

Center for Contemporary Printmaking

Norwalk, CT

www.contemprints.org

WPA: JOBS

March 28 through May 23, 2015

Excerpted from: 2015 Art Museum Touring.com

The Center for Contemporary (CCP) announces the opening of its next exhibition WPA: JOBS that will be on display March 28 through May 23, 2015. In addition to WPA: JOBS, CCP has planned WPA: JOBS Lecture Series taking place throughout April and May.

WPA: JOBS came about when Nomi Silverman, an Artist/Member of CCP's Board of Directors, was approached by Lou Siegel to hold an exhibition at CCP of original prints, archival materials and tools of artist/printmaker Louis Schanker (1903-1981). Schanker was pivotal in the Works Progress Administration program for artists. Silverman remarks, "Louis Schanker was a leading graphic artist and a muralist. In contrast to the predominantly realistic manner of working, Schanker represented the abstract artists, regularly running interference for them with the WPA authorities in an effort, oftentimes futilely, to get them work."



1 - Visitors examine Louis Schanker prints, print blocks and archival materials.

From this initial concept, CCP engaged Susan Teller of Susan Teller Gallery in New York City, Childs Gallery in Boston, Lou Siegel and the Norwalk Historical Society who will loan, Oyster Bay, a study for one of the WPA murals in Norwalk's Town Hall. David Westmoreland, chairman of the Historical Commission for the City of Norwalk says, "The Norwalk Historical Society is pleased to have the opportunity to support the WPA:JOBS exhibit and lecture series in conjunction with our friends at the Center for Contemporary Printmaking, the New Canaan Library, and the Norwalk Arts Commission. The WPA Murals are a significant part of Norwalk's history and the City's Art Collection. The collaborative efforts of these organizations allow

us to expand our reach to new audiences as we continue our mission to educate the public about our rich history."

The exhibition at CCP not only highlights works by WPA/FAP artists, but also the efforts of The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Federal Arts Project (FAP). Established in 1935 during the height of the Great Depression, the WPA and FAP were created by President Franklin Roosevelt to create jobs for citizens and help Americans find employment. The selected works of art will, through their imagery, tell a visual history of the economic hardships of the 1930's and showcase how the WPA and FAP successfully raised the spirits of United States citizens.

Along with the works of art on display, WPA:JOBS will include video and audio interviews, quotes from President Roosevelt as well as quotes from artists that will be placed on the walls as wall text. Laura G. Einstein, Executive Director of Center for Contemporary Printmaking says, "The Center for Contemporary Printmaking is thrilled to exhibit WPA era works of art that tell a fascinating story of the American public in the 1930s. CCP, throughout its twenty year history, has been committed to educational and historical exhibitions that tell evocative stories of the history of printmaking. This exhibition is rich in its story and compelling in its relevant message to America today. It is fascinating to see how works of art unified people, causing them to

connect with each other and to work toward a common purpose – being able to survive during a difficult economic climate.” Einstein continues, “Visitors to the exhibition will be able to view firsthand works of art by Louis Schanker, Will Barnet, Dox Thrash, a rural Southern black man, Riva Helfond, a female printmaker, Lynd Ward, Michael Gallagher and Hugh Mesibov who, in 1937, became prominent members of the WPA, vying with each other for the founding of the Carborundum mezzotint – was it a technical advance or a signature invention? Regardless, the Carborundum process was an effective way to create tone on an intaglio plate and was most likely discovered through their continued experiments with the medium.”

In conjunction with WPA: JOBS, the Center has planned numerous activities, both at the Center and in Norwalk and New Canaan. At the Center for Contemporary Printmaking, WPA: JOBS Lecture Series will present insights and information about the WPA from four renowned scholars of the WPA. At the Opening Reception on Sunday, April 19, 2015, at 3:00pm, Susan Teller of Susan Teller Gallery in New York City will serve as the Keynote Speaker providing a compelling look at the WPA era prints from her collection and provide commentary and insight into the cultural climate of the early years of the WPA. On Sunday, May 3, 2015, at 3:00pm, Wendy Jeffers, Chairman of the Archives of American Art will present a discussion of Holger Cahill, National Director of the Federal Art Project of the Works Projects Administration (1935 to 1943). On Thursday, May 7, 2015, at 7:00pm, Amy Trout will deliver, New Deal Art in Connecticut, bringing the topic of the WPA to Connecticut residents and others. On Thursday, May 14, 2015, at 7:00pm, Richard Baiano, President of Childs Gallery will discuss the works of art from his collection that he has lent to the exhibition.

On April 12, 2015, at 2:00pm, co-Curators Laura G. Einstein and Nomi Silverman will discuss the WPA era prints and contrast their subject matter and imagery with the WPA murals in New Canaan Library. In the Mayor’s Gallery in Norwalk, students from the Norwalk Housing Authority will present their WPA inspired prints during the run of the CCP exhibition.



Three Men on a Bench, woodcut, 1939
Louis Schanker



Cops and Pickets, woodcut, 1939
Louis Schanker



Direct Carving

February 5, 2015 – Indefinitely

American Art Museum

8th & F Streets, NW
Washington, DC

Location: 1st Floor, West

The exhibition includes approximately 24 sculptures from across the twentieth century, nearly all from the museum's permanent collection. Direct carving is an unusual method of sculpting in which an artist works directly with a piece of stone or wood, usually selected for its unique physical properties. Direct carvers often work spontaneously, rather than first making preliminary models in clay or wax. While most finished sculpture is made through the labor of teams of professional carvers, studio assistants, and foundry workers, direct carvers proudly claim sole responsibility for the production of their works.



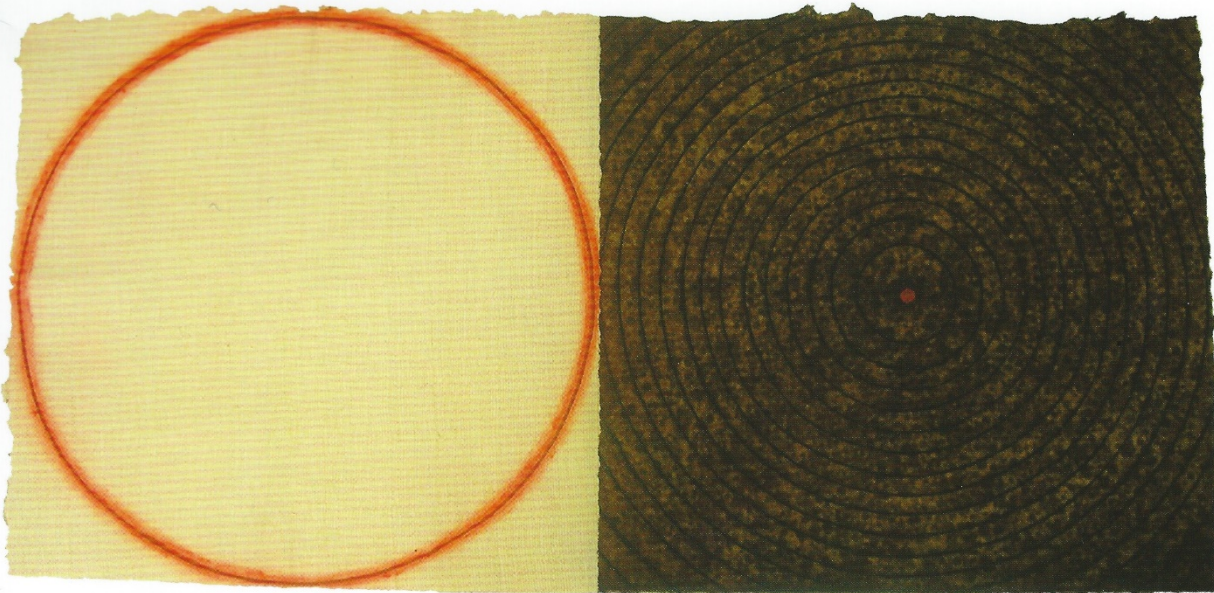
Owl

1937

Louis
Schanker

carved
Applewood
31 1/2 x 8 1/8 x
8 1/8 in.
(80.0 x 20.7 x
20.7 cm.)
Gift of Patricia
and Phillip Frost
1986.92.81

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY MUSEUM



David Shapiro (American, 1944-2014), *Clearing 12*, 2007. Etching and photo-polymer intaglio, 12 x 24 in., Hofstra University Museum Collections. Gift of Judith Schultz, HU2014.19



Louis Schanker
Polo, 1940,
woodcut, 10/30
8 7/8 x 7 1/4 in.

In Print

February 16-September 18, 2016
David Filderman Gallery

Krannert Art Museum (KAM)

Located at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign,
KAM is the second largest general fine arts museum in Illinois.



Circle Image #2

1952

color woodcut on paper

25 x 38 3/4 in. (63.5 x 98.4 cm)

Louis Schanker

(New York, NY, USA, 1903 - 1981, New York, NY, USA)

Artist

Credit Line: Museum Purchase, **Accession Number:** 1958-12-1
Not Currently On View

Dynamic Structures: American Abstract Artists

Mar 2, 2017 to Jul 8, 2017

Overlooked during the 1930s and 1940s by major institutions, such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, the AAA aggressively protested these institutions and instead held their own exhibitions and forums to help garner acceptance of abstract art.

Louis Schanker

The WPA Years

Pollock-Krasner House

East Hampton N.Y.

May—June—July 2018

May 27th, 5-7 p.m. Exhibition reception and gallery talk
with art historian Greta Berman



Study for WNYC Mural - Trio - 1937

www.LouisSchanker.info

Facebook-Louis Schanker

Instagram - LouisSchanker

www.pkhouse Museum open Th-Fri-Sat 1-5 PM

[Greta Berman Essay and Exhibition Checklist](#)

[Louis Schanker, The WPA Years](#)

[Louis Schanker, The Hamptons Connection](#)

Louis Schanker

The WPA Years



Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

3 May – 28 July 2018

Louis Schanker, Modernist Muralist and Master Printmaker

Greta Berman

As I was thinking about writing this essay introducing the artist Louis Schanker (1903-1981) to the public—or, more accurately, re-introducing him—I had a dream. One doesn't usually begin a catalog essay by describing a dream. But Schanker's imaginative murals and mural designs had lodged firmly in my mind since first seeing them when I was a young graduate student some 45 years ago.

I dreamed that a large, colorful Schanker mural had been uncovered. Surrounded by art deco furnishings, the mural's red and black lines swirled and swiveled gently over a multicolored abstract background. Like any fine mural, it fit perfectly into its environment. The huge, riveting, musically evocative painting reminded me strongly of the mural Schanker created for Radio Station WNYC, but with a twist. There were additional geometric and biomorphic shapes that looked like those he incorporated into his lost World's Fair Mural of 1939-40. Reminiscences of Kandinsky, Gorky, and Arp came to mind.

Although it is still possible to see Schanker's *Music* in situ, on the 25th floor of New York City's Municipal Building, where Radio Station WNYC used to be, dreams may be the only way we can see the artist's other murals. Fortunately, we do have his mural studies and preliminary sketches, and these reveal both his working methods and the unique nature of his contribution. In the present show, you can see three studies for WNYC, and four for Neponsit Beach Hospital, as well as a few untitled drawings of musicians, ideas for the *Music* mural which were not incorporated into the final work.

Louis Schanker began his art training at a young age, taking night and Sunday classes at The Cooper Union from 1919-1923. After traveling throughout the United States, from 1931-32 he lived in Paris, where he attended the conservative Académie de la Grande Chaumière. But he idolized the Impressionists, especially Renoir and Degas. In 1933 he lived in Mallorca, where he began to paint Cézannesque landscapes and works inspired by Cubism and the School of Paris. He also recalled that his rectangular heads and heavy outlining were influenced by Georges Rouault. These are the bare outlines of his training, leaving out numerous details of his rich life.

After returning to the United States, Schanker was employed by the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP), a New Deal program designed to relieve unemployment during the Great Depression of the 1930s. He was one of four artists—the others were Stuart Davis, Byron Browne, and John Von Wicht—selected by

Burgoyne Diller, the head of the Mural Division, to decorate New York City's WNYC Radio Station. A WPA/FAP publication of 1939 described how, "working as a group, these artists planned the decoration of the entire studio, coordinating architecture, interior decoration, furnishings, and the murals as one modern functional utility."

The muralists fulfilled the intended plan of coordinating a group effort, with Schanker's standing out as the most conventional of the lot—at first glance. But now, looking at it from a greater distance, I see it as unique, a forerunner of abstract expressionism, in a number of ways. The vague gestural figuration drawn over the colorful abstract background looks ahead to action painting more than the geometric works of Browne and Von Wicht. And the textural surface adds to the feeling of movement. Looking at a photo in situ, it is apparent that the artist thoughtfully planned his mural to blend in with the setting, enhancing it with curves and grace. Schanker's mural was cutting-edge at the time. Indeed, he can be considered in many ways an avant-garde artist, though he never abandoned representation completely, at least during the WPA years.

Diller, a pioneer abstractionist himself, found it necessary to justify his choice of modernist murals to a conservative New York City Art Commission not especially friendly to abstract art. As he explained it:

This is the first time that abstract murals have been painted for a radio station, although they are particularly suited for use in a modern broadcasting studio, where everything must contribute to quiet and the uninterrupted function of the broadcast. The studio itself is a sound-proofed, air-conditioned room, which must permit concentration during the performance of a program. The abstract mural is the best answer to these requirements, since it does not serve to distract the observer, but rather exercises a soothing influence through the proper use of form and color.

In telling the officials that abstract imagery would be less distracting than traditional figurative murals, Diller did his best to soft-pedal modernism. It should be remembered that mural art was a public and very visible art form, though few members of the public would be likely to see the radio station murals. And while we now

know that the notion of a uniform "WPA style" is misguided, representational art was still much more acceptable to the average taxpayer.

Schanker also painted a series of murals for the Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital in Rockaway Beach, Queens. These delightful murals were intended to cheer up the severely ill children with whimsical pictures of clowns, circus performers, and musicians. One particularly charming ink and watercolor sketch (#11) depicts a giraffe, a seal twirling a ball on its nose. There is also a trapeze artist flying through the air, an elephant, and several clowns, one with an accordion. Study #10 shows the process by which the artist had to design the murals around the available spaces. And study #12 features some acrobats, while a watercolor sketch (#13) depicts a large clown presenting two monkeys, one playing a fiddle and the other strumming a guitar.

The studies have graphed lines underneath, used for scaling up the images to be transferred onto the walls. There is an archival photo that shows how the murals were originally installed around the children's dining room. Although the subject matter is different and the style is more conventional, the colors and eddying lines are echoed in his *Music* mural for WNYC. Sometime during the late 1970s, the hospital was converted into a senior citizens home, and all records of the murals appear to have been lost. Unfortunately, this story is all too common when it concerns WPA murals. The relatively recent recognition of WPA murals at Harlem Hospital is a happy exception—though many of those murals have also disappeared. (See <http://iraas.columbia.edu/wpa/> for a history of those murals and their restoration).

In addition to displaying a number of Schanker's mural sketches, the present exhibition demonstrates how his mural concerns carried over into his printmaking. In fact, his oeuvre has an absolutely identifiable character, no matter what the subject or medium.

As a printmaker, Schanker holds an important position. He was supervisor of the graphic arts section of the WPA/FAP in New York City during the late 1930s, and went on to teach printmaking at the New School, and then at Bard College from 1949 until his retirement.

A primary recurring element in the artist's oeuvre is rhythm. All his subjects, no matter whether they are musicians, athletes, or even policemen and pickets (his few protest works) exhibit a strong sense of marked tempo. Two woodblock prints from 1936 depict struggles between cops and striking workers. Strangely, there

appears to be more emphasis on rhythm and harmony than on struggle. But perhaps it is not so odd, as this fugal push and pull, this yin-yang quality, pervades nearly all of his works. The larger print and the drawing for it (#1 and 2) show a powerful mounted policeman, surrounded by rectangular picket signs, bending down to assault the striker. Another print depicts a confrontation between one picket and a cop. These prints are followed neatly by a 1937 oil painting of two musicians (#4). While the cops wield batons, the musicians hold bows. You might be forgiven for almost confusing the cop and picket with the bassist and violinist.

A couple of related musician studies in gouache and crayon (#5) segue into the beautiful studies for string ensembles (#7-9) that Schanker tinkered with, but ended up not using, in his final WNYC mural. These musician studies are followed by drawings of polo, hockey, football, and jai-alai players. Every Schanker musician, worker, and athlete depiction is characterized by an imaginative, playful quality. The 1939 woodblock and the prints of the 1940s tend to be more abstract than the earlier works, but they retain the rhythms of his earlier works.

Schanker's incredibly time-consuming process involved many blocks, often separate ones for each color, influenced by Japanese print techniques. It is fascinating to see how the artist converted the ink and watercolor drawing (#14) for *Polo* into the colored linoleum block print. And #19 a, b, c, and d illustrate his method step by step: first a 3-panel ink drawing, then a tracing, then a block, and finally the finished print.

As noted, Schanker had the good fortune of being employed by the New Deal's WPA/FAP for a number of years. He was also a founding member of the avant-garde group known as "The Ten." (The most famous members included Adolph Gottlieb, Ilya Bolotowsky and Mark Rothko.) In a 1938 exhibition, this group expressed their strong opposition to what they viewed as reactionary contemporary American representational art.

Today, Louis Schanker takes his rightful place as an abstract/modernist pioneer during the 1930s and 1940s, a transformative time for art in the United States. This exhibition demonstrates some of the breadth and technical mastery necessary for his success.

Greta Berman, PhD, a professor of art history at the Juilliard School, is the author of *The Lost Years: Mural Painting in New York City Under the WPA Federal Art Project, 1935-1943*.

Checklist of the exhibition

All works are lent by the artist's family

- 1 *Cops and Pickets*, 1936
Ink on paper, 10 1/8 x 13 1/8 inches
- 2 *Cops and Pickets*, 1936
Woodblock print, 10 x 14 1/4 inches
- 3 *Cop and Picket*, 1936
Woodblock print, 11 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches
- 4 *Musicians*, 1937
Oil on linen mounted on wood, 12 x 9 3/4 inches
- 5 Two studies for *Duet*, 1937
Gouache and crayon on paper, each 6 x 5 inches
- 6 Sketch and print, *Duet*, 1937
Left: pencil on paper, 8 x 11 inches
Right: color woodblock print, 6 x 4 3/4 inches
- 7 Study for lobby mural, WNYC Radio, New York, ca. 1937
Gouache on paper, 9 x 14 3/4 inches
- 8 Study for lobby mural, WNYC Radio, New York, ca. 1937. *Illustrated below*
Ink and watercolor on paper, 8 x 29 1/2 inches
- 9 Study for lobby mural, WNYC Radio, New York, ca. 1937.
Ink and watercolor on paper, 17 3/4 x 6 inches
- 10 Study for dining room mural, north wall, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, 1937
Ink and watercolor on paper, 17 x 24 inches
- 11 Study for dining room mural, south wall, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, 1937
Ink and watercolor on paper, 9 1/8 x 24 1/4 inches
- 12 Study for dining room mural, west wall, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, 1937
Ink and watercolor on paper, 4 1/2 x 6 inches (image)
- 13 Drawing for dining room mural, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, 1937
Ink and watercolor on paper, 9 x 12 inches
- 14 Drawing for *Polo*, 1937
Ink and watercolor on paper, 13 1/2 x 18 3/4 inches
- 15 *Polo*, 1937
Color linoleum block print, 17 3/4 x 20 1/2 inches
- 16 *Jai-alai*, 1939. *Illustrated on the back cover*
Color woodblock print, 10 x 14 inches
- 17 *Hockey Players*, 1940
Color woodblock print, 14 x 11 7/8 inches
- 18 *Polo Players*, 1940
Color woodblock print, 11 3/4 x 14 inches
- 19 *Polo Players and Football*, 1940-41
Process group:
 - a. Three-panel ink drawing, 10 1/2 x 22 5/8 inches
 - b. *Polo Players* tracing, 9 x 8 inches
 - c. *Polo Players* wood block, 7 7/8 x 7 1/4 inches
 - d. *Polo Players*, woodblock print, 7 7/8 x 7 1/4 inches
- 20 *Football* and abstract design, 1941
 - a. Wood block, 7 7/8 inches
 - b. Monochrome proof, 10 x 8 1/2 inches (sheet)
 - c. Multicolor proof, 12 x 8 3/4 inches (sheet)
- 21 Carved porch post from the Schanker house in Sag Harbor, early 1960s
Pine, 87 1/2 x 5 1/2 x 5 1/2





Dining Room, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, Rockaway, New York. North wall murals by Louis Schanker, 1937.



Lobby, WNYC Radio, Municipal Building, 1 Centre Street, New York. Fresco by Louis Schanker, 1939.



10 Study for dining room mural north wall, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, 1937. Detail.



7 Study for lobby mural, WNYC Radio, New York, ca. 1937.



2 Cops and Pickets, 1936. Woodblock print.



17 Hockey Players, 1940. Color woodblock print.



Jai-alai, 1939. Color woodblock print

This exhibition has been supported by funds from
the New York State Council on the Arts and
the Thaw Charitable Trust Endowment

We are sincerely grateful to Lou and Flo Siegel
for their tireless efforts on behalf of
the Estate of Louis Schanker
www.louisschanker.info



830 Springs-Fireplace Road
East Hampton, New York
www.pkhouse.org

ART'S EXPERIMENTAL ARC

July's art shows bend
toward the groundbreaking.
—Sahar Khan

BENT OUT OF SHAPE

A pioneer in post-minimalism, conceptual, performance and video art, NYC- and Bridgehampton-based Keith Sonnier gets his first solo exhibit at an American museum in 35 years. *Keith Sonnier: Until Today* at Parrish Art Museum is a 38-piece study of the artist's twisted neon tube light sculptures, sound installations and large-scale works rarely seen in the United States and influenced by cultures as diverse as India and Japan. The exhibition maps Sonnier's evolution. "Rat Tail Exercise" (1968) showcases his use of nontraditional materials like string and latex (they were considered sensual compared to his postmodernist compatriots' industrial works). "Palm: Saw Tooth Blatt" (2004), on the other hand, fashions harder-to-manipulate neon lights into a palm leaf-esque wall sculpture based on drawings Sonnier made in a New Orleans garden. Each work emphasizes the artist's groundbreaking experimentation and an imagination that has only grown more complex and boundary-pushing over the decades. *July 1 to Jan. 27, 2019, 279 Montauk Highway, Water Mill, parrishart.org*

VIRTUAL WORLDS

Laurie Anderson thrives in multimedia art. The avant-garde artist, musician, composer and film director can't be contained in one box—or in one room. That's why Guild Hall is spreading out her works across three galleries for an eponymous show on the artist. The

