

eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release:

A NEW YORK MINUTE

Eric Firestone Gallery
2406 Florida Avenue | West Palm Beach, FL 33401
February 1 – March 15, 2024
Opening Reception: Thursday, February 1, 5:00–8:00PM

Eric Firestone Gallery is pleased to announce a six-week exhibition in West Palm Beach, FL opening February 1st. On view through March 15, *A New York Minute* is a rotating selection of work from the 1950s through the 1980s by significant American artists. The exhibition is a powerful presentation of a diverse group of artists—including many women and artists of color—working across abstraction and representation in the post-war period. The exhibition is presented in partnership with New Wave Art Wknd, a non-profit arts organization founded by Sarah Gavlak.

“We are thrilled to welcome Eric Firestone’s important program to Palm Beach,” says Sarah Gavlak. “His decades-long commitment to shedding light on underrepresented artists aligns perfectly with New Wave’s ethos. It will help us advance our mission, which is to expand the dialogue around contemporary art and provide a platform to learn, discover, and grow as a community.”

Since Eric Firestone Gallery opened in East Hampton in 2010, and on Great Jones Street in New York City in 2015, its mission has been to investigate the ever-evolving canon of post-war American art. In this short period, the gallery has re-introduced the art world to several major artists working in the 1950s through the ‘80s and placed their work in museums across the United States and globally. Several of these artists will be the subject of, or included in, major museum exhibitions over the next two years. *A New York Minute* will reflect the gallery’s program and mission.



Susan Fortgang | *Painting with White & Pink* | 1967
oil on canvas
60h x 60w in

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Paul Waters | *Portrait of Barbara* | 1967
oil on cut linen collage on canvas
60h x 46w in

On view in Palm Beach will be the work of four African American artists active in the 1960s and '70s: Paul Waters (b. 1936), Joe Overstreet (1933–2019), Ellsworth Ausby (1941–2014), and Thomas Sills (1914–2000). Paul Waters's work combines a symbolic language with an intuitive and playful process. He exclusively uses his hands and fingers to apply paint, and a pair of scissors as his "drawing" tool. His canvases are filled with repeated silhouettes made from cut canvas shapes, which reflect indigenous traditions, Western painting, and children's books. Ellsworth Ausby was dedicated to reflecting a deeply rooted African aesthetic and cultural heritage, responding to ancient Egyptian art. In the 1970s, Ausby made unstretched canvases that were attached directly to the wall, utilizing high-keyed color and suggesting sonic rhythms. Thomas Sills was an abstract colorist whose compositions form radiating, optical sensations. Self-taught, his inspiration

derived from the flora and fauna of his childhood in North Carolina. He later came to know the Surrealists and Abstract Expressionists in New York and was the subject of four solo exhibitions at the famed Betty Parsons Gallery from 1955 to 1961. Joe Overstreet was an artist and activist who pushed the boundaries of painting through decades of experiments in abstraction. Known especially for his "Flight Pattern" paintings of the early 1970s—unstretched canvases tethered to the wall, ceiling, and floor with ropes—he embedded abstraction with socio-political content. Overstreet will be the subject of a major survey at the Menil Collection opening in January 2025.

Another focus of the gallery's program has been 1950s and '60s abstraction by women. Currently, women artists are breaking sales records and achieving major institutional recognition for their role in post-war abstraction and Abstract Expressionism. Jeanne Reynal (1903–1983) brought Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist ideas to mosaic. She was dedicated to the ways in which hand-cut stones, set on a bias, could reflect light. At the Museum of Modern Art, NY, a Reynal mosaic is now on view beside a Willem de Kooning. Elise Asher (1912–2004), a painter-poet, incorporates calligraphic text within atmospheric clouds of brushwork. Pat Passlof (1928–2011) created abstract paintings

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Pat Passlof | *Mirrors* | 1973
oil on canvas
80h x 132w in

that responded to memory, experience, and place without narrative. In December 2023 one of her most monumental works was acquired by Crystal Bridges Museum; paintings were recently acquired by both MoMA and the Whitney Museum, NY. The gallery's presentation at Frieze Masters London 2022 of Passlof was critically acclaimed and sold out.

Miriam Schapiro is widely known as a pioneer of the Women's Art Movement and a leading force in American post-World War II art. One of Schapiro's most significant, monumental paintings, will be on view in the Fall of 2024 at the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, NY. A second generation of women abstractionists include Nina Yankowitz (b. 1946), Pat Lipsky (b. 1941), and Susan Fortgang (b. 1944). Lipsky made exuberant, fresh paintings associated with Lyrical Abstraction and Color Field painting. Yankowitz created daring, dynamic works: spraying mists of acrylic paint to produce atmospheric expanses and then hanging the unstretched canvases in loose soft folds that cascade down and across the wall. Yankowitz will be the subject of a retrospective at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, FL, in Spring 2025.

Several artists also work in a figurative mode, moving between fantasy and reality. These include Mimi Gross (b. 1940), Sally Cook (b. 1932), and Jane Kogan (b. 1939). Gross is known for her portraits and group portraits of friends, family, and people she encounters in the city and her extensive travels. Her paintings have a poignant expressiveness and connection to the subject. Hers is a world of bold, unapologetic color. Gross's work can

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be found in the major collections across the country including the Jewish Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, all in New York; the Minneapolis Museum of Art, MN, the Art Institute of Chicago, IL, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA. Sally Cook is a painter and poet whose fantastical approach to portraiture and still life reflects her incisive and witty observations of the world. Her work was surveyed in 2020 at the University of Buffalo Art Galleries. Jane Kogan's 7-foot-tall "Amazon" paintings were influenced by the feminist movement of the late 1960s and 70s. The series of women in powerful stances draws inspiration from art historical sources, the feminine divine, and the artist's imagination—their collective effect is that of a phalanx of warriors wielding weapons both material and spiritual. Kogan's work was the subject of a retrospective at the Provincetown Art Association and Museum in the summer of 2023.

The exhibition space in West Palm Beach will mark a new, exciting opportunity to survey the gallery's program, its development over the past eight years, and the work of many artists who are now receiving long overdue institutional, press, and market attention.

About New Wave Art Wknd

New Wave Art Wknd, a non-profit arts organization founded by Sarah Gavlak. New Wave's mission is to engage and inspire the West Palm community and the world through public programs and residencies in support of local, national, and international under-represented artists.

For more information visit www.newwave.art

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For further information, contact: press@ericfirestonegallery.com