“A method of painting is a natural growth out of a need. I want to express my feelings rather than illustrated them,” Pollock commented in his narration for archival footage of his painting process. “Technique is just a means of arriving at a statement. Because a painting has a life of its own, I try to let it live.” Hans Namuth also captured footage of Pollock at work in his Long Island barn in 1950.

“My opinion is that new needs need new techniques. And the modern artists have found new ways and new means of making their statements. Each age finds its own technique,” Pollock explained in a 1950 interview about the role of modern art and artists. “I think [viewers] should not look for, but look passively—and try to receive what the painting has to offer and not bring a subject matter or preconceived idea of what they are to be looking for... I think it should be enjoyed just as music is enjoyed---after a while you may like it or you may not. I think at least give it a chance.”

Three decades of new scholarship provided MoMA with new perspective in their 1998 retrospective of Pollock’s career, their first since 1967. More than 150 drawings and paintings traced the artist’s output from the 1930s until his early death. The exhibition was on view in conjunction with a showcase of Pollock’s printmaking and precipitated a published collection of articles, interviews, and reviews.
Jackson Pollock (American, 1912-56)

**Untitled**, 1953
Ink on Howell paper

Private Collection; L2021:2.1

Paul Jackson Pollock began his artistic training fueled by the ambitions of his older brothers and discovered a talent for painting in high school in Los Angeles. After moving to New York at eighteen, Pollock trained at the Art Students League and painted murals for the Works Progress Administration. In the early 1950s, he diverged from the paint-splattered canvases that defined his leadership of Abstract Expressionism in the latter 1940s. Trading enamel paint for watercolor and ink, Pollock turned his attention to more intimate works featuring a monochrome palette and echoing the raw but lyrical figuration of his early paintings. **Untitled** is a rare example of this, a moment when Pollock exchanged his trademark unstretched canvas on the studio floor for handmade paper, in this case produced specifically for the artist by artisan Douglass Morse Howell. In such late works, Pollock expanded on the trajectory of intuitive gesture and expressive energy begun twenty years prior, utilizing what he defined as the “craftmanship” of “brushes, pigments, and a surface to paint on.” At that point, his work was propelled by a need to express “the contemporary aims of the age that we’re living in” without attending to exterior subject matter, to “work from a different source. [To] work from within.”

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