



Charlotte Park 1918 - 2010 Concord

Summary

Charlotte Park's important contribution to the Abstract Expressionist movement during its early years has recently been acknowledged. Writing in the *New York Times*, just before Park died in late 2010, Roberta Smith called Park "a natural painter and a gifted colorist," whose "ascension into the ranks of widely known Abstract Expressionists" was probably too late for her to witness. Overshadowed by the attention given to the work of her husband, James Brooks, Park kept a low profile over the course of her career, while painting some the strongest and most brilliantly colored canvases of her time. Her art is a strong case against the idea prevalent from the 1950s onward that women were incapable of the muscularity and confidence necessary to be action painters.

Born in Concord, Massachusetts, Park studied from 1935 to 1939 at the Yale School of Fine Art. She met James Brooks while working at the Office of Strategic Services in Washington, D.C. during World War II. The two moved to New York City in 1945, where Park studied privately with the Australian artist Wallace Harrison. Brooks and Park soon became part of the circle of Jackson Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner. They rented a studio space that had been occupied by Pollock and joined Pollock and Krasner, along with other young artists working in new styles, in establishing studios on Long Island. They stayed first in Montauk, but after their studio was destroyed by a hurricane in 1954, they moved to a cottage in Springs, East Hampton, which became their full-time residence.

Park initially worked in a monochrome palette, which liberated her to focus on form. By the mid-1950s, she reintroduced color into her art, evolving a lyrical style, in which suggestions of the natural world appeared to pulsate with organic life. By the middle of the decade, she was producing larger canvases with complex compositions and charged relationships of color. She did not shy away from strong contrasts and bold, forthright shapes. Uniting painting and drawing, she formed a vocabulary featuring clustered loops, black curvilinear forms that both define and liberate, and tensed and sensual anatomical suggestions. Figurative elements seem to taunt and loom in her art, but are either suppressed or diffused. In the late 1950s, Park explored collage, concurrently with her contemporaries Krasner and Conrad Marca-Relli. For these works, she drew passages of color from her earlier paintings, setting them into new contexts. Later in life, Park was drawn to Piet-Mondrian's neo-plasticism and created open compositions that conveyed permanence and infinity.



In the 1950s, Park exhibited her work broadly, showing at the Stable Gallery and participating in annuals at the Whitney Museum of American art. Her first solo show was at Tanager Gallery in 1957. In deference to her husband, she withdrew from the art world in the 1960s, only emerging in 1973 when a solo show of her art was held at the Elaine Benson Gallery in Bridgehampton, New York. In the twenty years that followed, she was included in numerous exhibitions on Long Island and in New York City. She was also represented in *Seventeen Abstract Artists of East Hampton: The Pollock Years, 1946-1956*, held in 1979 at the American Cultural Center of the United States Embassy in Paris. In 2003, Park's art was featured, along with that of Dan Christensen and Allan Wexler in the exhibition, *Three East End Artists*, held at the Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, in 2003. Park's work is included in the collections of The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Guild Hall, East Hampton, New York; The Parrish Museum of Art, Southampton, New York; and the Telfair Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia.

Education

1939 Yale School of Art, New Haven, CT (1935-1939)

Solo Exhibitions

2016 Berry Campbell, New York, Charlotte Park (1918-2010)

2010 Spanierman Modern, New York

2003 Parrish Art Museum, 3 East End Artists (along with Dan Christensen and Allan Wexler) NY (2002-2003)

1981 Louise Jimelfarb Gallery, (along with James Brooks), Watermill, NY

1980 Ingber Gallery, New York, NY

1979 Guild Hall, East Hampton, NY

1976 The Benson Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY

1973 The Benson Gallery, Bridgehampton, NY

1957 Tanager Gallery, New York, NY



Group Exhibitions

- 2019** Kasmin Gallery, New York, Painters of the East End
Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina, A Life With Art | Gifts from Dwight and Sue Emanuelson
Setareh Gallery, Düsseldorf, Germany, A Gesture of Conviction | Women of Abstract Expressionism (2018-2019)
- 2018** Berry Campbell, New York, Summer Selections
- 2017** Eric Firestone Gallery, East Hampton, New York, Montauk Highway: Postwar Abstraction in the Hamptons
Berry Campbell, New York, Summer Selections
- 2016** Quidley & Company, Nantucket, Savage Nature: The Importance of Place in Early American Modernism
Art Southampton, Berry Campbell
- 2015** Art Southampton, Berry Campbell
Berry Campbell, New York, Summer Selections
Art Miami, Berry Campbell
McCormick Gallery, Chicago, Her Work
- 2012** Spanierman Modern, New York, Abstract Strength
Spanierman Modern, New York, Gallery Selections
- 2011** Spanierman Modern, New York, Abstract Expressionism and Its Legacy
- 2010** Spanierman Modern, New York, Gallery Selections
- 2009** Spanierman Modern, New York, Hot and Cool Abstractions: 1940s to the Present
- 2003** Parrish Art Museum, Three East End Artists, Southampton, NY (2002-2003)
- 2002** Parrish Art Museum, Charlotte Park: Work From the Fifties, Southampton, NY
Anita Shapolsky Gallery, Women of the 50's, New York, NY
Ashawagh Hall, Artists of the Springs Invitation Exhibit, East Hampton, NY
- 1998** Artsensry Gallery, In Context: An Intimate View; Syd Solomon & His Circle of Friends, Sarasota, FL
Katharina Rich Perlow Gallery, A Winter Group of Artist Couples, New York, NY



- Ashawaugh Hall, Artists of the Springs Invitational Exhibit, East Hampton, NY
Elaine Bensen Gallery, Old Friends, Bridgehampton, NY
The Parrish Art Museum, The Centennial Open, Southampton, NY
- 1997** Arlene Bujese Gallery, Wall to Wall, East Hampton, NY
Ashawagh Hall, Artists of The Springs Invitational Exhibit, East Hampton, NY
Arlene Bujese Gallery, Affairs of The Heart, East Hampton, NY
- 1996** Anita Shapolsky Gallery, Abstract Paintings and Sculpture Part 11, New York, NY
Arlene Bujese Gallery, Abstraction: The Subjective Impulse, East Hampton, NY
- 1995** Ashawagh Hall, Artists of The Springs Invitational Exhibit, East Hampton, NY
Arlene Bujese Gallery, The Reach of Abstraction, East Hampton, NY
Arlene Bujese Gallery, A Matter of Synthesis: Collage & Assemblage, East Hampton, NY
Anita Shapolsky Gallery, The Fifties, New York, NY
Anita Shapolsky Gallery, Artists of the Fifties, New York, NY
Anita Shapolsky Gallery, Women of the Fifties, New York, NY
- 1994** Nassau County Museum of Art, Intimates & Confidants in Art: Husbands, Wives, Lovers & Friends, Nassau, NY
- 1992** Stuart Levy Gallery, American Vanguard – Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner & Friends, New York, NY
Renee Fotouhi Gallery, Twentieth Century Prints of the East End, East Hampton, NY
Sidney Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, Paths to Discovery, The New York School Works on Paper from the 1950's & 1960's, curated by Ellen Russotto, New York, NY
- 1991** Elston Fine Arts, The New York School – Works on Paper 1950's – 1960's, New York, NY
- 1990** Guild Hall, East Hampton Avant Garde – A Salute to the Signa Gallery 1957-1960, East Hampton, NY
- 1986** Benton Gallery, Opening Show, Southampton, NY
- 1985** Fine Arts Museum of Long Island, Hempstead, NY
Arbitrage Gallery, Hampton Artists, New York, NY
Guild Hall, East Hampton Star 100th Anniversary Portfolio, East Hampton, NY
Ingber Gallery, Guild Hall, Survival of the Fittest, New York, NY
Artviews, Celebration: East End Artists, East Hampton, NY
- 1984** 383 West Broadway, 5 Artists, New York, NY



- Bologna/Landi Gallery, The Hampton Scene: Then and Now, East Hampton, NY
Elaine Benson Gallery, Then and Now: Part 11, Bridgehampton, NY
- 1980** Zabrieskie Gallery, Seventeen Abstract Artists of East Hampton, The Pollock Years, 1946-56, New York, NY
- 1979** American Cultural Center of the U.S. Embassy, The Pollock Years, 1946-1956, Paris, France
The Laundry, Women at the Laundry, East Hampton, NY
- 1978** The Laundry, Three Person Show, East Hampton, NY
- 1977** Guild Hall, Points of View, East Hampton, NY
- 1976** Guild Hall, Artists of the Region, East Hampton, NY
- 1975** Guild Hall, Artists of the Hamptons, Paintings, Sculpture, Auction Exhibitions, East Hampton, NY, and Sotheby Park, Bernet, NY
- 1974** Landmark Gallery, 18 Artists, New York, NY
Upstairs Gallery, Group Show, East Hampton, NY
- 1973** Guild Hall, Young Collectors Gallery, East Hampton, NY (1970-1973)
- 1972** Guild Hall, Interaction of Color, East Hampton, NY
- 1970** Parrish Art Museum, The Summer Place, Southampton, NY
- 1969** Alonzo Gallery, His and Hers, New York, NY
- 1965** Gallery North, Seven East Hampton Artists, Setauket, NY
- 1961** Guild Hall, Festival of the Arts, East Hampton, New York (1960-1961)
- 1960** James Gallery, Invitational Annual, New York, NY
- 1958** Stable Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY
- 1957** Signa Gallery, 8 Painters, East Hampton, NY
Signa Gallery, Third Exhibition, East Hampton, New York
Abstract American Painters, Invitational, New York, NY
Signa Gallery, A Review of the Season, East Hampton, NY



Stable Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY

1956 Camino Gallery, June Salon – 120 Sculptors, Painters, New York, NY
Stable Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY
Tanager Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY

1955 Watkins Gallery of the American University, Washington D.C.
Stable Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY
Tanager Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY

1954 Guild Hall, 15 Artists of the Region, East Hampton, NY
Hampton Gallery and Workshop, Amagansett, NY
Stable Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY
Tanager Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY

1953 Tanager Gallery, Annual Show, New York, NY
Whitney Museum of American Art, Painting Annual, New York, NY

1952 Peridot Gallery, Invitational Show, New York, NY

Collections

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Columbia Museum of Art, South Carolina

Guild Hall, East Hampton, New York

The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

The Parrish Museum of Art, Southampton, New York

Telfair Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia