A central figure in Abstract Expressionism, Michael Goldberg (American, 1924–2007) began making large, action-packed paintings in 1950. In Miracolo di San Marco, he used a palette knife to rake pigments across a canvas marked with lines rendered in oil stick, creating roughly rendered, geometric forms that appear to leap out toward the spectator. One's eyes cannot rest when viewing this dynamic composition. In addition to having no focal point, the painting's prominent diagonal lines and bright, discordant colors lead the gaze across the entire expanse of its richly textured surface.

Miracolo di San Marco is based on a monumental painting of the same title by the Italian Renaissance painter Jacopo Tintoretto (Venetian, 1519-1594). The red and pink costume elements of three figures in Tintoretto's picture inspired the bismuth-pink, cruciform form just below and to the right of the center of Goldberg's canvas. This painting is the fourth work by Goldberg to enter the permanent collection. Its acquisition honors and continues Joslyn's tradition of supporting the artist, who was the subject of a major monographic exhibition at the Museum in 2003. Miracolo di San Marco is a gift of Laura and Rick Schrager in memory of Phil Schrager.

Praised by his contemporaries for his ability to create striking likenesses of his subjects, Thomas Hudson (British, 1701–1779) was from the mid-1740s until the mid-1750s the leading fashionable portraitist in London. To cater to his enthusiastic clientele, Hudson maintained a busy studio, employing assistants and drapery painters and training a number of prominent portraitists. Commissioned by the sitter, this painting is a half-length portrait of Richard Ray, Esquire (1721–1811), proprietor of the Plashwood estate near Haughley in Suffolk. Ray’s body is turned very slightly to the left, with the face presented in full. He appears clean shaven with long, curly brown hair. His red satin coat and large, white muslin collar, edged with lace and tied with a cord with tassels can be described as Van Dyck dress, after the sumptuous fashions depicted by the Flemish Baroque painter Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), who enjoyed a successful career at the English court in the seventeenth century.

British portraiture has always had a prominent place within Joslyn Art Museum’s collection, beginning with Sarah Joslyn's gift of a painting by Joshua Reynolds (Portrait of Miss Franks, 1766) in 1934. Hudson’s Richard Ray is a gift from longtime museum member Mary Prioreschi. It was purchased in 1979 by her late husband, Dr. Plinio Prioreschi, a great admirer of British painting. Mary shared that he would be delighted that Richard Ray will be displayed within Joslyn's gallery of eighteenth-century European art.