



Educator Resource Guide:
Bradley Walker Tomlin: A Retrospective

February 11 - May 14, 2017

*Compiled by the
Education Department*

Image:

Bradley Walker Tomlin

Number 12, 1952

Oil on canvas, 66 x 48"

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York

General Purchase Funds, 1963

Everson Museum of Art
401 Harrison Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

AN INTRODUCTION

The Dorsky Museum, in partnership with the Everson Museum of Art, is organizing the first retrospective and catalog of American painter Bradley Walker Tomlin (1899-1953) since 1975. This exhibition, including over 40 paintings, works on paper, and printed materials, charts Tomlin's development from art nouveau illustrations of the 1920s to large-scale Abstract Expressionist paintings of the 1950s. The exhibition explores his formative years in Syracuse, early patronage by Condé Nast, and the important role played by the Woodstock art colony.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This educator resource guide was designed by the education department for use in conjunction with field trips to *Bradley Walker Tomlin: A Retrospective*, or for use as a stand alone classroom resource. The materials included here contain curriculum connections and can be adapted for use at any grade level.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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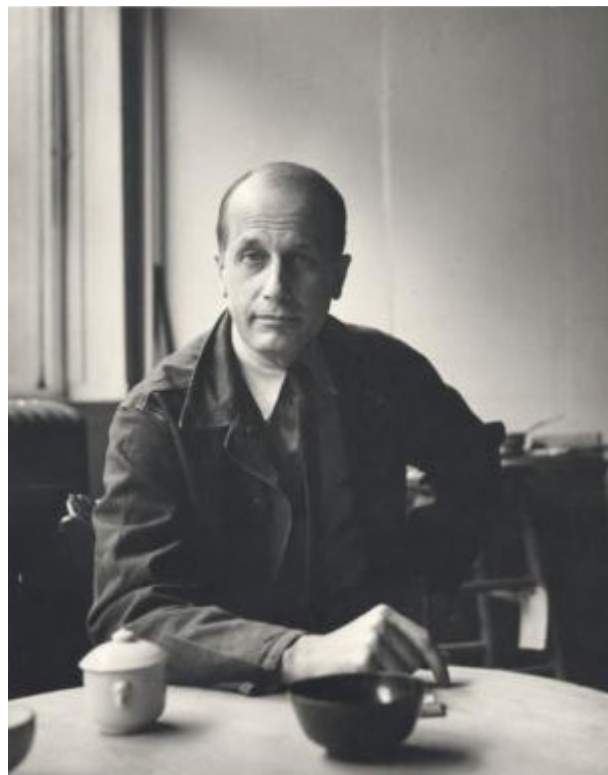
Artist Biography

BRADLEY WALKER TOMLIN

Bradley Walker Tomlin was born in Syracuse August 19, 1899, and died May 11, 1953, New York City. He was an American artist whose paintings introduced an elegiac tone to post-World War II abstract art. Following a path independent from art-world trends, in the last five years of his life he produced a body of work notable for its great originality and depth of feeling.

He studied painting at Syracuse University from 1917-1921. Received a fellowship to study at Académie Colarossi and Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris from 1923-1924.

This exhibition explores his formative years in Syracuse, early patronage by Condé Nast, and the important role played by the Woodstock art colony. Tomlin is best known as a key figure in the New York School and had close friendships with Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, and Robert Motherwell. Unlike most of his peers, Tomlin focused on the impersonal possibilities of art. His carefully orchestrated paintings resonate with our time's renewed interest in abstraction and design.



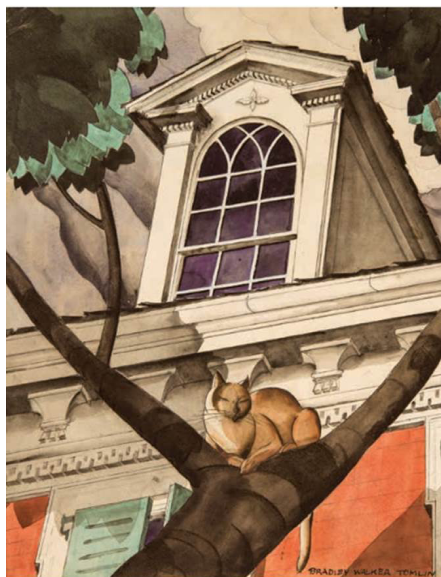
Bradley Walker Tomlin

The Condé Nast Years (1922–1929)

Throughout the 1920s Tomlin maintained a dual career as a fine arts painter and commercial illustrator. He mounted solo exhibitions at leading New York City galleries and presented watercolors and oil paintings in national museum exhibitions. Tomlin also enjoyed the patronage of publisher Condé Nast.

