



Jackson Pollock
America's Most Controversial Painter

"Because the painting has a life of its own - I try to let it live."
Jackson Pollock, 1950

*"On the floor I am more at ease. I feel nearer, more a part of the painting,
since this way I can walk around in it, work from the four sides and be
literally "in" the painting."*
Jackson Pollock, 1947

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DESCRIPTION

Drip/Pour Paintings
(All-Over, Action Paintings)

Jackson Pollock
1912-1956, American

1. "Revelation I"

Medium: Oil, lacquer (duco) and acrylic
Support: Un-primed linen canvas, medium-weight, unstretched
Date: Circa 1952-1956, unsigned
Dimensions: 52 inches by 126 ½ inches/123 inches

Condition: Good - however, moderate general undulations in the plane of the canvas are due to the effects of rolling. The painting was stored rolled up over a period of approximately forty years. Localized planar distortions have been caused by expansions and contractions in paint areas during stages of drying.

Description: The initial under-painting colors are predominately browns, sienna, blacks, green, yellow ochres, and grays with occasional ultramarine blue. Note: The under paintings appear grayed in tone and are matte in surface sheen.

The paint application is accented by a repeated rhythmical motif of strong diagonal strokes. They are predominately of the highly pigmented matte white paint and to a lesser degree of glossy black. Swirling arabesques of thinner lines of bright yellow, orange and glossy black contrast with counterpoint of wider splashed and drops of both shiny and matte aluminum paint. A thin transparent ultramarine blue is splattered across the tops of some whites and other colors. Accents of peach/pink, magenta, cerulean blue, venetian red, and chrome oxide green appear as interweaving threads of paint.

Provenance: Private collection of Gabor Erich Nemeth (an internationally recognized collector, early European master scholar, conservator, and consultant) since acquired in 1956 from previous owner prior to 1956: Dr. Arman Herskovich (Armin Herskovych) who acquired them from a young lady in 1956 after Pollock's death.

According to the woman, she had been storing the paintings since the early 1950's for Pollock and was nervous about selling them or keeping them.

2. "Revelation II"

Medium: Oil, lacquer (duco), and acrylic
Support: Un-primed linen canvas, medium-weight, unstretched
Date: Circa 1952-1956 - unsigned
Dimensions: 51 inches/51 ½ inches by 90 7/8 inches/88 inches

Condition: Good - however, moderate general undulations in the plane of the canvas are due to the effects of rolling. Painting was stored rolled up over a period of approximately forty years. Localized planar distortions have been caused by expansions and contractions in paint areas during stages of drying.

Description: The initial under-painting colors are predominately browns, reddish browns, burnt siennas, some yellow ochres, chrome oxide green, and occasional ultramarine blue, and thinned aluminum paint has also stained the canvas. These under-paintings also look somewhat grayed and matte.

The drip/splatter applications are more closely spaced and textured than on "Revelation I". The gesture of the application tends to be more circular. Rhythmical diagonals are shorter and tighter. Patterns of bright aluminum splatter lines and splashes are a motif throughout. The composition is lightened by extensive drip lines and poured areas of matte white paint and by an overall linear pattern of light blue paint. The dominant white and blue tonalities contrast with thin threads of bright orange and yellow paint.

Notation: Both paintings exhibit an intensely energetic physicality in their creation. A protracted period of development of paint build-up can be observed. This is demonstrated by the use of colors which exist at lower levels in the paint strata, re-appearing in the upper layers. Also, some colors have obviously dried before others were applied.

The most problematic of all colors used in both paintings are the whites. Most of the white paint areas appear similar in both works, with a rather pigment-to-medium ratio. These areas have dried matte and become quite brittle with age. Extensive cracking of the whites has resulted from the rolling of the canvases. Vulnerable paint cleavage and numerous chipped losses exist in many of the whites of both works. Other paint applications do exhibit a lesser

degree of cracking, but cleavage and loss are minimal in these areas.

The surface topography of both paintings is highly textured with raised webs of paint. The surface texture is punctuated sporadically by globs, chunks, and skins of paint. These probably resulted from partially dried paint in cans which the artist stirred into the fluid color as he worked.

I
THE PROJECT
(The Quest for Truth)

When first contacted relative to my possibly undertaking this authentication project - a referral which came after M.H. de Young Memorial Museum had been impressed with the paintings but had identified a problem that would take scholarly research - I, though willing to inspect the pieces, did not give a high probability that I would feel they were right. This pre-disposition arising from my having, through the last twenty years, inspected numerous supposed Pollocks and at first glance knew they were not his work. My opinions, always in an effort to be objective and open, but reinforced by my having been an admirer of Pollock's work (beyond art history) and my having had the honor of facilitating the private sale and transfer of a Pollock drip painting.

Pollock's success, and therefore the reason all attempts to forge (he is considered impossible to forge) his work have never been successful, was his ability to work in the air and know exactly where the paint would land and if I may say his subconscious, high energy, personality and passion showing in his creations. As Robert Hughes said in his book Nothing If Not Critical: "It is what his imitators could never do, and why there are no successful Pollock forgeries; they always end up looking like vomit, or onyx, or spaghetti, whereas Pollock - his best work, at any rate - had an almost preternatural control over the total effect of those skeins and receding depths of paint. In them, the light is always right. Nor are they absolutely spontaneous: he would often retouch the drip with a brush. So one is obliged to speak of Pollock in terms of perfected visual taste, analogous to natural pitch in music - a far cry, indeed, from the familiar image of him as a violent expressionist. As William Ruben suggests in the catalogue to this show, his musical counterpart is not the romantic and mood Bartok: it is the interlaced, twinkling and silky surface of Debussy. No wonder that it took an enthusiasm for Pollock to provoke the reevaluation of Monet's "Water Lilies" among Americans, back in the sixties. Yet Pollock's refinement is not the whole story. His best painting (like all serious art) are triumphs of sublimation, but they leave no doubt of the strength of feeling he had to control. From the very first, when he was trying - in studies such as "Composition with Figures and Banners", circa 1934-38 - to find painted form for the violently energetic, twisting, flame-like movement of masses, Pollock was obsessed by energy. His great theme, one might say, was the dissolution of matter into energy under extreme stress. He did not approach this by some corny process of finding painted "equivalents" for Einstein, as did so many pseudo-artists of his time. Rather, he looked back into tradition, past his teacher Thomas Hart Benton, to El Greco, with somewhat less understanding, to Michelangelo."

Therefore, I was pleasantly surprised (as apparently de Young was as well) when first viewing these two pieces. I walked in as a pragmatist and left as an optimist - realizing that if Pollocks, they were some of the most beautiful and dynamic he painted and would have been some of the most important at the recent Museum of Modern Art

(MOMA) Retrospective - and if not Pollocks the artist who painted them would have had all the reason to claim then for his importance and fame would have soon followed, for he/she would have accomplished what many had tried and all had failed. However, there was a problem - as discovered within the paint analysis done for the de Young Museum - there was acrylic and he was not known (by past art history) to have used such. Yet based on what I saw in front of me and their provenance I know I could not walk away from the challenge before me. The process would be more difficult due to Lee Krasner and all of Pollock's close artist friends (who could give an opinion of weight) were deceased - or so the art world and scholars believed at that time.

