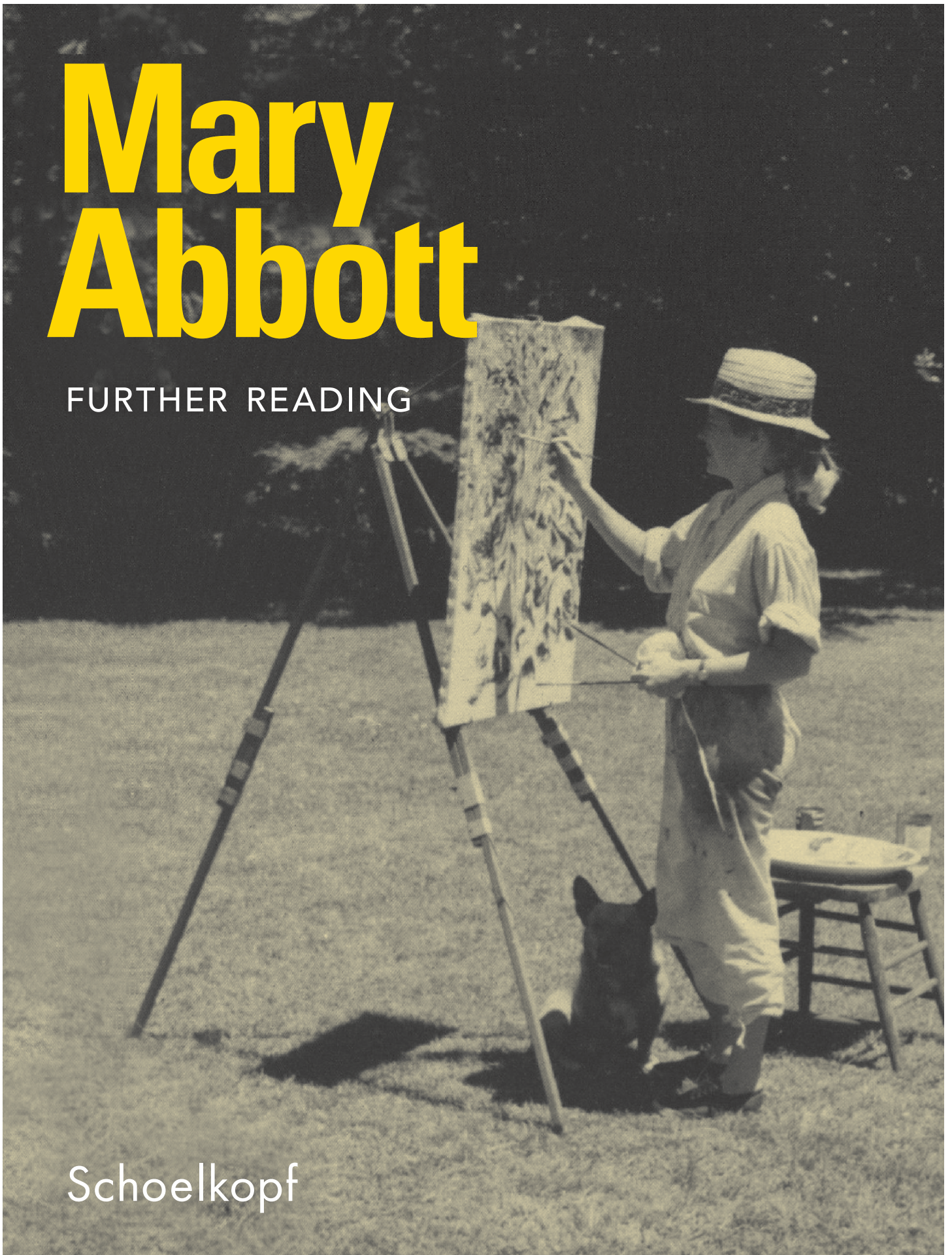


# Mary Abbott

FURTHER READING

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Mary Abbott, *Red Water*, 1957. Oil on canvas and collage, 64¾ x 106¼ inches (163.5 x 269.9 cm). © The Estate of Mary Abbott. Photo credit: Naples Studio

