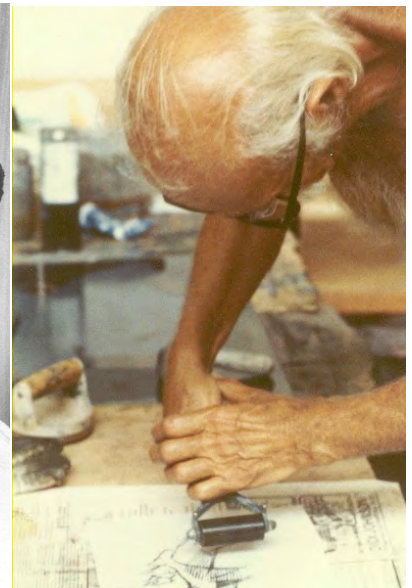
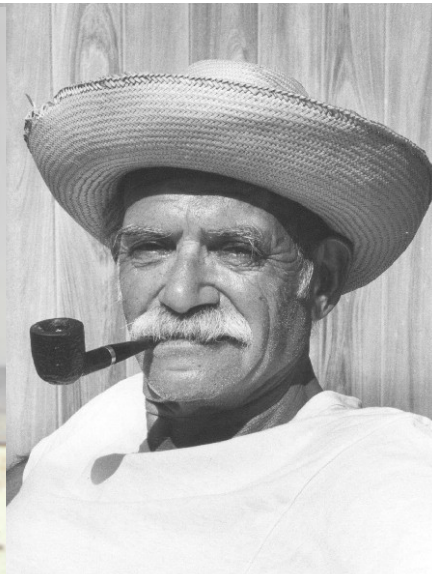


# *Louis Schanker*

## **The Hamptons Connection**



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“Louis Schanker: The Hamptons Connection,” was created on the occasion of the 2018 Show, “Louis Schanker: the WPA Years,” at the Pollock-Krasner House in East Hampton, New York. It is a compilation of clippings and ephemera from Louis Schanker and his wife, Libby Holman’s personal collections and memories of family and friends.

The companion volume is “Louis Schanker: The WPA Years,” a collection of Schanker’s personal photos, clippings and catalogs from the period. Both books were edited by Flo and Lou Siegel and are available online at

[www.LouisSchanker.info](http://www.LouisSchanker.info)





Schanker holding tape and brushes,  
in front of 1939 World's Fair mural, 1939



"Abstraction with Musical Instruments"  
Schanker, 1932, 38 x 27"

*"Throughout the years, Schanker remained close with his fellow WPA artists, who became his neighbors on the East End.....It was more about the camaraderie, the bonds they had established during the '30s when everybody was poor. They weren't competing with one another for galleries or reviews or museum shows. They were competing to be the best modern artist you could be."*

(Helen Harrison, Director, Pollock-Krasner Museum and Study Center)

## **Louis Schanker (1903-1981) Painter-Printmaker-Sculptor-Educator**

Schanker was born in the Bronx, New York in 1903. His parents were orthodox Jewish immigrants from Romania.

As a teenager Schanker joined the circus and traveled across America. He then worked with a wheat-threshing crew, worked on a great lakes steamship and "rode the rails" living the hobo life. Many of these experiences as well as his love of music are both reflected in his artwork.

Upon his return to New York, in the 1920's, Schanker shared a cold-water flat in Brooklyn with fellow young struggling artists, Adolph Gottlieb, the Soyer brothers and Chaim Gross. He studied art at Cooper Union, the Educational Alliance and the Art Students League. Amongst his fellow students were friends, Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko, and Milton Avery.

Schanker spent 1931 and 1932 studying at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, painting and traveling in Paris, Italy and Spain. Upon his return in 1933 to New York, he had his first show at the Contemporary Arts Gallery and first exhibited at the Whitney Museum in 1936.

Beginning in 1933 he was an artist and then supervisor in both the mural and graphic arts divisions of the New York Public Works of Art Project (PWAP) and then the WPA Federal Art Project. *"Louis Schanker, one of the principal artists in the [WPA] woodcut workshop, initiated a movement that replaced the prevalent social realist imagery of the period with expressive abstraction."* (*A Spectrum of Innovation: Color in American Printmaking 1890-1960*, David Acton).

*"Their mural program was the first major attempt by the American government to fund the creation of public artwork. [Burgoyne] Diller and fellow AAA founder Louis Schanker, who was also an administrator with the WPA, made sure many struggling abstract artists found paying jobs with the WPA painting public murals."* (<https://www.ideelart.com/magazine/american-abstract-artists>). During the 1930's while on the WPA Project Schanker became friends with fellow artists including: Williém de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner, Ida Abelman, Stuart Davis, Ilya Bolotowsky, and Herman Cherry.

Schanker taught at the American Artists School (1936-1940) and at The New School (1943-1960) where for a period of time he shared his studio with Stanley William Hayter (Atelier 17). They remained lifelong friends. "From Louis Schanker's example the great development of color woodcut in America chiefly stems." (About Prints, Stanley William Hayter, 1964). He was an assistant professor at Bard College from (1949-1964). "[Schanker,] one of the earliest U.S. woodcut artists to do abstractions, Schanker since has trained or influenced a generation of talented younger artists." (Comeback of an Art, Life Magazine, Jan. 1955.)

The 1930s were very controversial times in the arts community. In 1935 Schanker and fellow artists Ilya Bolotowsky, Ben-Zion, Adolph Gottlieb, Joseph Solman, Tschacbasov, Lou Harris, and Ralph Rosenborg, Marcus Rothkowitz (aka, Mark Rothko), formed a group called *The Ten* [Whitney Dissenters]. *The Ten* protested the lack of support for abstract artists by American museums and galleries which concentrated on representational art.

According to Sidney Schectman, Mercury Gallery owner in New York, who was showing the works of *The Ten* from 1937-1939, regarding Schanker and Rothko: "Rothko was by all reports a very serious person. He did not have many friends. I know he liked Schanker. I once talked to him about him, but he told me that Schanker was a playboy of some sort even then, but a great painter and a great wood block [painter] ... you know, painted, the greatest. But I don't know where he's going to go, he would say because he thought he was frivolous. And that's the kind of person Rothko was, terribly, terribly serious." (<http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistoryies/transcripts/braddo81.htm>)

Schanker was a founding member of the American Abstract Artists, (AAA) which arose in 1936 to promote and foster public understanding of abstract art.

He married stage actress and singer Libby Holman in 1960. They had homes in New York City, Stamford Connecticut, Sag Harbor and East Hampton, Long Island.

Schanker passed away in 1981 at Lennox Hill Hospital in Manhattan, just a short distance from his one man show at the Martin Diamond Gallery. Longtime friend and fellow artist, Ilya Bolotowsky, amongst others, spoke at a memorial service at the gallery surrounded by Schanker's works.

*...Schanker's is an art which is important in understanding the development of the second wave of American abstraction which culminated in Abstract Expressionism. (Susan Fillin Yeh, art historian, 1981)*



Schanker lived in the Maidstone Park section of East Hampton in the late forties. Around 1950 he then moved to this 100 year old farmhouse on Madison St. in Sag Harbor. In 1954 he bought the house from life-long Sag Harbor resident , Ruth King, who continued living on the second floor until her passing.



When I spent time during the 50's and 60's in Sag Harbor there was a strict dress code. No bathing suits were allowed on the street! We enjoyed ice cream and hamburgers at the Paradise after catching a movie at the Sag theater.

One of our favorite activities was going with Lou down to Long wharf in his Chevy Woody, being careful not to step into the hole in floorboards. His best friend was Larry Abelman, husband of WPA era artist, Ida Abelman. (Larry and Ida lived in the house on the hill in Mashashimuet Park.) He and Larry shared a 14 foot wooden rowboat with a 6 HP engine that we used for fishing. It was moored on two poles stuck in the sand adjacent to Long Wharf, just across from where the Bay Street Theater is now. It was a far cry from the vessels now moored at the Wharf! We also spent many hours swimming at Long Beach enjoying Schanker's folding, canvas sailing kayak.

There are fond memories of speeding down the Marsden St. hill on my bicycle from the Sag Harbor High School directly into the driveway of Lou's house on Madison St. Lou removed the wrap-around porch and used the posts for several sculptures (see attached.) He later commented that he got more for one of the sculptures than he had paid for the house. (Lou Siegel, nephew)



Lou treats me to my first trip on a sailing kayak at Long Beach in Sag Harbor in 1950.



In 1971 I took him out on my own boat from the same beach in Sag Harbor.



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153 Main Street,  
GUESTWORDS: By Gail Levin  
**Remembering David Slivka**  
(04/15/2010)

The East Hampton Star  
East Hampton, NY 11937

The sculptor David Slivka told me about going to an artists' picnic at Barnes Landing in 1953. He arrived driving his '32 DeSoto, a car he bought used from the printmaker Louis Schanker.

By then, Schanker had purchased a hundred-year-old farmhouse on Madison Street in Sag Harbor, and David rented his former place in Maidstone Park for the summer. Two artist couples were neighbors: Paul Brach and Mimi Schapiro as well as Joan Mitchell and Mike Goldberg. David remembered watching Joan paint outdoors between two trees.

At the cookout on the beach were Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, Jim and Charlotte Brooks, Bill and Elaine de Kooning, who that summer were staying at Leo Castelli's on Georgica Pond. Of course, David's wife Rose, later The Star's art critic, was also present. There was plenty of food, alcohol, and a giant bonfire. The swimming was nude, followed by some dancing around the fire. David loved to dance.

Suddenly Bill became distressed because Elaine had disappeared and he feared she might have drowned. Since Bill couldn't swim, it was left to David to go into the water to search for Elaine. He found her enjoying her nude swim in the dark.

When the time came to return home, Bill and Jackson both wanted to ride in David's DeSoto, which they called his "Surrealist car," since its upholstery was falling apart in a fantastic fashion.

Official Newspaper  
East Hampton  
Town and Village

# THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

SHINES FOR ALL

Established 1888  
10c  
Published Thursday  
1 Year \$3.50; 6 Mos. \$2

VOLUME LXIX

EAST HAMPTON, N. Y., THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1954

NUMBER 42

## Sixth Annual Art Exhibit Featuring 15 Local Artists Opens Sat. at Guild Hall

Fifteen Artists of the Region," the sixth exhibition in a series arranged annually since 1949 by the Guild Hall Art Committee to show work of professional artists resident on Eastern Long Island, will open Saturday, July 24, from 4 to 6 p. m. at Guild Hall, with a reception for members and guests given by Mrs. Irwin H. Cornell, Mrs. Kneeland L. Green, Mrs. Joseph F. Gunster, and Mrs. Harry D. Watts. The exhibition will continue through Wednesday, August 11.

Julian Levi and James Brooks, were the committee of selection for the exhibition. Mrs. Otto L. Spaeth is chairman of the Guild Hall art committee.

Out of the 15 artists, only two, Gina Knee of Sag Harbor; and Alfonso Ossorio of East Hampton, have been represented in earlier regional exhibitions at Guild Hall. Miss Knee has had several one-man shows at the Willard Gallery, New York; and Mr. Ossorio's most recent one-man show was at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1953.

Among the new exhibitors who will show paintings, are: Paul Brach, Springs, who was contributing critic to the Art Digest from 1942 to 1953, and is presently teaching at the New School, Rand School, and New York University. His work is in museum and private collections; John Graham, Southampton, who has exhibited extensively in Europe and the United States; Franz Kline, Bridgehampton, who has shown his work in the Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum, as well as in groups in Paris and Tokyo; Conrad Marca-Relli, Springs, who was visiting critic at Yale during 1954 and 1955, and has shown here and abroad; Joan Mitchell, Springs, who had a traveling fellowship from the Art Institute of Chicago in 1947 and has exhibited in the Whitney Annual and in other group shows in this country.

Charlotte Park, Montauk, who has exhibited in the Whitney Museum Annual and in various other group shows; Fairfield Porter, Southampton, who is an editorial associate on Art News and has had two exhibitions at the Tibor de Nagy Gallery; Louis Schanker, Sag Harbor, who teaches color woodblock technique and painting at the New School and is assistant professor of Fine Arts at Bard College; Jean Steubing, Springs, who studied with Hans Hoffman and has been in group shows at the Stable Gallery, New York.

Those who will show sculpture include Costantino Nivola, Springs, the sculptor who developed the new sand casting technique, and recently completed a mural for the Olivetti store in New York; and Day Schnabel, East Hampton, who has exhibited extensively here and in Europe since 1947. She has had one-man shows at the Betty Parsons Gallery, New York.

Jacques Lipchitz, East Hampton, considered one of the great sculptures of our time, who will show sketches made for several of his important works. A comprehensive exhibition of his work is currently on display at the Museum of Modern Art.

Larry Rivers, Southampton, will show paintings as well as sculpture. He studied with Hans Hoffman and his work is in many collections including the Gloria Vanderbilt Stokowski Museum.



July 22, 1954

July 29, 1954

**AT THE BLUE HOUSE**

The Blue House Art Gallery has opened on Newtown Lane. In East Hampton, as elsewhere, people interested in fine art are bound to search for it, even off the beaten track. The new gallery at 23 Newtown Lane is approximately twenty paces off the beaten track, set back from the sidewalk, and the paintings shown are so modern that most have identifiable subject matter. The artists whose work is shown are willing enough to part with their work to set reasonable prices.

Active local painters and sculptors predominate, among them Victor De Pauw, Louis Schanker, William Soles, Ray Prohaska, Ralph Carpentier, Oscar Collier, and H. C. Davies. A continuously changing show will include artists who show in other countries; for example the lacquered water colors of M. Goto, who lives in Tokyo, and paintings by Charles Blum who works in Mexico.

A liveliness of purpose animates all the oils, water colors, pastels, ceramics and sculpture on view at the Gallery's one intimate, elegant room, which is open every afternoon except Monday.

**LOCAL ARTISTS TO EXHIBIT IN GUILD HALL**

"15 Artists of the Region", the sixth exhibition in a series arranged annually since 1949 by the Guild Hall art committee to show work of professional artists resident on Eastern Long Island, will open Saturday, July 24 at Guild Hall, East Hampton, N. Y., and continue through August 11.

The exhibition will include painting and sculpture.

Out of the 15 artists, only two, Gina Knee, Sag Harbor, and Alfonso Ossorio, East Hampton, who will both show paintings, have been represented in earlier Regional shows at Guild Hall. Gina Knee is well-known for her water colors and has had several one-man shows at the Willard Gallery in New York.

Another exhibitor from here will be Louis Schanker, who teaches color woodblock technique and painting at the New School and is Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at Bard College. He is represented in many permanent collections.

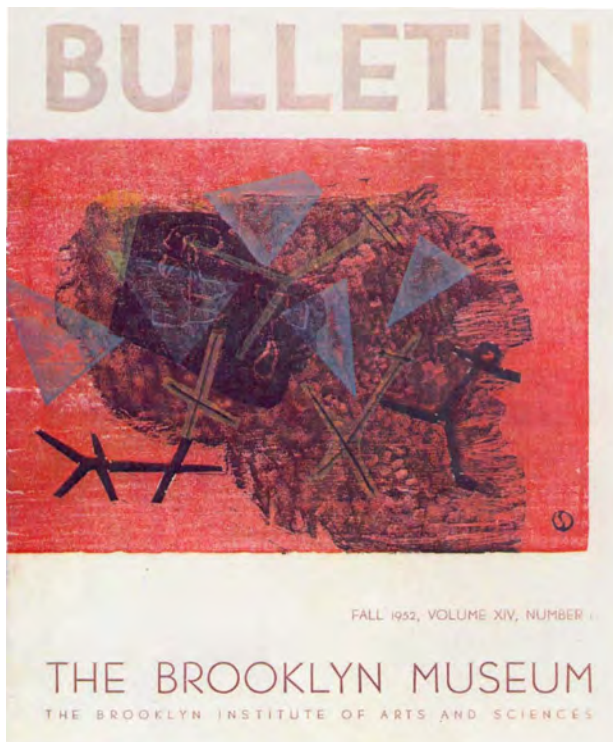
## Painting, Sculpture By Island Residents On View Till Aug. 11

EAST HAMPTON — The sixth exhibition in a series arranged annually by the art committee of Guild hall here to show works of professional artists living on Eastern Long Island opened Saturday at Guild hall and will continue through August 11.

The exhibition includes painting and sculpture. Gina Knee of Sag Harbor and Alfonso Ossorio of East Hampton, who are showing paintings, have exhibited in these regional shows before.

Among the new exhibitors showing paintings are Paul Brach of Springs, John Graham of Southampton, Franz Kline of Bridgehampton, Corrad Marca-Relli of Springs, Joan Mitchell of Springs, Charlotte Park of Montauk, Fairfield Porter of Southampton, Louis Schanker of Sag Harbor, Jean Steubing of Springs and Larry Rivers of Southampton.

Day Schnable of East Hampton and Constantino Nivolo of Springs are exhibiting sculpture and Jacques Lipschitz of East Hampton is showing sketches made for several of his works. He is currently having a one-man show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York city.



## OUT EAST AFTER DARK

By JIM CARR



### Heart to Heart Talk With Guild Hall's Enez Whipple

"Are there many Sag Harborites who participated in Guild Hall?" I asked Director Whipple.

"There are about 100 Sag Harborites who are Guild Hall members. Many Sag Harbor artists also exhibit here, including Alexander Brook, his wife, Gini Knee, and Louie Schanker. In fact, paintings by Alexander Brook, Gini Knee and Alfred Rogoway have been made part of Guild Hall's permanent art collection."

## Guild Hall Artists' Exhibitions Are Set For Summer Visitors

EAST HAMPTON — The twenty-second Annual Guild Hall Artist Members' exhibition, traditional opener of the Guild Hall season, will be on view from Saturday through July 10. It will include paintings and sculpture by 206 professional and amateur artists.

Among the well known artists who will show are: J. Anthony Buzzelli, Constance Clark Willis, George Constant, Victor DePauw, Perle Fine, Harlan Jackson, John Hultberg, Ray Prohaska, Louis Schanker, Jane Wasey and Arline Wingate. Miss Eleanor Tingley is chairman of arrangements for this exhibition.

Beginning Saturday and continuing through October 1, the galleries will be open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a. m. to 5 p. m. and Sundays from 2 to 5 p. m.

One of the most popular events of the exhibition season is the annual Outdoor Clothesline exhibition scheduled for July 16, from 10 a. m. to 6 p. m. This exhibition, open to all artists, is given as a benefit for Guild Hall.

Other Summer exhibitions planned by Mrs. Alfred L. Loomis, chairman of the Guild Hall Art committee, are: Outdoor sculpture, July 3 through September 5; water color exhibition, July 23 through August 13; Boys' harbor art exhibition, July 31 through August 7; painters and sculptors of the region, August 20 through September 5; photographic exhibition, September 9 through October 1.

