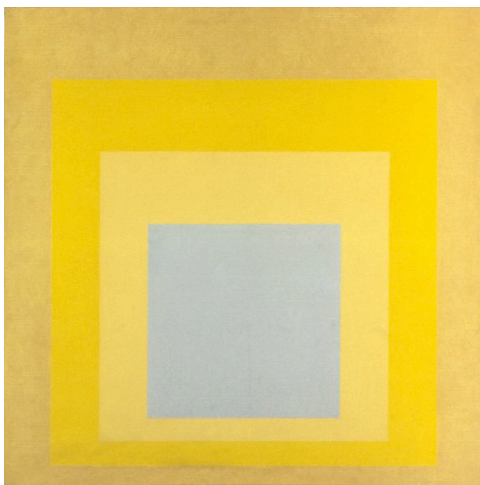
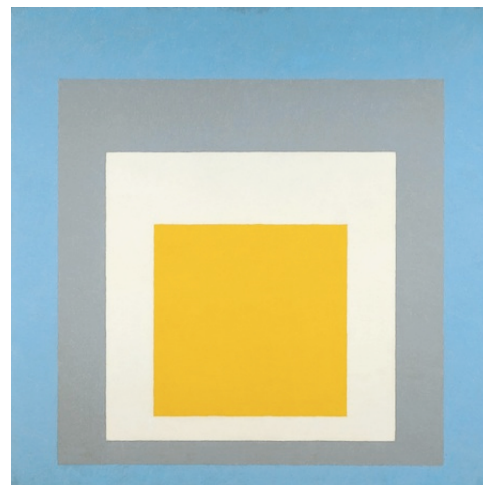


About: **HOMAGE**

One influence on my *Homage* series is the work of **Josef Albers** (1888-1976), a German born American artist. Albers may be best remembered for a series entitled *Homage to the Square*. His work represents a transition between traditional European art and the new American art. It incorporated European influences from the Constructivists and the Bauhaus movement, and its intensity and smallness of scale were typically European, but his influence fell heavily on American artists of the late 1950s and the 1960s. "Hard-edge" abstract painters drew on his use of patterns and intense colors, while Op artists and conceptual artists further explored his interest in perception. Albers explored chromatic interactions with nested squares. Each painting of his *Homage to the Square* series consisted of either three or four squares of solid planes of color nested within one another.



© 2011 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation  
Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York  
Josef Albers  
**Homage to the Square: With Rays**  
Oil on Masonite  
48 1/8 x 48 1/8 in. (122.2 x 122.2 cm)  
1959  
Metropolitan Museum of Art

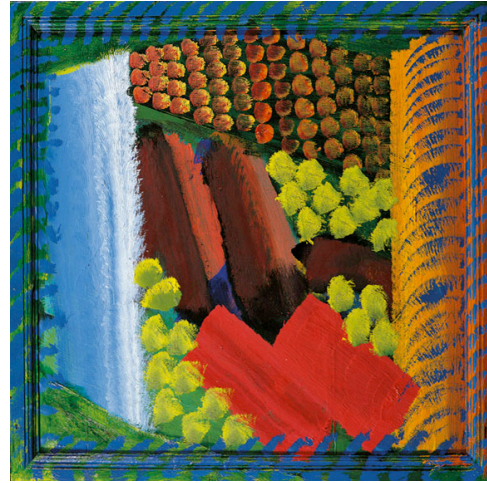


© 2011 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation  
Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York  
Josef Albers  
**Homage to the Square: Ascending**  
Oil on composition board  
43 7/16 x 43 7/16 in. (110.3 x 110.3 cm)  
1953  
Whitney Museum of American Art

Another influence upon my work is the paintings of **Howard Hodgkin** (British, 1932-2017). Around the beginning of the 1970s, Hodgkin's style became more spontaneous, with vaguely recognizable shapes presented in bright colors and bold forms.



© 1983 Rothschild Fine Arts, Inc.  
Howard Hodgkin  
**Small Henry Moore at the Bottom  
of the Garden**  
Oil on wood  
20 3/4in x 21 in (52.5cm x 53.0cm)  
1975



© 2015 Howard Hodgkin  
Howard Hodgkin  
**Red Bermudas**  
Oil on wood  
27 3/4 x 27 3/4" (70.5 x 70.5 cm)  
1978-80  
The Museum of Modern Art

Hodgkin's pictorial language evolved slowly over time. But where his early works showed the effort by being clamped and tight, his mature works are loose and free, with such a singing authority that there is no sense whatever of the long physical and emotional labor involved. Most of his paintings have the characteristic frames-within-frames which concentrate the central image.



© 2000 Howard Hodgkin  
Howard Hodgkin  
**Echo**  
Oil on wood  
12 1/8 x 13 5/8" (30.8 x 34.6cm)  
2000



© 2011 Howard Hodgkin  
Howard Hodgkin  
**Red Flowers**  
Oil on wood  
8 3/8 x 9 1/4" (21.3 x 23.5cm)  
2011

Hodgkin claimed that, "I am a representational painter, but not a painter of appearances. I paint representational pictures of emotional situations." There's no 'right' or 'wrong' way of interpreting Hodgkin's paintings. His paintings are objects for contemplation, reflection – and sensuous delight.

Both Albers and Hodgkin deploy the Renaissance theory of the picture as a window into an imaginative space . . . a device I use frequently. In my *Homage* series the orderly, controlled style of Albers may be viewed as juxtaposed with the "loose, free" style of Hodgkin. The concept of order, disorder, and reordering is central to my work. Scientists talk of order and randomness, of entropy, and of eternity's eventual end when all differences disappear. Yet, I am an optimist. I see life as an anti-entropic force for order. In my work, I constantly propose not a duality of life and death, but an endless cycle of life, death, and rebirth.

My "homage" would not be complete without mentioning the influence of the Welsh poet **Dylan Thomas** (1914-1953). It may be helpful to observe that I consciously used poetry to inspire me in individual paintings since 1993. Every painting in the *Homage* series was inspired by a Thomas poem and is titled with a quotation from that poem.

Thomas's major theme was the unity of all living things, the continuing process of life and death and new life that linked the generations. Thomas saw biology as a magical transformation producing unity out of diversity, and in his poetry sought a poetic ritual celebrating this unity. He envisioned men and women locked in cycles of growth, love, procreation, new growth, death, and new life . . . themes not unfamiliar to my own art. His mature work often preached an optimistic outlook in the face of seeming adversity:

And death shall have no dominion.  
No more may gulls cry at their ears  
Or waves break loud on the seashores;  
Where blew a flower may a flower no more  
Lift its head to the blows of the rain;  
Though they be mad and dead as nails,  
Heads of the characters hammer through daisies;  
Break in the sun till the sun breaks down,  
And death shall have no dominion.

Although influenced by the modern symbolism and surrealism movement, Thomas refused to follow its creed. Instead, Thomas may be viewed as part of the modernism and romanticism movements. Here is an example of a relatively unknown Thomas poem from when he was fourteen years old.

My tears are like the quiet drift  
Of petals from some magic rose;  
And all my grief flows from the rift  
Of unremembered skies and snows.

I think, that if I touched the earth,  
It would crumble;  
It is so sad and beautiful,  
So tremulously like a dream.

The Nobel Prize winning poet Seamus Heaney noted the confluence of Thomas and Hodgkin; Heaney said that Hodgkin's art celebrates what Dylan Thomas called "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower."