

EDITH SCHLOSS (1919-2011)
A Chronology

compiled and edited by Jason Andrew

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Chronology

1919

Edith Lina Schloss is born in Offenbach, Germany, July 20. Her father is Ludwig (b.1887) her mother is Martha (b. 1889). She has one sibling, a brother, Fritz, born in 1922. Family runs a leather factory. Her father believed that “having a command of foreign languages was a great asset for a girl,” so as a serene teenager, she travels throughout Europe studying at the Institut Weill-Aron, Nancy, Meurte-Moselle, France and Polytechnische Schule, Frankfurt, Germany, where she visits her first museum and “stands in front of Van Gogh’s Dr. Gachet.”

1936

Arrives in “plain Fascist Italy.” Attends Scuola Privata at Teresita Baldi in Florence. Stays with the relatives of a professor and studies Italian and Renaissance Art. Italy, despite the growing social unrest, becomes a place she would visit over and over again.

c.1937

By way of Holland, she travels to England and works as an au pair where at night she studies drawing at Shrewsbury Technical College, Shropshire. Makes regular sojourns to museums where she is awestruck by the paintings by J.M.W. Turner at the National Gallery. The Greek sculpture at the British Museum renews her interest in becoming an archeologist. “I went to learn typing at Pitman’s college and worked with a socialist group who followed [Johann Gottlieb] Fichte and were vegetarians,” she wrote, “I met all sorts of German political refugees and became friends with Trotskyites.”

1938

On Kristallnacht her family is rounded up by the Germans. The local Chief of Police, who is a friend, escorts the family to safety. They make their way to England. However, her grandmother Berta Goldschmidt Lowenstein dies in a concentration camp at Theresienstadt ('42).

1939

September 1: Germany invades Poland. World War II begins.

1941

During the Blitz on London by German forces, she leaves England in a convoy for America. In Boston she works as a waitress in Cambridge and studies at the Boston School of Practical Arts. She applies for American citizenship.

1942

Arrives in New York. Attends lectures by American pragmatists like John Dewey and dance performances at Cooper Union. “I don’t think I ever decided to become a painter,” she wrote. But “anyone who wanted to be anyone was studying at the Art Students League.” And so she enrolled. Begins studying painting and printmaking at the Art Students League. Shares a room on the upper West Side with the socialist Heinz Langerhans, who becomes a close friend and introduces her to Anne and Fairfield Porter and Bertolt Brecht. Porter is “the first real artist” she had ever met. Her father dies in Shrewsbury, England.



The Schloss Family, c1929 (l to r: Ludwig (father), Fritz (brother), Martha (Mother), Edith sits perched on the statue. The others are relatives who likely died during WWII).

1942-46

Works odd jobs in factories, as a waitress, a masker in newspapers and in a photoengraving shop. Studies at Art Students League with Harry Sternberg, Will Barnet, Morris Kantor and John Groth. She is most inspired by Sternberg. "Never wait for that famous inspiration," Sternberg told her, "just go on steadily everyday and you'll get there." Among her classmates are Esther Rolick, Max Eastman and Helen DeMott. She and DeMott would become lifelong friends.

1943

Through Porter she meets Willem and Elaine de Kooning, Ellen and Walter Auerbach and later Rudy Burckhardt and Edwin Denby. Studies art history, music and poetry at the The New School of Social Research, New York. Harry Sternberg helps Nell Blaine to get a loft down the street from Edith and they become close friends. Edith introduces Nell to the de Koonings and the Porters. Nell invites Edith be a part of the Jane Street Group, formed in 1944 by Hyde Solomon, Janet Marren, Ken Ervin and Howard Mitcham. Nell also invites her former classmates from the Hans Hoffman School, Al Kresch, Louisa Mathiasdottir and Judith Rothschild to join the group. The gallery opens on a first floor room at 35 Jane Street. Participates in her first national exhibition, *Biennial of Contemporary American Art*, Virginia Museum, Richmond, Virginia.



Edith in the loft at 116 West 21st Street, c.1945. Photo: Rudy Burckhardt

1945

Moves into Auerbach's loft at 116 West 21st Street across the street from de Kooning and Denby. Rudy Burckhardt frequents the loft as he shares Auerbach's darkroom located in the back. She begins dating Rudy and they soon move in together. May 8: Germany's unconditional surrender ends World War II.