## Mary Abbott

Mary Abbott was one of the longest living members of a group of influential New York School Abstract Expressionist painters including Willem de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Robert Motherwell, Barnett Newman, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko. Her memories and stories, recorded in correspondence and interviews, shine light on the post-war period of artmaking in New York. Though she exhibited her work consistently beginning in the 1950s and throughout her lifetime, little attention was paid to Abbott's own life and work in published scholarship until she appeared in the 2016 *Women of Abstract Expressionism* exhibition at the Denver Art Museum when she was 95 years old. The following collected scholarship includes a monograph, exhibition catalogues dating from the 1950s to the present day, surveys of the New York School and Abstract Expressionist painters, and many of Abbott's own words preserved in interviews, correspondence, and video which position her as a well-connected and influential figure of the era.

### Monographs

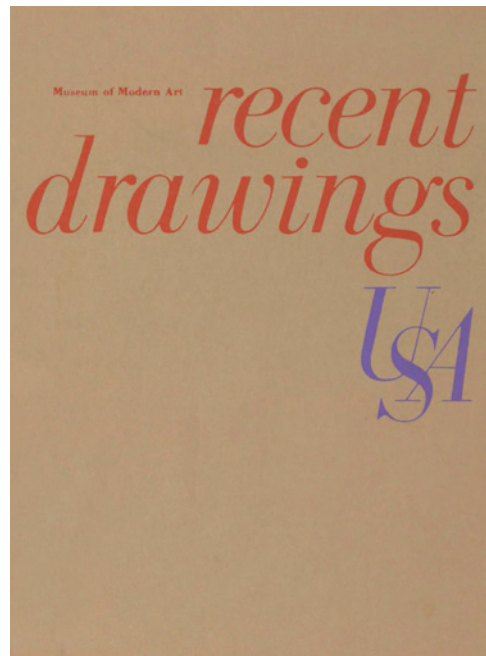
- McCormick, Thomas, *Mary Lee Abbott: A Painter*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2021  
Monograph with an essay by Thomas McCormick, genealogy, and anecdotes from friends. Includes 43 biographical photographs and 74 works illustrated in color.

### Exhibition Catalogues

#### Solo Exhibitions

- Braff, Phyllis, *Mary Abbott: The Living Possibility of Paint*, East Hampton, New York: Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center; and Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2021  
Solo exhibition catalogue with an essay about Abbott's practice in the 1950s. Includes a checklist of 10 works illustrated in color.
- McCormick, Thomas, *Mary Abbott: Works from the 1950s*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2004  
Solo exhibition catalogue including a checklist of 13 works illustrated in color.
- McCormick, Thomas, *Mary Abbott: Island Works*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2013  
Solo exhibition catalogue with an extensive essay about Abbott's travels to Haiti and St. Croix in the 1950s. Includes a checklist of 42 works illustrated in color.
- McCormick Gallery, *Mary Abbott: NATURE*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2017  
Solo exhibition catalogue focused on Abbott's use of nature in her paintings. Includes 20 works illustrated in color.
- Porter, Ann, Phyllis Braff, and Thomas McCormick, *Mary Abbott: Abstract Expressionist Paintings 1945–1985*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2007  
Solo exhibition catalogue with anecdotes by Porter, an essay by Braff, and biographical information from McCormick. Includes 11 biographical photographs and a checklist of 27 works illustrated in color.

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Exhibition catalogue for the 1956 exhibition *Recent Drawings U.S.A.* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, featuring Abbott's *Figures in Landscape* (1953; whereabouts unknown). © The Estate of Mary Abbott



Abbott: *Figures in Landscape, 1953, Charcoal*

## Group Exhibitions

Armstrong, Matthew, *Significant Form: The Persistence of Abstraction*, New York: Chowaiki / Mosionzhnik and Moscow: Gallery Shkola, 2008

International group exhibition catalogue including one work by Abbott. Written in English and Russian.

