

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The David Booth Department of Conservation

TITLE: *Twin*

MUSEUM No.: 691.1971

ARTIST: Robert Ryman

DATE: 1966

MEDIUM: Oil on canvas

DIMENSIONS: 6' 3 3/4" x 6' 3 7/8"

SIGNATURE: Signed, dated and titled on verso, upper left, in oil: "RYMAN 66" "TWIN"

CONSERVATORS: Laura Richter Le and Michael Duffy

DATE OF EXAMINATION: January 12, 2024

DESCRIPTION

The painting is stretched on a wooden strainer with 2 vertical and 2 horizontal crossbars. The strainer is 3 3/8 in wide. According to Storr, Ryman was experimenting at the time with the visual presence provided by thicker supports.¹

The painting is executed on a piece of tightly woven canvas.² There is a pencil line along the front turnover edge, likely used by the artist to mark where to stretch the canvas. At times it is seen on the face around 1/8 in from the edge.

The paint is applied in long horizontal brushstrokes that are visible through slightly raised brushstroke impasto. Ryman used a broad brush (around 12 in wide) to paint this work, *Mayco*, and *Allied*, all dating to 1966.³ The thickness of the paint varies across the surface, but is generally very thin. Additionally, as it was applied, the paint skipped over numerous recesses in the canvas, leaving a pattern of small holes through the paint layer and revealing the canvas color below. The paint extends close to the edge, with around 1/4 to 1/2 in of raw canvas showing around the sides.

On the verso, the painting has Oz clips with D rings, as well as Ryman hangers attached by the artist.

The companion painting, *Allied* (1966), is part of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York Panza Collection, 1991.⁴

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Storr, Robert., and Robert Ryman. *Robert Ryman*. London: Tate Gallery, 1993.

¹ Storr, 122.

² Listed as linen in Storr, 122. This is not confirmed, and visual analysis suggests the canvas is cotton duct.

³ Storr, 120.

file:///C:/Users/Ile/Downloads/Imported%20File.png⁴ Accession number: 91.3839.

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TREATMENT HISTORY

1991: Jim Coddington removed a dent along the lower edge (30 in from the right edge and 2 ½ in from bottom). Extensive minor cracking and several minor dents at the edges were also noted at this time.

1993: To prepare for loan, a new backing board was attached, as well as four Oz clips on wooden blocks.

From a damage report 12/20/2022: "During a routine gallery check on December 20th, 2022, Cataloguer Sofia Kofodimos noticed a drip approximately 1 inch long in the lower left quadrant of the canvas, 21 1/2 inches from the left edge and 13 inches from the bottom edge. Paintings Conservator Michael Duffy viewed the work on December 22nd. He confirmed that this condition, which was caused by a small amount of liquid splattered on the surface, is not noted on the previous condition report dated October 7th, 2020. He has asked that the work be brought to the paintings conservation lab for treatment at some point in the future."

4/11/2023: The drip was reduced in situ using water and saliva moistened brush, microswabs, and blotter

CONDITION

The painting is very dusty, especially on the upper tacking edge. On the side edges, the canvas has some orange brown staining (perhaps from the canvas sizing?). There are also some lines of staining alongside the pencil lines on the front edges of the painting.

There are cracks across the ground layer, especially visible under magnification. Some have surfaced and are slightly raised. While stable now, these should be monitored. Travel could also accelerate the formation of surface cracks, something that should be considered before any future loans.

There are three dents in the canvas in the lower right quadrant, around 1 in wide each. There is a small dent on the front edge of the right stretcher, slightly above the center (first noticed 12/13/02). Additionally, there are two thin lines in the paint surface running down a couple of inches from the top edge, and which could be original.

As noted in the damage report, there is a drip in the lower left quadrant, 21 1/2 inches from the left and 13 inches from the bottom. It is around 1 ¼ in long and glossy in appearance. The foreign material appears translucent, but has darkened the appearance of the paint slightly. There are some additional small stains/discolored adhesive near the bottom right edge (see condition map).

TREATMENT PROPOSAL

- 1) Dust the recto and tacking edges
- 2) Reduce the drip in the lower left quadrant
- 3) Flatten the dents in the lower right quadrant

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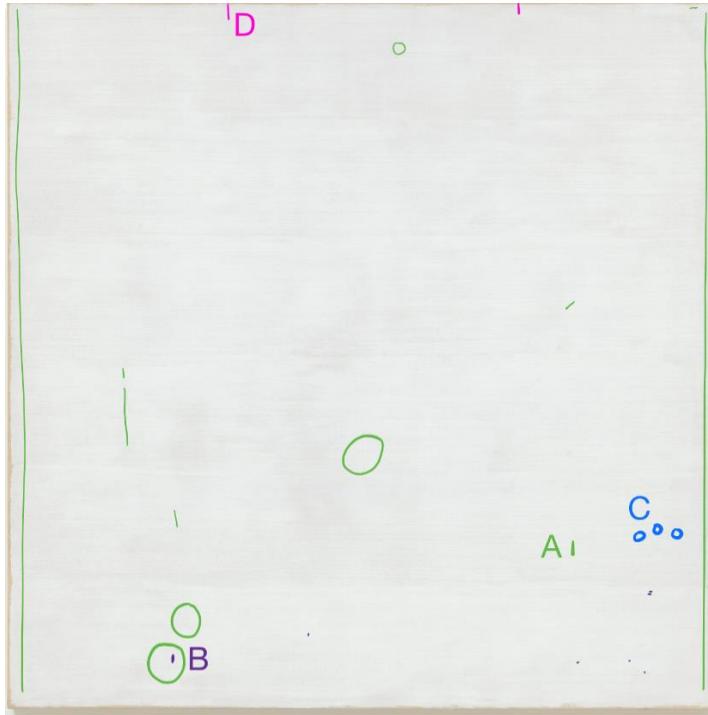
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TREATMENT

- 1) The tacking edges were cleaned with a nylon brush and vacuum, followed by soot sponges and a "tiger" cloth (anti-static).
- 2) The recto was cleaned with a soft brush.
- 3) The drip was reduced using a dental probe, silicon tool, and size 00 nylon brush. As the material was removed, the gloss was reduced, becoming better integrated with the surrounding paint.
- 4) The dents were eased into plane using a combination of moisture and suction. A slightly dampened piece of blotter paper was held against the area for ~1 min. Then, a Mitka mini suction apparatus was placed against the canvas verso, and allowed to run for ~5 min. This process was repeated until the dents were no longer visible under normal illumination and barely noticeable in raking light (6 times total).
- 5) A new backing board was attached and the labels were encapsulated in mylar. Both the Ryman hanging hardware and D-rings were left on the verso.

IMAGES

Condition Map:



■ Cracks

■ Surface distortion

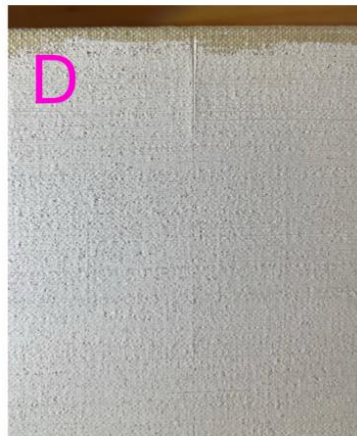
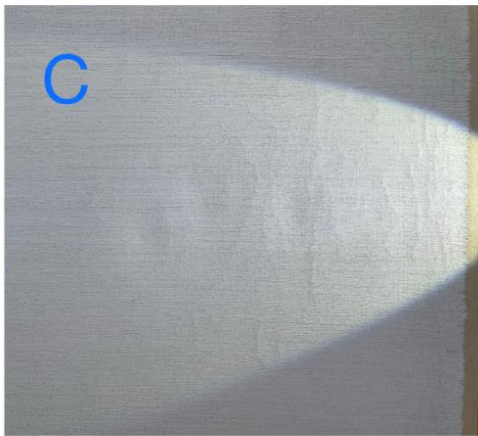
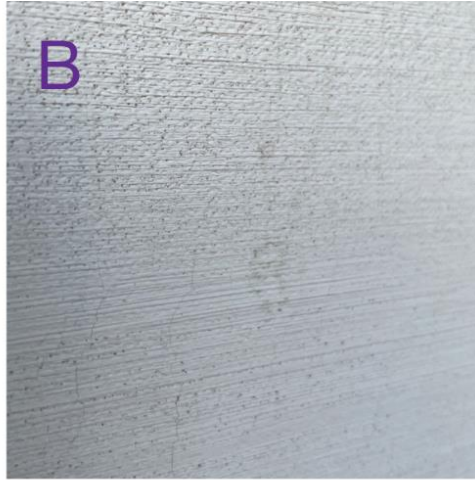
■ Drips

■ Surface irregularity

* There are cracks across the ground layer that are beginning to surface, and could be exacerbated by travel

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← Stains on
tacking margin

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Before Treatment:

Normal Light:



Raking Light:



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During Treatment:

Upper Right Tacking Edge, Before Treatment:



Upper Right Tacking Edge, After Treatment:



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Drip, Before Treatment:



Drip, After Treatment:



Dent, Before (left) and After (right) Treatment:

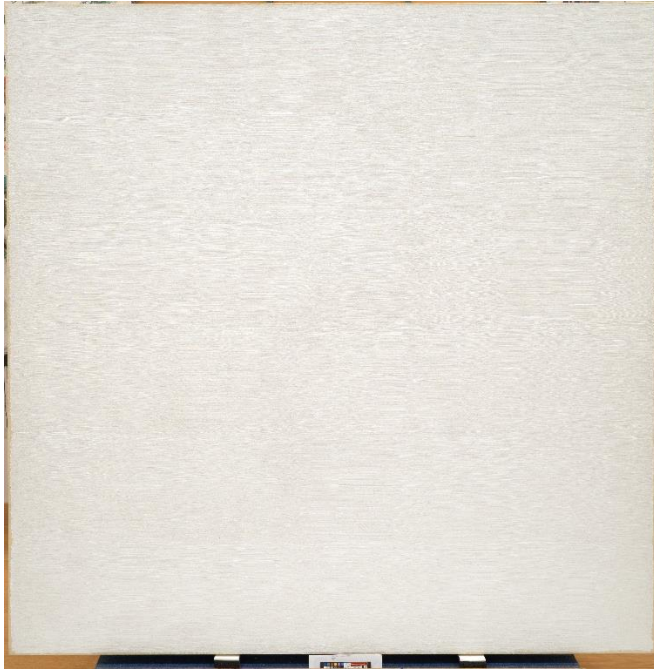


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After Treatment:

Normal Light:



Raking Light:

