

**23rd ANNUAL / FEDERATION of MODERN PAINTERS and SCULPTORS**

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*January 12 through 26, 1964*

*Hours: 10-5 Monday through Friday □ 1-5 Saturday and Sunday*

*Opening Sunday, January 12, 1-5*

*Lever Brothers Reception and Tea Monday, January 13, 3-5*

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**LEVER HOUSE / PARK AVENUE at 54 STREET**

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*The Federation wishes to thank Lever Brothers Company for this opportunity to present its 23rd Annual.*



Ann Wellmeier examines wood work at 23rd annual exhibit of Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors Inc. in lobby of Lever House, Park Ave. and 54th St. Exhibit, running through Jan. 26, includes 45 paintings and 20 pieces of sculpture ranging from realistic to abstract.

# Painter Louis Schanker To Exhibit Wood Sculpture

By ANTHONY ADAMS

Louis Schanker, the Sag Harbor artist who has long been one of America's leading abstract painters, is shortly to show his first major exhibition of sculpture.

Schanker, who has had more than 30 exhibitions of his paintings since he staged his first one-man show back in 1933, will unveil his sculpture, for the first time in depth, May 5 at the Granite Gallery in Manhattan.

On exhibit will be more than 25 non-objective figures carved in charred wood during the last year, which Schanker describes as "new gothic art with a touch of sophistication." Also included in the showing will be drawings and idea sketches for the sculpture.

Sculpture Schanker uses four different types of wood in his new exhibition, which with one exception, conveniently come from the area around his home in Stamford, Conn. Black birch, maple and oak which have been cut for fire logs of various lengths are the most satisfactory raw materials for his sculpture. The pine wood for some of the carvings comes from the porch post of his Federal house in Sag Harbor. This wood is more than 100 years old and difficult to carve because of its softness.

Schanker innovated and developed the unique circle image so dominant in his paintings in the last decade. His most recent showing in New York was at the Dewey Gallery two years ago. Last spring he exhibited at the New Paltz Gallery in Poughkeepsie, where he is on the faculty of Bard College, and last summer his work was shown at the Bleecker East Hampton Gallery.



LOUIS SCHANKER  
To Show Sculpture

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR, EAST HAMPTON, N. Y., MAY 7, 1964

## Schanker Showing Wood Abstractions

A showing of non-objective sculpture in charred wood, described as "new gothic art," by Louis Schanker of Sag Harbor and Stamford, Conn., opened at the Granite Gallery, Manhattan, this Tuesday. With the 25 pieces will be drawings and idea sketches for the sculpture.

Mr. Schanker employed black

birch, maple, oak and pine, some of which came from a porch post on his Madison Street, Sag Harbor, home. Five of the sculptures were suggested by an old wreck on the East Hampton beach.

Daniel Pinkwater, author and NPR radio commentator was an art student at Bard College where Schanker taught

## **The Pinkwater Copyright Infringement Jamberoo!**

David Nyvall, the sculptor to whom I was apprenticed for three years, as a soldier had visited Picasso at the close of the war. He told me that Picasso was cordial, invited him to stay to lunch, and flattered him by treating him as a fellow artist and an equal.

But Nyvall wasn't much like Picasso in his work, manner, or outlook. The closest I ever came to meeting someone more or less of the Picasso type

in person was my relationship with Louis Schanker, who taught printmaking at St. Leon's College (*Bard College*) when I was a student there. Louis was big, tanned, expansive, and rich. He drove to work sometimes in a Rolls Royce. He always wore one of those blue chambray work shirts, and smoked cheap black Italian Parodi cigars. Unlike the little pipsqueak art teachers with Master's degrees who proliferate today, Louis was not given to persiflage. You could sit with Louis for an hour, looking at samples of your own work- and Louis might only speak once or twice- but what he said would be right on the money.

And his manner of expression was direct, simply, monosyllabic. He didn't go in for jargon or conceptual flights of fancy. Often he'd pass his hands over the picture, pointing things out:

"See, kid... this part here... this is nice... but don't cha think it would work better if it came down here... like so?" OR, "What if there was a little more yellow in this red here?" Things Louis might say. Actually he never said them to me. He only ever said one thing to me- once or twice a week: "Do more work, kid," and rarely, "That's nice. DO more." It was all I needed.

So, the year after I graduated, when I read in the paper that Louis was having a show- of sculpture yet- I'd never seen any of his sculpture- I was up to the gallery like a shot.

And who should be there, giving an interview to a reporter for an art magazine, but Louis himself!

"See lady... I was sitting in the house in Connecticut, watching the logs in the fire... and as the fire consumed the logs, I began thinking that- while the fire was consuming the wood- deconstructing it, if you will- I was witnessing an inverse of the process by which the wood had grown. This suggested certain essential forms, which I could bring forth by carving partially burned logs. And always, I strive toward the quintessential form, the seed, or nut. At the heart of most of the sculptures is the suggestion of the germinal element. I discussed this with my friend, Robert Motherwell, and he said..."

Louis noticed me listening open-mouthed. I was experiencing the same sort of shock I'd feel when my father would mysteriously break out of Polish/Pigin and speak grammatical English for a sentence or two.

Louis leaned toward me and whispered, "You should always make up some bullshit to tell them."

## **(personal communication)**

Louis Shanker was a good art teacher at Bard College in the 50s and 60s. In fact, he was the only good art teacher there. So, a new college president, who is remembered as a great educator, gave him the boot. I stormed into his office, yelling that he had fired the only good teacher the art department had. What he told me was, "Louis is well-known, wealthy and apt to stand up in a meeting and express his opinions. I can't have teachers like that here. I have an organization to run. I want younger men who live here, and depend on the college for their whole income."





# LOUIS SCHANKER

Charred Wood Sculpture

MAY 5 TO MAY 23, 1964

PREVIEW TUESDAY, MAY 5, 5-7 P.M.

**Louis Schanker** (Granite, 63 E. 57th): Logs of birch, oak, maple, are charred in a fireplace, shellacked and varnished, carved and polished, making first-rate sculpture, totemic and playful in turn. In one departure, Schanker has carved a porch column from his Sag Harbor house into a thing of beauty.



Sculptor Louis Schanker and his "Cleopatra's Needle."

## Ashes of Discontent Inspire a Burnt Art

Louis Schanker's "burnt sculpture," to be shown beginning May 5 at the Granite Gallery on E. 57th St., is unlike anything he, or anyone else, ever has done before.

It was envisioned about a year ago out of the ashes of his discontent.

"I had come to a dead end in my painting," said Schanker, a well-known abstractionist, as he bit thoughtfully on his pipe and recalled a fateful evening at his Stamford, Conn., home.

"I was sitting in front of the fire, watching the logs burning and thinking to myself how handsome they looked. I guess that's when I got the idea of carving into them."

It was the fabled moment of inspiration. Schanker saw black magic in the charred logs. He began chiseling into them.

He shaped nutted centers at the pithy core of the charcoal-crusted wood. He gave some of the pieces movable parts, and he pyramided some on top of others. A few he painted. Most he charred in his own fireplace. One he mounted on a pedestal and engraved to his wife, singer Libby Holman, "with all my love."

In a pine wood porch post

from his 100-year-old house in Sag Harbor, he fashioned a spiraling cork-screw called "Cleopatra's Needle."

From strong white oak, homegrown in Stamford, he carved the orientally-inspired "Intermingling Spheres."

"I broke eight chisels on that one," he said. "I spit blood, but I did it."

And what he has done is unique, a testimony to his own ingenuity.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1964.

EE | E... I I I

### SCHANKER

SCULPTURE through May 23

"LOUIS SCHANKER is one of those blessed craftsmen who can lose himself in his material as in a vice. Now, with wood carving as his latest addiction, he has uncovered as a motif the shape of lumber's origin, the intrinsic nut."

HAROLD ROSENBERG

GRANITE  
GALLERIES • 63 E. 57



# Louis Schanker Sculpture Is Primitive, But Refined

A huge, almost totem-size, piece of fascinating sculpture soared to the ceiling of Louis Schanker's handsome Federalist home in Sag Harbor.

The sculpture, made of charred wood, had the feeling of both the very ancient and the very modern. It was

**SUNDAY**  
*Press Profile*  
By William Raidy

both primitive and refined. I couldn't pay it a higher compliment.

Artist Schanker, who is one of America's foremost abstract painters, is a man of unbounded talent but also a man of superb, simple honesty. No pretension comes into his conversation, either.

"It was once a pine porch post on this house," said the artist. "I call it 'Cleopatra's Needle.'"

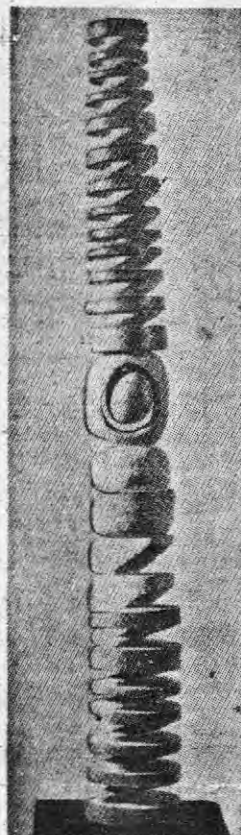
Cleo's needle is one of about three dozen pieces of sculpture Schanker is currently showing at Manhattan's Granite Galleries. Most of them are in his unique charred wood technique.

In his carvings, Schanker has cut away pretention and returned to the essentials of beauty. Says the celebrated Harold Rosenberg: "Louis Schanker is one of those blessed craftsmen who can lose himself in his materials as in a vice. Now, with wood carving as his latest addiction, he has uncovered as a motif the shape of the lumber's origin, the intrinsic nut . . ."

**BESIDES BEING** a sculptor of unique stature, Schanker's paintings have been shown in the world's top museums and galleries. A former visiting professor at the University of Colorado, who now is on the faculty of Bard College at Annandake-on-Hudson, Schanker is in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art and the Brooklyn Museum, to mention only a few.

In January of this year Schanker exhibited a sculpture at the group showing of the Federation of Modern Painters and Sculptors. A leading abstract artist and a recognized master in the field of wood block color printing, Schanker drew the inspiration for his new form of sculpture from a trip to Greece and Italy.

Schanker uses four different types of wood in his new



**CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE**  
Native LI Wood

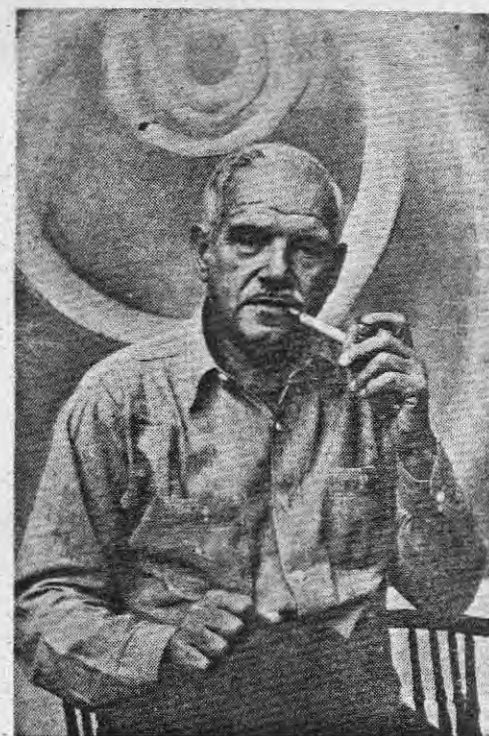


**LIBBY HOLMAN**  
The Artist's Wife



**ANGEL OF DEATH**  
A Schanker Work

exhibition, which, with one exception, conveniently come from the area around his home in Sag Harbor. Black birch, maple and oak which have been cut for fire logs



Louis Schanker, renowned for his unique abstract technique in painting, will show his unusual charred wood sculpture starting tomorrow at the Granite Gallery in Manhattan.

of various lengths are the most satisfactory raw material for his sculpture, he finds. Five of the sculptures were suggested by an old wreck off the shore at East Hampton.

Schanker innovated and developed the unique circular image so dominant in his paintings in the last decade. His most recent showing in New York was at the Dewey Gallery two years ago.

**LOUIS SCHANKER**, incidentally, is married to one of the most fascinating personalities of the theater world, Libby Holman.

The "Moanin' Low" lady is almost a legend on two continents.

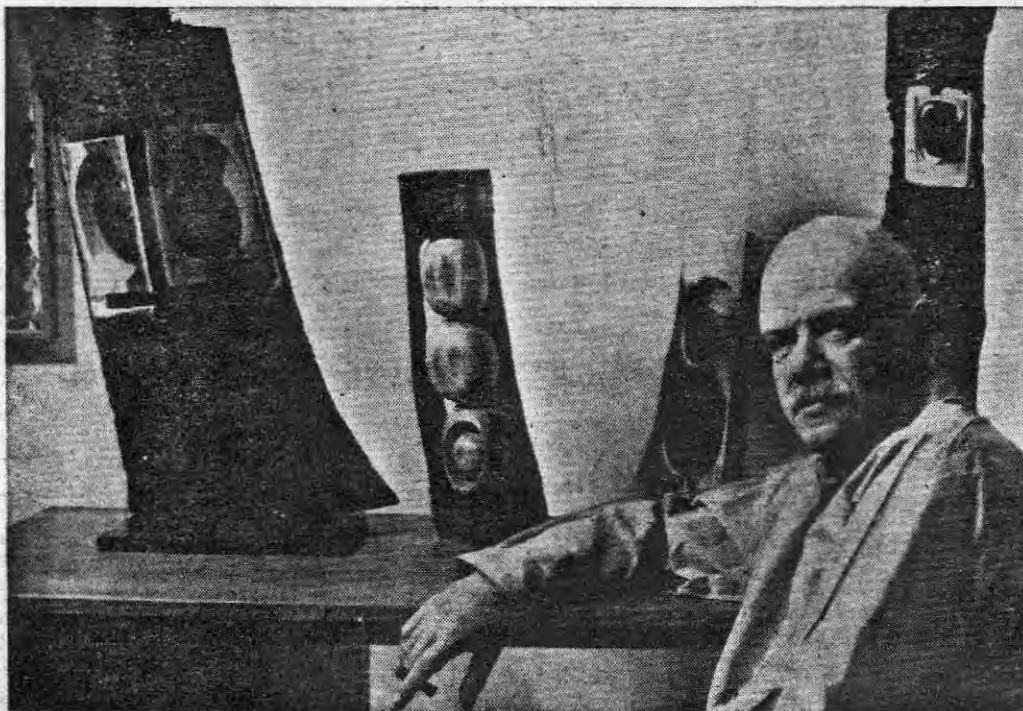
"Libby and Louis make a wonderful couple," a close friend told me. "They seem to balance each other. Libby is just as avant garde as Louis in his art. All those folk songs the rage today, why Libby, one of the most glamorous torch singers in creation, was doing folk songs . . . real ones . . . twenty years ago."

"Talk about civil rights. Libby was fighting that battle long before most entertainers stopped to realize the problem."

Mr. and Mrs. Schanker delight in traveling the world looking at its beauty. Recently the couple visited many of the Greek islands as well as taking a new glimpse of the great art in Rome.

**WHILE LOUIS** will spend his time this summer with new forms of expression, both in painting and sculpture, the ageless Libby, whose voice is still one of the most stirring sounds in modern American music, is in training for a concert tour.

Her first stop will be a good one: A benefit concert at East Hampton's John Drew Theater. It's scheduled for Aug. 23 and it will be for the benefit of Guild Hall, the artistic nerve center of the Hamptons.



Some of the works he'll show the public for the first time this week flank Sag Harbor artist Louis Schanker.



**LOUIS SCHANKER** of Merriebrook Lane, will have a one-man showing of sculpture at the Granite Gallery, 63 East 57th St., New York, May 3 through 23. More than 25 non-objective figures in charred birch, maple, oak and pine fire logs will make up the work of the artist, whose prints and paintings are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan, Whitney and Brooklyn museums, and private collections. Mr. Schanker, who is married to Libby Holman, "blues" singer, uses wood which with one exception comes from the area around their home off Westover Rd. His work has been shown in Europe, in Tokyo and in Auckland, New Zealand. Recently he exhibited at the New Paltz Gallery in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where he is on the faculty of Bard College.

Louis Schanker, the abstract artist, has turned to sculpture, and it may be costing him friends. He carves things out of charred wood, wood which he gathers from all over and chars himself. Some of the things (on exhibit next week at the Granite Gallery) are carved from a pine post which Schanker wrenched from the porch of his Federal house in Sag Harbor. The sculpture has been acclaimed, but some people are afraid to let him into their houses because of the hungry look in his eyes when he spots a balustrade, a newel post or a mantel.

### Schanker at Granite

Louis Schanker, already well-known as a printmaker and painter (his latest circle-image show two years ago won him considerable recognition) has now made a new departure—this time in the direction of wood sculpture. The inspiration for the intriguing pieces currently on display at the Granite Galleries came from an accident, but of course, it is accidents of this kind (in Schanker's case, seeing charred logs in a fireplace) which are manna to the artist's creative intelligence. Expanding on the circle image which appears in his paintings, Schanker has created striking totemic structures in which two elements—the circle and the line—are contrasted. In *Open Circle*, for example, polished lightwood balls are set in curved hollows, while the rest of the structure (actually a charred log) has a rough, jagged, sooty texture. *Cleopatra's Needle*, on the other hand, is done entirely in light wood, and consists of a series of spiral-like forms balanced by a solid sphere in the center. Many of these sculptures are quite beautiful, and all are well worth seeing.

Jane Jaffe







LOUIS SCHANKER, *Variation on a Theme*, 1965. Black walnut on mahogany base, 79 x 10 x 3. Dorsky Gallery, New York. (1950, 1955, 1957)

Louis Schanker was born in New York, New York, in 1903. He studied at The Cooper Union School of Art and Architecture, New York, 1920-24; Art Students League of New York, 1925; and at the Educational Alliance Art School, New York. From 1931 to 1933 he traveled and studied in France and Spain. He has taught at the New School for Social Research, New York, and at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

More than fifty special exhibitions of his work have been held including those at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; The Art Institute of Chicago; The Brooklyn Museum, Dorsky Gallery, Grace Borgenicht Gallery, Inc., New School for Social Research, The Willard Gallery, New York. His work has been included in group exhibitions at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; The Brooklyn Museum, The Museum of Modern Art, New School for Social Research, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Philadelphia Art Alliance; San Francisco Museum of Art; University of Illinois, Urbana; Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, Utica.

Mr. Schanker's work is in many collections including those of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; University of Colorado, Boulder; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; The Art Institute of Chicago; Cincinnati Art Museum; The Cleveland Museum of Art; The Detroit Institute of Arts; Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania; University of Nebraska, Lincoln; Wesleyan College, Macon, Georgia; University of Wisconsin, Madison; The Brooklyn Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The New York Public Library, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Philadelphia Museum of Art; The Toledo Museum of Art; Joseph H. Hirshhorn Collection, The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.



LOUIS SCHANKER of East Hampton, who will be represented in the sculpture show in the garden at Guild Hall from July 2 through Aug. 4.

East Hampton Star June 30, 1966



*"Louis Schanker is one of those blessed craftsmen who can lose himself in his materials as in a vice. Now, with wood carving as his latest addiction, he has uncovered as a motif the shape of lumber's origin, the intrinsic nut . . ."*

HAROLD ROSENBERG

GRANITE GALLERIES

63 East 57 Street, New York  
EL 5-1230

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11-5 p.m.

Upper Left: Albert Ten Eyck Gardner, Associate Curator of American Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, congratulates Miss Dorothy Abbott, East Marion, on her "Best of Show" sculpture. Above: Mrs Inez Whipple, Director of Guild Hall, and Paul Montgomery, chairman of board of directors of Guild Hall, enjoy the exhibits at the 28th Annual Guild Hall Artist Members' Exhibition. Mr Montgomery was recently elected to the American Water Color Society. Left: Miss Phyllis Reed, co-chairman of entertainment; Mrs Paul Montgomery and Mrs Peter Milholland, chairman of hostess, served delicious punch. Below: Sculpturer, Louis Schanker, E H, poses with his entry.

*Santa River 3/6*



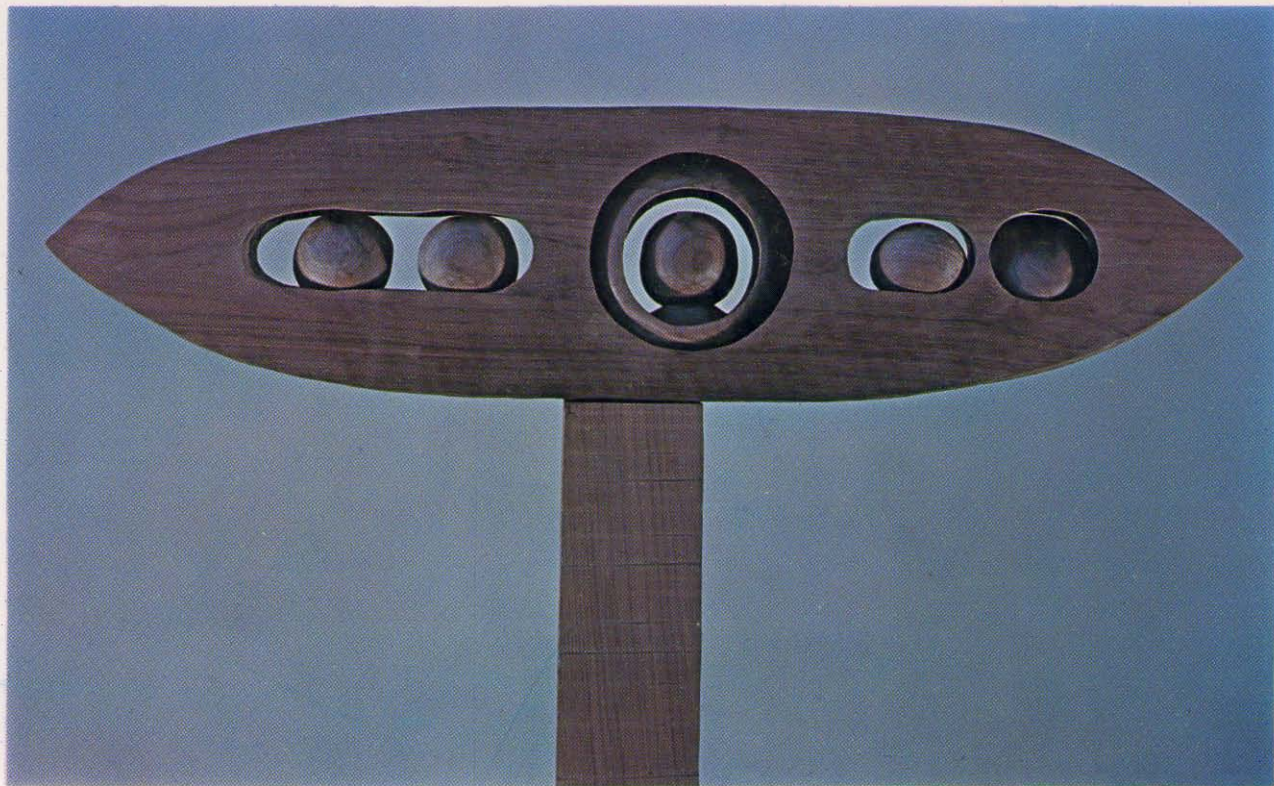
# LOUIS SCHANKER

*Exhibition: April 6th - April 30th, 1966*

**DORSKY GALLERY**

*888 Madison Avenue at 72nd Street  
New York, New York / LE 5-4594*





Schamber



*Photograph: Jonathan A. Scoville*

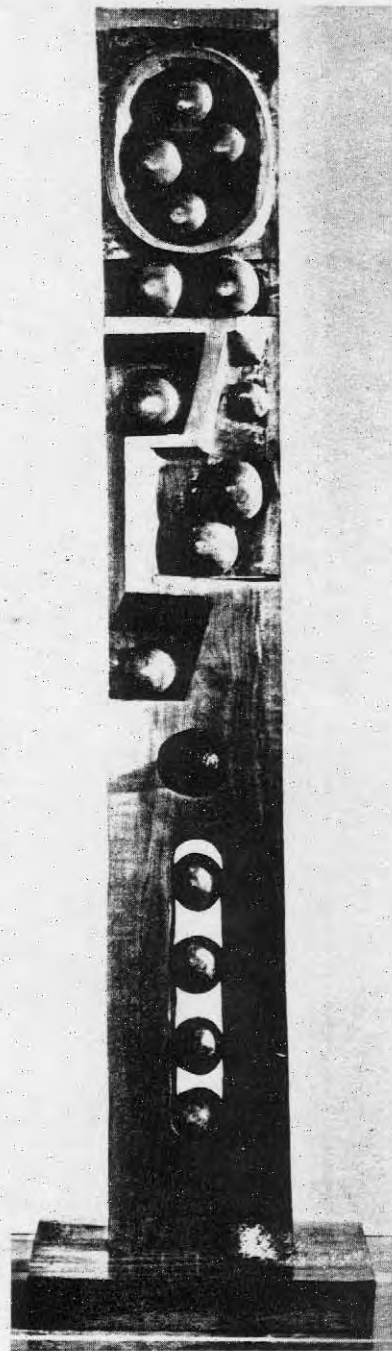
"Louis Schanker is one of those blessed craftsmen who can lose himself in his materials as in a vice. Now, with wood carving as his latest addiction, he has uncovered as a motif the shape of lumber's origin, the intrinsic nut..."

*Harold Rosenberg*

Louis Schanker was born in New York in 1903. He studied and traveled here and abroad, and in the early thirties painted in France and Spain. Schanker has executed several murals, notably at the 1939 World's Fair and in the lobby of Station WNYC. He has taught at the New School and at Bard College where he is now Professor Emeritus.

Schanker has received many awards and is represented in numerous private collections as well as those of the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the New York Public Library and other museums and universities across the country.

Schanker lives in Connecticut with his wife, Libby Holman. This exhibition is his first at the Dorsky Gallery.





# CATALOGUE

## Variations on a Theme

- |     |  |              |       |
|-----|--|--------------|-------|
| 1.  | BLACK KNIGHT, 1964                                   | pine         | 90"   |
|     | <i>(Collection of Joseph H. Hirshhorn)</i>           |              |       |
| 2.  | 1965-1966  | mahogany     | 115"  |
| 3.  | #1, 1965-1966  | black walnut | 68"   |
|     | <i>(Collection of Joseph H. Hirshhorn)</i>           |              |       |
| 4.  | 1965   | black walnut | 88"   |
| 5.  | 1965   | black walnut | 79"   |
| 6.  | 1965   | black walnut | 74½"  |
| 7.  | 1965   | black walnut | 72"   |
| 8.  | 1965   | black walnut | 65"   |
| 9.  | 1965   | black walnut | 48"   |
| 10. | 1964-1965  | poplar       | 32"   |
| 11. | 1965   | bronze       | 20"   |
| 12. | PREGNANT WOMAN, 1964                                 | pine         | 77"   |
| 13. | 1964   | white oak    | 72"   |
| 14. | TOMB POST FOR A<br>GREEK WARRIOR, 1964               | maple        | 39½"  |
| 15. | 1964   | black birch  | 27"   |
| 16. | 1964   | black birch  | 25"   |
| 17. | 1964   | black birch  | 25"   |
| 18. | 1964   | white oak    | 23"   |
| 19. | 1964   | black birch  | 21 ⅝" |
| 20. | 1964   | black birch  | 19½"  |
| 21. | THE LOVERS, 1963                                     | black birch  | 20"   |
|     | <i>(Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rosenberg)</i> |              |       |

Museum Section

# GUILD HALL

East Hampton, N. Y.

*You are cordially invited to  
the opening of the exhibition*

ARTISTS OF THE REGION

paintings by

MORTON KAISH

LEE KRASNER

prints by

MARK FREEMAN

GERSON LEIBER

LOUIS SCHANKER

AUBREY SCHWARTZ

Tuesday, August 23, 1966

4:30 to 6:00 P.M.

Mrs. Edward Rice, Jr.  
Exhibition Chairman

Mrs. Elise P. Mackintosh, Mrs. David McConnell  
Mrs. Peter Milholland, Mrs. Dudley  
Miller, Mrs. Yves Robert

Hostesses

Exhibition on view through September 7, 1966

*Sully Hammond Apr 1966*

# Sculptor Asks Blind To 'Look' at His Work

Sculpture for the blind?

Louis Schanker, aware of the tactile appeal of his wood sculptures, has decided they ought to be touched as well as seen. He even likes to call them "feelies."

So today he's invited a group of children from the Lighthouse for the Blind to come over to the Dorsky Gallery, 888 Madison Av., and feel for themselves whether or not they like his abstract work.

Schanker, a charmingly rough-hewn character himself, has based his current show on the theme of the circle or sphere, and many of the pieces have moveable parts, nut and kernel shapes that can be joggled intriguingly.

The surfaces range from rough and scratchy to deliciously smooth and polished and the woods used are black walnut, mahogany, pine, poplar, white oak and black birch.

Schanker, a native New Yorker whose work is in the Metro-

politan, the Whitney, the Museum of Modern Art and the Public Library, has taught at the New School and Bard College, where he is now professor emeritus.

He is married to Libby Holman, the famed torch singer of the 30's and 40's who now specializes in folk music. The current show at the Dorsky runs through April 30.

ery-hoppers  
-nauer. To save if  
areas of the city.  
er and John Gruen, 16/  
and in daily editions.  
r. 7. Herald Tribune 66

Louis Schanker (Dorsky, 888 Madison): An artist who has been a lively exhibitor on the New York scene for 30 years exhibits recent sculptures attesting to his long-evident craftsmanship and continuing invention. His newest works are totemistic wood carvings in which, at cadenced intervals, he lingers with elegance and mystery on circular or spheroidal motifs that appear to have symbolic as well as formal meaning. He handles his wood lovingly and beautifully, to make works of notable individuality. E. G.

*April 14, 1966* • PARK EAST •

## ART AND ARTISTS

By BETSY POLIER

### Schanker at Dorsky

Louis Schanker, a well-known American artist whose explorations of the circle image in a series of paintings shown a few years ago received much favorable comment, has recently branched out into wood sculpture, pursuing his fascination for the circle in a marvelous group of pieces currently on view at the Dorsky Gallery. Schanker is above all a superb craftsman, and these textured sculptures, with their detached spheres imbedded in totemic forms, are magnificently carved, inviting one to jiggle and caress. In the earlier pieces, there is a contrast between blackened wood and lighter color, as well as a contrast in texture and form. The later ones, most of which are tall, vertical totems, rely chiefly upon the play of flat surface against the rounded protuberances within them. There is a playful exuberance and sensuousness about these pieces that is altogether captivating.

Louis Schanker, like Kandinsky, is fascinated with the circle. This time it is in the form of a ball. It is the cosmic ball of the world spinning in space. The ball jugglers play with the ball within ball that is imprisoned in Chinese puzzles, the nut-ball that contains the seed. For years a painter, Louis Schanker recently turned to sculpture, carving his images in wood. Of them I like best the crude pieces, rough as if hacked out by an ax, whose burned, blackened surface, as if blasted by deadly fire, conceals and protects, like in a womb, the

found seed, the nut of life and immortality. 4166-Post  
Dorsky Gallery, 888 Madison

NEW YORK POST, SUNDAY, APRIL 3, 1966 3

## The Lyons Den

Welterweight Joe (Buzz) Shaw will fight on the Thornton card at Shea Stadium. His new managers include eminent writers—Norman Mailer, Bruce Jay Friedman, Pete Hamill, Harvey Breit, George Plimpton. He's had 19 knockouts in 26 fights. Collector Joe Hirshhorn bought three major works by sculptor Louis Schanker at the Dorsky Gallery. Mrs. Gandhi's tour was filmed by Stanley Ascher and Nick Webster, for a documentary movie.

BOOK NOTE: Francois Mauriac, the Nobel Prize-winner,

# SCULPTURE IN THE OUTDOORS

on the grounds of

**THE STAMFORD MUSEUM AND NATURE CENTER**

**July 31 - October 16, 1966**

**Sculpture will include work by**

Jules Agostini	Stanley Bleifeld	David Burt
Alexander Calder	Mary Callery	Robert Cook
Ludvig Durchanek	Frank Gallo	Enrico Glickenstein
Chaim Gross	Jack Kearney	John Marshall
Harry Marinsky	Edgar Negret	Hanna Orloff
Shay Rieger	Auguste Rodin	Wallace Rosenbauer
Louis Schanker	David Slvika	Sahl Swarz
Alfred Van Loen	Al Vrana	Harvey Weiss
Wayne Williams	Jean Woodham	Thomas Young

This exhibition has been designed to express the relationship between nature and art. It will create the setting for the coming show of the combined garden clubs of Stamford, soon to be held for the benefit of a permanent Sculpture Garden project at The Museum. This Exhibition will include a moss garden designed by Father William Pavl Austin and a "touch and smell" garden where blind as well as sighted people can experience the values of landscape and art.

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE**

**PREVIEW**

**on Saturday, July 30  
from five to eight p.m.**

## Museum's New Sculpture Garden To Get First Showing On Sunday

The first showing at the new sculpture garden of The Stamford Museum and Nature Center opens Sunday, with works of art by such renowned sculptors as Rodin and Calder. The exhibit, "Sculpture in the Outdoors," is the beginning of permanent sculpture gardens at the Museum. The art is on loan from the artists, collectors, and galleries.

Dr. Barnet Fine is loaning an Auguste Rodin, regarded by many as the first sculpture of unquestioned greatness of this century. From Alexander Calder, who lives and works in Roxbury, Connecticut, and delights people the world over with his enormous mobiles and stabiles, the Museum exhibit

will have a 10-foot-high stabile in black steel, titled "Pagoda."

From another Nutmeg resident, Jules Agostini of Bridgeport, comes "Adagio," a large welded sculpture of mild steel that will float above the garden from a wire suspension.

Impresario of the first outdoor sculpture show at the Museum is David Burt, a Stamford resident, and himself a sculptor. He will be represented by "Exclamation" done in copper washed with acid, and hung on six radial wires suspended in tension against a wall.

