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# ROTHKO AT THE KATONAH MUSEUM OF ART



He painted the kind of sensuous, abstract, color-block paintings that still have some viewers saying, “I could do that.” (Ah, but did you think to do it?). He once famously returned the advance on a commission to create murals for The Four Seasons restaurant. And a Yale University Art Gallery exhibit of his work was the impetus for students Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham’s first date in 1970, the year the artist killed himself at age 66.

Mark Rothko was a temperamental, larger-than-life artist in the tradition of temperamental, larger-than-life artists. No wonder John Logan created a Tony Award-winning play about him (“Red.”)

Now the Katonah Museum of Art has designed a room around one of his works. “Rothko,” with the first in a series of works by the painter at the KMA, features his “Untitled” (1951) in a room created for individual reflection. Painted in the same year that the “9th St. Show” brought Abstract Expressionism to the fore of the avant-garde, “Untitled” exemplifies Rothko’s most important work.

Rothko said his paintings begin an unknown adventure into an unknown space,” longtime Briarcliff Manor resident Simon Schama **observes**(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWRtrx-EdCM>), in his absorbing, challenging

series "Power of Art," which features six artists at moments of crisis, including Rothko. "I wasn't sure where I was being taken. I wasn't even sure I wanted to go. I only knew I had no choice and that the destination might not exactly be a picnic."

Also at the KMA you'll find "Hands & Earth: Perspectives on Contemporary Japanese Ceramics" (through Jan. 24).

*For more, visit [katonahmuseum.org](http://katonahmuseum.org)(<http://katonahmuseum.org>).*