



James and Charlotte Brooks Foundation Given, in Entirety, to Parrish Art Museum

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by Pat Rogers

The entire resources from the James and Charlotte Brooks Foundation has been given to the Parrish Art Museum, announced the museum in concert with Kathryn Brooks Dodson, President of the James and Charlotte Brooks Foundation. The major gift dissolves the Foundation with the Parrish receiving art, archives and all other resources established for the legacy of Abstract Expressionists [James Brooks](#) (1906 - 1992) and [Charlotte Park](#) (1918 - 2010). With the gift, the Foundation also transfers the assets and responsibility for stewardship of the legacy of Brooks and Park, according to the announcement.

“This generous gift will build upon the Parrish’s renowned collection of late 19th- to 21st-century American painting and allow the Museum to provide richly expanded context for its existing strengths,” Director of the Parrish Art Museum Terrie Sultan said. “Now, along with our major holdings of works by [William Merritt Chase](#) and [Fairfield Porter](#), we have the opportunity to engage in thorough scholarship and interpretation of the work of these pivotal artists, in order to both further the understanding and appreciation of Brooks’s and Park’s careers, and to also engage in lively dialogue about the creative legacy of artists who have lived and worked on the East End.”



“#13” by James Brooks, 1949. Oil on Osnaburg cloth, 55 x 37 inches. Parrish Art Museum, gift of the James and Charlotte Brooks Foundation. Courtesy of The Parrish Art Museum.

The Parrish plans to draw upon the Foundation’s assets to establish the James and Charlotte Brooks Fund, an endowment to provide support for research, care and exhibition of works by the two artists with the approval of the Foundation. A major exhibition of James Brooks and Charlotte Park is now in the making, according to the museum. Proceeds from sales of select assets will also be used to underwrite Parrish projects in modern and contemporary art, according to the announcement.

The Foundation encouraged the Parrish to “...sell gifts it has made of additional, not-intended-for-accessioning works by the two artists, with the income to be directed to the enhancement of the Museum’s James and Charlotte Brooks Fund,” according to the announcement.

“This innovative agreement with the Parrish handsomely advances the wishes of James Brooks and Charlotte Park by providing a fine home for their work,” stated Dodson. “It also stands as a model

for how small artist foundations can fulfill their mission by collaborating with museums in new ways. The Foundation's resources can now be fully dedicated to advancing artistic, scholarly, and educational goals, including the study, stewardship, and presentation of the artists' work and to the support of contemporary artists, which was a central focus of their lives."

Under the agreement developed by the Parrish and the Foundation, the museum will add to its permanent collection 89 paintings, drawings, and prints by Brooks and Park. These works were selected by the Parrish in consultation with John R. Lane, a Foundation trustee and the chair of its Art Committee. The gift forms the largest, most historically comprehensive and artistically absorbing holdings of their art anywhere and brings remarkable depth and richness to the Parrish's collection of American abstraction dating from the 1940s forward, according to the museum.

The Parrish's collection includes over 2,600 works that range from 19th century landscape paintings to contemporary art. Artists with work in the permanent collection include [Childe Hassam](#), [John Sloan](#), [James Whistler](#), [Dan Flavin](#), and [John Chamberlain](#), as well as contemporary artists including [Bleckner](#), [Chuck Close](#), [Elizabeth Peyton](#), [Jack Youngerman](#), [Joe Zucker](#), [Eric Fischl](#), [Keith Sonnier](#), [Alan Shields](#), [Monica Banks](#) and others. In addition, the Parrish holds the largest public collection of William Merritt Chase, consisting of over 40 paintings and works on paper, over 1,000 photographs relating to the artist's life and an extensive archive, [according to the museum's website](#). The collection also features extensive holdings of American realist painter Fairfield Porter.

In addition to the major gift to the Parrish, the James and Charlotte Brooks Foundation recently donated 170 works by the artists to the permanent collections of 20 other American museums, according to the announcement.

James Brooks and Charlotte Park were key figures and made significant contributions to modern American art history. At the urging of their close friends Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner, Brooks and Park spent their first summer on the East End in 1947 in a tiny shack on the Montauk bluffs. By 1957, the couple was living full time in Springs and had become important members of the artistic community.

During that decade Brooks developed a style characterized by the staining and dripping on unprimed canvas that became a signature of the artist's embrace of experimentation and risk. Park's paintings evolved from a use of shallow cubist space, often in black and white, to the rhythmic lines and vibrant color of her later work.

"I can think of no other painters whose commitment to art and their artistic community was as strong as that of James Brooks and Charlotte Park in the decades that they lived on the East End," stated Alicia G. Longwell, the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Chief Curator at the Parrish. "This gift brings enormous opportunities to further investigate that important period."

Frederic M. Seegal, Chair of the Parrish Board of Trustees, added, "The Parrish is uniquely placed within one of the most robust creative communities in the United States. Internationally renowned artists lived and worked here side-by-side with a burgeoning generation of emerging artists. James Brooks and Charlotte Park each have a story to tell that, contextualized by the strengths of the permanent collection, together create a narrative that is both intellectually and visually compelling.

The museum is honored to have worked with the Foundation trustees to execute this unprecedented agreement.”

The Parrish will begin by cataloguing the acquisitions and initiating a major survey exhibition dedicated to the work of James Brooks, accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.

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