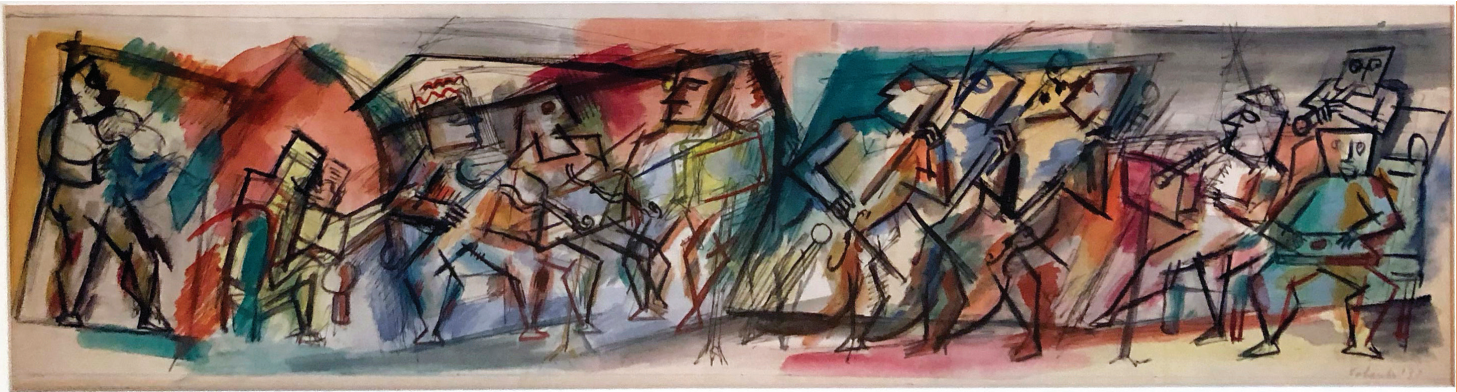


From top: Louis Schanker, "Study for lobby mural, WNYC Radio, New York" (1937, ink and watercolor on paper), 6 inches by 17.75 inches, at the Pollock-Krasner House; Laurie Anderson in collaboration with Hsin-Chien Huang, "Chalkroom" (2017, room installation for VR work), 27.5 feet by 40.5 feet by 11 feet, at Guild Hall; Keith Sonnier, "Aizen-Myoo (Tokobashira Series)" (1984, cedar, spruce, dry pigment and wax), 42.5 inches by 30 inches by 60 inches, at the Parrish Art Museum.

LOUIS SCHANKER PHOTO COURTESY OF POLLOCK-KRASNER HOUSE AND STUDY CENTER, BROOKLYN, NY; KEITH SONNIER IMAGE COURTESY OF MASS MOCA, BOSTON, MA; LAURIE ANDERSON PHOTO COURTESY OF KEITH SONNIER STUDIO; CATHERINA VERDE © 2018 KEITH SONNIER STUDIO/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

SONGS AND STORIES FROM MOBY DICK PHOTO BY FRANK MICELOTTA, COURTESY OF BAM, BROOKLYN, NY; KEITH SONNIER IMAGE COURTESY OF MASS MOCA, BOSTON, MA; LAURIE ANDERSON PHOTO COURTESY OF KEITH SONNIER STUDIO/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

DRAWINGS ON THE WALL
American muralist, painter and printmaker Louis Schanker's (1903-81) semiabstract style became a forerunner to the abstract expressionists in many ways. He was employed by the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project, which aimed to relieve unemployment



From top: Laurie Anderson, *Songs and Stories from Moby Dick* (1999, opera), at Guild Hall; Keith Sonnier, "Mastodon (Herd Series)" (2008, steel, neon tubing, electrical wire and transformer), 83 inches by 45 inches by 32 inches, at the Parrish Art Museum.



during the Great Depression. Schanker's well-known works include a mural depicting musicians at WNYC, the city's municipal radio station, and another at a children's hospital in Rockaway Beach illustrating clowns, circus performers and a seal twirling a ball on its nose. Although most of his murals have been destroyed, mural studies, preliminary sketches and archival photos remain to give us an idea of Schanker's seminal genius. Twenty-one of these are on display in *Louis Schanker: The WPA Years* at the Pollock-Krasner House. The show also includes thematic anomalies: Two woodblock prints from 1936 show a baton-wielding policeman attacking a picketing worker, rare examples of Schanker using his art as social commentary. *Through July 28, 830 Springs-Fireplace Road, East Hampton, stonybrook.edu/pkhouse*

‘An Intimate View’ of a Rhythmic Painter

Louis Schanker was a music lover and used rhythm as a compositional element
By Jennifer Landes | July 26, 2018 - 12:30pm



Numerous studies for Louis Schanker's murals are on view through this weekend at the Pollock-Krasner House, including, above, the study for a WNYC lobby mural executed around 1937. The color woodblock print "Jai-alai," below, is from a sports series he worked on during the late 1930s

Louis Schanker isn't one of the first to come to mind when thinking of the grand artistic names of the mid-20th century on the South Fork, but perhaps he should be.



