

Artist Resources – Mark Tobey (American, 1890 – 1976)

[Tobey at the Tate](#)

[Tobey at Moeller Fine Art](#)

[Tobey at the Smithsonian American Art Museum](#)



Tobey in his studio, 1964
Photograph: Comet Photo AG

In 1962, Tobey had a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Look at installation images of the exhibition on the [museum's website](#).

Mark Tobey Retrospective traveled to the [Art Institute of Chicago](#) and the [Dallas Museum of Fine Arts](#) in the 1960s. Browse through installation images and the exhibition catalogue in both institutions' archives.

A Tribute to Mark Tobey was on display at the National Collection of Fine Arts (now the National Gallery of Art) in Washington, D.C. in 1974. Read a [review](#) in the New York Times archive, "Tribute to an American Loner."

Tobey passed away in 1976 at the age of 85. Read his [obituary](#) in the New York Times and an [article](#) in Bloomberg about how his estate was unable to help the artist's legacy in the art market after his death.

In 2011, Moeller Fine Art installed [Mark Tobey](#), part of reignited interest in the artist's extensive oeuvre, in association with the Berlin Art Week. The gallery later installed [Mark Tobey: Between East and West](#) in 2014. Watch a video about the second exhibition on [VernissageTV](#).

[Mark Tobey and the Calligraphic Line](#) was curated by the JSMA's own McCosh Curator, Danielle Knapp, on display in the museum's galleries in 2017.

The [Peggy Guggenheim Collection](#) in Venice launched a major retrospective of Tobey's work in 2017, *Mark Tobey: Threading Light*. Read reviews in [IdeelArt](#), [The New Criterion](#), and [Apollo Magazine](#).

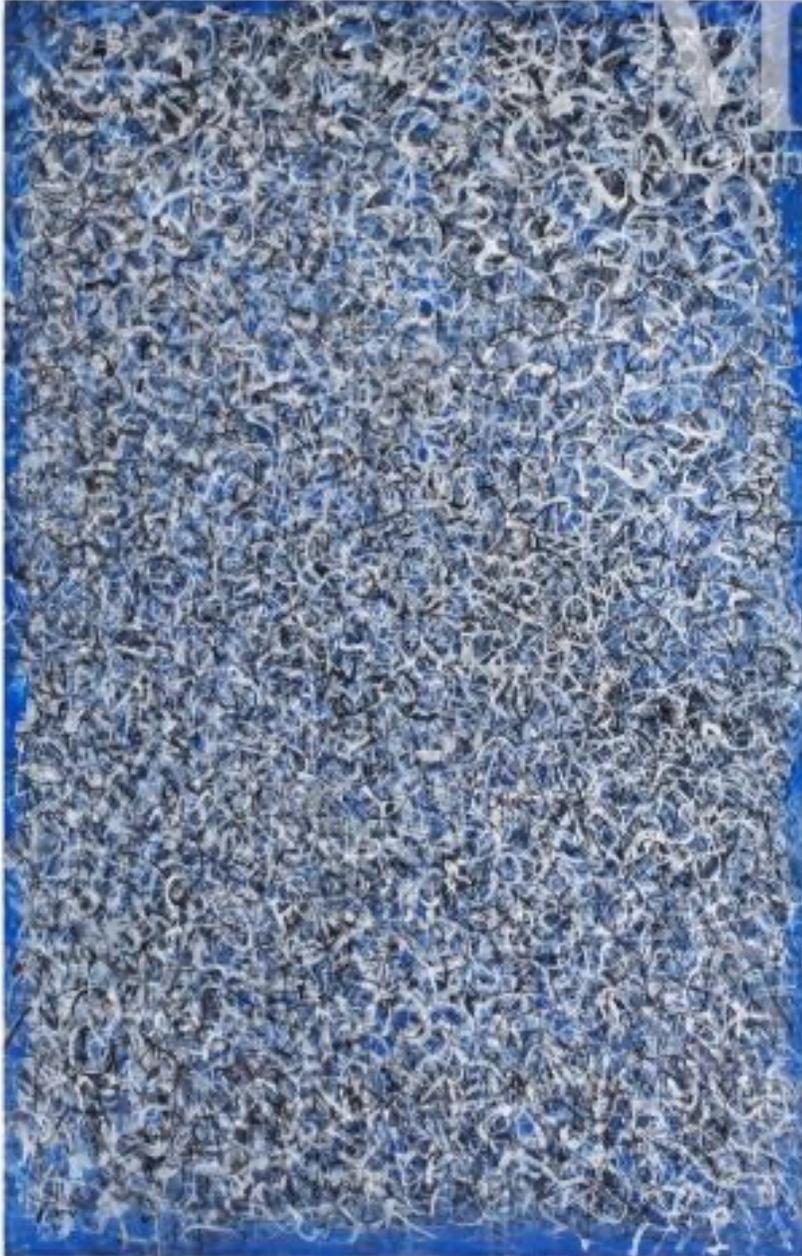
Tobey's 2019 solo exhibition at [Pace Gallery](#) was the first exhibition of the artist's work in New York in over 20 years.

In 2020-2021, [Tobey or not to be?](#) was on display at Jeanne Bucher Jaeger in Paris, commemorating the 130th anniversary of the artist's birth.

[Mark Tobey: Nature's Patterns](#) was organized by Anders Wahlstedt Fine Art in 2021, featuring 18 works from a private collection.



Kurt Wyss, *Mark Tobey in seinem Atelier in Basel*, 1970



Mark Tobey (American, 1890-1976)

Blue and White Calligraphy, 1962

Tempera, ink and gouache on board

Private Collection; L2023:59.1

American painter Mark Tobey became interested in East Asian calligraphy, philosophy, and literature in the 1920s when living in Seattle, Washington. Though his “white writing” style of calligraphic brush strokes over abstract fields of color resembles Abstract Expressionism, Tobey was more philosophically engaged with East Asian traditions than American modernism. **Blue and White Calligraphy** was painted after the artist emigrated to Switzerland towards the end of his career. With swirls of white and black brushstrokes on deep blue canvas, Tobey’s composition is meant to inspire a “higher state of consciousness” in the viewer. As the artist once said: “It is one thing to paint a picture and another to experience it.”

On view October 31, 2023 – February 4, 2024