

RECENT ACQUISITION

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923–1997)

Woman Contemplating a Yellow Cup, 1995

Machined aluminum, paint and wax

Gift of Thurston and Sharon Twigg-Smith, 2014
(2014-12-01)

Roy Lichtenstein was one of the key figures in the emergence of Pop Art in the 1960s, developing his signature style by appropriating subject matter and style characteristics from comic strips. Lichtenstein painted his banal subjects in simple, bold colors and imitated commercial printing techniques by representing shading with patterns enlarged from the half-tone screens of Ben Day dots used in the production of newspapers and comics.

Woman Contemplating a Yellow Cup is one of the few wall-relief sculptures Lichtenstein made, and the subject matter combines aspects of two bodies of his work from the 1990s, *Interiors* and *Nudes*. During the early and mid-1990's, he produced images of interiors focusing on modern furniture and architecture, the simple decorative forms of domestic life. In the mid-1990s Lichtenstein returned to the motif of the female figure which had predominated in his 1960s paintings. *Woman Contemplating a Yellow Cup* shows the back of the head of a woman looking into a room with carpet, chair, and table, on which sits the yellow cup of the title. On the wall is a Picasso-esque painting in a frame. The diagonal perspective, the irregular shape of the relief, and the partial rendering of the chair and other elements in the composition create dynamic spatial ambiguities. The relief also has open spaces where visual elements have been left out, and hangs several inches off the wall, so that when lit, real cast shadows become part of the experience. Completed just two years before the artist's death, this impressive work shows Lichtenstein as a master artist at the pinnacle of his career.