I approached this project well aware of the fact that I would be spending up to one year in the midst of investigative research, and becoming more of a Pollock scholar than I had imagined in the past. The advantage being that I would not just evaluate within a box of boundaries established by any old self-created dogmas. I was well aware that in the quest for the truth, supported by facts and evidence - I would find it necessary to play devil's advocate, so as to deal with the problems (acrylic and no previous authentication) at hand .

I have tried to bring to the surface scholarly knowledge that helps us understand how and why perhaps these and other pieces by Pollock are not catalogued nor always known of - why he would possibly channel some paintings away from all who controlled him and his work - how he sold or bartered many paintings under the table - how and why Ruth Kligman could have made off with more than the one we know she took and that there could have been paintings that ended up missing as was shown in the 60's when Guggenheim Guggenheim sued the Estate claiming paintings were due her and were missing. Therefore allowing us to look at all the evidence previously known and recently discovered - which in turn gives us insight to what is true rather than being restricted to that limited knowledge which has previously been known. We as historians and scholars must never satisfy ourselves with the simple answers. We need to be investigative researchers and try to view the artist and his or her art through their eyes, their personality and their lives.

Plato 2500 years ago described the artistic genius as "Divine Mania" and throughout the ages it has shown in such artists as Van Gogh and Pollock - which raises the question as the Wittkowers did in their book (Born Under Saturn: the Character and Conduct of Artists), whether absolute reciprocity ever exists between an artist's identity and what he creates. Art historians who know and study Jackson Pollock treat his life and art as if they were totally indivisible. Though I with those who were close to him have maintained that his mature work, which was often lyrical and quite beautiful, often had only a marginal relationship to his immature personality - yet still a reflection of his genius and rebellious freedom and brings us back to the beauty coming through his divine mania in the same way that darkness could arrive - his immaturity and naiveté is the channel. It is in knowing him and his relationship to his art that enables one to view his work and know that he could very well have painted these.

I knew I would have to go further than any researcher would typically go, but was encouraged and inspired by the fact that he was an artist constantly venturing into uncharted territory. As noted by "Life" editor Dorothy Sieberling in her 1959 retrospective assessment of Pollock - "In his studio on Long Island, amid a clutter of paint tins, driftwood, a human skull and large rolls of canvas, he brooded and wrestled with an art that surged restlessly into the unknown".

We must keep in mind, therefore, that Pollock was in constant evolution, much like the universe - had Namuth not filmed his exploration of working on a transparent surface in number 29, 1950 and how Jackson had allowed it to be altered by the imprint of falling leaves, the salt air, etc. All of which led it to being exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art - it could have later been questioned in its authenticity due to it not being a medium he worked in. We cannot confine Pollock or restrict him with our own limited understanding or arrogant ignorance; which was also acknowledged by Francis O 'Conner and Eugene Thaw in their catalogue *Raisonne*' - where he admits (though he does not rise to such wisdom in earlier text) that there are most likely other pieces yet to surface and that we do not know the medium of every painting. With Jackson Pollock we continue to discover new revelations that previously were either not known or believed.

II JACKSON POLLOCK (The Artist - The Art)

Pollock, Jackson (1912-56); This great American painter was born in Cody, Wyoming and died in Springs, Long Island. In the interim he became the commanding figure of the abstract expressionist movement.

He began to study painting in 1929 at the Art Students' League, New York, under the regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton. During the 1930's, he worked in the manner of the regionalists. Jackson also was influenced by the Mexican muralist painters (Orozco, Rivera and Siqueiros), as well as Michaelangelo, El Greco, Picasso, and Miro (by certain aspects of surrealism). Pollock's attraction to painting was a basic instinct of his "primitive need to utter" as a physician ascribed to him. He always seemed to follow a sort of ritualized behavior and the intuitive (as opposed to rational) approach to creativity of the shaman (he was very interested in American Indian subject matter). He was shamanistic and his deeply felt sympathy with the rhythms of the universe which he on occasion would vocalize, but above all showed in his art. His all-over action paintings - reinforced by what he had learned of Jung's ideas about the shared racial unconscious and what he was seeing in modern art - created in Pollock a fixation and intense identification with the makers of primitive art. He was also mentored by John Graham, the Russian born artist whose theories were pivotal to the abstract expressionist. We cannot forget the encouragement he received from two highly supportive Jungian analysts, Clement Greenburg and above all, Lee Krasner, whose conviction of Pollock's genius and her knowledge of art world thinking were essential to his development.

In the early 1930's, Pollock, his friend and neighbor Ibram Lassaw, and other struggling artists were cleaning statues (though classified as stone carvers) in New York for the Emergency Relief Bureau. From 1938 to 1942, he worked for the Federal Art Project (WPA). By the mid 1940's, he was painting in a completely abstract manner. Pollock's fervent desire in the early forties - which has been vividly recalled by both Motherwell and Krasner - was not only to create a "parallel" version of Picasso, but to compete on an equal level and eventually surpass the accomplishments of the twentieth century's greatest master. Pollock's first contract with Picasso's art dated to the 1920's, while a student of Schwankovsky. Any initial attraction Pollock may have felt to the innovations of European modernism was stifled during most of the following decade because of Benton's prejudice against abstraction and partiality to the old masters. His interest, however, was revived as a result of a confluence of events that began with the publication of Graham's article linking Picasso to both primitive art and Jungian psychology - along with several issues of "Cahiers d' Art" devoting themselves to the new work of Picasso and the much heralded arrival in New York in 1939 of "Guernica" and "Les Demoiselles d' Avignon". His previous attachments to Michelangelo and Orozco were excellent preparation for an appreciation of Picasso's performance.

By 1945, Pollock pushed color expression close to invisibility by loading his canvas with opaque blacks and purples and keeping in play only a thin and aberrant fluctuation of bright-spectrum colors at extreme edges of the canvas. The great postwar artists were abstract expressionist, the New York school, or action painters. Taken together, the descriptive epithets do suggest certain characteristic aspects of their work as it evolved: the wedding of constructed and fluid elements of abstract form with intense personal emotion. The concept of the work of art as a liberating and vital action to which the artist is committed with his total personality. In the forties the principal leaders of the new movement in painting were Pollock, DeKooning, Still, Rothko, Gorky, Motherwell, Newman, Reinhardt, and Hoffman. In sculpture: Lassaw, Smith, Lipton, Ruzsak, Ferber, and Hare. Jackson Pollock worked in a form of symbolic, surrealist tintured abstraction leaning toward homogeneous color with organic and biomorphic forms rather than geometric. Pollock, though withdrawn, abrasive and often drunk, was a true "rebel hero" with animal vitality, sexuality and a certain emotional fragility with his insubordination.

III SPRINGS

"On the floor I am more at ease, I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and be literally "in" the painting."

-- Jackson Pollock, 1947

In 1945, Pollock and Krasner moved to Springs, Long Island (an artist's community since the 19th century), which for a good while brought happiness and amazing creativity. He received an advance and a monthly stipend (for the purchase of a home he loved) from Peggy Guggenheim in return for stringent new contractual terms that guaranteed her virtually all of Pollock's production for the foreseeable future. He was allowed to give Krasner only one painting per year.

On January 5, 1945, his fifth one-man show opened at the Parsons Gallery (due to Guggenheim convincing Betty Parsons to take him into her stable of artists, due to Guggenheim closing her American Gallery and moving permanently to Venice) though he was still under contract to Guggenheim.

Pollock's magnificent "drip and splash" style for which he is best known emerged with some abruptness in 1947. Instead of using the traditional easel he affixed his canvas to the floor (or wall prior to) and poured and dripped his paint from a can while manipulating it with sticks, trowels, or knives, and sometimes adding foreign matter. This manner of action painting had in common with surrealist theories of automatism that is supposed by artists and critics alike to result in a direct expression or revelation of the unconscious moods of the artist. Pollock's name is also associated with the introduction of the all-over style of painting which avoids any points of emphasis or identifiable parts within the whole canvas and therefore abandons the traditional idea of composition in terms of relations among parts. The design of his painting had no relation to the shape or size of the canvas -- indeed in the finished work the canvas was sometimes docked or trimmed to suit the image.

"My concern is with the rhythms of nature I work inside out, like nature."

-- Jackson Pollock

Pollock's first showing of his drip/pour paintings was in 1948. By the end of 1948, he was drinking heavily again (remember the shaman approach of altered mind preceding creativity) appearing to be heading down a path of self-obliteration. Yet, by the end of that year he would begin the most productive two years of his life. Note: Perhaps the same occurred at the end of his life as well in which his art finally brought forth the full power of his imagination and creativity. During these two years it is

believed that he was not in an altered state for he was not drinking, yet that assumption is wrong. He may have not been drinking (though now we know that he still drank in private), but was under the influence of Phenobarbital and Dilantin which had been prescribed to give him the same feeling that alcohol gave him. This knowledge helps us understand that his greatest creativity did not come from true sobriety. In fact, it was always linked to either during or after his altered states - thus allowing his shamanistic approach and creativity to flow passionately from within and further the visual images he viewed in the air (where he really painted) which came due to an optical condition he suffered from. Tony Smith believed that his alcohol induced reveries were perhaps essential to Pollock's creativity.

Keep in mind that after Betty Parsons accepted Guggenheim's offer and signed contracts, Pollock complained about Parsons being "not as forceful a dealer" as Guggenheim and complained about being shut out of the process. "I'm not a slave", Pollock protested to Roger Wilcox, "They can't sell me". Parsons, too, was leery of the new arrangement and further aggravated Pollock by refusing to sign a separate contract with him. Guggenheim in turn was leery of both of them.

After his show at Parsons' in January 1948 (note: he was starting to experiment with paint, e.g. house paint) - he knew all proceeds from the show would go to Guggenheim according to the terms of the old contract and more so was aware that the next month would bring the last check of \$250 from Guggenheim, combined with his having already signed a contract with Parsons which did not include a provision for a monthly allowance. He was by March, destitute and trying to trade paintings to survive. Though most of his creditors would not take his paintings, a few such as Dan Miller (for a \$56 grocery bill) did eventually accept. More reason to sell/trade on his own or hide pieces while everything was going to Guggenheim. For even the vast inventory that was held by Parsons and getting sold belonged to Guggenheim. Parsons, feeling sorry for the Pollocks, even tried to discount pieces from her huge store of Pollock paintings, knowing Guggenheim would have been furious. She finally sold one for several hundred dollars - she had to almost beg Guggenheim (now in Venice) to forgo the proceeds from the sale so the money could go directly to them and in return Guggenheim would receive some future work.

By mid 1949, the house on Fireplace Road was filled every weekend with people from Krasner's growing list of artists, dealers, and collectors - anyone who might help Pollock's career or buy something. Some visitors, such as Reginal Isaacs, would buy more than one - not all paintings went through a gallery or were catalogued. It was that same year that Guild Hall in East Hampton showed three of Pollock's work in "17 Eastern Long Island Artists" along with Ibram Lassaw, Lee Krasner, and others. Pollock sold all three of his works shown, yet continued thereafter trying to find collectors and buyers. Guggenheim had made it clear that she was not interested in advancing Pollock's career - only in reducing her own inventory, which of course brought nothing to the Pollocks from the sales they generated.

Even though the 1949-50 gallery season brought Pollock an annual income of \$6,500, which was a solid, even bourgeois, annual income, and as we know, he didn't hesitate to spoil himself. They (especially Krasner) would to the outside world continue to maintain the pretense of poverty with Krasner wearing the same cloth coat for several years to offset Pollock's fine tweeds and chinos and as Parsons well knew, the Pollocks routinely supplemented their income and avoided paying commissions by bartering paintings for everything from kitchen appliances to dental services and land. Nevertheless, Pollock continued to plead poverty and ask Parsons to raise his prices.

He eventually wrote Betty Parsons saying he was going to try to get some mural commissions through a different agent and didn't want to pay two commissions. "I feel it important for me to broaden my possibilities in this line of development. But any painting shown in your gallery and mural commission gotten by you - you will receive your commission." Parsons, however, did not care for such a proposal and said so by return mail. Unbeknownst to most, including Parsons, was that he had put almost every dollar earned by the summer of 1950 into the house and old debts. Even while still destitute in 1949, he began remodeling, including plans to install heating and plumbing, despite the continuing lack of funds.

The November 1951 show at Parsons didn't fare too well, nor did Krasner's show that year. By the first of January 1952, Pollock had his fill of Parsons' shortcomings in business and informed her that he was not renewing his contract, but would leave his paintings for the remainder of the season. Pollock could not get Pierre Matisse to represent him (Matisse being well aware of how difficult Pollock was), so he went with Dr. Grant Mark to help him handle his own career. The following show in Paris (Ossorio acting as Pollock's agent in collaboration with Michel Tapie), though it produced a few sales, came with a multitude of difficulties - Pollock never saw the money from the sales and the paintings were "misplaced" in transit (due to the vagaries of French law and perhaps the chicanery of European dealers. Note: Fifteen of those paintings were still missing when he died. Not long after the full dimensions of the debacle in Paris became known, Dr. Mark's scheme collapsed. When the "15 Americans" show opened at the MOMA on April 9, 1952, Pollock was still without a dealer. He eventually went with Sidney Janis in mid 1952, hoping it would reverse the decline and bring back the money and celebrity - for he was once again a desperate man.

