

# CONTEMPORARY ART AND ASIAN COLLECTION

Yayoi Kusama

***Nets-Infinity (TWOS)***

2004

Acrylic on canvas

28 5/8 × 35 13/16 in. (72.7 × 91 cm)

Museum purchase, funds provided by the David A. Cofrin Acquisition Endowment and friends of the Harn Museum

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Yayoi Kusama is a prolific artist who has worked in several media including painting, sculpture, film, performance, and installation. Kusama first studied at the Kyoto School of Arts and Crafts before leaving for New York City in 1958. There she began developing her personal idiom of abstraction, repetition, and accumulation in a series of psychically charged work. By 1962 she was exhibiting widely in Europe and the United States, showing work next to influential artists such as Claes Oldenburg, Andy Warhol, and Jasper Johns. Kusama is considered by some to have anticipated many aspects of pop, minimalism, and postminimalism. Today she is known as one of Japan's most significant postwar artists. Kusama has a consuming interest in proliferating patterns and repetitive shapes. *Nets-Infinity (TWOS)* is part of her bestknown series of works, called "net paintings," abstract works with circular and repetitive patterns that fill the canvas. The painting suggests dualities and cyclical rhythms that in turn suggest infinite dimensions of time and space.

Kusama is audacious and inventive. She produces objects such as chairs, tables, and clothing. Her sculptures and installations involve entire rooms. Many of her sculptures, called *Accumulations*, are covered with organically shaped, hand-sewn protrusions. Kusama's work is obsessive, fed in part by a neurosis she developed under the stress of a difficult home life and the trauma of postwar Japan. In the 1970s she returned to Japan, where she voluntarily committed herself to permanent residence in a psychiatric clinic. Kusama continues to work productively both by revisiting her early themes and by forging fresh territory that still explores subjects of obsession, accumulation, and repetition. She received renewed international attention when she represented Japan in the 45th Venice Biennale in 1993. By the late 1990s she was receiving awards and retrospectives at major museums.

