

# ART EXPERTS

AUTHENTICATION    ATTRIBUTION    PROVENANCE    TECHNICAL ANALYSIS    COA  
PORTRAIT IDENTIFICATION    APPRAISAL    SCIENTIFIC TESTS    FORENSIC METHODS

# ART EXPERTS

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## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



The subject work

*Prepared for Mr. Ulrich Sherry  
by the Art Research Department  
of Art Experts*

**03 AUGUST 2016**

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## PRÉCIS

**SCOPE OF WORK** To determine whether the subject work is by or after Roy Lichtenstein, created as a study for a larger work.

**DESCRIPTION** Mixed media on paper. Signed in pencil on lower-right margin. The sheet measures 34 x 21 cm or 13.38 x 8.26 in.

The subject work depicts a hand, pointing a finger directly at the viewer. The hand uses Lichtenstein's signature Ben-Day dots. The hand and sleeve are drawn with a permanent felt-tip marker and the background is painted with a water-based, red paint. The image is framed with a pencil border and signed on the lower-right corner. It is apparent that the subject work is a study.

The work is in good condition. There are no signs of damage.

**PROVENANCE KNOWN TO CLIENT** The subject work was purchased from a gallery in SOHO, New York City in 1987 by a known Australian dealer for \$10,000. The work was part of a group of four works purchased for \$40,000.

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## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Roy Lichtenstein was an American artist, known as a leading figure of the pop art movement. Lichtenstein is most remembered for his comic-strip panel paintings, in which he created large-scale artworks based on comic-book images. He later used the Ben-Day dot aesthetic to create commissioned public artworks and several print editions.

Lichtenstein was born in New York City, where he was exposed to art at an early age. He took classes at the Art Student League of New York before leaving to study at Ohio State University. Lichtenstein completed his Masters degree in Ohio, which allowed him to teach college level courses.

In the 1950s Lichtenstein started having more solo shows, which eventually led him back to his native, New York. By the 1960s, Lichtenstein was using more pop imagery and started showing at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York, a gallery that showed other major pop artists like Andy Warhol.

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## ABOUT THE SERIES

Lichtenstein began his “Finger Pointing” series in 1961 with the creation of a black and white drawing. Throughout the 1960s and 70s Lichtenstein recreated the image several times in the form of drawings posters and prints.

Lichtenstein first added the red background in the 1960s, when the drawing was adapted for use as a poster for the Moderna Museet, Stockholm in 1964. The image was adapted and used for additional posters.

The origin of “Finger Pointing” is believed to reference the iconic Uncle Sam poster “WE WANT YOU!” The solid red background and the omission of Uncle Sam are seen as a reaction to the political climate in the United States during the Vietnam War and Nixon era.

In subsequent years the popular image was part of The New York Collection for Stockholm, published in 1973 by Experiments in Art and Technology, Inc., New York. The Lichtenstein series was printed by Styria Studio, Inc., New York. An edition of 300 numbered screenprints were generally unsigned but stamped on the verso. Only one print was signed in pencil with the initials “R.T.P.” or “Right To Print.” The numbered edition prints measure 30.3 x 22.7 cm. or 12 x 9 in.

According to the Museum of Modern Art, New York the entire portfolio consisted of seventeen screenprints, nine lithographs, two lithographs with screenprint, one photocopy, and one photograph.

“Finger Pointing” is catalogued in Corlett, Mary Lee. *The Prints of Roy Lichtenstein: a catalogue raisonné*. New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1994, Corlett 126.

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## SUBJECT WORK DETAILS



### Subject work

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Subject work, verso

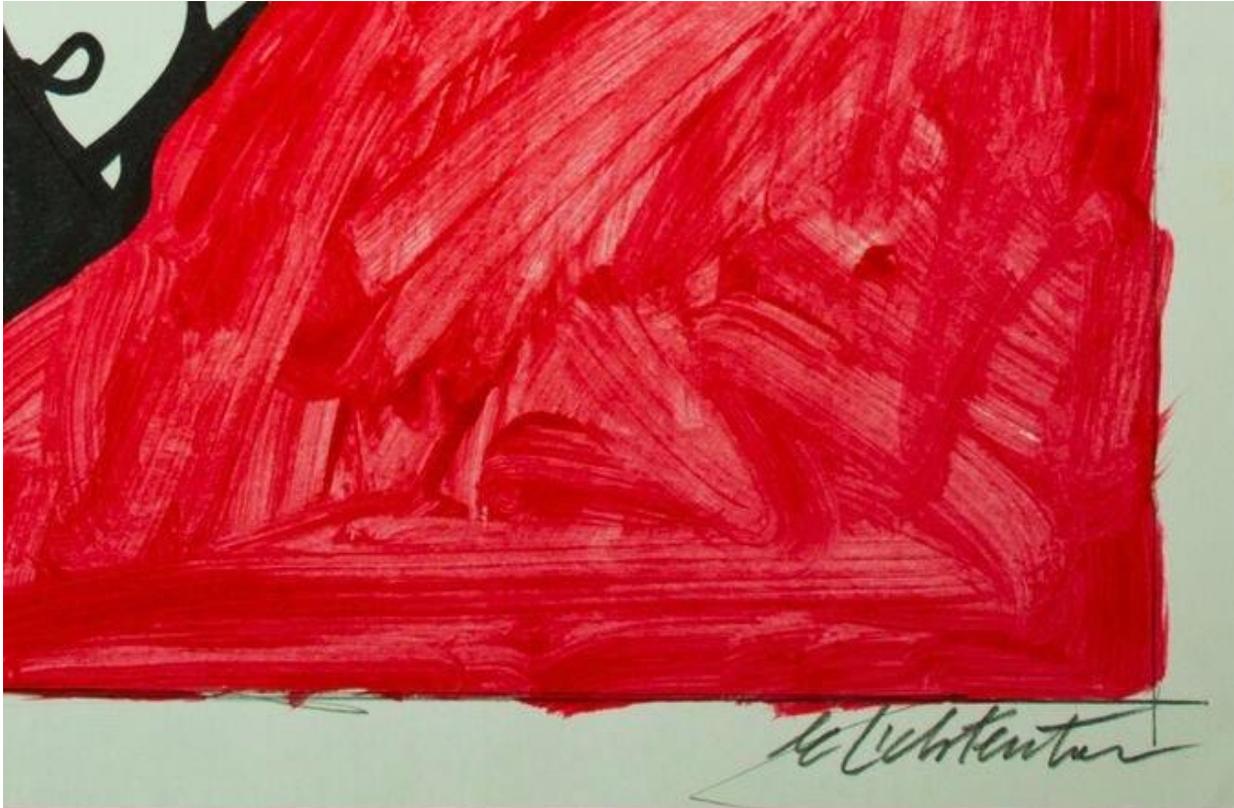
By examining the front and verso of the subject work, it can be seen that the drawing of the arm and pointed finger were created with a felt-tip marker. It is obvious that the work is an original study and not a print or reproduction. The red background was applied with a water-based paint. The background is washy and uneven, unlike the solid-red background seen in the “Finger Pointing” posters and prints.

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## SIGNATURE ANALYSIS



Subject work, signature detail

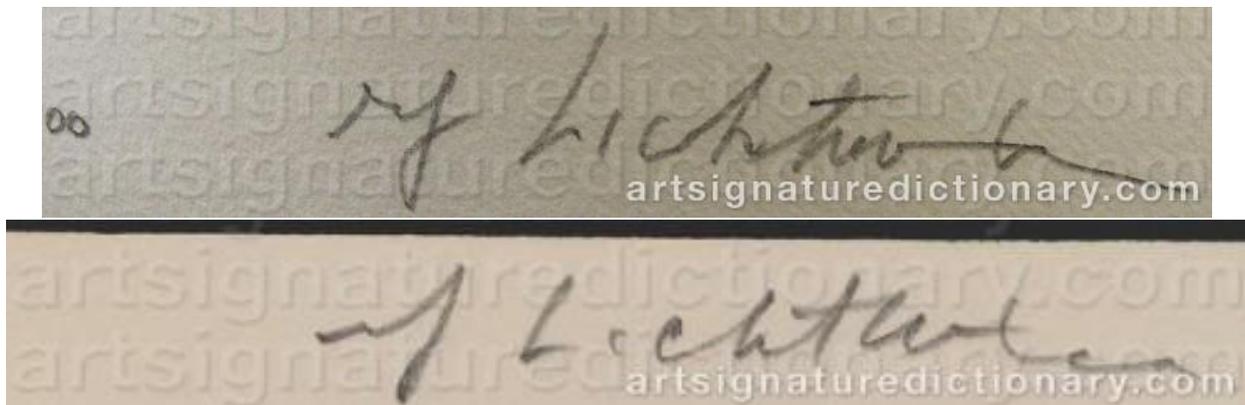
The subject work is signed on the lower-right corner of the work in the border margin, not within the image area. The pencil signature does not include any indication of a date.

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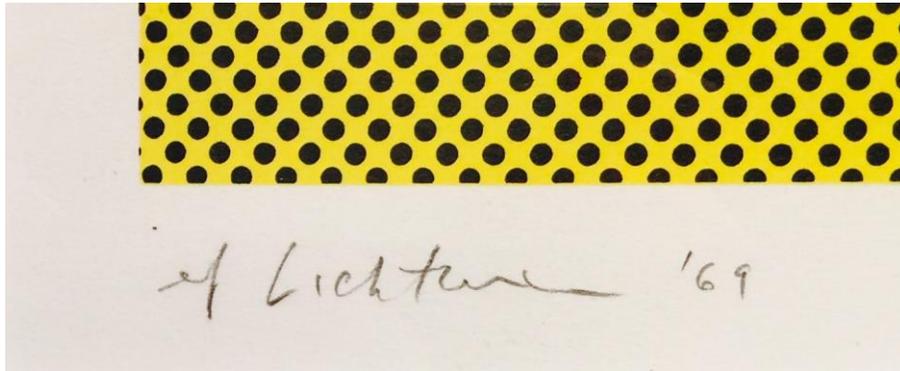
Subject work, signature detail



M. Lichtner

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Comparable signatures for Lichtenstein

Roy Lichtenstein generally signed his name in cursive, writing his first and last name. His first name was often less legible, looking more like an “ry” or “y” the “Roy.” His last name is usually easier to discern, though the first syllable “Licht” is usually the most legible while the last half of the name is less clear. The formation of the “L” in Lichtenstein varies from being more angular to being more rounded, like in the subject work.

In the subject work the signature appears more condensed than in most of the comparable signatures. In the comparable signatures there is more space between the letters in “Lichtenstein.”

Despite slight variations, the general style of the signature in the subject work is similar to authentic versions.

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## comparables: FINGER POINTING



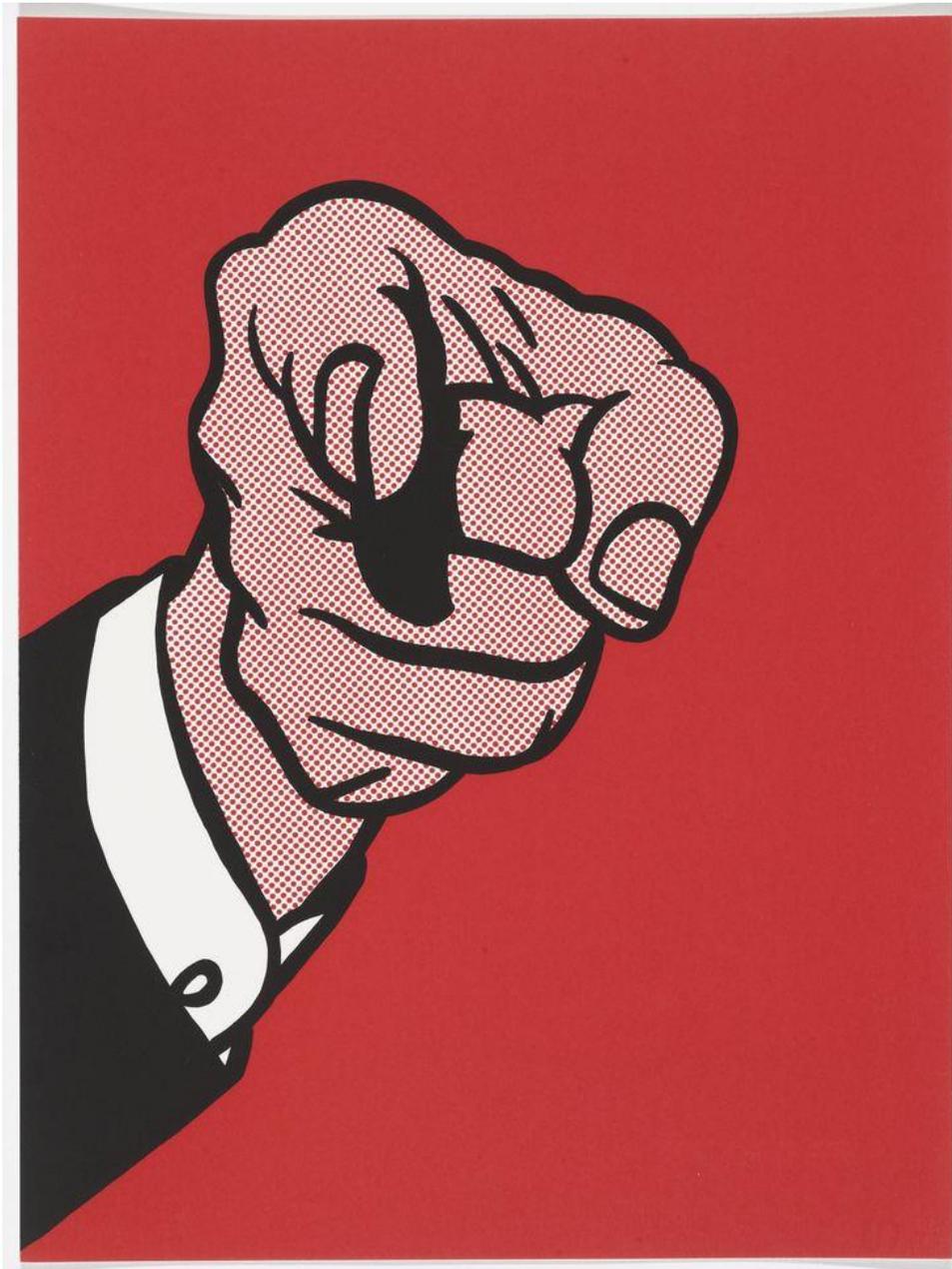
"Finger Pointing" 1961. Graphite, pencil, pochoir, brush and India ink on paper. 76.2 x 57.2 cm. Estate of Roy Lichtenstein

In 1961, Lichtenstein started working with *pochoir*, a stencil process used for making prints or adding color to a printed key illustration. The pochoir technique allows artists and designers to achieve a number of textures, such as Ben-Day dots, without individually drawing each dot.

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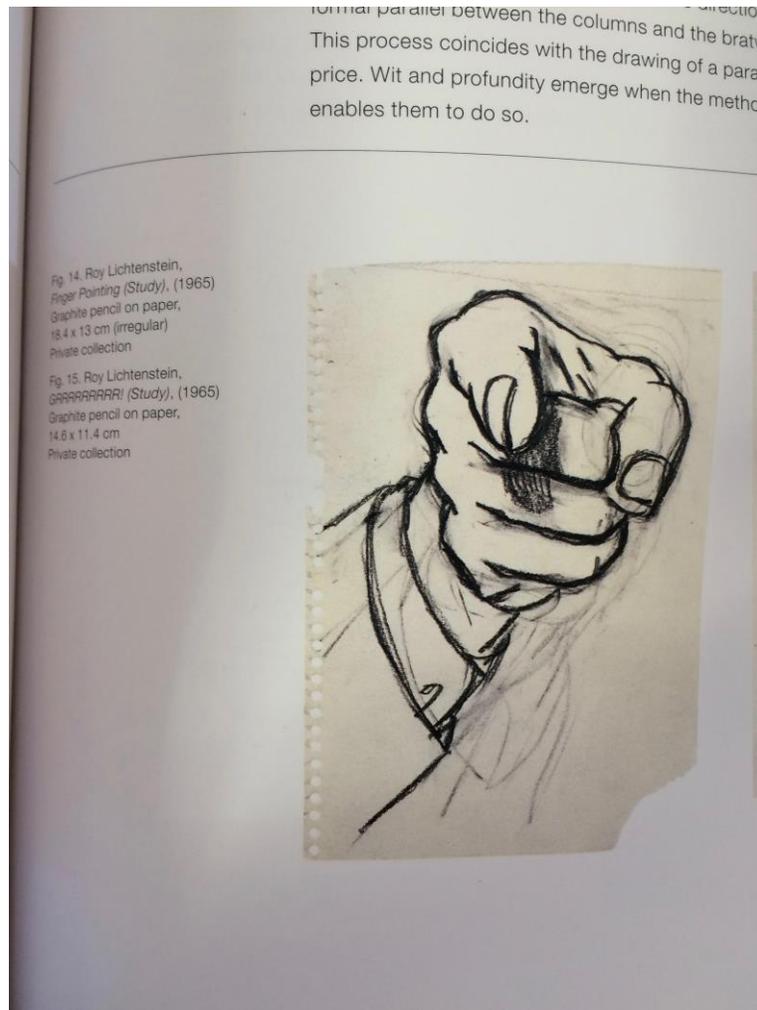


"Finger Pointing" from the New York Collection for Stockholm. 1973. Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Screenprint from a portfolio of seventeen screenprints, nine lithographs, two lithographs with screenprint, one photocopy, and one photograph. Sheet dimensions: 30.3 x 22.8cm x 11 15/16 x 9 in.

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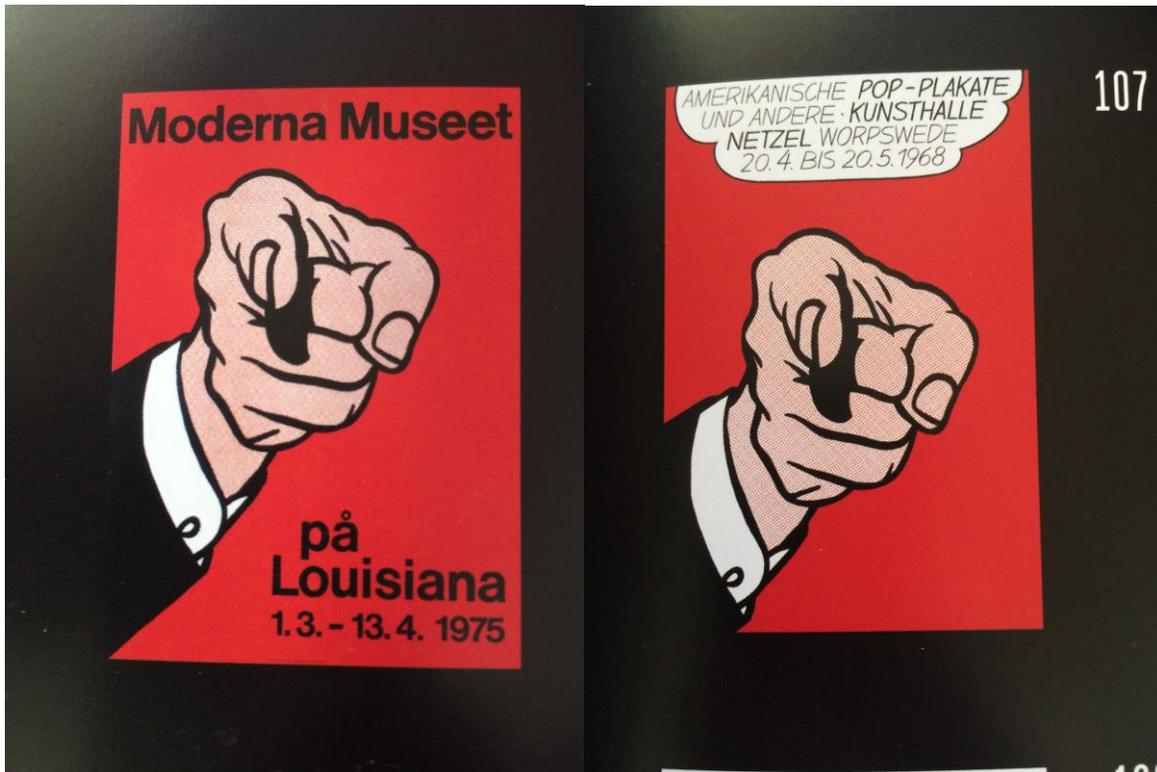


“Finger Pointing” Study 1965. Graphite on paper

Lichtenstein slightly refined his original drawing of “Pointing Finger.” While the original drawing from 1961 is rounded and cartoon-like, the later version is more chiseled and realistic.

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“Finger Pointing” Poster designs: 1964 (left) 1968 (right). Catalog of Roy Lichtenstein Posters.

“Finger Pointing” quickly reached iconic status. The image was reproduced numerous times within Lichtenstein’s career, and continues to be used by graphic artists and pop art historians. The pointed finger, hand and sleeve appear to be the same drawing in all of the posters and in the 1973 print series.

In the posters and the screenprint edition, both the background and the Ben-day dots are printed in red. The half-tone effect created by Ben-Day dots makes the hand appear to be a natural flesh tone, contrasted with the solid red used for the background. In the subject work, black Ben-Day dots are used to shade the hand, creating a gray, half-tone. The background in the subject work is painted red with a diluted gouache or acrylic. The paint is applied unevenly and without precision. The top corner of the composition is left mostly unpainted.

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## COMPARABLE STUDIES

The publication *Roy Lichtenstein, Drawing First*, edited by Danilo Eccher, demonstrated Lichtenstein's process and the importance of drawings and preliminary studies. Lichtenstein did not produce final works without creating numerous sketches and separation drawings. Lichtenstein studies often include collage, ink, marker, graphite, and any other materials necessary to create a blue print for his final work. Like in the subject work, Lichtenstein often drew a graphite border to plot out his composition.



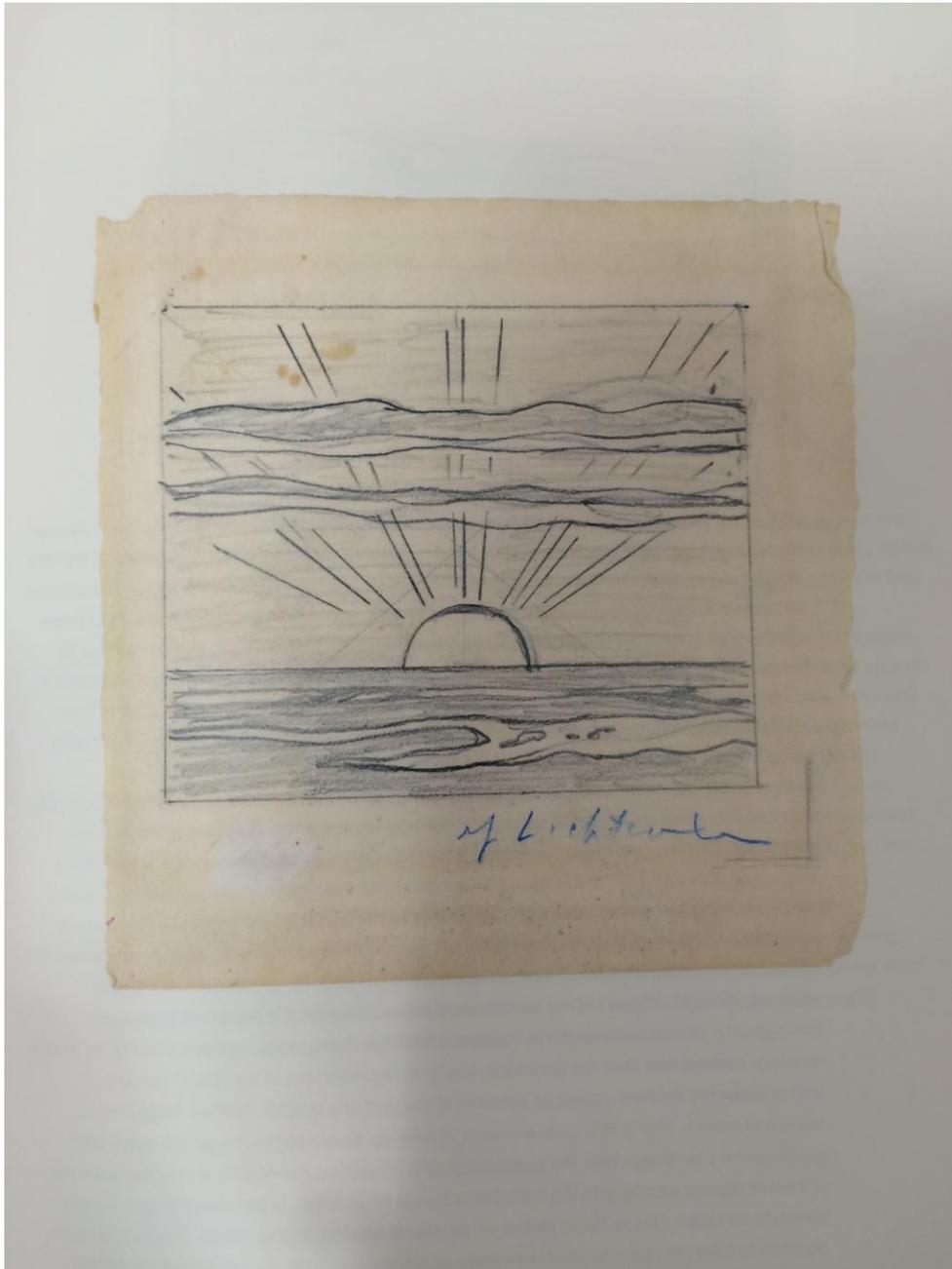
Sunrise: Separation Drawing for Blue, 1965. Black felt-tip pen, collage and graphite on paper. 52.8 x 65.6 cm. National Gallery of Art.

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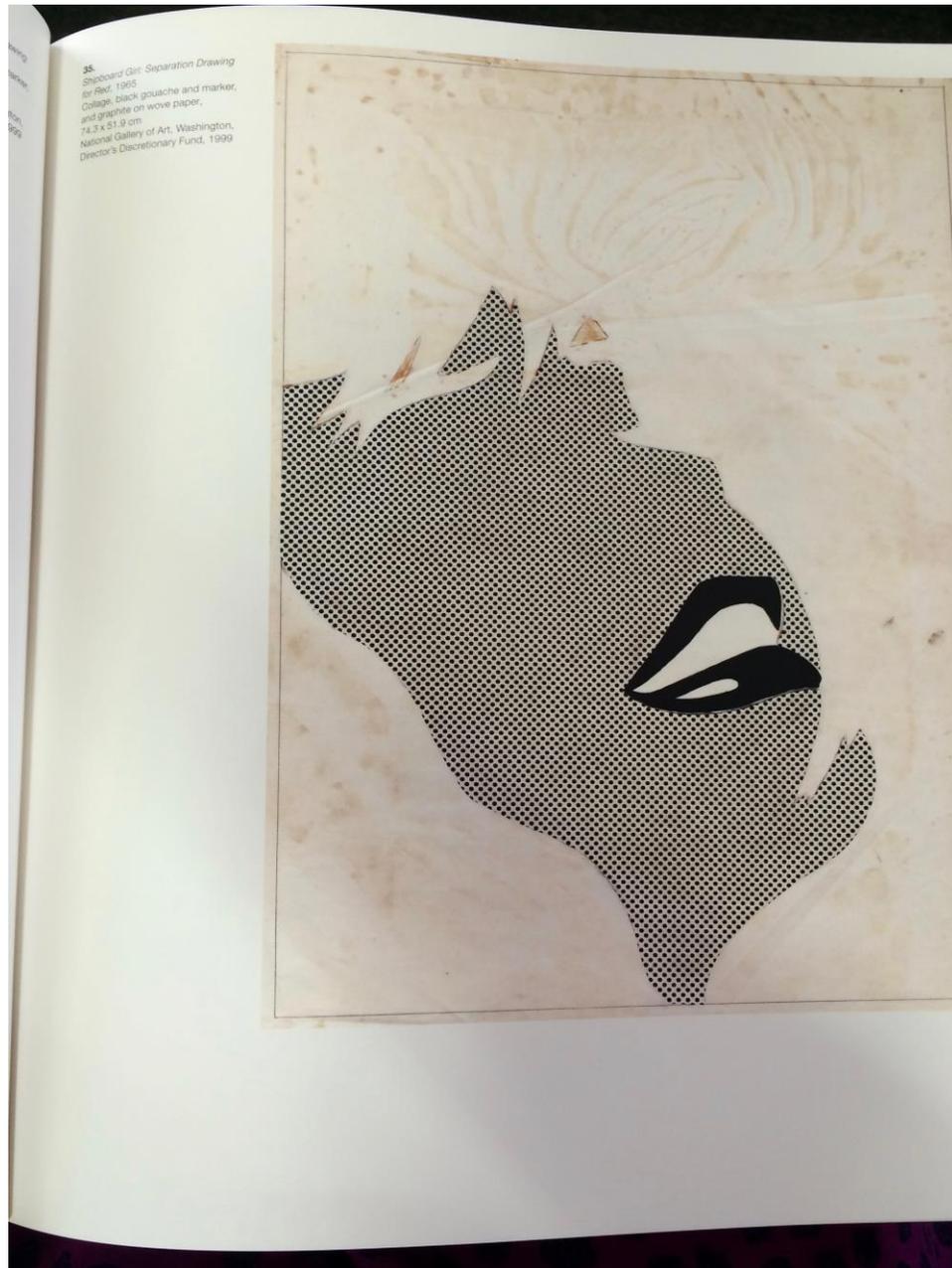
Preparatory sketch. Signed. Source: Roy Lichtenstein, Drawing First

The sketches were often signed, even though they were preliminary studies for large-scale paintings and print editions.

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35.  
Shipboard Girl: Separation Drawing  
for Red, 1965  
Collage, black gouache and marker,  
and graphite on wove paper,  
74.3 x 51.9 cm  
National Gallery of Art, Washington,  
Director's Discretionary Fund, 1999

Shipboard Girl: Separation Drawing for Red. 1965. Collage, black gouache, marker, graphite. National Gallery of Art.

Separation drawings are particularly helpful when planning prints where colors and patterns are applied separately. The layers are then registered and printed onto one sheet. The subject work is not a separation drawing since the red paint, Ben-Day dots and the black outline of the hand and sleeve are all present.

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Study for "Pop!" 1966. Felt-tip marker and printed paper on newsprint. 28 ½ x 22 in. / 72.4 x 55.9 cm. Collection of Marsha and Jeffrey Perelman.  
Copyright Estate of Roy Lichtenstein.

While Lichtenstein's final paintings and prints are known for their graphic nature, with clean edges and solid colors, his studies are less meticulous. In "Study for Pop!" Lichtenstein used markers to sketch out his composition. The red and yellow markers appear to run out of ink in some places, creating an uneven texture. The size of the study is also similar to the size of the subject work, which is a little taller.

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## CONCLUSION

Comparative analysis indicates that the subject work is an authentic study for “Finger Pointing.” The publication, *Roy Lichtenstein, Drawing First*, shows that Lichtenstein made numerous sketches and studies before producing his final works. While some of his studies were simple drawings, made with graphite or colored pencil, the artist also collaged materials, combining Ben-Day dots, marker, ink and gouache. In many of these studies the artists would frame the study with a pencil border, selecting a size and format for his composition.

The subject work is in keeping with Lichtenstein’s style. The drawing of the “Finger Pointing” is identical to the drawing in comparable prints and posters. The partial addition of the red background was possibly a trial, as the earlier version was simply black and white. The date of creation for the subject work is unclear, though it can be presumed that it was created between 1961 and 1973.

Despite the positive comparable analysis the provenance has not been corroborated. The subject work was supposedly purchased in 1987 at a SOHO gallery. While Lichtenstein showed at several galleries in his early years, he mainly showed at Leo Castelli and Gagosian Gallery in New York. Gagosian did not open a gallery in SOHO until 1991. While Leo Castelli was also located uptown, a SOHO location was opened in 1971 on West Broadway. In the 1980s a second SOHO location opened on Greene Street. Further research could reveal whether the subject work was ever purchased from Leo Castelli or a related dealer.

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This report comprises 20 (Twenty) pages.

The Art Research Department at Art Experts