

ADMISSION IS FREE DIRECTIONS 10:00 TO 5:00



National Gallery of Art



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[Chuck Close](#)

American, born 1940

# *Fanny/Fingerpainting*

1985

oil on canvas

overall: 259.1 x 213.4 x 6.3 cm (102 x 84 x 2 1/2 i

[Gift of Lila Acheson Wallace](#)

1987.2.1

[On View](#)

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he would divide into many smaller units by means of a grid. He then transposed the grid onto a much larger canvas and meticulously reproduced each section of it. The result is a monumental, close-up view that forces an uncomfortable intimacy upon the viewer.

Seen from a distance, the painting looks like a giant, silver-toned photograph that unrelentingly reveals every crack and crevice of the sitter's face. Closer up, the paint surface dissolves into a sea of fingerprints that have an abstract beauty, even as they metaphorically suggest the withering of the sitter's skin with age. The fingerpaintings provide a far more literal record of the artist's touch than most abstract expressionist brushwork -- but are at the same time dictated by an abstract, distinctly impersonal system.

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