From 1922 to 1929, Tomlin created two covers for *Vogue* and 22 for *House & Garden*. Tomlin's passion for interiors and objects especially suited *House & Garden*. Still life remained his favorite genre, though he also painted landscapes and religious subjects such as St. Sebastian. In this period Tomlin joined the Whitney Studio Club and the Woodstock Artists Association.

In this period Tomlin joined the Whitney Studio Club and the Woodstock Artists Association. He also spent several years in Europe, primarily Paris, where he disdained the bohemian lifestyle and gravitated to elite culture. Tomlin's success as a commercial illustrator allowed him to develop his own personal iconography but also shaped his reputation as he sought to establish his identity as an independent artist.



Bradley Walker Tomlin
Untitled Cover for *House & Garden*, 1926
Watercolor on paper, 16 1/4 x 14 3/4 inches
Collection of Arthur A. Anderson

Joining Up (1945–1949)

Like many artists, Tomlin sought the company of like-minded individuals to advance his ideals and reputation. In 1940 Tomlin and Frank London joined the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors, recently formed by Mark Rothko, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, and other avant-garde artists in New York City. He also met with sculptor Raoul Hague, painter Philip Guston, and writer Robert Phelps in Woodstock.

In 1948 and 1949 the artists collectively forged an assertive new style. The aesthetic similarity of paintings by Tomlin and others in his new milieu indicated a shared poetic that transcended the influence of any one artist, contrary to critic Clement Greenberg's claim that Tomlin merely "joined up." Together they distilled gestural painting into its elements and used them as signs, characters, and symbols.

INSPIRATION

During most of his career, Tomlin painted lyrical-Cubist still lifes while teaching at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, and at assorted boys' schools. In the mid 1940s, he was influenced by the Abstract Expressionist painter Adolph Gottlieb.

Experimenting with the semiautomatic methods used by Gottlieb and many Abstract Expressionists, he created graceful works, such as *Tension by Moonlight* (1948), that reflect his interest in Japanese calligraphy. He soon regarded such aesthetic freedom with suspicion, however, and began to paint more premeditated pieces, such as *Number 9: In Praise of Gertrude Stein* (1950), in which calligraphic and typographic shapes form a floating, but controlled, network over the entire surface of the canvas. During the remaining years of his life, he produced many paintings in subtle variations.

"He loved painters and painting. This is the essential fact about him"

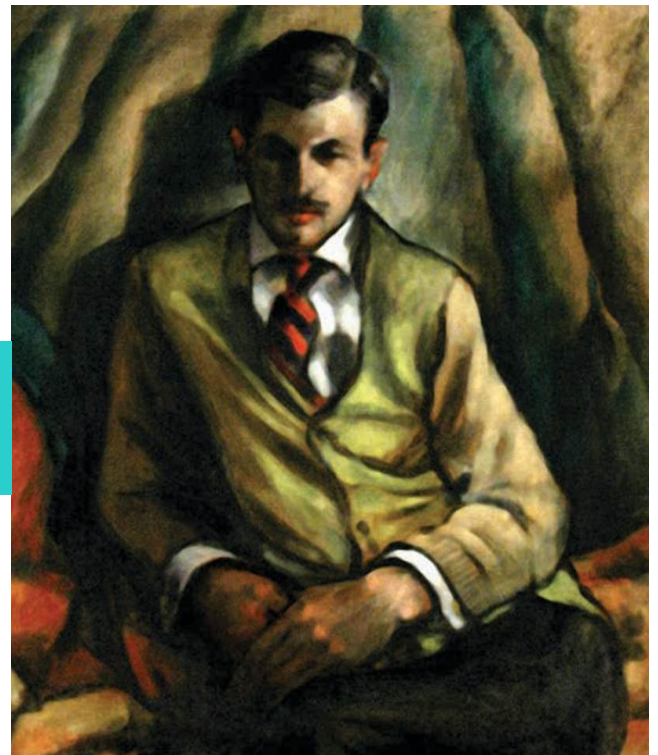
-Robert Motherwell

TECHNIQUES

Tomlin used different materials and techniques in his art during a time where it was not easy to get diverse materials and create new methods in painting and illustrations.