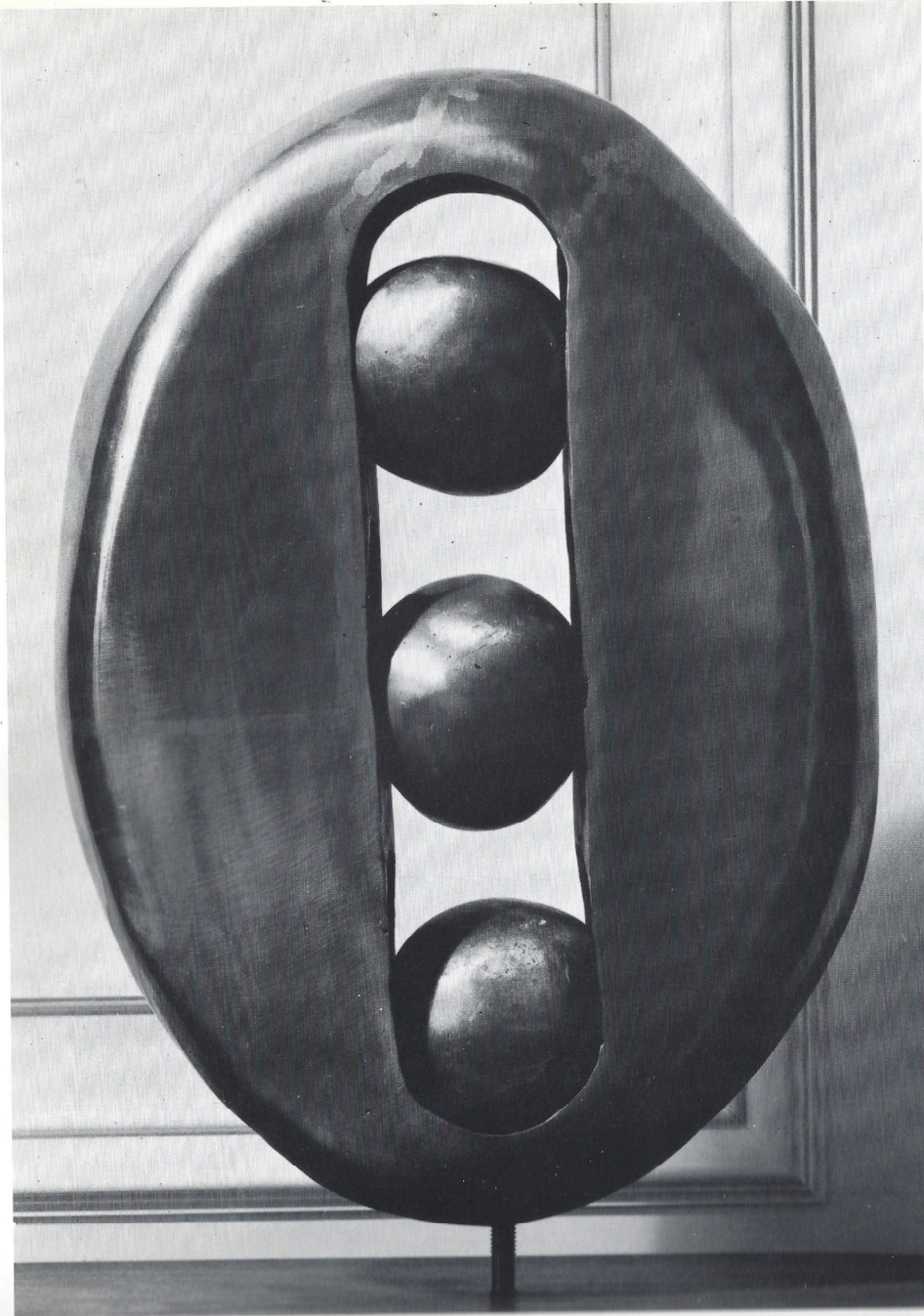
The community spirit that has seen the completion of such diverse and large projects on the Museum's grounds as the outdoor

Ezio Pinza Theatre and a 22-inch telescope, has helped the sculpture garden as well. Members of the mason's union are donating their services to construct a special stone wall in the garden for the display of sculpture. Stamford resident Louis Schanker, who had a recent one man show at the Dorsky gallery in New York, will have an ovoid sculpture for the Museum exhibit in cast bronze. As he uses no titles, it is merely labelled "1965." Two of Mr. Schanker's pieces are in the Hirshhorn collection which will become the mainstay of a new national museum in Washington.

From the studio of Chain Gross,  
(Continued on Page 26 Col. 4)



**LOUIS SCHANKER**



# **the sculptors guild annual exhibition**

LEVER HOUSE, 390 PARK AVENUE AT 53RD STREET, NEW YORK CITY

OCTOBER 20 - NOVEMBER 17, 1968

# Louis Schanker, Early Life Rebel, Enjoys Days In Rustic Home Studio

By MARIE UPDEGRAFF

If a fortune teller gazed into her crystal ball to see what was going to happen to Louis Schanker, neither she nor Louis Schanker would have believed it.

The Stamford artist, who married wealthy, twice-widowed "torch singer" Libby Holman in 1960, rebelled at age 14 against just about everything — family, school, religion.

If he had had his way at the time, he might have been killed or disabled in World War I. Or, today, he might be a retired circus roustabout.

Instead, at his present age of 66, Mr. Schanker is not only a leading designer, carver and printer of woodcuts, but also a respected painter and sculptor. Bard College, where he taught art for 15 years, has named him professor emeritus.

## Found in Top Collections.

His work can be found in the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum, the New York City Public Library, the Chicago Art Institute — to name a few hallowed halls that include him — and in many top private collections. This fall a Rockefeller grant to the Brooklyn Museum will enable the museum to publish a book of his woodcuts in color and black and white.