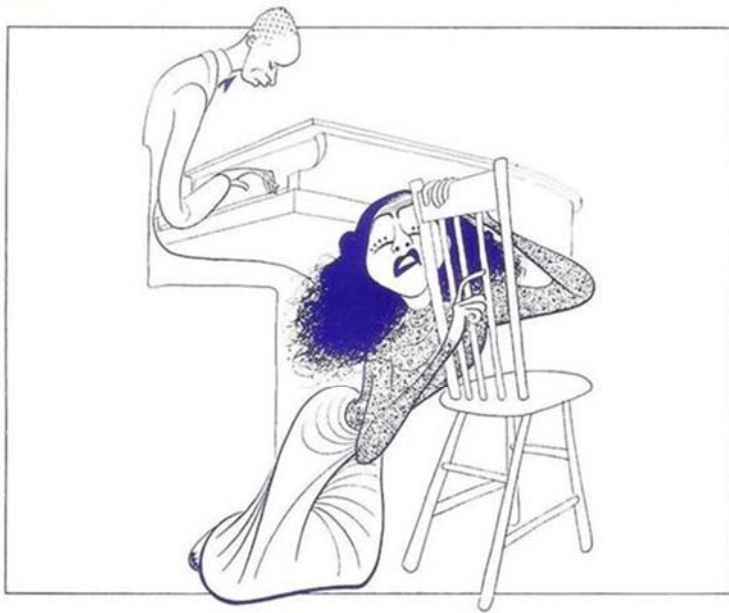


Schanker loved being a  
Sag Harborite.

He had a large studio right off  
the kitchen of his 100 year old  
farmhouse where he worked.

The beaches were only  
minutes away which allowed  
him to sail, kayak, and fish.  
Dinner often included local  
fish, mussels, clams and scal-  
lops.





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In 1960 Schanker married singer, activist and philanthropist Libby Holman.

Libby and Gerald Cook rehearsed their music programs at Schanker's Sag Harbor farmhouse.



Libby and Lou enjoyed their time in the Hamptons, spending fully half a year. They actively participated in the arts community while enjoying the beautiful beaches and natural resources.

Fishing off Sag Harbor

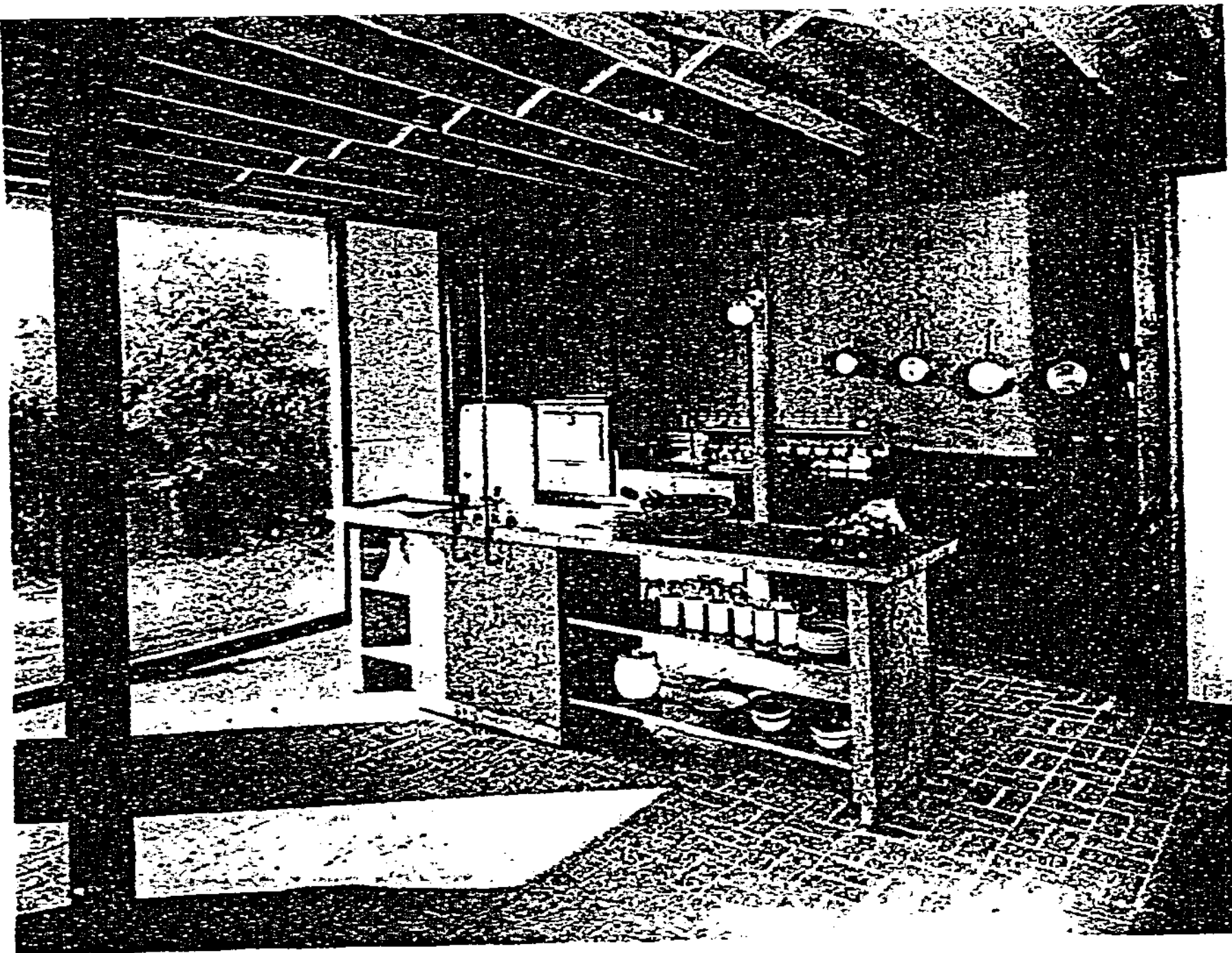




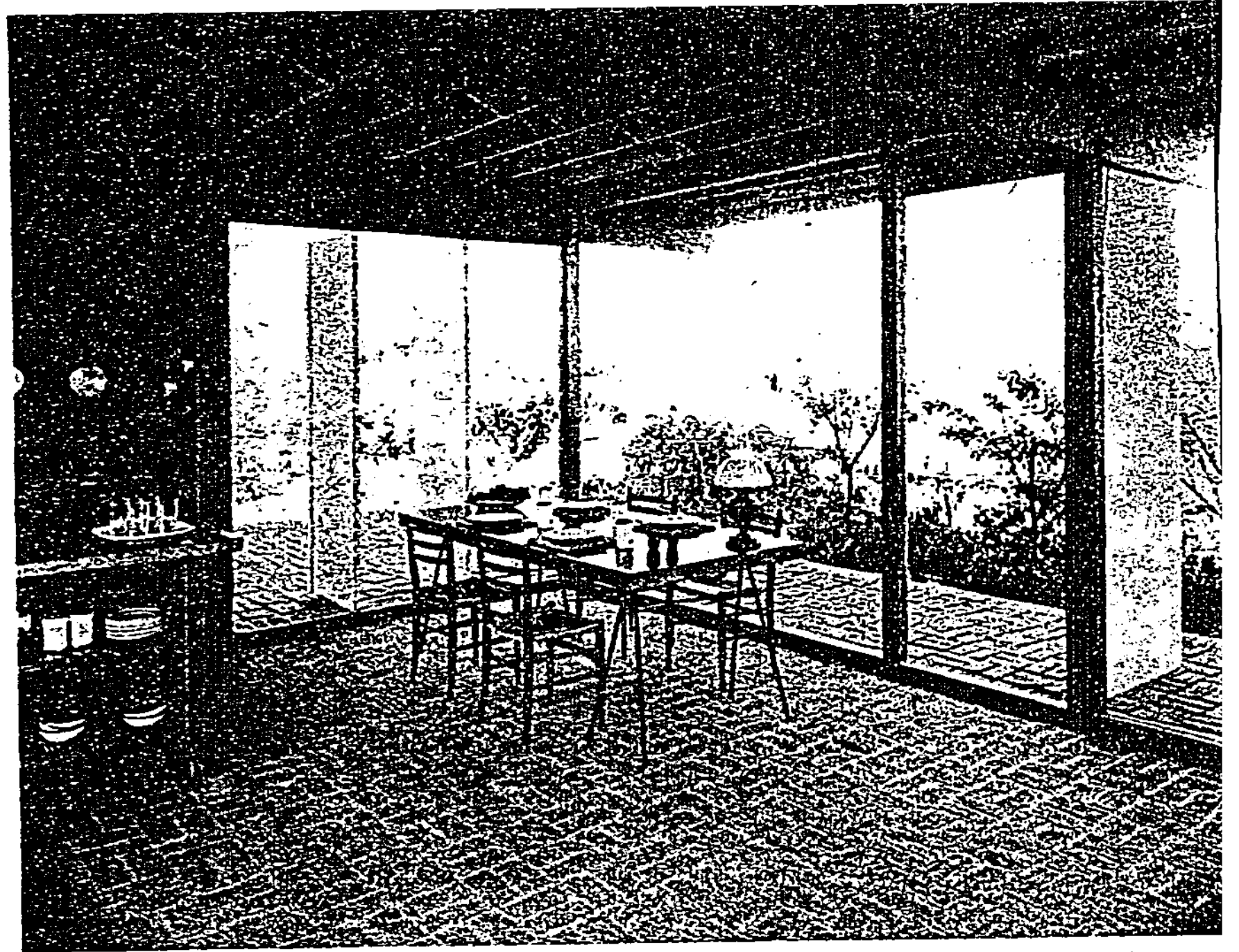
The modern approach allowed a house to be in direct concert with the natural landscape and to express a greater sense of individual choice. Instead of having to follow a predictable hierarchy of domestic spaces, the modern architect, like a jazz musician, was free to improvise on the spot as he interpreted the mood of the site. A 1952 article in the New York Times Magazine called Robert Rosenberg's all-glass beach house in East Hampton "A Window on the Sea," and that's just about all it was—a window with a kitchen and a bathroom. The low Miesian pavilion sat atop the secondary dune, overlooking Two Mile Hollow Beach. The house practically vanished into the scenery of rolling dunes and was surrounded by thick clumps of beach plum and bayberry. From the north you could see right through to the dunes and ocean that lay beyond. Except for a tiny bathroom enclosure, everything was revealed. It couldn't have been simpler.

Transparency was an inevitable part of the modern experience. After all the death and devastation of war, the glass house represented a new beginning, a fresh start. In the age of x rays and radar it also implied honesty, even a kind of moral courage in the face of an uncertain future.





**COOKING AREA**, completely operated on gas, is equipped with three-burner unit, an oven, refrigerator, gas light and free-standing sink with gas-heated hot water.



**EATING CORNER** is placed to take full advantage of the ocean view. Table is a slab of wood covered with black linoleum, placed on horses. Chairs are contemporary Italian designs.

# A Window ON THE SEA

By BETTY PEPIS

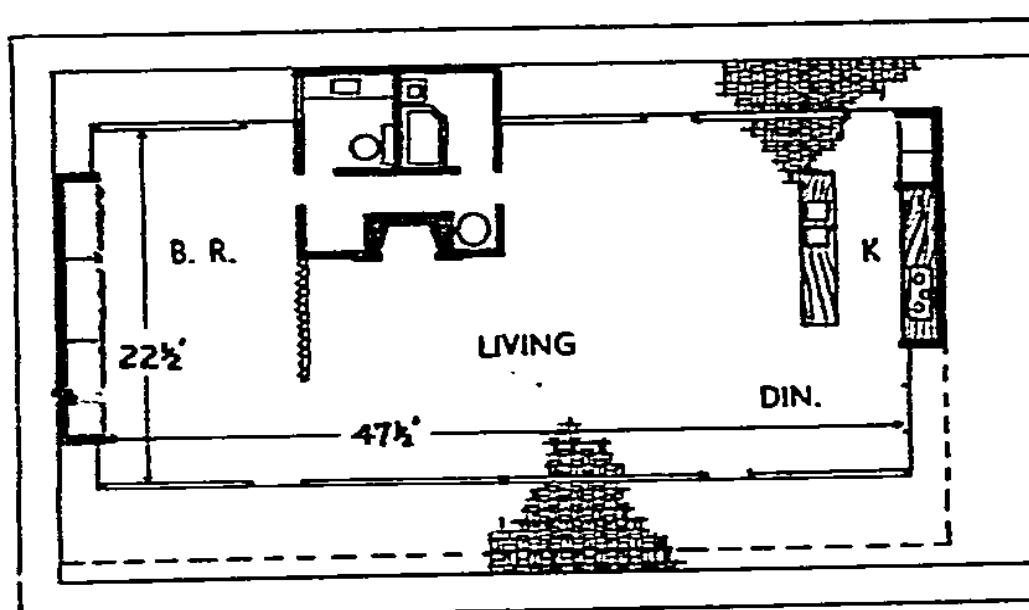
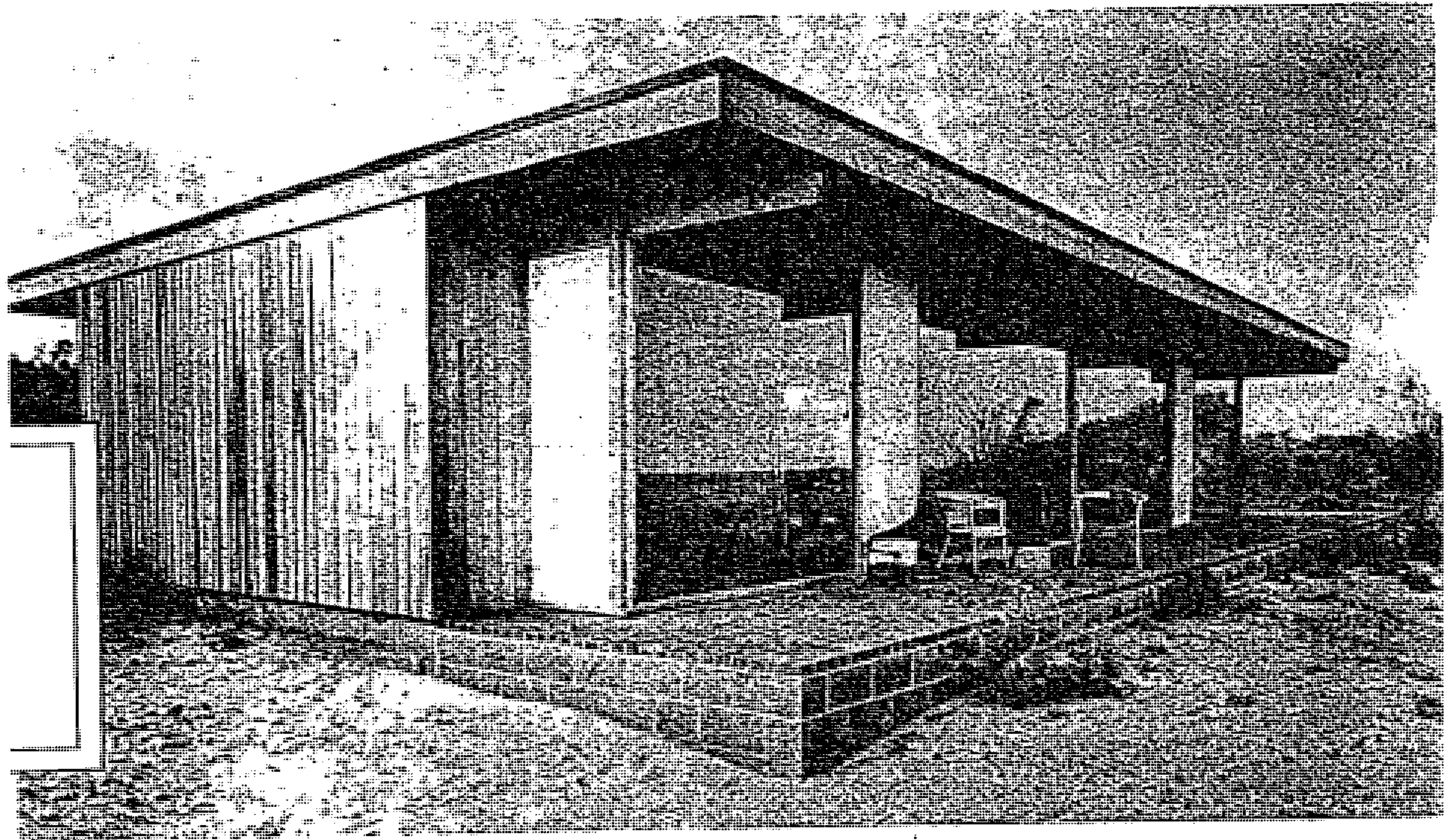
ON the crest of a bank overlooking the sand dunes at East Hampton, L. I., with a view of the sea, and so well surrounded by beach plum, bayberry, wild cherry and cedar that one hardly knows it is there, stands the beach house pictured here. It is actually nothing more than one large room. Along with the simplest kind of bunk-house (which provides four cubicles in a row for sleeping) it suffices as a summer retreat for a family of four and any friends who might choose to visit them.

As designed for his own family's use by architect Robert Hays Rosenberg, it proves that simplicity need lack neither comfort nor glamour. Adding to the comfort are the simple and inexpensive furnishings—the dining table,

for example, is a slab of wood set on two sawhorses, and low-priced chairs of natural-toned Chinese peel serve for both indoor and outdoor sitting. Adding to the casual and relaxed atmosphere of this house (while subtracting from the expense) is the fact that kitchen, dining, living and sleeping quarters are one—a plan that induces informal communal fun in which everyone present can and, indeed, must, join.

Another economy, and one which provides an extra dividend because of the romantic night atmosphere that results from it, is the elimination of electricity: after dark, this completely modern house is lit only with candles or lamps that burn either kerosene or gas.

**BEACH HOUSE** at East Hampton, L. I., designed by architect Robert Rosenberg, rests on a concrete rectangle set on the sand. Common brick in a basket-weave pattern forms inside floor and outside terrace. Siding is cypress, which weathers well. Glass panels are fixed, and there are blue canvas rolls on the outside which can be lowered for privacy. There are no windows and ventilation is provided by ten solid-wood doors.







I clearly remember the summer of house hunting with Lou and Libby. We visited many areas on the south fork and on Shelter Island. The East Hampton house which they eventually purchased, "Dune House," (174 Further Lane,) was on the last street, a dirt road, before Two Mile Hollow Lane. It was a private road which paralleled Spaethe Lane. They were the first owners of the house which was built by the well known architect, Robert Rosenberg.

