

Left Bank Art Blog



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Oldies But Goodies in Chelsea

By Charles Kessler

Except for older art, and new art by older artists, I wasn't impressed with anything I saw in Chelsea last week. This is not a reflection on contemporary art in general, or Chelsea in particular, because these are the art and artists that have lasted and are of interest today. As I remember, there was a lot of bad art in the sixties and seventies too.

My favorite show was [Edith Schloss, *Still Life, Myths and Mountains, A Retrospective*](#) at Sundaram Tagore Gallery, 547 W. 27th Street (through March 28th).



Edith Schloss, *Mont Amiata*, 1965, watercolor on paper, 15 x 19 inches framed.

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Edith Schloss, *Isola del Tino*, 1966, oil on canvas, 19 3/4 x 23 2/3 inches.



Edith Schloss, *Agon*, 2000, oil on canvas, 27 1/2 x 23 2/3 inches.

It was curated by my friend Jason Andrew, the dynamic co-founder and director of [Norte Maar](#); but that's not why I liked it so much. I liked it because I got to find out about an excellent artist who was unknown to me and to see a comprehensive selection of her art from her still lifes of the 1950s through to the mythological abstractions she painted until her death in 2011.

Schloss was under-recognized even though she was married to the photographer Rudy Burckhardt and was friends with many artists who played an important role in the post-war art world, including Will Barnet, Willem de Kooning, Rackstraw Downes, Alberto Giacometti, Mimi Gross, Robert Moskowitz, Philip Pearlstein, Robert Rauschenberg, Larry Rivers and Cy Twombly.

Which brings me to another reason why this is such a good show: art by these artists and others from her circle is on display with her work, placing Schloss's paintings in the context of her milieu. Moreover it's humble work by Schloss's friends, the kind given as gifts, traded or bought from the artist – work she might have been surrounded by. And for even further context, there's a glass case of letters, photographs, diaries and other memorabilia. (You can see a selection of Schloss's correspondence with many artists [here](#).)

So why, in spite of doing good work and having important friends in the art world, was she not discovered? I can speculate on several possibilities. She was active at a time women's art was scorned; she made relatively small, delicate paintings when only large, macho paintings were prized; and in 1962 she separated from her husband and moved to Rome, so her work wasn't seen in the United States.