1946

Edwin Denby helps her study for her immigration test and Fairfield Porter and Denise Bell act as her character witnesses. *August 29*: sworn in as a Naturalized U.S. Citizen. With Rudy, she hitchhikes to Penobscot Bay, Maine to visit the Porters on Great Spruce Head Island. This would be the first of many regular sojourns to the bay. *November 8*: Marries Rudy Burckhardt. Exhibits as a member of the Jane Street Group at Galerie Neuf run by Kenneth Baudoin, who also publishes a non-profit quarterly magazine for artists and writers called *Iconograph*. Her painting "Shop Window" is reproduced on the cover. She becomes a member of the Pyramid Group and continues to exhibit with the group through the 1950s.

1947

March 23: Her first one-person exhibition opens at the Ashby Gallery. *Summer*: Travels with Rudy to meet his family in Basel, Switzerland. At the suggestion of Nell they visit Zürich to meet Max Bill "a severe artist who told us he was free only at seven." They arrive in Italy "the main reason we had come to Europe," and visit Siena, Arezzo, Borgo, Sansepolcro, Ravenna, Assisi, Ancona and Florence. While Rudy creates a travel diary in photographs, Edith captures city after city in a series of whimsical watercolors. In Paris they met "everyone but Picasso," specifically Alberto Giacometti, Jean Arp and Meret Oppenheim. They bring hard candy to Brancusi. Arp invites her to exhibit in his newly founded *Salon Réalités Nouvelles*, Paris. *October 25*: Jack Tworckov's one-person exhibition opens at the Charles Egan Gallery.



Edith at a café in Ravenna, Italy, 1947. Photo: Rudy Burckhardt

1948

April 12: Willem de Kooning's first one-person exhibition opens at the Charles Egan Gallery.
October 1: Receives her *Certificate of Literacy* from The University of the State of New York.

1949

Formation of *The Club*, which becomes the hub of debate and discussion of Abstract Expressionism through the mid-1960s. Edith is one of the few women allowed to participate in its activities and after an all nighter at Stewarts Cafeteria talking about art and life she watches dawn rise on Madison Square with the rest of her friends. At their opening at the Pyramid Gallery on 8th Street, Edwin Denby christens her, Helen DeMott and Lucia Vernarelli "The Chelsea Girls." John Meyers of the Tibor de Nagy Gallery later titled them "The Italian Girls." Son, Jacob is born. Joseph Cornell's exhibition opens at Charles Egan Gallery.



Rudy Burckhardt, "Over the Roof of Chelsea: Helen DeMott, Lucia Vernarelli, Edith Schloss," 1949, Photomontage, 8 x 10 in.

1950-51

Returns to Europe. Travels to Italy, France and Switzerland. Begins exhibiting with American Abstract Artists.

1950

Oct 16: Franz Kline's one-person exhibition opens at Charles Egan Gallery, New York.

1951

May 21: *9th Street Show* opens at 60 East 9th Street in the first floor and basement of a building set to be demolished. The show is historic and ground-breaking, featuring notable artists stepping out of the post war New York avant-garde.

1952

May: Fairfield Porter's first one-person show opens at Tibor de Nagy Gallery. Elaine de Kooning's first one-person exhibition opens at Stable Gallery. *Autumn*: Tanager Gallery, an artist co-op, opens on 90 E. 10th Street. The "Founding Five" members are Charles Cajori, Lois Dodd, Angelo Ippolito, William King and Fred Mitchell.

1952-53

Exhibits with the Pyramid Group and Tanager Gallery. Rudy Burckhardt produces and directs *A Day in the Life of a Cleaning Woman*. The film features her alongside Larry Rivers and Anne and Fairfield Porter.

1956

Participates in group exhibitions including the American Abstract Artists, Poindexter Gallery, Kraushaar Gallery and March Gallery.

1957

Feb 3: Exhibit titled *Four: Rudy Burckhardt, Ernst Hacker, Edith Schloss, Lucia Vernarelli* opens at the Hudson Guild, New York. She and Rudy visit Joseph Cornell at his home in Flushing, Queens. Thomas Hess hires

her as an Editorial Associate at *Art News* and she begins writing regular reviews. Her first review, which features the work of Eli Nadelman, is published in the April issue. With Rudy, travels to Spain and Italy in the summer. In Spain she researches an article on Antoni Gaudí. *December 16*: Exhibits in *Collage in America* at Zabriskie Gallery, New York. Exhibition includes work by Julian Beck, Franz Kline, Jasper Johns, Ray Johnson, Lee Krasner, Robert Motherwell and Robert Rauschenberg among others.

1958

January: Her article on Gaudí, with photographs by Rudy, is published in *Art News*. On the cover is a *Target* by Jasper Johns announcing his first one-person show at Leo Castelli Gallery. The cover put Johns on the map. Alfred Barr buys three works from the show for The Museum of Modern Art. *May*: Exhibits drawings in group shows at Stuttmann Gallery and Workshop Gallery. She and Rudy rent a cottage from Ernest Barbour and begin spending summers on Deer Island, Maine.



