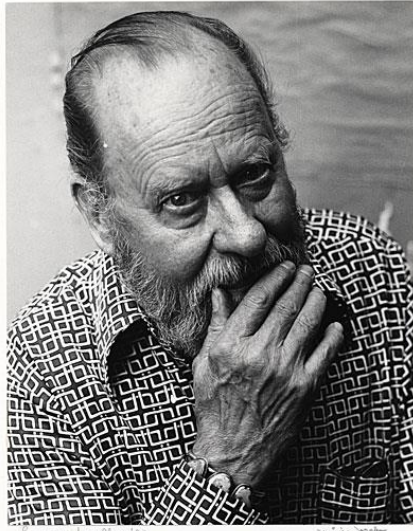


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Emerson Woelffer

(American Painter, 1914-2003)

Emerson Woelffer (July 27, 1914 – February 2, 2003) was a prominent abstract expressionist artist and painter born in Chicago. He studied Education at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago between 1935 and 1937. In 1938 he joined the WPA Arts Program. Woelffer subsequently studied at the Institute of Design under Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. and earned a B.A. Degree and taught there in 1942. In 1949 he taught at Black Mountain College at the request of Buckminster Fuller. Between 1949 and 1959, he lived in Yucatán, Mexico and Forio d'Ischia Naples, Italy. Later he was instrumental in bringing modernism to Los Angeles where he taught at the Chouinard Art Institute (now Cal Arts) from 1959 to 1973. From 1974 to 1992 he taught at The Otis Art Institute (now called Otis College of Art and Design) in Los Angeles, serving as Chair of the Painting Department from 1974 to 1978. In 1970, Woelffer was artist-in-residence at the Honolulu Museum of Art. He received the Pollock-Krasner Grant in 1984 and the Francis J. Greenburger Award, in conjunction with Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of New York City in 1988. In 1991 he received an Honorary Doctorate Degree from Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. He felt such a strong attachment to Otis that he left his estate to the college to set up a scholarship fund to benefit future artists. Emerson Woelffer died in Los Angeles in 2003.

Emerson Woelffer is best known for his boldly colored abstract paintings and collages with jagged forms. He also created sculpture and lithographs. Late in his career—suffering from macular degeneration—he began working in white crayon on black paper. The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center (Colorado Springs, Colorado), the Honolulu Museum of Art, the Montana Historical Society (Helena, Montana), the Museum of Art (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah), the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (La Jolla, California), the Neuberger Museum of Art (Purchase College, Purchase, New York), the Oklahoma City Museum of Art (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), the Portland Art Museum (Portland, Oregon), the San Diego Museum of Art (San Diego, California), Yellowstone Art Museum (Billings, Montana), and the Asheville Art Museum (Asheville, North Carolina) are among the public collections holding work by Woelffer.

Retrospectives of his work were held at the Santa Barbara Museum in 1964, the Phillips Collection in 1974, and the Otis Gallery in 1992. During his lifetime, exhibition venues included the Museum of Modern Art, the Corcoran Biennial, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Pennsylvania Academy.