

Joan Mitchell

Bleibtreustraße 45, Berlin-Charlottenburg

10 November 2013 – 18 January 2014
Opening: 10 November, 11 am-5 pm



Untitled, 1951
Oil on canvas
80 x 70 in / 203.2 x 177.8 cm
© Estate of Joan Mitchell

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present an exhibition by **Joan Mitchell** in Bleibtreustraße 45, Berlin-Charlottenburg from November 10, 2013 until January 18, 2014.

For the first time in Berlin, an exceptional ensemble of paintings and pastels from the almost 50 years of the artist's career will be featured.

One of the most respected figures of Abstract Expressionism, Joan Mitchell (1925-1992) came to an early attention with her lyrical abstract paintings. In 1951, at the age of 26, she participated in the *Ninth Street Art Exhibition* in New York, alongside Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Philip Guston and Helen Frankenthaler, among others.

In 1955, she began dividing her time between New York and Paris. She maintained close relationships with many New York School painters and poets even after 1968, when she settled in Vétheuil, a small town in the countryside outside of Paris. She worked there continuously until her death in 1992.



Untitled, 1958.
Oil on canvas, 79 1/2 x 71 in / 202 x 180 cm
© Estate of Joan Mitchell.

Mitchell's commitment to the tenets of gestural abstraction remained firm and uncompromising during all her life, as to be seen in the paintings from the exhibition. A dense and striking composition characterizes the early *Untitled* painting from 1951 (see fig.), while the *Untitled* painting from 1958 (see fig.) depicts a more tempestuous and expressive surface, whereas *Le chemin des écoliers*, 1960, betrays the inspiration from the French landscapes.

After 1960, during a difficult period in her life, Mitchell created a series of very intense works, where the colourful and rhythmic all-over brushstrokes gave way to a concentration of a central, thick dark mass. 1964 marks the culmination of what she called her "black-paintings".

In the 70's and 80's, Joan Mitchell found in the French countryside ample natural phenomena that became source of inspiration for her works, as expressed in some of her titles: *Green Tree* (1976), *Red Tree* (1976), *Tilleul* (1977). It is always through reminiscence of sensations and colours that Mitchell built her compositions. Already in a 1958 interview with John I.H.Baur, she said: "My paintings are titled after they are finished. I paint from remembered landscapes that I carry with me - and remembered feelings of them, which of course become transformed. I could certainly never mirror nature. I would more like to paint what it leaves with me." The influence of the French impressionists, but also Van Gogh and Cézanne appears more or less implicitly through her works.

In the last decade of her life, while Mitchell suffers from cancer, she paints large cycles, such as *La Grande Vallée*, and concentrates on pastels after her operations (*Untitled*, 1991). Her monumental paintings from 1990-91 (*Sunflowers* and *Trees*, see fig.) show an increased sense of freedom and share the fresh and spontaneous energy that strongly characterizes all Joan Mitchell's work.

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Although Mitchell has been a successful and preeminent figure during her lifetime, it is only recently that her works have fully gained the recognition they deserve.

She also played an important role for younger generations of painters, many of them being invited to stay and work with her in Vétheuil. Her legacy is now celebrated in major international institutions.



Trees, 1990-91
Oil on canvas, diptych
86 3/4 x 157 1/2 inches / 220 x 400 cm
© Estate of Joan Mitchell

This is the first exhibition of Joan Mitchell at Galerie Max Hetzler, in collaboration with the Joan Mitchell Foundation and Cheim & Read, New York.

A catalogue with an essay by Christoph Schreier will be published on that occasion and distributed by Holzwarth Publications, Berlin.

Joan Mitchell was born in Chicago in 1925 and died in France in 1992. Her artworks are held in numerous public collections internationally. She exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1958, at the Documenta II in 1959 and in several historical group shows in Europe and America since the 1950's. Since then major retrospectives of her work have been organized by the Whitney Museum, NY; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris; Newport Harbor Art Museum; IVAM, Valencia; Birmingham Museum of Art; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth; The Phillips Collection, Washington; New Orleans Museum of Art; Kunsthalle Emden, Germany; Palazzo Magnani, Reggio Emilia, Italy; Musée des Impressionnistes, Giverny and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, among others.

Further exhibitions and art fair participations:

10 November – 21 December 2013
Opening: 10 November, 11 am-5 pm

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23 November 2013– 18 January 2014
Opening: 23 November, 6-8 pm

Christoph Niemann, Goethestraße 2/3, Berlin-Charlottenburg

ART BASEL, MIAMI BEACH

05 - 08 December 2013, Preview 04 December

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