The entire time at Betty Parsons, they had to depend on handouts from friends. By late 1954, they were still doing badly, though sales did begin to pick up due to some critics starting to warm up to his black pourings. He never really made any money until the last, most unproductive year of his life. The severity of his final descent into alcoholism and depression did not stop him from showing off his new prosperity.

By 1955, his output was so sparse his wife and dealer talked him into a retrospective - which must have been absolutely terrifying in his psychological state of near paralysis - perhaps of assistance in the end. Add to that his dangerously low self esteem by the winter of 1955 with even Clement Greenburg now considering his work 'passé'. Pollock worked best when there was no value to this work. "An impulse would

go down without any premeditation" according to painter James Brook. As every stroke he made had worth, or was potentially famous, he became self-conscious and paralyzed. He had a difficult time dealing with the acclaim he had sought all his life as he vacillated between extremes of egotism and insecurity. All of this helps make sense of why he might again, before his death, produce great pieces after several years of his not being the artist he used to be. After those several years of depression and personal and career lows, possibly bringing out his creativity like never before.

It is relative, as well, that by 1955 Pollock was trying to get away from Krasner all he could, wandering the neighborhood looking for someone to visit - especially if they had children. He loved children and was inspired by them (being a child himself). He was so gentle and lovingly patient with children that neighbors would let him baby-sit (even in his last months) and the Braiders named one of their children after him. He had tired of Krasner's nagging, controlling nature and her pushing him away in bed - not to mention that he was constantly screaming and insulting her and didn't want to spend any time with her. By 1950, Krasner started painting again and not pushing Pollock as much, which was difficult for him. By the winter of 1952, Krasner's primary concern had stopped being Pollock - it was now only his art. She only wanted him to paint (I'm sure he knew this). Friends had noticed the change in Krasner. Gone was her support and selflessness. She seemed to hate him and he knew it. She was definitely part of the problem (a problem for art historians as well). Krasner resented being in his shadow. After his death she complained "That bastard Pollock - he had that big studio out there and I had the bedroom". By the winter of 1955, they were discussing divorce. During that last year of his life, with his marriage in a shambles, and his being desperate and alone, he started to see Ruth Kligman in February of 1956. He made a great effort to show her off to everyone, being that she brought some passion and inspiration back to his life. On one occasion, Kligman went with Pollock to see Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" -- a play whose structure was not unlike one of his own paintings: no story is told and there is no definable beginning, climax, or end. It is clear from eyewitness accounts that Pollock identified emotionally with Beckett's presentation of man's powerlessness to control his own destiny. Kligman said that Pollock cringed throughout the play, becoming highly distraught as the main characters each attempted suicide and he eventually began to sob so loudly that they had to get up and leave. When Krasner went to Europe after she and Pollock separated, Kligman moved into the house in Springs. She became disenchanted (Pollock became abusive) and left after two weeks but returned a week later.

I should also add to the analysis that Pollock admired the works of the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, taking particular delight in his rhythmically repetitive sound structures. Pollock acquired a 1953 volume of Thomas' collected poems, as well as recordings of the author reciting. Similar in both artists, in part, was their passion and intensity they both brought to their creativity, as well as the excesses they both pursued.

Pollock was well aware of the fact that his work in the previous years were not well received as had been his poured paintings, and if we consider this with the fact that Pollock truly yearned to belong after having been an outsider all his life, we can

understand why he would want to do his poured action paintings again. Especially being that they were the ones that had made him a celebrity and held the only hope of bringing him the material trappings of success as well as respectability which he craved. Also, take into account that when he finally became somewhat prosperous (for he never had the financial stability), he had to face that material success was meaningless if he could no longer create. After his brief time of showing of his monetary gains, he would have wanted to create again - especially if we consider his shamanistic creativity which followed his altered states, and Kligman bringing some inspiration back to his life.

IV SUPPORTIVE FACTS AND EVIDENCE

John Graham's ideas granted Pollock a license to follow his own natural, subjective bent, giving him permission to experiment and encouraged him to reach further in an attempt to redefine the basics of artistic achievement.

Siqueiros (whom Pollock studied with - the Siqueiros Syndicate) encouraged the artists who worked for him at his Union Square studio to employ atypical technology and materials in the freest ways possible. Pollock was already conversant with spontaneous and experimental paint handling as a way to court the kind of risks which could lead to expansion of the mechanisms of creativity. Siqueiros, as we know, urged the use of unusual nitrocellulose lacquers and silicone paints. He had his assistants apply them with spray guns, sometimes after implanting foreign objects into the support. Pollock was not only able to watch Siqueiros flick paint or pour pyroxylin onto a panel laid flat on the floor, but also took part in comparable group experimentation with nonstandard techniques. Therefore, any scholar who tries to limit the type or quality of paint that Pollock would work with does both themselves and art history a grave disservice.

Pollock was, by the mid 1950's, developing a simpler, airier, more controlled and "classic" composition. Pollock was also cognizant of the fact that his move toward outsize dimensions more fully satisfied the demands of his new style of painting and that an increase in scale requires extensive physical displacement.

Note: When looking at a drip/poured painting, the factors to look for:

1. There is no compositional center and seem to extend indefinitely.
2. The different colors of paint are not applied one after the other, but weave in and out; occasionally the colors mix together and seem to melt into one another.
3. The paint is laid on certain rhythmical patterns creating an optical rather than tactile field.
4. The painting overall has energy and exuberance.
5. They are really kind of pretty and seem to reflect that deeper level of consciousness.

These paintings meet the aforementioned factors. These pieces are bold, extravagant, pertinacious, and obsessed which shows us his approach without doubt - showing the energy behind his imagery flowing straight from his unconscious. They are unframed space, with no beginning or end. They are also executed on raw, unprimed canvas - which he had converted to by 1951.

These paintings definitely reflect Pollock when we think of him and his own words "I have to get into the painting to relax". As he confided to friends he often spoke of a desire to use art to leave his surroundings and enter a place where "outside things don't matter". These paintings, as well as his other masterfully done poured paintings, confirm and exemplify the dimensions of Pollock's breakthrough to the magical state after which he had always yearned; all of which was shown in Namuth's photographs - total involvement, release and self-transformation ritually induced in the process of making art. His photographs provided visual proof of the psychic and physical changes which took place in Pollock as he worked. Under the spell of his creativity, Pollock's body motions - often awkward and heavy in a more conscious state - took on the fluency and agility of a well-trained acrobat or athlete. These are prime examples of how he was no longer fighting his medium, he becomes one with his work, absorbed and transfixed by actions over which he admitted to having only varying degrees of emotional and motor control.

They are very much in the style of *Lavender Mist*. More so minutely detailed and tightly woven composition, much like Monet's later works showing equability of tone and texture, the evocation of mood through color and the micronization of form and like the impressionists' work, they show Pollock evoking nature's transcendent beauty, combining feeling and sense perception into a lyrical visual totality. Again, affirming that only one person could have done these - Jackson Pollock - especially when you consider the presence of his distinctively linear all-over format. Pollock's all-over style of painting avoids any points of emphasis or identifiable parts within the whole canvas and, therefore, abandons the traditional idea of composition in terms of relations among parts. The design of his painting had no relation to the shape or size of the canvas. Indeed, in the finished work, the canvas was sometimes docked or trimmed to suit the image.

In the knowledge that these paintings are clearly circa 1950's and though I believe they were painted in 1952, due to his having gone back to color after his black pourings, we must consider the possibility that he may have painted these not too long before his death (though his output was sparse in those last couple of years), and, therefore, consider all evidence in that direction.

Just as he had been able to create two masterpieces (*Blue Poles*-1952 and *Portrait and a Dream*-1953) during a time of prolonged mental and emotional crisis which were a surprise - color returned and during a brief period. Why then would he not repeat such in 1956, due to inspiration and acting out another period of what was like a religious ritual.

In February 1956, Pollock met Ruth Kligman (an artist's model). She became a catalyst - as he told a neighbor, Jeffrey Potter, "I've gone dead inside, like one of your diesels on a cold morning. I need a booster ... a sex-starter, so my sap will flow". So, despite his reputed sexual impotence, the two began an affair. His lack of productivity seemed to coincide with his marriage disintegrating so would it not return some after Kligman entered his life. It was in his drip/poured paintings that Pollock found the potency and masculinity that to him was like making love. He may have seen them as a

perfect gift to Kligman. He had promised her some paintings and once told her it wasn't worth the pain and sacrifice to give to the world as much as he had in the past - that "they never get the point anyway". Kligman eventually sued the Estate for negligence due to the auto accident in which Pollock was killed, and asked Krasner for a promised painting. I'm sure all the while knowing Krasner had no intention of giving her husband's girlfriend a painting (according to Ernestine Lassaw, Krasner hated Kligman and it made sense that Kligman would perhaps use an alias if selling some of Pollock's work). So, it was a strategic move to cover what she already had and should she had not done so, Krasner would have become suspicious in her always trying to maintain control of all of his paintings and having just inherited nearly all of her husband's estate.

Krasner's controlling possessiveness was a definite source of friction which helps explain why they were splitting up before his death and why he would hide these paintings. As psychiatrist deLaszlo had feared - he came to resent Krasner due to being too dependent on her. The same contempt he felt for his mother, he came to feel for Krasner. She was as strong as his mother, though in the beginning it was good for him.

In our understanding Pollock's eccentricity, we are able to more so comprehend why he might give to or hide with his mistress paintings that he may have wanted to keep away from Krasner - whether he had recently painted them or they were some of the missing pieces that finally arrived from Europe. The fact that he had days before his death asked his friend Ibram Lassaw to teach him to sculpt (which is what he as a teenager felt he would be) gives me cause to believe that he might have been painting again and was therefore feeling creative. One of the reasons Pollock agreed to move to Long Island, according to Krasner, was his notion that he should get back to his original goal of being a sculptor. We need to keep in mind that Pollock, who really was shrewder than generally given credit for, would easily keep the secret of paintings hidden or given - he was not one to talk much. According to Krasner and his family, he didn't believe in talking. He believed in doing - and remember, according to O'Conner and Thaw in Pollock's catalogue Raisonne' - there are pieces unknown yet to surface and all mediums are not known. The Raisonne' was published in 1974 (actually 1976) and they afterward found uncovered many unpublished works. We know that in 1953 through 1955 all of Pollock's records were askew, with pieces such as Vertical Composition which was neither signed nor dated. These paintings are not in the Raisonne', but as O'Conner and Thaw said as well, "The hopelessness of successfully forging a Pollock and defining by contrast the special power and character of his achievement".

All that have seen these paintings have recognized the movement - far from planned and rigid. Pollock once said of his work "When I am in my painting, I'm not aware of what I'm doing". His paintings, Pollock said, had a life of their own - his role was to let it come through. In the early fifties, Pollock defined painting as "a state of being". Like other great abstract expressionists, such as Ibram Lassaw, he believed the source of his art was the unconscious. These pieces do reflect such.

Clement Greenberg, his foremost champion, who once characterized Pollock as "a kind of demiurgic genius" gave the opinion when shown these paintings that they were Pollock's last and best he ever did.

Acrylic

In so far as the only problem before us, since these paintings were first inspected by the staff at DeYoung Museum in San Francisco and afterward referred to my office, has been the issue of acrylic. Though O'Conner and Thaw in their conclusion of the catalogue *Raisonne'* acknowledge that we as scholars do not know of all Pollock's paintings (they felt confident that more would surface with time) nor all of his mediums used (e.g., known pieces where the medium is unknown or assumed). I knew that it was necessary to approach the research at hand with logic and objectivity, without assumptions. Keeping in mind, that in getting to know everything inside and out about Jackson Pollock (no matter how much one has studied an artist, there is always more that can be learned or discovered) it helps any scholar understand what an artist may or may not have done and, therefore, is of great asset in one's research. I have always believed it important to completely comprehend the inner self of the artist allowing one to view things through the artist's eyes and mind.

Jackson Pollock believed that "Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement". He was from a very early moment seeking experimentally the means of enlivening his surfaces with effects similar to those produced by aluminum paint - the use of metallic paint is but a number of strategies used to heighten the sheer visual surface impact of the painting.

We know from Pollock's own comments that the drip and pour technique truly aimed at more efficaciously projecting untrammelled psychic material onto his canvas and that he was known for the application of the concept of sublimity with his usage of shine and glitter - all of which acrylic would facilitate more so. Acrylic in its makeup is more conducive to Pollock's all-over action paintings. According to Pollock's good friend, neighbor, and fellow artist, Ibram Lassaw, as I discovered in a series of in depth conversations - Pollock didn't even care for oil paints (took too long to dry and not as workable as lacquer, for example). He was more concerned with color than quality and as we know even used house paint.

We know that Pollock gave thought to his expressive use of color and though his color in each work appears to be carefully organized with rhythm and structure, he has left us no record of systematic thought about color and its use in his work.

With all of the aforementioned in mind, knowing he would have had ample reason to and could have used acrylic, we still cannot rest on assumptions, but must go further. And so we have.

Jackson Pollock always had a taste for the best, even in the worst of financial times. By the end of 1950 with his now being a celebrity, everything had to be the best

quality. His clothes, cuts of meat, even his exhibition catalogues. For his own materials, he began to abandon the cheap house paints he had been buying. By 1952, he began ordering advanced acrylics from the New York City paint maker Leonard Bocour, a pioneer in the development of acrylic paint. "It was expensive" Bocour remembers, "Like forty or fifty dollars in the cadmium reds. He'd buy a gallon of this, a gallon of that. Seven or eight colors would come to three or four hundred dollars. But he never seemed to be concerned about the cost".

We as scholars, therefore now know, not just by the preponderance of circumstantial evidence, but by facts, that Jackson Pollock did in fact use acrylic.

V OPINION

After extensive, in-depth research and evaluation, consideration of all facts we know to be true, chemical analysis and personal visual inspection and study of these two paintings, I believe without a doubt that no other hand other than Jackson Pollock's could have created these. Revelation I and Revelation II reflect romantic, emotional, passionate, gestural, and rhythmic beauty - in these as with his other great drip/pour pieces (Lavender Mist, Autumn Rhythm, Blue Poles) his effort was successful and he achieved an unequaled degree of directed intensity. I must agree with Clement Greenburg that these are some of his best work, if not his best.

Whether it was Ruth Kligman who sold them, Jackson Pollock who sold, bartered or hid them; or they are part of the exhibition that went to Paris in 1952 and were thereafter lost in transit for years (again they could have come back to Pollock and handled without any records or they may come back without going through his hand at all) - it will be clear to any who view these masterpieces that they are the work of America's master Jackson Pollock. The art world has gained tremendously by their surfacing after forty years.

IBRAM LASSAW

A friend and fellow artist of Jackson Pollock - the last around of the old group, "The Club" (Lassaw, DeKooning, Kline, Pollock, Motherwell, etc.). A major artist/sculptor. He is to modern sculpture what Jackson Pollock is to modern painting. He worked with Pollock in the 1930's and they later ended up next door neighbors in Springs. They were both from their early years in quest of something new and different; entering into the experience and being more involved within the work. Their art coming from within (the unconscious) and working in unframed space. It is no surprise, therefore, that Pollock wanted Ibram to teach him (as he asked of Ibram days before his death while visiting), as Ibram Lassaw was already where Jackson Pollock wished to go - the third dimension.

IBRAM LASSAW STUDIO

P.O. BOX 487
EAST HAMPTON, N.Y. 11937
(516) 324-4575

10/27/99

Dear Rudy,

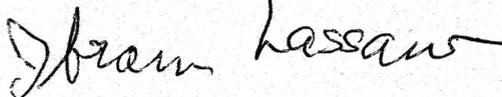
As I mentioned to you in our conversation about Jackson Pollack; a couple of weeks before his fatal accident I was visiting Jackson's studio and we had a conversation about what we were doing and about art generally, and he said he was interested in coming to my studio to watch me work. I had the intuitive understanding that he was feeling that he had to develop in the third dimension, that he was interested in doing his work in the third dimension. He was painting huge canvases on the floor but he wasn't yet "inside" his painting, and I thought he really wanted to work inside the space of the painting as I was working inside space rather than outside of it. We talked about this interest, this need to be involved in space.

I first met Jackson in the 1930's in New York City, although we didn't work together both Pollock and I worked on the PWP (Public Works Project) about 1934, cleaning monuments in the city. We became neighbors when I moved out to East Hampton in 1954. Around that time many artists moved to the Hamptons and several of us were within walking distance of each others homes and studios. Many artists used acrylic because it was cheaper, and Jackson used a tremendous amount of paint... you know in those days no one had much money to spend on materials. We were all "broke".

Another old friend and neighbor was Bill deKooning. I first met Bill about 1935. We used to visit each other often and became very good friends, especially as we both had a great interest in music. Bill and I would sit for hours listening very carefully. Music was a big influence on both of us. Bill and his wife Elaine were the witnesses at our wedding and later became the god-parents of our daughter, Denise. Bill and Elaine came over for dinner often- we lived within walking distance of each other.

We were very interested in the photographs you showed us of the Pollock paintings and both Ernestine and I thought they were certainly genuine Pollock's. As far as Ruth Cligman goes.. its quiet possible that she could have used an alias but we wouldn't have any knowledge of that.

Best Wishes,



TONY ROCKWELL

A well-known conservator who worked in the Conservator Department of the New York Museum of Modern Art during Jackson Pollock's lifetime. He has served as curator of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and restored two Jackson Pollock originals to prepare them for the 1998 Pollock show in New York. He is presently the curator at M.H. de Young Memorial Museum.

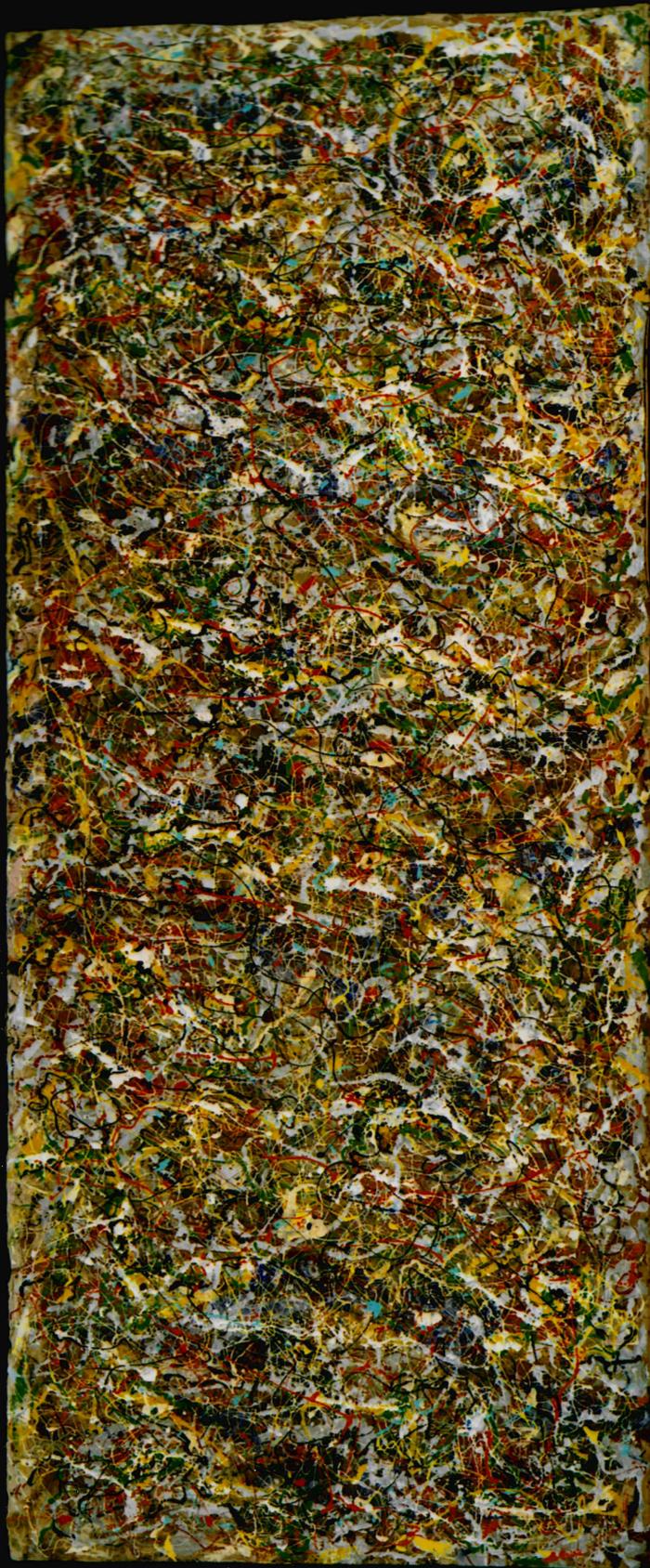
GABOR ERICH NEMETH

A retired internationally known conservator of old masters who studied and worked in Amsterdam at the Rijks and under Paul Coreman in Brussels. He was a serious art collector for over half a century and was also a conservator and art consultant to J. P. Getty, Norton Simon, and other major art collectors. He also did the scientific research and restoration on The Warschaw Collection which came together in Los Angeles in 1971.

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California Palace of the Legion of Honor
M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

Paintings Conservation Department
(415) 750-3645

Gerald Furchner
11791 North Alpine Road
Lodi, CA 95240-9429

March 4, 1998

Dear Mr. Furchner,

Enclosed please find copies of the Sample Submission Forms sent to the Williamstown Art Conservation Center describing samples taken from the painting attributed to Jackson Pollock called "Revelation #1". Included is a color copy of the photograph of the painting with a mylar overlay on which are marked the numbers and locations of the samples taken. The samples were sent to the WACC on 01/27/98. James Martin, head of WACC Analytical Services, will soon be sending us a written account of his findings.

The enclosed Invoice is for the Conservation Laboratory consultation and the taking of samples from the above mentioned painting on 01/23/98. I will let you know as soon as the analytical findings arrive and will send these off to you. Please do not hesitate to call at any time about any of these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tony Rockwell".

Tony Rockwell
Paintings Conservator

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco*

Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *Tony Rockwell*

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

Address: *M.H. de Young Museum*

E-mail:

City/State/Zip:

*Golden Gate Park
75 Tea Garden Drive
San Francisco, CA 94118-4501*

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 1/23/98* sample # and location: *SAMPLE # 1 (ONE), 1 1/4" from bottom edge*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock. If by Pollock, painting possible dates: 1947-* Surface color in visible and uv light: *32 3/4" from left edge*

Previous treatment and analysis:

to early 1950's.

Layers thought to be present in sample:

WHITE in both visible + UV

NONE

ONE homogenous layer

Known surface solubility:

UNKNOWN

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

*None known
no sign of restoration or consolidation*

Analytical objectives: *Identify PIGMENT + BINDER*

Analytical budget: *Open, please notify of expected costs*

*If pigment is titanium dioxide attempt to establish dates of manufacture + use by the following:
type of rutile, pigment particle size, or other characteristics.*

Date results desired: *Pigment identification by 2/6/98*

*(T. Rockwell will be away 2/10-2/19)
Other tests, if indicated, to follow ASAP*

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify of analytical options after pigment ID.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *TONY ROCKWELL*

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

Address:

M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

E-mail:

Golden Gate Park

City/State/Zip:

75 Tea Garden Drive

San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I," oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *#2 (TWO) 6 7/8" from bottom*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light:

13 1/4" from left

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

SILVER

*No previous treatment observed
possible previous analysis by owner.*

ONE

Known surface solubility:

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

UNKNOWN

NONE KNOWN

Analytical objectives:

pigment + binder

Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected costs.*

*Establish dates of manufacture
+ use if possible.*

Date results desired:

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify of analytical options after pigment/binder ID.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *Tony Rockwell*
Address: *M.H. de Young Memorial Museum*

Fax: *(415)-750.7692*

City/State/Zip: *75 Tea Garden Drive*
San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

E-mail:

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *#3, 22 3/4" from bottom, 19" from left*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light: *pale yellow ochre, or Naples yellow*

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

No previous treatment observed *one*
possible previous analysis by owner (not available).

Known surface solubility:

Known alteration or contamination of sample: *None known.*

UNKNOWN

possible slight contamination from under layer.

Analytical objectives: *Binder identification.*

Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected*

If Duco or other synthetic, determine dates (span) of manufacture/use by the following: date specific plasticizers, organic pigments or other factors.

Date results desired: *costs*

Binder ID by 2/6/98

Special comments or instructions:

please notify of analytical options after binder ID.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *TONY ROCKWELL* Fax: *(415)-750.7692*

Address: *M.H. de Young Memorial Museum* E-mail:

City/State/Zip: *Golden Gate Park*
75 Tea Garden Drive
San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I," oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *# 4, 16³/₈" from bottom, 35³/₄" from left*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock* Surface color in visible and uv light: *Black*

Previous treatment and analysis: Layers thought to be present in sample:

No previous treatment observed one
Possible previous analysis (not available)

Known surface solubility: Known alteration or contamination of sample: *none known*

UNKNOWN

Analytical objectives: *Identify binder* Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected costs*

Establish dates of manufacture
+ use if possible

Date results desired: *By 2/20/98*

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify of options after binder ID.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *TONY ROCKWELL*

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

Address: *M.H. de Young Memorial Museum*

E-mail:

City/State/Zip: *Golden Gate Park*

75 Tea Garden Drive

San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *# 5 canvas threads, center of right edge*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light: *Tan colored*

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

*No previous treatment observed
possible previous analysis (not available)*

Known surface solubility: *N/A*

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

accretions of dust, grime, sporadic paint residues.

Analytical objectives:

Fiber identification

Analytical budget: *\$75 for fiber ID (if appropriate)*

Date results desired:

2/6/98

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify if testing for radio carbon dating is available. Possible costs.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *TONY ROCKWELL*
Address: *M.H. de Young Memorial Museum*

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

City/State/Zip: *Golden Gate Park*
75 Tea Garden Drive
San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

E-mail:

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *# 6, 7³/₁₆ from bottom, 21⁷/₈" from right*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light: *Light blue in visible light*

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

No previous treatment observed *one*
possible previous analysis (not available)

Known surface solubility:

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

UNKNOWN

possible slight contamination from underlayer

Analytical objectives: *Identify binder*

Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected costs.*

Date results desired:

If duco or other synthetic, determine dates of manufacture/use by the following: plasticizers, organic pigments, or other factors

ASAP

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify of analytical options after binder ID.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *Tony Rockwell*
M.H. de Young Memorial Museum

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

Address: *Golden Gate Park*

E-mail:

City/State/Zip: *75 Tea Garden Drive*
San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *# 7, 1 5/8" from bottom, 68 3/4" from left*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light: *Light lavender (brownish) in vis. light.*

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

No previous treatment observed
Possible previous analyzers (not available)

one

Known surface solubility:

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

UNKNOWN

possible slight contamination from wood layer

Analytical objectives: *Identify binder*

Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected costs.*

If duco or other synthetic attempt
to determine dates of manufacture/use.

Date results desired:

ASAP

Special comments or instructions:

Please notify of analytical options after binder I.D.

WACC Analytical Services and Research — Sample Submission Form

Company: *PAINTINGS CONSERVATION, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* Tel: *(415) 750.3645*

Name of Contact: *TONY ROCKWELL*
Address: *M.H. de Young Memorial Museum*

Fax: *(415) 750.7692*

City/State/Zip:

Golden Gate Park

E-mail:

75 Tea Garden Drive

San Francisco, CA 94118-4501

Object sampled/Date: *"Revelation I", oil painting on canvas (drip style) 01/23/98* Sample # and location: *#8 5" from bottom 24" from right*

Maker/Life dates: *Attributed to Jackson Pollock*

Surface color in visible and uv light: *Red (medium) in visible light*

Previous treatment and analysis:

Layers thought to be present in sample:

*No previous treatment observed.
possible previous analysis (not available)*

one

Known surface solubility:

UNKNOWN

Known alteration or contamination of sample:

none known

Analytical objectives:

*Identify binder
If synthetic, attempt to
determine dates of manufacture/use.*

Analytical budget: *Open. Please notify of expected costs*

Date results desired:

ASAP

Special comments or instructions:

*Please notify of analytical options
after binder ID.*

March 6, 1998

WILLIAMSTOWN

ART CONSERVATION

CENTER

225 South Street

Williamstown

Massachusetts 01267

Telephone:

413 / 458-5741

Facsimile:

413 / 458-2314

ANALYTICAL SERVICES

DEPARTMENT

Telephone:

413 / 458-5741

Facsimile:

413 / 458-2314

E-mail:

jmartin@williams.edu

Tony Rockwell
M.H. de Young Memorial Museum
Golden Gate Park
75 Tea Garden Park
San Francisco, CA 94118

Re: 98-AS-535

Dear Tony:

Thank you for allowing me to assist you with analytical examination of paint samples you provided from the painting, "Revelation I." Following is a summary of the results of analyses to date.

Experimental

Each sample was examined for content and homogeneity using a stereomicroscope. A survey of the principal binder(s) in samples 1, 3, 4 and 6-8 was made using a visually representative particle of each and Fourier transform infrared microspectroscopy (FT-IR). Samples were analyzed neat on a diamond window, without prior extraction by solvent. Resulting spectra (attached) were examined for attribution of principal binders. Identification of pigments, fillers, and other materials was outside the scope of the present study.

Results

The following table lists the binder(s) identified in each paint sample analyzed.

Sample	Qualitative binder analysis by FT-IR
535.1 white	Oil or alkyd resin
535.3 yellow	Alkyd resin
535.4 black	Nitrocellulose
535.4 clear coating	Acrylic
535.6 blue	Acrylic and nitrocellulose
535.7 pink	Nitrocellulose
535.8 red	Acrylic

Samples 597	Samples 535	Qualitative binder analysis by FT-IR
597.1 white	535.1 white	Oil or alkyd resin
597.2 blue	535.6 blue	Acrylic and nitrocellulose indicated in spectra
597.3 light turquoise* 597.4 clear coating* 597.5 yellow* 597.6 yellow green 597.7 red	535.4 clear coating*	Acrylic
597.4 green	535.3 yellow*	Alkyd
597.8 black*	535.4 black*, 535.7 pink*	Nitrocellulose

Your analytical budget did not allow additional investigation. I would be pleased to continue analysis of the samples if you have specific objectives. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. It has been a pleasure to serve you.

Sincerely yours,



James Martin
 Director of Analytical Services and Research
 Associate Conservator of Paintings

August 13, 1998

WILLIAMSTOWN
ART CONSERVATION
CENTER

225 South Street
Williamstown
Massachusetts 01267
Telephone:
413 / 458-5741
Facsimile:
413 / 458-2314

Tony Rockwell
M.H. de Young Memorial Museum
Golden Gate Park
75 Tea Garden Park
San Francisco, CA 94118

Re: 98-AS-597

Dear Tony:

Thank you for allowing me to assist you with analytical examination of paint samples you provided from a painting attributed to Jackson Pollack. Following is a summary of the results of analyses to date.

Experimental

Each sample was examined for content and homogeneity using a stereomicroscope. A survey of the principal binder(s) in samples 1-8 was made using a visually representative particle of each and Fourier transform infrared microspectroscopy (FT-IR). Samples were analyzed neat on a diamond window. Resulting spectra (attached) were examined for attribution of principal binders. Identification of pigments, fillers, and other materials was outside the scope of the present study.

Results

The following table lists the binder(s) identified in each paint sample analyzed in this project, and in the earlier project we undertook on Pollack (98-AS-535). Similarities were observed in spectra for both projects. For example, the blue paint samples in each project were very similar, as were the white, clear coating, and black samples. As another point of comparison, probable plasticizer was indicated in spectra of samples from both projects — these spectra are marked with a *. I attempted but was unable to definitively identify the acrylic resin(s) used in the paint and coating samples. Coating spectra and spectra of solvent extractions of paint samples were compared by computer and manually with reference spectra for over 100 commercially-prepared acrylic resins. No single resin match was found, leading me to suspect a co-polymer, a mixture, or a plasticized acrylic. Plasticized acrylic resins have been used in commercial paints. Horie (Materials for Conservation) mentions use of a plasticized acrylic resin as a picture varnish some decades ago, but does not give a specific formulation.

ANALYTICAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT
Telephone:
413 / 458-5741
Facsimile:
413 / 458-2314
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jmarlin@williams.edu

98-AS-535

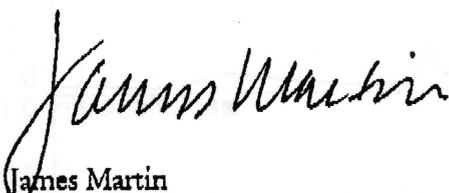
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Remarks

Al Albano (Intermuseum Conservation Association) and James Coddington (Museum of Modern Art) were consulted about the types of paint used by Pollack, and about the existence of comparative scientific data on the works of Pollack. Both reported use of nitrocellulose type paint (e.g., Duco type). Mr. Albano reported that Pollack probably would have used alkyd paints also, possibly from stocks of inexpensive surplus military paint. Neither cited the use of acrylic resins by the artist. You may wish to re-examine the areas sampled for evidence of restoration or coatings. Both reported that no systematic study of the artist's materials has been undertaken. Both also reported the existence of an inventory of the artist's studio and numerous anecdotal accounts about Pollack's working method. However, given the very limited scientific data on the artist's materials, in-depth analysis of the samples would likely not provide an objective means to evaluate the authenticity of the painting.

It has been a pleasure to serve you. I hope to have the opportunity again, soon.

Sincerely yours,



James Martin
Director of Analytical Services and Research
Associate Conservator of Paintings