It was essentially one large room with Japanese screens dividing off the bedroom from the living room/dining room/kitchen area. (There was also a dressing room and bathroom.) It was almost all windows overlooking the dunes and ocean. The compound included a separate building or bunkhouse with 4 or 5 bedrooms for the staff or visiting family. We all shared a single bathroom/shower which was outside on the boardwalk path which attached the building to the main house. The two car garage housed the 1960 Rolls Royce Silver Cloud convertible, a Chevy Suburban truck and Lou's studio. There was a small pool nestled into the dunes.

Lou's Sag Harbor house became the guest house if more space was needed for visitors. This is where Monty Clift, and Coretta King and family stayed when they visited. Gerald Cook, Libby's accompanist, also stayed there. He and Libby practiced and often rehearsed for concerts at the house. (Lou Siegel, nephew)





(l) Libby Holman, nephew David Holman, Louis Schanker, and Monty Clift on the rear terrace of Treetops, Libby Holman's estate in Stamford Connecticut, August of 1959.

(r) Monty clowning around with Louis Schanker's nephews, after a day of swimming and playing tennis with Schanker.

I recall him saying that it was the first time that he had played tennis since his 1956 major auto accident and he was very appreciative of the time spent with us.

We had gathered at Treetops for a few days in August of 1959 and then traveled in a several car caravan to Schanker's Sag Harbor house on the east end of Long Island. There, along with Libby's sons, Timmy and Tony, who had returned from school and traveling, we enjoyed water skiing, fishing, swimming and clamming.

While staying at the Sag Harbor house Monty asked Schanker's nephews, if they could help him out by reading a new script with him. They spent the morning reading with Monty. We realized years later it was the script for his movie role in "Judgement at Nuremberg," for which he received an Academy Award nomination.

(Lou Siegel, nephew)





Libby Holman, Feet Tucked Up Yoga-Fashion, and Her Husband, Louis Schanker, Relax in Their East Hampton Home (Newsday Photos by Hein-)

## Sand, Sea Are Setting for Oriental House

By Aurelie Dwyer

Newsday Home Furnishings Editor

Sand dunes tilt toward the sea; honeysuckle on the slopes in silver shadows. Swayed by an ocean breeze, bamboo chimes on the terrace make the only sound in the stillness.

This is the setting for the glass-walled beach house of artist Louis Schanker and his wife, singer Libby Holman. The house looks as if it drifted among the dunes and made itself at home there, the natural setting almost a part of the furnishings.

"I have always loved the sea," Miss Holman said, remembering their first view of the location, on Further Lane in East Hampton. The house was a shell then; the flat roof now tops an Oriental house.

Shoji screens open to make an L-shaped area of the living room and bedroom. Furnishings with

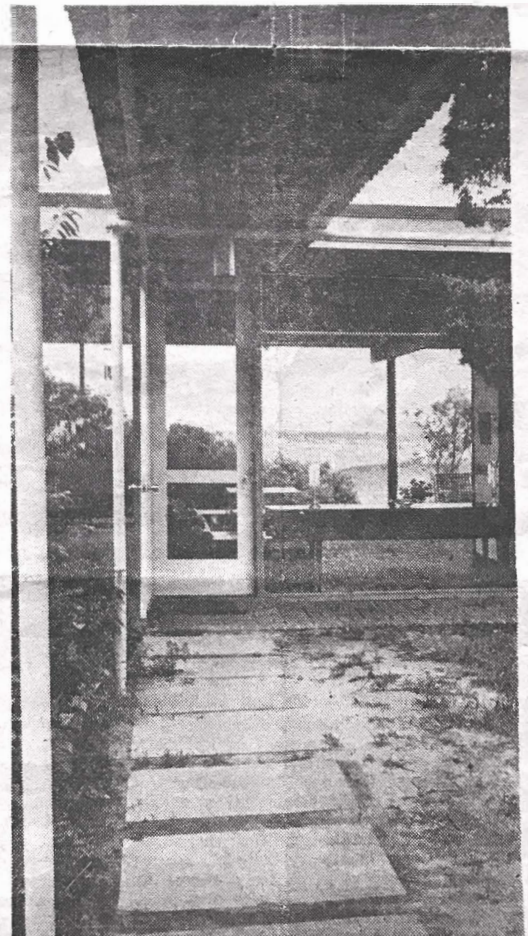
long, low lines are built in except for two teak tables with white legs and a harvest table in the living room and a teak framed chair in the bedroom. Mustard, oyster white and black cushions, and woven vinyl back rests are seating arrangements on a raised platform in front of one window-wall.

A covered flagstone path leads from the house to two other buildings, a guest cottage and Mr. Schanker's sky-lighted studio. The painter, a professor at Bard College, recently concluded an exhibit at the Bleecker East Hampton Gallery, his 30th one-man show.

Completing the house has kept Miss Holman so busy that she has had to postpone plans for a concert until later this year. Star of musicals during the '30s, she has toured Europe and this country with a repertoire of folk songs.



**COMPOSITION IN BLACK AND WHITE.** Portrait of singer Libby Holman and a wood-cut by her husband, Louis Schanker, are on either side of the fireplace in their recently completed beach house. Slate facing around fireplace dramatizes white wall.



**VIEW OF THE SEA.** Seen through glass walls, dunes lead down to the ocean. Hurricane lamps on long harvest table in living room are silver and crystal.



East Hampton Star, May 17, 1962

## Schanker Opens 29th One-Man Show



Louis Schanker will open his 29th one-man show at the new Dewey Gallery, 822 Madison Avenue, New York, May 28. Above, his painting is admired by Valerie Bettis, actress and director of the current off-Broadway production of Lorca's "If Five Years Pass."

Mr. Schanker, who has exhibited at Guild Hall many times, has a house in Sag Harbor. He and his wife, the former Libby Holman, recently bought and redecorated the

David Workman Photo

Bob Rosenberg house at Two Mile Hollow, East Hampton.

The show, which will run through June 23, will include more than 20 new canvases. Mr. Schanker, who is well known in the field of wood block color printing, is one of the directors of the Dewey Gallery, which opened last month, and which will have contributing artists operating as dealers.

East Hampton Star,  
June 14, 1962

## Two New Galleries Open

Two new galleries will open in schedule

### Here Saturday

Two new galleries will open in East Hampton on Saturday. The Village Gallery, an unusual shop on Montauk Highway, opposite Hook Mill, will be devoted to the exhibition and sale of works of a varied group of local craftsmen and artists.

The Blecker Gallery, which will open in the Seligson building at 65 Newtown Lane, will show new works of painters who have had one-man shows in New York this winter.

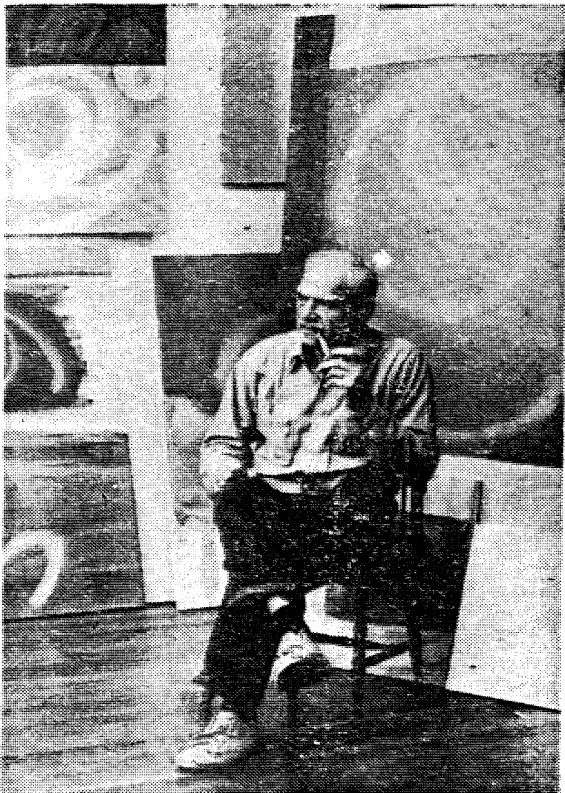
Mrs. Lucille Sadwith, a craftsman in stained glass and an East Hampton resident, said last week she was establishing the Village Gallery in the belief that good art is not restricted to traditional media. Exhibitions there will include furniture, pottery, greeting cards, prints, paintings, drawings, and sculpture, and photographs, among others.

The Blecker Gallery has already

1 scheduled its summer shows. It will  
2 open with a group show, June 16,  
3 and include one-man shows of paint-  
4 ings by Mark Baum, William Gam-  
5 bini, John Frank, Louis Schanker,  
6 George Dworzan, William H. Little-  
7 field, Yvonne Thomas, Seymour

1 Franks, and Maurice Bugeaud.  
2 Both galleries will be open daily  
3 with regular morning and evening  
4 hours. Both will also be open dur-  
5 ing the afternoon on rainy days.





Louis Schanker, the well-known Long Island avant-garde painter, poses before some of his work now on exhibition at Manhattan's Dewey Gallery.

**LOUIS SCHANKER**, the Sag Harbor abstract master, is showing a group of new paintings at the Dewey Gallery, Manhattan. The collection of more than twenty new canvases will mark Schanker's 29th one-man show during the past three decades in the art world.

A recognized master in the field of wood block color printing, Schanker has innovated and developed the unique circle image dominant in his recent paintings. In the present groups of canvases, he has developed a new color vibrancy and glow which still suggest his well-known circle image, but go further.

Schanker is regarded by art critics as one of America's leading avant-garde painters. Art Magazine, in reviewing his one-man show at the Grace Borgenicht Gallery in March 1957, praised his "energy, color sense, and true delight in craftsmanship." He is one of the leading pioneers of the New York School of painting. His wood block color prints and paintings have been exhibited in the collections of the foremost museums in the United States and abroad individually, and in group showings in Paris, Rome, London, Tokyo and Auckland, New Zealand.



Schanker with his entry in the 28th Annual Guild Hall Artist Members' Exhibition in 1962



The critic, Harold Rosenberg, Libby and Lou.





East Hampton Star July 26, 1962

## ART IN EAST HAMPTON

by Victor De Pauw

The opening of a show of recent paintings by Louis Schanker at the Bleecker Gallery, 65 Newtown Lane, last Saturday was attended by his many friends and fellow artists. Festivities were resumed at the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. Schanker, Dune House, on Further Lane, after the gallery closed.

Louis Schanker's homage is to the circle, unlike his distinguished contemporary Josef Albers, also a non-objective painter, whose homage is to the square.

It was back in 1933 that Louis Schanker began to progress from realism to semi-abstract and in 1945 or '46 he made the break from semi-abstract to non-objective painting.

Except for a brief return to a figurative approach in 1958, his pre-occupation with the circle image has continued to the present.

The circle symbol first began to appear in his painting in 1950. It marked the end of his search for a universal form, which, though two-dimensional, still allowed him to attain depth and space.

"There is no clear-cut square or line, anywhere in nature," declares

L. S. "A tree, a mountain, a leaf has its own form. You don't ever see a line, only an edge, which actually continues on to the other side. What I'm trying to say is — the leaf has its own form."

However objective his theory and aim, he occasionally wanders off into figurative painting, when he feels so inclined. His last show, in May, was at the Dewey Gallery in New York City.

Winter months are spent in Stamford, Conn., with weekly trips to Bard College in Annandale-on-the-Hudson, to teach art and graphics.

In the Herald Tribune of June 3, 1962, Miss Emily Genauer wrote: "In Louis Schanker's newest work, there is a beautiful assurance, and no less freedom. There are a new buoyancy and verve. Symbol has returned, but it has been purified, simplified, given more universal application."

# 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

SAG HARBOR EXPRESS THURSDAY, JUNE 25, 1964

## PLACES TO GO THINGS TO DO

### ART EXHIBITION

The 26th annual Guild Hall artists member's exhibition is in progress until July 7. Among those having work on exhibit are Peter Blanc, Daga and Jack Ramsey, Louis Schanker, Alida Schoening, Muriel Streeter, Val Telberg, Theodora Uehlzmann, and Fred Ulrich. Frances Miller of Bridgehampton and Victor De Pauw of East Hampton, both well known in the Harbor also have their paintings exhibited.

oOo







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.

### 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

shape of lumber's origin

NY Times, May 9, 1964

## Schanker Show To Open May 5

Louis Schanker of Stamford, Conn., Sag Harbor, and East Hampton, will have his first major exhibition of sculpture at the Granite Gallery, 63 East 57th St., New York, opening May 5. Mr. Schanker's first one-man show was in 1933; he has had over 30 others during the last three decades.

The coming exhibit will include over 25 non-objective figures carved in charred wood during the past year; also included will be drawings and idea sketches for the sculpture. Five of the pieces to be shown drew their inspiration from an East Hampton shipwreck. The pine wood for some of the carvings comes from the porch post of his Federal house in Sag Harbor, it is more than 100 years old.

A leading abstract artist and a recognized master in the field of wood block color printing, Mr. Schanker conceived his new form of sculpture following a trip to Greece and Italy last year. His work was shown at the Bleecker East Hampton Gallery last summer.



# 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 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.'"

**SUNDAY**  
*Press*  
*Profile*  
By William Reidy

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 at Bard College at Annandale-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 materials 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 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.

**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 flamboyant 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."

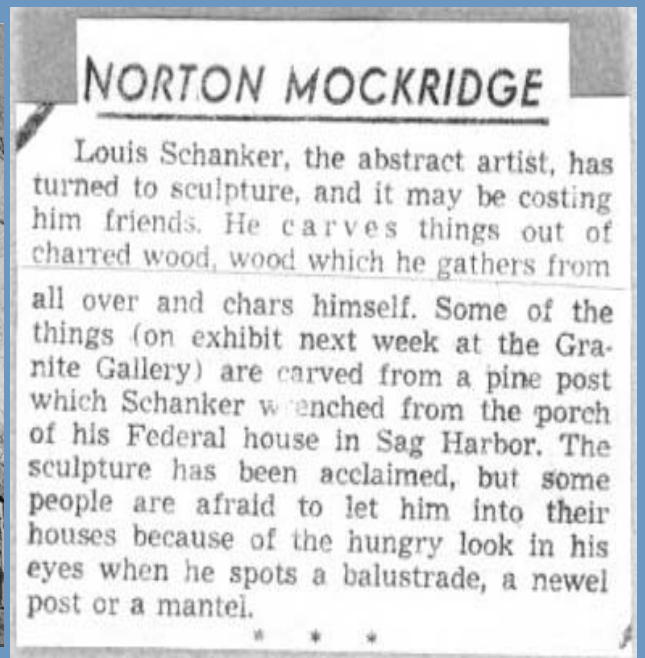
Mr. and Mrs. Schanker delight in traveling the world, looking at its beauty. Recently the couple visited many of the Greek islands as well as taking a new glimpse of the great art in Rome.

**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 used the porch posts from his Sag Harbor, Long Island house that he owned from the 1940's to the 1970's, as raw material for this sculpture,. This prompted the columnist, Norton Mockridge, to write the above NY Telegram article in 1964.



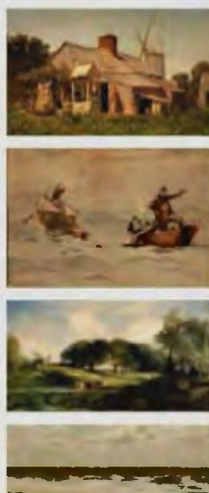


## PARRISH EAST END STORIES

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THE SOUTH FORK - LONG ISLAND: ITS ARTISTS  
AUGUST 9 - AUGUST 30 1964



The work done by artists on the South Fork may be broken down into four distinct groups, admitting innumerable variations. The first group interpreted the world in terms of luminosity, values and color. These painters developed their approach from the Munich school, the painting of West, Copley and the itinerant portraitists. The symbolism was traditional and readily apprehended. Childs Hassam, James Preston Hamilton King brought to the South Fork the new, vivid colors of the Impressionist School. A second group of artists, the Symbolists, were

### RELATED PEOPLE

Jackson Pollock  
Arthur Quartley  
Louis Schanker  
Moses Soyer  
Larry Rivers  
Moses Soyer  
John Henry Tawhman



East Hampton Star July 9, 1964



East Hampton Star  
September 10, 1964

## Holman Evening Reported Success

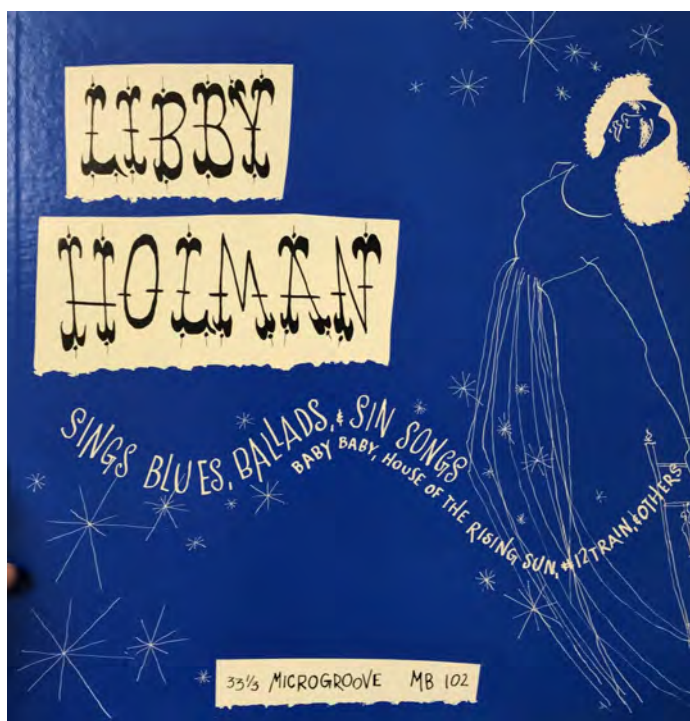
The recital given in the John Drew Theater on Sunday evening, Aug. 30, by noted blues singer Libby Holman (in private life she is the wife of Louis Schanker, the artist, with a summer home on the dunes here) was a tremendous success both financially and artistically, it was reported this week. All proceeds went to Guild Hall, and Miss Holman donated the expenses connected with her presentation. The theater was sold out five days before the performance, it could have sold out for two nights.

Conrad Thibault, artistic director of Guild Hall, introduced Miss Holman and the Guild Hall trustees presented her with red roses.

She had been working all summer on this program, largely quite different from the torch songs with which she won stardom. She will go on tour shortly with the program, in university towns. Is consisted largely of American Negro folk songs, arranged by the Negro composer Gerald Cook, who also accompanied the singing here.

Among these numbers were a "Riddle Song," and "Mosquitoes in My Kitchen." At the close of the program, as encores, Miss Holman gave some familiar night club numbers: "Careless Love," "Body and Soul," and "Something To Remember You By." It was a beautifully varied program.

