

inTRIBUTE

William Rubin art historian and curator

An influential figure of the twentieth-century art world recently left our midst. William Stanley Rubin, former head of the department of painting and sculpture at New York's Museum of Modern Art, passed away at his weekend home in Pound Ridge, New York, on January 22. A long-time resident of Manhattan, he was buried on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

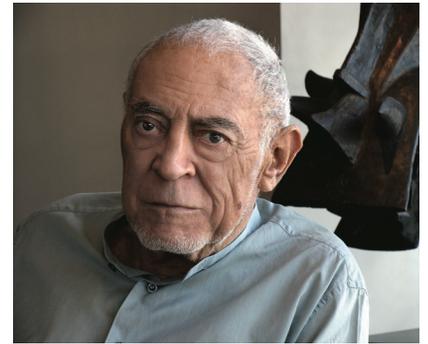
Rubin was instrumental in shaping and maintaining the curatorial perspective that MoMA has been identified with for decades. He was hired by founding director Alfred H. Barr Jr. and joined the department of painting and sculpture in 1967 as a curator. He became its director in 1973 and held this position until he retired in 1988. While Barr had seen the museum's primary mission as defining Modernism, Rubin expanded into Abstract Expressionism and beyond, while carefully supporting the institution's original concepts. He was responsible for adding signature works to the collection (some donated from his personal collection), which he further refined by deaccessioning redundant and irrelevant works. In both of these tasks, he worked closely with artists, artists' estates, collectors, and art dealers from around the world.

Rubin was educated at Columbia University and at the University of Paris. He taught art history in the 1950s and '60s at the City University of New York and at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York. He was an avid collector of post-War art and was particularly interested in Abstract Expressionism and the works of Frank Stella and Jasper Johns.

Through teaching, Rubin developed a professional relationship with Barr, who invited him to curate a small exhibition on André Masson. This led to an invitation to oversee a large exhibition on Dada and Surrealism, which in turn resulted in a long-term connection with the museum.

Rubin curated a plethora of major exhibitions, many focused on the work of Picasso. Among his most notable was the landmark 1984 *Primitivism in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* and its accompanying catalogue, which has become a standard reference. Though controversial at the time, the show firmly established the role of tribal art in the development of twentieth-century Modernism.

At the time of his death, Rubin was completing a memoir titled *A Curator's Quest*, which promises to be rich reading when it is published.



Roy Hathcock collector and author

by Ramona Morris

Collectors of Mississippian-era ceramics lost a mentor and friend with the passing of Roy Hathcock. Roy was one of those unpretentious collectors who proved that it was possible to put together a world-class collection using knowledge and patience rather than depending on "deep pockets."

Roy was born in Cherokee County, Oklahoma, and was a registered Cherokee tribal member. He had a master's degree in education from Northeastern Oklahoma State College in Tahlequah, and he spent thirty years as an art instructor in Missouri at West Plains High School and at the West Plains Campus of Southwestern Missouri State University. During that time he built a superb collection of Mississippian Period ceramics and prehistoric stone artifacts. Many were obtained from famous older collections whose owners had become his friends over the last forty years. Eight of his ceramics were included in the *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand* exhibition of the Art Institute

of Chicago, which was profiled in this magazine several issues back.

Roy is most noted for being the author of two pictorial surveys of Mississippian-era ceramics that have become the standard references for this art. *Ancient Indian Pottery of the Mississippi River Valley*, published in 1976, describes the ceramics created between AD 1000–1650, primarily in Missouri and northern Arkansas. *The Quapaw and Their Pottery*, published in 1982, continues the description with the beautiful painted ceramics, c. AD 1650–1750, of the Quapaw culture of Arkansas.

Roy brought a keen intelligence, astounding memory, curiosity, and artistic understanding to the study of these ancient cultures. Archaeologists and other academics frequently sought his advice, and through his books and generosity with his time, he helped train the eye and expand the knowledge of the majesty of today's collectors of this art form.

