

# JASON MCCOY GALLERY

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## **Charles Pollock**

Charles Pollock, American painter born in 1902, Denver, Colorado. The eldest of a family of five boys (Marvin Jay, Frank Leslie, Sanford Leroy and Paul Jackson), he spent his childhood in the American West: Colorado, Wyoming, Arizona, California. At twenty, he went to Los Angeles where he worked as copy-boy and make-up editor for the *Los Angeles Times*. At the same time, he attended classes at the Otis Art Institute. At the beginning of his artistic career, he showed an interest in Mexican art and particularly in the Mexican mural painters. His contact with the work of Max Weber, Orozco, Rivera and Thomas Hart Benton, took him to New York where he settled in 1926. He went to the Art Students' League and studied with Thomas Hart Benton, became his assistant and friend. Until the middle of the 1940s his work was marked by Benton's regional style.

In 1930 he made a living teaching art at the City and Country School in Manhattan and painting posters for cinema marquees. In 1935 he went to Washington, D.C., where he worked for the Resettlement Administration (Special Skills Division) and traveled through the South making drawings and studies. In 1937 he went to Detroit, Michigan where he worked for the United Automobile Workers' union newspaper as political cartoonist. From 1938 to 1942, Charles Pollock was Supervisor of Mural Painting and Graphic Arts for the Federal Arts Project (WPA) in Michigan. He made murals for the Water Conditioning Plant in the State capitol (Lansing) and another for the Fairchild Auditorium at Michigan State College (later Michigan State University), in East Lansing. From 1942 to 1967, he taught design, printmaking, calligraphy and typography at Michigan State University where he created a department of fine printing working with a Washington Hand Press. He was book designer to the Michigan State College Press from 1942 to 1959. In 1945, after finishing the Fairchild Auditorium mural, he went to the desert in Arizona to draw and paint; he then broke definitively with social realist, regionalist art and began experimenting with abstraction.

He took his first sabbatical year in Mexico in 1955-56. He lived in a little village on Lake Chapala, where he made the *Chapala* series: thirty large ink drawings and fifteen paintings, all marked by his interest in calligraphy. In 1959 he began working in a somber style with black figures of tinted gray grounds: the *Black and Gray* series. In 1962-63 he took his second sabbatical year in Rome, where he painted the somber and majestic *Rome* series and made aquatints. He was artist in residence at the University of Pennsylvania in 1965 and 1967, the recipient of a Guggenheim Grant in 1967-68 and a National Foundation of Arts Grant in 1967. During these productive years, relieved of his teaching duties, he returned to painting in vibrant color. He retired from teaching in 1967 and

moved to New York with his wife and year-old daughter. In his studio on the Bowery he made the extensive, diaphanous paintings in the *NY* series. In 1971 he moved to Paris with his family; there, in his atelier on the rue du Cherche-Midi, he painted the *Passim*, *Trace*, and *Cantus* series, confirming his intimate and magistral relation to color. In his last productive years he made a series of small drawings in black and white. He spent the last seventeen years of his life in Paris where he died in 1988 at the age of 85.

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

1934

Ferargil Gallery, New York

1952

Circle Gallery, Detroit, Michigan

1963

Galeria Pogliani, Rome, Italy

1964

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Kresge Art Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan

1966

Henri Gallery, Washington, DC

Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit, Michigan

1967

Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit

1968

Gertrude Kasle Gallery, Detroit

1969

Bennington College, Vermont, New Gallery

1979

Acme Gallery, London

"Recent Paintings, 1974-1978"; the exhibition travels in Great Britain

1979-80

U. S. Embassy, Brussels, Belgium

1981

Paris Art Center, Paris, France

1984

*Passim: Paintings of the 70s*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York

1984-85

Dimock Gallery, Washington, DC

1987-88

Jason McCoy Gallery, New York

1989

*The Rome Series*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York

2003

Ball State University Museum, Muncie, Indiana (retrospective)

*Exposition Sauvage*, Paris

2007

*Charles Pollock: The Chapala Series*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York, brochure

2008

The Art Show, ADAA, at the Park Avenue Armory, exhibitor: Jason McCoy Inc., New York, NY

*Charles Pollock: Stacked Color*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York, brochure

2009

Espace d'Art Contemporain Fernet-Branca, Alsace

*Charles Pollock: Works from the 1960s*, American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich, Germany

2015

*Charles Pollock: Works from the 1950s and 1960s*, American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich, Germany

*Charles Pollock: A Retrospective*, The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy

*CHARLES POLLOCK: BLACK TO COLOR*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1930

New School for Social Research, New York

1935

Northwest Printmakers, Seattle, Washington

1937

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

1939

San Francisco Museum of Art, California

Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Michigan

World's Fair, Contemporary American Art

1940

Detroit Institute of Arts

1941

Pennsylvania Academy, Philadelphia

1942

Art Institute of Chicago

1945  
Detroit Institute of Arts

1948  
Brooklyn College, New York  
Detroit Institute of Arts  
Northwest Printmakers, Seattle

1949  
Northwest Printmakers, Seattle

1963  
Whitney Annual, New York

1967  
Corcoran Biennial, Washington, DC

1967-68  
American Federation of Arts (AFA) Traveling Exhibition

1970-71  
*Color and Field, 1890-1970*: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York;  
Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, Ohio;  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio

1971  
Réalités Nouvelles, Paris, France

1982  
*Les Américains à Paris*, Paris Art Center

1986  
National Foundation for the Arts Fellowships Exhibition

2008-2009  
*Peggy Guggenheim and the New American Painting*, Arca Arte Vercelli, Italy  
*Charles Pollock*, American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich, Germany

2011  
*Charles Pollock and James Brooks*, American Contemporary Art Gallery, Munich, Germany

2013  
*American Letters 1927-1947: Jackson Pollock & Family*, Jason McCoy Gallery, New York, NY  
*Abstraction Américaine - American Abstraction*, Espace d'Art Contemporain Fernet-Branca, Alsace

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1977

Artscribe, London, September

1982

The New York Times, May

1987

The New York Times, December

1988

Artforum, New York, March

Brenson, Michael, *Charles Pollock, Abstract Painter and Brother of Jackson, Dies at 86*, Obituary,  
The New York Times, Tuesday, May 10

2001

Financial Times, London, July

2002

*L'Art de Charles Pollock: Douce Raison*, Terence Maloon, Ball State University Museum of Art

2004

L'Oeil, Paris, January

2006

Particules, Paris, December/January

2007

Artforum, New York, Summer

The New York Sun, New York, April

2009

ArtInside, Basel, Spring

"5 expositions à ne pas manquer," Beaux Arts magazine, Paris, May, p. 130

L'Oeil, Paris, March

Liberation, Paris, March

Nouvel Observateur, Paris, February

Challenges, Paris, January

*Charles Pollock*, Fernet Branca Exhibition Catalog

2013

"American Letters 1927-1947: Jackson Pollock & Family," New York Times, Roberta Smith

*Abstraction Américaine - American Abstraction*, Fernet Branca, Exhibition Catalog

2015

*Charles Pollock: A Retrospective*, Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Exhibition Catalog