

KEVIN CASSIDY PHOTO COMPOSITIONS

MENIL MUSEUM

SELECTIONS FROM THE JUNE 1987 OPENING OF
THE MENIL COLLECTION MUSEUM
IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
THE INAUGURAL EXHIBITION
ANDY WARHOL *SHADOWS* EXHIBITION
AT RICHMOND HALL.

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INTRODUCTION

MENIL COLLECTION MUSEUM AND DOMINIQUE DE MENIL

The Menil Collection Museum is in Houston, Texas. The Menil Collection Museum was designed by architect extraordinaire Renzo Piano to house the world famous de Menil art collection. Jean and Dominique de Menil, famed art collectors, human rights activists, architectural patrons, philanthropists and who were friends of mine. Dominique de Menil was one of 12 American recipients of the 1986 National Medal of the Arts awarded to her by then President Reagan in a July 1986 luncheon at the White House. "Her most recent award is the Legion of Honor, France's highest governmental award, which the French Ambassador to the United States personally awarded her in Houston in May 1985. She also has received the French Order of Arts and Letters, France's highest award in the field of the arts. (Carl Cunningham, *Houston Post*, July 6, 1986).















THE OPENING OF THE MENIL COLLECTION MUSEUM

Guests seen here on the lawn for this epic opening. Photos include the arrival of Dominique de Menil in her yellow dress and her progress to the podium with the gray and white colors of the Menil in the background. Gray and white are almost Dominique de Menil's heraldic colors. She is seen here giving her inaugural address, flanked by then Menil Founding Director Walter Hopps, then Assistant Director Paul Winkler, and being applauded by Menil architect Renzo, Piano. and then Mayor Kathy Whitmire (seated).





















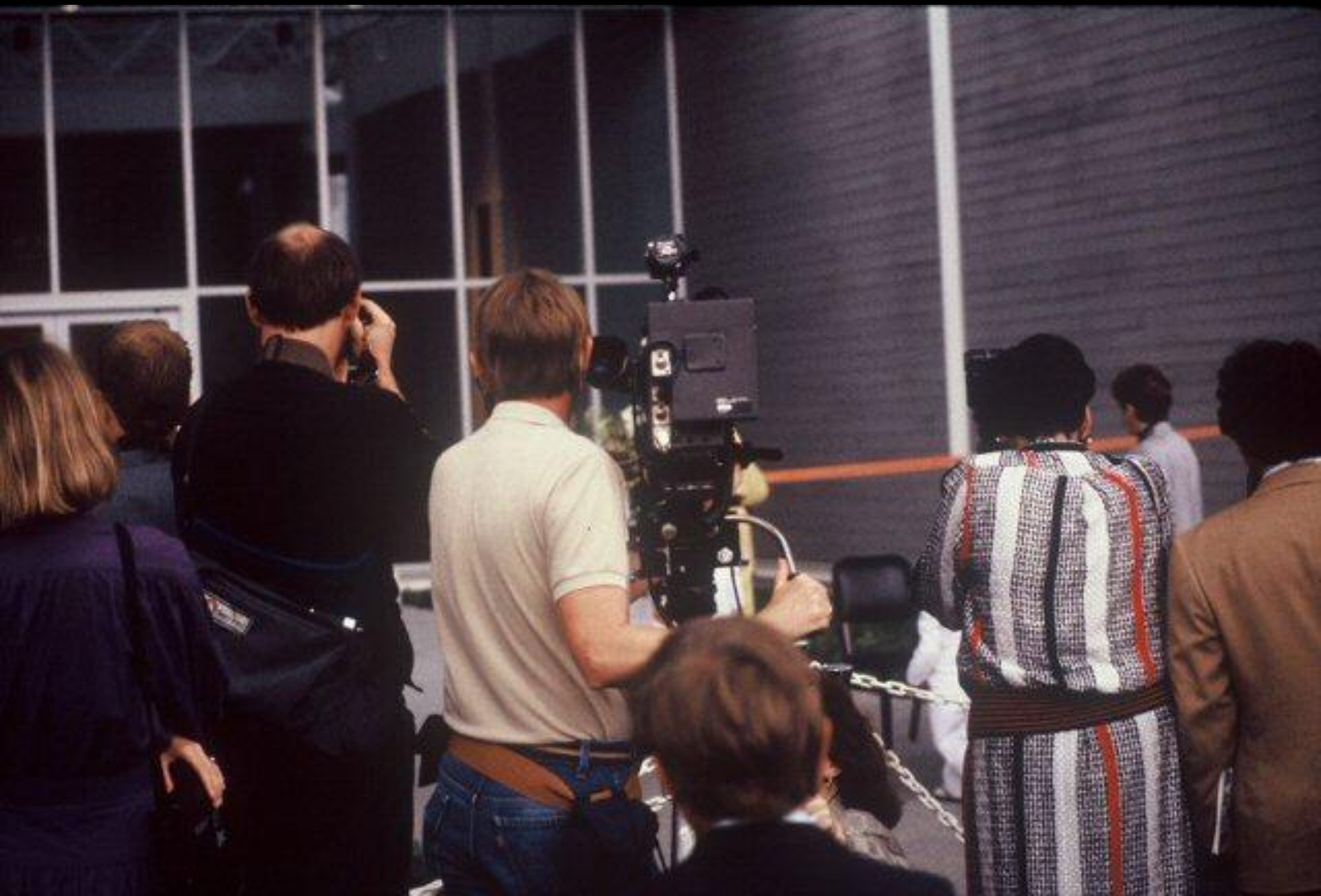
THE RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

The opening was covered extensively by the Houston media, some seen here filming for the evening news. Dominique de Menil is seen preparing to officiate at the ribbon cutting ceremony, which was cut by one of her grandchildren. The orange and white ribbon can be seen in the background. She then holds up the cut ribbon and motions with her hand to “come on in.” The Menil Collection Museum is officially opened. The Menil Collection is focused in several areas including Byzantine, Tribal or Indigenous, Cool!

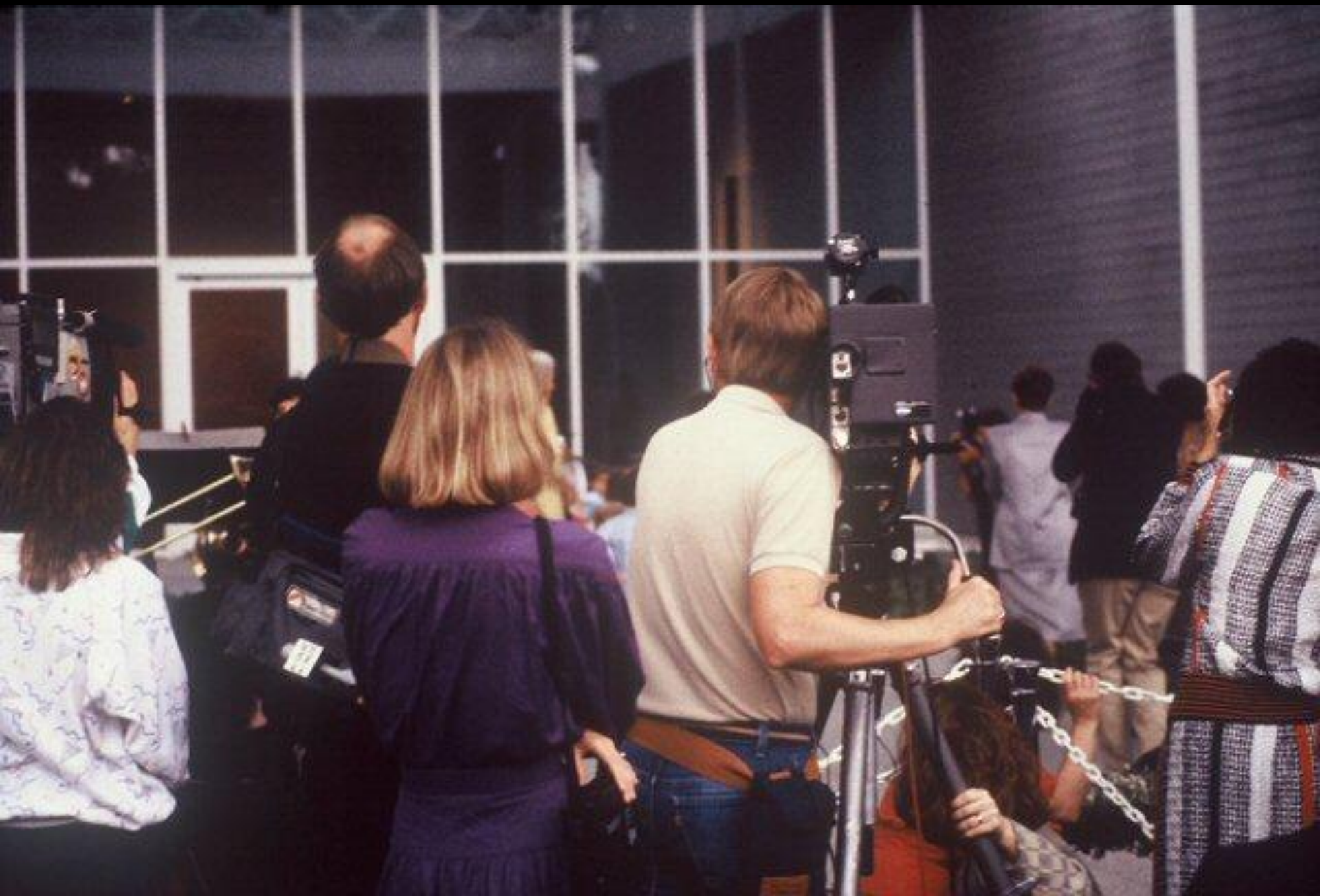














INSIDE THE INAUGURAL EXHIBITION

Selections include Barnett Newman's *Vir Heroicus* in the foyer, and a photos of Carol, my old friend and companion at many Menil events (who will be seen several more times in these photo compositions). Moving into the Exhibition, we see guests enjoying art selected from the Menil Collection, including a large stone Sunken Relief Inscribed *The beautiful Horus, the great God, Lord of Heaven, one who is formost Behet (Edfu?)*. He is wearing the Double Crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. We then see a small Sumerian Votive statue *Eannatum, Prince of Lagash* (Early Dynastic) whom I affectionately refer to as the "little Sumerian dude." One of my favorite pieces in the entire Menil Collection.

















