

Jardin du Luxembourg



Bacchus #3



Jardin du Luxembourg, 1977

Bacchus #3, 1978

## Raucous Bacchus

**Elaine de Kooning (1918–1989)** often worked in series, single-mindedly attending to one theme. This print and painting both reference Bacchus, the Roman god of wine and agriculture. It is one of more than 60 works she created in response to a 19th-century sculpture in Paris's Luxembourg Gardens.

### Take a closer look

These pieces appear abstract, but upon closer inspection the lithograph's gray silhouette and painting's energetic black lines reveal figures. De Kooning frames a recumbent, inebriated deity with greens, yellows, and blues. Find his limp limbs and bloated belly at the top of each composition.

### Something to talk about

The artist often combined abstraction and figuration. What do her stylistic choices add to your interpretation of her work?

### In her own words

"My whole approach to painting, whether it's abstract painting or portraits, is that I place a value on ideas that are difficult to put into words."

Elaine De Kooning, *Jardin du Luxembourg*, 1977; Color lithograph on paper, 30 x 22 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Foster; © Elaine de Kooning

Elaine de Kooning, *Bacchus #3*, 1978; Acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 78 x 50 inches; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Wallace and Wilhelmina Holladay; © Elaine de Kooning; Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

