



ROBERT MOTHERWELL

(Aberdeen/Washington 1915–1991 Provincetown/Massachusetts)

Drunk with Turpentine # 48. 1979.

Oil on cardboard.

Monogrammed and dated upper right (faded): RM 79.

51 x 40.5 cm.

This work will be included in the online supplement to the Robert Motherwell catalogue raisonné. We thank the Deadalus Foundation for their kind support. Provenance: - Galerie Veith Turske, Cologne (verso with the label). - Galerie Turske & Whitney, North La Brea (verso with the label). - Purchased from the above by the present owner, since then private collection Switzerland. Like Jackson Pollock, to whom he is often referred as his intellectual counterpart,

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in his early work Robert Motherwell was closely associated with Surrealism. In the 1950s, however, he turned towards Abstract Expressionism, and developed his own pictorial language, which is characterised by powerful black signs and gestural motifs. In the 1960s he turned increasingly towards colour field painting. Amongst other things, he cites pure presence, passion, immediacy, objectivity and clear colours as his ethical values. He often worked in large scale series, based on works of literature. He had full command of all the techniques he used. The present work by Robert Motherwell belongs to the series "Drunk as Turpentine", which is based on a poem by the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. The comprehensive series dates from the 1970s and is an outstanding example of Motherwell's mature style. Reduced to black and white, he created gestural drawings with great spontaneity and energy. Only at second glance is the viewer aware that the artist not only experiments with the drawn lines, but also uses the intensity of the black to convey his aims and thereby creates depth and an extraordinary intensity.

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