

# ANITA SHAPOLSKY GALLERY

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## Divergent Paths

April 6<sup>th</sup> – June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023

### Press Release:

*“I am creating an event out of the forces of nature that I understand. And this event, if its implications, both emotional and intellectual, are understood, should throw light on nature.”*

Jon Schueler

The Anita Shapolsky Art Gallery proudly presents *Divergent Paths*; selected paintings of Ernest Briggs (1923-1984) and Jon Schueler (1916-1992) from the 1940s to 1980s, showcasing both their influences and divergence.

At the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco, Briggs and Schueler studied under artists such as Richard Diebenkorn, David Park, Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko, and most importantly Clyfford Still. Their early paintings bore “a familial resemblance to Still’s while differing substantially because of their more explicit references to nature, their greater lyricism, and their stress on painterly finesse.” (*The New York School: The Painters & Sculptors of the Fifties*, Irving Sandler, Harper & Row, 1978, p. 78.).



Ernest Briggs, Untitled,  
7/12/1959 o/c, 49.5" x 39.5"



Jon Schueler, December '68,  
Chester, CT, 1968 o/c, 71" x 76.5"

Both Briggs and Schueler left the CSFA in 1951, Schueler directly to New York, and Briggs arriving in 1953, joining the avant garde of The New York School. In the subsequent decades their paths would further diverge as well as their styles. Briggs represented action painting calling attention to the act of painting itself. His work often displays both dynamism and discord within strong, thick brush strokes, lyrical colors and seemingly wild displays of emotion. Schueler, however, is known for his abstracted paintings of the sky, having sought to create “a painting most like nature”. He favored minimal shapes, almost eliminating figuration, allowing for a viewer’s personal associations to shape their experience.

Also on exhibit in the upper gallery, Derek Buckner. Born and raised in Brooklyn, his paintings have captured the shifting industrial areas of the Gowanus Canal and its surroundings for the past twenty-five years. His urban landscapes “explore the relationship between destruction and growth, strength and impermanence”.



Derek Buckner, Shipping  
Cranes at Dusk, o/c, 48" x 36"

**Ernest Briggs (1923-1984):** As part of the New York School avant-garde, Briggs began exhibiting at Stable Gallery. He participated in several Whitney Museum Annuals and in 1956 was included in the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition "12 Americans" curated by Dorothy Miller. Selected collections include San Jose Museum, San Jose, CA; Blair Collection of Bay Area Abstract Expressionism Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA; Ciba-Geigy Corporation, Ardsley, NY; Hirshhorn Museum, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC; Housatonic Community College, CT; Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI; NU Oakland Art Museum, Oakland, CA; Portland Museum of Maine Rockefeller Institute, NY; San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA; San Jose Museum of Art, CA; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC; Jan Verhoeven Collection, Stichting Yellow Fellow, Woudrichem, Netherlands; Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC.

**Jon Schueler (1916-1992):** Moving to NYC in 1951 to join Clifford Still, Schueler was a prominent member of the second generation of Abstract Expressionists shown at the Stable Gallery and Leo Castelli Gallery. In 1975 his work would be featured at the Cleveland Museum of Art in an exhibition with Milton Avery and Mark Rothko. Selected Collections include Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, MA; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY; Baltimore Museum of Art, MD; Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Archive, Berkeley, CA; City Art Centre, Edinburgh, Scotland; Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, Scotland; Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Madison, WI; Mallaig Heritage Centre, Mallaig, Scotland; The McManus: Dundee's Art Gallery and Museum, Dundee, Scotland; Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA; National Academy Museum, New York, NY; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, Scotland; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

**Derek Buckner:** Born and raised in Brooklyn, Buckner's work has been regularly exhibited for the past twenty-five years with pieces held in the collections of the US Department of State; Stowers Institute, Kirkland & Ellis Law Firm, Verizon; Pfizer, The Kellogg Group, Downtown Associates, MTC Financial Holdings, and Clark and Weinstock.

Matthew Cohen, March 2023