Edith at Penobscot Bay, Maine, 1955. Photo: Rudy Burckhardt

1959

May 6: Exhibits in “Life Drawing” at Workshop Gallery. Exhibition includes work by Alex Katz, Elaine de Kooning, Paul Resika and Jack Tworkov among others. *December 9*: Her review of Nell Blaine titled *From Richmond to Athens to the Future* is published in *The Village Voice*.

1960

May: With Helen De Mott organizes and exhibits in *American Still Life Painting Today* for Peridot Gallery, New York. Exhibition includes Nell Blaine, Helen DeMott, Robert de Niro, Jane Freilicher, Rudy Burckhardt, Lawrence Campbell, Alex Katz, Fairfield Porter and Lucia Vernarelli among others. The show is reviewed by James Schuyler in *Art News*. Summers on Deer Island, Maine.

1961

March: Exhibits with Lawrence Campbell and Gabriel Laderman at Tanager Gallery. *October*: Participates in the historic exhibition, *The Art of Assemblage* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Curated by William C. Seitz, the show features 250 works by 130 artists, beginning with Picasso and Braque, Duchamp and Kurt Schwitters and progresses to include contemporaries Joseph Cornell and Robert Rauschenberg. She exhibits two works: “Straits of Magellan” and “Dow Road.” Her portrait drawing of Bertolt Brecht is reproduced in *Tulane University Drama Review*. Reproductions of her assemblages

appear in *How To Make Collages* by John Lynch, Viking Press; and in *Collage* by Rudy Blesh and Harriet Janis, Harcourt Brace.

1962

May: Organizes and exhibits with Lawrence Campbell *Out Of Doors*, an exhibition of figurative and landscape painting for Kornblee Gallery, New York. Exhibits in *Assemblages* at the Allen Stone Gallery, New York. Separates from Rudy Burckhardt, at which point she and young Jacob leave for Rome. With plans to stay only for three months, she ends up staying for a lifetime. She becomes friends with other Americans in Rome, including Peter Rockwell and Cy Twombly.

1963

Moves into an apartment at via della Vetrina 18. Writes and illustrates the children's book, *What Caspar Saw*.

1964

February: Divorce from Rudy Burckhardt is finalized. First one-person exhibition in Italy opens at the Galleria Aleph, Rome. Travels to Greece with composer Alvin Curran.

1966

May 20: *Watercolor Music* the first of many collaborative events with Alvin Curran opens in the basement of St. Paul's American Church in Rome. Exhibition and performance features watercolors by Edith and sound installation, a sonic portrait of the city of Rome, by Alvin Curran. Summers for the first time in La Serra di Lerici, over the bay of La Spezia, Italy.

1967

With Peter Rockwell organizes *How to see a landscape* at A.S.C. Gallery, Rome. Exhibition includes work by Warhol, Rauschenberg, Gillespie, Helicker and others. Writes and illustrates the children's book *The Ziggurat*. Porter family visits her in Italy.



Alvin Curran, Casper (dog), Edith Schloss, Richard Teitelbaum, Barbara Mayfield, Nicole and Frederic Rzewski
Piazza Navona, 1967. Photo: Clyde Steiner

1968

An illustration and poem appear in *49 South Main*, a poetry review edited by James Schuyler, Southampton, L.I.

1969

Designs cover of album *Musica Elettronica Viva*, Polydor Records, London. Creates the sets for the production of *The Ziggurat*, a comedy for children, at A.S.C. Gallery, Rome. Becomes art critic for Italy for *The International Herald Tribune*, Paris (a post she would hold until 1986). Also begins writing for *The Nation*, *MS Magazine*, *Redstockings* and *Reader's Digest*.

1970

March: First of several one-person exhibition opens at the Green Mountain Gallery, New York.

1972

Exhibits in *Women In The Arts*, Stamford Museum, Stamford, Conn. Exhibits in *Homage to Tanager Gallery*, Roko Gallery, New York. Illustrations appear in *War Resisters Calendar*, New York.

1973

Stage set for *Views and Songs from the Magnetic Garden*, concerts by Alvin Curran, at the Teatro Beat 72, Rome. Illustrations for book by Alvin Curran, *Music For Every Occasion*.

1974

March 2: First of many one-person exhibitions opens at the Ingber Gallery, New York. Publishes *Seven Dog Walks In Rome Or More* with Prove Dieci, Rome.

