

eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

THE REST IS HISTORY

Elise Asher • Ellsworth Ausby • Richard Bowman • Sari Dienes • Jorge Fick
Susan Fortgang • Helen Frankenthaler • Sidney Geist • Charles Houghton Howard
Walter C Jackson • Ibram Lassaw • Marcia Marcus • Jay Milder • Costantino Nivola
Joe Overstreet • Pat Passlof • Esther Pressoir • Jeanne Reynal • Miriam Schapiro
Thomas Sills • Esteban Vicente • Peter Voulkos

Eric Firestone Gallery
4 Newtown Ln, East Hampton, NY 11937
August 13 – September 27, 2026

Eric Firestone Gallery is pleased to present *The Rest is History*, an exhibition at its East Hampton location of sculpture and painting made between the 1940s–80s. The show reflects the gallery's ongoing commitment to historical re-investigation of the art historical canon. Eric Firestone Gallery has maintained its original location at 4 Newtown Lane since 2010, and has prioritized, in its programming, the local community and the legacy of art-making in the area. The exhibition includes artists and estates the gallery has worked with since its inception.



Esteban Vicente, *Gentle Sound*, 1988
oil on canvas
52 x 64 in.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the East End of Long Island became one of the most significant meeting-grounds of like-minded artists, who gathered on the beach, in local bars, and in the artist-run Signa Gallery in East Hampton (active from 1957–60). It was an extension of the vanguard artistic activity happening in New York City around abstraction, which constituted a radical re-definition of art. But the East End was also a place where artists were freer to experiment.

The artists in the exhibition who lived and worked in the Hamptons include Sidney Geist, Ibram Lassaw, Costantino Nivola, Miriam Schapiro, Esteban Vicente and Lucia Wilcox. Martha Edelheit visited the area regularly; Nina Yankowitz continues to live and work part time in Sag Harbor. Other artists found refuge in different summer communities: Helen Frankenthaler, Elise Asher, Marcia Marcus, and George McNeil in Provincetown, on Cape Cod; Edelheit nearby in the back woods of Wellfleet.

Pat Passlof spent time in the Schwangunk Mountain ridge area in upstate New York. Sari Dienes retreated from

eric firestone gallery



Peter Voulkos, *Stack*, 1976
fired clay and glaze
36 1/2 x 12 x 12 in.

New York City to an artist community known as The Land, in Rockland County, New York. Other artists in the exhibition were based in the Bay Area of California, including Richard Bowman, Charles Houghton Howard, and Peter Voulkos. Joe Overstreet began his career in the Bay Area before moving to New York; several of his *Flight Pattern* paintings were made during a temporary return to Oakland in the early 1970s. Jeanne Reynal spent the war years in the Bay Area, with a retreat in the Sierra Nevada mountains. Jorge Fick left Detroit, New York, and San Francisco, to live in the high desert of New Mexico.

Many works in the exhibition are connected aesthetically by the impulse to break apart and explode forms. This may reflect a response to World War II, as well as the ongoing lineage of Cubism. This aesthetic also becomes a visual metaphor for what coastal and rural areas represented to these artists. They were a refuge from the pressures and quotidian nature of the city, and as such, a fragmenting of dense urban culture. The work of Overstreet, Thomas Sills, and Paul Waters frequently refers to childhood experiences in nature: for Waters, his grandparents' farm in Pennsylvania, for Overstreet, screened porches in Mississippi; for Sills, the experience of working in a greenhouse in North Carolina.

The work in the exhibition is both joyful and optimistic, as well as reflecting socio-political tension points, and wartime experiences. The families of several artists were refugees or immigrants before and during the war. Edelmet alternately referenced nuclear weapons, sunsets, and rising moons in her abstract assemblage paintings. Lassaw, who was born in Egypt to Russian-Jewish parents, learned to weld while serving in the army. The Surrealist