David Findlay Jr. Fine Art, *Summerset*, New York: David Findlay Jr. Fine Art, 2007

Exhibition catalogue including two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

David Findlay Jr. Fine Art, *Twelve New York Painters*, New York: David Findlay Jr. Fine Art, 2006

Exhibition catalogue including one work by Abbott illustrated in color on the cover.

Eisele, Marion and Lilian Schnellmann, eds., *A Gesture of Conviction: Women of Abstract Expressionism, Works from the 1950s and 60s*, Düsseldorf: Setareh Gallery, 2018, illus. in color pp. 26–29

International group exhibition catalogue including three works by Abbott. Written in German and English.

Harrison, Helen A., *East Hampton Avant-Garde: A Salute to the Signa Gallery, 1957–1960*, East Hampton: Guild Hall Museum, 1990

Group exhibition catalogue that narrates the history of the Signa Gallery.

Kingsley, April, John Corbett, Jim Dempsey, and Thomas McCormick, *Suitcase Paintings—Small Scale Abstract Expressionism*, Chicago: Art Enterprises, Ltd., and TMG Projects, p. 26, nos. 13–14, illus. in color pp. 25, 27, and on the cover

Group exhibition catalogue for a traveling show organized for the Georgia Museum of Art. Includes three works by Abbott.

Lieberman, William S., ed., *Recent Drawings U.S.A.*, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1956

Group exhibition catalogue including one illustrated work by Abbott. Entrants from 46 states submitted more than 5,000

drawings to the Museum of Modern Art with the goal of emphasizing new talent and directions in American drawing. Abbott's work was one of 150 chosen to be exhibited.

Long, Robert, "Light in the Dark," in *Black*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2005

Exhibition catalogue including two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

Marter, Joan M., ed., *Women of Abstract Expressionism*, Denver: Denver Art Museum; and New Haven: In association with Yale University Press, 2016, p. 162, nos. 1–3, illus. in color pp. 73–75

Museum catalogue for a group exhibition of women Abstract Expressionist painters. Includes references to Abbott throughout chronology, a brief biography, and three works illustrated in color. Over 50 women were considered for inclusion in the exhibition and Abbott was chosen as one of 12.

McCormick Gallery, *Her Work: Nine Artists of the New York School*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2015, p. 6, illus. in color pp. 7–11

Exhibition catalogue for a group of women Abstract Expressionist painters. Includes five works by Abbott illustrated in color.

Nordland, Gerald and Thomas McCormick, *Reuniting an Era: Abstract Expressionists of the 1950s*, Rockford, Illinois: Rockford Art Museum, 2004, p. 86, illus. in color p. 17

Exhibition catalogue including one work by Abbott illustrated in color.

Smith, Laura, ed., *Action | Gesture | Paint: Women Artists and Global Abstraction 1940–70*, London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2023, p. 243, illus. in color pp. 176–177

Exhibition catalogue for an international group exhibition including two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