1975

Exhibits in *Close To Home. Still Life Painting by Women* at Genesis Gallery, New York. Exhibitors include Margery Caggiano, Kay Kurt and Jane Freilicher among others. Designs sets for concert by Alvin Curran at The Kitchen, New York.



Edith somewhere in Europe, c.1975. Photo: Jacob Burckhardt

1976

Participates in *Forty Years of American Collage*, Bicentennial traveling exhibition throughout the United States. Designs the cover for album by Alvin Curran, *Songs and Views from the Magnetic Garden*, Ananda Records, Rome.

1977

Organizes *Assemblage* at Galleria Maldoror, a small basement bookshop in Rome. Designs sets for Alvin Curran concert, *Fiori Chiari, Fiori Oscuri*, Teatro Argentina, Rome. Begins lecturing regularly on contemporary Italian and American art including Tyler School of Art, Rome Temple University Abroad, Rome; Rhode Island School of Design, Rome; Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome; American Academy in Rome; Temple University, Philadelphia; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; New York University. Appears on "L'Arte in Discussione", RAI (Italian National Radio & TV), Terzo Programma, Italy. Her lectures bring her close to a younger generation of artists including Francesca Woodman.

1978

Designs album cover of music by Alvin Curran, *Fiori Chiari, Fiori Oscuri (Light Flowers, Dark Flowers)*, Ananda Records. March: Francesca Woodman's first one-person show opens at Maldoror, Rome. Edith reviews the exhibition for *International Herald Tribune*, making it Francesca's first review ever.

1979

Visits New York City and paints a series of watercolors from the apartment of Elliott Carter on 12th Street, featuring a still life in a window and the Twin Towers.

1980

Designs album cover of music by Alvin Curran, *The Works*, Raretone Records, Milan.

1981

May: Her review of *New York / New Wave*, published in *International Herald Tribune*, makes mention of the young painter Jean Michel Basquiat, his first mention ever. Designs stage backdrop, Galleria La Tartaruga, Rome.

1982

Songs of La Serra, poems and drawings by E.S. is published by Vetrina Press, Rome. Reproductions of paintings published in "Maenad" magazine, Gloucester, Mass.

1983

July 12: Edwin Denby dies by his own hand.

1985

Selected to participate in *Paintings and Sculpture by Candidates for Art Awards*, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, New York. She exhibits five paintings. The poetry magazine, "Parnassus" publishes a selection of her paintings. Participates in *Pittura In Piazza*, executes a large painting in public square in the Piasseo festival in Lerici. Travels for the first time to Egypt with Alvin Curran and Clark Coolidge.

1986

Moves into a new apartment at via del Corallo 29 in Rome. Becomes Chief Art Critic for *Wanted In Rome*, Rome. Show of new paintings on canvas and paper opens at Galleria Il Gabbiano, La Spezia. Participated in *Pittura per Roma*, executes painting in the public square in Campo de' Fiori, Rome. Travels to Paris.

1987

February: Duos and Trios, a one-person show with Cy Twombly opens at Galleria Arco di Rab, Rome.
March: A retrospective of her watercolors from 1960s to present opens at Ingber Gallery, New York.

1988

Exhibits at *Il Magazzino Del Sole*, Oratorio In Sela, Tellaro (near Lerici). Exhibits at *Neue Maler*, Ute Pahrduhn Gallerie, Düsseldorf, Germany. Exhibits at *Ubi Minor Ibi Maior*, Galleria Arco di Rab, Rome. Exhibits in *Passaggi*, Studio E, Rome. *November: Organizes and curates the exhibition Roman Americans* at Sala Uno, Rome, featuring works by Cy Tombly, Sol Lewitt, Nona Hershey, Edith Schloss and Peter Rockwell among others.

1989

February 1: Elaine de Kooning dies. One-person exhibition titled *Allegro Feroce*, friezes on Greek myths in oil, Studio Bocchi, Rome. One-person exhibition titled *Mythmaking, new paintings on canvas and paper* opens at the Ingber Gallery, New York. This is her last exhibition in New York during her lifetime. Exhibits in *Gruppe Ute Parduhn*, Art Fair, Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Participates in *Mediterranean Painters* at the Broughton House Gallery, Cambridge, UK.

1990

First one-person exhibition opens in Germany. Titled *Oimoi, recent oils, watercolors, assemblages and drawings*, it is held in her hometown of Offenbach at the Klingspor Museum.

1991

One-person exhibition, *Persephone & Co., recent paintings on canvas and paper*, opens at Studio Watts, San Gemini, Umbria. Exhibits in *Arte x 1000*, Sala I, Rome.

1992

One-person exhibition, *The Lovers*, opens at Broughton House Gallery, Cambridge, UK. *Artae*, an exhibition of art by women, curated by Achille Bonito Oliva, opens in Ferrara, Rome, and Milan.

1993

One-person exhibition, *Toro toro, recent work on canvas and paper*, opens at Coronari Design Studio, Rome. One-person exhibition of recent paintings on canvas and paper opens at Galleria Renata Torino, Isernia. Participates in *Collezione di Farfalle*, Studio Ausoni, Rome.



Edith in her summer studio, Pietrasanta, 1994. Photographer unknown

1994

July: Mother dies at the age of 97. One-person exhibition, *Baccanali, recent oils, watercolors and frieze installation*, opens at Istituto Daniela Gara, Rome. *Transizioni, migrazioni, passaggi*, a mini-retrospective of fourteen canvases opens at Galleria A.A.M., Rome.

1995

Participates in *Nuove Trame* at Galleria Progetto, Rome.

1996

November 14: Nell Blaine dies. Participates in *Artemonete* at Galleria Giulia, Rome.

1997

March 19: Willem de Kooning dies. One-person exhibition, *Miti e Monti. Dipinti nuovi*, opens at Il Museo del Louvre, Rome. Cover design of album for James Dashow, *Media Survival Kit ed altri discorsi*, Scarlatti Classica.

1998

Exhibits in *Quadreria* at Galleria L'Ariete, Rome.

1999

Exhibits in *Carissime nemiche* at Il Politecnico Arte, Rome. Exhibits at 27, Galleria L'Ariete, Rome. *Eros* opens at Galleria L'Ariete, Rome. *Aug 1: Rudy Burckhardt* dies.

2000

One-person exhibition, *Edith in Italy: Retrospective of paintings, boxes, collages, and drawings from 1962-2000*, opens at St Stephen's School Gallery, Rome. Exhibits at Broughton House Gallery, Cambridge, England. Participates in the memorial exhibition "Remembering Rudy" at Tibor de Nagy Gallery, New York. *To Edith Schloss with love. A collection of reviews and covers from "Wanted in Rome"* is published by Società della Rotonda, Rome.

2003

One-person exhibition, *Assemblage* opens at Mondello Ottica, Rome. Exhibits in *On paper* at Galleria AAM, Rome. Exhibits in *Sguardi sull'America* at Galleria AAM, Rome. Participates in *100 artisti in ospedale*, installations in former hospital *Lucchesi* in Pietrasanta. *Metek 4 Magazine* publishes her essay on box making, titled *Composizioni: scatole e quadri*. Essay is accompanied by photographs by Rudy Burckhardt.

2004

One-person exhibition *Transizioni, migrazioni, passaggi, The Galatea Acis and Polyphemus Series*, watercolors, oils, cut-outs and drawings, opens at Wanted in Rome Gallery, Rome. Exhibit held in tandem with *Rome, New York, Havana, etc.*, Photographs by Jacob Burckhardt. Designs installation for *Roccart* at Rocca di Sala in Pietrasanta. Exhibits *Segni, parole e suoni* at Galleria Giulia, Rome. Exhibits *Mimosa* at Galleria Sala I, Rome.

2005

One-person exhibition, *Paintings from the Bay of Lerici and Versilia, still-life and myth-life, 1964-2005*, opens at Keats Shelley House, Rome. Again, designs installation for *Roccart* at Rocca di Sala in Pietrasanta

2008

One-person exhibition, *Two Summers, Paintings 2006-2007*, opens at Caffè Novecento, Rome. One-person exhibition opens at Galleria Giulia Arte Contemporanea, Rome.

2009

Celebrates her 90th Birthday. One-person exhibition, *Divini e Mortali*, opens at Galleria Giulia Arte Contemporanea, Rome (catalogue with introduction by Toni Maraini).

2010

Film, *A Guided Tour of Edith's Apartment*, is created by Jacob Burckhardt.

2011

Dies at her home on December 21, the eve of her opening, *The Painted Song: new works by Edith Schloss and Alvin Curran*, at La Casa delle Letterature, Rome, Italy.



Edith in her apartment at via del Corallo 29, Rome, 2011. Photo: Silvia Stucky



Edith Schloss, "View from Great Spruce Head Island," c.1949, Oil on panel, 18 x 20 5/8 in. (47.7 x 52.5 cm)



Edith Schloss, "Air Mail," 1966, Oil on canvas, 23 1/4 x 19 1/4 in. (60 x 50 cm)



Edith Schloss "Agon," 2000, Oil on canvas, 27 1/2 x 23 5/8 (70 x 60 cm)



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