

Large Print Guide

Action Gesture Paint:

**Women Artists and Global
Abstraction 1940–70**

9 February – 7 May 2023



Galleries 1, 8, 9

Continues on next page

These artwork captions start with the interpretation panel and labels inside Gallery 1, and then continue on the left as you enter the gallery and follow in a clockwise direction.

Continues on next page

Introduction

This exhibition celebrates the women artists of mid-20th-century gestural abstraction and shows how they shaped modern painting. The story of abstract art took a radical turn in the 1940s. Fusing bodily, gestural and emotive expression with colour, mark-making and the materiality of paint, this new movement was termed – in the USA – as Abstract Expressionism. It is often thought to have been centred in New York, where it was defined mainly by the work of white male artists. However, this new style of painting was a global phenomenon, shaped as much by local cultural and political contexts as by international exchange and dialogue. The contributions of women have long been marginalised in modern art. The paintings presented here demonstrate how women across the world were fundamental in evolving the story of abstraction, incorporating experiences of turbulent social change into their work and promoting freedom of expression.

Continues on next page

Their art was made in a period of great historical shifts: the aftermath of the Second World War, global industrialisation, the rise of civil rights and post-colonial movements, and a 'cold war' – marked by the threat of nuclear extinction – between capitalist democracies and communist states. Against this backdrop, the USA promoted abstract art as a form of western propaganda, to counter the influence of communism. The exhibition explores how artists made the canvas an arena for experimentation and personal expression through form and colour. It focuses on five themes: paint as material and process, symbolic languages drawn from myth and ritual, abstraction as an expression of the self, painting as movement and dance, and the canvas as environment.

Continues on next page

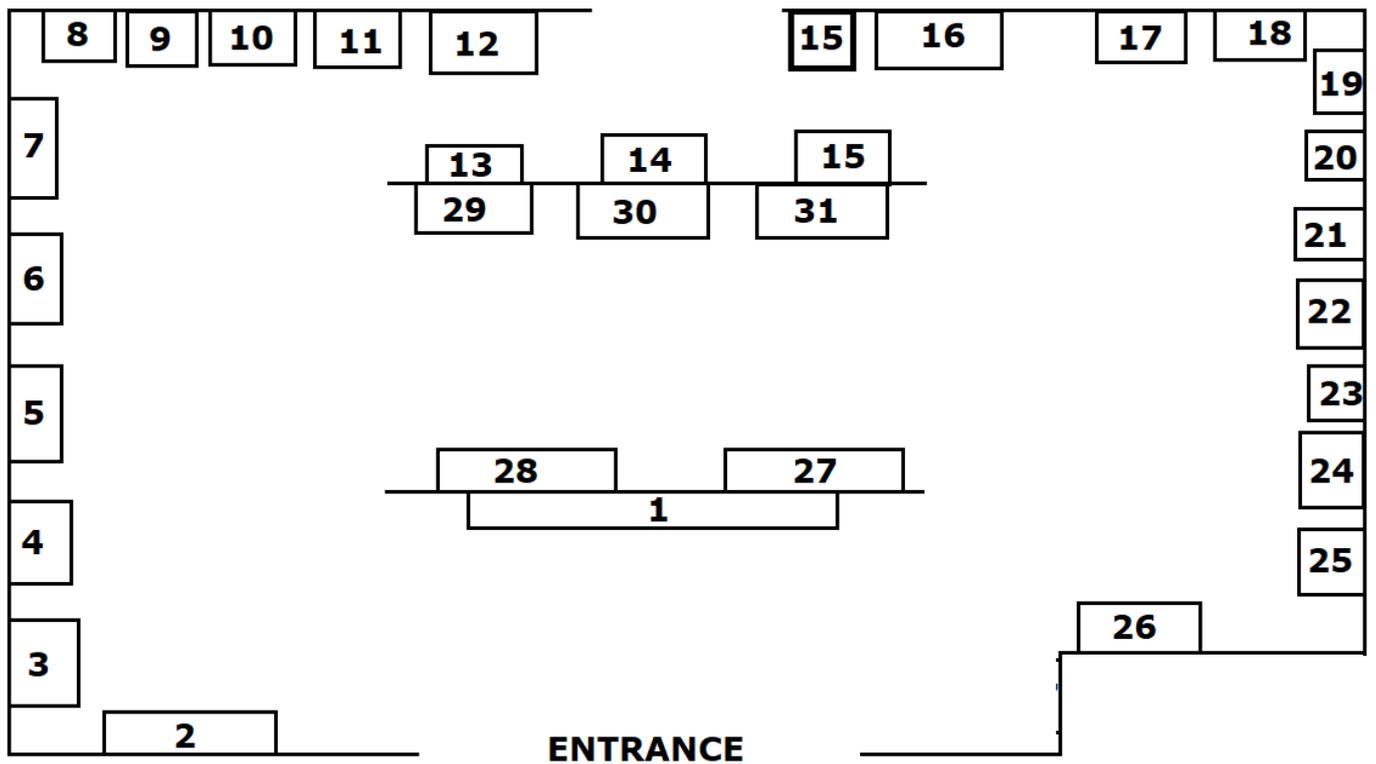
MATERIAL PROCESS TIME

The works grouped here show artists exploring the materiality of paint in its own right. The canvas becomes a laboratory where pigment is diluted and layered or allowed to take on a life of its own through splashes, dribbles and stains. Paint may be laid on thickly and shaped like a sculptural form. It is made analogous with the world through the incorporation of found materials such as mud, rags, sawdust, resin, paint tubes and even cigarette ash. The surface of the painting becomes mutable, shaped by violent acts or tender, intimate gestures revealing the processes of their making alongside chance, accident and the passage of time.

Continues on next page

These artwork captions for Gallery 1 follow the labels as marked in this floorplan.

FRONT GALLERY 1 FLOOR PLAN



Continues on next page

List of Works:

1. Helen Frankenthaler

(1928, USA – 2011, USA)

April Mood, 1974

Acrylic on canvas

A major figure of American abstraction, Frankenthaler is known for her invention of the soak-stain technique in New York in the 1950s. Often working on the floor, she applied thinned-down paint onto unprimed canvas so diluted it looked like watercolour. She described this body of work as 'drawing with colour' and made increasingly monumental paintings leading to the Colour Field movement which she pioneered.

Continues on next page

2. Sandra Blow

(1925, UK – 2006, UK)

Painting (57), 1957

Oil on canvas

One of the pioneers of the British abstract movement, Blow's paintings are characteristically large scale, colourful abstract collages incorporating discarded studio materials such as sawdust, sackcloth and plaster and loose tea. She painted large geometric shapes which emphasised surface textures creating a tactile quality. Blow is credited with introducing a new, expressive informality to abstract painting in Britain through her improvisatory approach to materials, partly shaped by the influence of Italian Arte Informale.

3. Sandra Blow

Composition 1, 1960

Oil on board

Continues on next page

4. Sandra Blow

Creation, undated

Oil on board

5. Audrey Flack

(b. 1931, USA, lives and works in USA)

Abstract Force: Homage to Franz Kline, 1951-52

Oil on canvas

Flack was still a student at art school Cooper Union in New York when she became a regular member of the influential artist group 8th Street Club and the legendary artists' haunt Cedar Tavern. It was through Abstract Expressionism that she forged her artistic identity and created highly original works that were structurally ordered yet gestural and fluid, capturing the core sensibility of the age often naming paintings after artists she admired. Later in her career, she became a pioneer of photorealism.

Continues on next page

6. Marta Minujin

(b.1943, Argentina, lives and works in Argentina)

Untitled, 1961

Sand, pyroxlin shellac, chalk and carpenter's glue on
hardboard

An Argentinian artist known as a pioneer of happenings, performance art, soft sculpture and video, Minujin often uses urban debris and found objects, such as cardboard, fabric and food in work that is both monumental and fragile. Her work is indebted to a specific lineage of Argentinean protest against the dictatorships. In her long artistic career, she was associated with Art Informel, participatory art, and Pop Art in both Europe and Argentina.

Continues on next page

7. Marta Minujin

Untitled, 1961-62

Sand, pyroxylin shellac, chalk and carpenter's glue on
hardboard

Continues on next page

8. Zilia Sánchez

(b. 1926, Cuba, lives and works in Puerto Rico)

Gravitacion, 1963

Oil, cardboard, sawdust and resin on canvas

Sánchez began her career as a set designer and abstract painter for radical theatre groups in Cuba before the Cuban Revolution. In the 1950s and early 1960s she travelled to Madrid several times, and there developed a style akin to Art Informel and Abstract Expressionism. She moved to New York in 1962 and soon began working on her signature stretched canvases with protruding, curvy elements that recall female body parts, using undulating silhouettes, muted colour palettes and a sensual vocabulary.

Continues on next page

9. Elsa Gramcko

(1925, Venezuela – 1994, Venezuela)

Untitled, 1962

Mixed media on Masonite

Gramcko never identified with any artistic movement, instead pursuing distinctive and varied approaches to art, freely exploring geometric abstraction, Surrealism, and Informalism through her painting, assemblage, and sculpture. By the end of the 1950s, she developed new works characterised by elegant, biomorphic shapes with a strong graphic inflection that positioned her as a singular artist among her peers. Recognised in her home country and internationally, she represented Venezuela in the 1959 Sao Paulo Biennial and in the 1964 Venice Biennale.

Continues on next page

10. Gloria Gomez-Sanchez

(1921, Peru – 2007, Peru)

Untitled, c.1960

Mixed media

Gomez-Sanchez's artistic career was short, spanning only ten years between 1960 and 1970.

During this time, she had five solo exhibitions in Lima, participated in fifteen group exhibitions in Peru and abroad, and pushed the boundaries of art making, including introducing waste and consumable materials into her painting. Her last solo exhibition revealed her shift to conceptualism and – ultimately – her rejection of professional art circuits. Few works by her have survived, as she destroyed many of her paintings and assemblages.

Continues on next page

11. Gloria Gomez-Sanchez

Untitled, 1960

Mixed media

12. Bice Lazzari

(1900, Italy – 1981, Italy)

Senze Titolo [Untitled], 1964

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Lazzari studied decorative arts at the Venice School of Fine Arts and followed a career in applied arts, a field that allowed her some freedom and independence as a woman. Lazzari had little exposure to international currents of abstraction and it was through her research into design and decoration that she developed her approach to abstraction with Italian Informalism and devoted herself to painting, oscillating between oil, acrylic and drawing in her signature abstract style.

Continues on next page

Superficie H1 [Surface H1], 1950

Tempera, glue, sand and graffiti on canvas

Senza Titolo [Untitled], 1963

Oil and sand on canvas

Continues on next page

13. Wook-kyung Choi

(1940, Korea – 1985, South Korea)

Untitled, 1960s

Acrylic on canvas

A Korean artist who moved to the US in the early 1960s, Wook-kyung Choi had a short yet prolific career before her tragic death at the age of forty-five. Influenced by Korean Art as well as Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art in the US, her paintings combine the use of bold colour, an interplay of organic and linear shapes and line and mass through rapid and seemingly chaotic brushwork, alongside passages of more controlled application.

14. Wook-kyung Choi

Untitled, 1960s

Acrylic on canvas

Continues on next page

15. Fanny Sanin

(1938, Colombia, lives and works in USA)

Oil No.4, 1968

Oil on canvas

After studying art in Bogota, Sanin went on to graduate studied in the US and Mexico. In Mexico she befriended the Rupture Generation who were exploring lyrical abstraction in tune with gestural expressions evolving in Paris and New York. She spent 1966-1968 in London, where she was exposed to the European avant-garde and experimented with gestural abstraction, she settled permanently in New York in 1971 and dedicated the last five decades to painting meticulous, colourful geometric abstract compositions.

Continues on next page

Fanny Sanin

Watercolour No.4 (2), 1968

Watercolour on paper

Fanny Sanin

Watercolour No.8, 1968

Watercolour on paper

Continues on next page

16. Yuki Katsura

(1931, Japan – 1991, Japan)

Untitled, c.1960

Acrylic on canvas

Initially trained in both Nihonga (Japanese style painting) and Western painting, Katsura visited Paris, Central Africa, and New York in the late 1950s, where she produced a series of unique two-dimensional works, which involved painting over pieces of wrinkled washi paper that had been collaged onto the canvas.

After three years in New York, she returned to Japan in 1961 and continued to experiment with unconventional modes of expression including finely detailed paintings, collages and caricatures.

Continues on next page

17. Yuki Katsura

Work, 1959

Oil on canvas

18. Yuki Katsura

Work, 1958-62

Oil and paper on canvas

Continues on next page

19. Aiko Miyawaki

(1929, Japan – 2014, Japan)

Work, 1962

Marble powder and oil on canvas

Known for her richly layered paintings and metal sculptures, Miyawaki graduated from the Japan Women's University in 1952 and lives in Europe and North America from 1957-66. She experimented with heavily built-up surfaces made from layers of pigment mixed with marble powder over canvas on board, creating mixed-media works with undulating dune-like surfaces, incorporating materials like glass.

In 1966 she shifted towards sculpture, with her famous Utsurohi [transience] series of swirling ductile stainless-steel cords.

Continues on next page

20. Tomie Ohtake

(1913, Japan – 2015, Brazil)

Roxo (Purple), 1966

Oil on canvas

In 1935 Ohtake travelled to Brazil to visit her brother and unable to return to Japan when the Pacific War broke out, she made a new life for herself in Brazil.

Known for her paintings, prints and sculptures, Ohtake did not begin to paint until the age of 39, with the encouragement of the Japanese artist Keiya Sugano.

Consistently experimenting with form and process, Ohtake soon ventured from figurative painting into creating abstract shapes and colour fields.

21. Tomie Ohtake

Untitled, 1960

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

22. Dusti Bongé

(1903, USA – 1993, USA)

The Beckon, 1956

Oil on Masonite

American artist Bongé is considered Mississippi's first Abstract Expressionist painter. Her early work depicted scenes of Biloxi, Mississippi as well as a variety of self-portraits and still lifes that became more and more abstract over the 1950s as she moved fully into Abstract Expressionism. She continually experimented with different expressive techniques and explored various gestural approaches alternating palettes and compositional layouts. Bongé forged a long relationship with Betty Parsons, the Abstract Expressionist artist and dealer, whose gallery represented her for many years.

Continues on next page

23. Yolanda Mohalyi

(1909, Romania -1978, Brazil)

Travel, 1967

Oil on canvas

A key figure in post-war Brazilian art, Mohalyi studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Bucharest and emigrated in 1931 to Brazil. In the 1950s, after a trip to Europe, she moved away from figuration towards an expressive informalist style, adding textures of sand, sawdust and collage to her works. She participated in the early influential iterations of the Sao Paulo Biennial, during the 1960s and 70s, which foregrounded Brazil as a centre of the new international art world.

24. Helen Frankenthaler

After Rubens, 1961

Oil and charcoal on unsized, unprimed canvas

Continues on next page

25. Ruth Armer

(1896, USA – 1977, USA)

Untitled, c.1955-60

Oil on canvas

A pioneer of non-objective painting in California, Armer's atmospheric, process-oriented work included a series of synesthetic early abstractions that associated the emotional and aural characteristics elucidated from sound into colour and line. Her works were widely exhibited in the US, during her artistically active years, including in three solo exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Art and in the group exhibition 'American Painting Today' at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1950.

Continues on next page

26. Helen Frankenthaler

Vessel, 1961

Oil on unsized, unprimed canvas

27. Gillian Ayres

(1930, UK – 2018, UK)

Break-off, 1961

Oil on canvas

London-born Ayres studied at Camberwell School of Art from 1946-50, and exhibited with the Young Contemporaries in 1949, aged just 19. One of the leading exponents of the radical developments in abstract painting dominating British art in the 1950s and 60s, Ayres' heavily worked canvases reflected how she claimed to see the world: in ebullient shapes and colour. She was included in the Whitechapel Art Gallery's ground-breaking 1963 exhibition 'British Painting in the 60s.'

Continues on next page

28. Gillian Ayres

Untitled, c. 1977

Oil on board

29. Gillian Ayres

Distillation, 1957

Oil and house paint on board

30. Gillian Ayres

Sun Up, 1960

Oil on canvas

31. Sylvia Snowden

(1942, USA, lives and works in USA)

Untitled, 1966

Acrylic and oil pastel on Masonite

An African American abstract painter, Snowden has developed a singular body of work which is characterised by a visceral and sculptural application of paint and densely worked underlayers.

Often working in series, Snowden's expressive paintings convey an emotional force and tactile quality as she explores the struggles and triumphs of communities around her. In 2018, her work was featured in the landmark exhibition 'Magnetic Fields: Expanding American Abstraction, 1960-Today' at the National Museum for Women in the Arts.

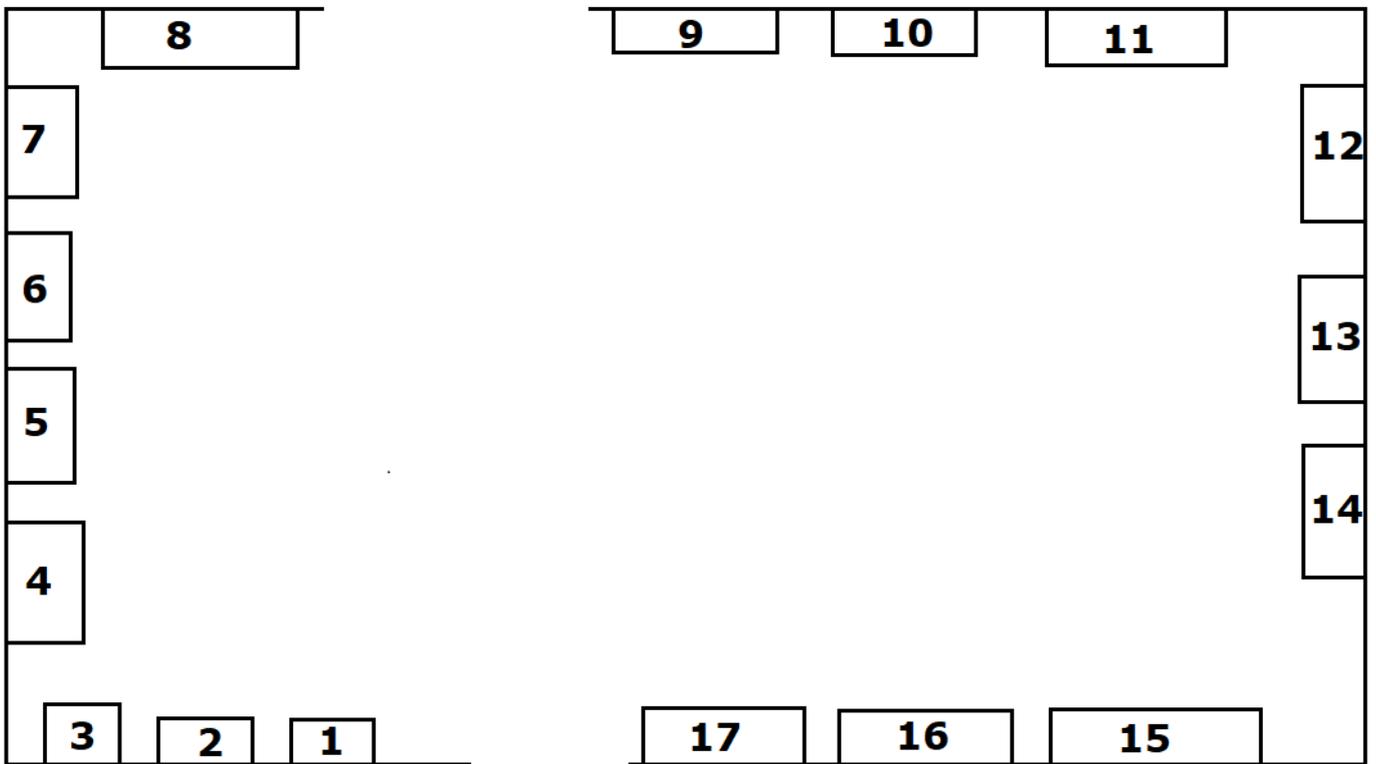
Continues on next page

MYTH SYMBOL RITUAL

The paintings in this section are characterised by systems of marks or forms that suggest a non-representational language – abstract signs and symbols that exist outside of place and time. Their origins lie in the legacies of European and Latin American movements such as Surrealism, *Taschisme* and *Art Informel*. Spontaneous or ‘automatic writing’ was seen as a way of bypassing rationalism to access unconscious drives and desires. The artists here were also interested in non-western systems of belief and their expression through calligraphy and graffiti, as well as in the symbols and glyphs associated with ancient myths and rituals.

Continues on next page

MIDDLE GALLERY 1 FLOOR PLAN



Continues on next page

List of Works:

1. **Buffie Johnson**

(1912, USA – 2006, USA)

Pentecost, 1958

Oil on canvas

Johnson travelled to Paris in the 1930s, where she met the artistic avant-garde and absorbed both Cubism and Surrealism. She returned to New York as war broke out in Europe and in 1947 she moved to East Hampton, joining a small community of artists centered around Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock and Elaine and Willem de Kooning. Her work, largely celebrating female energy and life force, was first shown at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1950. She also published a major study on prehistoric representations of The Great Goddess which informed her work.

Continues on next page

2. Betty Parsons

(1900, USA – 1982, USA)

Looking Out, 1957

Oil on canvas

Parsons was a painter and a sculptor, and owner of the eponymous Betty Parsons Gallery in New York from 1946 to 1982, which exhibited and supported many Abstract Expressionist artists and helped shape twentieth-century art in the US. From 1923-33, she studied painting landscapes and still life's but turned to abstraction in the late 1940s. Often referencing natural elements, her paintings feature biomorphic forms levitating on muted colour fields.

3. Betty Parsons

Blue Field, 1957

Acrylic on canvas

Continues on next page

4. Behjat Sadr

(1924, Iran – 2009, France)

Untitled, 1956

Oil on wood

A pioneering figure in the visual arts in Iran, Sadr studied at the Fine Arts faculty of Tehran University and in 1955 travelled to study in Rome, where she encountered Art Informal and Abstract Expressionism. There, Sadr developed a style of rhythmic brushstrokes in all-over compositions of curvilinear flowing forms based on nature. In the late 1960s she became interested in optical experimentation and kinetic art, moving into installation, including a well-known series of painted functional Venetian blinds.

5. Behjat Sadr

Untitled, c.1956

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

6. Judit Reigl

(1923, Hungary – 2020, France)

Mass Writing, 1961

Oil paint on canvas

Reigl studied at the Hungarian University of Fine Arts in Budapest from 1942-45. In 1947 she was awarded a scholarship that enabled her to continue her studies in Rome before relocating to Paris in 1950. There, she encountered Surrealist artist Andre Breton and was influenced by Surrealist ideas, particularly the technique of automatic writing that remained substantial throughout her career. Later, she moved towards lyrical abstraction, in work that emphasised the gestural involvement of the body when painting.

Continues on next page

7. Judit Reigl

Experience d'Apesanteur

[Experience of Weightlessness], 1964

Oil and tempera on canvas

8. Jay DeFeo

(1929, USA – 1989, USA)

Torso, 1952

Oil with string on canvas

After travelling in Europe and North Africa in her youth, DeFeo returned to her native California, joining the San Francisco community of Beat artists, poets and jazz musicians. Her work from this time was influenced by Abstract Expressionism and combined geometric forms found in Italian architecture and Asian, African and prehistoric art. She often included diverse materials like rags, string and plaster to explore the broadest definitions of sculpture, drawing, collage and painting.

Continues on next page

9. Lee Krasner

(1908, USA – 1984, USA)

Bald Eagle, 1955

Oil, paper and canvas collage on linen

One of the defining figures of the first generations of Abstract Expressionists in New York, Krasner had her first solo show at Betty Parsons Gallery in 1951 and was included in the seminal 9th Street Art Exhibition the same year. With husband Jackson Pollock, she moved to East Hampton, where she made her series of Little Images and collage paintings which included fragments of discarded paintings by both Pollock and Krasner which she let fall onto the surface of the canvas. After Pollock's death in 1956, Krasner took over his barn studio as her work grew in scale and ambition.

Continues on next page

10. Lee Krasner

Feathering, 1959

Oil on canvas

11. Charlotte Park

(1918, USA – 2010, USA)

Jubilee, 1955

Oil on canvas

Park and her husband painter James Brooks arrived in New York in 1945, moving into the former studio of Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock on 8th Street in Greenwich Village.

They visited Krasner and Pollock regularly in Springs in East Hampton and eventually moved there themselves. Park, whose abstract paintings utilised bold colours and rhythmic lines and later collage elements, was recognised in her time, and showed in numerous group exhibitions at the renowned Stable Gallery.

Continues on next page

12. Ethel Schwabacher

(1903, USA – 1984, USA)

Woman: Red Sea, Dead Sea, 1951

Oil on canvas

After initially studying sculpture, Schwabacher turned to painting, taking art classes at the Arts Students League in New York. She travelled in Europe and later studied with Arshile Gorky, a recent émigré to New York whose influence along with Surrealism, psychoanalysis and the Freudian unconscious, informed her highly charged atmospheric paintings of nature and female figures in bold colours inspired by classical mythology and experiences of pregnancy and childbirth. Schwabacher had her first show at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1953.

13. Ethel Schwabacher

Sankaty II, 1956

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

14. Grace Hartigan

(1922, USA – 008, USA)

Cedar Bar [originally Aries], 1951

Oil on canvas

Hartigan was part of the dynamic group known as the second generation of Abstract Expressionists, which also included her friends Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell and with them was included in important gallery shows of the time. In the 1950s she used the name George, which she attributed to her admiration for nineteenth-century women writers George Eliot and George Sand. She collaborated with poets Barbara Guest and Frank O'Hara and included recognisable elements from everyday life in her 'all-over' compositions.

15. Grace Hartigan

Portrait of W, 1951 – 52

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

16. Helen Frankenthaler

Circus Landscape, 1951

Oil and charcoal on sized, primed canvas

17. Franciszka Themerson

(1907, Poland – 1988, UK)

Calligramme I (Q), 1960

Red emulsion and black enamel on paper

Themerson was a Polish avant-garde artist who came to London, with the Polish government-in-exile in 1940, where she spent the rest of her life. Primarily a painter, she also worked in illustration, theatre design, graphic design and avant-garde films with her husband Stefan Themerson. She created what she described as 'Bio-abstract pictures' using plaster and cloth in relief works and poured enamel paint onto paper in improvised drawings relying on chance.