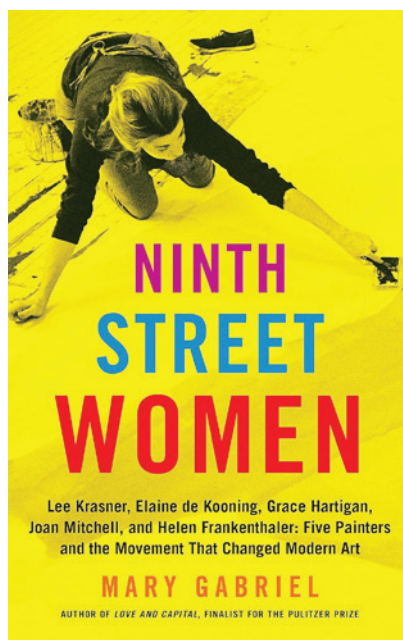
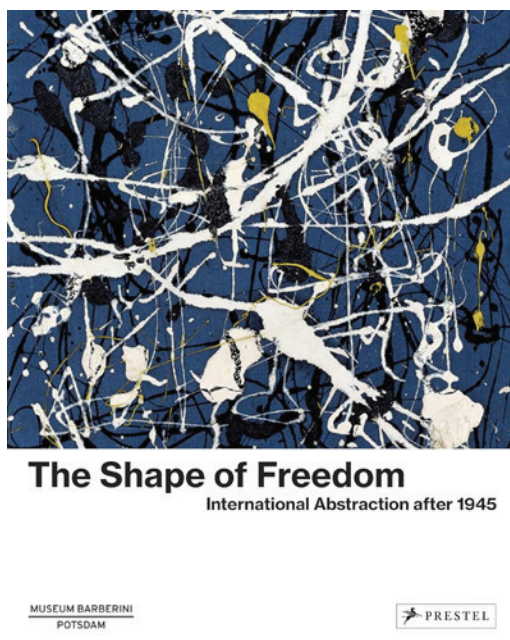
Spanierman Gallery, *Abstract Expressionism and Its Legacy*, New York: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, 2011

Exhibition catalogue including one work by Abbott illustrated in color.



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Exhibition catalogue for the 2022 exhibition *The Shape of Freedom: International Abstraction after 1945* at the Museum Barberini, Potsdam, Germany (Munich, London, and New York: Prestel and Museum Barberini, 2022). The exhibition traveled to Albertina Modern, Vienna, and Munch Museet, Oslo.  
Catalogue cover  
© Museum Barberini



*Ninth Street Women* by Mary Gabriel (New York, Boston, and London: Back Bay Books, and Little, Brown and Company, 2019), featuring excerpts from the author's interview with Abbott.

Spanierman Gallery, *Artists of the East End II*, New York: Spanierman Gallery, LLC, 2012  
Exhibition catalogue including one work by Abbott illustrated in color.

Westheider, Ortrud, Michael Philipp, and Daniel Zamani, eds., *The Shape of Freedom: International Abstraction after 1945*, Munich, London, and New York: Prestel and Museum Barberini, 2022, p. 74, no. 12, illus. in color  
Exhibition catalogue for an international exhibition of post-war abstraction. Abbott is included in the chapter on Abstract Expressionism alongside artists such as Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Joan Mitchell, and Jackson Pollock.

## General Reference

Buhmann, Stephanie, ed., "Mary Abbott," in *New York Studio Conversations Part II: Twenty-One Women Talk About Art*, Berlin: The Green Box, 2018, pp. 213–219, 256–257, illus. in color pp. 304–305  
Transcription of an interview conducted with Abbott in 2006. Includes two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

Edgar, Natalie, ed., *Club Without Walls: Selections from the Journals of Philip Pavia*, New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 2007  
A history of The Club until 1955 supplemented with excerpts from Philip Pavia's journals and recollections. Includes transcripts of conversations that took place during Club meetings and reproductions of Club rosters and invitations.

Gabriel, Mary, *Ninth Street Women: Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Joan Mitchell, and Helen Frankenthaler, Five Painters and the Movement That Changed Modern Art*, New

York, Boston, and London: Back Bay Books, and Little, Brown and Company, 2019  
Biography of women Abstract Expressionist painters in Abbott's circle. Locates Abbott in the New York Abstract Expressionist scene while contextualizing her relationships to Grace Hartigan and Willem and Elaine de Kooning. Personal details provided through an interview with Abbott conducted by the author on March 10, 2012.