Tomlin Materials & Techniques

- Oil on masonite, canvas, board, linen on brown paper
- Watercolor on paper
- Ink on paper
- Gouache and ink on paper and on board
- Offset ink on bound paper
- Oil and metal leaf on thin plywood
- Oil and aluminium leaf on board
- Graphite on paper
- Gelatin silver print



Bradley Walker Tomlin
Portrait of Bradley Walker Tomlin, c. 1926
Oil on canvas, 23 7/8 x 19 3/8 inches
Woodstock Artists Association and Museum
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marsden F. London

THE IRASCIBLE EIGHTEEN

The Irascible Eighteen was a group name referring to Tomlin and seventeen other artists. It was named after a letter that they wrote to the president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The art critic Emily Genaur named the group after the letter's irascible or angry tone in response to the MET's 1950 exhibition.

The letter : Tomlin and the other artists criticized the Metropolitan Museum Of Art's lack of abstract expressionist art in the exhibition *American Painting Today 1950* and lack of jurors who did not support cutting edge art of the time.



Vocabulary

Abstract ▶

A trend in painting and sculpture in the twentieth century. Abstract art seeks to break away from traditional representation of physical objects. It explores the relationships of forms and colors, whereas more traditional art represents the world in recognizable images.

Cubism ▶

A style of painting and sculpture, characterized chiefly by an emphasis on formal structure, the reduction of natural forms to their geometrical equivalents, and the organization of the planes of a represented object independently of representational requirements.

Expressionists ▶

A manner of painting, drawing, sculpting, etc., in which forms derived from nature are distorted or exaggerated and colors are intensified for emotive or expressive purposes. A style of art often characterized by heavy, black lines that define forms, sharply contrasting, vivid colors, and subjective or symbolic treatment of thematic material.

Landscape ▶

An art that contains a section or expanse of rural scenery, usually extensive, that can be seen from a single viewpoint. The category of aesthetic subject matter in which natural scenery is represented.

Modernism ▶

A deliberate philosophical and practical estrangement or divergence from the past in the arts and literature occurring especially in the course of the 20th century and taking form in any of various innovative movements and styles.

Still Life ▶

A representation chiefly of inanimate objects, as a painting of a bowl of fruit. The artist will focus on objects that are displayed indoors.

Surrealism ▶

A style of art developed stressing the subconscious or nonrational significance of imagery arrived at by automatism or the exploitation of chance effects, unexpected juxtapositions, etc.

LESSON IDEAS

BEFORE THE MUSEUM VISIT ▶

- Abstract or portrait ?
- Line or color ?
- Expressionism or impressionism ?
- Surrealism or reality ?
- Can you make a piece of art combining all those materials?



Bradley Walker Tomlin
Calla Lily, ca. 1930
Oil and metal leaf on thin plywood, 19 x 14 inches
Woodstock Artists Association and Museum
Gift of Charlotte Collins

AT THE MUSEUM ▶

- Bring sketch pad. Sketch in the galleries using #2 pencils.
- What are your thoughts, what attracts your attention the most ?
- Write notes

Experimentation

- Rope or String ?
- Using Rope/ string with glue throw the rope or strings randomly and create your own art piece
- Use white or colored strings or ropes with either white or colored backgrounds



Bradley Walker Tomlin
Tension by Moonlight, 1948
Oil on canvas, 32 x 44 inches
Everson Museum of Art
Gift of Mrs. Kathleen Tomlin, Mrs. Earle Dockstader,
and Jean Barron, PC 78.36

RELATED PROGRAMMING

January, February, March, April, May 2017

YOUTH CLASSES

Youth Art Classes (Ages 4-12)

4-week sessions, Saturdays 10:30 am–12:30 pm

Members \$65 per session

Non-Members \$85 per session

Explore your creativity by experiencing different materials and themes each session. Classes are taught by dedicated artists and educators. Space is limited, all materials and equipment provided.

To pre-register, contact Qiana Williams, qwilliams@everson.org or (315) 474 6064 x303 or visit everson.org/learn.

Painting + Printing March 4, 11, 18, 25

Experiment with different techniques in painting and printing using tempera, acrylic, watercolor and more. Explore the Bradley Walker Tomlin exhibition to learn about abstract expressionism.

Playful Sculpture April 1, 8, 15, 22

Get inspired by sculpture at the Everson including works from the collection and artist Vanessa German. Combine different techniques and materials to build colorful sculptures using found objects, recycled materials and much more.

Photography for Kids! April 29, May 6, 13, 20

Explore different ways to create photographs through digital photography, collage, sun prints and more!