Continues on next page

Franciszka Themerson

Calligramme VIII (Bird), 1960

Black and red enamel paint on paper

Calligramme XIII (Omega), 1961

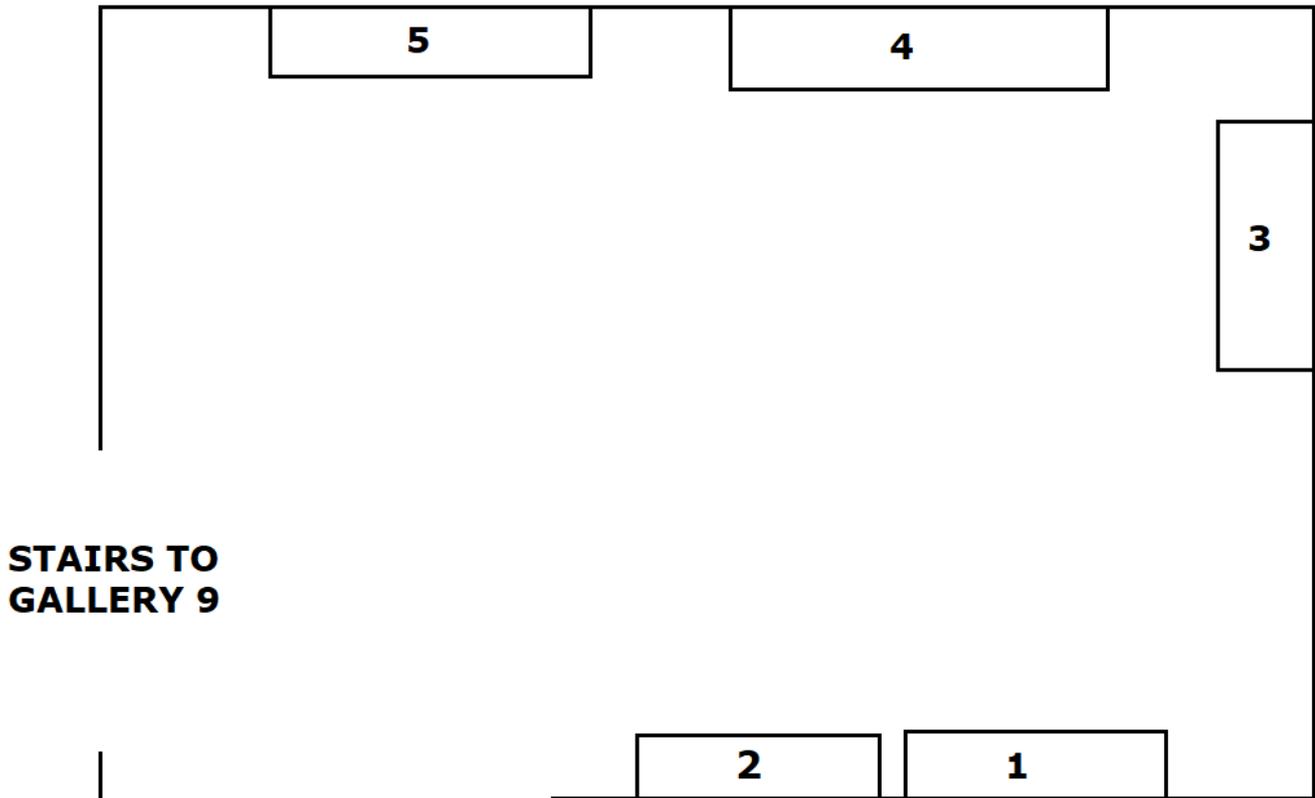
Black and gold enamel and white emulsion paint on paper

Calligramme XX (Girl), 1961

Black, red and silver enamel paint on paper

Continues on next page

BACK GALLERY 1 FLOOR PLAN



Continues on next page

List of Works:

1. Vivian Springford

Untitled (from the calligraphy series), 1962

Acrylic on canvas

2. Vivian Springford

(1913, USA – 2003, USA)

Untitled, 1961

Acrylic on canvas

Springford studied at the Arts Students League in New York and worked as a commercial illustrator in the 1930s and 1940s. Her work became more abstract in the 1950s, influenced by East Asian philosophy and Chinese calligraphy, and she associated with many of the Abstract Expressionists in New York at the time. Her artistic language developed into what became known as Colour Field painting, as she explored staining and ripping techniques in 'chromatic pools' of acrylic washes and centrifugal stains.

Continues on next page

3. Maliheh Afnan

(1935, Palestine – 2016, UK)

Concours, 1961

Oil on canvas

Afnan was part of an important generation of female artists and writers who emerged in the Middle East in the new cultural climate of the 1960s. Her work touches on the post-war themes of exile and memory, based on her and her family's experience being exiled from Palestine in 1948. Interested in Arabic and Persian scripts, she transformed these in her 'written paintings' into abstract forms, creating a visual calligraphic language concerned with memory and feelings of loss displacement.

Continues on next page

4. Sarah Grilo

(1919, Argentina – 2007, Spain)

Black Wall, 1967

Oil on canvas

Grilo was a member of the Grupo de Artistas Modernos [Group of Modern Artists] who explored geometric abstraction in the 1950s, Buenos Aires. After the group dissolved she travelled to Europe, then moved to New York in 1962, where she developed a more gestural and lyrical informal abstraction using letters, numbers and symbols drawn from torn posters, signs and graffitied walls she observed on the streets of the city. She returned to Europe in the 1970s, living and working in Paris and Madrid.

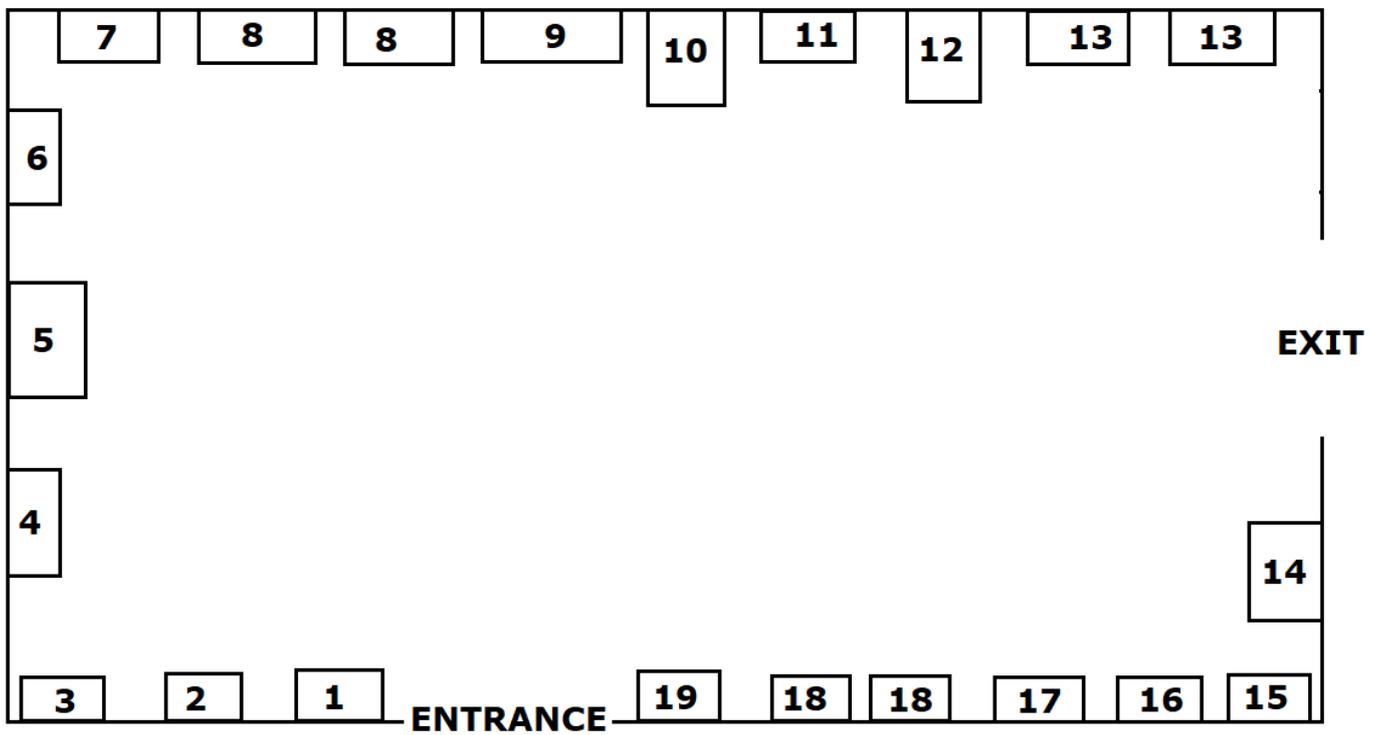
5. Sarah Grilo

Ni Un Dia Mas (Not even one more day), 1966

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

GALLERY 9 FLOOR PLAN



Continues on next page

List of Works:

1. Alice Rahon

(1904, France – 1987, Mexico)

Sans Titre [Untitled], c. 1930s

Oil on canvas

A French painter and poet, Rahon began her artistic career creating hats for fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli in Paris, where she also became close to many Surrealist artists. She settled in Mexico City in the late 1930s, where she began painting, with a particular interest in prehistoric imagery, Surrealism and Indigenous art. Rahon often scratched through the surface of her paintings to reveal the underlying colours and included found objects (feathers, leaves, butterfly wings) in her works.

Continues on next page

2. Etel Adnan

(1925, Lebanon – 2021, France)

Untitled, 1960

Ink wash and pastel on paper

Having studied literature and philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris, Adnan moved between San Francisco, Paris and Beirut as a university lecturer, journalist and poet. Untrained as a visual artist her small-format colourful abstractions connect nature, politics, poetry and myth and explore the relationship between visual language and literary expression which she described as: 'It seems to me I write what I see, paint what I am'.

Etel Adnan

Untitled, 1960

Ink wash and pastel on paper

Continues on next page

3. Margaret Mellis

(1914, China – 2009, UK)

Plant (Black, Umber, Orange), 1960

Oil on board

Scottish painter Mellis taught at the Edinburgh College of Art in 1935–37 before relocating to Cornwall, becoming one of the early members and last survivors of the group of modernist artists who gathered in St Ives in the 1940s. Mellis was renowned throughout her career as a colourist, and her works from the mid-1950s moved away from direct representation, simplifying still life and landscapes to flattened areas of pure, gestural colour.

Continues on next page

4. Bertina Lopes

(1924, Mozambique – 2012, Italy)

Segni di terra [Earth signs], 1969

Watercolour on paper

A Mozambican painter, sculptor and activist, Lopes studied in Lisbon where she encountered the avant-garde painting of Portuguese modernism and contemporary artistic international movements. After returning to Mozambique in 1953, she became an influential professor and engaged with the anti-colonial and independence movements but was forced to leave Mozambique in 1961 by the military dictatorship.

She settled in Rome, focusing on a body of work based on abstracted forms inspired by African iconography and informed by political events.

Continues on next page

Bertina Lopes

Composizione astratta [Abstract composition], 1969

Acrylic on card

5. Chinyee

(b. 1929, China, lives and works in USA)

Solids, 1964

Oil on canvas

Chinese-American Chinyee left Nanjing in 1974 to study in New York, where she received her BFA from the College of Mount Saint Vincent and MA from New York University. The explosion in abstraction around her offered a way of bridging the Eastern traditions of brush and ink calligraphy and watercolours, with a new form of self-expression. Although her early abstract works reveal traces of figuration, she gradually adopted a looser brushwork that draws on both calligraphic traditions and Western abstraction.

Continues on next page

Chinyee

Reminiscence, 1964

Oil on canvas

6. Helen Khal

(1923, USA – 2009, Lebanon)

Untitled (Ochre over Brown), 1968

Oil on canvas

Khal grew up in Pennsylvania and in 1946 travelled to Lebanon to study painting at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts in Beirut. She met her future husband poet Yusuf al-Khal and in 1963 they established Lebanon's first permanent art gallery. Her paintings contain fluid blocks of colour in intimately scaled abstract works infused with light which she described as a way to create 'an oasis for the emotions'. In 1975, she published the influential feminist book, *The Woman Artist in Lebanon*.

Continues on next page

7. Maliheh Afnan

Mindscape, 1961

Oil on canvas

8. Nadia Saikali

(b. 1936, France, lives and works in France)

Geste [Gesture], 1960

Oil on canvas

Saikali graduated from the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts in 1956 and then studied at L'Académie de la Grande Chaumière and L'École des Arts Decoratifs in Paris. Before moving to Beirut her interest in abstraction grew from a love of geography and geology, ancient civilisations and archaeology, which inform her mark-making and fluid gestures. She permanently moved to France in 1979 during the civil war in Lebanon.

Continues on next page

Nadia Saikali

Lever de Lune [Moonrise], 1969

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

9. **Sonja Sekula**

(1918, Switzerland – 1963, Switzerland)

7am, c. 1948–49

Oil on canvas

Sekula was a Swiss artist who emigrated to New York with her family in 1936, where she quickly became part of the artistic avant-garde surrounding Surrealist émigrés André Breton and Marcel Duchamp.

Inspired by Surrealism and Indian folklore, she developed a style focusing on abstract patterns and lines. During her time in New York she exhibited in numerous exhibitions alongside Abstract Expressionists, but her work was rarely shown in Europe until the 1990s, when she began to find recognition.

Continues on next page

10. Fayga Ostrower

(1920, Poland – 2001, Brazil)

Composition, 1958

Etching and aquatint

Ostrower's Polish family moved to Germany and then in 1934 were forced to leave to flee the persecution of the Jewish people. They emigrated to Brazil, where she studied and developed a passion and skill for woodblock and metal engraving.

Her early figurative work depicted social themes, however in 1953 she began to focus on abstraction in printmaking inspired by Cubism and Cézanne. Ostrower taught art and published many books reflecting on the power of art as a universal language.

Fayga Ostrower

Composition, 1958

Four colour woodcuts

Continues on next page

11. Asma Fayoumi

(b. 1943, Jordan, lives and works in Syria)

Requiem for a City, 1968

Oil on canvas

Fayoumi was a key figure in the development of 1960s Syrian Abstraction which emerged at a time of social change in the Arab world amidst growing opposition to Western influence and a search for a new artistic identity. She began painting cityscapes, moving away from realism to using more abstract forms and gestural expressionist marks that still hint at architecture. Later works were inspired by Arabic poetry and featured female figures drawn from mythology.

Continues on next page

12. Nasreen Mohamedi

(1937, Pakistan – 1990, India)

Untitled, 1962

Watercolour and ink on paper

Recognised for her significant contribution to Indian modernism, Mohamedi studied at Saint Martin's School of Art in London from 1954–57 and worked in Europe before returning to India in the early 1970s.

In the 1960s she developed an abstract language with a fluid gestural use of line and colour, before becoming interested in the modernist grid as a vehicle for exploring utopian landscapes and cities in detailed drawings of geometric lines and forms suspended in space. Private Collection. Courtesy of Talwar Gallery, New York and New Delhi

Continues on next page

Nasreen Mohamedi

Untitled, c. 1965

Ink, graphite and pastel on paper

13. Carol Rama

(1918, Italy – 2015, Italy)

Si geme, si fa del Bop [We moan, we do the Bop],

1968

Pigmented glue and dolls' eyes on card Rama, a self-taught artist, began making erotic watercolours in the mid-1930s, before her work evolved to explore corporeality and viscosity through abstraction.

Rama's career spanned several art movements, including Surrealism, post-war abstraction and Arte Povera, and her transgressive drawings, assemblages and paintings often incorporated materials such as dolls' eyes, syringes, wire and fur in her 1960s work and car tires, rubber and electric cables in the 1970s.

Continues on next page

Carol Rama

Senza titolo [Untitled], 1969

Spray paint, glue, and mixed media on card

14. Britta Ringvall

(1899, Sweden – 1983, Sweden)

Swedish Landscape, c. 1960

Oil on canvas

Ringvall painted abstract landscapes, figures, portraits and still life's in her signature loose brushwork, often taking inspiration and depicting motifs from Stockholm's archipelagos. Her works are densely composed of layers, with a very free and playful approach to the use of colour. Throughout the 1940s, Ringvall held numerous exhibitions in various galleries across Stockholm and was well known in her time as an influential abstract artist.

Continues on next page

15. Hedwig Thun

(1892, Germany – 1969, Germany)

Dodona, 1962

Oil on canvas

Thun's early works were figurative, and she turned to abstraction while a student at the famous Bauhaus school, where her early compositions show a similarity to her teacher Wassily Kandinsky. From 1950 onwards, Thun's works became more gestural as she experimented with various stain and drip techniques. Her works were exhibited internationally, including at MoMA in New York, but only about eighty of her paintings and some of her writing survive.

Continues on next page

16. Elna Fonnesbech-Sandberg

(1892, Denmark – 1994, Denmark)

Myriader, 1959

Oil on canvas

Fonnesbech-Sandberg was a Danish artist, collector and patron who, during the 1920s, built up a unique art collection of Scandinavian modernism.

Following the Second World War, she shifted her focus to collect expressive abstract art. Fonnesbech-Sandberg started painting in 1947 at the request of her psychoanalyst, quickly developing a densely layered, abstract style consisting of numerous layers of paint that she then scratched through and repainted again and again.

Continues on next page

17. Nína Tryggvadóttir

(1913, Iceland – 1968, USA)

Eruption VII, 1959

Oil on linen mounted on panel

One of the few Icelandic women artists of her generation, Tryggvadóttir was a painter but also employed collage, stained glass and mosaic, her compositions referencing nature, Icelandic landscapes and Nordic light. Tryggvadóttir moved to New York in 1942 to study at the Art Students League, becoming an important member of the city's Abstract Expressionist scene, even though she spent much of the 1950s away since the US government suspected her of being a communist sympathiser.

Nína Tryggvadóttir

Abstraction, 1963

Oil on linen

Continues on next page

18. Janet Sobel (1893, Ukraine – 1968, USA)

Untitled, c. 1948

Mixed media on canvas board

An untrained artist, Sobel discovered painting through her son who was studying art in New York. She developed a unique style dripping enamel paint directly onto the canvas using glass pipettes. Her paintings were shown by Sidney Janis in 1944 and Peggy Guggenheim's gallery in 1945 where they were seen by Jackson Pollock and the critic Clement Greenberg, who only acknowledged her influence much later. Sobel's work fell into obscurity after she left New York in 1947, the year Pollock began his own iconic drip paintings, but her contribution to 'all-over' and drip painting is now being recognised.

