

**INDEPENDENT RESEARCH**  
**FINE ART INVESTIGATION**

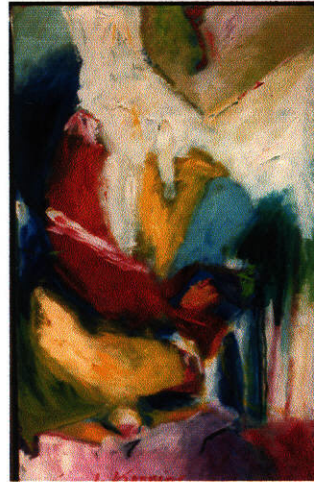
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**WILLEM de KOONING**

(1904-1997)  
Untitled: 'Abstract Composition'  
Oil on Canvas: 48" x 24"  
Signed lower left centre: de Kooning.  
Inscribed on verso: Willem de Kooning.  
Collection - William H. Littlefield. 5/12/61

**PROVENANCE**

William Horace Littlefield. Boston. (1961)  
Private Collection. Boston. (1979)  
Private Collection. Mission Viejo. CA. (1989)



**VALUATION REPORT**

Willem de Kooning had merged his figurative 'Women' motifs into abstract landscape themes to such an extent that by 1955 the figure of a 'Woman' had virtually disappeared. (Refer: Women as Landscape. 1955)  
Replaced in turn by a series of abstract landscapes mainly based on Urban or Pastoral themes, in this more lyrical phase (1955-1963) he clarified his paintings with larger brush-strokes and color fields.  
By 1960 his paintings were broader, the gestural brush strokes more passive, lighter in color, form and line to reflect the ambience of rural Long Island. After 1960 the use of vivid white color fields increase and his intermittent use of red, blue & yellow as strategic elements of his color scheme more prevalent. In 1961 he made a lesser-known second series of smaller woman works that may be indirectly related. The emphatic vertical direction and color selection of this work is exceptional for the period 1957-1963 as squarer compositions based on rural/urban themes dominated. Yet this format style does forecast his new series of intrinsically figurative 'Women' that again emerge from the landscape in June 1963.

**SUMMARY**

This painting was presumably acquired by William Littlefield from Willem de Kooning as a gift or via an exchange. However in this case it is possible this work was purchased as a commercial transaction. The artist William H. Littlefield had a private and professional association with Willem de Kooning. Overall the work conforms to his hand between 1956-63. Some aspects allude to themes he developed between 1961- 63 when he progressively moved his studio from New York City to rural East Hampton. In our opinion the color is slightly more disproportionate than expected in passages and minor variances occur in the overall cohesion of the composition but the work can be judged to an exhibition standard & size. The style, technique, color scheme, motif and compositional plan appear consistent with a unique/rare original or a transitional work for a planned series/exhibit by Willem de Kooning.

(It is our recommendation that this specific work of art *not* be included in the Main Exhibition Collection)

**VALUATION**

U.S.\$ 15,000,000

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