The painter and graphic artist's indelible participation in the cultural community here with his wife, Libby Holman, will be featured in a talk on Saturday by Lou Siegel, the artist's nephew, at the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center in Springs. The former home of Lee Krasner and Jackson Pollock and current art center is the site of an exhibition of Schanker's work from 1935 to 1943, when he was a supervisor of murals and graphic art for the Works Progress Administration. The agency, among other things, employed artists during the Great Depression so they could support themselves while doing some good for the public.

Those were the days before he found a Sag Harbor house on Madison Street in 1949, and married Holman in 1960. She was a colorful figure whose first husband died under suspicious circumstances, leaving her with quite a bit of Reynolds family tobacco money. The couple then bought a modernist house on Further Lane in East Hampton designed by Robert Rosenberg, which was subsequently destroyed, according to Helen Harrison, the director of the Pollock-Krasner House.

"I'm not sure when the Schankers bought it," she said. "But they had it by 1962, when the famous photograph by Hans Namuth was taken. It was their annual July 4th house party, and everyone trooped down to the beach for the photo."

Holman was a blues singer with very dark coloring, leading some people to surmise she was African-American. Witnessing oppression from both her own Jewish

background and the ethnicity she was assumed to have, she became an ardent civil rights advocate. After befriending the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King, she encouraged them to go to India to learn Mahatma Gandhi's peaceful resistance tactics. Coretta King also visited the couple in East Hampton, according to Ms. Harrison. As a performer, Holman "was a pioneer in introducing African-American music to a white audience," she said.

Louis Schanker, who died in 1981, was also a music lover and used rhythm as a compositional element in his drawings, paintings, and print work. He shared this love with artists such as Stuart Davis, who was a fellow contributor to WNYC studio murals and used jazz rhythms and references in his work. Krasner, who contributed a proposal for the radio station that was never executed, became lifelong friends with Schanker, who in turn befriended her husband, another jazz enthusiast who referenced music in his work.

Included in the Pollock-Krasner House show are a few studies for Schanker's WNYC mural, which Greta Berman, a W.P.A. scholar, sees as "a forerunner of Abstract Expressionism, in a number of ways," she wrote in her exhibition essay. "The vague gestural figuration drawn over the colorful abstract background looks ahead to action painting. . . . And the textural surface adds to the feeling of movement." During this time, Schanker, who was a naturalist at heart, never abandoned figuration completely, but "he can be considered in many ways an avant-garde artist," Ms. Berman wrote.

The fact that the WNYC murals would be abstract — and all of the four contributions turned out to be, to an extent — was considered radical at the time. Burgoyne Diller, an abstract artist and director of the mural program, chose the murals because their modernity suited the modern surroundings, which boasted early examples of soundproof rooms and air-conditioning.

Schanker was also one of 10 artists who dissented in reaction to the Whitney Museum's preference for realist artists such as George Bellows and Edward Hopper in its exhibitions. As "The Ten," a group including Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb, they staged their own abstract show in 1938.

Among the other mural studies on view in Springs are several drawings for the Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital's dining room, where Schanker decorated the walls in cheerful renderings of clowns and animals.

Some of the prints he worked on as a supervisor in the graphics division of the W.P.A. are here as well. There is a series of sports subjects rendered in woodblock and linoleum color prints that involved many different blocks, sometimes one for each color used. The exhibition includes examples of some of the steps in the process. Executed later than the murals, the prints continue to employ the movement he developed in those works.

There is a lot to see in such a concise show and it illuminates a period not often in evidence here. These are the last few days to see it before it closes on Saturday. The closing day gallery talk featuring Mr. Siegel is at 5 p.m. Titled "Lou and Libby: An Intimate View," it will be an eyewitness account of the couple's creative and social lives, including their involvement in the South Fork arts community.



The artist in front of his mural.



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Art Processes: Drawings and More

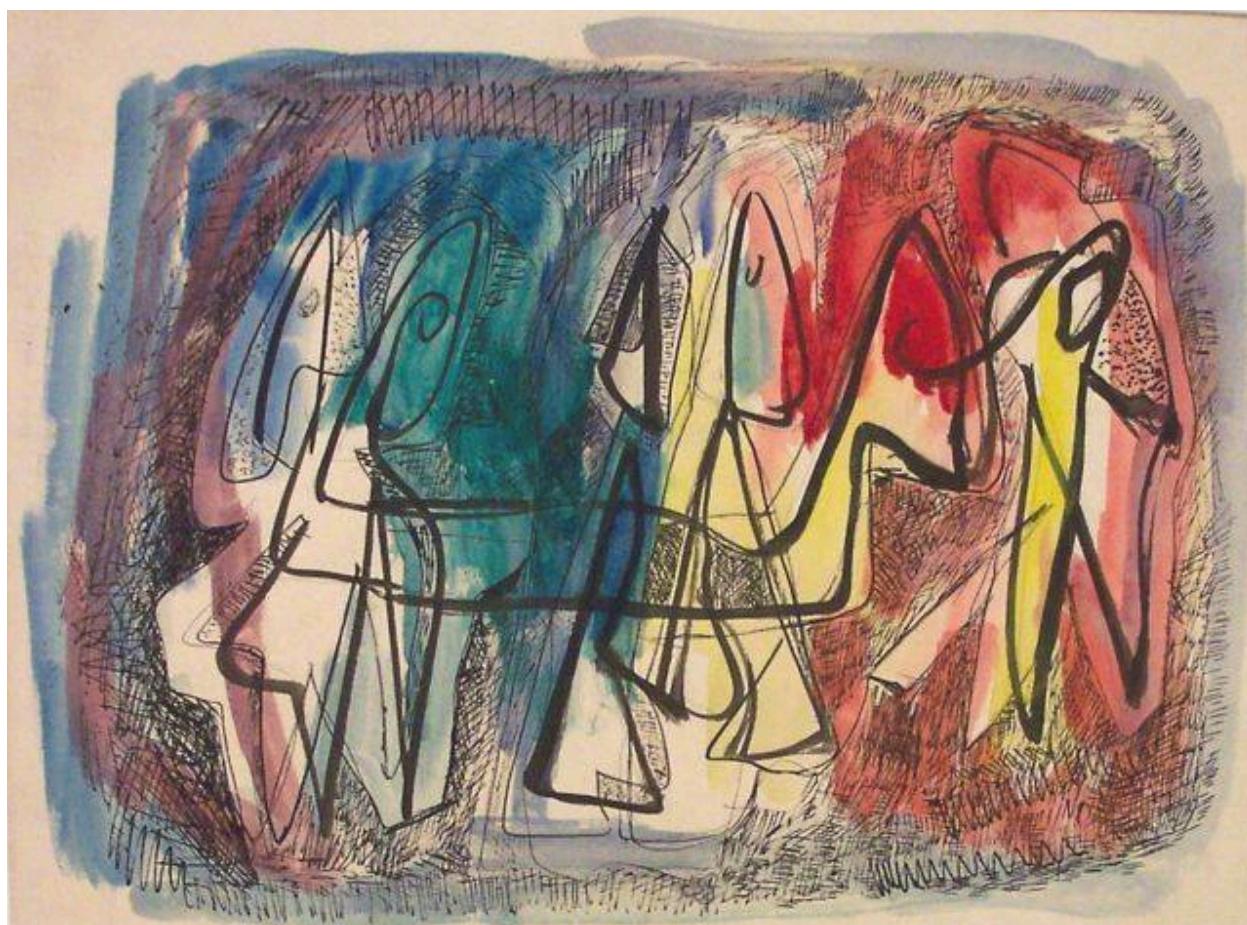
As a complement to *Color and Form*, the Baum Gallery is hosting a large exhibition *Artistic Processes: Drawings and More*. This features preparatory work across numerous media including printing, sculpture, painting, illustration, a poster, a banner and ceramics. Artists include Abe Blashko, David Bailin, Morton Brown, Charles Burchfield, Louis Freund, Tony Hepburn, Fannie Hillsmith, E.B. Lewis, Bryan Massey, Jennifer Rospert, Louis Schanker and Ben Shahn.

On View: Thursday, August 30-Thursday, October 11, 2018

Opening Reception: Thursday, August 30, 2018, 4:00-7:00 PM

Public Lecture: The Spark of Creation: Drawings and Process, by Brian Young, Thursday, September 6, 2018 at 1:40 PM , Art Lecture Hall 143, McCastlain Hall

Below is one of the works in the show, Louis Schanker's drawing, Abstraction #31, 1944 on loan from Susan Teller Gallery, NYC



MERCURY GALLERY ROCKPORT

Reminder Summer Party and Reception

This Saturday, August 4th, 5-7 pm



Louis Schanker, *Abstract Composition*, oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in., c. 1937

Please join us this Saturday, August 4th, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Mercury Gallery for a summer reception featuring Louis Schanker (1903-1981) along with new work from our gallery artists.

Louis Schanker studied at Cooper Union and at the Art Students League before leaving to study abroad in Paris. During the 1930s Paris was the art capital of the world and his exposure to the artists and work of the time was life changing.

Notably, Schanker was involved with other artists in protesting the American art establishment's unwillingness to show modern art. With Joseph Solman, Mark Rothko and others he founded the progressive group "The Ten." The painters in this collaborative did works that stood in bold contrast to the social-regionalism painting then prominent in American art.

Schanker also worked on mural projects for the Federal Works Progress Administration; major works included murals for the lobby of the radio station WNYC and at the New York World's Fair in 1939. The Whitney, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Brooklyn Museum are among venues that have exhibited his work.

[Click Here to View More Work](#)

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