Continues on next page

Janet Sobel

Illusion of Solidity, c.1945

Oil on canvas

19. Erna Rosenstein

(1913, Ukraine – 2004, Poland)

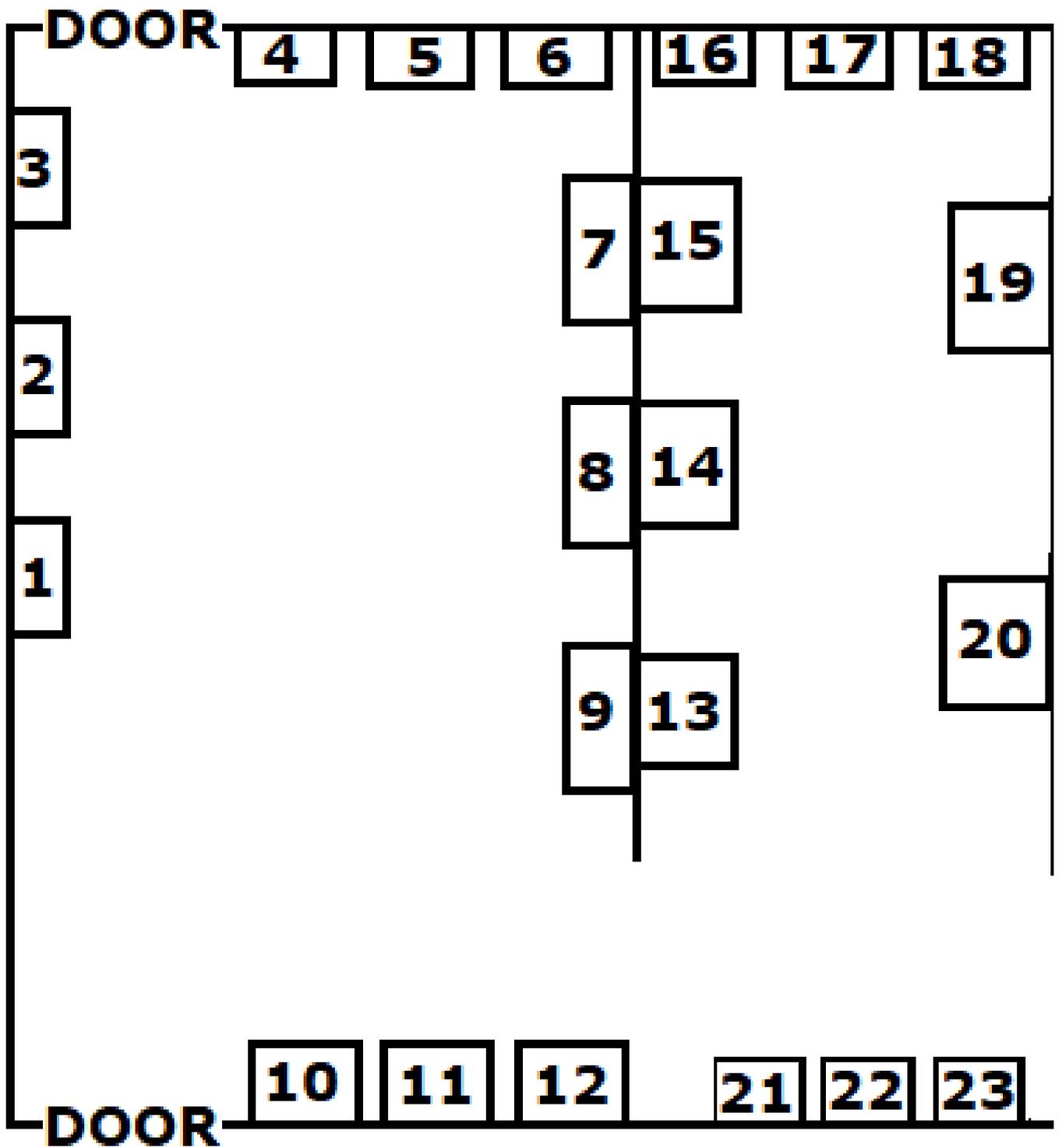
Composition, undated

Oil on canvas

A leading figure amongst Polish avant-garde artists, Rosenstein studied in Vienna and travelled to Paris before returning to Warsaw in 1934. Interested early on in Surrealism and the unconscious, the abstract paintings of fluid biomorphic forms of the 1950s and 60s manifest states of mind. She remained in Poland after the trauma of the Nazi occupation, her later work oscillated between figuration and abstraction, in defiance of the dictates of Soviet Realism.

Continues on next page

FRONT OF GALLERY 8 FLOOR PLAN



Continues on next page

BEING EXPRESSION EMPATHY

The ruinous violence and displacements of the Second World War left a deep wound in the cultural psyche of the 1950s. It was in this era that existentialism, phenomenology and nihilism emerged as dominant themes in philosophy, themes that also underlie the paintings in this section. We can see the manifestation of trauma, feelings of emptiness or a brooding anxiety about a future 'defended' with nuclear weapons through a dark palette, chaotic fragmentation and congested, overwhelming compositions. To break with the past and generate a new creativity, artists also embraced destruction in art with the dissolution of form and physical attacks on the canvas. These artists are investigating the very nature of existence, triggering non-linguistic, empathetic responses in the viewer.

Continues on next page

List of Works:

1. Juana Francés

(1924, Spain – 1990, Spain)

No. 8, 1958

Mixed media on canvas

Initially self-taught, Spanish painter Francés went on to study art in Madrid and Paris. During the 1950s she embraced Art Informel, which led her to found the El Paso group, along with other artists, in 1957. This group represented the culmination of Abstract Expressionism in Spain and became a definitive influence on post-war Spanish art. Francés' paintings employed a muted monochromatic palette with the paint scraped, dripped and scratched onto the canvas, sometimes adding materials such as sand or earth.

Continues on next page

2. Juana Francés

No. 49, 1960

Mixed media on canvas

3. Juana Francés

No. 16, 1959

Acrylic and soil on canvas

Continues on next page

4. Martha Edelheit

(b. 1931, USA, lives and works in Sweden)

Sacrificial Portrait, 1958

Oil, wood, metal and canvas

'It didn't really occur to me that I could be an artist. All the artists in the museums were men', said Edelheit, an American artist who now lives and works in Sweden. She is known as a pioneering feminist artist, whose work addresses women's desires, the body, and skin as a canvas. Combining a variety of mediums, including painting, sculpture, film and performance, Edelheit's art challenges social expectations of women, formalist paradigms and traditional notions of painting.

Continues on next page

5. Sonia Gechtoff

(1926, USA – 2018, USA)

The Map, 1958

Oil on canvas

With an artist father and a gallerist mother, Gechtoff received a BFA in painting from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia. She moved to San Francisco in 1951, where she abandoned figurative work in favour of painterly gestures largely inspired by nature and poetry. Known for her innovative manipulation of the palette knife on canvas, in 1958, Gechtoff moved to New York, but felt the atmosphere unsupportive of Abstraction Expressionism with the rise of Pop Art.

6. Sonia Gechtoff

The Queen, 1958

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

7. Franciszka Themerson

Capricious Growth, 1961

Oil, canvas and plaster relief

8. Michael West

(1908, USA – 1991, USA) Nihilism, 1949

Oil, enamel and sand on canvas

9. Michael West

Narkisses, 1966

Oil on canvas

Born Corinne West in Ohio, West attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music before enrolling the Cincinnati Art Academy in 1925, eventually relocating to New York in 1932. In the mid-1930s, West, like her contemporaries Lee Krasner and George (Grace) Hartigan, adopted a masculine name. West sought respect based on the merit of the work, free from the bias of gender.

Continues on next page

West appreciated a linear approach to painting, preferring to use the paint brush to almost draw onto her canvas.

10. Deborah Remington

(1930, USA – 2010, USA)

Dr S, 1962

Oil on canvas

Remington was part of the San Francisco's Beat scene in the 1950s and in 1954 was one of six painters and poets, and the only woman, to found the legendary Six Gallery in San Francisco. Most recognised for her works in hard edge abstraction characterised by flat colours and sharp edges, from 1955 Remington spent two years travelling and living in Southeast Asia, India and Japan, where she studied classical and contemporary calligraphy, which had a significant impact on her painting.

Continues on next page

11. Deborah Remington

Eleusian, 1951

Oil on canvas

12. Mercedes Pardo

(1921, Venezuela – 2005, Venezuela)

Pequeña Nada [Little Nothing], 1959

Oil on canvas

In the 1950s, during a climate of renewal and optimism, abstraction began to be celebrated in Venezuela and Pardo was one of the central figures in this artistic scene. Predominantly a painter, she also worked in stained glass, enamel and graphic design. Around 1956 she began making Informalist works that incorporated rich pictorial layering and vibrant explorations of colour. Pardo was also a founding member of the San Antonio de Los Altos Cooperative School in her home country.

Continues on next page

PERFORMANCE GESTURE RHYTHM

Also described as 'Action Art', the paintings here are conceived as events. Often painted at the scale of the human body and made through physical movements such as throwing, jabbing, jumping and dancing, gestures that are mirrored with tonalities and shapes that balance, swoop or collide. Many of the artists here were influenced by modern dance and its rejection of traditional forms of ballet for the embrace of physical freedom – in particular for women. There is an exhilaration of pure abandonment as painting becomes performance, and the body and the canvas become one in a synthesis of physical and psychic energy.

Continues on next page

13. Bernice Bing

(1936, USA – 1998, USA)

Untitled, 1959

Oil on canvas

Born in San Francisco to Chinese parents, Bing studied at the California School of Fine Arts, developing an artistic language that combined Western abstraction with Eastern philosophies introduced to her by Japanese artist Saburo Hasegawa. Bing cited the exposure to existential philosophy as a path to her pursuit of abstraction, alongside a broad array of musical, literary, film and artistic influences. She travelled extensively, including to South Korea, Japan and China, where she studied traditional Chinese ink painting and calligraphy.

Continues on next page

14. **Miriam Schapiro**

(1923, Canada – 2015, USA)

Idyll II, 1956

Oil on canvas

Schapiro was a painter, sculptor, printmaker and pioneer of feminist art. In the 1950s she created a substantial body of work in a gestural language that involved thinning her paint with turpentine before spreading it across the canvas in broad wipes. Although these works were abstract, Schapiro based them on works by old masters, specifically referencing male artists and recreating their works in her own style so as to position herself on an equal playing field as her male forebears.

Continues on next page

15. Alma Thomas

(1891, USA – 1978, USA)

Etude in Brown (Saint Cecilia at the Organ), 1962

Oil on linen

An African American painter known for vibrant series of works featuring concentric circles, layered geometries and mosaic patterns inspired by observations of the earth, science and space.

She produced much of her work at her kitchen table turning to full time artmaking after she retired as an art teacher in 1960. She achieved national recognition as a major artist and was the first African American woman to have a solo at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York in 1972.

Continues on next page

16. Elaine de Kooning

(1918, USA – 1989, USA)

Untitled, 1950

Oil on paper on canvas

A key figure in the New York School of the 1940s and 50s, de Kooning was aware of the gender inequality of her time, so chose to sign her artworks EDK, to avoid her paintings 'being labelled as feminine in a traditionally masculine movement' as well as to distinguish her work from her husband, Willem de Kooning. Though mainly working in abstraction, she retained an interest in figuration, bringing the expressive gesture of Abstract Expressionism to bear on figurative subjects such as bullfights and portraits of friends and family.

Continues on next page

17. Elaine de Kooning

Abstraction #3, 1959

Oil on canvas

18. Elaine de Kooning

The Bull, 1959

Acrylic and collage on Masonite

Continues on next page

19. Lilly Fenichel

(1927, Austria – 2016, USA)

Untitled, 1950

Oil on canvas

Associated with the Bay Area School and Beat Generation, Fenichel was born in Vienna and escaped to the UK with her family following the Nazi invasion of Austria, before moving to California in 1940.

Her work tended to combine both influences of West Coast gestural abstraction and the New York School of Abstract Expressionism during her early career, with brief forays into geometric abstraction and three-dimensional constructions after joining the artistic community in Taos, New Mexico where she spent much of her life.

Continues on next page

20. Lilly Fenichel

Ochre, Red and Blue, 1950

Oil on canvas

21. Tomie Ohtake

Untitled, 1960

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

22. Judith Godwin

(1930, USA – 2021, USA)

Black Pagoda, 1958–59

Oil on canvas

Godwin studied art in Virginia and moved to New York in 1953, inspired by Hans Hofmann and modern choreographer Martha Graham. Through her studies with Hofmann, her long association with Graham, her expressive dance movements, her participation in the burgeoning of Abstract Expressionism and her love for Zen Buddhism. Godwin forged a unique artistic vocabulary of open, gestural strokes often featuring chevrons, spirals and arc forms that she dynamically interwove into complex relationships between figure and ground.

Continues on next page

23. Toko Shinoda

(1913, China – 2021, Japan)

Shinoda began as a calligrapher, and started experimenting with abstraction in the mid-1940s.

In 1954 she achieved renown outside of Japan with her inclusion in an exhibition of Japanese calligraphy at MoMA. She then spent two years in New York, where she met many of the Abstract Expressionist artists.

Returning to Japan, Shinoda further fused calligraphy and an expressionist aesthetic, with sumi ink on traditional Chinese and Japanese papers, or on backgrounds of gold, silver or platinum leaf.

Continues on next page

Top to bottom, left to right

Wind from the sea, c. 1970s

Print on paper

Sprout, c.1970s, lithograph

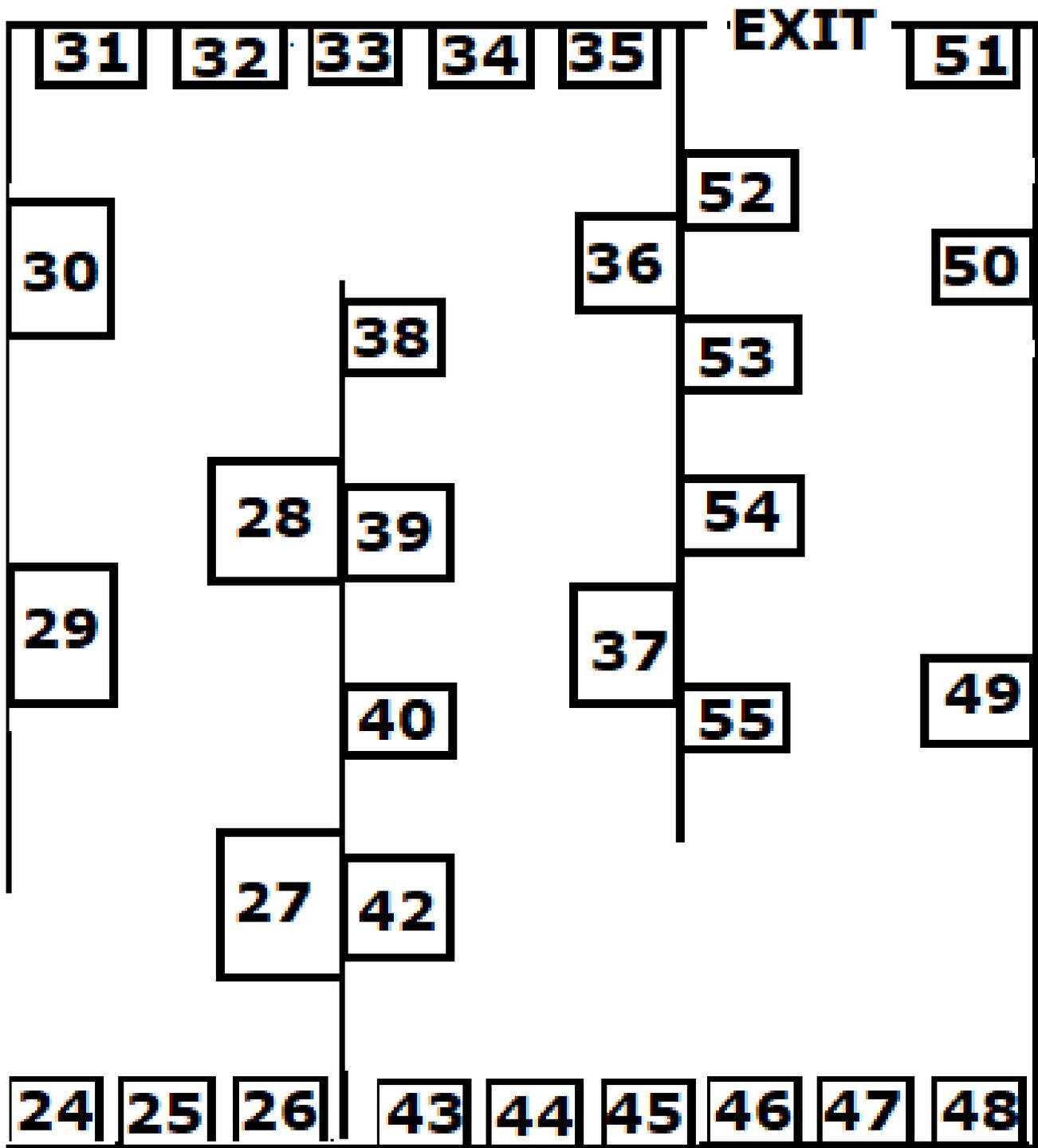
Stream, c.1970s, lithograph

Depth, c.1970s, lithograph

To Green, c.1970s, lithograph

Continues on next page

SECOND HALF GALLERY 8



Continues on next page

24. Judith Godwin

Black Cross, 1959

Oil on canvas

25. Sarah Schumann

(1933, Germany – 2019, Germany)

Untitled, 1962

Egg tempera on canvas

An important figure in artistic exchange between the UK and Germany, Schumann lived in London between 1960–63. She had a solo show at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London in 1963, after which she relocated to Italy, where she began painting gestural abstractions in egg tempera paint. She organised the exhibition 'Künstlerinnen International 1877–1977', presenting many women artists from across art history. Shortly afterwards, she began a lifelong partnership with feminist writer Silvia Bovenschen.

Continues on next page

26. Sarah Schumann

Untitled, 1962

Egg tempera on canvas

27. Pat Passlof

(1928, USA – 2011, USA)

Stove, 1959

Oil on linen

Passlof studied at Queens College in New York with art historian Robert Goldwater and at the fabled Black Mountain College with Willem de Kooning. In New York, she organised young artist evenings at the celebrated 8th Street Club. Her work, fully immersed in Abstract Expressionism, grew progressively lighter and more spontaneous over the years, as did her sense of colour. Passlof made both figurative paintings, often landscapes with centaurs, nymphs and horses, as well as large abstractions derived from repeated patterns and marks.

Continues on next page

28. Pat Passlof

Promenade for a Bachelor, 1958

Oil on linen

29. Amaranth Ehrenhalt

(1928, USA – 2021, USA)

Jump In and Move Around, 1961

Oil on canvas

An American painter who spent much of her career in Paris before returning to New York, Ehrenhalt's paintings in lush colours, fluent brushwork and bustling compositions bordered on figuration while remaining committed to abstraction. Of her days as a young artist in New York, Ehrenhalt described how she painted directly on the floor, 'not by choice à la Jackson Pollock but for lack of a table', eventually settling in Paris and bringing the influence of the New York School with her.

