

The East End In the Abstract

Object List

James Brooks (1906-1992), *Untitled*, 1963, Ink and watercolor on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

James Brooks (1906-1992), *Untitled (Hooker's Green Series)*, 1979, Acrylic on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

During the 1920s and 1930s James Brooks supported himself as a commercial artist in New York while studying painting at the Art Students League. Brooks worked in the popular realist style of the day, and participated in the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) where he created his best-known work, *Flight*, a 237 foot long mural in the rotunda of the Marine Air Terminal at LaGuardia Airport. After World War II, Brooks married the painter Charlotte Park and in 1947 he started working in the abstract style. Brooks and Park followed their close friends, Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, to the East End of Long Where, where they set up painting studios in Montauk in 1949. In 1957 the couple established a home and studio in the Springs, East Hampton, where they lived and worked for the rest of their lives.

Herman Cherry (1909-1992), *Arrangement No. 13*, 1956, Oil on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Herman Cherry began spending summers in East Hampton in 1964 and maintained a residence there until his death in 1992. Like Jackson Pollock, Cherry studied with Thomas Hart Benton, and his early work reflects an interest in American Regionalism. After years of travel, Cherry settled in New York and by the 1950s his work had become abstract. Cherry is known for his skillful and lively interplay of color and shape.

Perle Fine (1905-1988), *Accordment No. 16 (A Timelessness)*, Acrylic on canvas, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

In the 1930s, while taking classes at Hans Hofmann's school in New York, Perle Fine met artists Louise Nevelson and Lee Krasner and began painting in a non-objective style. Feeling alienated by the male-dominated art scene in Manhattan, and at the prompting of Krasner, Fine and her husband, the photographer Maurice Berezov, moved to the Springs, East Hampton. In 1954, Fine and Berezov built a studio not far from Krasner's and Jackson Pollock's own house and studio. Fine would teach at Hofstra University and gave private lessons from 1962 to 1973. Fine's final major body of work was the *Accordment Series*, (to

which this work belongs) on which she would continue to work until the mid-1980s. In this work, Fine's focus turned to the grid, an aesthetic form she fully embraced while working in the Springs. She described these paintings as "compelling, mysterious...yet very tranquil; they are evocations of being in tune with nature and the Universe."

Helen Hoie (1911-2000), *Venetian Harbor*, ND, Acrylic on Linen, Collection of Stony Brook Southampton

Helen Hoie built a highly successful career as an award-winning designer and Creative Director for major international fashion firms. She became known for her discerning eye and timeless style imbued with a balance of artistry, glamour, and femininity. She married artist Claus Hoie in 1956 and then moved to East Hampton in the 1960s. It was there that Helen shifted her focus from fashion to the fine arts. She would go on to exhibit her collages and paintings with major galleries and institutions throughout the United States.

Lee Krasner (1908-1984), *Refractions*, 1962, Lithograph on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Lenore (Lee) Krasner was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY. Trained under the tutelage of avant-garde painter Hans Hoffman, Krasner would join the Federal Art Project of the WPA in 1934, a program which allowed her to devote herself to fine art full time. In 1942, she was selected by the artist John Graham to participate in his exhibition *American and French Painters*. Through this, she met Jackson Pollock, who was also showing in the exhibition. Three years later, the pair relocated from their apartment and loft studios in Manhattan to a 19th century farmhouse and barn studio in the Springs, East Hampton. From a small bedroom studio in the home, Krasner produced a series known the Little Images, a suite of abstract hieroglyphs. After Pollock's death in 1956, Krasner moved her practice into the barn studio. There, the scale and scope of her work expanded. Her monumental paintings translate the language of nature into bold, gestural abstract compositions. A prolific artist who often reworked and recycled old works into new, Krasner worked between East Hampton and Manhattan until her death in 1984.

John Little (1907-1984), *Untitled*, 1976, Oil and collage on paper mounted on linen, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

After visiting Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner at their home in the Springs in 1948, John Little purchased a near-by property known as Duck Creek Farm. Using funds from his successful fabric and wallpaper design business, Little

renovated the farmhouse and relocated an old barn to the site to use as a studio. He became a permanent resident of the Springs in 1951, where he began to paint with a new freedom in the Abstract Expressionist mode. From 1957-1960, along with Alfonso Ossorio and Elizabeth Parker, Little ran the Signa Gallery in East Hampton. During these four summers, the gallery served to promote the work of contemporary artists beyond the boundaries of Manhattan to the beach communities of the Hamptons.

Joseph Meert (1905-1989), *Untitled*, 1987, Watercolor on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Joseph Meert studied with Thomas Hart Benton at the Kansas City Art Institute before moving to New York to attend the Art Students League in 1941. It was there that Meert became friendly with Jackson Pollock. Meert painted geometric abstraction in the late 1940s, progressing to abstract expressionism in the 1950s. In his later years, Meert's mental health deteriorated and he eventually entered into a psychiatric care institution. In 1986, the Pollock-Krasner Foundation provided funds to improve Meert's care and provide art therapists to work with him. The result was a revival of Meert's artistic expression, which in 1986 -1988 produced a series of lyrical abstract watercolors, of which this is an example.

Alfonso Ossorio (1916-1990), *Untitled*, 1980, Lithograph, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Alfonso Ossorio, the scion of a wealthy Filipino family, formed friendships with and collected the work of artists Jackson Pollock and Jean Dubuffet. In 1949, Ossorio visited Pollock and Lee Krasner in the Springs. Two years later, he purchased The Creeks, a fifty-seven-acre estate on Georgica Pond where he would live until his death. The Creeks became a cultural hub of the East End, a meeting place for creatives such as Pollock, Krasner, Dubuffet, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, and Costantino Nivola. Ossorio was a co-founder of East Hampton's Signa Gallery, which, from 1957 to 1960, not only showed the work of celebrated New York School artists but also exhibited artists from the Japanese Gutai group. Ossorio's own work began in a Surrealist mode, before, in the 1950s, his exposure to the art brut of Dubuffet turned him towards assemblage, affixing shells, bones, driftwood, nails, dolls' eyes, cabinet knobs, dice, costume jewelry, mirror shards, and other objects to his panels.

Charlotte Park (1918-2010), *Number 3*, 1984, Oil and acrylic on canvas, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Charlotte Park was a key figure in the Abstract Expressionist movement, although her critical success later in the decade was largely eclipsed by the more dramatic and widely celebrated work of the New York School's male contingent. Although she started as a student of Cubism, by the 1950s she had developed lyrical, organic and abstract qualities of light and color in her paintings. Park married the Abstract Expressionist painter James Brooks in 1949, and they set up painting studios in Montauk (much of their work there was destroyed by a hurricane in the 1950s). In 1957, they established a home in the Springs, East Hampton.

Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), *Untitled (posthumous edition of 50)*, 1944-1945, Engraving and drypoint on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Paul Jackson Pollock was born in Cody, Wyoming and raised between California and Arizona. In 1930, he moved east with his older brother Charles to study under Thomas Hart Benton at the Art Students League of New York. In 1936, he attended the experimental art workshops of David Alfaro Siqueiros, an experience which moved his own work further towards abstraction. In 1942, he met Lee Krasner through John Graham's 1942 exhibition *American and French Painters*. The two began a relationship and would move to the Springs in East Hampton in 1945. There, working out of a rustic barn studio, Pollock would produce the most influential work of the Post War era. His all-over abstractions, alternatively referred to as drip or pour paintings, defined the Abstract Expressionist movement.

David Slivka (1914-2010), *Untitled*, Ca. 1980s, Ink on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

David Slivka spent most of his adult life living and working in Greenwich Village, where he was an active participant in what came to be known as the New York School. During the 1950s, he and his wife Rose, a writer, made their way to the Springs, East Hampton to join fellow Abstract Expressionists such as Pollock and Krasner, who had also migrated from the Village. Since the 1930s, Slivka maintained a fascination with the forms and phenomena of nature. Later, even in his most abstract pieces, his work still evinces the essence and contours of nature through shape and gesture. His ink drawings represent a melding of the organic and the abstract. He sought to infuse his art with spontaneity, accompanied by the freedom to accept or reject the accidents which emerged as the result.