A perfectionist, Miss Holman even brought her own lighting expert to arrange that part of the presentation. The audience found it an exciting program.







Celebrities Backstage at John Drew Theater,  
Guild Hall in East Hampton  
(l. to r.) Vincent Donohue, Anne Jackson,  
Libby Holman, Eli Wallach and Louis Schanker

East Hampton Star November 11, 1965



### At Unicef Benefit Concert

**LIBBY HOLMAN** (Mrs. Louis Schanker) of New York and Sag Harbor was greeted after her Unicef benefit concert at the United Nations Building in New York last week by John Larsen, who built the African kraal summer home off Hands Creek Road, East Hampton. The benefit was a sell-out.

East Hampton Star, November 4, 1965

### Libby Holman Singing For Unicef



**LIBBY HOLMAN** (Mrs. Louis Schanker of East Hampton) sang last night at the Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium at the United Nations in a benefit for Unicef, and will repeat the sellout tonight. Here, she presents a ticket to Henry R. Labouisse, executive director of Unicef.



*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.

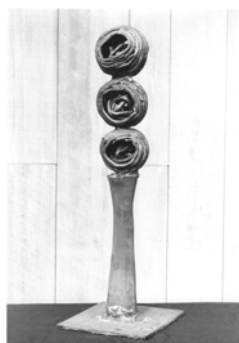
Schanker, a charmingly rough-hewn character himself, has based his current show on the theme of the circle or sphere, and many of the pieces have moveable parts, nut and kernel shapes that can be joggled intriguingly.

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.

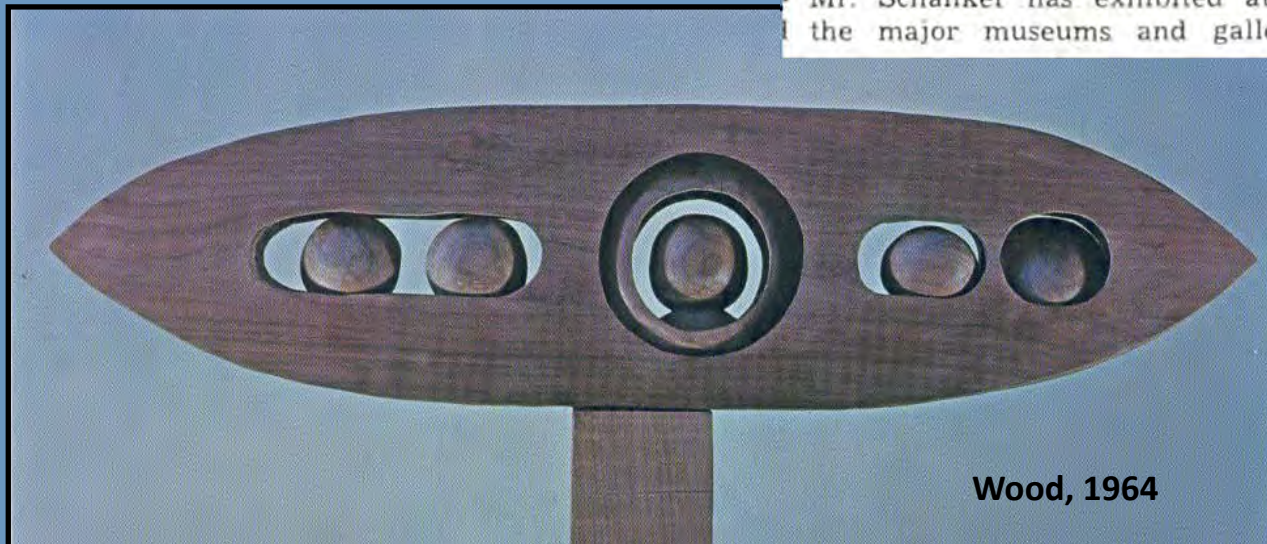


East Hampton Star June 13, 1967

### *Guild Hall Names Exhibit Winners*

#### Sculpture

Louis Schanker of East Hampton won first prize in sculpture for his bronze, "Oval Shape With Balls." Mr. Schanker has exhibited at all the major museums and galleries



Wood, 1964

These were part of a series which Schanker called his "Feelies." They were the 3 dimensional expression of his "Circle Image." He chiseled and polished one or more movable spheres that remain entrapped, exactly as he formed them in the body of the work. The spheres can be rotated, but they can't be removed from the piece. Always experimenting with different materials, the piece in the center was formed of window caulking which was then bronzed. In 1966 Schanker invited a group of children from the Lighthouse for the Blind to come and experience his sculptures at the Dorsky Gallery, NYC. (From Schanker's personal clippings.)



## Guild Hall Names Six 1966 'Artists of Region'

Lee Krasner and Morton Kaish, be on view for the first time here, painters, and printmakers Mark Freeman, Gerson Leiber, Louis Schanker and Aubrey Schwartz, will be represented in the annual "Artists of the Region" exhibition at Guild Hall, East Hampton, from Aug. 23 through Sept. 7.

In the original "Artists of the Region" exhibition in 1949, Miss Krasner, along with her husband, Jackson Pollock, had shown works. All of her current selections will

Her last major showing, at the Whitechapel Gallery in London, was chosen by the British Arts Council to tour museums of the British Isles and later will go to the new Israel Museum and Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum. Miss Krasner is represented in New York by the Marlborough-Gerson Gallery.

Morton Kaish, an East Hampton summer resident, in his first showing here will be represented by nine paintings and six gouaches. He studied at Syracuse University, in Paris and Florence, and has exhibited both in this country and in Europe. His most recent show was at the Staempfli Gallery in New York.

### 'Texture Prints'

Mark Freeman of Southampton

will include among his works some of his "texture prints," which are made from a relief-type plate, usually on sepia or black paper. Mr. Freeman was a Carnegie Fellow in art

and archeology at the Sorbonne. His work is in the Library of Congress among other collections.

Gerson Leiber of Springs has exhibited in over 150 national exhibitions and several internationals in Rome, Salzburg, Mexico City and London. His work is in the Metropolitan, Brooklyn and Cincinnati museums, among others.

Louis Schanker, an East Hampton resident, has taught at the New School and Bard College, where he is now professor emeritus. His works in the Metropolitan, Whitney and Modern Art museums.

Aubrey Schwartz, twice winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship, is a resident of Sag Harbor. His work is in the National Gallery, Brooklyn; Philadelphia Museums, the Art Institute of Chicago and others. He will show recent prints.



Libby and Lou's 1960 Rolls Royce Silver Cloud convertible. They used it for driving about town. More than once Lou was known to put buckets and waders in the trunk to collect mussels at Jessup's Neck in Sag Harbor for dinner.



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

Sag Harbor Express,

August 18, 1966

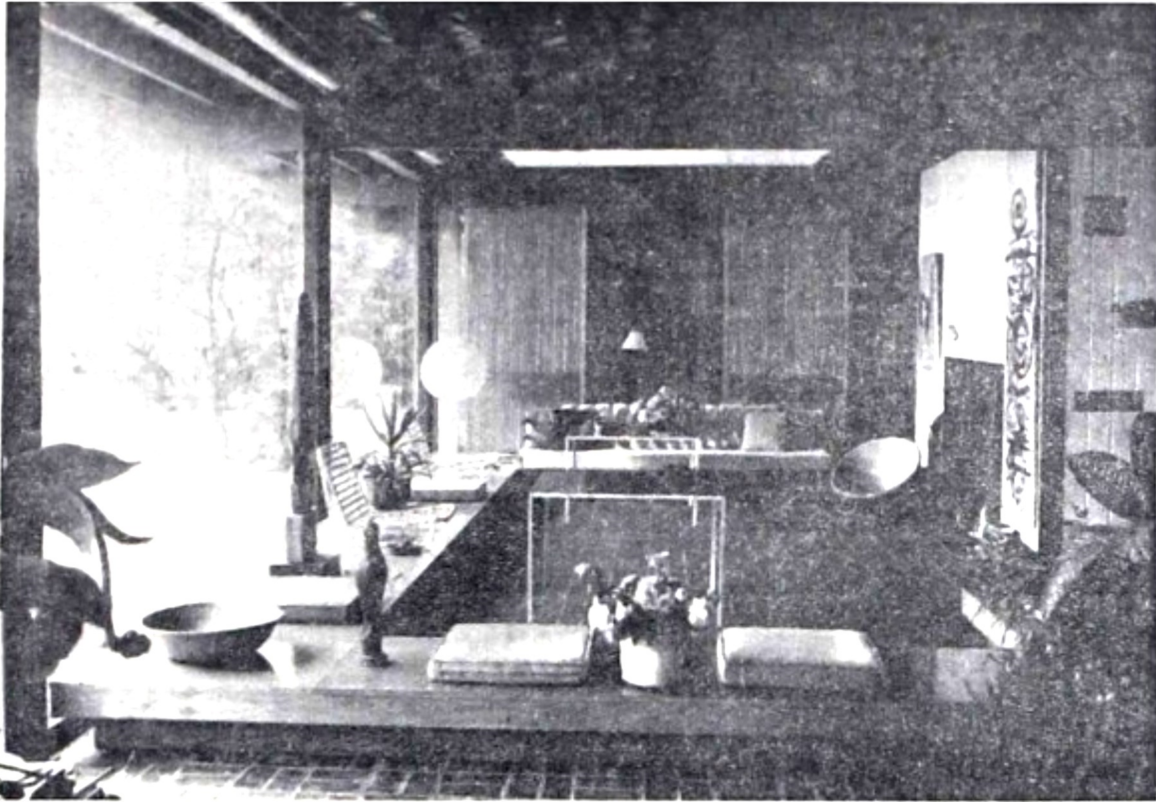
## *Guild Hall*

### *News*

#### ARTISTS OF THE REGION EXHIBITION

Two distinguished American painters, Lee Krasner and Morton Kaish; and four well-known print makers — Mark Freeman, Gerson Leibler, Louis Schanker and Aubrey Schwartz, will be represented in the annual Artists of the Region exhibition at Guild Hall, East Hampton from August 23 through September 7.

Louis Schanker, a versatile artist represented earlier this season in a group sculpture exhibition in the Guild Hall garden, will show prints for which he achieved considerable recognition earlier in his career. Schanker, who lives in East Hampton, has taught at the New School and at Bard College where he is now Professor Emeritus. His work is in collections of the Metropolitan and Whitney museums as well as the Museum of Modern Art and other important collections across the country.



DUNE HOME of Louis Schanker, the artist and his wife, Libby Holman, the singer, will be on the Guild Hall tour, from 2:30 to 6 p.m. Tuesday. Mr. Schanker is opening his studio for the tour as well, as are two other painters.

Betty Schellinger Photo

SAG HARBOR EXPRESS, THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1967

## *Guild Hall News* **Race Track News**

The best amateur race

Tues. Aug. 22 **ART IN THE HOME.** A Tour of Six  
2:30 to 6 P.M. Distinguished Houses: Mrs. Howard B.  
Dean and Mrs. Otto L. Speath.  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard V. Hare.  
Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Gottlieb.  
Louis Schanker and Libby Holman.  
Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Chalif.  
Mr. and Mrs. David McConnell.  
Alfonso A. Ossorio and Edward F.  
Dragon.

During the years in the Hamptons, Lou and Libby were active in both the art and theatrical communities. Many parties and fundraisers were held at their home each summer. Guests included, amongst others, friends Montgomery Clift, Elizabeth Taylor, Mark Rothko, Ilya Bolotowsky, Lee Krasner as well as poets, writers, politicians and religious leaders.



THE STAR TALKS TO:

# Mr. and Mrs. Louis Schanker

Libby Holman, a noted torch and blues singer, lives near Two Mile Hollow beach. Bob Ullman, publicity director for the John Drew Theater, took me over last Sunday to talk to her and to her husband, Louis Schanker, an artist who works in oils, watercolors, ceramics and who also sculpts in various mediums.

Miss Holman, to use her professional name, met us at the door and showed me around her home, an open glass-walled house that was designed by Bob Rosenberg.

There is a minuscule swimming pool just outside the front of the building, a free-form pool that has been cleverly designed to fit one corner of the property. "I call it my moon-reflecting, meditating pool," Miss Holman explained.

## Night Blooming Cereus

She next showed me an indoor plant, a large affair with fan shaped leaves and two or three faded blooms. "That's a night blooming Cereus. It only blooms once a year and then only at night. Are you interested in flowers?"

I said yes, and she took me on a tour of her garden, showing me hanging fuschia and bridal wreath, geraniums and tuber roses. One small, square patch of ground had been covered with chips of rose quartz and another lime-colored stone that a friend had sent her from Colorado.

Back inside and settled down, I asked Miss Holman what concerts she had coming up.

"I'm doing a concert for my alma mater, the University of Cincinnati, in October. I've also been asked to do a recital at the United Nations Pavilion of the Montreal Expo in September. I've already done several benefit concerts for the United Nations Children's Fund, in the Dag Hammarskjöld Theater at the U.N. And, of course, there's the Guild Hall benefit I'm doing on September third."

"Her last Guild Hall benefit was a complete sellout," Publicity man Ullman added. "Everybody came."

## Sojourner Truth

I asked what kind of program she

would be presenting. "I'm really working with Gerald Cook in an interplay of voice and music. He does all my arrangements. Gerald is an extremely accomplished musician and will always keep it contemporary. I don't sing folk songs but songs with a folk flavor, that is they are not repetitive like regular folk songs.

"For example, Gerald has set to music some speeches of a fantastic woman, Sojourner Truth, who was born in slavery in 1798. A Dutch family owned her. She was emancipated in 1828 but the incredible thing about her was the speeches she made about civil rights and woman's rights, and this was before the Civil War.

"She had an enormous sense of humor. Anyway, we dug up these speeches and Gerald has set them to music. Gerald and I work against each other and with each other, we create a sort of musical tension between us. I never use a mike and consider Gerald as my first partner and the audience as my second partner."

"Did you know your record is still in Liberty's window?" Bob Ullman asked.

## Knew Everyone

Miss Holman knew almost everyone in the music world back in the late 1920's. She knew Richard Rodgers, Leonard Stillman, Florenz Ziegfeld, Vincent Youmans, Oscar Hammerstein II, and scores of others.

She introduced "Moaning Low," "Can't We Be Friends," "Body And Soul," and "Something to Remember You By." Her last Broadway appearance was in "You Never Know," a Cole Porter musical in which she appeared with Clifton Webb.

In 1941 she took up folk singing in earnest, specializing in American folk songs, and studied under Josh White with whom she went on a recital tour that included an eight month stand in New York.

"Boston University has started a Libby Holman collection of memor-

abilia and documents," she said. "They also have a Martin Luther King collection, and it was in this collection that we found the speeches of Sojourner Truth. Dr. King is a good friend of mine."

## Miked-Up

I asked Miss Holman what she thought of the Beatles. "I really don't know, I don't keep my finger on the pulse of modern-day singers. Gerald Cook says they are an excellent group."

And Barbra Streisand? "A little too slick, I'm afraid, not her but all that screaming and the way it's miked up."

Judy Garland? "A very good singer."

I asked Miss Holman why she thought there was such a swing to folk music among the young. "I really don't know," she confessed.

At this point her husband joined in the conversation. Louis Schanker is an accomplished artist who first broke into prominence with some murals he did for the 1939 World's Fair in New York. His work is represented in the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum and the Metropolitan Museum, as well as various private, college and university collections.

Three of his pieces of sculpture are currently on display in Guild Hall's benefit show for new acquisitions. "I think it's a rejection of the mechanical world that young people find themselves in," Mr. Schanker said. "You find the same sort of thing in the various movements of modern art that are actually rejections of sophistication in art."

I asked Miss Holman what kind of audience she preferred. "I like them all. A lot of older people, of course, remember me from my torch singing days, but I've given concerts in colleges where the young people reacted very enthusiastically."

Miss Holman is a slim woman,

deeply tanned, and wears a minimum of make-up. She is an articulate conversationalist and, once started, her flow of talk is liable to skip around, touching briefly on all kinds of subjects.

"I read your piece about Father Terence Netter," she said. "I did two concerts for him at Georgetown University, to raise funds for Civil Rights organizations."

## Sardine Crush

Miss Holman wanted to know what I did and where I lived. I told her and she said, "You and your wife will have to come over sometime to one of my sardine crushes. Last year I invited 100 and 350 showed up."

"Vladimir Horowitz came and watched the young people dancing. Edward Albee came and brought his mother with him. All kinds of people were here; it was mobbed."

I thanked Miss Holman for the interview. She then presented me with her latest record, which she obligingly autographed. It was raining outside, and she appeared with a Japanese umbrella that she insisted on sheltering me with on our way to the car.

Arthur Roth



# ***Libby Holman To Sing***

Libby Holman will sing at the John Drew Theater Sunday evening, but if you haven't bought your tickets yet you will not hear her. The show, a benefit for Guild Hall, has been sold out since June.

Miss Holman, who as Mrs. Louis Schanker is an East Hampton summer resident, introduced some of the great songs of Youmans, Porter, Rodgers and Hart, and Dietz and Swartz in the 1920's and 30's. Now, in the 60's, she sings only for causes close to her heart.

Miss Holman and her musical collaborator, Gerald Cook, have titled the 8:40 p.m. program "Musical Interplay."

## **New York**

The voice and piano performance will feature American folk blues and ballads, including a new work by Mr. Cook based on the writings of the slave Sojourner Truth.

It is "Quotations of Sojourner

"Watch and Pray." Sojourner Truth (1797-1883) was the first Negro woman to speak out for women's rights before the Civil War. She was freed in 1828.

In October, Miss Holman has been invited by the University of Cincinnati, of which she is a graduate, to give two concerts to inaugurate the University's new Music Center.

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR, EAST HAMPTON, N. Y., AUGUST 26, 1967

## **Rehearsing "Musical Interplay"**



**LIBBY HOLMAN** and Gerald Cook will present a "Musical Interplay" of voice and piano at the John Drew Theater on Sunday evening, Sept. 3, as a Guild Hall benefit. The event is already sold out. Miss Holman is Mrs. Louis Schanker, an East Hampton summer resident.





Shunryu Suzuki Roshi and others from the Zen center of San Francisco relax on the deck overlooking the Atlantic at Dune House in East Hampton sometime in the late 1960's. Libby and Lou had developed an interest in Zen meditation, traveling to Japan in the early 1960's.



Schanker's bronze, "Oval with Balls," which won first prize at the Guild Hall Sculpture exhibition in 1967, can be seen through the all glass Dune House.



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King, Coretta Scott.

**My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr.**

First edition of Coretta Scott King's memoir. (1969)

Presentation copy.