Continues on next page

30. Amaranth Ehrenhalt

Carmona, 1957

Oil on canvas

31. Mary Abbott

(1921, USA – 2019, USA)

Mahogany Road, 1955

Oil on canvas and collage

A member of the New York School of Abstract Expressionists in the late 1940s and '50s, Abbott studied at the experimental art school Subject of the Artists with Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, and had her studio on 10th Street in Manhattan, a location at the centre of New York's artistic scene. She worked on large canvases, combining vibrant colours and sweeping, energetic brushstrokes with sections of painted collage to create emotional abstractions that draw on mythology, religion and nature.

Continues on next page

32. Mary Abbott

Purple Crossover, 1959

Oil on canvas

ENVIRONMENT NATURE PERCEPTION

Lived experiences of the environment are expressed here through canvases that emphasise space, texture, light and atmosphere. These artists distil a momentary impression, observed or remembered, using a palette drawn from their surroundings – rural and urban. Like poets writing at this time, they developed an aesthetic language that communicates the instantaneous experience of a time and a place, immersing us in the sensations of a landscape or interior.

The epic scale of some of these canvases also presents the painting itself as an environment.

Continues on next page

33. Yvonne Thomas

(1913, France – 2009, USA)

To the Forest, 1960

Oil on linen

French-born Thomas moved to New York in 1925 and studied at Cooper Union and the Art Students League. In 1948, she joined the short-lived experimental school Subject of the Artists alongside male figures such as Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, and three years later was part of the famous 9th Street Art Exhibition, with painters such as Lee Krasner and Joan Mitchell. Her paintings combine coloured planes with instinctive gestures and forms that reference her relationship with nature.

34. Yvonne Thomas

Exploration, 1954

Oil on linen

Continues on next page

35. Yvonne Thomas

Transmutation, 1956

Oil on canvas

36. Perle Fine

(1905, USA – 1988, USA)

Painting No. 56 (Lacerated Yellows), c. 1954

Oil on canvas

An American Abstract Expressionist painter whose parents were Russian émigrés, Fine moved from her native Boston to New York City to study at the Art Students League while still in her teens. By the 1930s, her art was firmly abstract and non-objective. Known for her fluid brushstrokes and renderings of biomorphic forms intertwined with irregular geometric shapes, in 1950 she was admitted as one of the first women members of the influential artist group known as the 8th Street Club.

Continues on next page

37. Perle Fine

Summer I, 1958–59

Oil and collage on canvas

38. Lilian Holt

(1898, UK – 1983, UK)

Tajo, Ronda, 1956

Oil on canvas

Holt was an influential and founding member of the Borough Group, a collective of painters that included Walter Sickert, Jacob Epstein, Jacob Kramer, and David Bomberg whom she married in 1940.

In the 1950s, she and Bomberg moved to Ronda in southern Spain. Holt made many paintings of views of the small town built on two sides of a ravine, working in situ and painting quickly, conveying a sense of place through colour and abstract forms.

Continues on next page

Lilian Holt

Spirit of Ronda, Andalucia, 1955

Oil on canvas

39. Lifang

(1933, Taiwan – 2020, Switzerland)

Autumn, 1968

Oil on canvas

Lifang studied fine arts at Taiwan Provincial Teachers College and was a founding member of the Fifth Moon Group in 1957. In 1959 she travelled to Paris and met Swiss artist Hans Brun, with whom she settled in the mountains of Switzerland while remaining active in the European art world. Lifang created mainly small-scale abstract paintings with heavy colours and bold brushstrokes informed by landscape and nature, incorporating the 'broken brush' and 'flying white' techniques of Chinese calligraphy.

Continues on next page

Lifang

Untitled, 1969

Oil on canvas

40. Emiko Nakano

(1925, USA – 1990, USA)

Composition in Yellow, 1957

Oil on canvas

During the Second World War, California born Nakano and her family were placed in an American internment camp for three years because of their Japanese ancestry. When they were eventually released, Nakano attended art school and studied with the West Coast Abstract Expressionists. A painter, printmaker, fibre artist and fashion Illustrator, Nakano's work often reflected an abstract approach to landscape painting, in which large blocks of colour are orchestrated in taut compositions to convey a sense of space and light.

Continues on next page

41. Else Fischer-Hansen

(1905, Denmark – 1996, Denmark)

Composition, 1949

Oil on canvas

A Danish painter who studied in Italy, Fischer-Hansen's early works were naturalistic and figurative, but in the 1930s her practice became increasingly abstract as she started making what she referred to as 'psychological paintings', abstractions based on specific landscapes or drawing on musical works. Her paintings of the sea, light and air are created in a highly simplified abstract form, often with just a few strong colours on a light background.

Else Fischer-Hansen

Composition, 1949

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

42. Elsa Vaudrey

(1905, Scotland -1990, UK)

Untitled, 1959

Gouache on board

Vaudrey began painting in water colour, ink and gouache in the tradition of British landscape painters until she came across the New York School painters in two exhibitions at Tate, 'Modern Art in the United States' 1956 and the 'New American Painting' in 1959. Adopting the technique of Tachisme, her work shifted into a distinctive and fluid gestural abstraction from the 1960s onwards, in which visionary expressive impressions of the natural world featured as subject matter.

Elsa Vaudrey

Night Flight, 1960

Gouache on board

Continues on next page

43. Janice Biala

(1903, Poland – 2000, France)

Yellow Still Life, c. 1955

Oil on canvas

A Polish-born artist who lived in both France and the US for long periods of time. She is known for her paintings and collages of intimate interiors, portraits of friends and the places she travelled to. She was one of the few women associated with the New York School of Abstract Expressionism and her work fused gestural lyricism with the aesthetics of the School of Paris.

Continues on next page

44. Maria Helena Viera da Silva

(1908, Portugal – 1992, France)

La Nef (Interieur d'Eglise)

(The nave (Interir of a Church),

1955

Oil on canvas

Having lived in Portugal, Brazil and France, Viera da Silva was a leading member of the European and International Art Informal movement. Her works feature complex, mostly geometric compositions using lines that explore space and perspective through her characteristic use of heavy impasto and overlaid forms. The subject matter of Viera da Silva's 1950s paintings focuses on post-war Europe: cities that had been burned or flooded, alleyways, sunsets and landscapes, both natural and built.

Continues on next page

Maria Helena Viera da Silva

Terrasse Ensoleillee, 1952

Oil on canvas

45. Maria Helena Viera da Silva

Sans Titre [Unititled], 1955

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page

46. Marie Raymond

(1908, France – 1988, France)

Montagne, 1961

Oil on canvas

Associated with Tachisme and one of the central figures of the artistic scene in post-war Paris, Raymond and her husband the artist Fred Klein are the parents of celebrated French artist Yves Klein. During the Second World War, Raymond and her family took refuge in Cagnessur-Mer with other artists including Hans Arp and Sonia Delaunay, and there her work became resolutely abstract, often inspired by nature and country walks.

Continues on next page

47. Anna-Eva Bergman

(1909, Sweden – 1987, France)

Finnmark, 1966

Oil and silver on particle board

A Norwegian artist who became one of the most famous post-war Scandinavian painters. She studied at the Staatens Kunstakademi Oslo and the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and, in 1929 Bergman moved to Paris, where she met her husband the German painter Hans Hartung. Her early works were expressive depictions of landscapes, before she turned to Abstract Expressionism, suggesting that when painting you have to 'find the expression that suggests the atmosphere, the effect of the colours. Nothing naturalistic'.

Anna-Eva Bergman

No 1 - Fjell, 1957

Oil and metal foil on canvas

Continues on next page

48. Joan Mitchell

(1925, USA – 1992, France)

Painting, 1958

Oil on canvas

One of the leading American abstract painters, Mitchell studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and travelled to Paris for the first time in 1948. She would return to France many times, eventually settling there in 1959. Arriving in New York in 1949 she joined what became known as the second generation of Abstract Expressionist artists, including Helen Frankenthaler and Grace Hartigan. She painted in a fluid Abstract Expressionist style throughout her long career, exploring 'remembered feelings of nature' and experimenting with printmaking and drawing.

Continues on next page

49. Joan Mitchell

Untitled, c. 1957

Oil on canvas

50. Joan Mitchell

Rufus' Rock, 1966

Oil on canvas

51. Ida Barbarigo

Open Game, 1961,

Oil on canvas

52. Ida Barbarigo

(1925, Italy – 2018, Italy)

Promenade, 1963

Oil on canvas

Barbarigo was an Italian painter from Venice, who abandoned landscapes and portraits after moving to Paris in 1952 and became associated with the abstract painting movement of the New School of Paris. Painting in ochre tones, rhythmical white brushstrokes, and using sinuous forms orchestrated against light, airy backgrounds, Barbarigo frequently incorporated personal references in her work, in an attempt to 'unlearn how to paint', as she described it, and be closer to her senses.

Continues on next page

53. Lea Nikel

(1918, Ukraine – 2005, Israel)

Untitled, 1967

Oil on canvas

One of the foremost Israeli abstract artists, Nikel was a member of artist groups such as New Horizons, which was crucial in bringing abstraction to Israeli art.

Recognised for her daring, expressive style, full of spontaneity and bold colouring, Nikel combined paint, collage, scratching and areas of bare canvas in her work. Her distinctive form of gestural abstraction was also influenced by extensive travels to Paris New York and Rome.

54. Lea Nikel

Untitled, 1967

Oil on canvas

Continues on next page