Herskovic, Marika, ed., *American Abstract Expressionism of the 1950s: An Illustrated Survey*, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey: New York School Press, 2003, pp. 22–25, illus. in color pp. 23–24  
A reference survey that includes brief biographical details about Abbott and a selected exhibition history. Includes two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

Herskovic, Marika, ed., *New York School: Abstract Expressionists—Artists Choice by Artists; a Complete Documentation of the New York Painting and Sculpture Annuals 1951–1957*, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey: New York School Press, 2000  
Confirms Abbott's inclusion in the third, fourth, and sixth annual exhibitions of painting and sculpture at the Stable Gallery alongside artists such as Milton Avery, Willem de Kooning, Joan Mitchell, and Cy Twombly. The Annuals began in 1951 with the landmark *Ninth Street Show* and continued to show the work of the pioneers of the New York School Abstract Expressionists until 1957.

Landau, Ellen G., Joan M. Marter, and Christian Levett, *Abstract Expressionists, The Women: The Levett Collection*, London and New York: Merrell, 2023, illus. in color pp. 60–61  
Catalogue of selected works by 35 women Abstract Expressionist painters in the Christian Levett collection, which includes more than 2,000 works. Includes one work by Abbott illustrated in color.

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Lundquist, Sara, "Another Poet Among Painters: Barbara Guest with Grace Hartigan and Mary Abbott," in Terence Diggory and Stephen Paul Miller, eds., *The Scene of My Selves: New Work on New York School Poets*, Orono, Maine: National Poetry Foundation, 2001, pp. 245–264

A chapter contextualizing Abbott's friendship and professional collaboration with poet Barbara Guest.

Lundquist, Sara, "Reverence and Resistance: Barbara Guest, Ekphrasis, and the Female Gaze," *Contemporary Literature* 38, no. 2, 1997, pp. 260–286

Brief references to Abbott and her collaboration and friendship with poet Barbara Guest.

McCormick Gallery, *Abstract Expressionism Second to None: Eight Artists of the New York School*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2004

Gallery inventory publication that includes Abbott among artists such as Janice Biala, Perle Fine, and Yvonne Thomas.

McCormick Gallery, *Abstract Expressionism Second to None: 3*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2006

Gallery inventory publication that includes two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

McCormick Gallery, *Abstract Expressionism Second to None: 4*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2007

Gallery inventory publication that includes one work by Abbott illustrated in color.

McCormick Gallery, *McCormick Gallery, Recent Acquisitions: Autumn, 2008*, Chicago: McCormick Gallery, 2008, p. 48, illus. in color pp. 6–7

Gallery publication including a brief biography and two works by Abbott illustrated in color.

Morrill, Rebecca, ed., *Great Women Painters*, London and New York: Phaidon, 2022, illus. in color p. 17

An anthology of women painters including Abbott.

Pavia, Philip, ed., *It is 4*, New York: Second Half Publishing Co. Inc., Autumn 1959, illus. p. 46

The fourth issue of Philip Pavia's magazine for abstract art. Abbott's painting *The Kiss (Kiss Me Dear)* (1957–59) is reproduced as a plate.

Schuyler, James and Charles North, eds., *Broadway: A Poets and Painters Anthology*, New York: Swollen Magpie Press, 1979, illus. p. 11

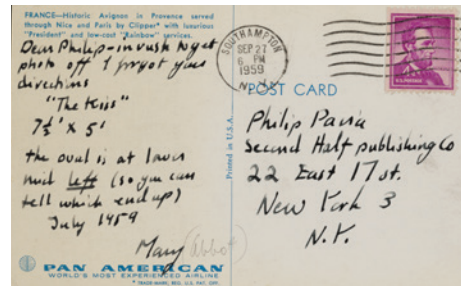
A collection of contemporary poetry and illustrations including one work by Abbott.

Stevens, Mark, and Annalyn Swan, *de Kooning: An American Master*, New York: Knopf, 2006

Biography of Willem de Kooning including details about his professional and romantic relationship with Abbott contextualized by interviews with her conducted by the authors on February 5 and April 7, 1992.

Vallerino, Vincent, *Abstract Addictions, Are You Experienced?*, New York: Vincent Vallerino Fine Art LTD., 2013, illus. in color pp. 10–11

Gallery inventory publication including two works by Abbott illustrated in color.