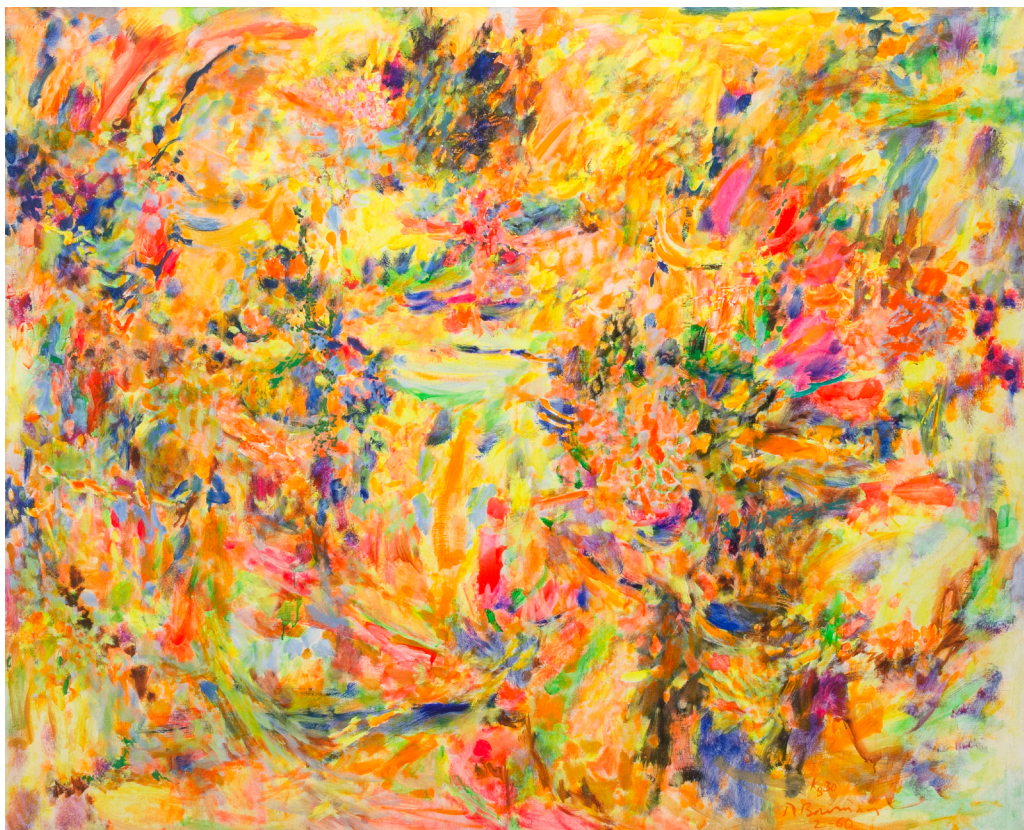
and biomorphic forms in the work of Dienes, Howard, and Reynal, are part of a larger aesthetic response that emphasized the subconscious and intuition, in the face of "logical" thinking that led to mass destruction.

Socio-political expression also runs through the show. Schapiro was a leader in the Feminist Art movement who used symbolic forms to explore structures of containment and freedom for women. Yankowitz's work of the 1970s is a continuation of this legacy; she harnesses an experimental approach to material and discipline to engage themes of feminism, environmentalism, and social justice. Anderson Pigatt and Ellsworth Ausby turned to African roots and forms as inspiration for their work. Overstreet considered the idea of the North Star as a beacon towards freedom for enslaved people. This inspired him to look upward, and point his paintings towards the ceiling.

In many works, nature becomes an abstract contemplation. Asher's paintings are poetic and mysterious ruminations of light and shadowy forms. Dienes would often begin her sidewalk rubbings on urban streets,

eric firestone gallery

and then layer them with rubbings from natural forms she collected, like branches, leaves, and shells. In his *Pod* series, Fick depicted semi-abstract forms of growth and regeneration, reflecting his study of Buddhism, Native, and Latin culture. Lassaw's work draws on the forms of constellations; while Bowman explored sub-atomic structures and primal elements. Bowman was a pioneer in the use of fluorescent paints, considering them a way to express life energy and reflect early discoveries in atomic physics and space exploration. Nivola, while spending time with his children on the beaches of Long Island, developed a singular technique of using molds made in sand to cast plaster or concrete sculptures. These works combine the textured freedom of sand with the permanence of stone.



Richard Bowman, *Kinetogenics 30*, 1960
oil and fluorescent oil on canvas
71 x 87 in.

Together, the work in the exhibition is a reflection on this history – a synthesis of social forces, pressures, and discoveries of the time – along with the refuge and healing of nature and rootedness in place.

THE REST IS HISTORY

Eric Firestone Gallery

4 Newtown Ln, East Hampton, NY 11937

August 13 – September 27, 2026

For further information, contact: press@ericfirestonegallery.com