

eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

Eric Firestone Gallery at Frieze Masters Seoul

Booth M22

COEX | 513 Yeongdong-daero, Gangnam-gu, 06164, Seoul

September 6–9, 2023



Pat Passlof | *Atheneum* | 1960–61
oil on linen
77h x 144w in

Eric Firestone Gallery is delighted to participate in the 2023 edition of Frieze Masters Seoul. The gallery will showcase the work of three women Abstract Expressionist artists: Jeanne Reynal (1903–1983), Elise Asher (1912–2004), and Pat Passlof (1928–2011). The presentation honors recent scholarship that has contributed to an art world where women artists are, more than ever, breaking sales records and being recognized for their role in important art movements. All three artists - Asher, Passlof, and Reynal - made pioneering and experimental work, and were also significant figures in their communities.

Pat Passlof was a central and active figure in the Abstract Expressionist art community that burgeoned in New York City after the war. Passlof grew up in New York City, attending Queens College. In the summer of 1948, she left school to study with Willem de Kooning, who, along with his wife Elaine de Kooning, was teaching at Black Mountain College. At the end of the summer, de Kooning helped Passlof find a place to live at 80 East Tenth Street, and suggested that she continue as his private student. Passlof created abstract paintings that responded to memory, experience, and place without narrative descriptors. She used open-ended forms and a variety of

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painterly marks and tempos. Her work suggests a belief in the manifold possibilities of how paint communicates. In 1956, Passlof helped found the artist-run March Gallery, where she had two shows and helped organize many others, including Mark di Suvero's first exhibition. The March Gallery showed artists as varied as Allan Kaprow, Yayoi Kusama, Boris Lurie, and Elaine de Kooning. Passlof's friendship with Mark Di Suvero led to her 1961 solo exhibition at Dick Bellamy's renowned Green Gallery. In her 1960s paintings, Passlof uses repeating patterns and marks across the canvas to create dynamic rhythms. Her work often suggested abstracted landscapes, like the later work of Claude Monet. Her work is represented in the collections of Black Mountain College, North Carolina; the Milwaukee Museum of Art; and it was recently acquired by the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, both in New York.



Elise Asher | *Arrivederci* | 1959-60
oil on canvas
46h x 42w in.

Elise Asher's paintings of the 1950s and 1960s blend calligraphic handwriting with color and brushwork - blurring the line between brushstrokes and text. The personal style of these linear abstractions was Asher's unique contribution to the Abstract Expressionist movement. Asher was also a poet who published three volumes of her work in 1955, 1994, and 2000. She divided her time between Provincetown, MA, and New York City. Asher's calligraphic paintings are suggestive, rather than literal and legible. However, Asher did cite from a variety of sources, including her own poetry, that of her husband, Poet Laureate Stanley Kunitz, and Yeats, Keats, and Blake. The words blend into atmospheric clouds of brushwork. Critic Brian O'Doherty, reviewing a 1964 exhibition, wrote of her paintings: "In a Rimbaud type of association of color and symbol, words flick in and out of recognition, briefly suggesting a thought or image." Asher stated, "I try to translate the poetry of existence, its beauty and its terror, into a vocabulary of the visual imagination." Asher's work is in the collections of the Weatherspoon Art Gallery, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York, NY; Tougaloo College, Jackson, MS; and the Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, among others.

Jeanne Reynal was a mosaicist and central figure of the New York School. Her goal was to challenge expectations of mosaic by creating, in her words, "a new art of mosaic, a contemporary and fresh look for this ancient medium." She was dedicated to the ways in which hand-cut stones and glass tiles, set on a bias, could reflect and create light across a surface. Her surfaces sparkle, ebb, and flow like topographies kissed by the elements. She applied tesserae (the tiles, stone, and

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Jeanne Reynal | *Now is Winter* | 1951
smalti, marble and pigmented cement on board
47 1/4h x 55 1/2w x 1d in

shells she used to construct her mosaics) in loose formations, to a ground of pigmented cement. She applied tenets of Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism to mosaic - working intuitively, making changes as she worked, and creating broad color areas. Reynal, who had apprenticed in Paris, was a friend of many significant artists and thinkers, including André Breton, Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Arshile and Agnes (Mougouch) Gorky. Reynal exhibited alongside the Surrealists, and later at the renowned Betty Parsons Gallery. She also collaborated with Isamu Noguchi. She was among the very first collectors of Jackson Pollock's work and was largely responsible for his, along with Noguchi's, early exhibitions at the San Francisco Museum of Art. Reynal's work can be

found in numerous institutional collections including the Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Noguchi Foundation and Sculpture Garden, all New York; as well as the Menil Collection, Houston, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

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For further information and images, contact press@ericfirestonegallery.com