Postcard from Abbott to Philip Pavia with details about her painting *The Kiss (Kiss Me Dear)* (1957–59), postmarked Southampton, New York, September 27, 1959. Philip Pavia and Natalie Edgar archive of abstract art, Stuart A. Rose Library, Emory University. Photo credit: Stuart A. Rose Library, Emory University



Abbott's *The Kiss (Kiss Me Dear)* (1957–59) illustrated in Philip Pavia, ed., *It is 4*, New York: Second Half Publishing Co. Inc., Autumn 1959, illus. p. 46. © The Estate of Mary Abbott



Mary Abbott, *The Kiss (Kiss Me Dear)*, 1957–59. Oil on canvas and collage. 70% x 95% inches (179.7 x 242.3 cm). © The Estate of Mary Abbott. Photo credit: Naples Studio



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## Articles

### Biographical

- Dorfman, John, "Back to Nature," *Art & Antiques* 37, no. 5, 2014, pp. 40–44  
Profile that focuses on Abbott's Abstract Expressionist paintings and their connection to nature.
- Genzlinger, Neil, "Mary Abbott, 98, a Pillar of Abstract Expressionism: Biography," *New York Times*, October 2, 2019  
An extended biography published alongside Abbott's obituary.
- Hewlett, L.I., "Debutantes Bow at 'Little Season' Joint Party Given for Misses Purves and Allison—Mary Abbott Is Introduced," *New York Times*, June 30, 1940, p. 39  
*New York Times* article published in advertisement of Abbott's debut in 1940.
- Morris, Margaret, "About People," *Star Tribune*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, March 3, 1975  
A short biography of Abbott referencing her place in both the New York art scene and as a professor at the University of Minnesota.
- Saxton, Diane, "Mary Abbott: Quintessential American," *HuffPost*, September 11, 2012, illus. in color  
A personal profile on Abbott written after the author met the artist and visited her studio.

### Exhibitions

- Beck, James H., "Reviews and Previews: Mary Abbott," *ARTnews* 60, no. 9, January 1962, p. 16, illus.  
A review of a 1962 solo exhibition at Kornblee Gallery.
- Braff, Phyllis, "They Were Driven to Abstraction," *New York Times*, August 26, 1990  
A review of *East Hampton Avant-Garde, A Salute to the Signa Gallery 1957–60*, at the Guild Hall Museum.
- Campbell, Lawrence, "Reviews and Previews: Mary Abbott and Barbara Guest," *ARTnews* 62, no. 5, September 1963, pp. 12 and 53  
A review of the 1963 Kornblee Gallery exhibition of collaborative works by Abbott and Barbara Guest.
- Genauer, Emily, "On the Arts: A Glimpse of La Vie Bohème," *Newsday (Nassau Edition)*, Hempstead, New York, April 11, 1970, pp. 135–136  
A review of the third annual *Ten Downtown* exhibition, in which contemporary artists opened their studios during weekends in April and exhibited their art in situ. Abbott appears in a group photograph.
- Genocchio, Benjamin, "2 Artists, 1 School, Results That Differ Significantly," *New York Times*, August 29, 2008  
A review of an exhibition of works by Abbott and fellow painter Sally Egbert at Spanierman Gallery.



Mary Abbott, *Untitled*, 1950. Oil and canvas collage on canvas. 101½ x 81 inches (256.9 x 205.7 cm). © The Estate of Mary Abbott. Photo credit: Olivia DiVecchia

