



# Photographs by Janice Mehlman and Works on Paper by Emerson Woelffer at the Quogue Gallery

May 4, 2015

by Sponsors

Two concurrent exhibitions opening on May 15 will launch the 2015 summer season at the Quogue Gallery: "Shifting Tides," photographs by internationally renowned artist Janice Mehlman; and "Works on Paper" by the distinguished abstract expressionist Emerson Woelffer.

An opening reception is scheduled on May 23 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the gallery, and both exhibitions will remain on view through June 22, 2015.

The unique vision of Janice Mehlman melds architectural structures with photography, resulting in striking images and artistic statements. Throughout her 30-year career, Mehlman has played with the effect that light and shadow have upon architectural details and other objects, thus creating her distinct point of view. "The click of Janice Mehlman," writes Gian Luigi Corinto in *RD'Arte*, "is a poetic vision [that] asks of those who look to spend time in order to be capable of seeing the feelings the images transmit."

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"Peeling Away the Layers" by Janice Mehlman, 2012.



"Multinational Agreement" by Janice Mehlman, 2012.

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The integration of light and color in Mehlman's buoyant works on display at the Quogue Gallery radiates joy and energy. The strips of color in such works as *Peeling Away the Layers* and *Multinational Agreement* harmoniously unite to suggest structures that are at once ethereal and terrestrial. In other works, such as "Night Madness," the light and shadows that dance around the composed waves of paper produce images of structures that defy gravity.

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"Night Madness" by Janice Mehlman, 2015.

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Mehlman's work has been exhibited throughout the United States, Europe and South America. It is also featured in museum and corporate collections both here and abroad as well as in important books about the history of photography.

Mehlman's photographs have been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions and included in group shows around the world. She directs the photography program in the Art Department of Kingsborough Community College of the City of New York. The artist resides, and divides her creative time between her studios, in Pietrasanta, Italy and Brooklyn, New York.

Emerson Woelffer (1914- 2003) has earned the sobriquet "the grandfather of L.A. modernism." Woelffer came of age at a time when the dreamy philosophy of Surrealism merged with the individual angst of the Abstract Expressionists as well as the distinctly modern ideas of European expatriates who came to America and transformed commonly accepted views of art.

Early in his career, from 1933-1956, he taught at Black Mountain College alongside Robert Motherwell, Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning and others who had a major impact on visual arts. Widely considered a pioneer of Abstract Expressionism, Woelffer himself was rather indifferent to art history labels and dubbed himself an "Abstract Surrealist."

The selection of works on paper at the Quogue Gallery showcases the idiosyncratic nature of the works by Woelffer, who said, "I always work first and think later." They also display his bold use of pure color, line and shape.

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"Untitled", 1977 by Emerson

Woelffer.



“Untitled”, 1964, by Emerson Woelffer.

The surrealist in Woelffer is observed in *Untitled*, 1977, in which the yellow, black and white palette and drips and shapes recall pieces by Joan Miró as well as the controlled spontaneity of de Kooning. *Untitled*, 1964 could be mistaken for a pop art rendition of an apple, but Woelffer here is nodding to one of Pablo Picasso’s great masterpieces, *Girl Before a Mirror*, 1932.

Emerson Woelffer was born in Chicago, where he would go on to study art and teach at Chicago’s Institute of Design under the direction of the Bauhaus constructivist Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. From there he went to the experimental, progressive and highly influential Black Mountain College in North Carolina, where he began to put his distinctive stamp on his work.

After a brief stint teaching at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, he went to Los Angeles where he played a crucial role ushering in modernism as a teacher at Chouinard Art Institute, which would become CalArts. Later, he went to Otis Art Institute, where he taught until 1989. Upon his death in 2003, Ed Ruscha, who studied under him, called Woelffer, “an American original, a tender tough guy who turned a lot of people on to the beauty of abstract painting.”

Woelffer’s work has been exhibited in numerous museums and galleries, including the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and the New Orleans Museum of Art. His work is included in Marika Herskovic’s important and definitive book, *American Abstract Expressionism of the 1950’s* (2003).

In addition, his work has been in numerous group exhibition catalogues, including Solomon R.

Guggenheim Museum, *One Hundred Paintings from the G. David Thompson Collection* and the Museum of Modern Art, *Tamarind: Homage to Lithography*.

The Quogue Gallery was established in 2014 by Chester and Christy Murray, long time art collectors and residents of Quogue. The gallery features contemporary emerging and established artists whose work includes paintings and prints, photography, glass, and sculpture. The gallery's focus is on displaying the work of East End artists who capture a mood, a color, or the extraordinary light that define the East End. The artists do not necessarily represent the specific realities of the area, but rather have each uniquely been influenced or inspired by their surroundings. The gallery also exhibits modern and contemporary artists whose work fits within the gallery's aesthetic.

Janice Mehlman's "Shifting Tides" and Emerson Woelffer's "Works on Paper" will be on view at the Quogue Gallery from May 15 through June 22. The opening reception will be from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 23.

**Quogue Gallery, 44 Quogue Street, Quogue New York, 11959, 631-653-6236,**  
[www.quoguegallery.com](http://www.quoguegallery.com)

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