

A vibrant, abstract painting in shades of red, blue, and black. The composition features bold, expressive lines and organic shapes, suggesting a stylized face or figure. The background is a rich, textured red, with blue and black outlines and accents. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-20th-century abstract art.

Detail from *Mexican Girl* by Peter Busa

RECENT GIFTS

FROM THE DAVID MURPHY COLLECTION

November 22, 2019–May 17, 2020
Curated by Christine McCarthy



460 COMMERCIAL STREET | PROVINCETOWN MA | PAAM.ORG | 508-487-1750

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Detail from *Evening Star* by Fritz Bultman

The permanent collection is an important measure of any museum's value. At PAAM, the holdings of local and regional art is extensive and dynamic, comprising nearly 4,000 works by over 700 twentieth century and contemporary artists who have worked in Provincetown and on Cape Cod. Their styles were revolutionary and remain noteworthy in the history of American Art. The PAAM Collection weaves together at least three major art movements—each a significant strand of American art history—and creates perspectives that uniquely position the Provincetown Art Colony as a pertinent fixture to the larger art world. This exhibition shares a selection of over twenty works gifted to us this year by David Murphy.

Each year, PAAM presents at least two exhibitions showcasing some of the recent gifts donated to our permanent collection. As an actively collecting museum, PAAM receives on average nearly 100 new works each year, and these exhibitions allow us to proudly display a selection of those works, some of which represent our first works by an artist in our permanent collection. We extend our deepest gratitude to our new and continuing donors.

Another measure of a museum is how well it uses its collection. The PAAM Collection serves as a foundation for many of our educational programs and exhibitions. Programs for both youth and adults in our Lillian Orłowsky and William Freed Museum School use collection works to stimulate creativity. The Museum School courses take advantage of gallery exhibitions to clarify principles and techniques. Additionally, major museums and galleries borrow exemplary works for exhibitions around the country.

Embedded into PAAM's mission, the collection is truly at the heart of our organization. A glance at the newly released Permanent Collection catalog shows how many hundreds of people have been moved to express their generosity through contributions that make up virtually the whole collection. Amassed over an entire century, PAAM's collection has been donated by people who really cared that the region's art remain here.



Detail from untitled, 1965 by Fritz Bultman

Fritz Bultman (1919–1985)

Bultman studied with Hans Hofmann in New York and Provincetown from 1938–42. In Provincetown Bultman helped found the Long Point Gallery and The Fine Arts Work Center. During the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's Bultman was instrumental in forming an art collection for Tougaloo College, a black college in Mississippi. Robert Motherwell said of his forty-year acquaintance with Bultman: "I am still convinced that he is the most splendid, radiant and inspired painters of my generation, and of them all, the one drastically and shockingly underrated."

Evening Star, 1978

Painted paper collage, 20" x 16"

untitled, 1985

Painted paper collage, 14" x 6.5"

untitled, 1965

Painted paper collage, 19" x 25.5"

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Detail from untitled (from the Indian Space Figure series) by Peter Busa

Peter Busa (1914–1985)

As an artist, Busa is difficult to categorize due to his highly original and diverse body of work influenced at times by the Surrealists and Native American Art. Busa was a central figure of the New York School. He studied with Hans Hofmann in New York and Provincetown from 1935–1938. Busa was a friend and colleague of Jackson Pollock, in fact Busa started drip painting a year before Pollock's first in 1947. Busa spent time in Provincetown in the 1950's and 60's, despite some of his frustrations with old guard attitudes toward art: "I was surprised how hostile the old hats, including Henschel, were to modern art. In Provincetown, the past was not dead. It was not even the past. It was as though they were untouched by Picasso."

Early Birds, 1944

Block print on paper, 11.5" x 11.5"

Mexican Girl, 1946

Screen print on paper, 20" x 14.5"

Sport, 1944

Watercolor on paper, 14" x 10.5"

untitled (abstract collage), n.d.

