



Fred Staloff

American, (1924 – 2019)

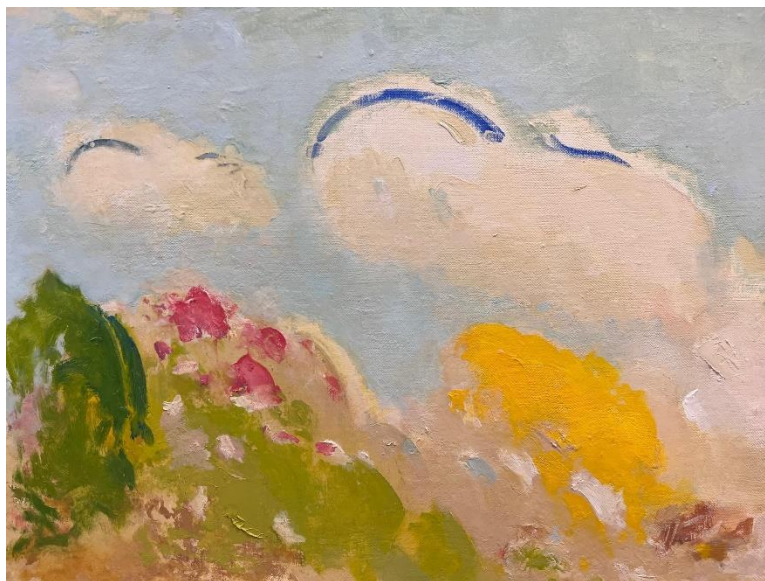
Fred Staloff was born in New Jersey in 1924 and died in 2019. He was attending the Newark College of Engineering when World War II changed his plans, and he joined the army in 1943. Initially, Staloff was assigned to continue studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, but before long found himself participating in the invasion of the Philippine Islands and Okinawa.

Discharged from the army in 1946, he found it difficult to reintegrate himself in previous plans and activities. As the outlines of a second major historical event, the Holocaust, emerged from the war, his cynicism became acute. He would resolve this dilemma by pursuing a career in the arts.

Staloff enrolled as a student in the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art. There he studied sculpture with Reuben Nakian and painting with Hans Weingaertner. After graduating in 1949, he went to Paris where he studied in the Atelier of Ossip Zadkine and then at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. During this time, he met Janette Gannat who would become his wife and biggest supporter of his artistic ambitions.

Back in the United States in 1956, he committed himself entirely to painting. Toward the end of this period, Staloff first demonstrated the concept of viewing the still life form as a landscape. No longer were the elements of the still life represented solely for their architectural function. The forms of nature are returned to nature. A poetry in which the elements of the still-life-landscape reflect a universal whole starts to emerge.

The paintings from this period contain the poetic impulses that we continue to see in later years. These impulses would transform reality into a poetry of color and light. It is what the French call *évasion*, an escape from the troubles and problems of human existence into a dream. The other poetic sentiment, essentially the opposite of *évasion*, is introspection with a mysterious and dense atmosphere. These two



Fred Staloff (American, 1924 – 2019). *Spring Day*, painting
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sentiments are key to understanding the dual development of Staloff's subsequent ideas. We see a polarity in his work, switching back and forth from lyrical optimism to troubling pessimism.

In the early 1960s he began what turned into an extended analysis of the psychological significance of the rectangular form. The rectangle, he reflected, was a form unique to man, not to be found in nature. With these ideas in mind, Staloff and his wife returned to Paris where he created a series of works based on demolitions. The facades, with their crumbling plaster, paint, and wallpaper, would become the vehicle and the atmosphere for his meditation on the meaning of the black rectangle. A group of psychological portraits commenting on the human condition were painted during the same years.

While in France, Staloff participated in exhibitions at the Salon des Independents and the City of Chatillon Annals. He had numerous solo exhibitions at the Galerie des Jeunes, Galerie Mouffetard, and at the Atelier Decima. He also had an affiliation with the Galerie Petrides. He returned to the United States and had a solo exhibition at The Caldwell College in 1978. Additionally, he participated in juried exhibitions at The Newark Museum, The Montclair Museum, The New Jersey State Museum, The Painters and Sculptors Society of New Jersey, The Summit Art Center, The Somerset Art Association, The Jersey City Museum Bicentennial, The New Jersey Annual Exhibition, and the National Academy of Design. Staloff was a member of Audubon Artists and participated in its annual exhibitions. He won the William Myerowitz Award in 1991, the Elaine & James Hewitt Award in 1994, and the Michael M. Engel Memorial Award in 1995. Staloff was presented with the Joe & Emily Lowe award in 1994 at the Annual of the Allied Artists of America, where he was elected to the board of directors.

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