

# PEYTON WRIGHT

237 East Palace Avenue  
Santa Fe, NM 87501

800 879-8898  
505 989-9888  
505 989-9889 Fax  
fineart@peytonwright.com

## Martha Hamlin Visser't Hooft

(American Painter, 1906-1994)



Martha Visser't Hooft was an artist and teacher in the modernist tradition, best known for her abstract expressionist work, geometric-totemic abstractions, and surrealism. Her career spanned more than 60 years and she garnered critical acclaim with many awards and distinctions during the course of her long art career. She exhibited extensively in Buffalo, New York City and throughout the United States.

Martha for the most part was a self-taught artist. In 1922 she traveled to Europe to study the works of the emerging modernist painters at the Académie Julian, in Paris, as well as the music and avant-garde theater of the day. She moved to New York City three years later to further her studies at the Parson's School of Applied Art, where she practiced set design for the theater there. She taught at the University of Buffalo from 1956-58, in Buffalo, NY. Her sister Mary Hamlin Goodwin, designer and patron of the arts, settled in Taos as a member of the Taos Art Colony. Visser't Hooft visited her often, where she painted the surrounding landscape.

Martha Visser't Hooft's work is included in numerous private and public collections throughout the United States, including at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Burchfield Art Center, Buffalo, NY; Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Anthony Bannon, former director of the Burchfield Art Center, writes of her work, "Martha Visser't Hooft's art is made in the eye's mind, dazzling with feats of mental gymnastics, cast broadly through a rhetoric informed by literature as well as by the systems of science, by archaeology as well as by anthropology, by nature as well as nurture. Always fantastic, even when it is as simple as the rocks that mass at the foundation of her work, even with the tectonics

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that structure the tripod forms used to move her rocks about, her paintings and drawings delight a viewer with the skilled conversation of drawn line, as with the intellectual challenge of her imagination.”