit of all.

In 2025, the Hood Museum of Art is commemorating its 40th anniversary with landmark exhibitions, loans, and innovative programs that support a visionary future for art at Dartmouth and the communities of the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont.

### **About Dartmouth College**

Dartmouth College educates the most promising students and prepares them for a lifetime of learning and of responsible leadership through a faculty dedicated to teaching and the creation of knowledge. The Dartmouth model is unique in higher education: the fusion of a renowned liberal arts college and robust research university where students and faculty partners take on the world's great challenges. Since its founding in 1769, Dartmouth has provided an intimate and inspirational setting where talented faculty, students, and staff—diverse in background but united in purpose—contribute to the strength of an exciting academic community that cuts easily across disciplines.

### **Hood Museum of Art Media Contact**

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