A highly intelligent, considerate man with a fringe of white hair and a full white mustache, Mr. Schanker radiates good will and physical stamina. The other morning, as he sat in the library of "Tree Tops," his wife's 100-acre estate on Merriebrook La., it amused him to recall how, as a youth, he tried to derail his life — and had a lot of fun doing it.

## Tried to Enlist at 14.

"I was born in a cold-water flat in the Bronx," he began, "and, when I was 14 I ran away from home to go to war. I changed the date on my birth certificate to prove I was 18. But, the Army decided it didn't look kosher and told me to go home."

"I rebelled against religion. My parents were orthodox Jews who had a small store in the Bronx which sold tailor's trimmings. Also, I rebelled against school. My first month at the old Townsend Harris High was my last. To me, academic subjects meant nothing but frustration."

So young Schanker quit school and went to work for E. P. Dutton & Co. as a messenger. One day he saw a set of oil paints in a store window, and, with money jingling in his

pocket, bought the set as a birthday present for his older brother. Louis was the fourth of seven children, three boys and four girls.

## Brother Didn't Paint.

But, his brother took no interest whatever in the paint set. Finally, Louis picked it up and began coloring the spaces of the picture that came with it. (He insists the spaces weren't numbered in those days.)

Then, he went on to painting on blank paper. His new interest in art propelled him back to school, to study drawing at Copper Union at night.

The lure of adventure continued to haunt him, however. So, when he was a strapping 19-year-old with black hair and the endurance of an elephant, he dropped the art courses to run away with two friends and join a circus in Macon, Ga.

The hick-town Sparks Circus, which played one-night stands in towns of 5,000 or less, hired him to take care of its ring horses. In the circus pecking order the wire walkers, animal trainers, and other performers were the elite. Fellows like "Blackie" Schanker who did the menial jobs were considered "scum."

## Gambled Away Money.

"I was paid five dollars a week plus 'found,' which meant room and board," he said. "I never saw a penny of my five dollars because I always lost it in circus crap games. But as long as they fed me, I didn't care."

Nevertheless, he cared enough to try to organize the "scum" to demand more money. Management found out and abruptly fired him in a little town in Michigan.

After a summer on a harvesting crew in the Midwest wheat fields, young Schanker returned to New York to seriously study art at the Art Student's League and the Educational Alliance, a settlement house. He earned money manning a soda fountain from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. When he wasn't painting, he posed for art classes.

## Studied in France.

"I made enough money on tips at the soda fountain to finance a year in France and Italy in 1931, during the depression," he said. "I studied at the Grande Chaumiere and had a studio outside Paris. I was still doing realistic painting."

But, as time passed, his work became increasingly abstract. Until today he rarely creates anything that could be considered realistic.



The artist who completed only one month of high school went on to teach at Bard College, becoming an associate professor. At roughly the same time, he spent 18 years teaching at the New School for Social Research.

Mr. Schanker's marriage to the famous Miss Holman, widow of tobacco heir Zachary Smith Reynolds and widow also of actor Ralph Holmes, was another unexpected event in his unpredictable life. They met in 1958 at the New School. Miss Holman had just finished starring in Lorca's tragedy, "Yerma," her first appearance after a long absence from the stage.

#### "You Must Meet Libby."

"One of my former girl students at the school was in a Zen Buddhism class with Libby," Mr. Schanker explained. "This student kept telling me I must meet her friend Libby, and one day she brought Libby into my classroom.

"We had about a minute. I said, 'I'm glad to meet you,' and Libby said, 'I'm glad to meet you,' and that was that. She had to go to her Zen class, and my next art class started coming in.

"I didn't see Libby again until the same student had an exhibit at one of the New York galleries. I said, 'Hello,' and she said, 'Hello,' and we both attended a party after the show. It wasn't until we started going together that I had any idea who Libby Holman was."

Originally, the dynamic Elizabeth Holman came to New York City from Cincinnati to study law at Columbia, but was sidetracked into the theater. In 1926, she made a hit overnight singing "Moanin' Low" in "Garlick Gaieties," and from then on was famous as the "torch singer." Her plans for a legal career went down the drain.

#### Wed In Jamaica.

Two years after they met, Mr. Schanker, whose first marriage had ended in divorce some time before, and Miss Holman, were married in Jamaica. He stands the artist's modern studio building, where he often spends 12 hours at a stretch. It has a fireplace and a generous expanse of windows and skylights which let in candid north light. The studio holds samples of his sculpture, woodcuts and paintings and, of course, the tools with which he works.

Circles and spheres particularly fascinate him. "They are the perfect shape," he explained. "You drop some liquid

on the floor and it forms a circle, never a square or a rectangle."

#### Creates "Feelies."

This fascination takes form in wood sculpture that Mr. Schanker calls his "feelies." Standing about in his studio are a number of pieces, some taller than a man, inside of which he has chiseled and polished one or more moveable spheres. They remain entrapped, exactly as he formed them in the body of the work, like an unborn child in the womb. The spheres can be rotated, but they can't be removed without breaking the piece.

Mr. Schanker invited a group of teenagers from a blind school to one of his New York shows, specifically so they could feel his sculpture. He says the blind youngsters were ecstatic over the experience.

Currently, he was prepared an exhibit of bright acrylic abstract paintings on sheets of plastic that he chiseled out ever so slightly to create a textured effect. They will be shown in a New York gallery. Occasionally, he has exhibited one or two of his pieces at the Stamford Museum.

"I don't think any artist can explain his work or why he does what he does," Mr. Schanker commented. "It's a matter of feeling, mainly, and a sense of color, space and movement. Preconceived ideas don't necessarily turn out that way. You allow accidents to happen, because accidents make art exciting."

The rebel who tried to go to war in 1917 has become a rebel against the war in Vietnam.

"Libby and I and some others have organized a group called 'Peace Now' to end American war immediately," Mr. Schanker said. "Libby is chairman of the movement. We have just sent telegrams to all 100 senators and to President Nixon, urging them to get out of the war right now."