FAMILY PROGRAMS

February Break Family Afternoon

February 22nd, Pay-What-You-Wish Wednesday
1:00 pm–3:00 pm

Come in from the cold and enjoy family time during mid-winter break. Dig in to clay to create a playful creature, watch art come to life through a wheel throwing demonstration then explore the galleries on your own or in a family friendly tour with a museum docent.

Take a Break

Ages 5-12

February 21-24 (Tuesday- Friday)

9:00 am- Noon

Per day Members \$15, Non-Member \$12

Looking for fun and creative activities during mid-winter break? Sign up for one day or the entire week! Each day will hold a different themed activity to engage young artists including art making, gallery exploration, storytelling, games and more! Space is limited. To register, contact Qiana Williams, qwilliams@everson.org or (315) 474 6064 x303.

ADULT + TEEN CLASSES

Yoga with heART

Saturdays

10:30 am–Noon

Per class: \$10 Members

\$15 Non-Members

First class is FREE!

Open your heART space in this alignment-based yoga class, where you can connect with your body and the art that surrounds you. Long-time yoga instructor Dara Harper will guide you through proper form and precision of poses. Stay after class for a few minutes to enjoy a mini-tour led by an Everson docent. All skill levels welcome.

FREE Third Thursday Tours

February 16, March 16, April 20, 6.00 pm

Join us for a FREE docent tour to get familiar with temporary exhibitions and permanent collection.

Gallery Walk: Bradley Walker Tomlin

March 30, 6.30 pm

Free with Museum admission

Daniel Belasco, Curator will offer a guided gallery walk of the exhibition and discuss selected works.

FREE Family Day!

April 8, 12:00-3:00 pm

Explore the galleries and join in art making for the entire family!

EDUCATORS

Evening for Educators: Bradley Walker Tomlin

March 2, 5:30- 7:30 pm

\$10 Members, \$15 Non-Members

Pre-registration Required. Space is limited. Join the education department in a private viewing and tour of *Bradley Walker Tomlin: A Retrospective*. Educator resources will offer many ways to engage your students in pre- and post- tour activities. Meet colleagues, share ideas and enjoy light refreshments.

Please contact Qiana Williams at qwilliams@everson.org or (315) 474 6064 x303 to reserve your place.

Educator Resource Guides

Educator Resource Guides help educators adapt the content of the exhibition to individual curriculum needs and provide the necessary information to maximize a guided tour. Included are an introduction to the exhibitions, artist biographies, related lessons, images, and more. Available at everson.org/erc.

School Tours

Hour long docent-led tours are available Tuesday through Friday, 10:00 am- Noon, free of charge for school groups K-12.

To book a tour, please contact Qiana Williams, qwilliams@everson.org or **(315) 474 6064 x303**.

Please call at least three weeks in advance as tour dates book quickly.

Outreach

The Everson Outreach program strengthens the presence of the Everson in the community and increases access to the visual arts for those that may otherwise be unable to visit the Museum. Docents visit facilities with presentations and hands-on activities. To find out more or to schedule an outreach program at your facility, please contact us at **(315) 474 6064 or eversonoutreach@everson.org**.



EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART

TOUR REQUEST FORM

REQUESTOR'S NAME: _____ TODAY'S DATE: _____

SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

AGE OF GROUP: _____ NUMBER IN GROUP: _____ (60 VISITORS MAXIMUM PER TOUR)

Please note the Everson Museum is open for docent led tours from Tuesday to Friday, 10:00am—5:00pm, and limited tours are available Saturday & Sunday, from noon—5:00pm. Tours are one hour in length.

**SCHOOL GROUP TOUR POLICY: There should be a chaperone to student ratio of 1:10, (excluding staff who accompany special needs students). ALL guests must wear name-tags (first name only.)

TENATIVE DAY & DATE OF TOUR: _____ PREFERRED TIME: _____

ALTERNATE DAY & DATE: _____ PREFERRED TIME: _____

TYPE OF TOUR:

We offer many types of tours. Please select a tour type by checking the choices below:

- Visual Thinking Strategies Architecture Art History Ceramics
iPad Pals (Presentations) K-12 College-level Seniors General
Featured Exhibition French Speaking (limited basis)

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Form box containing fields for DATE RECEIVED, INFORMATION TAKEN BY, CALENDAR ENTRY, STATISTIC DATA ENTRY DATE, CONFIRMATION PACKET SENT ON, CONFIRMATION SENT TO DOCENTS ON, and DOCENTS CONFIRMED.