ERASED DE KOONING DRAWING

In the early 1950s, Robert Rauschenberg created the *Erased de Kooning Drawing* as an art experiment to see if art could be made by erasing only. He began by erasing his own art but thought it would be more meaningful if he erased the art of someone he idolized. Mr. Rauschenberg approached Willem de Kooning and asked if he would be open to letting one of his pieces be erased. Mr. de Kooning was, at the time, one of the most popular artists in New York. Mr. de Kooning is said to have unenthusiastically agreed because he understood the concept and didn't want to stop another artist's work. He offered Mr. Rauschenberg a painting that was created with pencil, crayon, ink, and charcoal. Mr. Rauschenberg spent about two months erasing the painting and said that he used many erasers to accomplish the task.

After the painting was erased, Mr. Rauschenberg and another artist that he frequently collaborated with, Jasper Johns, picked a frame for the piece and added an inscription:

Erased de Kooning Drawing

Robert Rauschenberg

1953

Mr. Rauschenberg has said that the frame and inscription are parts of the drawing and should not be removed. Without the inscription, people observing the art would not understand the process of the creation or the partnership that was required for the art to be created.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art used digital technology in 2010 to enhance the remaining traces of the original artwork. They were able to reveal a piece that has multiple people including a female image who was likely a woman Mr. de Kooning had a relationship with from 1950 to 1955. The digital enhancements did not reveal why Mr. Rauschenberg decided to erase Mr. de Kooning's art and lingering questions remain about the purpose of creating the art. The power of the piece comes from the fascination of the unseen and the decision to erase the painting. Mr. Rauschenberg said that the creation of *Erased de Kooning Drawing* was "poetry and celebration of art."

Robert, S. (2013, July). Erased de Kooning drawing. Rauschenberg Research Project. SFMOMA.
    https://www.sfmoma.org/artwork/98.298/essay/erased-de-kooning-drawing/

OLYMPIC RINGS

Created in 1985, *Olympic Rings* was a collaboration between Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat. The two artists worked on several collaborative paintings between 1983 and 1985 at the suggestion of a Swiss art dealer, Bruno Bischofberger. Mr. Basquiat idolized Mr. Warhol for many years and Mr. Warhol was inspired by the much younger Mr. Basquiat. Mr. Warhol found Mr. Basquiat to be charming and full of energy. The two artists became good friends and would work on over 100 paintings together.

The painting *Olympic Rings* was inspired by the 1984 Summer Olympic Games that was held in Los Angeles, California. Mr. Warhol's contribution was the many variations of the colorful Olympic rings and Mr. Basquiat's contribution was adding the dark face and filling in some of the rings with black paint. The face is thought to be a reference to past African American Olympic athletes such as Jesse Owens, Carl Lewis, Tommie Smith, and John Carlos. Both artists brought styles of painting that they were known for to create *Olympic Rings*. Mr. Warhol and Mr. Basquiat took turns painting without much discussion or planning. Mr. Warhol said about Mr. Basquiat, "Jean-Michel got me into painting differently, so that's a good thing."

Andy Warhol lived from 1928 to 1987 and is generally thought to be a defining artist of the Pop Art Movement during the 1960s. He created paintings, prints, sculptures, and drawings. He also worked on television, films, and photography. He endorsed consumer products and recreated advertisements, which gave new thoughts to the intersection between art as a reflection of society and a product of society. Mr. Warhol had art exhibits throughout the world.

Jean-Michael Basquiat lived from 1960 to 1988 and is less well known than Andy Warhol. He had major art exhibitions throughout the United States and Europe.

Warhol and Basquiat: Collaboration & Contrast. (n.d.). The Andy Warhol Museum. https://www.warhol.org/lessons/warhol-and-basquiat/

Creahan, D. (2012, July 13). London: Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat 'Olympic Rings' at Gagosian Gallery. Art Observed. http://artobserved.com/2012/07/london-andy-warhol-and-jean-michel-basquiat-olympic-rings-at-gagosian-gallery/

PICASSO DRAWS A CENTAUR IN THE AIR WITH LIGHT

Pablo Picasso was famous in his lifetime, unlike many other artists. He is known for his work in Cubism, which he helped create with another artist, Georges Braque. *Life* Magazine photographer Gjon Mili was known as a lighting innovator and is most famous for the photographs he took of Pablo Picasso drawing with light and other photographs he took for *Life* Magazine.

In 1949, Mili was sent to Pablo Picasso's home for a photography session. Mr. Picasso had granted Mr. Mili fifteen minutes only, but Mr. Mili showed Mr. Picasso photographs he had taken that experimented with the use of light. Mr. Picasso was intrigued and collaborated with Mr. Mili five more times, creating more than 30 photographs of Mr. Picasso drawing with light. Mr. Picasso held a small lightbulb in a dark room. Mr. Mili used two cameras, one to the side of Mr. Picasso and one in front of him and left the camera shutters open. Mr. Mili was able to photograph the light moving through the air and the creation of shapes such as minotaurs, [human] figures, Mr. Picasso's signature, and vases of flowers. The images created by Mr. Picasso vanished as soon as he drew them. He was not able to see what he had created with the light until he viewed the photographs on display at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City the year after the photographs were taken. The series became known as "Picasso's Light Drawings" and is considered to have been groundbreaking in the use of light and movement in photography.

Campbell, T. (2021, October 25). Artistic collaborations: Pablo Picasso & Gjon Mili. Artland Magazine.
    https://magazine.artland.com/artistic-collaborations-pablo-picasso-gjon-mili/