SOME AFRICAN AND OCEANIC ART IN THE MENIL COLLECTION

Part of the curatorial intelligence in the way the de Menil's presented art in their exhibitions was to play down the text and raise up the mystery of the encounter with the object itself. These next photos of African and Oceanic art selections will not be identified. Just wander through and meet the objects as if they too are guests at the exhibition. The "gaze" is one of the great themes of world art and many works in the Menil Collection have a focused gaze. They may be gazing into a beyond of long ago and far













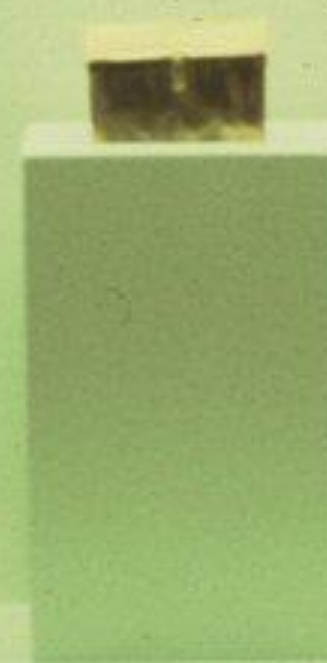
CHRISTIAN

Selections include three photos of a brass plate showing the angel Gabriel and the Annunciation with a marvelous tableau below with the Crucifixion in the center but no cross. Look closely down on the left and there is a seal gazing up. After these, we see in the center of the next photo, a 6th century Early Byzantine *Gold Reliquary Box* from Macedonia. Finally, two tapestries. One of the Crucifixion (with Millefluer background from Franconia and the Lower Rhine regions, late 15th early 16th century). The other of the Deposition.

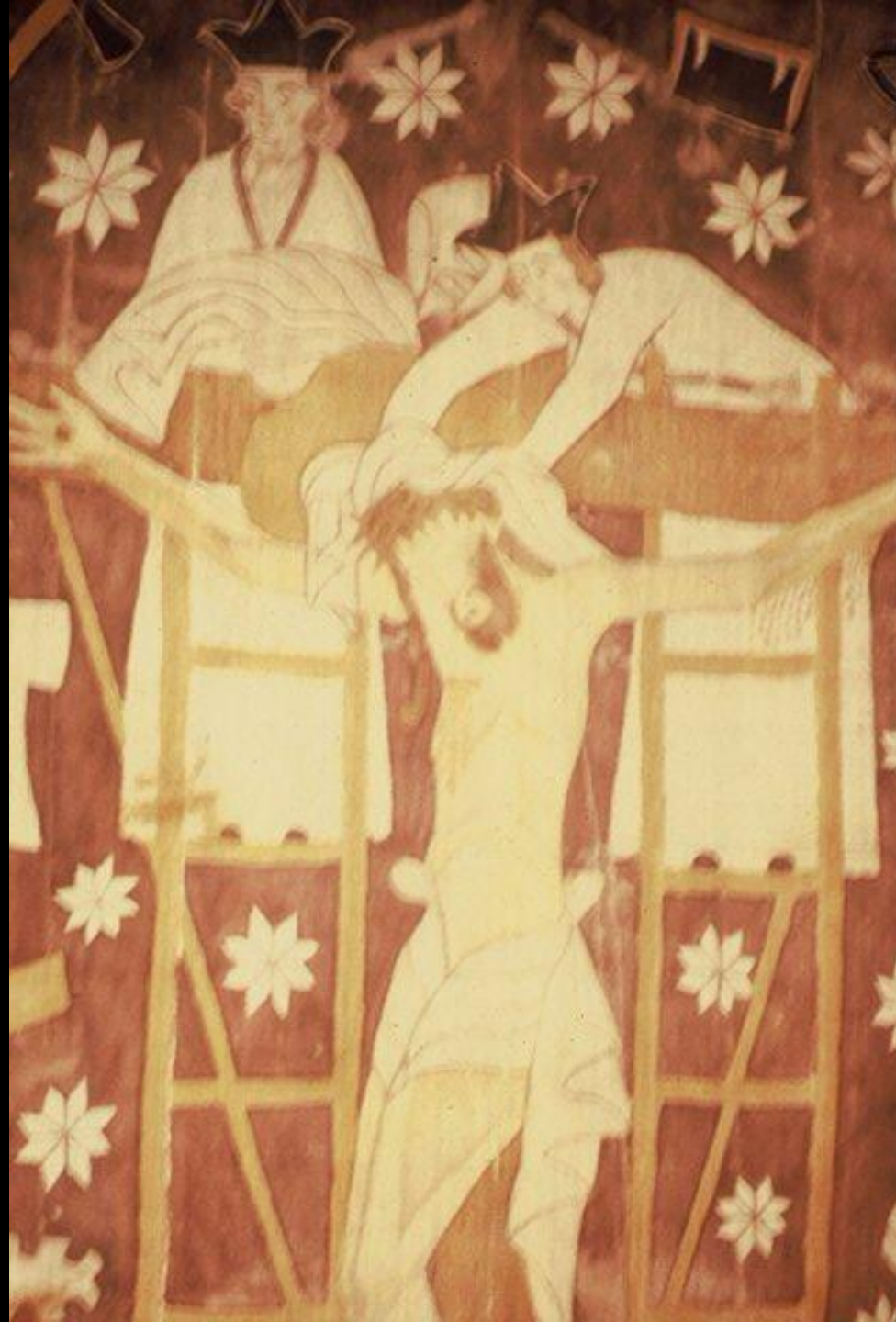












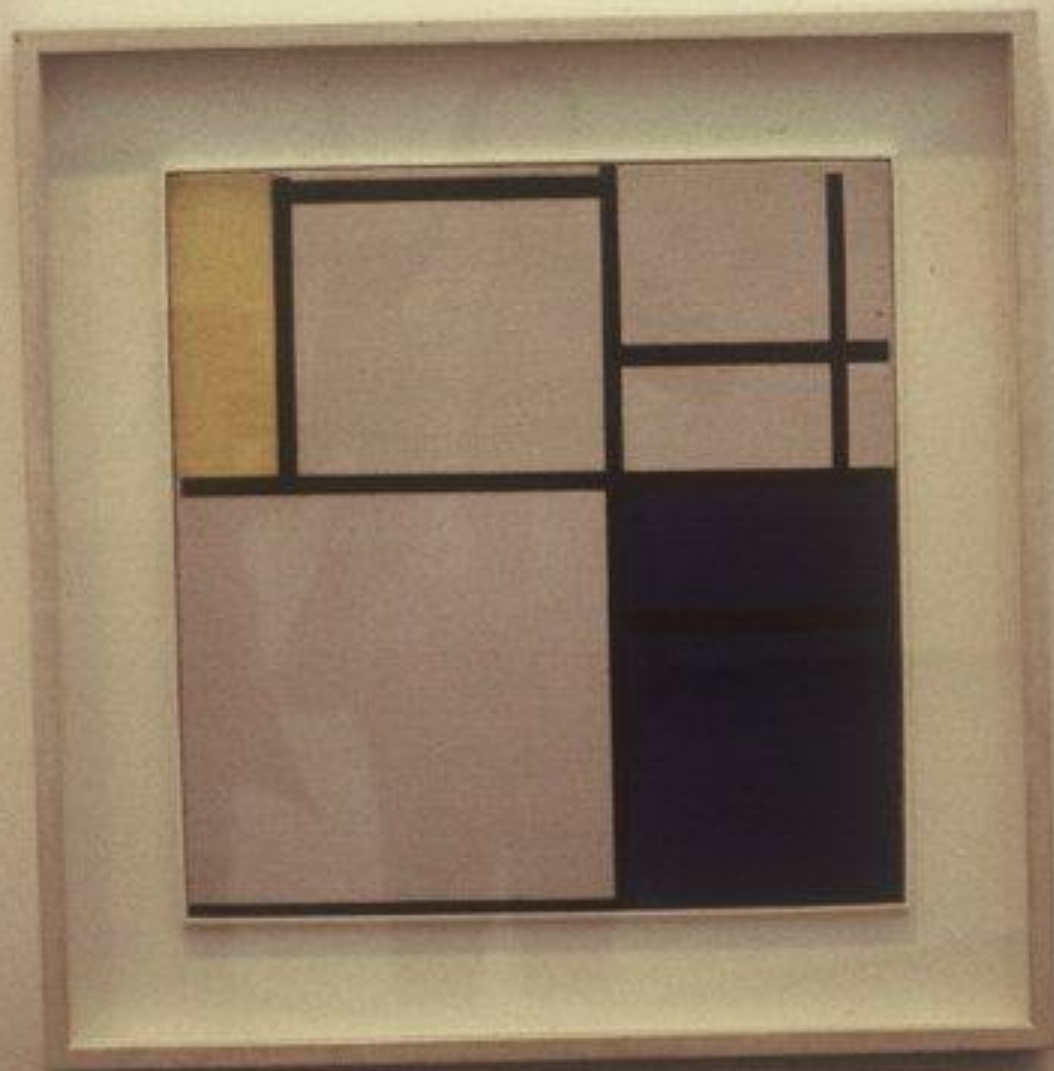
MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Selections include: Picasso's *Guitar on a Table and Female Nude*, Piet Mondrain " *Composition in Yellow Blue and Blue White*, 1922. Three photos of Jasper Johns's *Grey Alphabets* (1956) close up of the head of Dominique de Menil from the Max Ernst painting, Joseph Sacco's *Eye of a Woman* (1844), three compositions of Jasper John's *Gray Alphabet*.





Abstract painting by [illegible]



De Stijl, 1930















MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Selections include two photos of a wonderful yellow and white Rothko simply entitled *No.10* (1957) Barnett Newman's *Ulysses* (1952). Two "paintings" by Yves Klein: and gold leaf painting *Untitled* (1960) and a blue painting entitled *Requiem* (1960) made of sponges painted with International Klein Blue, a color he invented and is associated with, and Andy Warhol's *Beef Noodle Soup Can* and *Double Mona Lisa* followed by James Lee Byars's *Halo* and two John Chamberlain sculptures.

