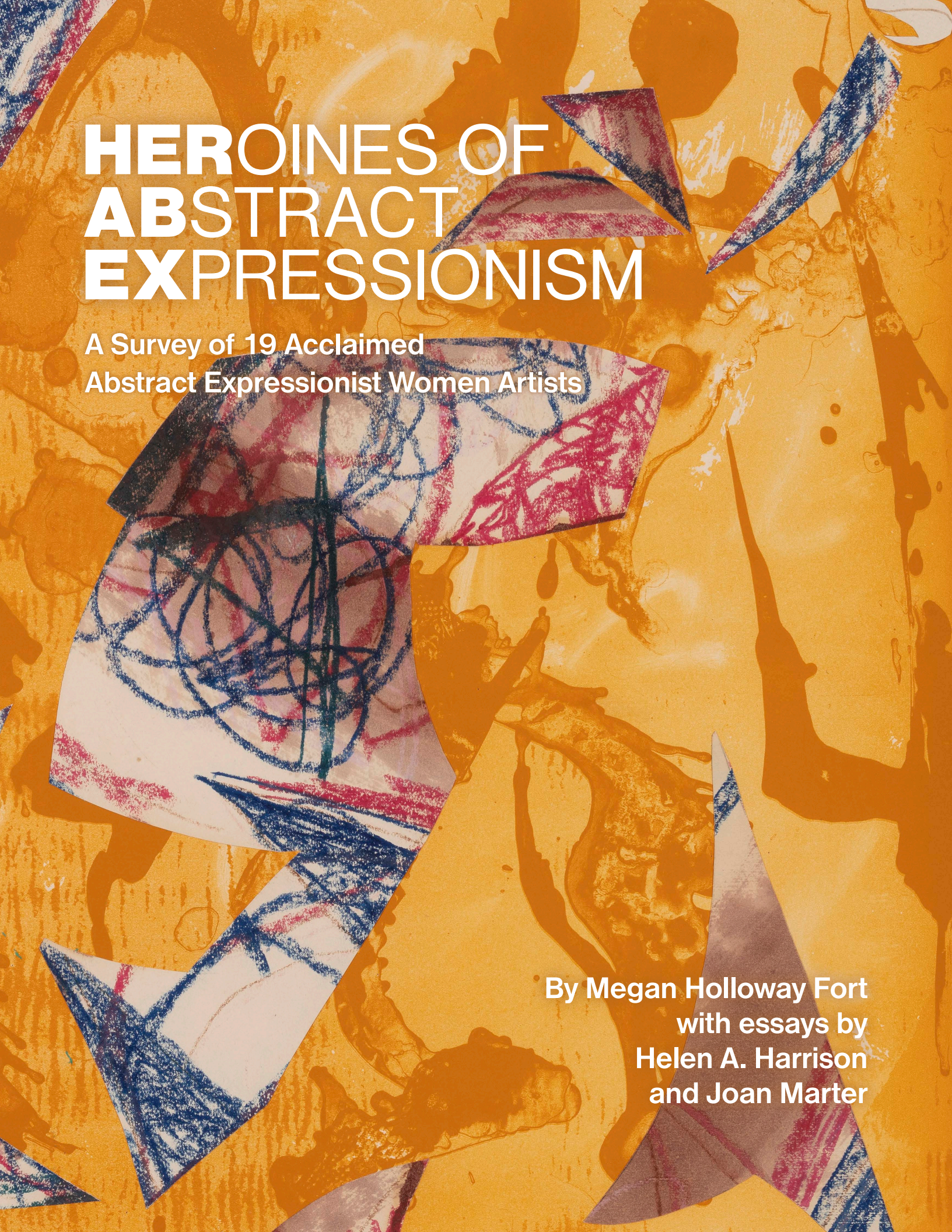

HEROINES OF ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONISM

A Survey of 19 Acclaimed Abstract Expressionist Women Artists

By Megan Holloway Fort
with essays by
Helen A. Harrison
and Joan Marter

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Heroines of Abstract Expressionism

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Rick Friedman
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EDITOR
Rick Friedman

AUTHOR
Megan Holloway Fort

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS
Helen A. Harrison
Joan Marter

DESIGN
Adam D. Smith
Seven Thirteen Creative, Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY
Gary Mamay

DIRECTOR OF EXHIBITIONS, Fenimore Art Museum
Christine Rossi

COPY EDITOR
Martha M. Membrino

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Photo by Gary Mamay

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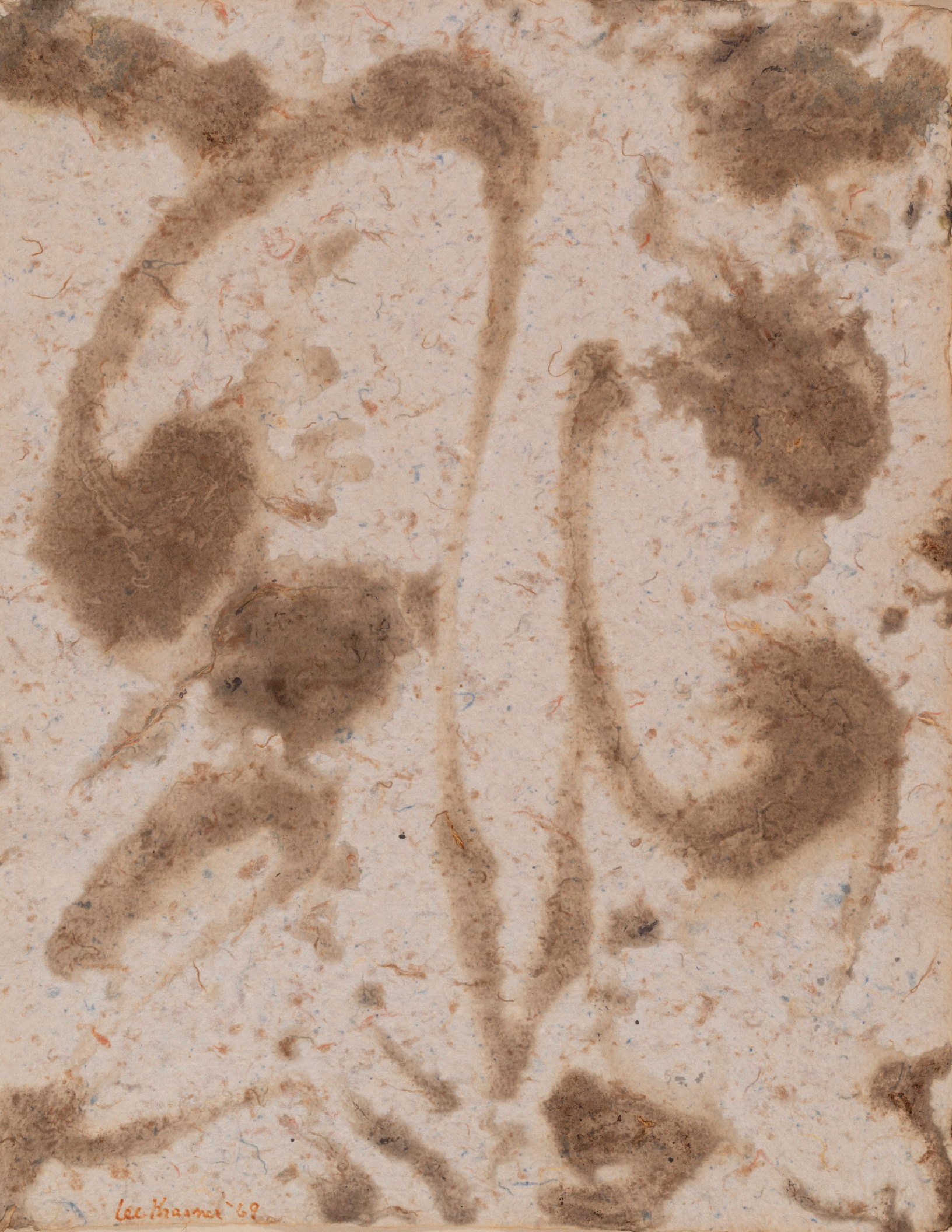
Black painted plaster on a wood base
Photo by Gary Mamay


Lee Krasner '69

“I never met a painting from the 1950s I didn’t like.”

Rick Friedman

When Cindy Lou Wakefield and I started our collecting journey fifteen years ago, we were focused on more than women painters of this era. We were, however, greatly inspired by Helen Harrison’s landmark book, *Hamptons Bohemia*, which gave us the direction, inspiration, motivation, and knowledge to focus on what we smugly like to call “local Hamptons painters.” We soon became intrigued by the Hamptons’ more prominent and influential women painters, like Lee Krasner and Elaine de Kooning.

As we focused on collecting artworks from the 1940s to 1970s era, we were fascinated by the tightly intertwined relationships among the first and second generation painters of the New York School—who knew whom, who was married to whom, who was influenced by whom. This long-winding, interconnected trail led us to collect both upstream and downstream—to the European pioneering masters of the 1930s and 1940s who had a profound influence on many of the AbEx painters of the 1950s. Our journey led us to acquire works by Picasso, Matisse, Ernst, Miro, Matta, Man Ray, and others. During this tireless exploration, and as we “connected the dots” of interconnected artists of the 1940s through 1970s, the path often led us to canvases of women painters. After fifteen years, we were able to extract the women painters from our tightly interwoven collection, and holy cow, we had a substantial, cogent and meaningful show of women artists from the era.

As it turns out, we now have perhaps the widest survey (19) of women abstract expressionists staged in a museum to date, all from one thoughtful, cohesive, and curated collection. So it is with great pleasure that we share a portion of our personal collection with all museum-goers as we place the spotlight on these talented, driven, and perhaps less appreciated heroines of Abstract Expressionism.

Elaine de Kooning, *Portrait of Bill,* c. 1953, Ink on paper

Today it seems that the pendulum has swung, and these once undervalued women painters are now red hot in the art world. As we enter 2020, the value of their best works is skyrocketing. They may soon achieve an equal place with, or even surpass, the work of men’s painters of that era in terms of recognition, esteem, and value.

As Steven Jobs often said, “the journey is the reward,” and for us, he was correct. ■

Left: Lee Krasner, *Earth No. 7,* 1969, Gouache on Howell paper

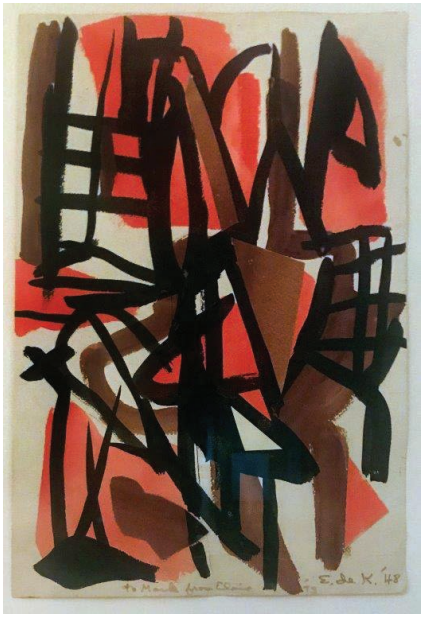
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the art world, publishing, collecting, and exhibiting require strong collaboration. I want to thank the many talented and highly driven professionals who became part of the team that made this exhibit and its corresponding catalog a reality.

First, my main driver, motivator, and visionary in collecting is Cindy Lou Wakefield. It began on our first date, when we met for lunch and discussed a children's publication about Jackson Pollock that she was coordinating with the Pollock-Krasner House. Cindy has an astute eye and instinctive understanding of quality, value, and potential. Her smile, quick glance, and positive nod seals the deal on most transactions. Without her everlasting devotion, commitment, and love for 1950s-era art, this art collection and publication would not be possible. Together, it's been a joyous fifteen-year journey of "go sees."

Next, I am delighted to recognize the writing contributions of two of the most esteemed art historians of our time, Joan Marter and Helen Harrison. Dr. Marder has written, curated, championed, and chronicled women's art for more than three decades—long before it was fashionable.

Helen Harrison, the Hamptons resident go-to art expert, has subjectively and objectively evaluated and chronicled the Abstract Expressionist movement while actually living within it, overseeing the famed Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center for Stony Brook University. Her seminal book, *Hamptons Bohemia*, propelled us to act on the notion of collecting local Hamptons' painters. What I found inspirational is that both of these esteemed, well-published academic historians personally knew and worked with many of the artists featured in this exhibit.



Elaine de Kooning, *Collage,* 1948

I also want to thank renowned artist Audrey Flack for graciously allowing me to interview her. As one of the last surviving woman artists and member of the 1950s Abstract Expressionist era, and as one who personally knew, painted, and showed with many of the artists in the show—including the 1956 Stable Gallery show in New York City—she shared some candid observations and valuable insights. Her 1951 artwork is included in this exhibit.

We would like to give special thanks to art historian Megan Fort for her intelligent, insightful, and well-researched text that provides the backbone of the show and the catalog.

I want to thank my longtime art director, Adam Smith, for his intelligent design of this publication. As I have often said, if he weren't so gifted, we would be in trouble." I also thank copy editor Martha Membrino for her conscientious review of the exhibit and catalog text, and respected expert art photographer Gary Memay for his precise capture of all the works in this book.

Finally, our whole-hearted thanks go to Paul D'Ambrosio, president and CEO of Fenimore Art Museum, and Chris Rossi, the director of exhibitions, along with her hard-working team. Their ongoing vision, belief, and enthusiasm for this exhibit made it happen. ■

August 2019
Rick Friedman

Michael West, *Still Life,* 1957, Oil on canvas

New York School Women Rising

Helen A. Harrison

A series of recent exhibitions—from *Women of Abstract Expressionism*, which originated at the Denver Art Museum in 2016, and *Making Space: Women Artists and Postwar Abstraction,* at the Museum of Modern Art in 2017*,* to major solo shows devoted to Helen Frankenthaler, Elaine de Kooning, Lee Krasner, and Joan Mitchell—as well as biographies of Krasner, Mitchell, de Kooning, and Grace Hartigan, and Mary Gabriel's compendium, *Ninth Street Women*, have significantly raised the profile of female artists who came of age during the heyday of Abstract Expressionism. This groundswell of interest has been promoted by academic scholars and curators seeking to revise and broaden our view of the post-World War II avant-garde, by younger artists looking for role models, and by collectors eager to discover ignored or underappreciated works of high quality. The fact that these women are now being given the attention and recognition they deserve is an overdue corrective.

The paradox is that many of them, including almost all of those in the current exhibition, have long been represented in important museum collections, which often acquired their work early on. Irene Rice Pereira's 1940 mixed-media work on paper, *Exploration with a Pencil*, entered MoMA's collection in 1941. Louise Bourgeois has been collected in depth by MoMA, which owns primarily her graphics but also several sculptures, among them *Sleeping Figure*, made in 1950, which was purchased the following year. Numerous similar examples in *Making Space*, which featured nearly a hundred works by more than fifty female artists—with canvases by Krasner, Frankenthaler, Hartigan, and Mitchell—illustrated the richness of MoMA's holdings.

Nor was MoMA the only New York City museum collecting work by contemporary female artists in the mid-twentieth century. At the Whitney Museum of American Art, paintings by Mitchell, Krasner, Frankenthaler, Hartigan, Hedda Sterne, Ethel Schwabacher, Jane

Helen Frankenthaler, *Orient Express #5*, 1977
Acrylic and collage on paper

Wilson, Mercedes Matter, and Perle Fine, made between 1951 and 1967, were all acquired within a year or two of their creation, as were sculptures by Bourgeois and Louise Nevelson. Even earlier, in 1944 the Metropolitan Museum of Art bought Pereira's *Green Depth*, painted the same year, and in the 1950s added Sterne and Hartigan to the collection, which also includes paintings by Krasner, de Kooning, Mitchell, Frankenthaler, and Jane Freilicher, and sculpture by Nevelson and Dorothy Dehner.

Nevertheless, the tendency of museums that collect and interpret the New York School has been to focus on a narrowly defined canon of primarily white male artists, to the exclusion of their female counterparts. Unfortunately, acquisition seldom translates into exposure. Owning the art is one thing, showing it is another. To have one's work validated by august institutions only to see it vanish into storage has professional as well as personal consequences; it's both dispiriting and a signal that the unseen art is less worthy than what's on view in the galleries. That is true for male as well as female artists, but overall the women have gotten shorter shrift, and they are far outnumbered by men in museum holdings and solo exhibitions.

Coupled with the lack of institutional exposure has been the dearth of coverage in art history texts, which have

rendered female artists all but invisible. That the women of the New York School persevered in the face of such neglect, either benign or deliberate, is a testament to their tenacity. Whether pursuing abstract approaches or, like Freilicher and Wilson, working in more representational modes, they needed strength of character and the courage to follow their chosen path, knowing that the deck was stacked against them.

A 2017 Maastricht University study demonstrated that even now there is "strong evidence for discrimination against female artists in the market for fine art." According to the study, under 14 percent of living artists represented by galleries are women. Sixty years ago, the percentage was even lower. This is essentially a marketplace phenomenon, not based on qualitative judgment. It also echoes systemic inequity. As the Maastricht study concluded, "The art market reflects broader biases both in the art world and in the real world."[1]

The auction market, however, has seen a remarkable upsurge in prices for work by women. As reported in the August 2019 issue of *In Other Words*, an online magazine, a twenty-year survey by Sotheby's Mei Moses tracking service found that, although "male artists have consistently captured more than 90 percent of the total market by volume and 93 percent by value," women outperformed men on the resale market by a wide margin. With a dwindling supply of work by the top New York School men, "the market (dealers and auction houses alike) has begun to focus buyers' attentions on the work of their more historically overlooked or undervalued contemporaries,"[2] including female artists like Frankenthaler, Mitchell, and Krasner, all of whom set auction records in the past two years.

Does this mean that art by New York School women has, like fine wine and old fiddles, gotten better with age? Of course not. What it does mean is that their work was excellent to begin with, only the dealers, critics, and collectors allowed their judgment to be clouded by the artists' gender. Ironically, while museums were more clear-eyed, their imprimatur has been far less influential than might have been expected, since art by men still takes up the vast majority of exhibition space. Women will continue to occupy a marginal position until their works are fully integrated into the collection galleries and exhibition programs, not in a token way, but as a result of reasoned curatorial decisions. Krasner spoke for many of her generation—and indeed for artists in general—when she insisted that the only criterion for judging art is whether or not it's any good. ■


Credit: Steve Joyce

Helen A. Harrison, the Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Director of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center in East Hampton, New York, is a former art reviewer and feature writer for the *New York Times* and visual arts commentator for National Public Radio. Among her many publications are *Hamptons Bohemia: Two Centuries of Artists and Writers on the Beach*, co-authored with Constance Ayers Denne, and two mystery novels set in the art world.

1 Julia Halperin, "The 4 Glass Ceilings: How Women Artists Get Stiffed at Every Stage of Their Careers," *artnet News, 15 December 2017.* https://news.artnet.com/market/art-market-women-1615090?utm_content=from_&utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Saturday

2 Michael Klein, "Where Women Outpace Men in the Market, *In Other Words, 1 August 2019.* https://www.artagencypartners.com/is-there-demand-for-female-artists-at-auction/

A Closer Look at the Prominent Women of Abstract Expressionism

Joan Marter

This exhibition brings deserved attention to nineteen women of Abstract Expressionism, and features a larger number of outstanding painters and sculptors of this group than any previous show. Why should we take a closer look at these heroines of the New York School at this time?

Decades after Abstract Expressionism was heralded as an internationally recognized movement of the 1950s, critics began to acknowledge that women artists also had serious careers. The new attention to women artists has been aided by the feminist movement of the 1970s, and continues recently with the #MeToo movement. The time is long overdue to give greater recognition to the women who painted alongside the men associated with Abstract Expressionism. These women are the contemporaries—and sometimes wives—of the renowned men, and their innovations have similar intellectual and artistic roots.

Louise Nevelson, *Dancer*, 1946
Black painted plaster on a wood base

Some of these artists, notably Lee Krasner, Perle Fine, and Elaine de Kooning, already were painting in an Abstract Expressionist idiom in the 1940s. Excellent paintings, works on paper, and sculpture were produced by women associated with Abstract Expressionism, including Mary Abbott, Charlotte Park, Michael West, Irene Rice-Pereira, and Ethel Schwabacher.

Were there reasons, socially and culturally, for marginalizing women who were active as Abstract Expressionists? If the male painters negotiated visual metaphors for disorder, chaos, and other issues of postwar America, women artists share this language. Such artists as Joan Mitchell, Grace Hartigan, and Helen Frankenthaler certainly can be identified with "heroic" painting. Louise Nevelson, Louise Bourgeois, and Dorothy Dehner were among the most innovative sculptors of the postwar years.

In the 1950s, a few articles were published that acknowledged women as part of a new direction in American art. Irving Sandler wrote his perceptive "Joan Mitchell Paints a Picture" in *Art News* (October, 1957). Sandler singled out Mitchell as one of the best artists of her generation and was willing to identify her paintings with the New York School. In his serious and respectful assessment of her art, accompanied by photos of the artist at work, Sandler claimed that Mitchell assimilated

Dorothy Dehner, *Frost on the Pane*, 1948, Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper

some of the methods of Arshile Gorky, Willem de Kooning, and Franz Kline, and she experienced "a kindred involvement with space." Mitchell was compared to the "elders of Abstract Expressionism." Sandler noted, "She not only appreciates the early struggle of the older painters whose efforts expedited acceptance for those following them, but finds a number of qualities in their work that have a profound meaning for her."

Younger women, such as Mitchell, Helen Frankenthaler, and Grace Hartigan, who were born in the 1920s and began exhibiting in the 1950s, were more easily championed by the "elders" of Abstract Expressionism and their critics. For these women came to their artistic maturity at a time when the famed Abstract Expressionists were already well established, and the women could be more acceptably considered as disciples. For example, when *The New American Painting,* an exhibition organized by the International Program of the Museum of Modern Art, traveled to eight European countries, only one woman was included in the show—Grace Hartigan.

Women such as Lee Krasner, Perle Fine, and Hedda Sterne were born into the same generation as the men identified as Abstract Expressionists, and were not included in the earliest writings and exhibitions about the movement. *Abstract Expressionism: The Formative Years*,

Elaine de Kooning, *Cave #24 Red Oxide Wall,* 1984, Acrylic and collage on paper mounted on canvas

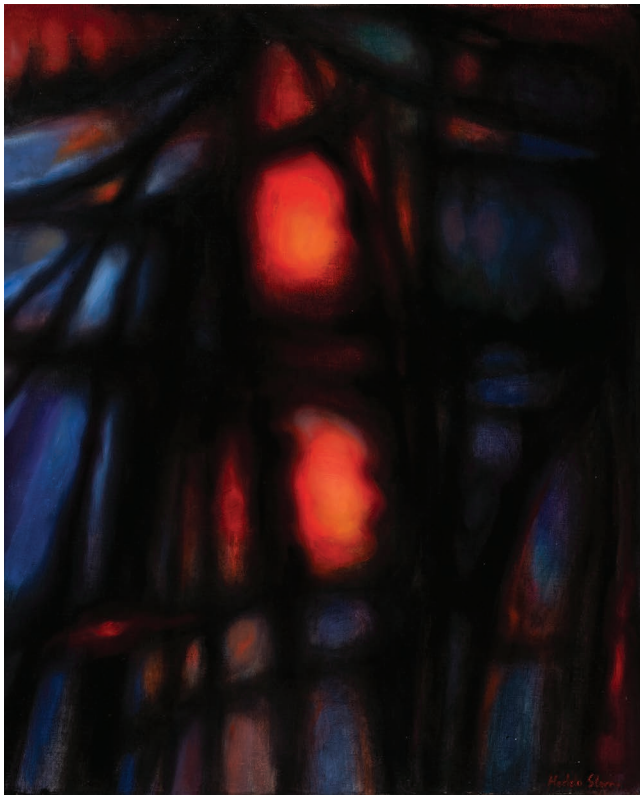
at the Whitney Museum of American Art, reclaimed Lee Krasner for the group in 1978. But in 1987, the recognition of women's achievements had not improved significantly. In the acclaimed *Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments* at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Lee Krasner remained the only woman artist to be included. In 2008, the Jewish Museum organized *Action/Abstraction, Pollock, de Kooning and American Art, 1940–1976*, which did include six women artists. In 2016 the Denver Art Museum organized *Women of Abstract Expressionism*. Of the twelve women who were included in this exhibition, three were from the Bay Area and were students of Clyfford Still. The extensive catalogue that I edited included biographical essays on forty-two women artists, and a full-scale timeline for exhibitions and other events related to women artists. Most of the women appropriate to the roll call of Abstract Expressionism, including Dorothy Dehner, Perle Fine, Lee Krasner, Michael West, and Ethel Schwabacher, were born in the first decade of the twentieth century and were middle-aged in the 1950s. Like their male counterparts identified as first generation Abstract Expressionists, they were practicing artists in the 1930s. Some women such as Mary Abbott, Mercedes Matter, Michael West, and Dorothy Dehner studied at the Art Students League. In 1932, Hans Hofmann taught at the Art Students League, and his students, both at the League and later, included Mercedes Matter, Louise Nevelson, Irene-Rice Pereira, Lee Krasner, and Perle Fine. The careers of these women followed a similar

course: although they had exhibited regularly in group and solo shows, they struggled to establish their identity separate from other defining circumstances. For Lee Krasner and Elaine de Kooning, their positions as wives of artists at the forefront of Abstract Expressionism impeded acceptance on their singular merits. Krasner's critical recognition postdates Jackson Pollock's death in 1956. Elaine de Kooning, who wrote art criticism for *Art News* beginning in 1948, was recognized primarily as a writer. Throughout the 1950s, Ethel Schwabacher was preparing a book on Abstract Expressionism. Although this project was never completed, she did publish a biography of Arshile Gorky in 1957.

All of these women were seriously committed to their art and sought critical attention for their work. Some of them attended meetings at the Eighth Street Club, a gathering place for artists associated with the New York School. Lectures and panel discussions were organized, and ideas were freely exchanged among the members, including debates on Abstract Expressionism as an appropriate name for their art. For example, on March 7, 1952, a group of younger painters, including Jane Freilicher, Grace Hartigan, and Joan Mitchell, participated in a panel discussion on Abstract Expressionism. Perle Fine set up her studio on Tenth Street by the late 1940s and was associated with the nascent Abstract Expressionists. She was one of the first women to join The Club. During the 1950s, these women artists were included in the Ninth Street Show and annual exhibitions at the Stable Gallery. Among those exhibited in the Ninth Street Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture of May–June, 1951, were Elaine de Kooning, Perle Fine, Grace Hartigan, and Lee Krasner. Audrey Flack exhibited at the Stable Gallery show of 1956. As a young art student, she was introduced to artists in The Club by her teacher at Cooper Union, Nicolas Marsicano. However, most of these women were only included in group shows in the 1950s—before the Abstract Expressionists became acknowledged internationally and began to sell their work to museums and collectors.

In subsequent decades, women active in the 1950s eagerly sought to be recognized as Abstract

Basketball Players, 1960, Acrylic and gouache on paper mounted on canvas

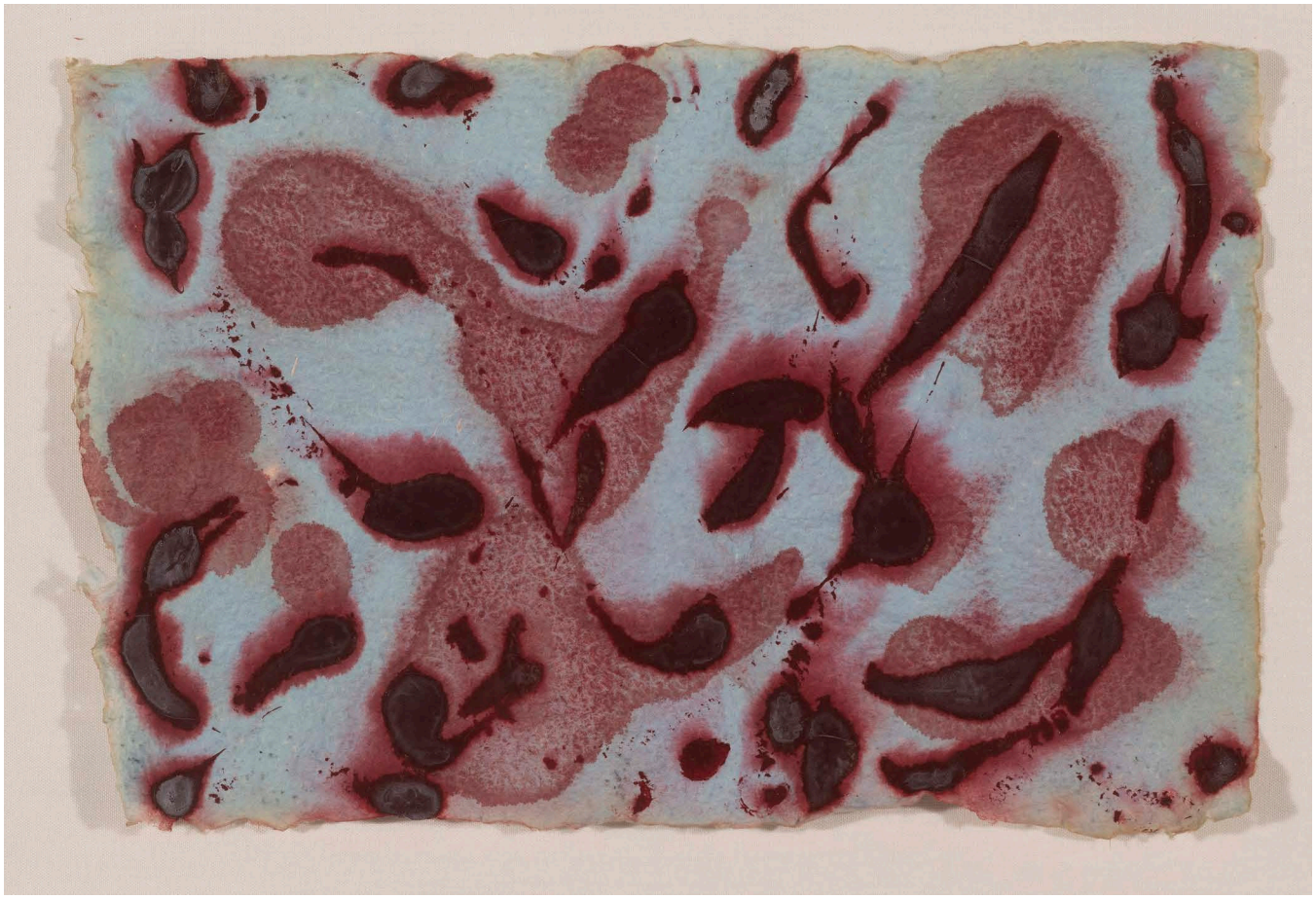


Hedda Sterne, *Untitled,* 1955, Oil on canvas

Expressionists, but they had limited success until recently. Curators of exhibitions followed the practice of art historians and critics who identified this movement with male artists. In her lifetime, Lee Krasner did not experience the acclaim that her artistic achievements deserved. She struggled to secure a separate identity during her years with Pollock. In June 2019—long after her death in 1984—Krasner was given a solo exhibition at the Barbican Art Gallery in London. This show will travel to Germany, Switzerland, and Spain in the coming year. The time has come to reassesses women's role within the Abstract Expressionist movement. This opportunity to see works created by women active in the 1940s and 1950s affirms that these artists participated in a radical new art. Their stellar accomplishments have designated them as heroines. ■

Right: Michael West, *Untitled,* 1957, double-sided, oil on paper

Joan Marter is editor-in-chief of the *Woman's Art Journal*, and distinguished professor emerita, Rutgers University. She co-organized *Women of Abstract Expressionism* at the Denver Art Museum in 2016. She is also the editor of *Bold Gestures: Women and Abstract Expressionism,* Yale University Press, (2018), *Grove Encyclopedia of American Art*, 5 Volumes, (2011), and *Abstract Expressionism, The International Context* (2007).



Lee Krasner, *Seed no. 3*, 1969, Gouache on Howell paper

A Conversation with Audrey Flack

August 2019

Audrey Flack is an internationally recognized painter and sculptor, and a pioneer of Photorealism. Her works reside in many of the leading museums in the nation, including MoMA, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Solomon R. Guggenheim, The Whitney Museum of American Art, and National Museum of Women in the Arts. She was the first woman artist, along with Mary Cassatt, to be included in *Janson's History of Art*. Flack and Mary Abbott are the only living artists represented in the catalog.

— Rick Friedman

In 1951 you painted* Weehawken Ledger*, which appears in the show. Why, with your numerous talents, did you create it in an abstraction manner?

Abstract Expressionism was in the air. I had a studio on Eighth Street and Third Avenue, right in the middle of the explosion. I went to the Cedar Bar and the Artists Club, and just walking down the street you met all the artists. Abstract Expressionism meant working intrinsically from within. You had the freedom to experiment, deal with your inner self, and catch the power of that moment. But along with Abstract Expressionism, I always really wanted to draw like the Old Masters. I learned from them and copied their work. My sketchbook from Yale shows mostly abstract sketches but a good deal of representational drawings. It is part of human nature to want to see human images, a deep-seated need to reproduce yourself.

Who were your motivators in the early 1950s, and who has been an inspiration since?

My painting teacher at Cooper Union, Nick Marsicano, was a key figure. Although he never achieved fame in his lifetime, he was great teacher and a good friend of Jackson Pollock. He was an influential member of the famed Artists Club. You had to be invited to the club (no one could just walk in), and Marsicano brought me and introduced me around.

Milton Glaser and Ed Sorrel and the rest of the Push Pin group were my classmates at Cooper Union. Alex Katz was a senior, and his then-wife Jean and I became good friends. Franz Klines' work inspired me. When he stopped in front of my painting at a Tanager Gallery opening and told me how much he liked it, it meant the world to me. I remember his words to this day.

You were included in the 1956 Stable Gallery show. What was your reaction and with whom were you proud to be showing?

I was excited to be included. I would be among artists I admired—Kline, de Kooning, and Pollock. The Stable Gallery show accepted my work without seeing it, and when they realized it was a transitional figurative work they hung it far back in the gallery. Figurative painting was not acceptable then. That painting was subsequently sold by Ruth Klingman (Pollock's girlfriend who survived the car crash that killed him) to the French actor and mime artist Marcel Marceau.

Which artists were your closest friends in the 1950s and 60s?

I was friendly, gregarious, but a loner. I remember one night when Jackson Pollock stumbled over to my table. I was sitting alone in the back of the Cedar Bar. I was in awe of this man; he was one of my heroes. I wanted to talk to him about his work, about art. But Jackson was drunk, and so needy, so distraught, so sad, he only wanted to do one thing, grope me. After my refusal to go home with him, we continued talking for quite a while. I walked home alone that night to my fifth floor walk-up apartment on East Twenty-first Street and never returned to the Cedar Bar.

When I got married and had children, I couldn't run to the Cedar Bar. I had responsibilities, I had to care for and feed my children. I had moved to the Upper West Side and became good friends with Philip Pearlstein and his wife, Dorothy, who lived a few blocks away. They had three children of their own, and Dorothy was a helpful mentor. Alice Neel lived in the neighborhood as did artist John Koch and later Richard Estes. Richard and I became close friends in the Photorealist years. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, I became good friends with Grace Hartigan. I influenced Grace to sober up and helped get her a New York gallery. Elaine [de Kooning] talked about art a lot and went watercolor painting every week in East Hampton.

Many of the artists of the time used liquor to motivate them; you did not. What motivated you?

It was the art itself that motivated me. I wanted my art to be taken seriously and respected but in order for that to happen women artists in the mid-1950s had to be tough, hard drinking, and had to act much like the men surrounding them. I didn't like the taste of gin or vodka, and if I drank two whisky sours I would wind up on the floor. I was not a drinker and did not need it to motivate my art. I admired Joan Mitchell's work. I would have liked her as a female mentor but Joan was impossible. Like many of the men artists, she was hard drinking, and there was a violence about her, a violence without reason, which I once experienced. So many of the Abstract Expressionist painters destroyed themselves, going out so far on the limb that they could not get back. They were fueled by alcohol, which was so destructive.

Why do you think you have been able to evolve so gracefully among different art genres and media, and other artists have not?

There is an inner drive that all true artists have. Great works of art inspired and motivated me. I used to and still go to The Met and stand for hours in front of great works. Anyway, there are many aspects to the self. Why not explore them? Moving from Abstract Expressionism to figuration and eventually Photorealism was a long development. It didn't happen overnight.

Rick Friedman with Audrey Flack

May we discuss the voice within you that pushes you to explore new art genres—from Abstraction, figuration, Photorealism, and sculpture to your new work an art historian calls Neo-Pop?

I did what I had to do. I experimented with color and light theory. I worked to achieve technical mastery. There was maybe a ten-year period in the 1970s and 1980s when I was producing terrific work. I was like a tennis player consistently hitting the ball in the middle of the racket. I believe I produced several masterpieces during that period. Or shouldn't they be called **mistresspiec-es**. That may sound egotistical but artists know when they create something over the top.

But to paraphrase Pollock, "Every artist paints who they are." You are who you are, and it comes out in whatever style you are in. What emerges is your persona. In fact, the pioneering New York art historian Francis V. O'Connor (who co-authored the Jackson Pollock catalogue raisonné), said that sculpting was a female activity, related to the Jungian anima and animus. Oh, and by the way, why is mentor named after a man? How about **womentor**.... ■

PREFACE

Heroines of Abstract Expressionism

Megan Holloway Fort, PhD

Women artists played a crucial role in the development of Abstract Expressionism in New York City during the 1940s and 1950s. Marginalized through sexism and discrimination by male artists, art critics, and art dealers, a group of fearless women artists, including Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Hedda Sterne, and Joan Mitchell, made careers for themselves by embracing avant-garde painting. These women joined the conversation about the trajectory of modern American art and showed their work alongside that of their male counterparts in key exhibitions that introduced Abstract Expressionism to a broad audience. But for more than sixty years the significant contributions these women made to the movement were all but forgotten, while works by men such as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning have been canonized in the history of American art. It has taken the dedication of scholars and museum curators—and the commitment of a handful of prescient collectors—to restore these women artists to their rightful place in the history of American art.

Elaine de Kooning, *Portrait of Aristodemas Kaldis,* 1970
Oil on canvas

This exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the collection of Rick Friedman and Cindy Lou Wakefield explores the contributions of a number of postwar American women artists. Their work is a creative response to nature, place, personal history, social history, politics, literature, music, dance, and religion, executed in varied and vivid styles. What emerges is a vision of art made by American modernist women that is diverse, vibrant, energetic, and groundbreaking. The objects on view are both visually mesmerizing and technically complex, demonstrating the various ways in which these artists were pushing themselves in new directions. Clearly women were full participants, not followers, in the early years of the Abstract Expressionism movement.

Heroines of Abstract Expressionism *was organized by Fenimore Art Museum.*
All artwork is from the collection of Rick Friedman and Cindy Lou Wakefield.

Abstract Expressionism

Abstract Expressionism is a uniquely American art movement that originated in New York City in the late 1940s. It was the first specifically American style to achieve international influence, which led to New York replacing Paris as the center of the art world. Postwar New York was the perfect environment for a bold new vision of painting to emerge. Avant-garde artists who had been forced by political and economic upheaval to flee the capitals of Europe settled in the dynamic American city alongside American artists devastated by the horrors of World War II. These artists rejected the status quo, and gathered and worked in classroom studios at the Art Students' League, around tables at the Cedar Tavern in Greenwich Village, in meetings at artists' organizations such as the Eighth Street Club (The Club), and at exhibitions at Betty Parsons and the Stable Gallery.

The style that emerged, Abstract Expressionism, was characterized by experimental, gestural, nonrepresentational painting, often on dramatically large canvases. While it is true that spontaneity, or the impression of spontaneity, characterized many of the Abstract Expressionists' works, most of these paintings involved careful planning and a fine balance of color and form. For some of the artists associated with the movement, abstract art was a means of expressing ideas concerning the spiritual, the unconscious, and the mind. For others, it was a way to explore formal and technical concerns.

First and Second Generation

From 1947 to 1951, a number of Abstract Expressionists, including Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Hans Hofmann, and Mark Rothko, achieved breakthroughs to independent styles. During the following years, these painters, the so-called First Generation of the New York School, received growing recognition nationally and globally. The First Generation included several groundbreaking women—Elaine de Kooning, Lee Krasner, and Hedda Sterne. Younger artists such as Grace Hartigan and Michael West entered the circle in the early 1950s and were known as the Second Generation. They also earned acclaim but significantly less than their first generation peers. While Abstract Expressionism is most closely associated with painting, the sculptors Dorothy Dehner, Louise Nevelson, and Louise Bourgeois were also integral members of the movement.

Lee Krasner

The personal and artistic partnerships between Elaine and Willem de Kooning, who married in 1943, and Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock, who married in 1945, were among the most influential in the history of American art. But while Pollock and Willem de Kooning have always been considered leaders of the Abstract Expressionist movement, their

Irene Rice Pereira, *As In An Entrance the Wind Spreads Its Hand to Entice the Water's Flow,* 1959, Watercolor and gouache on paper

wives' contributions were long overlooked.
It was Krasner who first introduced Pollock to the Greenwich Village avant-garde in 1942, encouraging him to branch out from his then conservative style to explore the international modern idiom that she had already embraced. Born Lenore Krasner in Brooklyn in 1908 to Jewish emigrants from Odessa, Russia, Krasner decided to become an artist at age 13. She studied at the Women's Art School of Cooper Union in New York in 1926, followed by four years of study at the National Academy of Design, where she worked in the traditional academic mode. From 1936 to 1940 she studied with the influential painter Hans Hofmann, who introduced her to European abstraction, Cubism, and other avant-garde styles. Although Krasner's work was rarely totally abstract, it was as international (European) as any produced by the New York School.

Elaine de Kooning

Elaine de Kooning was born Elaine Fried in Brooklyn in 1918. In 1937 she enrolled at the Leonardo da Vinci Art School where she took drawing classes taught by Willem de Kooning. Elaine became Willem's student and occasional model, and they married in 1943. Her early works were still lifes and portraits distinctly influenced by Cubism, but in the mid- to late-1940s she began making abstract paintings as well. In 1948 she was appointed an editorial associate for *ARTnew*s and began publishing art criticism. The de Koonings used themselves as models for their paintings during the 1940s and 1950s, pushing one another stylistically and forcing a reconciliation between modern action painting and the traditional genre of portraiture. The resulting figure paintings by Willem de Kooning are icons of Abstract Expressionism, while Elaine de Kooning's representational portraits earned little acclaim during her lifetime.

Over the course of the past few decades, Krasner and de Kooning have emerged from the long shadows cast by their more famous husbands, as a number of museum exhibitions and scholarly investigations have highlighted their unique and important contributions to the development of Abstract Expressionism.

Rick Friedman and Cindy Lou Wakefield

Collectors Rick Friedman and Cindy Lou Wakefield reside in Southampton, on the East End of Long Island, an area where several Abstract Expressionist painters lived and worked and where their presence can still be felt. It was Wakefield, a freelance writer for the Pollock-Krasner House Study Center in East Hampton, who first encouraged Friedman to explore and seek out work by these artists. Their earliest purchase together was Elaine de Kooning's *Cave #24, Red Oxide Wall,* and Friedman still recalls the strong emotion he felt seeing it on the wall of his home. At the root of his commitment to collecting works by women Abstract Expressionists is a desire to honor these artists for creating work that was as good as that of their more famous male colleagues. And as he learns and discovers more about women artists and their works, his respect for them continues to grow. ■

Cindy Lou Wakefield and Rick Friedman, Southampton, NY

Megan Holloway Fort, PhD, is an independent art historian who has contributed research and writing to numerous art exhibitions and art and antique publications.

MARY **ABBOTT** (b. 1921)

Mary Abbott was raised in a wealthy family in New York City. At a young age, she enrolled in Saturday art classes at the Art Students League, eventually progressing through more advanced courses. In 1946 she rented her own studio on Tenth Street in Greenwich Village, and in 1948 she immersed herself in abstract painting at the experimental Subjects of the Artist School where she studied with Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman.

Soon after, she joined The Club and began frequenting the Cedar Street Tavern to discuss art, philosophy, and ideas with the likes of Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock. Like many of her fellow abstract painters, Abbott considered her canvases to be painterly expressions of her personal experiences. *Bombash* is considered a response to one of her annual winter trips to Haiti and the Virgin Islands.

Bombash, 1949, Ink and gouache, on paper

LOUISE **BOURGEOIS** (1911–2010)

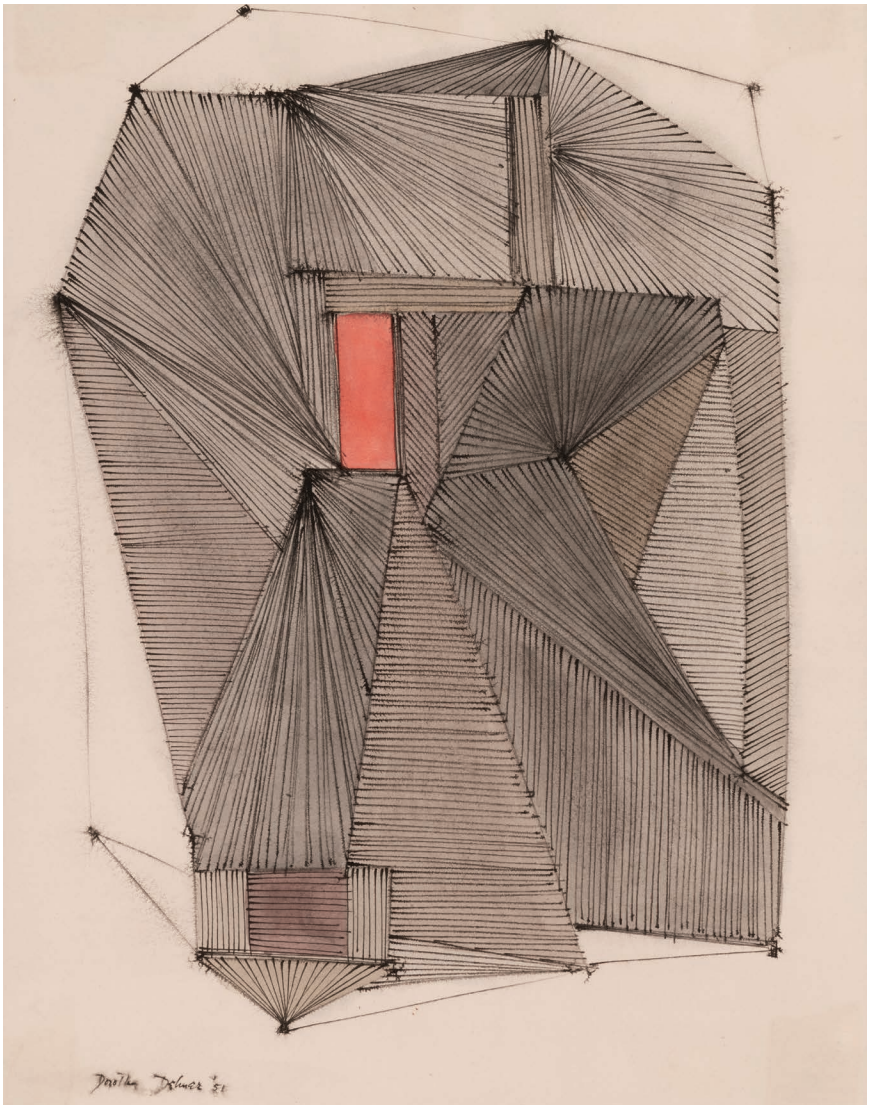
Louise Bourgeois began her career as a painter and engraver, turning to sculpture in the late 1940s. Born in Paris, she studied art at various schools there including the École du Louvre, Académie des Beaux-Arts, Académie Julian, and Atelier Fernand Léger. In 1938 she moved to New York where she continued her studies at the Art Students League, produced prints at Atelier 17, and became friendly with the avant-garde artists Joan Miró and Yves Tanguy. Bourgeois's early sculptures—abstract groupings of elongated, carved wood totems—were influenced by Surrealism. In the early 1960s, she continued to explore Surrealist themes while working in larger sizes and different materials—bronze, carved wood, and rubber latex. *Point of Contact* reflects Bourgeois' signature style, which relies on an intensely personal vocabulary of anthropomorphic forms charged with sexual allusions.

Point of Contact, 1967–1968, Bronze

DOROTHY **DEHNER** (1901–1994)

Of all of the artists represented in this exhibition, Dorothy Dehner is probably the one whom commentators most often discuss as a victim of thwarted ambition. Born in Cleveland, Dehner moved to New York at the age of 21 for a career in the theater. While working Off-Broadway, she began taking classes at the Art Students League where she met painters like Stuart Davis and Arshile Gorky who were pioneering abstraction in the United States. She also met the young sculptor David Smith, whom she married in 1927. Their tumultuous marriage ended in divorce in 1951.

It was then that Dehner began making sculpture—which became her primary medium—and signed with an art dealer. From 1952 until her death in 1994, Dehner had more than fifty solo exhibitions of her work in various media within the United States and executed numerous public art commissions for organizations including the New York Medical College, Rockefeller Center, and the American Telephone and Telegraph Corporation in New York City.



The Red Window, 1951, Ink and watercolor on paper

ELAINE **de KOONING** (1918–1989)

Separated from Willem de Kooning in 1957, Elaine de Kooning left New York for a teaching appointment as visiting professor at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. Throughout her career, de Kooning taught at fifteen colleges and universities and was remembered for her enthusiasm as a teacher and mentor to younger artists. Her time in Albuquerque gave her the opportunity to immerse herself in the unique colors and expansive space of the southwestern landscape, reinvigorating her artistically. In 1958 she traveled to Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, where she saw her first bullfight. The experience inspired a series of bull paintings on horizontal canvases, rendered in a bolder and brighter palette than that of her previous work. Once seized by a particular theme, de Kooning would explore many aspects of it. She continued to explore the subject of bullfights for the next five years.

Standing Bull, 1959, Mixed media on paper

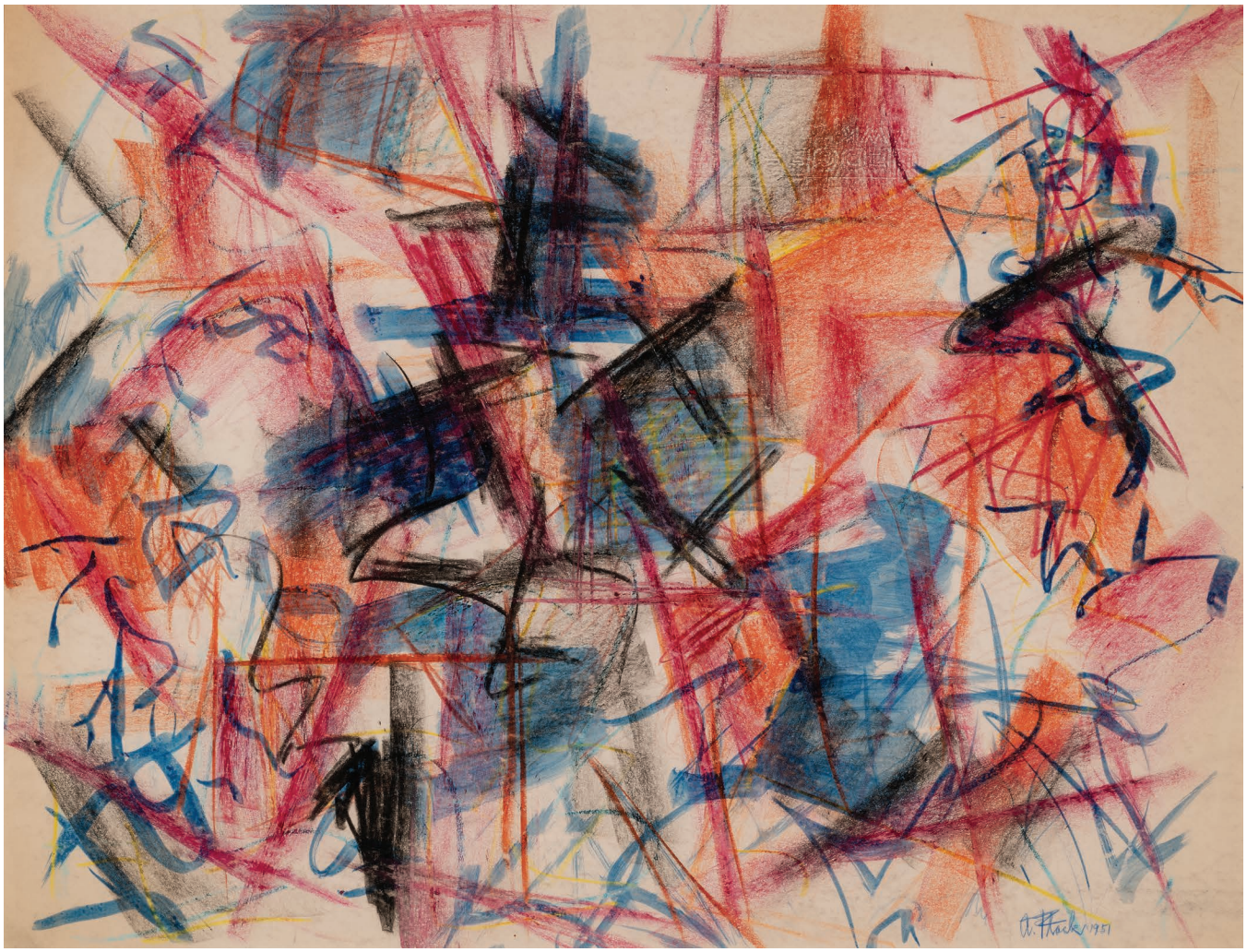
PERLE **FINE** (1905–1988)

Perle Fine's work is distinguished by her commitment to nonobjectivity, fueled by her desire to achieve a pure expression of color and line. The daughter of Russian émigrés, Fine moved to New York in 1929 and studied at the Art Students League and at the Grand Central School of Art, where she met her husband, the photographer Maurice Berezov. Beginning in the mid-1930s, she attended classes at Hans Hofmann's School of Fine Arts in Greenwich Village and at his summer school in Provincetown, Massachusetts. In 1944 she officially joined the American Abstract Artists group. Soon after, Willem de Kooning invited her to join The Club, and she became a frequent participant in discussions there. Fine showed her work in both group and solo exhibitions in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Paris beginning in the 1940s, and later became an influential art teacher. This work demonstrates both her commitment to abstraction and the expressive energy she brought to her paintings.

Untitled, 1950, Oil on paper mounted on board

AUDREY **FLACK** (b. 1931)

Though today best known for her stunning Photorealist paintings, Audrey Flack first came to artistic maturity among the vibrant downtown scene of Abstract Expressionism. After receiving degrees in art from Cooper Union in New York City in 1951 and Yale University in 1952, Flack became a regular at The Club and at the Cedar Tavern, where she immersed herself in the cultural and social atmosphere of the period and developed ties with key figures such as Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, and Franz Kline. Through Abstract Expressionism, Flack found her artistic identity and created highly original work that was ordered yet gestural and expressed the core sensibility of the age. *Weehawken Ledge*r is a prime example of Flack's abstract paintings, featuring a flattened picture plane, all-over composition, and intense rhythmic energy that she generated by means of highly expressive brushwork.



Weehawken Ledger, 1951, Acrylic on paper

HELEN **FRANKENTHALER** (1928–2011)

Helen Frankenthaler was one of the most admired and influential of the second-generation Abstract Expressionist painters. During the 1950s, she developed a technique of staining raw canvas with pigment by pouring turpentine-thinned paint in watery washes directly onto the canvas surface. The washes soaked through the canvas, fusing the fabric weave and the colored pigment. While inspired by Jackson Pollock's method of pouring pigment directly onto canvas laid on the floor, Pollock used enamel paint that rested on the raw canvas to create a thick skin. Frankenthaler's method instead brought an airiness to the painted surface, releasing color from the gestural approach of the first-generation Abstract Expressionists and establishing a new style of painting known as Color Field. Throughout her career Frankenthaler applied her signature technique to paper as well as canvas, as in this example. In the 1970s she commented, "Working on paper can even replace working on canvas for me, for periods of time . . . more and more, paper is painting."

Untitled, 1976, Acrylic and crayon on paper

JANE **FREILICHER** (1924–2014)

Though Jane Freilicher came of age during the height of Abstract Expressionism—she studied with the influential theorist of abstraction, Hans Hofmann, in the 1940s and attended meetings at The Club where she participated in discussions and debates on the new style—she never embraced abstract painting techniques. Instead she applied an expressionist approach to recognizable images, taking as her subject matter the cityscape outside of her Greenwich Village apartment, interiors with still-life objects, and the marshes and potato fields of eastern Long Island. Among Freilicher's closest friends were the New York School poets John Ashbery and Frank O'Hara, and the painters Grace Hartigan, Fairfield Porter, and Larry Rivers, all of whom championed her work in the face of critics who found it too conservative and pedantic. This luminous landscape exhibits several of the defining characteristics of Freilicher's finest paintings: quick brushstrokes and minimal definition of shape; an allover approach to the canvas; and a bright palette that generates a vibrant, joyful quality.

Landscape with Pond, ca. 1970, Gouache, watercolor, and graphite on paper

GRACE **HARTIGAN** (1922–2008)

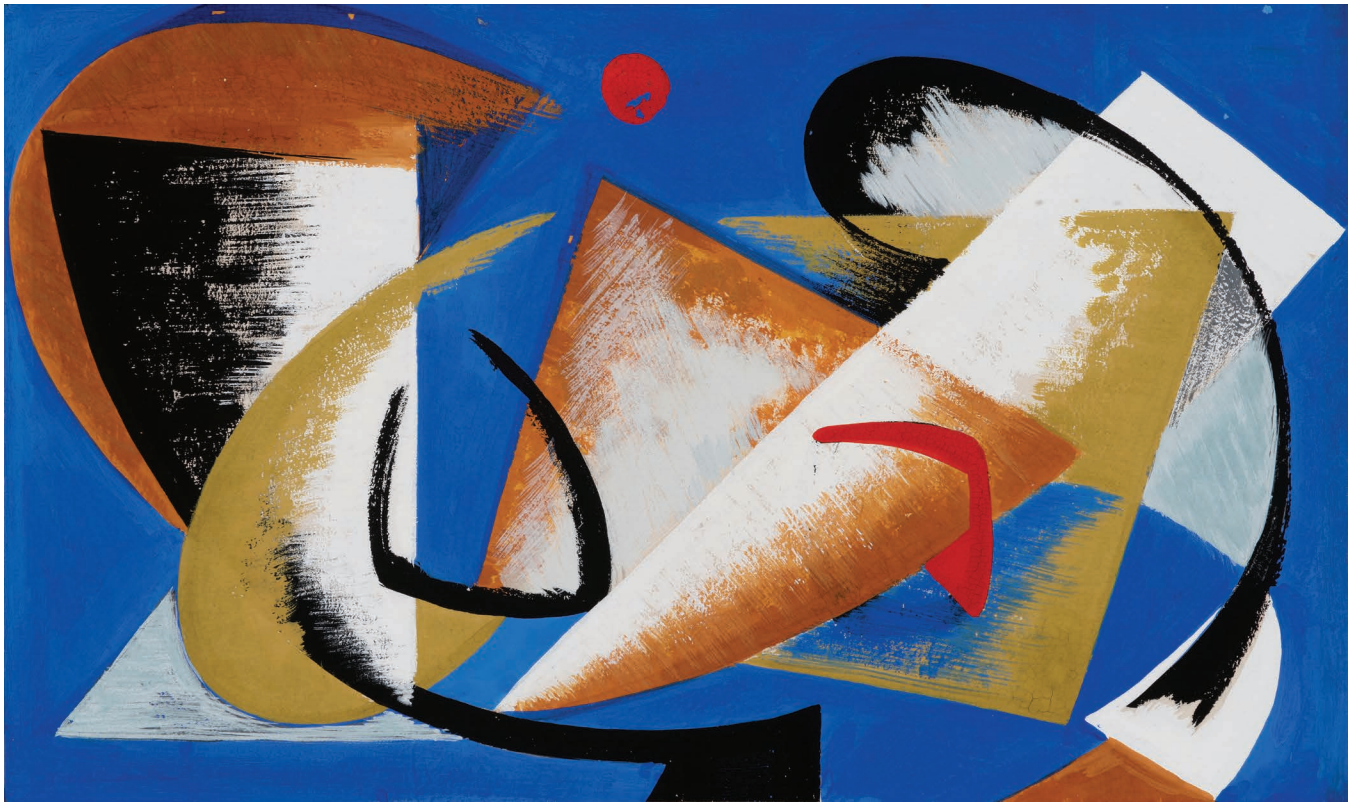
Raised in New Jersey, Grace Hartigan moved to California in 1941 and took drawing classes in Los Angeles. During the Second World War she worked in Newark, New Jersey, as a draftsperson in an airplane factory and took painting classes in New York. There she met Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb, who were both exploring nonobjective painting. Hartigan began her own series of gestural abstractions upon viewing an exhibition of Jackson Pollock's paintings at the Betty Parsons Gallery in New York in 1948. Through Pollock she met Willem de Kooning, who became a formative influence and close friend. Although Hartigan is classified as an Abstract Expressionist painter, she never broke entirely with the figurative tradition. She developed the medium of watercolor collage seen in this work after moving from New York to Baltimore in 1960. Using washes to create form, then tearing and reassembling the pieces, Hartigan found a new way to explore her characteristic bold gestures and fluid compositions.

Fantasy Study, 1965, Watercolor and collage

LEE **KRASNER** (1908–1984)

This work on paper is one of several studies—including two pen and ink drawings and one other gouache on board—for a larger oil painting Krasner completed in 1942. An inscription on the back of the other gouache implies that Krasner hoped to execute the composition as a mural for the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Established by the United States government as a New Deal program to employ out-of-work artists, the WPA commissioned as many as 10,000 artists to produce murals, easel paintings, sculpture, graphic art, posters, photography, and other projects from 1935 to 1943.

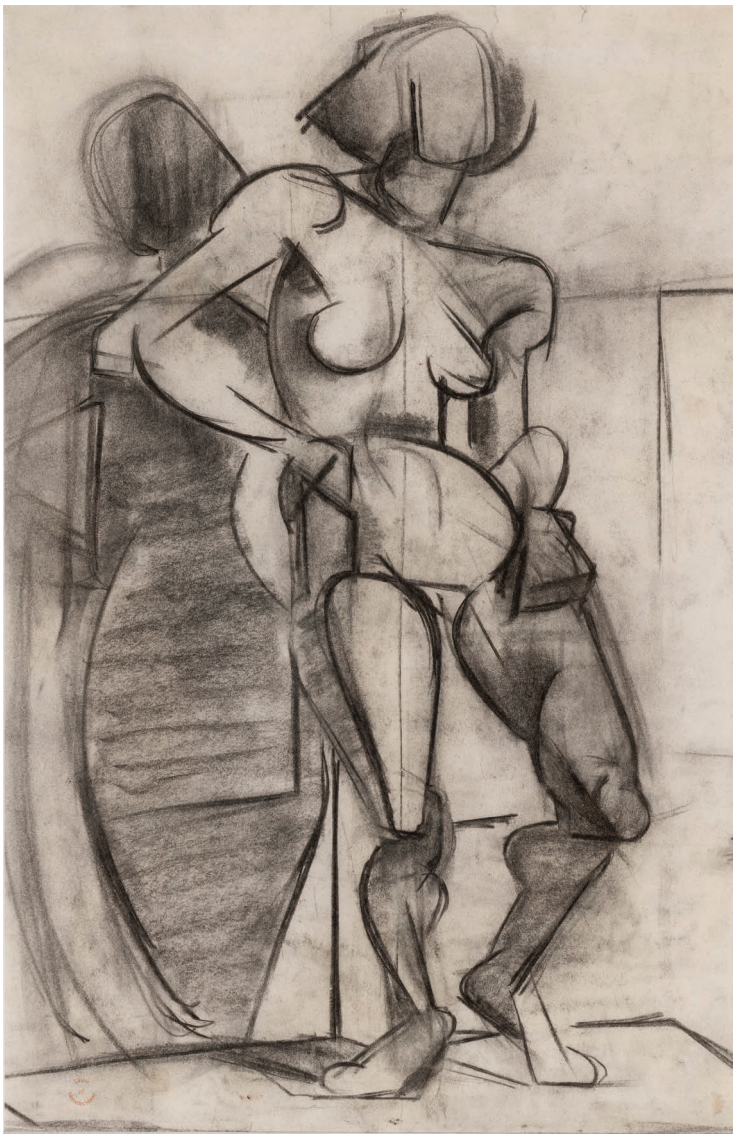
The biomorphic composition seen here is stylistically consistent with Krasner's other WPA-period designs, as well as with works created by her colleagues in the American Abstract Artists group. This composition does not diverge significantly from its related studies or from the final canvas, although the reddish circle at top mid-center was not present in the drawings, the other gouache, or the final oil painting.



Gouache No. 5, 1942, Gouache on paper

MERCEDES **MATTER** (1913–2001)

Mercedes Carles Matter was the daughter of American Modernist painter Arthur B. Carles and Mercedes de Cordoba, a fashion illustrator and model. She was a founding member of the American Abstract Artists group and a forceful presence at the Cedar Street Tavern and The Club. Her mature paintings were highly expressive and colorful abstracted landscapes and still lifes. Matter made this sketch of her close friend, the painter Lee Krasner, early in her career at the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts in New York. Hofmann was born in Germany and worked in Paris before emigrating in 1930 to New York, where he became an influential artist and teacher who promulgated European modernist styles such as Cubism. Several of the women artists represented in this exhibition studied with Hofmann at his schools in New York and Provincetown, Massachusetts, in the 1930s and 1940s, including Matter, Lee Krasner, Perle Fine, Helen Frankenthaler, and Joan Mitchell.



Untitled, 1945, Charcoal on paper

JOAN **MITCHELL** (1925–1992)

Joan Mitchell spent the majority of her life in her hometown of Chicago and in France, where she had studios in Paris and in the small village of Vétheuil. Though she was in New York for only a relatively short stretch from 1949 and 1955, Mitchell became a commanding presence in the city's downtown art scene. She was one of the few female members welcomed into the male-dominated Eighth Street Club (The Club), and in 1951 was invited to participate in the Ninth Street Show, which was essential for introducing Abstract Expressionism to the interested art public. *Untitled* demonstrates Mitchell's signature style: rhythmic, counterposed lines and layered fields of color and tone that became the language through which she communicated emotion. Though seemingly unrestrained, her process was structured. She carefully layered each color, focusing on the relationships between them and to the weight of each brushstroke, often standing far from the canvas between layers to assess the balance of her composition. "The freedom in my work is quite controlled," she once explained. "I don't close my eyes and hope for the best."

Untitled, ca. 1955, Ink on paper

LOUISE **NEVELSON** (1899–1989)

Since the mid-1950s, Nevelson has been best known for her large, painted wood wall constructions. Inspired by Surrealism, pre-Columbian sculpture, and urban architecture, these works typically include various boxes and pieces of wood stacked against a wall, each compartment filled with wooden scraps that include moldings, dowels, spindles, and furniture parts. Nevelson then painted the entire assemblage black, or sometimes white, both unifying the composition and obscuring the individual objects.

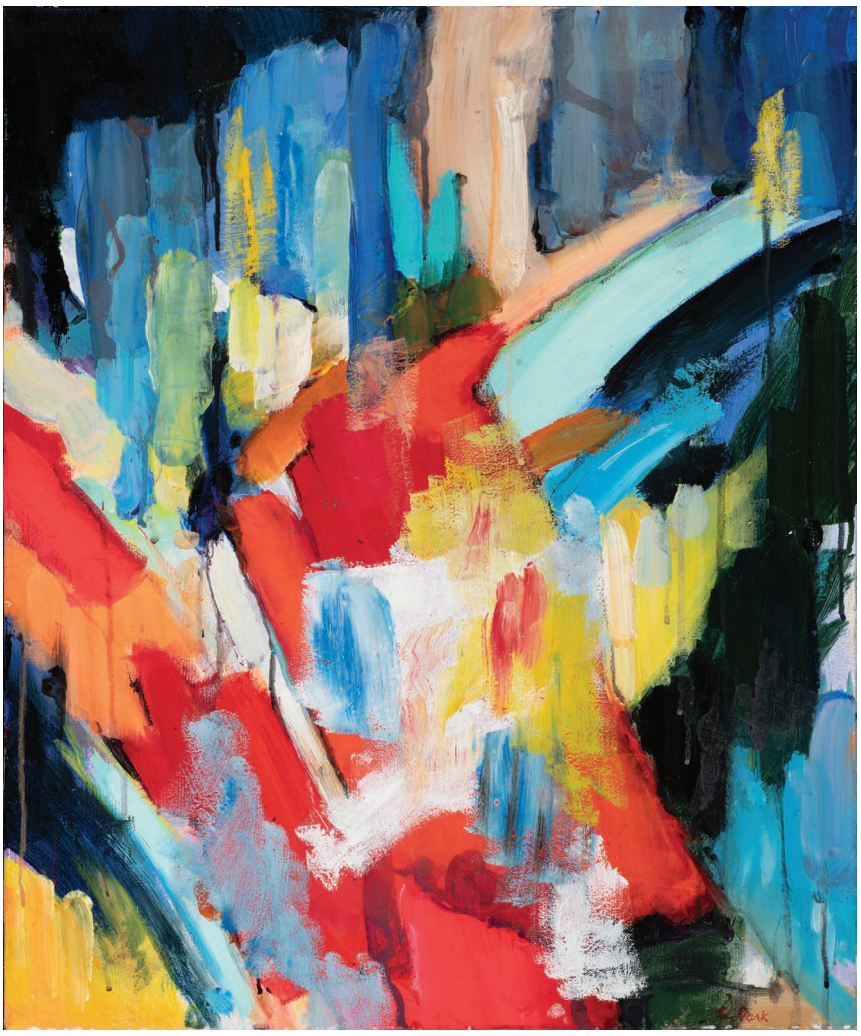
Nevelson created this example in homage to Dame Edith Sitwell, a celebrated British poet and critic who died in 1964. Like many of her wall pieces, this one evokes the sense of a shrine or place of devotion.

Homage to Edith Sitwell, 1966, Black painted wood and glass

CHARLOTTE **PARK** (1918–2010)

Charlotte Park was a first-generation Abstract Expressionist who explored both geometric and gestural forms in a noteworthy legacy of paintings. She was born in 1918 in Concord, Massachusetts, graduated from the Yale School of Fine Art in 1939, and began her career as a painter shortly after the end of the Second World War. With her husband and fellow artist, James Brooks, whom she married in 1947, Park worked both in New York City and on the East End of Long Island—first in Montauk, then in East Hampton. There her circle of friends and colleagues included Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner.

Although Park's paintings were nonrepresentational, she drew inspiration from natural objects. Park painted in oil, acrylic, and gouache on both paper and canvas. During the late 1950s, she began to explore collage, often cutting up and re-assembling sections of earlier paintings. Though Park exhibited regularly in both solo and group exhibitions from the late 1940s through the late 1970s, her work did not garner any significant critical attention until the recent reappraisal of women abstract artists. A colleague who knew her well said that Park sacrificed her career for the benefit of her husband's, believing that a man's success was more likely and that working to promote him would enable them both to survive as artists.



Untitled, c. 1970, Oil on canvas

IRENE RICE **PEREIRA** (1902–1971)

Experimentation was at the heart of all of Irene Rice Pereira's work. She began her career in the late 1920s at the Art Students League in New York City, where she learned about the European avant-garde painters Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso and explored abstraction and Cubism. From 1931 to 1933, she traveled through Africa and Europe, stopping briefly in Paris to study at the Académie Moderne. Back in New York she became a central figure among the abstract artists, exhibiting her painting at the American Contemporary Art (ACA) Gallery, teaching art at the Works Progress Administration Design Laboratory, and working as an assistant at the Museum of Non-Objective Painting (now The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum). Her works from the 1930s and 1940s were almost always completely abstract and demonstrate her interest in working with different industrial materials such as metal and glass to explore formal concepts such as light, reflection, and depth. She was equally interested in philosophy, psychology, and theories of perception, all of which influenced her work. These figurative paintings date from late in the artist's career and reflect her continued interest in experimenting with color, form, and materials.

As In An Entrance the Wind Spreads Its Hand to Entice the Water's Flow, 1959, Watercolor and gouache on paper

HEDDA **STERNE** (1910–2011)

Born in Bucharest, Romania, in 1910, Sterne began her art career in the late 1930s when she exhibited with the Surrealists in Paris. She was deeply involved with the avant-garde art scene in Bucharest before escaping a Nazi roundup of Jews in the city during World War II and immigrating to the United States in 1941. She settled in New York where she became an important member of the New York School and exhibited with the Surrealists and the Abstract Expressionists during the 1940s and 1950s.

Untitled, 1955, Oil on canvas

ETHEL **SCHWABACHER** (1904–1983)

Born Ethel Kremer in 1903 in New York City to a wealthy Jewish family who valued culture and creativity, the artist began studying sculpture as a teenager at the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design. She turned her attention to painting in 1927 following a series of personal traumas and relocated to Europe, where she painted in the south of France. Shortly after her return to New York, she met and married Wolf Schwabacher, a lawyer representing creative clients. Most of Schwabacher's paintings during the 1940s were studies of nature, including landscapes and animals, rendered in bright colors. Inspired by the Surrealist work of her friend Arshile Gorky, Schwabacher's style grew increasingly free and dynamic, eventually becoming nonrepresentational. In 1951 she began exploring themes of childbirth and motherhood in the same Surrealist style.

Schwabacher painted this canvas in 1956, during the most productive and experimental decade of her career. From 1953 to 1961, she had five solo exhibitions and participated in fourteen group shows at the Betty Parsons Gallery in New York, which also represented Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, Hedda Sterne, and Louise Bourgeois, among others. Her close association with this avant-garde milieu led her to push her painting further and further into abstraction, resulting in dynamic canvases like the painting exhibited here.

Untitled, 1956, Goauche on paper

MICHAEL **WEST** (1908–1991)

Born Corinne Michelle West in Chicago, the artist moved to New York in 1932 and attended Hans Hofmann's first class at the Art Students League along with Mercedes Matter and Louise Nevelson. From 1935 to 1945, West lived in Rochester, New York, where she painted, exhibited, and lectured on modern art. It was West's close friend, the Armenian-American Surrealist painter Arshile Gorky, who in 1936 convinced her to drop the name Corinne, which he said sounded like that of "a debutante's daughter," and go by Mikael, which she later changed to Michael. Back in Manhattan in 1945, West began experimenting with the direct approaches of the Abstract Expressionist painters, frequently using a palette knife and paint directly from the tube to achieve a thickly raised, rough surface. *Still Life* demonstrates West's commitment to action painting and the idea that the creative process involves a dialogue between the artist and the canvas.

Still Life, 1957, Oil on canvas

JANE **WILSON** (1924–2015)

Jane Wilson's landscape paintings straddle representation and abstraction. She earned a master's degree in painting at the University of Iowa in 1947 and two years later moved with her husband, the art critic John Gruen, to New York City. There she spent time at the Cedar Tavern with Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and other Abstract Expressionists, and her early work reflected their purely nonrepresentational style. But by the mid-1950s, Wilson began creating expressionist landscapes that explored relationships among land, sea, and sky.

In 1960 Wilson and Gruen bought a house on the East End of Long Island, and the landscape there inspired much of her subsequent work. Hayground, the area of Water Mill and Bridgehampton that is the subject of this canvas, was named after the thriving salt hay industry that had developed there by 1719.

Dawn at Hayground, n.d., Oil on canvas

Checklist of the Exhibition

Bombash, 1949
Mary Abbott
Ink and gouache on paper
36 x 30 x 2 in

Point of Contact, c. 1967–1968
Louise Bourgeois
Bronze with black patina
5 x 10.5 x 6 in

The Red Window, 1951
Dorothy Dehner
Ink and watercolor on paper
31 x 27 x 1.5 in

Untitled, 1964
Dorothy Dehner
Bronze
21.5 x 33.5 x 16.5 in

Frost on the Pane, 1948
Dorothy Dehner
Ink, watercolor, and gouache on paper
27 x 31 x 1.5 in

Portrait of Aristodemas Kaldis, 1970
Elaine de Kooning
Oil on Canvas
41 x 33 x 3 in

Portrait of Bill, c. 1953
Elaine de Kooning
Ink on paper
28.5 x 23.5 x 1.5 in

Untitled, 1948
Elaine de Kooning
Watercolor and paper collage
25 x 19 x 1.5 in

Cave #24 Red Oxide Wall, 1954
Elaine de Kooning
Acrylic and collage on paper
mounted on canvas
49 x 39 x 2 in

Basketball Players, 1960
Elaine de Kooning
Acrylic and gouache on paper
and mounted to canvas
29 x 26 x 1.5 in

Standing Bull, 1959
Elaine de Kooning
Mixed media on paper
22 x 26 x 3 in

Untitled, 1960
Perle Fine
Oil on paper mounted on board
20 x 38 x 3 in

Weekawken Ledger, 1951
Audrey Flack
Acrylic on paper
24 x 36 x 1 in

Untitled, 1976
Helen Frankenthaler
Acrylic and crayon on paper
43 x 35 x 2 in

Orient Express #5, 1977
Helen Frankenthaler
Acrylic and collage on paper
54 x 39 x 2.5 in

Landscape with Pond, c. 1970s
Jane Freilicher
Gouache, watercolor, and graphite on paper
19 x 23 x 1.5 in

Fantasy Study, 1965
Grace Hartigan
Watercolor and collage
34 x 26 x 1.5 in

Gouache Number 5, 1942
Lee Krasner
Gouache on paper
16 x 12 x 1.5 in

September Twenty-third, 1980
Lee Krasner
Ink, crayon and collage
on lithographic paper
47 x 38 x 2.5 in

Earth #7, 1959
Lee Krasner
Gouache on Howell paper
47 x 38 x 2.5 in

Seed, No. 3, 1969
Lee Krasner
Gouache on Howell paper
14 x 17 x 1 in

Untitled (Lee Krasner modeling at a Hans Hoffman drawing class), c. 1945
Mercedes Matter
Charcoal on paper
35 x 26.5 x 1 in

Untitled, c. 1955
Joan Mitchell
Ink on paper
36.5 x 31 x 1 in

Homage to Edith Sitwell, c. 1966
Louise Nevelson
Box construction—wood painted black
and glass
21 x 15 x 11.75 in

Abstract Composition, ca. 1945
Louise Nevelson
Black plaster on a wood base
15 x 10 x 11 in

Dancer, 1946
Louise Nevelson
Sculpture
Black painted plaster on a wood base
16 x 17 x 8 in

Untitled, c. 1970
Charlotte Park
Oil on canvas
30 x 26 x 1 in

Light for the Eye, 1959
Irene Rice Pereira
Gouache on rice paper
42.5 x 31.5 x 1.5 in

As In An Entrance the Wind Spreads Its Hand to Entice the Water's Flow, 1959
Irene Rice Pereira
Watercolor and gouache on paper
42.5 x 31.5 x 1.5 in

Untitled, 1955
Hedda Sterne
Oil on canvas
42.5 x 24.5 x 1.75 in

Untitled, c. 1955
Hedda Sterne
Oil on canvas
37 x 31.5 x 1 in

Untitled, 1956
Ethel Schwabacher
Gouache on paper
18 x 14.5 x 1 in

Michael, c. 1958
Michael West
Double-sided with stand
Oil on paper
40.4 x 39 x 8 in

Still Life, 1957
Michael West
Oil on canvas
35 x 49 x 3.5 in

Dawn at Hayground, n.d.
Jane Wilson
Oil on canvas
40 x 29 x 2.5 in

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