***For Libby and Louis With love and deepest gratitude for your friendship, your concern, your love and your devotion to the ideals for which Martin worked and gave his life.....May you find continued fulfillment as you share your lives together.  
Coretta.***



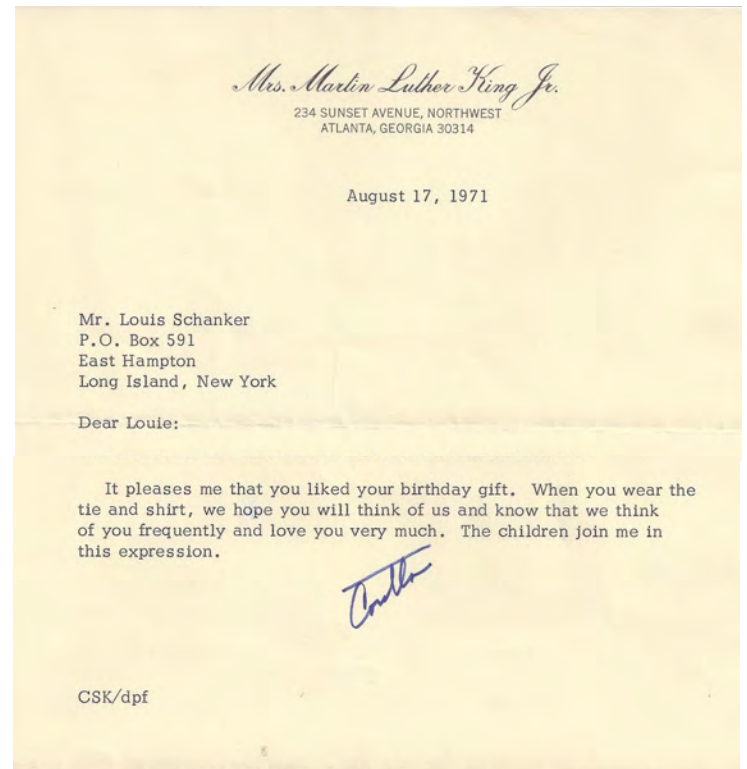


Lou, Coretta, Libby and a guest at a Dune House fundraiser © 1970.

Libby Holman Schanker was an early supporter of Martin Luther King, sponsoring his trip to India to study Ghandi's concept of passive resistance. In later years, Lou and Libby hosted the family at Dune House and held several fundraisers for Coretta . During the day the family relaxed on the East Hampton beaches.

Libby Holman had such a reputation for battling racism in America throughout the 1940s and 1950s that, when she went behind the scenes after a rally to tell Dr Martin Luther King how his non-violent Civil Rights campaign had inspired her, he responded: "You got that the wrong way round, Libby, it was you who inspired me with your campaigning against racism."





Schanker's birthday was at the end of July. Here Libby and Lou celebrate with the whole King family in 1970. After Libby's passing in 1971 Lou and Coretta remained good friends. These are examples of their correspondence.

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ATL.=ZCZC 215 VW PDB ATLANTA GA 20 720P EDT.=			
PMS LOUIS SCHANKER.= PHONE 516-324-0014			
291 EAST HAMPTON LI NY.=.= EAST HAMPTON NY 11937			
ON YOUR BIRTHDAY WE RECALL WITH JOY THE TIME WE SHARED			
THIS.=SPECIAL DAY WITH YOU WE THINK OF YOU OFTEN AND			
SEND OUR BEST WISHES AND LOVE.=			
CORETTA AND CHILDREN.=			
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*Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr.*

234 SUNSET AVENUE, NORTHWEST  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30314

June 17, 1971

Dear Louie,

As we approach this Father's Day occasion, my children and I are painfully aware of the absence of our beloved father and devoted husband. Yet, our hearts are filled with gratitude for the blessings of your friendship, love and support. May the God of love, mercy, justice and peace help you to experience all the fulfillment which this occasion suggests.

With our love,

*Coutta  
&  
The children*

Mr. Louie Schanker  
Treetops, Merrie Brooke Lane  
Box 359  
Stamford, Connecticut 06904





## Libby Holman (1904-1971)

Our aunt, Libby Holman Schanker, tragically committed suicide on June 18, 1971.

She was one of the strongest women we have ever met. Her high-profile life was filled with many challenges and yet they only seemed to make her even stronger.



In addition to her successful singing/acting career she was an activist involved in many of the struggles of her era. Her life was significantly affected by events in 1932 when her husband, Zachary Smith Reynolds, accidentally shot himself at Reynolda, their North Carolina home. Libby left several recordings. In one, a distraught Libby said that what had occurred was due to Smith's recklessness with guns. She was heartbroken. She spoke of how she, other family members and friends tried to stop him from being so irresponsible. She added that there had been previous minor accidents, but that the family chose not to report them. The death of Smith prompted her to become a strong gun safety advocate.

She supported the young Martin Luther King Jr. and others involved in the civil rights and gay rights movements. Libby was also politically active and fought for the rights of soldiers returning home from serving in Vietnam. She was especially empathetic with the mothers who had lost their sons due to the war. (Libby's son "Topper" died at the age of seventeen in a mountain climbing accident.) She later established the Christopher Reynolds Foundation in his name.

Libby battled depression all her adult life but seemed to have it under control. The unfortunate events during the latter part of the 1960's took their toll on her. The deaths of friends, Montgomery Clift, Martin Luther King Jr., John Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and the derailments of the McCarthy and McGovern presidential campaigns affected her greatly. She was also dealing with the recent death of longtime friend and lawyer, Benet Polikoff, still coping with the loss of her older sister, Marion, and the deteriorating health of her good friend Jane Bowles.

Around this time, she also became aware that a new book, again sensationalizing her life, was being written. Libby was accustomed to dealing with fictitious stories about her, many from people who did not agree with her strong social and political views. She would not allow the author an interview. In retaliation he intimidated Libby, her family, friends, and staff who also chose not to meet with him. Libby felt responsible for them having to go through this, which greatly added to her stress, and affected her already very fragile health. (When the "Dreams That Money Can Buy" book was published in 1985, Libby's longtime lawyer, Jack Clareman considered suing due to its many inconsistencies. After the book received such poor reviews from the *New York Times* and *Kirkus Reviews*, he assumed that it would not sell well and decided not to move ahead with the lawsuit.

These accumulating factors drove Libby, despite her valiant efforts and those of others concerned for her, such as good friends Coretta Scott King, and Olga Hirshhorn, to give into her depression and take her own life. Her husband, artist Louis Schanker, with the help of staff, had been able to save Libby during two previous suicide attempts. They unfortunately couldn't prevent her third attempt. In her recordings, Libby also thanked Schanker and others for their efforts in trying to help her get through these difficult times. She expressed her love for him and sons Timmy and Tony, asking for their forgiveness in not being able to fight her depression any longer. Schanker and the boys remained close after her passing.

Libby's whole life was very turbulent, yet she was able to keep her depression under control. She was a fighter. We must all be on guard for signs and encourage those who are suffering to seek the help they need. Libby was a very private person, however, we feel that she would have wanted us to pass this on if it might be of some help to others.

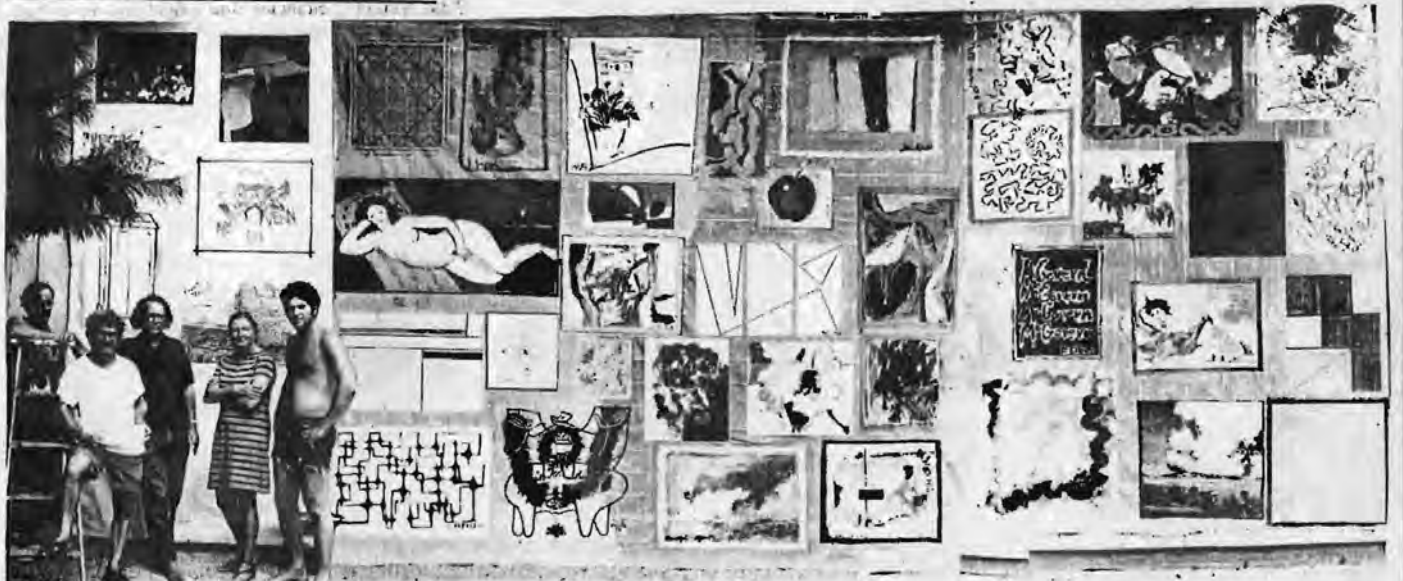
## Mural created to raise money for McGovern Campaign August ,1972



Photographs for The New York Times by JOE ADAMS

Warren Brandt, right, at work at the political painting session on Thursday in an East Hampton, L.I., studio. Seated at the right rear is Harold Rosenberg, art critic.

### 6 - East Hampton Summer Sun - Sept. 14, 1972



Standing in front of the forty foot Springs mural, from left to right are Liel Rupe, Herman Cherry, Kimber Smith, Elaine Benson and Bill Coff. The artists who contributed to this thing are Pearl Fine, Ralph Carpenter, Ilya Bolotowski, Schivonen, John Oppor, Calvin Albert, Jimmy Ernst, Jane Freiliker, Bill DeKooning, Jim Brooks, Charlotte Parks, Manouch Yektai, Bill Durham, Nivola, Harlan Jackson, John Little, Kyle Morris, Ibram Lassaw,

Elaine DeKooning, Larry Rivers, Lee Krasner, Peter Grippi, Louie Schanker, Warren Brandt, Nicole Bigar, Francille Downs, Arnold Hoffmann, Ray Parker, Vincent Longo, Mary Abbott, Herman Cherry, Ron Lusker, Ray Prohaska, V.V. Rankin and Arline Wingate. \$10 cash first prize to the first person who clips this photo out and indicates properly which artist did which painting.



# 46 L.I. Artists Brush Up for Politics

By JOHN CANADAY

Special to The New York Times

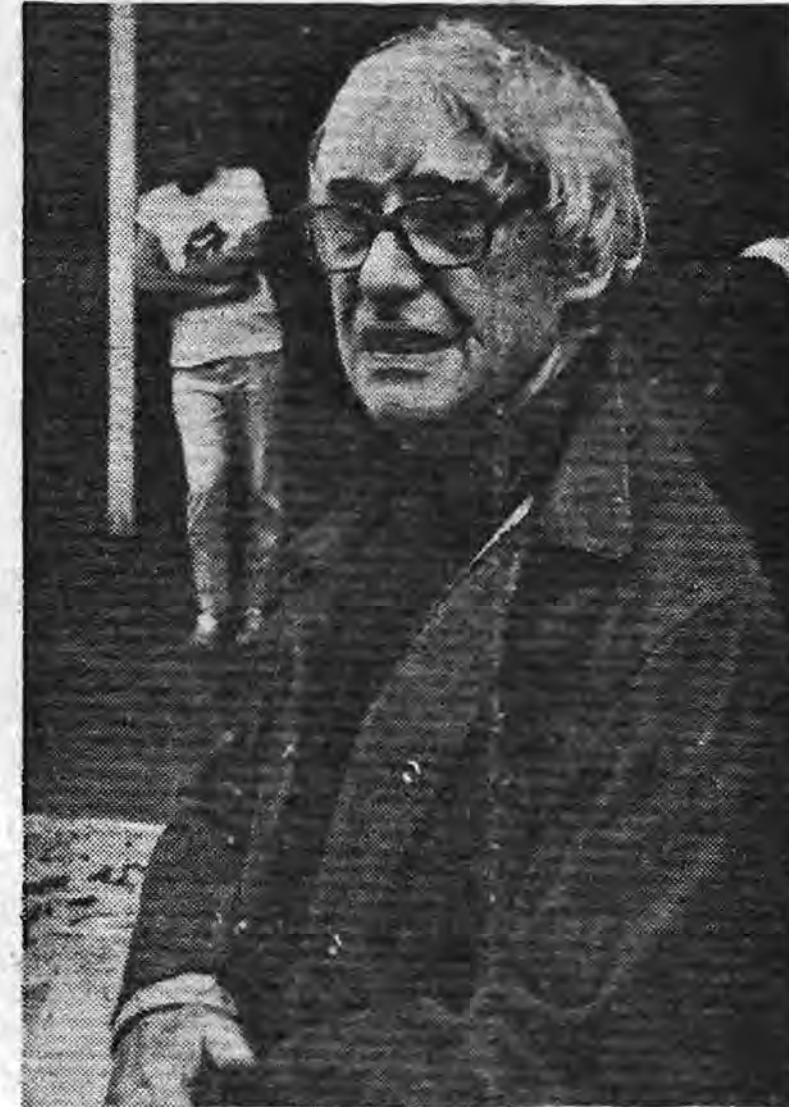
EAST HAMPTON, L. I., Aug. 18—It looked a little like a reunion of graduates of the Cedar bar, the New York pub where artists and critics generated abstract expressionism during the nineteen-fifties. It looked even more like a paint-out for the adult and golden age Fun with Art classes of any community art center. In spite of a couple of McGovern buttons and one McGovern sweatshirt it didn't look at all like a political rally, which it was.

Forty-six artists who live or summer in the Hamptons had signed up for a project that they hope will bring about \$25,000 (hopes vary upward and downward) to the McGovern fund when their combined efforts on two giant canvasses are auctioned in September. Yesterday afternoon about 25 or 30 of them met here in the backyard of the studio of the late Wilfrid Zogbaum and lit into (which involved getting onto) the canvasses, one 12 by 15 feet, the other 9 by 12 feet, which were laid out on the ground. Artists who couldn't attend sent work to be pasted on.

## A Reserved Spot

The session was scheduled to begin at 4 P.M. and contrary to expectations it really did. The artists not only arrived on time but also staked their claims to choice spots like homesteaders in a land rush. By 4:30 the canvasses were literally crawling with painters, and late-comers were jockeying for places.

"Can't you get another sheet or something?" one of them asked Herman Cherry, a Cedar bar alumnus who,



Willem de Kooning, the dean of Hampton painters

with David Myers, a writer, is the project's impresario. "No, I can't," Mr. Cherry answered. "Just paint smaller."

"I gave them a limitation of size but naturally they disregarded it," he went on, and added a refrain that had been recurrent during the afternoon: "De Kooning will be here any minute now." An area about 2½ feet square on the southwest corner of the smaller canvas had been reserved for Willem de Kooning as the dean (i.e.,

the highest-priced) of Hampton painters.

Mr. Cherry explained that the canvasses, which are unmounted, will be used as curtains or backdrops for an evening of skits by artists and writers of the area to be performed Sept. 1 in nearby Amagansett as their traditional end-of-summer frolic and get-together. (It sometimes takes the form of a baseball game, but lately a lot of joints are getting a bit stiff.)

"We've already got one line for the skits—like in the old Groucho Marx song, 'Whatever It Is I'm Against It'" [the Harry Ruby-Bert Kalmar song from "A Night at the Opera"]. "Whatever It Is, Amagansett."

The artists' individual areas, spotted across and up and down the canvases, are meant to resemble the advertisements on asbestos curtains in oldtime vaudeville and burlesque houses, except that most of them will be abstractions. One nonabstract painter, Warren Brandt, known as a strong colorist, was at work on a large reclining nude that began as a solid white area with the figure sketched in in gray and punctuated by four red dots for the navel, nipples and mouth, defining four points of a kite-shaped quadrangle.

"Once that's settled, I'm O.K.," Mr. Brandt said.

#### Few Secrets Revealed

"Now we know how he does it," another painter commented, but not many studio secrets were given away. Robbed of their easels, the artists were more interested in comparing the advantages of the crawl, the crouch, the squat or, for the more agile, the standing full bend, as positions for working on a horizontal surface. A guest of honor, Harold Rosenberg, the art critic, dean emeritus of the Cedar and inventor of the term "action painting," was seeing plenty of it.

Garb for the occasion was informal but not eccentric, with the exception of Larry Rivers's. Mr. Rivers was modeling a floppy beret improvised from a pair of women's panties, pale blue silk with a dainty floral pattern. The Rivers Beret, which falls across one ear but reveals it through a leg opening, is not expected to catch on.

Mr. Rivers, although a painter, was present as the camera half of one of four mike-and-camera teams whose documentaries will immortalize such comments as Manoucher Yektai's "What this really is, is a jam session." Jimmy Ernst's "We've got nothing to worry about because neither of the candidates paints on the side," and somebody's "Don't slip up on me with the mike like that. That's a Republican trick."

#### The Star Appears

At about 5 o'clock the star of the day, unexpectedly bearing a vivid resemblance to Janet Flanner, stepped out of the bushes near his corner of the canvas, and the mikes clustered around him.

"How did you get here, Mr. de Kooning?" asked one mike-bearer, a question that sounded reasonable enough to a reporter who had made it from New York by way of a train, a bus, and \$18 worth of taxis.

"I walked over," said Mr. de Kooning.

Wasting no time, he assumed a medium crouch and began to work from two pages of pencil sketches he had prepared in advance. Within 10 minutes his designated area was filled with a pattern of black on white, and, yielding to the goad of the territorial imperative, he crossed the line into an area where Louis Schanker had been working all afternoon on a very neat black on white pattern of his own.

"Hey!" said Mr. Schanker. "You got some paint on mine!"

Mr. de Kooning smiled and put on a finishing touch or two and faded back into the bushes.

"What should I do?" Mr. Schanker asked of a wide audience.

"Paint it out," answered Ralph Carpentier, the landscape painter, presumably meaning paint out the de Kooning part.

"Mine's better than his is anyhow," said Mr. Schanker. "And I've still got my border to put in."

#### A Little Squiggle

The border was put in, two inches wide, bright orange and extending slightly into de Kooning country. A small taillike squiggle from Mr. de Kooning's brush was left within the Schanker area, or at least was still there at 5:30 when this reporter last observed it.

"We all love each other," Jimmy Ernst commented. "It's the World of East Hampton."

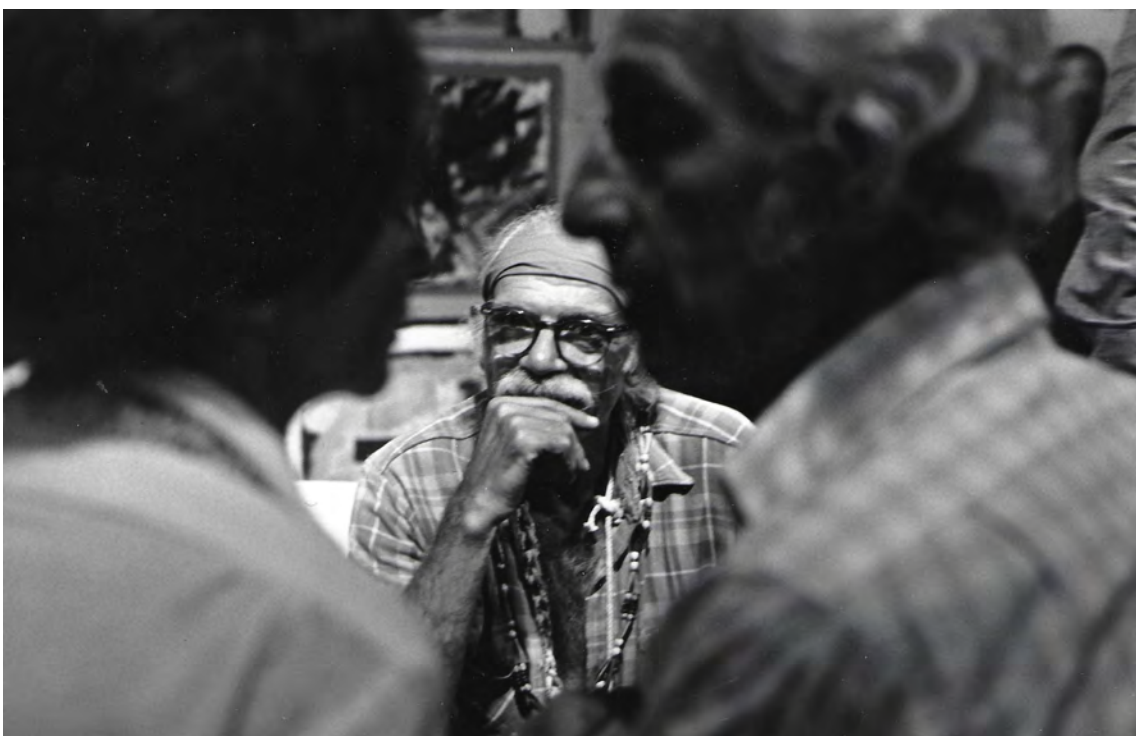
The participating artists, in addition to those mentioned, are Pearl Fine, Ilya Bolotowsky, Oli Sihvonen, Calvin Albert, John Oppen, Jane Freiliker, John Grillo, Adolf Gottlieb, James Brooks, Charlotte Parks, Bigar, Bill Durham, Constantino Nivola, Harlan Jackson, Francile Lord, John Little, Kyle Morris, Robert Gwathmey, Alfonso Ossorio, Ibram Lassaw, John McMahon, Elaine de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein, Lee Krasner, Arnold Hoffman, Peter Grippi, Ray Parker, Paul Georges, Saul Steinberg, Kimber Smith, Val Telberg, Jack Youngerman, Alec Brook, Gina Knee, Paul Brach, Vincent Longo, Mary Abbott and Vivi Rankin.

de Kooning frequently attended parties and charitable events at Schanker's East Hampton home, Dune house. Schanker and de Kooning were friends since the 1930's when both worked at the Mural division of the WPA in New York City.





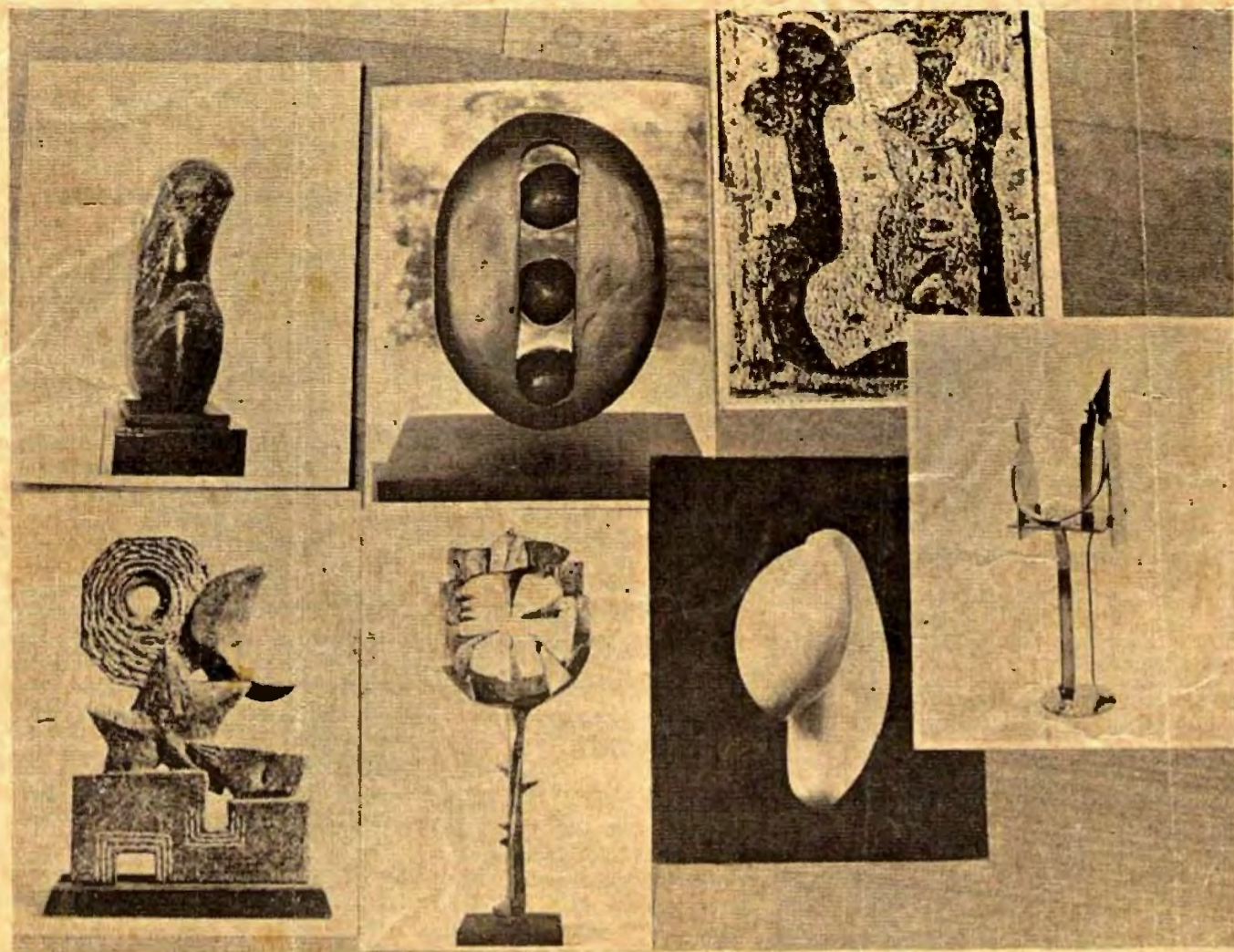
The Mural was used as curtain or backdrop for an evening of skits by artists and writers of the area to be performed in nearby Amagansett as their traditional end-of-summer frolic and get-together. (It sometimes takes the form of a baseball game, but lately a lot of joints are getting a bit stiff.) Herman Cherry





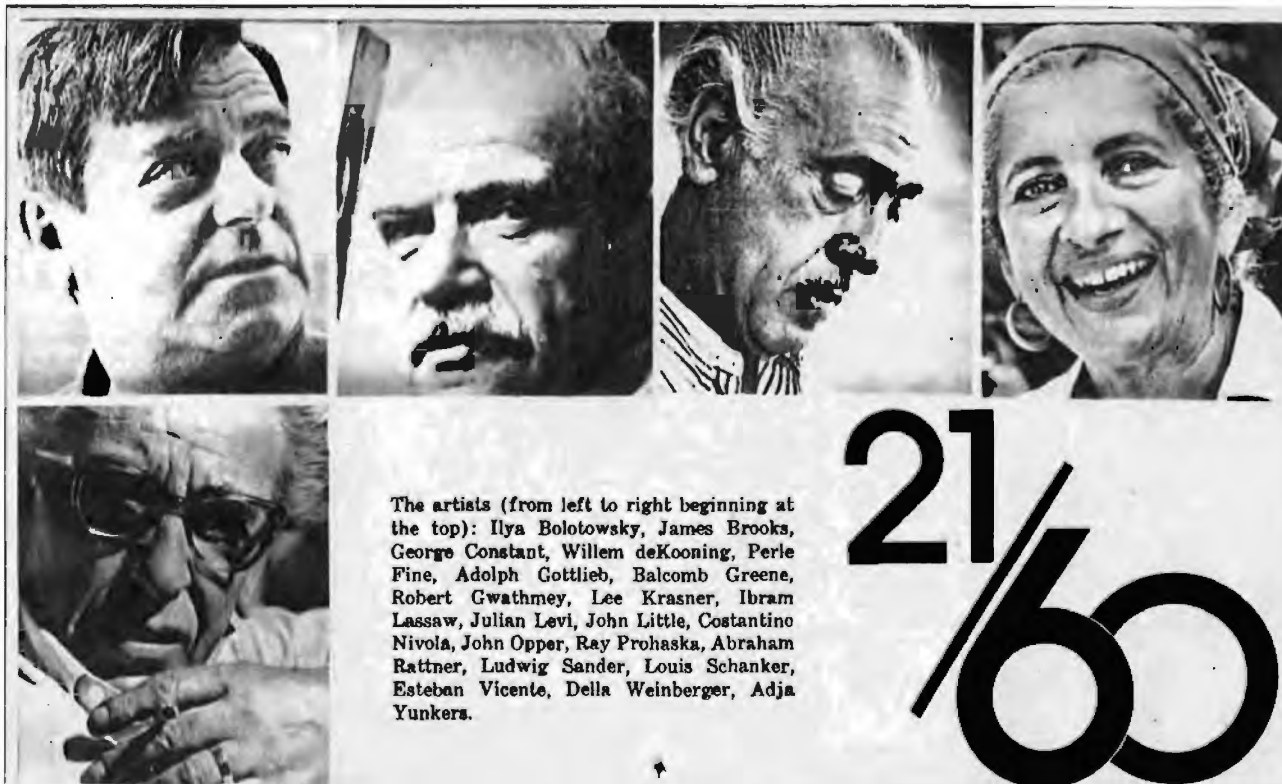
THE EAST HAMPTON STAR, EAST HAMPTON, N.Y., JULY 13, 1972

## In Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit



SHOWN IN A PHOTO MONTAGE are seven of the sculptures to be included in a new show, "23 Sculptors of the Region," opening July 15 in the Ruth Dean Garden of Guild Hall. Top, from left: "Poseidon," by Grace Zeblisky; "Oval with Three Balls" by Louis Schanker; "Crumblage," by Maria Martel. Bottom: Nat Werner's "On the Seventh Day He Rested;" "Thorn Flower," by Arline Wingate; Dorothy Abbott's "Lyra," and "Cafe" by William Dorothy Beskind.





The artists (from left to right beginning at the top): Ilya Bolotowsky, James Brooks, George Constant, Willem deKooning, Perle Fine, Adolph Gottlieb, Balcomb Greene, Robert Gwathmey, Lee Krasner, Ibram Lassaw, Julian Levi, John Little, Costantino Nivola, John Opper, Ray Prohaska, Abraham Rattner, Ludwig Sander, Louis Schanker, Esteban Vicente, Della Weinberger, Adja Yunkers.

MUSEUM SECTION GUILD HALL EAST HAMPTON, N.Y.

## TWENTY-ONE OVER SIXTY

JULY 21 - AUGUST 12, 1973

Elayne H. Varian, Guest Director  
of the exhibition

### Foreword

This exhibition presents the triumphant production of artists of the Hamptons, a few of many, but it will demonstrate our premise, that art and life may both be long and continuously stimulating. The work on view has the power, vitality and continuation of an ever-increasing force. Some is perhaps more lyrical, but all has a great sensitivity, and presents a positive statement. The show is an opportunity to re-evaluate the work of known artists, some of whom have been clarifying and reconfirming a personal image, while other artists have been experimenting in new media.

The title — which was a decision of the artists — "Twenty-One Over Sixty" (twenty-one artists over sixty years of age) is a humorous one, and is a counter-title to the several exhibitions of "Artists under Thirty," or Forty, etc. Our intention for this exhibition was to select two works of art by each artist, but due to prior commitment this was not always possible.

It was a great privilege for me to meet the artists and their wives and husbands, whom previously I had not known. I wish to thank all the artists for their cooperation, and also Enez Whipple, Director of the Guild Hall Museum, and two indispensable members of her staff, Rae Ferren and Sherry Foster. Appreciation is due Hans Namath for his generosity in lending perceptive photographs of the artists. Toni Borgzinner's profound interest in the Hampton artists has been of inestimable help and made the preparation of this exhibition a joyous experience.

Elayne H. Varian

Director, The Contemporary Wing  
Finch College Museum of Art

All measurements are in inches	
ILYA BOLOTOWSKY	Red Trylon, 1972 acrylic on wood 84 x 9 x 9 x 9 Vertical Ellipse, Yellow, Black and Red, 1972 acrylic on canvas 67 1/2 x 47 1/2 Courtesy Grace Borgenicht Gallery
JAMES BROOKS	Fangle, 1973 acrylic on canvas 76 x 76 Gair, 1973 acrylic on canvas 64 x 64 Courtesy Martha Jackson Gallery
GEORGE CONSTANT	Parallelos, 1970 oil on canvas 50 x 60 Manhattan, 1970 oil on canvas 52 x 60 Lent by the Artist
WILLEM DE KOONING	Clam Digger, 1971 bronze height, 60" Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Bigar
PERLE FINE	An Accordment No. II, 1973 acrylic on canvas 62 x 65 An Accordment No. III, 1973 acrylic on canvas 66 x 68 Lent by the Artist
ADOLPH GOTTLIEB	Petaloid, 1971 painted corten steel 78 x 72 x 44 Courtesy Marlborough Gallery
BALCOMB GREENE	The Sea — Early Summer, 1973 oil on canvas 44 x 48 Ocean Rocks, 1972 oil on canvas 60 x 54 Courtesy Forum Gallery
ROBERT GWATHMEY	Forgot, 1973 oil on canvas 30 x 25 United, 1970 oil on canvas 62 x 40 Courtesy Terry Dintenfass, Inc.
LEE KRASNER	Rising Green, 1972 oil on cotton duck 82 x 69 Pennons, 1972 oil on linen 54 x 54 Courtesy Marlborough Gallery
IBRAM LASSAW	Spaceloom, XXVI, 1973 bronze height, 72" Lent by the Artist
JULIAN LEVI	Hook Slide, 1972 oil on canvas 50 x 46 Courtesy Frank K. M. Rehn, Inc.
JOHN LITTLE	Monoblue, 1973 collage, acrylic color on rice paper mounted on muslin 72 x 62 1/2 Lent by the Artist
COSTANTINO NIVOLA	Wall piece, model for a wall in the lobby of the State House in Albany, N. Y., 1972, cement 52 x 38 Sculptures, six models for a new intermediate high school, Bronx, N. Y., 1972, cement Four sculptures 21 x 8 one sculpture 36 x 8 one sculpture 26 x 8 Lent by the Artist

JOHN OPPER	No. 12-71+72, 1971-72 acrylic on canvas 60 x 54 No. 3-72+73, 1972-73 acrylic on canvas 52 x 66 Courtesy Grace Borgenicht Gallery
RAY PROHASKA	F.O.B. Mycenae, 1967 acrylic on canvas 72 x 50 Touching Series II, 1969 acrylic on canvas 40 x 50 Lent by the Artist
ABRAHAM RATTNER	To Be or Not To Be, 1971-72 oil on board 26 x 39 1/2 Man to Man, 1972 oil on board 20 x 24 Courtesy Kennedy Galleries, Inc.
LUDWIG SANDER	L-5, 1971 oil on canvas 40 x 44 Senica I, 1970 oil on canvas 66 x 60 Courtesy Knoedler Contemporary Art, Lawrence Rubin, Director
LOUIS SCHANKER	I, 1970 plexiglas, painted and engraved 24 x 36 II, 1971 plexiglas, painted and engraved 36 x 36 Courtesy New Bertha Schaefer Gallery
ESTEBAN VICENTE	Untitled, 1973 oil on canvas 68 x 56 Untitled, 1973 oil on canvas 62 x 60 Courtesy Andre Emmerich Gallery
DELLA WEINBERGER	Sand Fragments, 1973 oil on canvas 88 x 56 Lent by the Artist
ADJA YUNKERS	Y, 1973 acrylic on canvas 72 1/2 x 62 1/2 Variation of Composition XI, 1972 oil on canvas 63 1/2 x 48 Lent by the Artist

When several of the artists of our region discussed with us the idea of this exhibition last year, we were enthusiastic but realized it would be difficult for one of us closely associated with the community to make the choice of artists. We therefore asked Elayne Varian, a museum director highly respected in the profession, to serve as guest director and now wish to express our appreciation to her for selecting and assembling this outstanding exhibition. We wish also to thank the artists, galleries and collectors who lent work; Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Kolin and Mrs. Dorothy Beskind for their generous support in making the exhibition possible; and Miki Denhof for her generosity in designing the attractive catalogue.

Enez Whipple  
Director  
Guild Hall

PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS: Maurice Berezov, Dorothy Beskind, Andrew Bolotowsky, Ivan Chermayeff, Betty David, Francis Haar, Peter A. Juley, F. K. Lloyd, Hans Namuth, Steve Slonan, Malcolm Varon



## **At the Galleries**

# **Art Season in Full Swing**

### **Shanker Show at Tower**

A reception will be held on June 18 from 6 to 8 p.m. to mark the opening of a one-man show by East Hampton artist Louis Schanker at the Tower Gallery, 3 South Main Street, Southampton.


Mr. Schanker has exhibited at many major galleries and museums world-wide and is represented in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan and Whitney museums, the Brooklyn Museum, and numerous private collections.

Born in New York in 1903, Mr. Schanker studied classical painting at Cooper Union, the Art Students League and the Educational Alliance School of Art. After art school, Schanker worked at many jobs to support his painting, including a tour with the Sparks Circus caring for show horses.

During the Depression Mr. Schanker was commissioned to paint murals by the WPA in New York (1934-1939) and began to experiment with abstraction, most notably a panel for the Science and Health Pavilion at the 1939 Worlds Fair. Working with low relief hardwood sculpture and ancient methods of Japanese woodcut, he also developed modern innovative graphic compositions depicting sports, music, a WPA artists' picket line. Because of this special interest, he was chosen to head the Graphic Section of the WPA in New York City.

In the late 40's and early 50's, Schanker became increasingly preoccupied with arcs and circles in his work.

The retrospective at the Tower Gallery, which runs through July 1, will represent works from 1955 to 1976 and includes paintings, sculpture in various rich hardwoods, plexicut prints and monoprints.



**TOWER  
GALLERY**

Presents  
**LOUIS  
SCHANKER**  
Retrospective 1955-1976

First One Man Show  
in the Hamptons

Exhibiting  
June 18th - July 1st  
**1977**

3 SOUTH MAIN STREET,  
SOUTHAMPTON, L.I. N.Y. 11968  
(516) 283-3951



East Hampton Star June 16, 1977

Louis Schanker of Further Lane, East Hampton , will have a one man retrospective showing of His sculptures, paintings and graphics at the Tower Gallery, Southampton, June 18-July 1. There will be a reception the opening day from 6 to 8 PM

Suffolk Life Newspapers June 22, 1977

Selling art.....

When Schanker's retrospective opened last Saturday it was videotaped by Telefrance TV, with a local reshewing at the gallery this Saturday. Also, plans call for showing the videotaped opening and an interview with Schanker at the Whitney Museum ....





#### EXHIBITION ARTISTS:

Cahyn Albert  
John Alexander  
Carlos Basaldúa  
Walter Bernard  
Ross Bleckner  
Russell Blue  
Norman Bluhm  
Fred Brandes  
Warren Brandt  
James Brooks  
Victor Caglioti  
Ralph Carpenter  
Lawrence Castagna  
John Chamberlain  
Herman Cherry  
Dan Christensen  
Paul Davis  
Elaine deKooning  
Willem deKooning  
Jim Dine  
Peter Dohanos  
Jack Dowd  
Bill Durham  
Eric Ernst  
Jimmy Ernst  
Eric Fischl  
Audrey Flack  
Dan Flavin  
Connie Fox  
David Geiser  
Adolph Gottlieb  
Balcomb Greene  
Elaine Grove  
Robert Gwathmey  
Bill Hoffman  
Leif Hope  
Ed Hollander  
Howard Kanovitz  
Bill King  
Franz Kline  
Boris Kroll  
Marvin Kuhn  
Ibram Lassaw  
Dennis Lawrence  
Conrad Marca-Relli  
Lynn Matsuoaka  
Eddie McCarthy  
James McMullan  
Jeffrey Metzlik  
Joan Mitchell  
Kyle Morris  
Dr. Ron Noy  
Ray Parker  
Philip Pavia  
Joel Perlman  
Jackson Pollock  
Ray Prohaska  
Peter Reginato  
Ronnelle Riley  
Larry Rivers  
Dan Rizzie  
James Rosenquist  
Randall Rosenthal  
Bernard "Tony" Rosenthal  
Ludwig "Lutz" Sander  
Louis Schanker  
Lois Singer  
David Sivka  
Mike Solomon  
Syd Solomon  
Joe Sotlak  
Billy Strong  
Michelle Suna  
Tim Tibus  
Lou Trakis  
Esteban Vicente  
Joan Ward  
Dan Welden  
Joe Wilder  
Lew Zacks  
Wilfrid Zogbaum

#### ON THE COVER:

Franz Kline, Howard Kanovitz and  
Willem de Kooning at an early  
Artists & Writers game. Courtesy  
of Howard Kanovitz Foundation.  
Illustration by Walter Bernard.

*"I feel sometimes an American artist must feel  
like a baseball player or something—  
a member of a team writing American history. . ."*

*—Willem de Kooning (1969)*

Excerpt from an interview with David Sylvester from *Content Is A Glimpse* by Thomas B. Hess



Randall Rosenthal, *Sweet Memories*, 2009. Vermont white pine, acrylic and ink. Photo by Gary Mamay.

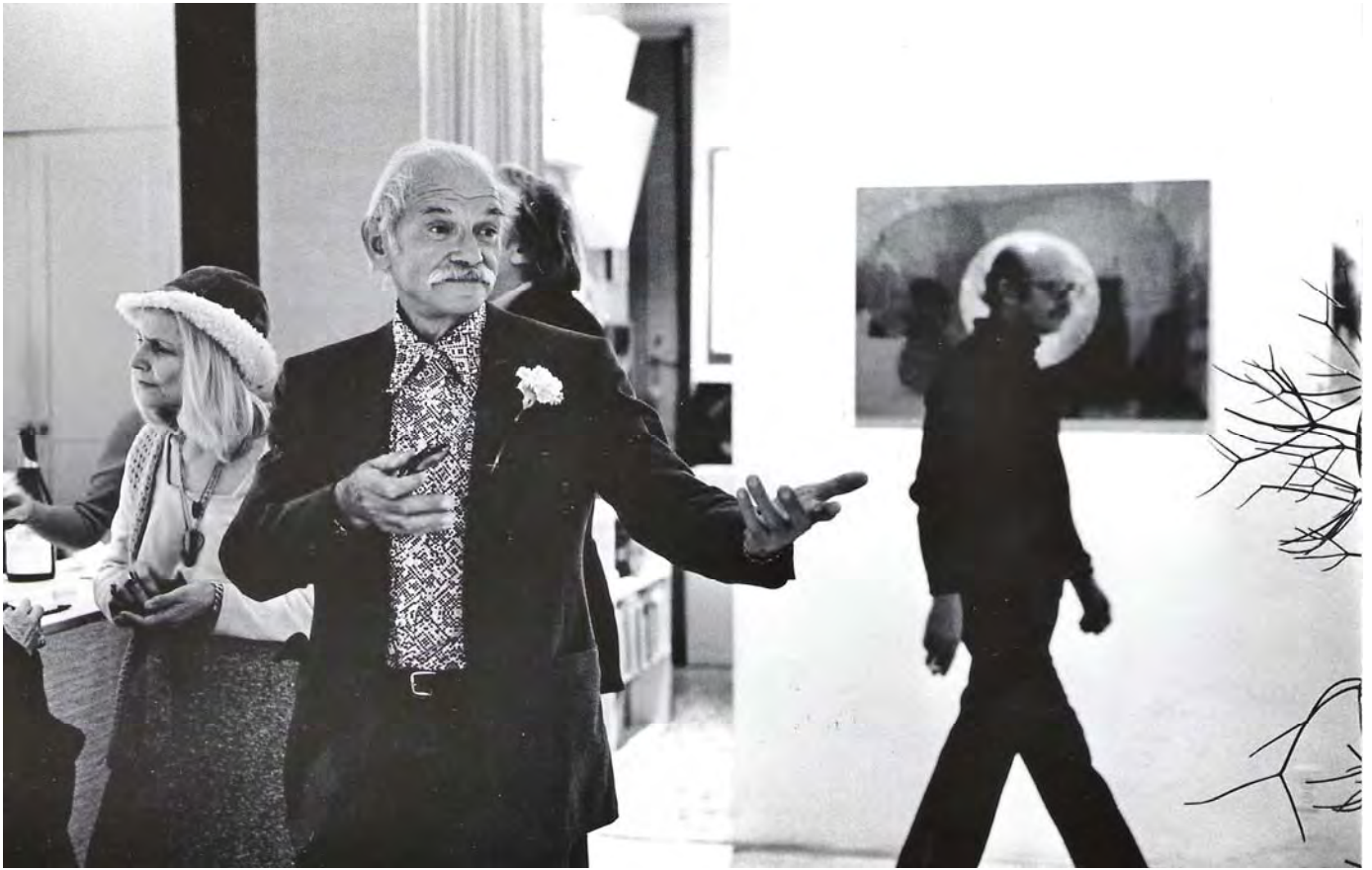
### *A Note from the Curators*

**G**UILD HALL HAS BEEN A PART OF OUR COMMUNITY FOR 82 YEARS. Opening its doors to all those eager to celebrate the arts. This summer the Artists & Writers Softball Game on August 17 will celebrate its 65th annual game. To commemorate this milestone the Museum at Guild Hall wishes to honor all the artists and writers who have participated in this friendly rivalry. The idea for the exhibition was the brainchild of artist Leif Hope, who is also the driving force behind the competition, which raises funds that help local charities.

The Artists and Writers Game, rich in nostalgic history and anecdotes but occasionally devoid of athletic ability, could probably happen nowhere else in the country. The Hamptons might represent the highest concentration of creative talent per capita anywhere in the United States. Our artists and writers and the game they love are a living tribute to the Hamptons legacy as a significant artist colony.

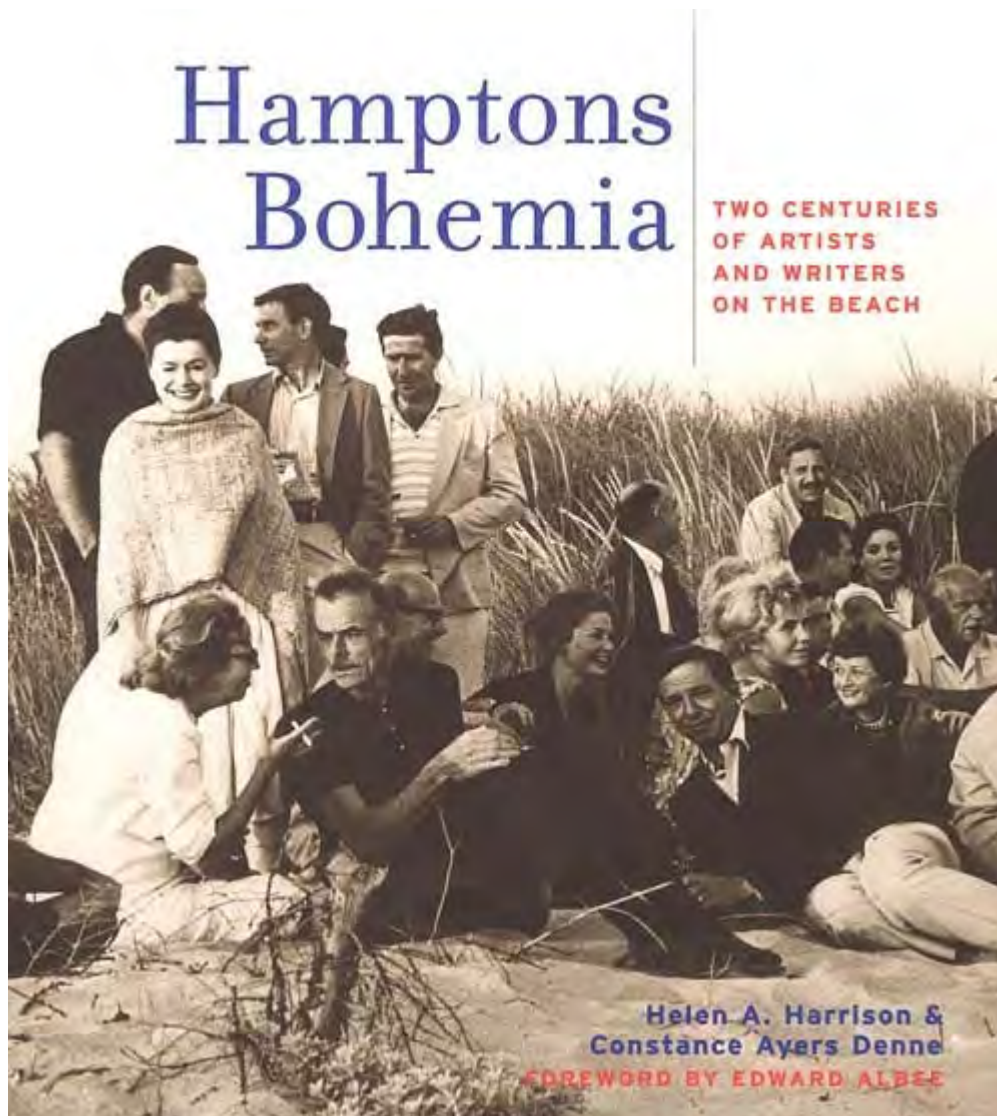
*Elena Prohaska Glinn and Christina Mossaides Strassfield, Co-Curators*





In the 1970's Schanker experimented with various media. He made prints from carved pieces of plywood, plastic and pieces of rubbermaid mats! Below he is in the studio at Dune House working on a reverse painting on plexiglass. In some he used a dremel tool to carve into the plexiglass in addition to the paint. (Top © Dorothy Levitt Beskind, and courtesy of the Dorothy Levitt Beskind Film and Photographic Archive. )





Artists often gathered at Two Mile Hollow Beach below Dune House as shown in the Hans Namuth photo on the cover of *Hamptons Bohemia* by Hellen A. Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne.

Larry Ableman and Lou Schanker  
(Photo © Regina Cherry—Kremer)



Lou and photographer Dorothy Beskind





# PARRISH EAST END STORIES

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## LOUIS SCHANKER 1903 - 1981



American  
Painters

Cooper Union, the Educational Alliance, and the Artists' League, and traveled through Europe from 1931 to 1933. During the 1930s, Schanker supervised several artists in the New York City mural division of the WPA. His own work included a large project in the lobby of WNYC Radio in the Municipal Building, a series of circus murals at a children's hospital, and a mural in the Science and Health Building at the 1939 World's Fair. He was one of the founders of the Associated American Artists and was also a founding member of "The Ten: Whitney Dissenters," a group protesting the museum's preference for American Scene painting and Social Realism. Ilya Bolotowsky, Mark Rothko, and Robert Rauschenberg.



### EXTERNAL RESOURCES

[Louis Schanker  
Website](#)

[Archives of  
American Art Oral  
History Interview](#)

### ORGANIZATIONS AND EVENTS

[Works Progress  
Administration  
\(WPA\) Federal Art  
Project \(FAP\)](#)  
(is the organization)

### SOCIAL NETWORKS

[Ilya Bolotowsky  
\(friend\)](#)

[Mark Rothko  
\(friend\)](#)

[Adolph Gottlieb  
\(friend\)](#)

[Ida York Abeiman  
\(friend\)](#)

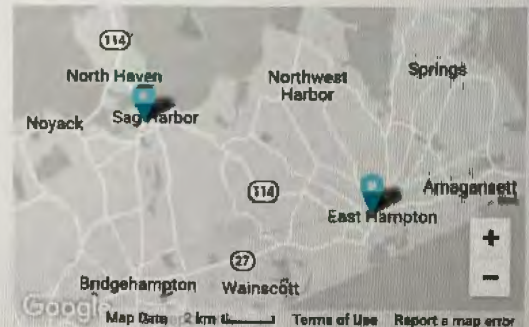
### PLACES

[Sag Harbor  
\(lived in, 1949 -  
1975\)](#)

[East Hampton  
\(lived in, 1962 -  
1981\)](#)

[Madison Street, Sag  
Harbor  
\(had a studio in,  
1949 - 1975\)](#)

[Madison Street, Sag  
Harbor  
\(lived in, 1949 -  
1975\)](#)



Please login/register to share your story about this artist







Schanker was athletic and enjoyed all sports.

He played tennis well into his 70's.

Baseball, football and basketball, hockey, skating, hand-ball, polo, jai alai and gymnastics are all depicted in his artwork.

Fellow artists, including Herman Cherry (with whom Schanker often played tennis,) frequently came by to swim and relax, enjoying the ocean view at Dune House.





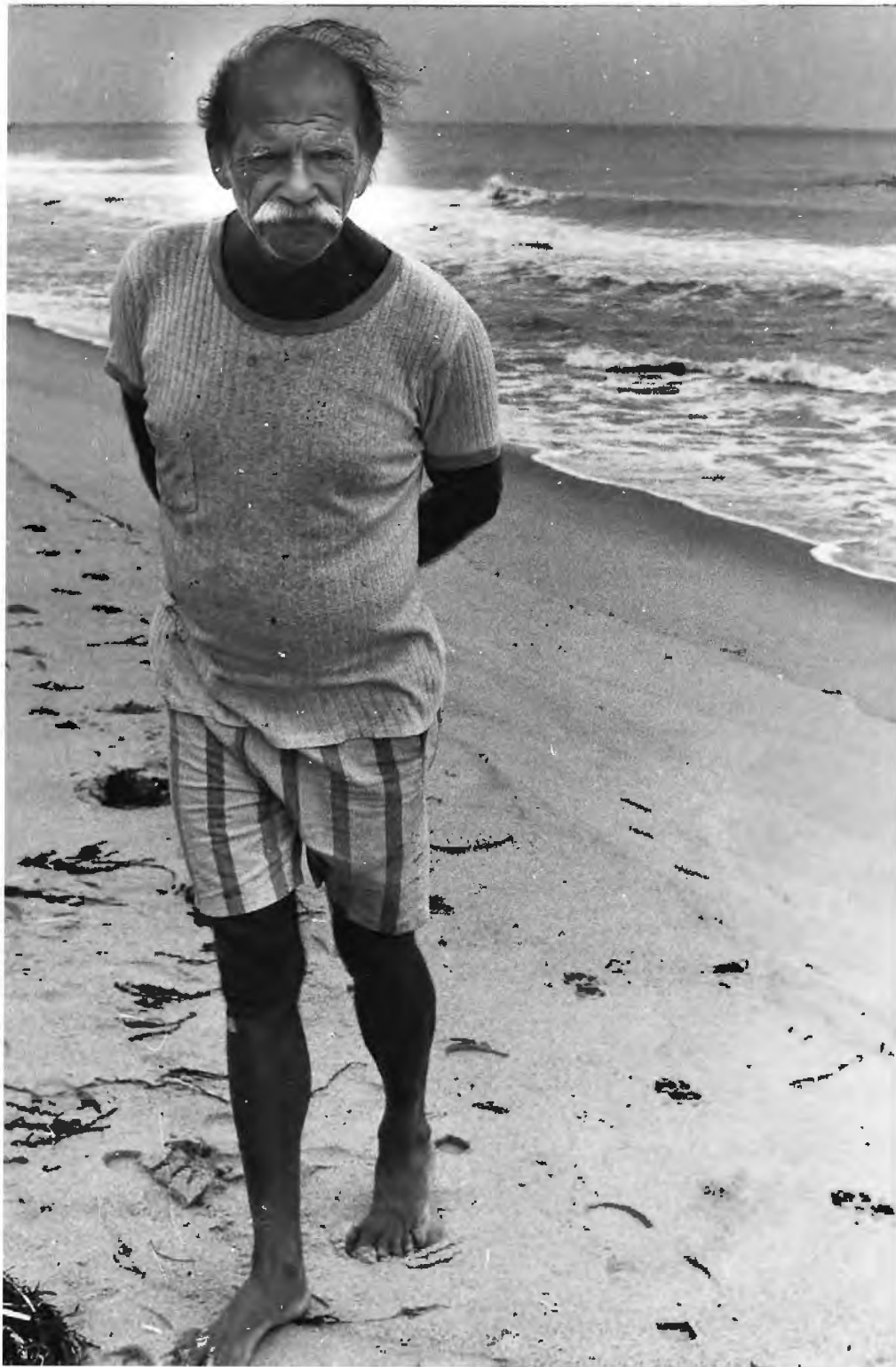


Artist Peter Grippi sculpting a bust of Schanker in the East Hampton studio at Dune House. (Photo © Dorothy Levitt Beskind, courtesy of the Dorothy Levitt Beskind Film and Photographic Archive.)

