RECLAIMING ARTISTS OF THE NEW YORK SCHOOL

SIDNEY MISHKIN GALLERY
BARUCH COLLEGE

RECLAIMING ARTISTS OF THE NEW YORK SCHOOL

TOWARD A MORE INCLUSIVE VIEW OF THE 1950s

MARCH 18 TO APRIL 22, 1994

CURATED BY SANDRA KRASKIN

BARUCH COLLEGE/CUNY, 135 EAST 22 STREET, NEW YORK CITY

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The exhibition *Reclaiming Artists of the New York School* marks the gallery's tenth anniversary as well as the twenty-fifth year of Baruch's establishment as an independent college within The City University of New York. The exhibition celebrates the work of 28 artists who helped to establish an avant-garde movement in the United States after World War II.

Most discussions of the New York School, even recent revisionist treatments, tend to concentrate on the same ten to fifteen artists to represent the group. Yet, in 1951, the Abstract Expressionists themselves organized what has come to be called the *Ninth Street Show*, an exhibition representing 61 avant-garde painters and sculptors. Other important exhibitions throughout the 1950s, including the Stable Gallery annuals, likewise featured a broad spectrum of artists. By reclaiming 28 artists of the New York School and documenting their contribution to this historically influential movement, this exhibition presents a more inclusive view of the 1950s.

I would like to thank the museums, galleries, artists, and collectors whose generous loans have made this exhibition possible. The cooperation of Ida Balboul, Research Associate, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Ellin Burke, Assistant Registrar, Whitney Museum of American Art, has been essential for the success of the exhibition.

Drs. Thomas and Marika Herskovic have been a source of inspiration and support for this exhibition. The documentary videotapes of individual New York School artists that they have produced will provide an opportunity for our students to study this period more closely.

I would like to acknowledge the importance of the encouragement and support of Baruch College President Matthew Goldstein and Provost Lois Cronholm. Their commitment to providing cultural programs at Baruch College has been essential for the Mishkin Gallery.

For their expertise, I am grateful to the Baruch College Office of Publications—especially, Edith Pavese, director, and Diane Harrigan, editor. I would also like to thank Melissa Card Bianco, Sherrie Gauley, and Dennis Raverty, all of whom helped to prepare the artist biographies and the bibliography.

Sandra Kraskin
Director, Sidney Mishkin Gallery

Cover: **Alfonso Ossorio**
Martyrs and Spectators, 1951
Oil and enamel on canvas, 45½ x 35"
Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery

The exhibition, publication, and symposium were supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The Baruch College Fund, the Jane Globus Fund, and private donors.

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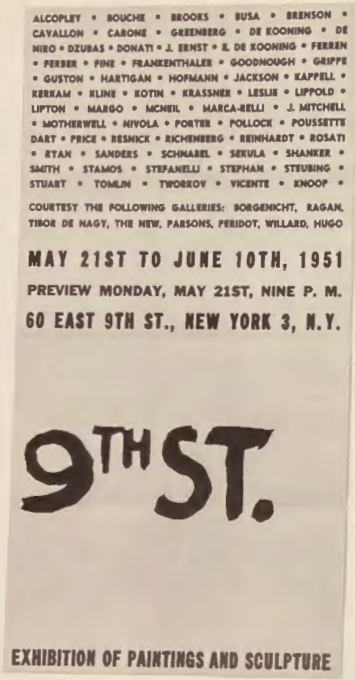


Poster for 9th St. Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, *New York, 1951*

RECLAIMING ARTISTS OF THE NEW YORK SCHOOL

BY SANDRA KRASKIN

The work of Abstract Expressionist artists in New York after World War II created a vanguard movement that established the international prominence of American art. The myths attending this movement, along with the heroic stature achieved by some of its members, have recently been reexamined and reinterpreted.[1] New scholarship has also provided a broader context from which to view the painting and sculpture produced during the 1940s and the 1950s.[2] Yet, none of these studies has seriously questioned the basic "lineup" of representative artists.

As the millennium approaches, it is time to challenge the most hallowed myth of Abstract Expressionism: which artists should represent this movement? It is time for America to reclaim Abstract Expressionist artists of the New York School.[3] This exhibition begins the reclamation process by presenting 28 artists who clearly have created work that merits reconsideration and whose authentic inclusion as major participants would add great strength to the movement as a whole.

Since the 1950s, Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning have been the artists whose names have been synonymous with American Abstract Expressionism. Jackson Pollock has been enshrined in the history of art as perhaps the most important American artist of the twentieth century (the American challenge to Picasso), and Willem de Kooning presides as the most eminent living artist. During the 1950s, the critical debate was led by Harold Rosenberg, who defined Abstract Expressionism as "action painting," and Clement Greenberg, who advocated a formalist approach that eliminated all the conventions extraneous to the medium of painting.[4]

Influenced by the European Surrealists who came to America as exiles during World War II, the Abstract Expressionists experimented with an automatic process of drawing, using their unconscious as a source for their imagery.[5] This process of free association was closer to the improvisational approach of jazz musicians than to traditional painting techniques. These artists made no preparatory sketches; in fact, they did not know what their work would look like until it was completed. Like jazz improvisations, these paintings and sculptures were invented as the artists worked. Painters, like Jackson Pollock, dripped, poured, and spattered their paint onto the surface of the canvas.

Almost 50 years have passed since Pollock painted the first of his classic drip paintings in 1947. During these decades, the history of American art has been written and rewritten in major texts, most of which discuss this movement in terms of the work of ten to fifteen of its participants: William Baziotes, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Philip Guston, Hans Hofmann, Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko, Clyfford Still, Mark Tobey, and Bradley Walker Tomlin.[6] As the representatives of the movement for almost half a century, these artists have achieved heroic stature. Their work illustrates the art of the midcentury in major museums all over the world.

While this established canon has mythologized a few artists and encouraged extensive exhibition, documentation, and collection of their work, it has, in fact, also limited the import and the scope of the movement itself, diminishing the force created by the visual achievements of many more artists. In 1951, at the height of the movement's success, 61 New York School artists exhibited in *9th St. Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture* in a storefront at 60 East 9th Street. For this exhibition, commonly known as the *Ninth Street Show*, the artists themselves selected the participants using a much more inclusive process to define the movement. Critic Thomas B. Hess recalled:

> New York's avant-garde . . . gathers spectacularly in a 90-foot former antique shop, newly whitewashed (by the exhibitors) for the occasion. An air of haphazard gaiety,

confusion, punctuated by moments of achievement, reflects the organization of this mammoth show which, according to one of the organizers, "just grew." Some pictures were chosen by the artist himself; others picked by small delegations of colleagues.[7]

From 1953 to 1957, the Stable Gallery continued this tradition with annual exhibitions of New York School artists. During this period, more than 250 artists exhibited work in the Stable Gallery annuals and participated in the various activities that defined the New York School. What happened to these artists? Many of them continued to produce Abstract Expressionist work or later became hard-edge or figurative artists, establishing significant careers. Others worked in isolation or remained unrecognized and have now been forgotten.

The Abstract Avant-Garde in the 1930s and 1940s

Abstract Expressionism emerged out of the collective experiences, experimentation, and dialogue of many young American artists during the 1930s and 1940s. A number of the artists who would become Abstract Expressionists had studied at the Art Students League or with Hans Hofmann. They had worked as colleagues on the WPA Federal Art Project, and some of them had participated in the exhibitions and discussions organized by the American Abstract Artists group. Some served in World War II.

The dilemma of American abstract artists in the 1930s was conveyed dramatically by the art critics who repeatedly dismissed American abstract art as merely decoration and complained that the work of the Americans too closely imitated the European modernists. The American Abstract Artists (AAA) group was formed in 1936 to exhibit, promote, and defend abstract art. With its exhibitions, publications, and even demonstrations, the AAA provided a forum for abstract art. The group's advocacy of American abstract art helped to prepare the way for the success of the New York School.

Susan C. Larsen documented the avant-garde role of this group in the 1930s and its importance to the development of American art and concluded that its activities—the annual exhibitions and publications as well as the camaraderie and dialogue that were fostered—could be considered the first phase of the New York School.

> From 1936 to 1942 the A.A.A. members engaged in a spirited dialogue with the press, the public, the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Non-Objective Painting, helping to effect a gradual transformation of attitude, but achieving little of immediate benefit to themselves. The New York art world of 1942 was, however, a more open-minded one with regard to the future of abstract art in the United States, and it was upon this foundation that the later phases of the New York School would be built. As the New York School gained momentum and confidence, the A.A.A. was swept aside and its contributions virtually forgotten, but a close examination of the origins of major American abstractionists of the later forties reveals their own genesis in the mid-1930's and substantial contact with the activities, exhibitions and membership of the American Abstract Artists.[8]

The debate between artists and critics was intense. Although most of the critics talked about art in "formalist" terms—discussing composition and color—the critics of the 1930s used more sarcastic language. Jerome Klein, writing for the *New York Post*, was one of these antagonistic critics.

Concurring with negative opinions about abstract art, Klein titled his review of the 1938 American Abstract Artists exhibition "Plenty of Duds Found in Abstract Art Show." In his description of the exhibition, he asked: "And what is the result? A series of light pops, a bit of sizzle here, a fizzle there and plenty of duds."[9] He scornfully pointed out: "These are the artists who are above imitating nature. But too many of them are not above imitating other artists in the most slavish manner."[10] He also noted, "However sincere their pretentions, they are certainly not substantiated by the bulk of this work, which is generally shallow in design rarely more than superficial decoration."[11] Klein's

Ibram Lassaw's Sculpture, *1936, in the first exhibition of the American Abstract Artists at the Squibb Gallery, New York, 1937*

conclusion and advice to the viewer revealed his open hostility: "Very well, poke among the droppings of modern art, pick yourself a dry bone and suck on it. See what you get."[12]

Emily Genauer, writing for the *New York World-Telegram* in April 1937, continued the diatribe against abstract art:

> If only they were saying something new, though. If only they were not reiterating again and again the pronunciamentoes of their precursors in Europe. The galleries resound with echoes of Miró, Braque, Picasso, Masson, Léger, Mondrian. The conventions of abstract paintings are as strictly adhered to as those of the Academy are in its current show at the Fine Arts Building. There is as much creative integrity to the works of one school as there is to those of another. If the academic things are unimaginative colored photographs, these are a lot of decorative designs.[13]

Somewhat more open to abstract art was Robert M. Coates, critic for *The New Yorker*. His discussion of the third AAA annual, held in 1939 at the Riverside Museum, was more thoughtful. Coates even included modest praise for the show: "There is, moreover, a respectable number of pieces that would seem outstanding in any gathering."[14] However, he continued:

> It's the mood of the show, and the tendencies it illustrates, that bothered me. With a few exceptions, the trend of the group is toward the purest of "pure" abstraction, in which all recognizable symbols are abandoned in favor of strict geometric form. It seems to me to be a move in the wrong direction; indeed, it is precisely in the development of symbols, and the exploration of their capacity to express emotion, that the true field of abstract painting lies. . . . I can't help feeling that the American abstractionists need, above everything else, to develop some such set of symbols, equally native in atmosphere, to serve as a point of departure for their work.[15]

Thus, although more interested in abstract art than many other critics, Coates did not respond to geometric forms. Instead, he presented a prescription for Abstract Expressionism (a term which he would use in 1946).[16]

The advent of World War II reshuffled the events that would limit the impact of the American Abstract Artists group in the 1940s and fostered a new avant-garde. Most likely the failure of the AAA artists to achieve the stature necessary to represent American art after the war resulted from their close association with influences from the School of Paris. Their work clearly acknowledged the modernist developments of European masters like Picasso, Miró, Kandinsky, and Mondrian. Yet, these American artists combined many sources, creating a new syntax for this European vocabulary—a process analogous to the cultural melting pot formed by the immigration of the period.

Unlike the American Abstract Artists, who were often attacked by critics for being "followers" of the European modernists, the Abstract Expressionists created paintings that could not be considered too European, too decorative, or without content. As an advocate of Mondrian's neo-plastic painting, AAA member Ilya Bolotowsky was very much aware of the problem of identifying with European artists during the 1950s:

> We [AAA members] were called unAmerican. And we were called unAmerican, by the way, during the McCarthy period so that it is not exactly such an innocent insult. It gave political connotations that any wise Greek should know and they should deal with us more carefully. To call a certain type of art not American meant unAmerican, and since McCarthy and his bunch suspected any ideas as being unAmerican, this was almost like telling them, don't look at us, look at the other side [the Abstract Expressionists] . . . .[17]

Although they adopted the automatic process developed by the European Surrealists, the Abstract Expressionists used it to evoke imagery from the artist's unconscious—imparting a distinctly individual meaning to abstract art. Energetic and even considered violent, this imagery could not be viewed as decorative, and its mythic content replaced the "purity" of abstract form. In 1943, when Pollock had his first solo exhibition at Peggy Guggenheim's New York gallery, Art of This Century, James Johnson Sweeney characterized the intensity of the work of the young painter: "Pollock's talent is volcanic. It has fire. It is unpredictable. It is undisciplined. It spills itself out in a mineral prodigality not yet crystallized. It is lavish, explosive, untidy."[18]

The Myth of the American Hero

The American translations of European modernism became problematic in postwar America when they clashed with nationalistic attitudes and the "Adamic myth."[19] Although Picasso, Matisse, and Mondrian were considered avant-garde, their followers in the United States were viewed by many critics as retrograde. (Certainly, being described as a "follower" by definition limits the perception of an artist's role as an innovator.) Moreover, the fact that the modernists were "European" artists and that Cubism, Fauvism, and Neo-Plasticism presented "European" developments made conflict with America's postwar nationalism and its self-image inevitable. The myth of the American hero was an important part of this self-image. In 1955, R.W.B. Lewis articulated this myth in his study *The American Adam*.[19] He found embedded in the image of the American hero the myth of Adam:

> The new habits to be engendered on the new American scene were suggested by the image of a radically new personality, the hero of the new adventure: an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritances of family and race; an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling, ready to confront whatever awaited him with the aid of his own unique and inherent resources. It was not surprising, in a Bible-reading generation, that the new hero (in praise or disapproval) was most easily identified with Adam before the Fall. Adam was the first, the archetypal, man. His moral position was prior to experience, and in his very newness he was fundamentally innocent. The world and history lay all before him. And he was the type of creator, the poet par excellence, creating language itself by naming the elements of the scene about him. All this and more were contained in the image of the American as Adam.[20]

Thus, the American hero could not be a proponent of European styles or ideas. He must embark on a new adventure, confronting adversity alone, not as a group member, and, by definition, he could not be a woman.

In the 1950s, the perfect manifestation of the American hero became the cowboy. The fifties artist who best fulfilled the myth was Jackson Pollock, and the style that best embodied the Adamic myth was Abstract Expressionism, with its emphasis on *action* painting. (Born in Holland, Willem de Kooning did not represent the myth quite as well as did Pollock, who was born on the Watkins Ranch in Cody, Wyoming.)

Harold Rosenberg, a major advocate of Abstract Expressionism, discussed American painting in terms similar to those used by Lewis to discuss American literature. The concept of the American hero/the American Adam informs Rosenberg's *Tradition of the New*, published in 1959, in which he emphasized the difficulty of being "new."[21] He invented the "Parable of American Painting" (chapter one in his book) to elucidate this difficulty. The parable described Redcoatism—the tendency to continue a previous style in a new location—as a problem for the "new" man in America. Rosenberg asserted that American art had been dominated by Redcoatism: "Like Braddock, painting in this country has behaved as if it were elsewhere . . . ."[22]

In this parable, Rosenberg opposed the Redcoats with the Coonskinners, who were the "new" heroes, the "real" Americans who had adopted the anti-formal fighting style of the individual "sharpshooter."[23] (Rosenberg's "sharpshooter" is an Eastern version of the cowboy and clearly embodies the concept of the American Adam.) "Coonskin doggedness," Rosenberg continued, "is a major characteristic of America's most meaningful painters. Not one—Copley, Audubon, Eakins, Ryder, Homer, Marin, Stuart Davis, de Kooning—in whom this quality is not predominant."[24] The Coonskinner of the postwar period, of course, was the action painter who "fought" improvisationally within a canvas that became "an arena in which to act."[25] The struggle of this encounter resulted in an image that had not been envisioned before the painting was complete.

By invoking the myth of the solitary hero and allying Abstract Expressionism with it, Rosenberg encouraged the selection of one or two innovators to represent Abstract Expressionism. However, a closer look at the documented activities of the artists during the 1940s and 1950s supports a broader view of the movement.

Expanding the Pantheon

Historically, the Abstract Expressionist movement was defined by a very small group of representative artists that excluded not only many excellent painters but also all women, all African-Americans, and, more surprisingly, all of the sculptors of the period.[26]

An expanded pantheon of Abstract Expressionists should include Lee Krasner, a pioneer of the movement. Krasner's development paralleled that of the more famous artists in many ways. Not only was she about the same age as they were (Krasner was born in 1908) but she also studied with Hans Hofmann, worked on the WPA Federal Art Project, and exhibited with the American Abstract Artists group. In his monograph on Lee Krasner, Robert Hobbs described her in 1936, when she first met Pollock:

> Krasner met Pollock at a time when she was considered a formidable, well-connected young avant-garde artist and he was still an unknown loner. Because of her associations with the AAA, de Kooning, Gorky, Hofmann and his students, Rosenberg, and Rosenberg's friend and newly established art critic Clement Greenberg, Krasner was fully aware of the latest trends. Pollock, by contrast, was a protégé and close friend of the reactionary Regionalist Thomas Hart Benton, though in 1936 he was briefly an assistant to the Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros.[27]

Krasner was working as an Abstract Expressionist by the mid-forties in her *Little Image* series. She had her first solo exhibition at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1951, exhibited in the *Ninth Street Show*, and later was the focus of a 1973 exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 1983 a major retrospective of her work was held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Although her work has received major recognition in recent decades, her name is not usually included on the "sacred list."[28]

The African-American artist Hale Woodruff, a painter and teacher at the New York University School of Art Education, was an active participant in the dialogue that fostered a cohesive bond among the artists of the New York School. Woodruff helped to organize the Friday evening discussions at Studio 35 (located at 35 East 8th Street) from May 1949 until April 1950. These discussions continued the activities of a cooperative school in Greenwich Village organized in 1948 by painters William Baziotes, Robert Motherwell, and Mark Rothko and sculptor David Hare.[29] This school, called "Subjects of the Artist" to emphasize that abstract art has a subject, sponsored Friday evening lectures by avant-garde artists that were open to the general public.

Born in 1900, Woodruff was a few years older than many first-generation Abstract Expressionists. He studied in Paris in the late 1920s, where he was particularly impressed with the paintings of Cézanne. Influenced by Alain Locke, a Howard University philosophy professor whom he met in Paris, Woodruff began to collect African art. Like many of the European modernists, including Picasso, Woodruff was influenced by African art, which had a major impact on his painting and served to affirm his heritage as an African-American.

In 1934 Woodruff traveled to Mexico City to work with the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. When he returned to Atlanta, Georgia, he painted two murals sponsored by the WPA Federal Art Project. After the war, his painterly abstract work identified him as an early practitioner of Abstract Expressionism, and his position as a professor at New York University, which he held from 1946 to 1967, placed him in Greenwich Village, near the center of the activities of the New York School artists. Woodruff, however, was not a member of the Eighth Street Club (the Club), which was formed in 1949 to discuss avant-garde issues. In fact, as Ann Gibson has pointed out, "As late as 1961 not one African American was a member of the Club, the major association of Abstract Expressionist artists in New York."[30]

Also absent from the standard list of major Abstract Expressionist artists is Norman Lewis. Lewis, also an African-American, was present at many of the defining moments of the movement. He participated in the three-day Artists' Sessions held in April 1950 at the Museum of Modern Art. These sessions, which were the culmination of the Friday evening discussions at Studio 35, addressed a number of issues concerning the creative process and the relationship of artists to society. Inherent in the Artists' Sessions was a recognition by the artists that they formed a group. Lewis exhibited at the Willard Gallery, a prominent gallery that showed avant-garde artists David Smith and Mark Tobey. However, Romare Bearden and Harry Henderson, in their study of African-American artists, record that "Even though he had nine one-man shows with very favorable reviews for over a decade at a major gallery and was associated with leading members of the movement, 'nothing happened,' to use Lewis' phrase."[31]

A charter member of the Club, sculptor Ibram Lassaw participated in the Artists' Sessions at Studio 35 in 1950 along with seven other sculptors: Louise Bourgeois, Herbert Ferber, Peter Grippe, David Hare, Richard Lippold, Seymour Lipton, and David Smith. Yet, not one sculptor is represented in the lineup of key figures of Abstract Expressionism listed in many art history texts. (Perhaps the designation "action painters," given by critic Harold Rosenberg, helped to exclude these sculptors.) Many of the later studies separated sculpture from painting as a matter of convenience, thereby unintentionally continuing to give sculpture a secondary status.[32]

Lassaw is one sculptor who should be included in the expanded pantheon. The flowing line of Lassaw's abstract sculpture from the 1930s anticipates the linear

continued on page 37

Charles Alston
Painting, 1950
Oil on canvas, 50 x 36"
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1951

Nicolas Carone
Lv[illegible] 1956
Oil on canvas, 41[illegible] 50"
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Gift of Miss Katherine Ordway, 1956

Ernest Briggs
Untitled, 1953
Oil on canvas, 69 x 63
Courtesy of Snyder Fine Art, New York

James Brooks
[illegible]
Oil on canvas, [illegible]
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Center & Fisher Fund, [illegible]

Peter Busa
Effigy c 1957
Oil on canvas, 47 x 38
Collection of Drs Thomas and Marika Herskovic

Giorgio Cavallon
Untitled, 1959
Oil on canvas, 65 x 38"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Purchase with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 60.2

Nanno de Groot
Untitled, 1950
Oil on canvas, 52 x 59"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henkovic

Elaine de Kooning
[illegible]

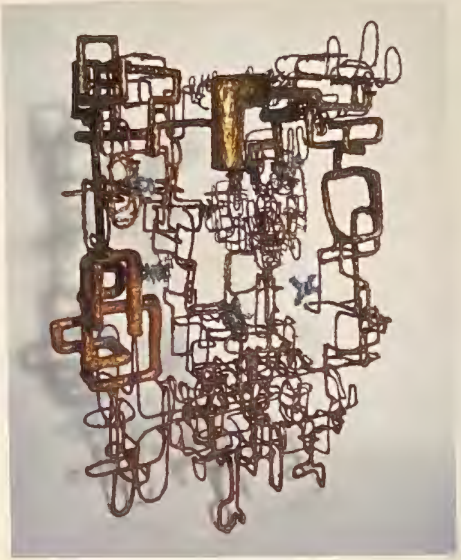
Friedel Dzubas
Untitled, c. 1957
Oil on canvas, 52 x 39¼
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Marika Herskovic

Perle Fine
[illegible] 1[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Grace Hartigan
[illegible]
Oil [illegible] 69 [illegible]
[illegible]
Pu[illegible] Roy [illegible] Mark [illegible] [illegible]
G[illegible] 1956

Albert Kotin
[illegible] 1957
[illegible]
Collection of Dr. [illegible] and Manka [illegible]

Lee Krasner
[illegible] 1948
Oil on canvas, 30 x [illegible]
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Gift of Mrs. Donald T. Braun, 1986



Ibram Lassaw
[illegible] 1957
[illegible] and [illegible] 38 x 28 x 19"
[illegible] of the artist

Norman Lewis
[illegible] 1949
Oil on [illegible] 39" x 36"
Courtesy of Michael Rose[illegible]

Conrad Marca-Relli
The Battle 1956
Oilcloth, tinted canvas, enamel paint and oil on canvas
70" x 130"
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1956

George McNeil
Astor, 1958
Oil on canvas, 66" x 66"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Purchase with funds from an anonymous donor, 59.17

Joan Mitchell
Untitled, 1952
Oil on canvas, 77¾ x 72'
Courtesy of Robert Miller Gallery New York

Alfonso Ossorio
Martyrs and Spectators, 1951
Oil and enamel on canvas, 45' x 35'
Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery New York

Milton Resnick
[illegible] 1957
Oil on canvas, 76 x 68"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Guy A. [illegible] 60.67

Robert Richenburg
Crossed Terrain, 1950
Oil on canvas, 48 x 48"
Collection of the artist

James Rosati
Floating Figure, 1952
Plaster, wire mesh, and metal with wood base
23 x 48 x 10"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henkovic

Ethel Schwabacher
Antigone I, 1958
Oil on canvas, 51 x 85"
Collection of Christopher Schwabacher and Brenda Webster

Jack Tworkov
Untitled, 1953
Oil on canvas, 80 x 28"
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Anonymous gift, 1955

Esteban Vicente
Untitled, 1958
Oil on canvas, 32 x 40"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Marika Herskov

Hale Woodruff
[illegible] 1954
Oil on canvas, 27 x 41
Courtesy of Midtown Galleries, New York

Herbert Ferber
Sun Wheel, 1956
Brass, copper, and stainless steel, 56¼ x 29 x 19"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Purchase, 56.18

Seymour Lipton
Storm Bird, 1953
Nickel silver on steel, 20 x 35½ x 11"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Marika Henkovic

skeins of paint that Pollock would drip onto his canvases in the late forties. Documented in a photograph of the first exhibition of the American Abstract Artists group at the Squibb Gallery in 1937, Lassaw's sculpture reflects the improvisational technique that he would later describe:

> To me, a work is at first, quite unknown. In time, more and more enters into consciousness. It would be better to consider a work of art as a process that is started by the artist. In that way of thinking a sculpture or a painting is never finished, but only begun. If successful, the work starts to live a life of its own, a work of art begins to work.[33]

Lassaw's description is, in fact, an apt definition of Abstract Expressionist painting as well as his own sculpture.

Perhaps one of the most baffling omissions in the documentation of the New York School is that of the painter Albert Kotin. Born in 1907, Kotin attended the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design, and he studied with Charles Hawthorne and, later, with Hans Hofmann in Provincetown. Kotin was employed by the WPA Federal Art Project as an easel painter and served as an instructor of cartographic drawing at an Army engineering school in Virginia during the war. He was a member of the Club and participated in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951. Represented in all of the Stable Gallery annuals of the 1950s, Kotin was certainly recognized as a significant artist by his colleagues.

Critics also praised his work. A review in *Art News* of his first one-person show in 1951 at Hacker Gallery noted:

> Albert Kotin . . . who lives in New York and teaches design at C.C.N.Y. presents a fiery group of abstractions. Flying fragments of color are pulled into coherence by their continuity of motion, and by a tension which pervades his best works. His colors are generally brilliant and straight, but among his most effective paintings is a simple black on white.[34]

Kotin was featured in the 1959 *Art News Annual* as one of the artists who prevailed over the Tenth Street group.[35] Although he has not been included in recent studies of Abstract Expressionism, his powerful canvases document his important contribution to the New York School.

The Myth of the Second Generation

Another myth that confuses the definition and evaluation of Abstract Expressionism is the myth of the "second generation." The term "first generation" of Abstract Expressionist painters did not, in fact, refer solely to the age of the artists but to their participation in the early development of the movement. Later, however, the designations of "first generation" and "second generation" often assumed a qualitative meaning that served to exclude artists and to protect the ongoing myth.

Painter James Brooks has, on occasion, been described incorrectly as a "second generation" Abstract Expressionist artist.[36] Yet, the facts run counter to this designation. Six years older than Pollock, Brooks began to use an automatic process in 1948. While painting in Maine during the summer of that year, Brooks was engaged by the accidental markings of black paste seeping through paper to the reverse side of the canvas to which it was adhered. The following year, using an original variation of the automatic process, Brooks poured paint onto Osnaburg cloth and used cardboard to force the paint through the cloth. Turning the stained cloth from one side to another, Brooks continued to work on both sides until an image emerged. In 1952 he described his process:

> My paintings start with a complication on the canvas surface, done with as much spontaneity and as little memory as possible. This then exists as the subject. It is as strange as a new still life arrangement, as confusing as an unfamiliar situation. It demands a long period of acquaintance during which it is observed both innocently and shrewdly. Then it speaks, quietly with its own peculiar

logic. Between painting and painter a dialogue develops which leads rapidly to the bare confrontation of two personalities. At first a rhythm of the painting is modified, then a chain of formal reactions sets in that carries the painting and painter through violent shifts of emphasis and into sudden unfamiliar meanings. . . . At some point the subject becomes the object, existing independently as a painting.[37]

Brooks is listed as a "first generation" painter by Irving Sandler in *The New York School: The Painters and Sculptors of the Fifties*.[38] Although Sandler classified him as one of "the later gestural painters," along with Bradley Walker Tomlin, Franz Kline, and Philip Guston, in *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism*, he included Brooks among the fifteen major artists who had developed distinctive styles by 1952 and had been acknowledged by their colleagues as significant artists.[39] Brooks was also part of the discussions and camaraderie of the Artists' Sessions in 1950 at the Museum of Modern Art, and he can even be found in the photograph of the so-called "Irascibles," seated between Barnett Newman and Clyfford Still, published in *Life* magazine on January 15, 1951.[40] The description of "second generation" in Brooks's case was more likely a reference to his position outside the designated group of heroic figures.

Born in 1926, Joan Mitchell is more accurately described as "second generation." Mitchell was attending Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, during World War II and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1947, when Pollock was developing his allover drip paintings. After living in Europe on a fellowship from 1948 to 1949, Mitchell continued her education, earning a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1950.

Yet, in spite of her youth, Mitchell made a notable contribution to the movement. In 1951 she had her first solo exhibition in New York at the New Gallery. She also attended the Club meetings, participated in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951, and exhibited in all of the subsequent Stable Gallery annuals in the 1950s. Certainly, she was 14 years younger than Jackson Pollock and 22 years younger than Willem de Kooning and she was not part of the artistic milieu of New York City in the 1940s. Neither did she study at the Arts Students League nor with Hans Hofmann, and she did not work on the WPA Federal Art Project or join the AAA. Yet, her Abstract Expressionist paintings were forceful, mature statements by 1952, only two years after Franz Kline executed his first black and white abstract works [41] and only seven years after Barnett Newman created his earliest paintings at the age of 40.[42]

Her work from the early 1950s holds its own among the paintings of the pioneers and makes an important contribution to the history of American art. Although her birthdate and her absence from New York in the 1940s are part of her history, these facts should not limit her to a secondary position in the history of American art.

Mitchell provides another example of the ambiguity of the term "second generation" Abstract Expressionist, a term often used incorrectly or inappropriately to indicate that an artist is less important ("second-string"), or perhaps even "second-rate," rather than to identify him or her as younger or not among the pioneers of the movement.

A More Inclusive View

In the 1950s, Abstract Expressionism provided "American" heroes whose work was seen to exemplify the creative struggle of the individual rather than the collective strength of a group. Unfortunately, with such a limited number of heroes, other significant Abstract Expressionists are relegated to the status of "followers" or are considered to be of "secondary" importance.

As the passage of time provides a perspective to reevaluate the art and the myths of the 1950s, the significance of the Abstract Expressionist movement as a whole emerges. The work of the painters and sculptors in this exhibition highlights the complexity of the development and documentation of the New York School, challenges some of the movement's most sacred myths, and begins to expand the pantheon of its artists. Many more artists can be celebrated, and a more inclusive view of the 1950s can be established.

The strength of America has always been, in theory, its democratic process of inclusion. The strength of the New York School is also better portrayed with a more democratic inclusion of many of the best artists who worked in the 1950s. The stature of the pioneers can, in fact, be augmented with the painting and sculpture of many more excellent artists, giving an expanded import to the American art of midcentury.

Notes

1. *Art Journal* 47 (Fall 1988), special issue "New Myths for Old: Redefining Abstract Expressionism," Ann Gibson and Stephen Polcari, eds.
2. Two recent studies that discuss Abstract Expressionism in a broader cultural context are Michael Leja's *Reframing Abstract Expressionism: Subjectivity and Painting in the 1940s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) and Stephen Polcari's *Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
3. The term Abstract Expressionism was used by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., in 1929 to describe Wassily Kandinsky's early work (see William C. Seitz, *Abstract Expressionist Painting in America*, Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1955, p. 448); the term was applied to American artists by critic Robert Coates in 1946. (See note 16.) The term New York School is often used in a broader sense, referring to avant-garde artists who worked in New York City in the 1940s and 1950s. It is analogous to the term School of Paris, which was used to designate the early modernists in France. In this study, Abstract Expressionism and New York School are used interchangeably.
4. Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," *Art News* 51 (Dec. 1952), 22–23, 48–50; Clement Greenberg, "'American-Type' Painting," *Partisan Review* 22 (Spring 1955), reprinted in John O'Brian, ed., *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism*, vol. 3: *Affirmations and Refusals 1950–1956* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 217–35.
5. Searching for a universal meaning, many of these artists used the automatic process to evoke imagery based on the collective unconscious, a concept posited by Carl Jung. See Terree Grabenhorst-Randall, *Jung and Abstract Expressionism: The Collective Image Among Individual Voices* (Hempstead, N.Y.: Hofstra Museum, Hofstra University, 1986).
6. Arshile Gorky, Hans Hofmann, Mark Tobey, and Bradley Walker Tomlin are not included as frequently in the list of major Abstract Expressionists. Irving Sandler in *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970) included James Brooks but not Mark Tobey. Stephen Polcari in *Abstract Expressionism and the Modern Experience* wrote chapters on eight Abstract Expressionists (Still, Rothko, Gottlieb, Newman, Baziotes, Pollock, de Kooning, and Motherwell) and grouped several additional artists in one chapter: Tomlin, Hofmann, Stamos, Krasner, and Pousette-Dart.
7. T[homas] B. H[ess], "9th St.," *Art News* 50 (Summer 1951): 46–47. Leo Castelli also helped to organize this exhibition.
8. Susan Carol Larsen, *The American Abstract Artists Group: A History and Evaluation of Its Impact Upon American Art*, Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1975), 434.
9. Jerome Klein, "Plenty of Duds Found in Abstract Art Show," *New York Post*, Feb. 19, 1938: p. 18.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Emily Genauer, "Subjective Art Favored," *New York World-Telegram*, Apr. 10, 1937, p. 9A.
14. Robert M. Coates, "The Art Galleries, Abstractionists, and What About Them?" *The New Yorker* XV (Mar. 18, 1939), 57.
15. Ibid., 57–58.
16. Robert M. Coates, "Abroad and Home," *The New Yorker* XXII (Mar. 30, 1946), 83. Cited in Piri Halasz, "Art Criticism (and Art History) in New York: The 1940s vs. The 1980s; Part Two: The Magazines," *Arts* LVII (Mar. 1983), 70. See note 3.
17. From author interview with Ilya Bolotowsky, New York City, September 1977.

18. James Johnson Sweeney, "Introduction," *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Art of This Century, 1943). Cited in Francis V. O'Connor, *Jackson Pollock* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1967), 30.
19. R.W.B. Lewis, *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955). Although he focused on the dialogue in American literature in the nineteenth century that drew on this myth, Lewis also discussed its continuing influence in the 1950s.
20. Ibid., 5.
21. Harold Rosenberg, *The Tradition of the New* (New York: Horizon, 1959; reprint, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965). All page references are to reprint edition.
22. Ibid., 15.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 20.
25. Ibid., 25.
26. Sculpture was often excluded or placed in a separate category by critics and historians. For example, in "'American-Type' Painting," Clement Greenberg said, "Sculpture is a different question" (O'Brian, 217); Harold Rosenberg wrote specifically on action painters in his essay "The American Action Painters"; and Irving Sandler wrote only on painting in his history of Abstract Expressionism, *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism*.
27. Robert Hobbs, *Lee Krasner* (New York: Abbeville, 1993), 32.
28. Other studies that have also given prominence to Lee Krasner are Michael Auping, ed., *Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments* (New York: Abrams; Buffalo, N.Y.: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1987), and Robert Carleton Hobbs and Gail Levin, *Abstract Expressionism: The Formative Years* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University; New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1978).
29. Robert Motherwell and Ad Reinhardt, eds., *Modern Artists in America* (New York: Wittenborn Schultz, 1951), 9. Later Barnett Newman joined them.
30. Ann Gibson, "Two Worlds: African American Abstraction in New York at Mid-Century," in *The Search for Freedom: African American Abstract Painting 1945–1975* (New York: Kenkeleba Gallery, 1991), 12.
31. Romare Bearden and Harry Henderson, *A History of African-American Artists: From 1792 to the Present* (New York: Pantheon, 1993), 326.
32. See note 26.
33. Motherwell and Reinhardt, eds., *Modern Artists in America*, 11–12.
34. P[rudence] B. R[ead], *Art News* 50 (Nov. 1951), 56.
35. Harold Rosenberg, "Tenth Street: A Geography of Modern Art," *Art News Annual* 28 (1959), 120–43, 184.
36. One recent example of this appeared in the *New York Times* obituary for the artist Jon Schueler (*New York Times*, Aug. 4, 1992), which grouped James Brooks with Schueler and Joan Mitchell as second-generation Abstract Expressionists.
37. James Brooks as quoted in Michael Preble, *James Brooks: Paintings and Works on Paper, 1946–1982* (Portland, Me.: Portland Museum of Art, 1983), 9.
38. Irving Sandler, *The New York School: The Painters and Sculptors of the Fifties* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 321.
39. Sandler, *The Triumph of American Painting: A History of Abstract Expressionism*, 2.
40. Ibid., frontispiece.
41. Auping, ed., *Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments*, 267.
42. David Sylvester, "The Ugly Duckling," in Auping, ed. *Abstract Expressionism: The Critical Developments*, 137.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARTISTS

Charles Alston (1907–1977)
The son of a prominent Charlotte, North Carolina, minister, Charles Alston earned a master's degree in fine arts at Columbia University's Teachers College in New York. His degree work included the study of African art, an interest that had been stimulated when he assisted the distinguished collector and writer Dr. Alain Locke with the installation of an exhibition of African sculpture.

In the early 1930s, Alston taught WPA art classes at 306, which became one of Harlem's leading artistic and intellectual centers. When the WPA Federal Art Project refused to make qualified black artists supervisors of its mural projects, Alston joined with other artists to form the Harlem Artists Guild and subsequently became the supervisor of the Harlem Hospital mural project. After serving as an artist in several government and military agencies during World War II, Alston used the GI Bill to attend Pratt Institute, where Alexander Kostellow introduced him to the ideas of Hans Hofmann and Vaclav Vytlacil.

Alston worked in many styles and media through the years, including social realist mural compositions and naturalistic sculpture, as well as abstract paintings. In 1950 Alston won first prize for an abstract painting he entered in a national competition sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. With this new-found success, Alston stopped producing commercial art and devoted his time to painting, making sculpture, and teaching. Appointed to the faculty of the Art Students League in 1950, Alston was the first African-American to teach there. Simultaneously he taught part-time at the City College of New York. In 1971 becoming a full professor, Alston was among the members of the short-lived Spiral, a group of African-American artists in New York who met to discuss their relationship to the Southern civil rights movement and formulate plans to help the cause.

Alston's works are in many collections, including those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.

Ernest Briggs (1923–1984)
Ernest Briggs was born in San Diego, California. During the years 1946 to 1947, after serving in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, he studied at the Schaeffer School of Design. Then, sponsored by the GI Bill from 1947 to 1950, he studied at the California School of Fine Art (now the San Francisco Art Institute), where he came under the influence of the Abstract Expressionist painters who taught there: Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko, and Ad Reinhardt. Recalling the significance of the art-making atmosphere created by these instructors, Briggs described the tremendous elation of being freed from representational subjects and allowed to paint abstractly.

In 1953 he moved to New York and in subsequent years lived and worked there as well as in Maine. Briggs was featured in solo exhibitions at the Stable Gallery in 1954 and 1955. He was also included in *12 Americans* at the Museum of Modern Art in 1956. After teaching briefly at the University of Florida during 1958, Briggs began a long teaching career at Pratt Institute, a relationship that spanned from 1961 to 1984, with periodic appointments at other institutions, including Yale University Graduate School of Art in 1967–68.

The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; the San Francisco Museum of Art; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, are among the institutions whose collections include paintings by Ernest Briggs.

James Brooks (1906–1992)
A pioneer of Abstract Expressionism, James Brooks was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and studied at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and the Art Students League in New York City. Although the artist's early work was essentially regionalist, his use of bold, simplified design and flattened space reflected the influence of Cézanne.

Working for the WPA Federal Art Project from 1936 to 1943 as a muralist, he executed a number of large projects in public spaces. His work from this period culminated in the monumental *Flight*, painted in 1942 (and recently restored) at the Marine Terminal Building at La Guardia Airport, New York.

During World War II, the artist was stationed in the Middle East as an art correspondent. After the war, Brooks turned to biomorphic abstraction and by the late 1940s had developed an allover style of composition using calligraphic and gestural forms. While in Maine during the summer of 1948, Brooks experimented with a staining process that he discovered while adhering paper to Bemis's Osnaburg cloth, which was used for packaging grain. By 1949 Brooks was applying paint with cardboard or pouring it directly from the can, working back and forth on both sides of the cloth before deciding which side of the painting to use. His work from this period is an

original variation of the automatic process that is central to Abstract Expressionism.

He exhibited during the 1950s at the Kootz and Stable galleries and participated in the *Ninth Street Show*. By the end of the decade, his palette became more subdued and his forms bolder and more simplified. His work is represented in major collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; and the National Museum of American Art, Washington, D.C.

Peter Busa (1914–1985)
Peter Busa was among the earliest American artists to practice the surrealist technique of automatic drawing, along with his colleagues Jackson Pollock, William Baziotes, Gerome Kamrowski, and Robert Motherwell. During the winter of 1942–43, these artists met at the studio of émigré surrealist artist Matta to discuss their work and to experiment with the possibilities of automatism.

Born in Pittsburgh, Busa studied at the Art Students League with Thomas Hart Benton during the early 1930s and later in the decade with Hans Hofmann at his school in New York and in Provincetown, Massachusetts. He was employed by the WPA Federal Art Project from 1936 to 1941.

Busa's paintings were greatly affected by Native American art as well as surrealist art. In the late 1930s, he was influenced by the native art of the Northwest Coast Indians, from whom he adopted the flat pictorial plane in order to extend the spatial innovations of Cubism. He exhibited with the Indian Space painters in *8 and a Totem Pole* at the Galerie Neuf in 1946. In that same year, Busa exhibited automatic paintings in his first solo show at Peggy Guggenheim's gallery, Art of This Century. Reviewing this exhibition on March 10, 1946, critic Edward Alden Jewell described the paintings in the *New York Times*: "[Busa's] meandering impasto looks as if it had been ejected from a frosting tube." In the early 1950s, Busa exhibited at the Bertha Schaefer Gallery and was represented in the *Ninth Street Show*.

Working as an Abstract Expressionist from the late 1950s until the mid-1960s, Busa then began to simplify and restructure his paintings using more geometric forms. In 1983, near the end of his long and productive career, he combined geometric forms with his earlier expressionistic approach and reintroduced the figure.

Busa spent many years of his life teaching. He taught painting and design at Cooper Union in the mid-1940s and later at New York University. From 1961 until his retirement, he was a professor of art at the University of Minnesota. His work is represented in the New York collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and in the collection of the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

Nicolas Carone (1917–)
Nicolas Carone was born in New York City. He received training at the National Academy of Design, the Art Students League, and the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts. After serving in the Army during World War II, he received a Fulbright grant to study in Rome, where he exhibited with the surrealist painter Matta Echaurren. Upon his return to New York, he had solo exhibitions of his large gestural paintings at the Frumkin Gallery in Chicago and the Staempfli and Stable galleries in New York.

Carone exhibited his work in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951 and in all of the subsequent Stable Gallery annuals. In 1956 he was included in the Venice Biennale and two years later was represented in the U.S. Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair. Parts of the figure often appear in Carone's work, visible under the surface of swirling brushstrokes, and the fluidity of his paint engulfs the viewer in a wave-like motion. Carone has taught painting at Cooper Union and Columbia University. He is the founder and director of the International School of Art in Umbria, Italy. His work is represented in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Giorgio Cavallon (1904–1989)
Born in Sorio, near Vicenza, Italy, Giorgio Cavallon immigrated to the United States when he was sixteen. He studied at the National Academy of Design and privately with Charles Hawthorne during the summer of 1927 in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Cavallon later studied at the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts in New York. In the mid-1930s, he worked as Arshile Gorky's assistant in the mural division of the WPA Federal Art Project. He was a founding member of the American Abstract Artists group in 1936 and exhibited with them for over 20 years. Cavallon's geometric paintings of the late 1930s reflected his commitment to cubist pictorial structure and the neo-plastic painting of Piet Mondrian.

During the late 1940s, Cavallon exhibited at the Egan Gallery in New York. A charter member of the Eighth Street Club, he exhibited in the historic *Ninth Street Show* in 1951 and participated in *Abstract Painting and Sculpture in America* at the Museum of Modern Art that same year. He was featured in "Cavallon Paints a Picture," an article by Frank O'Hara in *Art News* (December 1958), and his work was considered in O'Hara's *Art Chronicles: 1954–1966*. Throughout the 1950s, he exhibited at the Stable Gallery.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Cavallon taught at Columbia University, traveled and exhibited widely in Europe, and exhibited at the Kootz and A.M. Sachs galleries in New York. His work is in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York.

Nanno de Groot (1913–1963)
Nanno de Groot was born in Holland. When his father refused to let him study art, he became a sailor and worked as an officer on freighters from 1930 to 1937, continuing to draw on his own. Later he served in the Dutch Navy, after working in the shipping business in Java and Bali until 1941. In 1946 he applied for U.S. citizenship and worked for a year as a cartoonist.

Settling in New York in 1948, De Groot began to paint and in the next few years met many New York School artists, including Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning, Philip Guston, and Hans Hofmann, as well as David Smith, with whom he exhibited in 1956. In 1949 he summered in Provincetown (well-known as an artists' colony), a routine that he continued until 1961, when he moved there permanently.

De Groot began his black and white paintings in the early 1950s. These linear paintings, which tie him to the Abstract Expressionist movement, develop a figural iconography. Working in a house in rural New Jersey from 1957 until 1961, the artist created a series of paintings incorporating more direct references to landscape and the figure. He also worked in other locales in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut during this time. In addition to his painting, in the 1950s, De Groot wrote a semi-autobiographical novel and illustrated two children's books.

He is represented in private and public collections, including the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., and the Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, Virginia.

Elaine de Kooning (1918–1989)
As a critic for *Art News* magazine, Elaine de Kooning was a major voice in the dialogue that documented the Abstract Expressionist movement in the 1950s. Born in New York City, De Kooning attended the Leonardo da Vinci Art School in 1937 and the American Artists School in 1938. Later she studied with Willem de Kooning, whom she married in 1943.

Elaine de Kooning's recently recovered enamel paintings on paper from 1948 document her development as an Abstract Expressionist. However, later, during the 1950s, her work began to rely more on illustrational drawing techniques. In 1950 she was selected by Clement Greenberg and Meyer Schapiro to exhibit in *Talent 1950* at the Kootz Gallery. She was also represented in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951 and in all of the subsequent Stable Gallery annuals from 1953 to 1957. Her first solo show was organized by the Stable Gallery in 1952.

Elaine de Kooning was well-known at universities throughout the country as a visiting artist and lecturer. In 1957 she taught at the University of New Mexico and later held the Lamar Dodd Chair as professor of painting at the University of Georgia. The University of Georgia organized a retrospective of her work in 1992. De Kooning is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Neuberger Museum, Purchase, New York.

Friedel Dzubas (1915–)
Friedel Dzubas was born in Berlin during World War I. From 1933 to 1936, he was an apprentice in a Berlin decorative painting company. His real interest, however, was in the painting of the German Expressionists, whose work he saw in museum collections. During the turbulent mid-1930s, Dzubas joined the Communist Party and in 1939 was forced to flee Germany, first to London, then to the United States. After living in New York for a short time, he moved to Chicago to work as a graphic designer.

After the war, Dzubas returned to New York, where he continued working as a designer and painter. He met the influential critic Clement Greenberg in 1948 and, through him, Jackson Pollock and a number of the other painters who would become well-known as Abstract Expressionists. In 1949 he became a member of the Eighth Street Club and began painting in a nonfigurative style.

In 1959 Dzubas abandoned his work as a designer to devote himself to painting. During the 1960s, Dzubas twice won Guggenheim fellowships and taught painting at Dartmouth and Cornell as a visiting artist. In the following decade, he received a number of important commissions, including a mural-sized painting for Shawmut Bank in Boston.

Major exhibitions of his work have been organized by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. He is represented in the collections of the

Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and in the collections of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.

Herbert Ferber (1908–1991)
Born in New York City, Herbert Ferber studied dentistry at Columbia University, receiving both BS and DDS degrees. During the 1930s, he exhibited paintings at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., the Philadelphia Art Alliance, and the John Reed Club Gallery in New York. Ferber was already a serious sculptor in the 1930s, but throughout his life he continued to draw and paint. Active in the Artists' Union and the Artists' Congress, Ferber received an award at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 1942 *Artists for Victory* exhibition.

After the war, he turned increasingly to sculpture and began to exhibit at the Betty Parsons Gallery. Through the gallery, Ferber became more involved with the Abstract Expressionists and participated in their activities. He took part in the Artists' Sessions at Studio 35 and was a member of the Eighth Street Club. Ferber also contributed to the artist-run periodical *The Tiger's Eye*.

During the 1960s, Ferber became interested in large-scale environmental sculpture and was commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art for its *Sculpture as Environment* installation. He also lectured on the subject at Princeton University and the architecture school at Columbia University. The Walker Art Center in Minneapolis organized a retrospective exhibition of his work in 1962, which traveled to a number of venues, including the Whitney Museum.

The artist received a number of large-scale commissions in recent decades, including a 22-foot-high sculpture in Chicago and major outdoor works at Rutgers University in New Jersey. His work is represented by several major museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Perle Fine (1908–1988)
One of the earliest female members of the Eighth Street Club, Perle Fine was born in Boston and moved to New York to study with Kimon Nicolaides at the Art Students League. In the late 1930s, she studied with Hans Hofmann and experimented with a variety of painting styles derived from the masters of early European modernism. A member of Hofmann's circle, she lived across the street from his school on 8th Street in Greenwich Village and spent the summers of 1938 through 1951 in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Like many of Hofmann's students, Fine joined the American Abstract Artists group and began to exhibit with them in 1945.

By the late 1940s, she had established a studio on 10th Street, in the midst of the nascent Abstract Expressionist community. Her mature paintings and collages from the 1940s and 1950s are imbued with the vigorous, gestural qualities of the New York School. She was represented in the *Ninth Street Show* and exhibited regularly during the 1950s at the Betty Parsons and Tanager galleries, although by 1954 she was living in East Hampton, New York. In the early 1960s, she abandoned her painterly style for an allover geometric grid.

Her work is in the collections of the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C., and the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Grace Hartigan (1922–)
Among the first female artists in the New York School to be given critical attention during the 1950s, Grace Hartigan was included in important showcases of the new art: the Kootz Gallery's *Talent 1950* exhibition; the 1951 *Ninth Street Show*; and the Museum of Modern Art's 1956 *12 Americans* and its 1958 *New American Painting*, which traveled to eight European cities.

Born in Newark, New Jersey, Hartigan studied mechanical drafting at Newark College of Engineering and painting with New Jersey artist Isaac Lane Muse. She worked as a draftsperson in a Newark war plant and then moved to New York in 1945. There she soon began meeting artists, including Adolph Gottlieb and Mark Rothko. Seeing Jackson Pollock's 1948 exhibition of drip paintings at Betty Parsons Gallery profoundly moved Hartigan, and by 1950 she was painting Abstract Expressionist canvases. Active in the milieu of avant-garde New York, she soon numbered among her close friends Pollock, Lee Krasner, and Willem de Kooning.

Her collaboration with poet Frank O'Hara on twelve poem-paintings, entitled *Oranges*, marked her turn away from complete nonobjective compositions to more recognizable imagery in 1952. Throughout the years from the 1950s to the present, she has painted abstract and semi-abstract works, as well as representational works in which she has explored the figure, landscape, symbolic objects, and the urban themes of fragmentation in contemporary life.

Hartigan's work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and in that of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Albert Kotin (1907–1980)
Albert Kotin was born in Russia and immigrated to the United States with his parents as an infant. He studied at the Art Students League, at the National Academy of Design, and with Charles Hawthorne in Provincetown, Massachusetts. In the late 1920s, Kotin went to Paris, where he studied at the Académie Julian and the Grande Chaumière. Returning to the United States in 1931, he found employment first on the Public Works of Art Project and then as an easel painter on the WPA Federal Art Project. He also executed commissioned frescoes in public spaces in the regionalist and social realist styles.

In the 1940s, Kotin taught cartographic drawing in the U.S. Army. After the war, he studied in New York with Hans Hofmann and turned to abstract art. He participated in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951, was active in the Eighth Street Club, and exhibited at the Tanager and Stable galleries during the 1950s, while he supported himself by teaching at City College and the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute. By the end of the decade, he began to incorporate poetic texts into his gestural paintings. During the 1970s, he reintroduced figurative elements in his work, a development that culminated in a series of colossal heads.

A memorial exhibition of his work was held in 1982 at the Brooklyn Center of Long Island University, where he had taught for many years. His work is in the collections of the Everson Museum of Art of Syracuse, the Hampton Institute in Virginia, the Brooklyn Public Library, and the University of California at Berkeley.

Lee Krasner (1908–1984)
Lee Krasner's *Little Image* series of the mid-1940s highlights her position as a pioneer Abstract Expressionist. As a group, these works are allover painterly images, although they are sometimes structured by an underlying grid. They represent Krasner's contribution to the early development of the allover picture.

Born in Brooklyn, Krasner completed programs at Women's Art School, a part of Cooper Union, and the National Academy of Design, as well as a course at the Art Students League. She worked in the mural division of the WPA Federal Art Project, where her assignments included painting a full-scale mural from a Willem de Kooning sketch featuring a hard-edged nonobjective composition. Through her WPA Artists' Union, and American Abstract Artists group activities, Krasner met many avant-garde artists and critics, including Harold Rosenberg, Piet Mondrian, Arshile Gorky, and Jackson Pollock.

In Hans Hofmann's classes, which she attended from 1937 to 1940, Krasner began painting accomplished abstract still-life and figure studies. After Krasner and Pollock were included, along with others, in a 1941 exhibition organized by John Graham, the two artists became good friends and were married in 1945.

Since she was forced through lack of money to scrape down earlier paintings so she could reuse the canvas, much of her work before 1945 does not survive. Earlier works also fell to her scissors, when in 1953 she cut up these paintings to recombine their fragments into collage form. After the death of Pollock in 1956, Krasner began painting on a monumental scale, with the execution of large-scale paintings continuing through several series until her death. During much of her career, she was overshadowed by other Abstract Expressionists. It was only in the last years of her life that her contribution to Abstract Expressionism began to be recognized.

Krasner's work is well represented in museum and private collections, including those of the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the National Gallery of Art, the National Museum of American Art, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.

Ibram Lassaw (1913–)
Sculptor Ibram Lassaw was born in Alexandria, Egypt, to Russian émigré parents and moved in 1921 to New York City. While still in his teens, he attended the Clay Club (now the Sculpture Center). During the early 1930s, he studied traditional sculpture techniques at the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design and attended City College of New York, during which time he also worked as an assistant at a sculpture-fabricating factory. Later in the decade, he was employed by the WPA Federal Art Project and was involved in the founding of the American Abstract Artists group in 1936.

During World War II, Lassaw learned oxyacetylene welding at an Army technical school, a technique he exploited in his mature sculpture during the period after the war. Beginning without a sketch, Lassaw melted welding rods of various alloys, fusing open linear structures through a process that paralleled Jackson Pollock's dripping of paint.

A charter member and participant in the Eighth Street Club, Lassaw was represented by the Kootz Gallery from 1951 to 1965. Lassaw was included in the 1954 Venice Biennale as well as several Whitney Museum annuals and biennials. He has participated in exhibitions at numerous galleries and

museums, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C.

In 1984 the artist was elected a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. He continues to work and live in his studio in East Hampton, New York. His sculptures are in notable public collections and museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the Brooklyn Museum.

Norman Lewis (1909–1979)

Norman Lewis's painting spans from the socially conscious figurative work of the Harlem Renaissance to his own lyrical version of Abstract Expressionism. Born and raised in New York City, he started his art education in Harlem at Augusta Savage's studio and continued to study with Raphael Soyer at the John Reed Club Art School.

The artist worked for the WPA Federal Art Project during the 1930s and was actively involved in the Artists' Union and the Artists' Congress. Very conscious of his heritage as an African-American, he made copies of the traditional African art from the Museum of Modern Art's *African Negro Art* exhibition of 1935. He showed his ethnic pride through other venues as well: he was a founding member of the Harlem Artists Guild and participated in the inaugural exhibition of the Salon of Contemporary Negro Art, a gallery organized and run by Black artists. In the early 1960s, Lewis was elected the first president of Spiral, an organization of Black artists.

His earlier work depicted the lives of urban Black workers and their families in a broad, painterly style that showed affinities to the social realist art of Raphael Soyer and the bold compositions of Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. After the war, his paintings became more abstract, with his Abstract Expressionist work characterized by luminous atmospheric effects in allover compositions that hover ambiguously between a painterly surface and an implied deep space. As an Abstract Expressionist painter, he began to exhibit at the Downtown Gallery and the Willard Gallery and was included in major exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Lewis's paintings can be found in the collections of the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute Museum of Art, Utica, New York.

Seymour Lipton (1903–1986)

Seymour Lipton began his career as a professional dentist, receiving his DDS from Columbia University in 1927. Although he never received formal training as an artist, he began to do sculpture in the late 1920s. By the mid-1930s, Lipton had exhibited his figurative sculpture at the ACA Gallery and at the gallery for the radical John Reed Club. His early work, primarily direct carving, reflected his interest in social and political issues. After World War II, however, he began his sheet-lead construction technique and his sculpture became more abstract.

Lipton exhibited at the Whitney Museum annuals in the 1940s and at the Betty Parsons Gallery in the 1950s. During this time, Lipton developed his signature style of abstract sculpture and he began to receive important commissions. Along with many other Abstract Expressionists, he participated in the Artists' Sessions at Studio 35 and contributed to the artist-run periodical *The Tiger's Eye*. From 1940 to 1965, Lipton taught sculpture at the New School for Social Research. In 1958 he was featured in the Venice Biennale and in 1960 received a Guggenheim grant.

In more recent decades, Lipton participated in important international exhibitions, including *Documenta II* in Kassel, Germany, and executed a number of monumental works in public places, including *Archangel* at New York's Lincoln Center. His work is in a number of public collections, including those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.

Conrad Marca-Relli (1913–)

Joining expressionist brushwork with canvas collage, Conrad Marca-Relli transformed this cubist technique into a monumental painting statement. Born in Boston, Marca-Relli spent his childhood traveling between his Massachusetts hometown and Europe. In 1926 his family moved permanently to New York City.

Marca-Relli studied at Cooper Union in New York for one year and then established his studio in 1931. He participated in the WPA Federal Art Project from 1935 to 1938, working in both the easel and mural divisions, and served in the U.S. Army during World War II. In 1947 Marca-Relli had his first solo exhibition in New York at the Niveau Gallery. Marca-Relli worked in Paris and Rome, returning to New York in 1949. He became associated with the Abstract Expressionist circle at this time, assuming the role of a charter member of the Eighth Street Club and then, in 1951, an organizer of the historic *Ninth Street Show*. Two years later, Marca-Relli settled in East Hampton, New York.

Throughout the 1950s, Marca-Relli traveled extensively in Europe, spending long periods of time in Rome. During the late 1950s, the artist joined the Kootz Gallery in New York and he also exhibited in countries in Europe and South America and in Japan. The Whitney Museum of American Art organized a major retrospective of Marca-Relli's work in 1967. In the late 1960s and 1970s, he was represented by the Marlborough Gallery in New York.

Marca-Relli's paintings often refer to the figure. He explained: "By creating forms, not unrelated forms but human forms, the figure no longer exists at a naturalistic level, only an emotional one" (Girault-Miracle, *Marca-Relli*, p. 60).

Marca-Relli is included in the collections of many major museums: the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

George McNeil (1908–)

Born in New York City in the early years of this century, George McNeil has recently received attention as a precursor of Neo-Expressionism, his expressively painted figures anticipating the work of many contemporary artists. At the age of 18, McNeil entered the art program at Pratt Institute, where he was introduced to European modernism. He attended Vaclav Vytlacil's lectures at the Art Students League and classes with Jan Matulka. From 1932 to 1936, he studied with Hans Hofmann. McNeil worked as a WPA Federal Art Project artist beginning in 1936 and, that same year, helped to found the American Abstract Artists group.

After serving in the Navy during World War II, McNeil taught art at the University of Wyoming (1946–48) then returned to Pratt Institute as director of the evening school, employing such artists as Philip Guston, Adolph Gottlieb, Jack Tworkov, and Franz Kline. Although he remained on the Pratt Institute faculty through 1980, McNeil assumed other teaching assignments, at the University of California at Berkeley (1956–57) and the New York Studio School (1966–80).

In his paintings, McNeil combined rectilinear compositions with expressive brushwork, reflecting the influence of Hans Hofmann. The human figure began appearing in his compositions in the 1950s. His abstract images increasingly included explicit anatomical references and painterly allusion to the moods and psychological states of his characters. His works are included in such public collections as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

Joan Mitchell (1926–1992)

Joan Mitchell journeyed east to attend college, studying at Smith from 1942 to 1944. The Chicago-born artist returned to the Midwest, however, earning a BFA and an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1947 and 1950, respectively. In the early 1950s, Mitchell had a studio in New York City, where she met many of the Abstract Expressionists and was active in the Eighth Street Club. Her first New York exhibitions—a solo show at New Gallery and inclusion in the *Ninth Street Show*, both in 1951—were followed by frequent shows at the Stable Gallery throughout the 1950s. Beginning in 1955, Mitchell divided her time between New York and France, spending the greater part of her career in Paris and after 1969, in Vétheuil, about an hour from the city.

Mitchell's work took its inspiration from nature. The artist said that her paintings were about a feeling that came to her from landscape. In her early 1950s works dealing with remembered landscapes from her travels in Europe, Mexico, and the Midwest, she created large, open, airy fields of white upon which linear markings form a latticework, activated by drips, smudges, and wiped areas. Her later paintings evolved a denser surface. Painterly areas are often combined with linear markings to create a flat webbing, yet the works are gestural and often exuberantly lyrical.

Mitchell is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh; the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C.; and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Alfonso Ossorio (1916–1990)

Born in Manila, the Philippines, the son of the owner of a sugar refinery, Alfonso Ossorio immigrated to the United States in his early twenties. The artist received a BA in 1938 from Harvard University and studied at the Rhode Island School of Design the following year. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a medical illustrator and after the war traveled to Paris, where he met and became friends with artist Jean Dubuffet. In 1952 Dubuffet's Art Brut collection was installed in Ossorio's East Hampton estate, where many Abstract Expressionists were able to view it. (A decade later it was exhibited at Cordier and Warren Gallery in New York.) Like Dubuffet, Ossorio was profoundly influenced

by Art Brut, the work of untrained artists (now called outsider art). His paintings from the early 1950s incorporated Jackson Pollock's drip method and allover compositional field with subject matter inspired by Art Brut. Later, these influences were particularly evident in his "congregations," in which he combined a variety of materials and debris, including bones, glass eyes, mirrors, and starfish, together with oil paint and wax, in a way that owed more to expressionism than assemblage.

Ossorio exhibited at Betty Parsons Gallery throughout the 1950s. Later he was involved in organizing exhibitions, including shows at Executive House in New York and the Signa Gallery in East Hampton, which he co-founded. His work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; and the Boymans–van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam.

Milton Resnick (1917–)

Born in the Ukraine the year of the Russian Revolution, Milton Resnick immigrated with his parents in 1922, first to Cuba and then to Brooklyn, New York. At Pratt Institute, he enrolled in the commercial art program and later switched to the fine arts program. In the mid-1930s, he was employed on the WPA Federal Art Project as a mural assistant. Resnick served in Iceland and Europe in the U.S. Army during World War II. All of his prewar paintings were lost or destroyed, except two works that were left with Willem de Kooning.

After the war, Resnick returned to New York and began painting abstractly. In 1946 he moved to Paris for two years under the GI Bill and then returned to New York, where he enrolled in Hans Hofmann's school to continue his GI benefits. Resnick was a charter member of the Eighth Street Club, which began in 1949, and in 1951 he participated in the *Ninth Street Show*. His gestural painting of the mid-1950s gradually gave way to a concern with creating an allover unitary field made up of small brushstrokes. This development led to critics dubbing his work "abstract impressionist," a label the artist eschewed. After 1959 Resnick abandoned this delicate, lyrical style in favor of the thickly textured monochromatic paintings characteristic of his later work.

Resnick is represented in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the National Gallery of Art and the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.; and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

Robert Richenburg (1917–)

Robert Richenburg was born in Boston. In 1939 he attended the Corcoran School of Art and, from 1940 to 1941, the Art Students League, where he studied with George Grosz and Reginald Marsh. After serving in the Army in Europe during World War II, he lived in Provincetown, Massachusetts, for a year. Then in 1947 he settled in New York, where he studied with Amédée Ozenfant and Hans Hofmann.

Richenburg participated in the events and exhibitions of the nascent Abstract Expressionist group: a visit with Lassaw to Willem de Kooning's studio left a lasting impression on him, and in 1949 Lassaw invited him to join the Eighth Street Club. Richenburg was included in the 1949 and 1950 loan exhibitions at the Museum of Non-Objective Painting and participated in the *Ninth Street Show*.

Throughout the 1950s and into the mid-1960s, Richenburg exhibited frequently in New York City and taught at Pratt Institute. His early dark paintings, which evoke the horror of war, evolved into a distinctive synthesis of vibrant color overlaid with black.

After resigning from Pratt Institute in 1964, Richenburg taught at Cornell University, Hunter College, and later Ithaca College in upstate New York. Cut off from New York City's active art world and no longer represented by the Tibor de Nagy Gallery, Richenburg exhibited less frequently with the New York School artists in the 1970s. He turned to creating smaller-scale works, experimented with diverse media, and produced numerous works on paper. After retiring from Ithaca College in 1983, he moved to East Hampton, New York.

Richenburg is included in many museum collections, such as the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. A retrospective of his work was organized in 1993 by the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University.

James Rosati (1912–1988)

Well-known for his monumental outdoor sculpture like *Ideogram* (1973), commissioned for the World Trade Center in New York, James Rosati was an early participant in the New York School. Born in Washington, Pennsylvania, Rosati displayed an early interest in and talent for music and, while still in his teens, played violin for the Pittsburgh String Orchestra. In 1934 he turned to sculpture and worked for the WPA Federal Art Project during the last years of the decade.

In 1944 Rosati moved to New York City and became acquainted with many avant-garde artists. He was a charter member of the Eighth Street Club in 1949 and participated in the *Ninth Street Show* in 1951. He also took part in several of the Whitney Museum annuals and participated in all of the Stable Gallery annuals in the 1950s.

Rosati, in contrast to many other avant-garde sculptors, continued the tradition of closed forms characteristic of Constantin Brancusi, and his early sculpture remained involved with the figure. During the fifties, he taught at Cooper Union in New York and Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. In 1958 he showed in the Carnegie International Exhibition and during the 1960s received a number of awards, including the Brandeis Award, the Logan Medal from the Art Institute of Chicago, and a Guggenheim fellowship. He taught sculpture at Yale from 1960 to 1973 and in 1977 was visiting critic of sculpture at the University of Pennsylvania.

Rosati's work is represented in a number of significant collections, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Ethel Schwabacher (1903–1984)

Ethel Schwabacher was born in New York in 1903. At the age of fifteen, she enrolled at the Art Students League and two years later studied sculpture at the National Academy of Design. After apprenticing with stone carvers and studying sculpture with Anna Hyatt Huntington in 1923, Schwabacher gave up sculpture for painting. In 1927 she enrolled in Max Weber's painting class at the Art Students League and that year met and began a long association with Arshile Gorky. (Schwabacher wrote the foreword to the 1951 Whitney Museum of American Art catalog *Arshile Gorky, Memorial Exhibition* and authored the 1957 monograph on the artist.)

While living in Europe from 1928 to 1934, she studied painting in France and Austria and underwent psychoanalysis, an experience that began her life-long interest in Freudian psychology. Through Arshile Gorky, with whom she studied from 1934 to 1935, Schwabacher was introduced to surrealist automatism, and consequently she combined clear references to nature with free-associational images drawn from her unconscious. Her variation of biomorphic abstraction, with its fauve colors and intensified contrasts, heralded her later styles.

In the 1950s, Schwabacher developed themes of childbirth, women, and children. Her paintings also reinterpreted mythological subjects, emphasizing themes of separation, anxiety, loneliness, and loss. While painful personal experiences (including the untimely death of her husband and the artist's depression and several suicide attempts) may inform her affinity for tragic subjects, she transcended her own experiences by selecting epic and heroic themes, such as those found in Greek tragedies.

Her works are represented in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Jack Tworkov (1900–1982)

Jack Tworkov was born in Poland and emigrated to the United States with his family just before the outbreak of World War I. He studied at Columbia University, the National Academy of Design, and the Art Students League. He showed his work in the Société Anonyme's exhibition *Vanguard* in 1929 and during the 1930s worked in the easel division of the WPA Federal Art Project, where he met Willem de Kooning, who was to have a lasting influence on him. Tworkov worked as a tool designer during World War II.

In 1947 Tworkov began to exhibit his expressionistic paintings at the Egan Gallery in New York, and a year later he had his first museum show at the Baltimore Museum of Art. In 1949 Tworkov was a charter member of the Eighth Street Club. He said of that era: "There was a period when I felt connected. . . . It coincided with that short period after World War II when I really believed that, after the sacrifices and horror the world went through, we were embarked on a better world" (Armstrong and Baker, *Jack Tworkov: Paintings 1928–82*, p. 145).

By the 1960s, he began to bring more of an underlying geometric structure to his free, gestural style, anticipating some concerns of the emerging minimalists. Tworkov was appointed chairman of the Art Department at Yale University's School of Art and Architecture in 1963. The following year the Whitney Museum of American Art organized a traveling retrospective of his work, and again in 1971 the museum mounted a solo exhibition of his work. Tworkov's paintings are represented in major museum collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York; the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.; and the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.

Esteban Vicente (1903–)

In the early 1920s, Esteban Vicente moved from the provincial Spanish town of his birth to Madrid, where he studied at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando. During this period, he formed friendships with some of the leading artists and intellectuals of his day, including Federico García Lorca and Luis Buñuel. In 1929 he moved to Paris, where he

became involved with the cosmopolitan Parisian avant-garde. During the Spanish Civil War, Vicente returned to Spain, painting camouflage for the Loyalists; following their defeat in 1936, he moved to New York City, becoming a United States citizen four years later.

In 1950 he established a studio on East 10th Street, which he later shared with Willem de Kooning, and became involved with the Abstract Expressionists. By the mid-1950s, his work was being exhibited at the Egan Gallery, the Rose Fried Gallery, and the Leo Castelli Gallery.

Vicente taught at New York University from 1959 to 1964. In 1964 he became a founding faculty member of the New York Studio School. At this time, he purchased a summer home in Bridgehampton, New York.

Vicente is known for his collages and his consummate use of color. His later work evokes what he described as "inner landscapes." Vicente is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Brooklyn Museum in New York; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden and the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.; the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis; and the Albright-Knox Museum in Buffalo, New York.

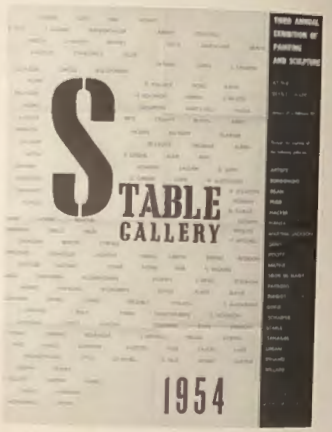
Hale Woodruff (1900–1980)

Born in Cairo, Illinois, Hale Woodruff grew up in Nashville, Tennessee. Enrolling at the age of 18, he studied at the John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis for several years.

With a $300 award won for a painting entered in a 1926 Harmon Foundation competition, Woodruff was able to purchase a ticket to Paris, where he remained for four years, studying at the Académie Moderne, the Académie Scandinave, and independently at the museums. When he returned to the United States, Woodruff began teaching at Atlanta University, where he gained a reputation as one of the most talented African-American artists of the 1930s. During the summer of 1934, he studied mural painting with Diego Rivera in Mexico, and later he painted murals for the WPA Federal Art Project in Atlanta.

Winning a Rosenwald fellowship in 1943 and 1944 allowed him to study and paint in New York City for two years. Then in 1946 he left his teaching position in Atlanta to move to New York, where he taught art at New York University until 1968. In 1962 Woodruff helped start the Spiral group of African-American artists working in New York, who met to discuss problems of Black artists and the civil rights movement.

Woodruff's paintings from the late 1940s are energetic abstract canvases that often incorporate the imagery of Ashanti gold weights and other African-designed motifs. Included in numerous group exhibitions, Woodruff had a 1979 retrospective at the Studio Museum in Harlem. His works are included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the National Museum of American Art in Washington, D.C.



Poster for the Stable Gallery annual, New York, 1954.

CATALOG OF THE EXHIBITION

1. **Charles Alston**
   Painting, 1950
   Oil on canvas, 50 x 36"
   Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
   Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1951

2. **Ernest Briggs**
   Untitled 1953
   Oil on canvas, 69 x 63"
   Courtesy of Snyder Fine Art, New York

3. **James Brooks**
   Aralee, 1957
   Oil on canvas, 84 7/8 x 66 1/8"
   Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
   George A. Hearn Fund, 1957

4. **Peter Busa**
   Effigy, c. 1957
   Oil on canvas, 47 x 38"
   Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

5. **Nicolas Carone**
   Living Time, 1956
   Oil on canvas, 41½ x 50½"
   Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
   Gift of Miss Katherine Ordway, 1956

6. **Giorgio Cavallon**
   Untitled, 1959
   Oil on canvas, 65 x 38"
   Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
   Purchase, with funds from the Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art, 60.2

7. **Nanno de Groot**
   Untitled, 1950
   Oil on canvas, 52 x 59"
   Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

8. **Elaine de Kooning**
   Untitled, 1949
   Oil on canvas, 30 x 30"
   Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

9. **Friedel Dzubas**
   Untitled, c. 1957
   Oil on canvas, 52 x 39¼"
   Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

10. **Herbert Ferber**
    Sun Wheel, 1956
    Brass, copper, and stainless steel, 56¼ x 29 x 19"
    Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
    Purchase, 56.18

11. **Perle Fine**
    Untitled, 1954
    Oil on canvas, 50 x 59¼"
    Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

12. **Grace Hartigan**
    Showcase 1955
    Oil on canvas, 69 3/16 x 80¼"
    Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
    Purchase, Roy and Marie S. Neuberger Foundation, Inc. Gift, 1956

13. **Albert Kotin**
    Westerly, 1957
    Oil on canvas, 69 x 79"
    Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

14. **Lee Krasner**
    Untitled, 1948
    Oil on canvas, 30 x 25"
    Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
    Gift of Mrs. Donald T. Braider, 1986

15. **Ibram Lassaw**
    Counterpoint Castle, 1957
    Bronze and copper, 38 x 26 x 19"
    Collection of the artist

16. **Norman Lewis**
    Green Mist, 1949
    Oil on canvas, 39¾ x 36"
    Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York

17. **Seymour Lipton**
    Storm Bird, 1953
    Nickel silver on steel, 20 x 35¼ x 11"
    Collection of Drs. Thomas and Manka Henskovic

18. **Conrad Marca-Relli**
    The Battle, 1956
    Oilcloth, tinted canvas, enamel paint, and oil on canvas
    70½ x 130½"
    Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
    Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1956

19. **George McNeil**
Astor, 1958
Oil on canvas, 66 x 66"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Purchase, with funds from an anonymous donor, 59.17

20. **Joan Mitchell**
Untitled, 1952
Oil on canvas, 77¼ x 72"
Courtesy of Robert Miller Gallery, New York

21. **Alfonso Ossorio**
Martyrs and Spectators, 1951
Oil and enamel on canvas, 45½ x 35"
Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York

22. **Milton Resnick**
Low Gate, 1957
Oil on canvas, 76 x 68½"
Collection of the Whitney Museum of American Art
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Guy A. Weill, 60.67

23. **Robert Richenburg**
Crossed Terrain, 1950
Oil on canvas, 48 x 48"
Collection of the artist

24. **James Rosati**
Floating Figure, 1952
Plaster, wire mesh, and metal with wood base
23 x 48 x 10"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Marika Herskovic

25. **Ethel Schwabacher**
Antigone I, 1958
Oil on canvas, 51 x 85"
Collection of Christopher Schwabacher and Brenda Webster

26. **Jack Tworkov**
Adagio, 1953
Oil on canvas, 80 x 28"
Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Anonymous gift, 1955

27. **Esteban Vicente**
Untitled, 1958
Oil on canvas, 32 x 40"
Collection of Drs. Thomas and Marika Herskovic

28. **Hale Woodruff**
Equinox, c. 1954
Oil on canvas, 27 x 41"
Courtesy of Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York

Dimensions are in inches, in order of height, width, and depth

Poster for the Stable Gallery annual, New York, 1957.

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Poster for the Stable Gallery annual, New York, 1953

Photograph Credits
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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 94-065703
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