

Yves Tanguy (French, 1900–1955)

The Long Rain, 1942

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1943 (262.1)

Yves Tanguy started painting in 1923 without any formal training, and by 1925 he had joined the Surrealist Movement. Today he is known for haunting dreamscapes such as this scene of a bleak, empty plain stretching toward a distant horizon and populated with irrational, vaguely biomorphic shapes. The harsh, hard-edged shadows cast by these disquieting forms seem to take on a life of their own, blatantly disregarding the distorting effects of the landscape or the clouded sky. Of all the Surrealists, Tanguy made the fewest references to the everyday world of the five senses, thus creating works that plumb the depths of the imagination and the subconscious mind.

Yves Tanguy
1900–1955, France

The Long Rain, 1942
Oil on canvas
39 x 32 in. (99.1 x 81.3 cm)
Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1943 (262.1)

Yves Tanguy's family originated in Locronon, Brittany, and during his childhood Tanguy spent his vacations there. The region is known for its spectacular megalithic sites, and its haunting menhirs and dolmens made a strong impression on the young boy. Although he denied it late in life, the stones may have been the source of some of the forms Tanguy used in his paintings.

In 1920 Tanguy was called for military service and stationed at Lunéville, where he met the surrealist poet Jacques Prévert. After being discharged in 1922, Tanguy joined Prévert in Paris and there began sketching in the cafés, soon attracting the attention of Maurice de Vlaminck. Tanguy was unsure of his future in art until, in 1923, he happened to be on a bus that passed the Paul Guillaume Gallery, where in the window Giorgio de Chirico's *The Child's Brain* was displayed. Tanguy got off the bus, studied the painting, and decided then and there that he would devote himself to oil painting. Without receiving any formal training, Tanguy started painting, and by 1925 he had joined the surrealists. In 1939 the artist traveled to the United States, eventually settling in Woodbury, Connecticut; he became an American citizen in 1948.

The Long Rain is typical of Tanguy's paintings of the early 1940s. Applying his paint in layers of thin glazes, a traditional technique, the artist created the cool blue atmosphere that pervades *The Long Rain*. Stretching to the distant horizon, a bleak plain is populated by strangely colored and striped abstract forms. The large form on the left has some anthropomorphic qualities, but, like the others, it is primarily an odd composite of organic and mineral attributes. The harsh, hard-edged shadows cast by the disquieting forms lead a life of their own, disregarding any distorting effects of the plain or clouded sky. The painting can be interpreted as a macabre dreamscape, or possibly an extraterrestrial landscape; either way, *The Long Rain* is a mildly disturbing image. Of all the surrealists, Tanguy made the fewest references to the everyday world of the five senses, thus creating works that plumb the depths of the imagination and subconscious mind.

YVES TANGUY

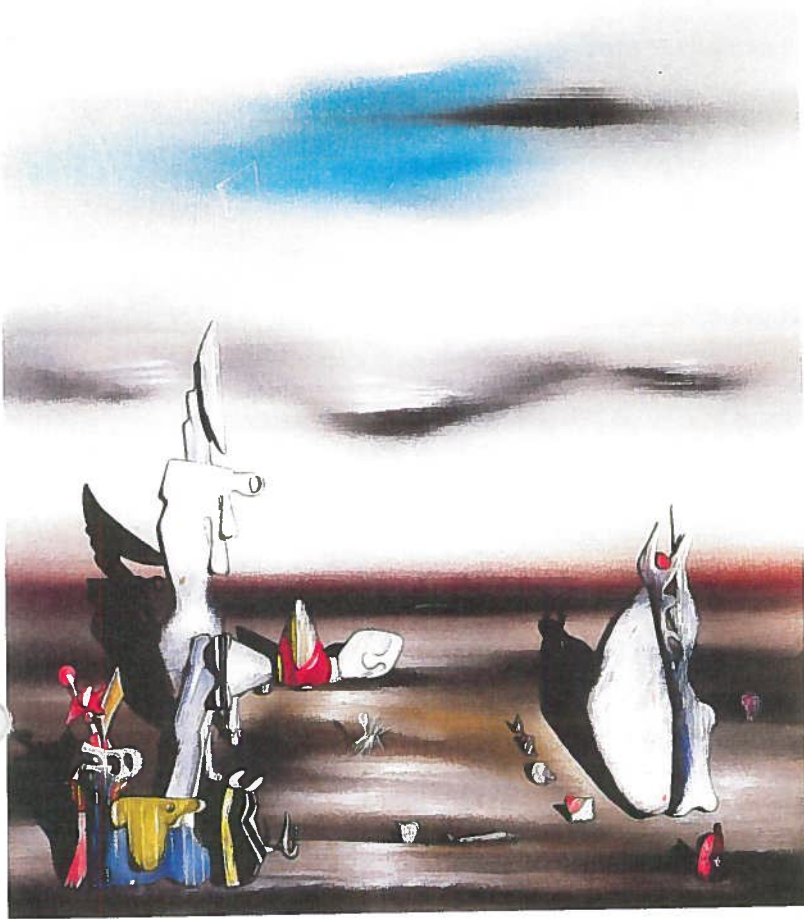
French, b. Paris, France, 1900; d.
Woodbury, CT, 1955