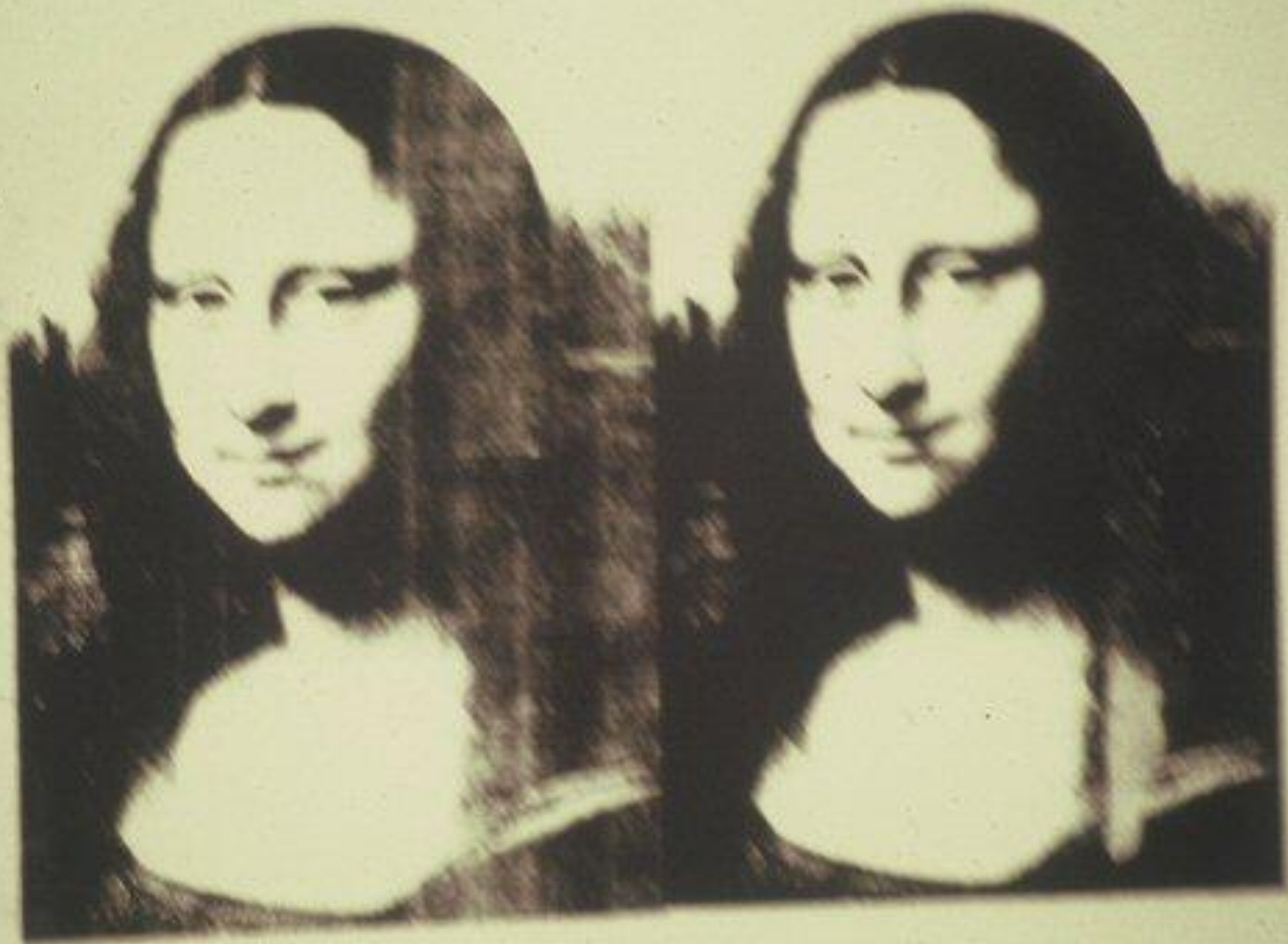


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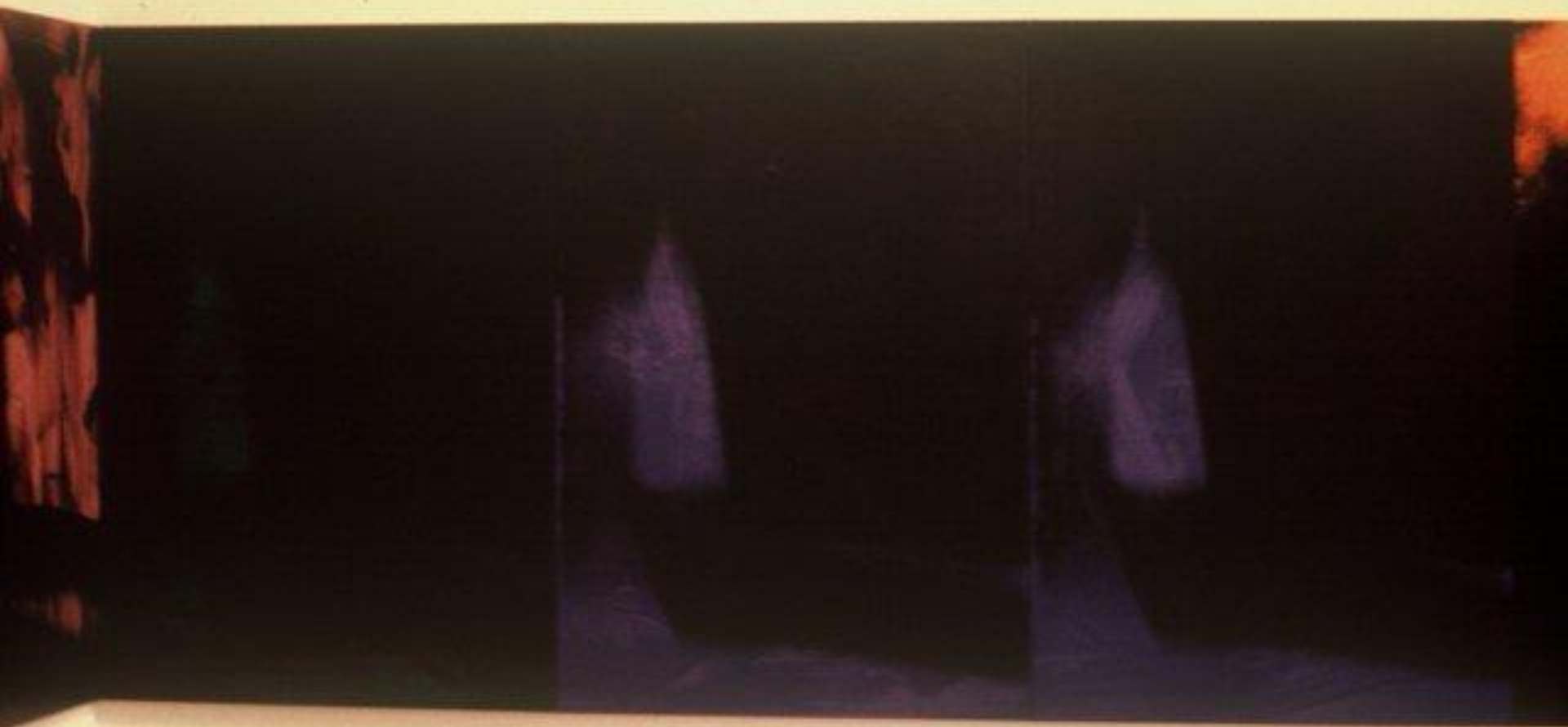


ANDY WARHOL *SHADOWS* EXHIBITION AT THE MENIL'S RICHMOND HALL

This next series are of selections from the wonderful Andy Warhol *Shadows* series in Richmond Hall. Originally created in 1976-78 the entire series included over 90 paintings, which were first exhibited at the Heiner Friedrich Gallery in New York in 1979. For some contemporary art historians, they represent one of Andy's experiments in abstract art. It was very interesting to see the exhibition *Andy Warhol: The Last Decade* at the Fort Worth Modern in the Spring of 2010. Several *Shadows* paintings were on exhibit there.