Mixed media, 12" x 10"

untitled (abstract line drawing), n.d.

Graphite on paper, 6" x 8"

untitled (from the *Indian Space Figure* series), n.d.

Screen print on paper, 11.5" x 14"

untitled (multiple abstract compositions), 1947

Ink, graphite on paper, 7.5" x 11.5"

untitled (red, black, grey, yellow abstract), n.d.

Gouache on paper, 21" x 14"



Detail from untitled (abstract, 3/3/1952) by Nanno de Groot

Nanno de Groot (1913–1963)

Born in Holland, de Groot considered himself an American artist and part of the Abstract Expressionist movement. In 1930, he put aside his artistic aspirations to attend Nautical School in Amsterdam. In 1941, he was sent to San Francisco with the Dutch Navy as a submarine radio operator. When his office was discontinued in 1946, he ended his naval career and applied for U.S. citizenship; at the age of 33, he began a new life as an artist in New York. He began summering in Provincetown in 1949 and built his own home here in 1962 shortly before his death. Of his work, de Groot once said "in moments of clarity of thought I can sustain the idea that everything on earth is nature, including that which springs forth from a man's mind, and hand. A Franz Kline is nature as much as a zinnia". While some aspects of De Groot's work are generic to the ideas of the time, he was a uniquely strong and gifted painter. There is wonderful facility and angst in his mark-making. In his early work the nervous black lines suggest forms or figures that make one think of European Post War artists like Dubuffet and Giacometti. The works are gestural and confined in palette and all are compelling enough to command respect and further study.

untitled (abstract, 3/3/1952), 1952

Ink, charcoal on paper, 23" x 16"

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Detail from untitled (face between doric columns) by Lester Johnson

Lester Johnson (1919–2010)

Johnson was an American artist. He was a figurative expressionist and member of the Second Generation of the New York School. The subject of much of his work was the human figure. In New York, Johnson exhibited at the Martha Jackson Gallery, Zabriskie Gallery, Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer, and James Goodman Gallery as well as having been included in group shows at the Guggenheim, The Whitney, Museum of Modern Art, and Metropolitan Museum of Art. He was elected a member to both the American Academy of Arts & Letters and National Academy of Design. Lester's roots in Provincetown go back to 1953, when he had his first show at Earle Pilgrim's shop at 393 Commercial Street. Throughout the next decade, he would go on to have five one-man annual exhibitions at the Sun Gallery as well as several exhibitions at the HCE Gallery. Johnson's work was also exhibited at the Albert Merola Gallery, Acme Fine Art, and the Provincetown Art Association and Museum.

untitled (face), 1962

Ink on paper, 13.5" x 10.5"

untitled (face between doric columns), 1967

Oil on canvas, 28" x 36"



Detail from untitled (green and blue abstract) by Maud Morgan

Maud Cabot Morgan (1903–1999)

Morgan was an American modern artist and teacher who is best known for her abstract expressionism. After studying with Hans Hofmann from 1932–1940, she mentored Frank Stella and Carl Andre, and had some of her art shown alongside such notable contemporaries as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. In her autobiography, Morgan remarked, “He was introducing us to the European theories of Picasso and Matisse with whom he had been friends while in Paris... Hofmann’s teaching was extremely dynamic... Hofmann was a superb teacher and excellent draughtsman. Everything I know about space I learned from him”. Morgan’s life began in New York City to an aristocratic family. She was also known as Boston’s Modernist Doyenne.

untitled (green and blue abstract), n.d.

Oil on panel, 20" x 30"

untitled (Hofmann student drawing), n.d.

Charcoal on paper, 25" x 19"

PROVINCETOWN ART ASSOCIATION AND MUSEUM



A nationally recognized, year-round cultural institution, PAAM fuses the creative energy of America's oldest active art colony with the natural beauty of outer Cape Cod that has inspired artists for generations.

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