

“MAKING IT MODERN” EXHIBITION

Docent Summary Notes on LINE

In the visual arts, **LINE** is a mark or stroke long in proportion to its' breadth: the trace of a moving point, or, as Paul Klee famously said, “**A line is a dot that went for a walk**”.

Short lines repeated (parallel or intersecting) produce tone or texture and often indicate volume or shadow as in **JUAN GRIS'** *Still Life with Tablecloth*.

LINE can outline shapes or figures as in **MILTON AVERY'S** *Nude Alone*, the two **MATISSE** *Photogravure of Drawings*, and **CHAGALL'S** *My Village*.

Sometimes artists make line the subject of their composition as in **MOTHERWELL'S** *The Big Four*, certainly in **MORRIS LOUIS'S** *Number 2-00*, and perhaps in the two photograms by **MAN RAY**.

BRAQUE gives us **LINE** as birds (or birds as line) in *Les Martines*.

ALEXANDER CALDER was a master with line's potential for expressing whimsy in the tail of his *Lizard*, and in the playful linear elements in *Butterflies and Spiral*. Note that in the spiral's center we can ask if we are looking at black on white, or white on black?

The fluidity of softly brushed (painterly) line appears in **BYRON BROWN'S** *Fugue*, and **DUFY'Ss** *The Arno in Florence*. The same can be said of **PICASSO'S** *Grande Plaque: Tete*

Sculpturally line defines the graceful contours and concave/convex surfaces of **ARCHIPENKO'S** *Flat Torso* and **GUITOU KNOOP'S** *1on1*.