***The Long Rain*, 1942**

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Friends of the Academy, 1943 (262.1)

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"The Long Rain," #262.1
Gift of the Friends of the Academy (1943)
oil on canvas

Yves Tanguy (France)
(1900-1955)
1942
Gallery 1

Artist: Yves Tanguy (1900-1955), French-born painter, moved to the United States in 1939, became an American citizen and settled on a farm in Woodbury, Connecticut, where he died in 1955. Tanguy had no formal training and decided to paint very suddenly after having seen a painting by de Chirico in the window of the Paul Guillaume Gallery in Paris. He joined the Surrealists in 1925. Tanguy's paintings depict an inner universe independent of the real world and the relationship between the psychic and the physical. About 1950, Tanguy began painting large canvases which are different from his earlier works in their replacement of fluid space with heaps of debris.

Subject: Dream-like landscape containing abstract, primordial, rock-like forms. Light is crystalline and shadows are very sharp and black. Landscape seems bathed in cool, bluish atmosphere and space is ambiguous.

Style: Yves Tanguy joined the Surrealists in 1925. This art was concerned mostly with dream imagery. Tanguy's use of his subconscious was very spontaneous. He never planned a painting but relied on one form to suggest the next. Very often these seemingly extra-terrestrial forms recall bone or mineral shapes and occupy a limitless space, although we are never certain as to their exact place in this space. Tanguy's technique is tight and precise and he applies his paint in layer upon layer of thin glazes.

Instructional Aids

- Compare with de Chirico's "The Great Machine." What similarities are there which may be considered general characteristics of Surrealism?
- Discuss space. Is there a logical depiction of it here?
- Discuss light. Is there a single light source? Is it soft and diffused?
- How does color contribute to the mood of the painting? What is the overall mood?
- How large do you think the forms are? What contributes to this conception - color? Composition? Light?
- Speculate on what it would be like to enter this painting. Where would you prefer being, amidst the form or in the expansive distance? What smells might there be? What sounds?
- Jungian psychology was very influential on the art and thought of the early 20th century. Do any of the shapes seem suggestive of unconscious symbolism? Discuss.

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MAKER: TANGUY, Yves (b. Paris 1900; d. 1955)

DESCRIPTION: "La Longue Pluie" (*The Long Rain*)

Oil painting on canvas. Surrealistic landscape, showing strange ovoid shapes (in coral, rust, red, blue, blue-gray, green, gray-white, and black) placed at right and left of gray foreground; casting black shadows behind them. Foreground darkens toward low horizon. Sky of light grayed pink, turquoise and blue shows horizontal streaks of blackish clouds. Double frame; inner, narrow light gray; outer, wide heavy decorated gold and gray.



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PERIOD: 1942

SIGNATURE OR MARK: Yves Tanguy 42 (lower right)

MEASUREMENTS: H ³⁹~~38~~-1/4"; W ³²~~31~~-1/4"
with frame: H 47-3/4"; W 40-3/4"

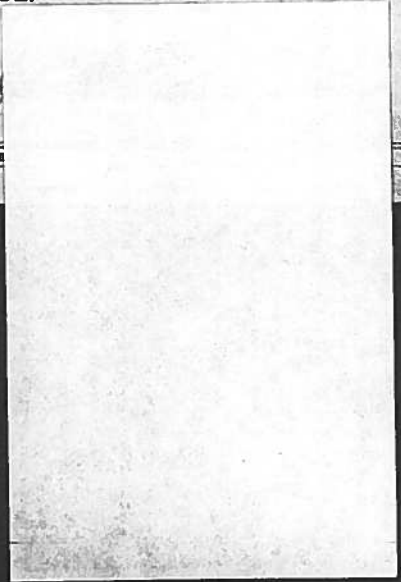
GIFT OF: Friends of the Academy

DATE: 1943
PRICE:

BOUGHT FROM: Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

LOCATION: *6/12/77 Gallery I*

COUNTRY France OBJECT Tanguy,





Accession No.: 262.1
Artist: Yves Tanguy, 1900-1955, France
Title: "La Longue Pluie"
Date: dated 1942
Signature: signed and dated lower right "Yves Tanguy 42"
Medium: oil on canvas
Dimensions: h. 39" (99.1 cm.), w. 32" (81.3 cm.)
Provenance: Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York
Credit line: Gift of Friends of the Academy, 1943
Exhibitions:

Published: Andre Breton, Yves Tanguy, reproduced p. 32.

Remarks: