

## Riff's Rants & Raves: Art & Literature



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Philip Guston, "Painting," oil on canvas, 1956

### PHILIP GUSTON: 1954-1958

L&M Arts


45 East 78<sup>th</sup> St. between Park & Madison Aves.

Tuesday — Saturday 10:00 am — 5:30 pm through February 28

Admission: free

212-861-0020

<http://www.lmgallery.com>

 (out of four) Last summer, the Morgan Library featured an exhibit of works on paper by Montreal-born artist Philip Guston, documenting his shifts from abstract imagery to figuration, angering many of his friends and colleagues. This small but revelatory show at L&M Arts, comprising just eight paintings, emanates from that very time period when Guston was in the midst of that change, 1954-58. Each of the paintings features a central conglomeration of harsh brushstrokes and color, surrounded by a still grayness or bits of raw canvas. Guston's palette consists primarily of red and black, with patches of green, gray, blue, orange, and yellow adding dimension. While "Prague" is more muted, evoking the look and feel of the Czech city, "Processional" is freer and brighter, bringing to mind a clown parade. The densest work is "To Fellini," a montage homage to Italian auteur Federico Fellini. Animals appear to pop out of "The Mirror," as well as a slab of meat that recalls Francis Bacon. The centerpiece of the exhibit is the simply titled "Painting," a canvas of gorgeous reds with splashes of orange, yellow, and green, featuring thick brushstrokes that culminate in an abstract landscape of dazzling vibrancy and beauty.