Syd Solomon (1917-2004), *Today (Windesign Series)*, 1969, Lithograph on paper, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Syd Solomon arrived in New York in 1947 after having established his primary home, with his wife, Annie, in Sarasota, Florida. By the mid 1950s, the Solomons were splitting their time between homes and studios in Sarasota and East Hampton, where they hosted some of the era's more celebrated artistic and literary figures. Solomon's abstract imagery is heavily influenced by the rhythms of nature that he observed in his two coastal environments. His work is notable for its gestural richness and subtle layering of color and texture. Those qualities are well illustrated in this print, part of the *Windesign* series, printed at the Mourlot atelier in Paris, a renowned lithography studio.

Ronald Jay Stein (1930-2000), *Untitled*, 1955, Oil and chalk on Masonite, Collection of Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Ronald Jay Stein, nephew of artist Lee Krasner, studied at The Cooper Union and Yale University School of Art, where Josef Albers served as one of his mentors. Growing up in the presence of Pollock and Krasner exposed Stein to many of their art-world colleagues, including Franz Kline, Robert Motherwell, Bradley Walker Tomlin, Adolph Gottlieb, Mark Rothko, and Conrad Marca-Relli. Stein went on to teach at the art school of the Worcester Art Museum and at Rutgers University. In 1959, he assisted Krasner on her mosaic murals for the Broadway façade and Broad Street entrance of the Uris Building at 2 Broadway in Manhattan. Four years later, Krasner provided him with a cottage next door to the Pollock-Krasner House, where he lived until his death.

Susan Vecsey (b. 1971), *Untitled (Blue)*, 2023, Oil on linen, Loan courtesy of Berry Campbell Gallery

Susan Vecsey was born in Somerville, New Jersey and raised in a dual culture by parents who emigrated from Hungary to the US in 1969. Vecsey earned her Bachelor of Arts from Barnard College, Columbia University, New York, and a Master of Fine Arts from the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture. Now living and working between Manhattan and East Hampton, she creates abstractions from perception, with pouring techniques from the Color Field tradition. The landscape or the figure is a starting point, a vehicle to explore form and color. Compositions are simplified to their essence to create a universal image. The artist begins with charcoal drawings, and then works on extensive color studies to find three to four colors that will lock together visually. Vecsey works like a watercolorist but with thinned oil paint, carefully pouring in a wet in wet process. No brushes are used in the application, to avoid brush marks, and to better show the beauty of materials. "With poured paint, timing is everything,

and it is important to be decisive with it, and also ready to accept or reject the unexpected.”

Joe Zucker (1941-2024), *Boxing Round #13, #14, and #15*, 1981, Acrylic, cotton, rhoplex on canvas, and enamel on wood, Loan courtesy of Robert S. Taubman

Joe Zucker came to East Hampton by way of Chicago. His work blends the aesthetic considerations of previous formalist groups like the Abstract Expressionists, with socially conscious subject matter. While his work is often representational, his abstraction of form often places a focus on the processes and materials used, including experimental media such as rope and cotton balls. The paintings on view here, *Boxing Rounds #13, #14, and #15*, delineate the finish of the prizefight: the last uppercut of the red boxing glove before the boxer drops to the “canvas;” the cotton strips suturing the bruise-blue and blood-red gashes; the bands that “frame” the painting like ropes around a boxing ring and here do double duty as they channel the flowing liquid poured directly from the can onto the flat canvas in shapes that, as the artist has noted, “no human hand could make.” If de Kooning marked the canvas as the “arena of the action,” Zucker has confounded all expectations for the resulting combat. Making a painting “by pouring paint from a can,” he once wryly observed, “is like painting with boxing gloves on.”