

## ANITA SHAPOLSKY GALLERY

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Press Release

May 6 - Through September 2008

### Masters of Abstraction

**Seymour Boardman, Ilya Bolotowsky, Ernest Briggs, James Brooks, Lawrence Calcagno, Pérez Celis, Nassos Daphnis, Lynne Drexler, Amaranth Ehrenhalt, Jimmy Ernst, Joseph Fiore, John Grillo, Buffie Johnson, Grace Hartigan, John Hultberg, Albert Kotin, Michael Loew, William Manning, Jeanne Miles, Joan Mitchell, Leonard Nelson, Louise Nevelson, Betty Parsons, Philip Pavia, Irving Petlin, Robert Rauschenberg, Jeanne Reynal, Misha Reznikoff, Richards Ruben, William Saroyan, Ethel Schwabacher, Thomas Sills, Aaron Siskind, Theodoros Stamos, Yvonne Thomas and Wilfrid Zogbaum.**

The show features paintings, paper pieces, photographs and sculptures of the Abstract Expressionists. The work on display is an example of the use of various techniques, materials and different artistic ideas of 50's and 60's. The art exhibited at the Anita Shapolsky Gallery is aimed at knowledgeable art collectors.

**Seymour Boardman** created contemplative landscapes. His work reduced complicated image to its essence through a simple play with basic color planes while the original background, color lines pierce, bend and twist the negative space. **Ilya Bolotowsky** was a prolific artist involved in painting, sculpture, mural production, as well as teaching and filmmaking. His visually ordered works reveal the influence of Piet Mondrian's geometry. **Ernest Briggs** investigated the use of lyrical color and the cataclysmic power of nature through ragged and expressive brushwork. His non-representational compositions of pure and emotional colors explode with an inviting gesture to emerge in their powerful intimate world. **James Brooks** stated that "My painting starts 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 any unfamiliar situation". **Lawrence Calcagno** with the use of linear brush strokes created meditative and colorful landscapes. **Pérez Celis** from Argentina, recognized as a neo-expressionist abstract artist, through layered and piercing planes in a uniquely interwoven space he expresses a primal energy. **Nassos Daphnis** observed that "nature works in order to create form in an orderly fashion". His works, often exhibited as site-specific installations, mirror nature with a geometric precision. **Lynne Drexler** captured the colors and energy of the atmosphere similarly to Klimt's paintings. Her luminous brush strokes of rich color result in ephemeral velvety landscapes. **Amaranth Ehrenhalt**, an 'action painter', presents us with dynamic, colorful and playful works. **Jimmy Ernst**, a member of the Irrascible Eighteen abstractionist group in 1940s portrayed mythical tragedies in a form of built lines creating depth and inviting to a very intriguing perceptual experience. **Joseph Fiore's** abstractions subtly combine inspirations of a purity that comes from the solitude of his nature environment in Maine. **John Grillo**,

produced a series of luminous yellow oils in the 60's. They continue to beam the warmth sunshine viewed through a kaleidoscope of vibrant colors. **Buffie Johnson** represented existentialist work among Abstract Expressionists; her cosmic-like paintings convey her belief in the cycle of life with its eternal returns. **Grace Hartigan**, abstract painter and printmaker from the early 1950's, arrested the uncanny through combining fragments of washed lines. Her paintings attempt new approaches in showing the relationship of self to space. **John Hultberg's** dramatic landscapes develop with a prophetic and apocalyptic atmosphere. Environmental damage, pieces of debris and dirt screams through the piles of organized brushstrokes. Al Kotin's phantasmagoric combination of color initiates an illusion of slowly rotating motion. **Michael Loew's** geometric abstraction retains a sensuous esthetic balance. **William Manning's** pieces unfold in a way that is reminiscent of the Cubists ideas about fragmented vision. **Jeanne Miles'** work seeks to explore divine and spiritual truth and her mandalas serve as meditations on ritualistic designs. **Joan Mitchell's** paper works are highly expressive inspired by landscapes. Her violent brushstrokes gesture emotional dynamism. **Leonard Nelson** is known for his gestural abstractions, which he later simplified into color-field paintings. **Louise Nevelson's** wood sculptures were made of old pieces of wood. Her signature is a complex arrangements of abstract shapes enclosed in boxes. **Betty Parsons** famous for promoting and nurturing Abstract Expressionism was also an artist herself. Large planes of individual elements in her paintings seem to emit a strong, almost sculptural presence, even atop the flat surface of canvas. **Philip Pavia**, sculptor, co founder and director (from 1948 to 1955) of *The Club* emphasizes in his work from abstract marbles through expressive archaic heads in bronze and terra-cotta the relevance between formality, spontaneous gesture and materials. **Irving Petlin** introduces a new language of abstract landscapes. White flares of dragged brush strokes lift and lighten the atmosphere and invite to share a magical momentum. **Robert Rauschenberg's** paper collage work incorporates found objects and found pop images. **Jeanne Reynal** through her "direct method" adapted the luminosity of ancient mosaics into abstract mosaic compositions. **Misha Reznikoff's** piled layers of abstract figures enhance the depth of visual landscapes. Articulate and dynamic brushwork invite the viewer to new vigorous dimensions. **Richards Ruben's** series "Venetian Fragments" breaks the dictates of the flat two-dimensional work and reminds us that he is mainly a gestural artist, who shapes and curves his canvases. **William Saroyan's** literary works parallel his dynamic abstractions. They manifest a play of reoccurring elements and colors that are join and broken apart again in coincidental landscapes. **Ethel Schwabacher's** warm pastels explore human psyche. Her paintings combine automatism, introduced to her by Arshile Gorky, with abstract forms, referring to nature. **Thomas Sills'** bold oil compositions provoke with brightness and mimic the luminous mosaics of Jeanne Reynal. **Aaron Siskind**, captured in his abstract photography details which invite new perceptual dimensions. **Theodoros Stamos**, inspired by Asian mysticism, was one the youngest and most original Abstract Expressionists. The atmosphere of his paintings, and paintings by **Yvonne Thomas**, is best conveyed through a play of muted brushstrokes that transgress the substantiality of matter. **Wilfrid Zogbaum's** dynamic steel structures bear a kinship to primordial ancestors.

Summer Gallery Hour:

[www.anitashapolskygallery.com](http://www.anitashapolskygallery.com)

May - June: Tue – Sat 11 – 6 PM / July – August: Wed and by appointment