



Ary Stillman, *Untitled*, 1962-1965
Oil on canvas, 38 x 30 inches

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Ary Stillman: Rediscovering an American Modernist

On view from November 6, 2008 – January 30, 2009

Opening Reception on Saturday, November 15 from 6:00 – 9:00 pm

Gallery Hours: Monday - Friday 10:00am – 5:00pm
Saturday hours by appointment

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (Oct. 8, 2008) -- The Art Resource Group in Newport Beach, Calif., is pleased to present the first West Coast exhibition of "Ary Stillman: Rediscovering an American Modernist" (American 1891-1967). The exhibition is a timely and revealing examination of a remarkable talent and will encompass each phase of Stillman's stylistic development from his early representational painting in the 1930s to his later works of the mid-1960s. Included in the exhibition are 30, early Impressionist and representational works from the 1930s; important mid-century Abstract Expressionist paintings; watercolors and gouaches; and, work from his stay in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in the 1960s.

Stillman, an important figure who created artwork alongside some of the most famous names in Abstract Expressionism, attracted great critical acclaim during his lifetime, but his contribution to modern art has been largely overlooked during the past four decades.

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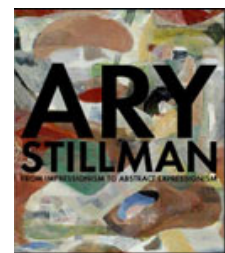
Curators, critics and historians are currently re-examining Stillman's role as an artist who, in fact, helped to define his generation. Stillman's immigrant experience, Jewish heritage, world travels and spirituality continuously defined his art, resulting in a fascinating body of work. Sandra Kraskin, curator of the Sidney Mishkin Gallery at Baruch College noted, "Ary Stillman's abstract paintings bring together the ordered structure of Cubism and the expressionistic, ritualistic themes that the American Abstract Expressionists inherited from Surrealism."

Born in White Russia (modern Belarus) in 1891, Stillman immigrated with his family to Sioux City, Iowa, in 1907. After studying at the Art Institute of Chicago and then at the National Academy of Design and the Art Students League in New York, Stillman moved to Paris where he embraced the Impressionists, experimenting with light and atmosphere. In 1922, he established a studio in Montparnasse and studied with Cubist painter André Lhote. During his years in Paris, Stillman exhibited regularly in salons and museums and traveled extensively in Europe, Africa, and the Near East. In 1933 he returned to New York City, where he worked on the Federal Art Project, part of the WPA.

Like many artists, Stillman was greatly affected by WWII, which led to a dramatic shift in his style. No longer representational, his art embraced abstract forms. He explained, "For me the world of surface realities is no longer paintable. For nothing is as it formerly seemed..." He exhibited his first abstract composition at New York's Macbeth Gallery in 1946, a show comprised entirely of non-figurative work. The exhibition was critically acclaimed. Shortly thereafter, Stillman joined such artists as Mark Rothko as a member of the Eighth Street Club, the genesis of the New York School.

Stillman worked in New York until the mid-1950s when he moved to Cuernavaca, Mexico, but failing health forced him to return to the United States. He died in Houston, Texas in 1967.

This exhibition coincides with the publication of the first major monograph ever devoted to Stillman, entitled *Ary Stillman: From Impressionism to Abstract Expressionism*. The book contains contributions from prominent curators, critics and art historians, including a forward essay by Donald Kuspit, historian and professor of art history and philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. The publication will be the subject of several Southern California Book Fairs and lectures in November.



Chronology

1891

Ary Stillman is born in a village near Slutzk, White Russia. At age 14 attends the Academy of Fine Arts in Vilna where Chaim Soutine and Jacques Lipchitz study

1907

Immigrates to Sioux City, Iowa and lives with his brother. Continues art education at the Art Institute of Chicago

1919

Moves to New York City. Studies at the National Academy of Design with George Willouby Maynard and the Art Students League with John Sloan

1921-33

Moves to Paris where he studies with the Cubist painter André L'Hôte and travels extensively throughout Europe. First solo show at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in 1928 and shows at Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, Société du Salon d'Automne and The Salon of American Artists in Paris to critical acclaim

1929

One man show in New York City followed by group shows at City Art Museum of St. Louis, Art Institute of Omaha and Court Arcade, Tulsa. Makes a short visit to Mexico

1933

Returns to New York with an established reputation. Member, Society of Independent Artists with Katherine Drier, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, John Marin and Albert Gleizes. Works on federal Works Progress Administration with Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko who would become known as the New York School

1944-1948

Profoundly affected by WWII, Stillman abandons Realism and embraces Abstract Expressionism.

Exhibits with The Federation of Modern Painters & Sculptors to critical acclaim. Active in the Eighth Street Club. Critic Clement Greenberg says "Stillman had startling light on a subject everyone else in attendance was in confusion about." Numerous gallery exhibitions, including at Bertha Shaefer Gallery where he was represented from 1949-1954

Group Shows:

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
California Palace Legion of Honor, San Francisco
Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford
Seattle Museum, Seattle
Honolulu Museum, Honolulu

1948

Visits The Provincetown Art Association, MA where he experiments with psychic automatism. Produces a unique and original body of drawings

1955

Due to declining health, leaves New York to spend time in Paris and Mallorca

1957-62

With his wife, moves to Cuernavaca, Mexico where he is prolific and a new style emerges incorporating indigenous Aztec motifs

1962

Moves to Houston to spend his final days

1967

Dies at age 76 in Houston

During his lifetime, Mr. Stillman participated in 135 exhibitions. His artwork is collected by 47 museums internationally

For additional information and/or visuals, please call (949) 640-1972 or e-mail the gallery at msmith@artresourcegroup.com.

For more information on Ary Stillman, please visit the Stillman-Lack Foundation at www.stillmanlack.org.

About Miriam Smith and the Art Resource Group

Established in 1987 by Miriam Smith, the Art Resource Group specializes in the sale of twentieth and twenty-first century American art, with a focus on American Modernist art and second-generation New York School artists. The gallery also handles Old Master, Impressionist and Abstract Expressionist paintings from private collections. Miriam Smith represents five estates of mid-twentieth century artists: Michael Corinne West, Ruth Wall, Jon Serl, Andy Wing and Ary Stillman.

The Art Resource Group offers a full range of client services, maintains an extensive inventory and has an experienced staff. The Art Resource Group also specializes in the resale or direct purchase of single pieces or entire collections of important modern and contemporary work. Services include fine art appraisals, professional art installation and conservation framing.

Formerly located on the Coast Highway in Corona del Mar, the gallery moved to its current location at 20351 Irvine Avenue in Newport Beach in August of 2007.

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