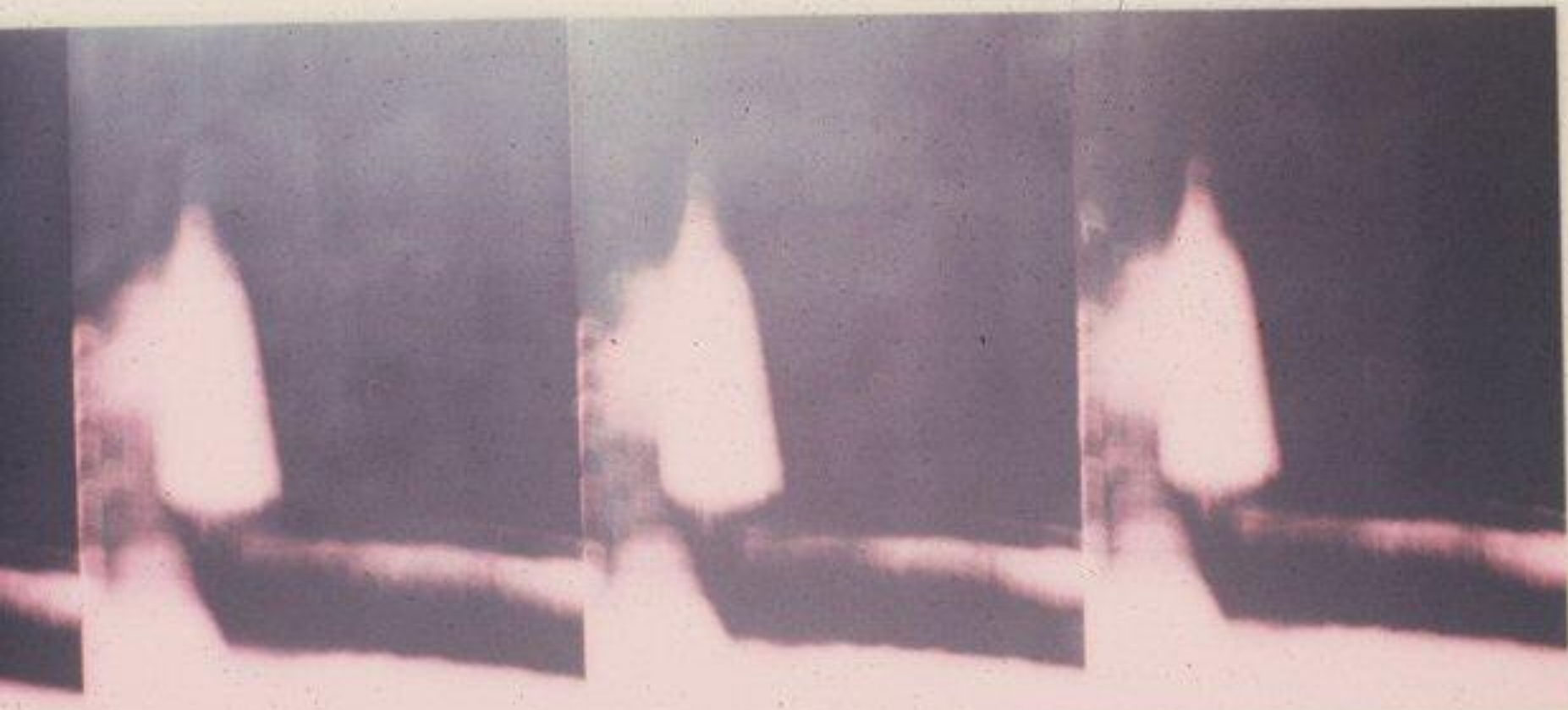












FIN

Thank you for sharing with me these photo compositions of the opening of the Menil Collection Museum. This humble *homage* is dedicated to the memory of Dominique and Jean de Menil, to the many artists represented in the Collection, to all the great folks who attended the opening, and to the many others over the years who made all this possible.

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