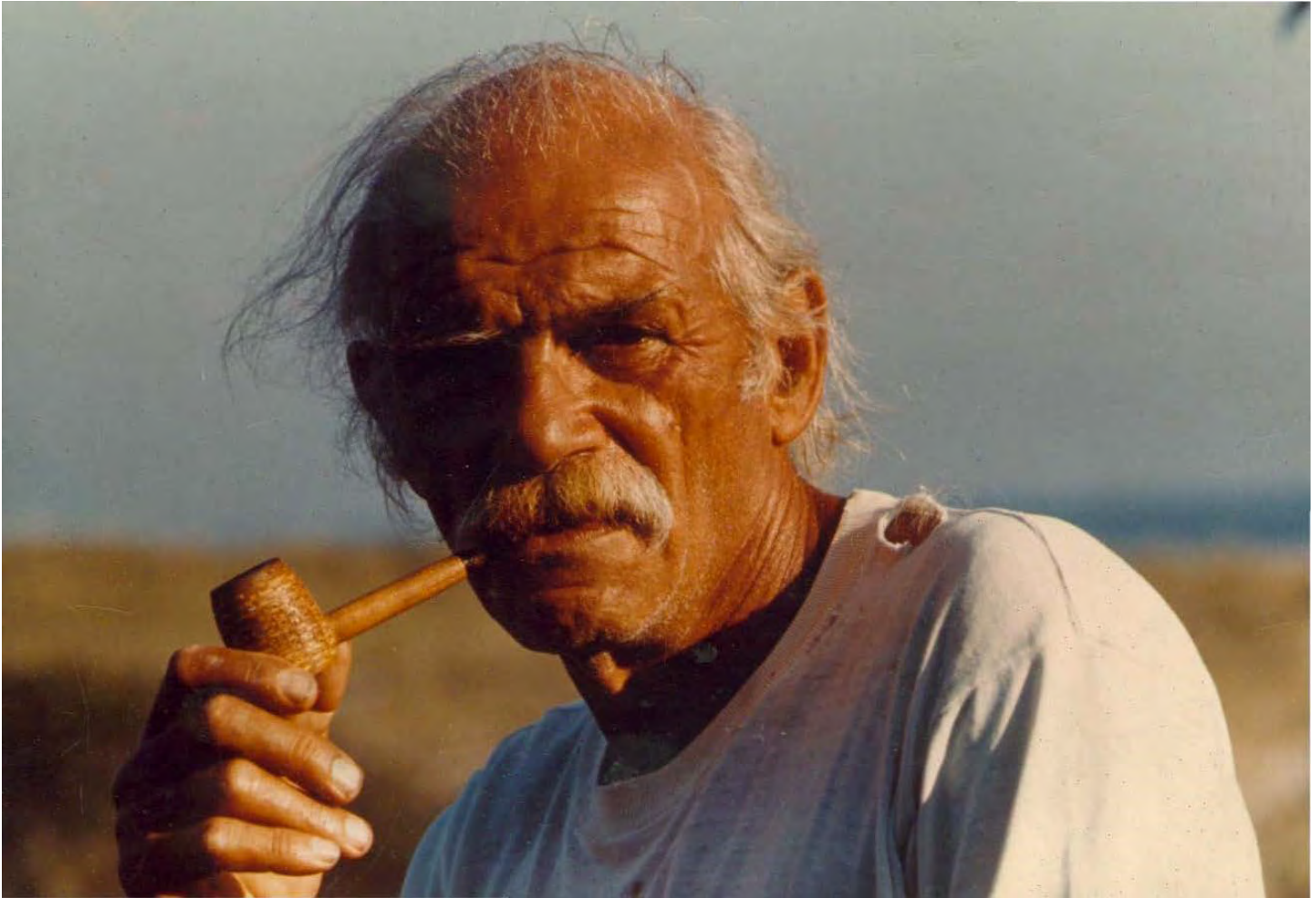


Schanker personally printed nearly all of his woodblocks in small editions.

He originally had a studio in the Sag Harbor house and but eventually moved his work space to Dune House.



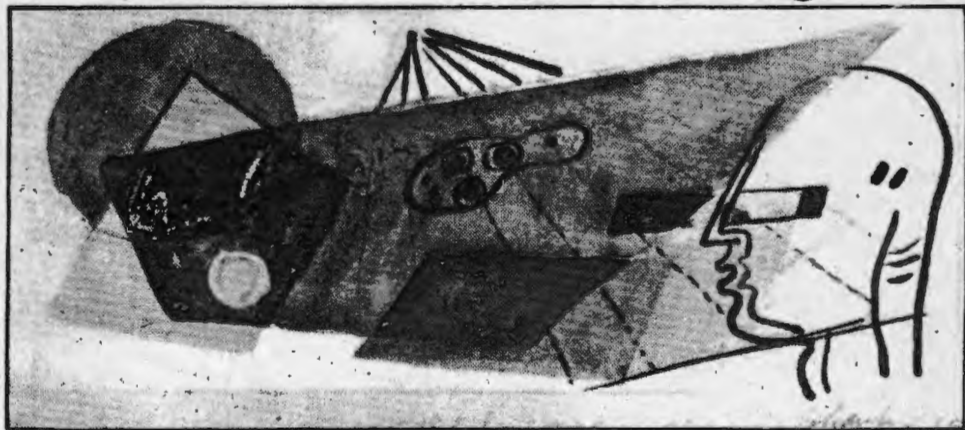




Louis Schanker

1903-1981

# Louis Schanker Bids Goodbye



Watercolor sketch for mural at N.Y. World's Fair at M. Diamond 1014 Madison - to June 4

Louis Schanker passed away the other day at the age of 78, an artist who has made contributions to American art over many years. He was a man of tremendous talent and ex-

perience in art, but one who always sought out new fields for his experiments. He was noted as an early printmaker. Printmakers must be experimenters, and that suited his nature best. He also did murals early, receiving important commissions.

Schanker was so skilled in painting that he could change styles and not lose stride. While others would need two years to produce their satisfactory work in a new style, he could do so at once. This could have been a mixed blessing, for Schanker was always searching, changing direction. In latter years, he moved into sculpture, still finding new outlets for his many-sided genius. He was forever youthful and open to new ideas—and we'll miss you, Louis.

**Paimor Poroner**

## ARTSPEAK

Published bi-weekly by  
**ARTSPEAK PRESS**

305 West 28 Street New York, N.Y. 10001  
924-6531 at 9-10 AM or PM

Membership \$15. (26 issues). Subscription  
donation, \$12 (26 issues)

**Palmer Poroner, Publisher**

Reviewers: Peter Ellingsen, Sassona Sakel  
William Pellicone.

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## Louis Schanker: Selected Collections

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York [link](#)  
Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts [link](#)  
Amon Carter Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas [link](#)  
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois [link](#)  
Asheville Art Museum, Asheville North Carolina [link](#)  
Auckland Museum of Art, Auckland New Zealand [link](#)  
Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois [link](#)  
Boston Museum of Fine Art, Boston, Massachusetts [link](#)  
British Museum, London, England [link](#)  
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, New York [link](#)  
[1943 Woodblock Color Prints of Louis Schanker - Installation](#)  
Brooks Museum of Art Memphis Tennessee [link](#)  
Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh/Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania [link](#)  
Cincinnati Library, Cincinnati, Ohio [link](#)  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio [link](#)  
Cornell University - Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Ithaca, New York [link](#)  
CU Art Museum, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado [link](#)  
Davis Museum, Wellesley College, Wellesley Massachusetts, [link](#)  
Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit, Michigan [link](#)  
Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C. [link](#)  
Flint Institute of Arts, Flint, Michigan [link](#)  
Georgetown University Library, Washington, D.C. [link](#)  
Guilford College Art Gallery, Greensboro North Carolina [link](#)  
Guild Hall Museum, East Hampton, Long Island, New York [link](#)  
Hamilton College Wellin Museum of Art. [link](#)  
Harvard University Art Museum, Boston Massachusetts [link](#)  
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden [link](#)  
Hofstra University Museum, Long Island, New York [link](#)  
Huntington Art Collection, San Marino, California, [link](#)  
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston Texas, [link](#)  
University of Illinois, Krannert Art Museum, Urbana-Champaign, [link](#)  
University of Iowa Museum, Iowa City, Iowa, [link](#)  
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis Indiana [link](#)  
Israel Museum, Jerusalem [link](#)  
Jewish Museum, New York, [link](#)  
University of Kentucky Art Museum, Lexington, Kentucky [link](#)  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco California [link](#)  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York [link](#)  
National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. [link](#)  
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia [link](#)  
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University of Minnesota, Weisman Museum, Minneapolis Minnesota [link](#)  
Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York [link](#)  
Munson-Williams-Procter Art Institute, Utica New York [link](#)  
New York Public Library, New York, New York [link](#)  
Parrish Museum, Southampton New York [link](#)  
Phillips Collection, Washington, DC [link](#)  
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC [link](#)  
Weatherspoon Art Museum, UNC Greensboro NC [link](#)  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York [link](#)  
Wichita Art Museum, Kansas Michigan [link](#)  
Wisconsin Union Galleries, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin [link](#)  
Worcester Museum of Art, Worcester, Massachusetts [link](#)  
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut [link](#)

3/22/07

## Owning Hamptons History: Modern Cottage About to Switch Hands One More Time

A modern beachfront estate built by the famed minimalist designer Joe D'Urso-complete with star-gazing observatory-is close to trading at its \$9.95 million asking price, real-estate sources familiar with the property said.

The property, at 174 Further Lane in East Hampton Village, has a formidable history: It's the former home of late Broadway siren Libby Holman, and later of ABC news titan Boone Arledge, who sold it in 1992 to the private investor Richard Pollack, the current owner.

Atop the stucco house, there's a domed metal-plated observatory-complete with a retractable roof-on the three-acre property, which overlooks Two Mile Hollow. There's also a heated, 45-foot-long granite infinity-edge pool and a tennis court.

"It has a very Oriental feeling," said one broker who has toured the property. "There's a beautiful room that faces a private pond. I envy anyone who gets this house."

The property was first listed in 1999 at \$14 million. Since then, it has bounced on and off the market. Now, brokers familiar with the proceedings say, an offer is on the table, and a signed deal is near.

"There's some definite interest, and we're pursuing it," said **Gary DePersia** of Allan M. Schneider Associates, who is representing the property along with Harald Grant of Sotheby's International Realty. Mr. **DePersia** declined to comment on whether an offer has been accepted.

"Any interest that we have would have to be pretty much full price," he said.

If the house does trade for close to \$10 million, the buyers will own a piece of Hamptons history. In the 1960's, Ms. Holman and her artist husband, Louis Schanker, built a modest \$10,000 glass cottage designed by the architect Robert Rosenberg, said a longtime East End broker with knowledge of the property.

After Mr. Pollack purchased the property from Mr. Arledge in December 1992 for \$2.1 million, he tore down the existing structure and commissioned Mr. D'Urso to build the current four-bedroom home. The house has made a nice gallery for Mr. Pollack's extensive fossil collection, sources who have visited the property say, lending it a museum-like feel. In August, Mr. Pollack told The New York Times : "[The house] is not so modern that it's crazy," but added that "most people just want the old-fashioned shingles, which bore me."

If the thought of plunking down that many zeros for a Suffolk County refuge seems steep, the four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bathroom home, with mahogany floors and trim, is also available as a summer rental for \$350,000.





Louis Schanker: The WPA Years  
Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center

Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center  
830 Springs-Fireplace Road  
East Hampton, NY 11937  
631-324-4929 [pkhouse.org](http://pkhouse.org)

## Louis Schanker: The WPA Years

Graphics and mural sketches by one of the leading  
printmakers and muralists working on the New York  
City WPA Federal Art Project in the 1930s

3 May - 28 July 2018

Reception and gallery talk by  
catalog essayist Dr. Greta Berman  
Sunday 27 May from 5 - 7 p.m.

Louis Schanker (1903-1981), study for mural, WNYC Radio, ca. 1937  
Gouache on paper, 9 x 14 3/4 inches. Lent by the artist's estate

**For more information on Schanker:**

**[www.LouisSchanker.info](http://www.LouisSchanker.info)**



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**Louis Schanker, The WPA Years**

**[www.louisschanker.info/PKSchanker.pdf](http://www.louisschanker.info/PKSchanker.pdf)**

**Louis Schanker, The Hamptons Connection**

**[www.louisschanker.info/lshamptons.pdf](http://www.louisschanker.info/lshamptons.pdf)**

# 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.louisschanker.info)



830 Springs-Fireplace Road  
East Hampton, New York  
[www.pkhouse.org](http://www.pkhouse.org)

## ‘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.

## inspire ART

### ART'S EXPERIMENTAL ARC

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



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

### DRAWINGS ON THE WALL

American muralist, painter and printmaker Louis Schanker's (1903 -1981) 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 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 the 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](http://stonybrook.edu/pkhouse)*



# Hamptons ARTHUB

## Exhibit Finder 2018

### “Louis Schanker: The WPA Years”



May 3, 2018 - July 28, 2018

**Reception:** May 27, 2018, 5 to 7 p.m.

**Location:** [Hamptons](#)

From 1935-1943, thousands of artists across the country were employed by the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a New Deal agency created to relieve unemployment during the Great Depression. The largest contingent was in New York City, where Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner, and many of their contemporaries painted murals and canvases and made sculpture and prints for public buildings such as schools, libraries, and hospitals.

One of the most prominent WPA artists was Louis Schanker (1903-1981), who became a supervisor on both the mural and graphics divisions. The exhibition features a selection of his woodblock and linoleum block prints, including examples of the blocks themselves and process materials.

Also on view are studies for his murals at WNYC, the New York municipal radio station, and the Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital in Queens. The catalog essay by Great Berman, Ph.D., a specialist in New Deal mural painting, focuses on Schanker's three major themes: music, sports, and the circus. Works are lent by the artist's estate



Louis Schanker with his mural for WNYC, the New York City municipal radio station, 1939.

## “Louis Schanker: The WPA Years” at Pollock-Krasner House

By  
**Michelle Trauring**  
SagHarborExpress.com

-  
July 10, 2018

At the bottom of the hill on Marsden Street, there sits a big white house on Madison, dating back to the mid-1900s — to a different time and place, and to a non-existent front porch.

The artist who once lived there in the 1950s took it down, saving nothing but the porch posts. He would carve out wooden spheres inside the posts, creating what Helen Harrison can only describe as “giant puzzles.”

It is very Lou Schanker, she said.



One of the beams is currently on view at the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center in Springs, the director explained, which is now home to a body of work by one of the leading printmakers and muralists working on the New York City WPA Federal Art Project in the 1930s — and friend of the buildings' namesakes, artists Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner.

"I met [Schanker] when I was doing my WPA research," Harrison said. "He was very forthcoming, very helpful. He really felt the WPA, that what it had done for artists was a godsend during the Depression. It helped them not only financially — it gave them a living wage — but that it helped them develop as artists because there was no commercial pressure. They were able to experiment freely."



Louis Schanker (1903-1981), Study for mural, Neponsit Beach Children's Hospital, WPA Federal Art Project, 1937. Gouache on paper, 4 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches. Lent by the artist's estate.

Formally Louis Schanker — classically trained at The Cooper Union and the conservative Académie de la Grande Chaumière — the artist marched to his own beat. He had lived as a roustabout in the circus before moving to Mallorca for some time, where he began to paint Cézannesque landscapes and works inspired by Cubism and the School of Paris.

He idolized the Impressionists, especially Renoir and Degas, and when he returned to the United States, he was employed by the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project — a New Deal program designed to relieve unemployment during the Great Depression of the 1930s — to decorate the WNYC Radio Station. The mural, "Music," that he completed with Stuart Davis, Byron Browne and John Von Wicht still exists on the 25<sup>th</sup> floor of New York City's Municipal Building, where the station used to be. Schanker stands out as the most conventional of the lot, according to Greta Berman, in her essay, "Louis Schanker, Modern Muralist and Master Printmaker," but only at first glance.

Now, studying it from a greater distance, she sees Schanker 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," she wrote. "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."





Louis Schanker, "Hockey Players," 1940. Color woodblock print, 14 x 11 7/8 inches. Lent by the Estate of Louis Schanker.

He would go on to work as supervisor of the graphic arts section of the WPA during the late 1930s, teaching printmaking first at the New School and then Bard College from 1949 until his retirement.

"I think it's his experimental quality that is very interesting," Harrison said. "He didn't just use traditional print-making methods. He was very inspired by Japanese woodblock printing — that tradition resonated with him — but he was a modern man and he wanted to do things that were a little bit experimental and different, so he used the woodblock technique but he used it in a more modernist vocabulary."

Throughout the years, Schanker remained close with his fellow WPA artists, who became his neighbors on the East End — stories the artist's nephew, Lou Siegel, will share on Saturday, July 28, at the museum, reminiscing about the artist and his wife, singer and civil rights activist Libby Holman.

"That will really give a lot of personal background," Harrison said. "He was a young kid. He went sailing with Lou. He went fishing with him. He went to the parties and he was a fly on the wall. He rode in the Rolls-Royce that was so famous locally, this beautiful Silver Cloud. And he just has all these wonderful personal anecdotes that he's going to share."

Schanker and Holman — who was a larger-than-life character herself — split their time between their home on Madison Street in Sag Harbor, and a modernist build in East Hampton by architect Robert Rosenberg in 1953, which they acquired in the early 1960s.



"This photograph is a house party that he and Libby gave at the Further Lane house," Harrison said. "They did it every Fourth of July and everybody trooped down to the beach to have their picture taken because the house was right on the beach."



Artists on the beach outside Lou and Libby's home on Further Lane, East Hampton, during their July 4th house party, 1962. (Photograph by Hans Namuth)  
(Cover of *Hamptons Bohemia* by Helen Harrison and Constance Ayers Denne)

