

# ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

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**Exhibition dates: 22 January 2016 - 10 April 2016**

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More information: <http://tiny.cc/ackland-wallsofcolor>

## **“Walls of Color: The Murals of Hans Hofmann” to Open at Ackland Art Museum**

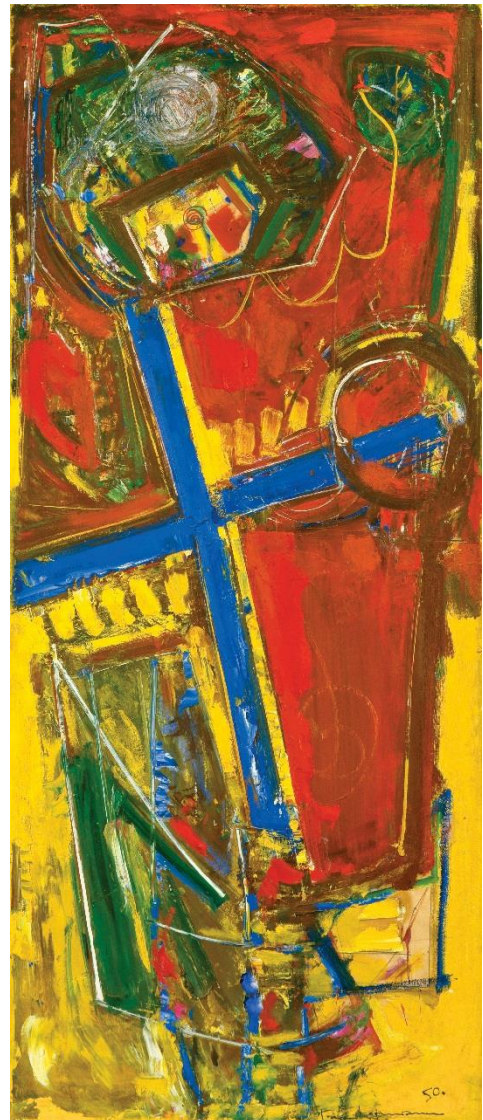
Exhibition is the first to focus on Hofmann’s public mosaic projects

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina — The art of Hans Hofmann, a towering figure among postwar New York School painters, is the subject of the exhibition *Walls of Color: The Murals of Hans Hofmann*, opening at the Ackland Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on Friday, 22 January 2016.

Famous for his push/pull spatial theories and dynamic approach to color, Hans Hofmann was a revered painter and the most important teacher and theoretician of the Abstract Expressionist movement. The complex structures of Hofmann’s abstract canvases explode with vivid hues, each work a distinct expression of his highly evolved “Search for the Real,” the title of his influential books of essays of 1948.

*Walls of Color* is the first exhibition to focus on Hans Hofmann’s vibrant and varied, yet underappreciated, public mosaic projects through his paintings, mosaic studies, and drawings. Incorporating a number of the finest examples of the artist’s contemporaneous easel paintings, in addition to key paintings leading up to and following his mural work, the exhibition demonstrates the continuity and evolution of Hofmann’s oeuvre.

The centerpiece of *Walls of Color* is nine oil studies by Hofmann, each seven feet tall, made for the proposed redesign of the Peruvian city of Chimbote. This was Hofmann’s extraordinary collaboration, in 1950, with Catalan architect José Luis Sert – the man who designed the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World’s Fair in 1937, for which Picasso’s great mural *Guernica* was painted. Visionary and never realized, the town center of Chimbote was to include a huge mosaic wall designed by Hofmann, which would incorporate not only his own highly evolved notions of Abstract Expressionist visual dynamics, but also forms symbolic of traditional Peruvian culture, religion and history.





Hofmann also created two huge public murals in Manhattan, now nearly forgotten. In 1956, in collaboration with the noted pioneer modernist architect William Lescaze, he created an astonishing, brilliantly colored mosaic mural, wrapped around the elevator bank in the lobby of 711 Third Avenue. Two years later, Hofmann was commissioned by the New York City Board of Education to create a 64-foot long, 11-foot tall mosaic-tile mural for the High School of Printing (now the High School of Graphic Arts Communication) on West 49th Street.

*Walls of Color* culminates in the artist's late, so-called Slab paintings, where both the assertive planarity of the murals and the modular, colored mosaic elements achieved their final, sublime expression.

The Ackland is the third and final venue for the national tour of *Walls of Color*. The exhibition was organized by the Bruce Museum, Greenwich, Connecticut, with the support of the Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust, and was most recently on view at the Frost Art Museum at Florida International University, Miami.

To the travelling exhibition, the Ackland is adding four works of art, including the Museum's own Hans Hofmann, *Undulating Expanse* from 1955, as well as three 1942 works by Hofmann: one from the North Carolina Museum of Art and two from the private collections of UNC-Chapel Hill alumnae.

*Walls of Color* is presented at the Ackland with support from the Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust, John and Marree Townsend, the Fenwick Foundation, and gifts made in honor of the Ackland Docent Program.

A scholarly catalogue for the exhibition—including a foreword from the Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust and essays by Kenneth Silver, Bruce Museum Adjunct Curator and New York University Professor of Modern Art, and Mary McLeod, Professor at the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University—will be available for purchase at the Ackland Museum Store.



#### **Also on View**

In conjunction with *Walls of Color*, the Ackland extends its exploration of murals with the exhibition *Beyond Walls: Designs for Twentieth-Century American Murals*, offering a glimpse into the logic and concerns of artists such as Charles Alston, James Henry Daugherty, Robert Motherwell, and Ben Shahn.

**Select *Walls of Color* Public Programs – find more at [ackland.org](http://ackland.org).**

#### **Public Celebration**

Friday, 12 February 2016, 5:00-9:00 PM, during the Chapel Hill-Carrboro 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday ArtWalk

## Select *Walls of Color* Public Programs (continued)

### Meet the Curator

Friday, 12 February 2016, 5:30-6:30 PM

Kenneth Silver, professor of Modern Art at New York University and curator of *Walls of Color*, presents a talk entitled "Hans Hofmann, Modern Murals, and the Final Glorious Decade."

### Meet the Artist

Wednesday, 23 March 2016, 6:00 PM

A public talk about Hans Hofmann with Chapel Hill-based painter Donald Martiny.

### Meet the Filmmaker

Sunday, 10 April 2016, 4:00 PM

Screening and talk with experimental filmmaker Ken Jacobs, a former student of Hans Hofmann.

### Music in the Galleries

These two concerts explore abstract expressionism through mid-century avant-garde music.

Sunday, 21 February 2016      Experimental Music Study Group

Sunday, 20 March 2016      The Walsh-Warwick Wind Duo

## About the Ackland

The Ackland Art Museum is located on the historic campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Ackland's holdings consist of more than 17,000 works of art, featuring significant collections of European masterworks, twentieth-century and contemporary art, African art, North Carolina pottery, and folk art. In addition, the Ackland has North Carolina's premier collections of Asian art and works on paper (drawings, prints, and photographs). As an academic unit of the University, the Ackland serves broad local, state, and national constituencies.

## Admission and Hours

Admission to the Ackland Art Museum is always free, with donations accepted. The Ackland is open Wednesday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Sundays 1:00 to 5:00 PM. The Museum is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

## Location

The Ackland Art Museum is located at 101 S. Columbia Street, just south of Franklin Street, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Detailed directions are available at [www.ackland.org](http://www.ackland.org) or by calling 919.966.5736. Downtown Chapel Hill parking information and a map are available at [www.parkonthehill.com](http://www.parkonthehill.com).

Works by Hans Hofmann (1880-1966) used with permission of the Renate, Hans, and Maria Hofmann Trust.

*The Cross (Sketch for Chimbote Mosaic)*, 1950. Oil on paper mounted on board. 84 x 35-½ in. Renate, Hans and Maria Hofmann Trust, L2015.24.8.

*Mosaic for Apartment House Sketch No. 14*, 1956. Gouache and collage on cardboard. 33 x 22-⅝ in. Collection of Debbie Goodman Davis, L2015.25.

*Maquette for Mural at the New York School of Printing*, 1957. Mosaic tile set in concrete. 7-¾ x 28-⅝ x ¾ in. Collection of Charles and Elise Brown, L2015.29. Photograph by Paul Mutino.