- Harrison, Helen A., "Art Reviews: Mary Abbott," *New York Times*, July 24, 2005  
A review of a solo exhibition at Avram Gallery, Southampton College.
- Hawkins, Margaret, "Reviews: National, Mary Abbott," *ARTnews* 103, no. 8, September 2004, pp. 148–149, illus. in color  
A review of *Mary Abbott: Works from the 1950s* at Thomas McCormick Gallery, Chicago, Illinois. Includes one work by Abbott illustrated in color.
- Landes, Jennifer, "Mary Abbott's Revelatory Decade," *East Hampton Star*, June 17, 2021  
A review of the 2021 solo exhibition *The Living Possibility of Paint: Works by Mary Abbott* at the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center.
- Morrison, Don, "Expressionist Show Seems Time-Stopping," *Minneapolis Star*, February 6, 1975  
A review of Abbott's solo exhibition of almost 40 works at Art Lending Gallery in Minneapolis.
- Weinberg, Lauren, "Reviews: National, Mary Abbott," *ARTnews* 106, no. 7, Summer 2007, p. 206, illus. in color  
A review of *Mary Abbott, Abstract Expressionist Paintings: 1945–1985* at McCormick Gallery, Chicago, Illinois. Includes one work by Abbott illustrated in color.

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Mary Abbott and Grace Hartigan bicycling in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, 1959. Grace Hartigan Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries

Wullschläger, Jackie, "When Abstraction was an Act of Liberation: Pioneering Non-Figurative Work by Women from All Over the World gets its Due in an Exuberant London Exhibition," *Financial Times*, London, United Kingdom, February 1, 2023  
A review of *Action|Gesture|Paint: Women Artists and Global Abstraction 1940–1970* at Whitechapel Gallery.

## Obituaries

- Art & Antiques, "Mary Abbott," *Art & Antiques* 42, no. 10, 2019, p. 26
- Cascone, Sarah, "Painter Mary Abbott, a Fixture of New York's Abstract Expressionist Movement, Has Died at Age 98," *Artnet*, September 11, 2019
- Genzlinger, Neil, "Mary Abbott, Abstract Expressionist, Is Dead at 98," *New York Times*, October 1, 2019
- Sampson, Christine, "Mary Lee Abbott, Abstract Expressionist Artist, 98," *East Hampton Star*, August 29, 2019
- Smith, Harrison, "Mary Abbott, Abstract Expressionist with an Unsung Influence, Dies at 98," *Washington Post*, October 2, 2019
- Smith, Harrison, "Mary Abbott: 1921–2019: Expressionist of the 1940s and '50s with an Unsung Influence," *Chicago Tribune*, October 9, 2019

## Archives

- Barbara Guest Papers, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut  
Includes correspondence dated between 1959 and 2005, photographs, and tape-recorded conversations with Abbott.
- Grace Hartigan Papers, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries, New York  
Includes correspondence and photographs with Abbott dated between 1955 and 1960.
- Mary Abbott Papers, Smithsonian Libraries and Archives, Washington, D.C.
- Philip Pavia and Natalie Edgar Archive of Abstract Expressionist Art, Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.  
Includes unpublished photographs and correspondence with Abbott dating between 1957 and 1962.



## Artist's Own Words

- Abbott, Mary, "Introduction," in *Jack Rabinowitz*, New York: Estate of Jack Rabinowitz, 1997  
A retrospective monograph of painter and sculptor Jack Rabinowitz, a friend of Abbott's, including an introduction authored by Abbott.
- Abbott, Mary, in Andrea Torrice, *Women of Abstract Expressionism Trailer*, Torrice Media: Vimeo, 0:29–1:10  
Abbott speaks about the post-war period and her decision to pursue abstract painting.
- Abbott, Mary, in Sarah Fishko, "Post-War Painters," *Fishko Files*, New York: WNYC, 7:20, October 1, 2010  
A podcast segment including a recorded interview with Abbott.
- Abbott, Mary, "Thinking of Philip Pavia," in Regina Stewart, ed., *New York Artists Equity Association, Inc. 55th Anniversary Awards Dinner Journal*, New York: New York Artists Equity Association Inc., 2002, p. 28  
Abbott reflects on her friendship with sculptor and founding member of The Club, Philip Pavia.

# Schoelkopf

For more information about this artist or any of our exhibitions, please contact the gallery. You can stay informed about our upcoming programs by visiting us at [schoelkopfgallery.com](http://schoelkopfgallery.com) or following us on Instagram @schoelkopfgallery

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