

MICHIEL GLOECKNER (1915-1989)

MICHIEL GLOECKNER BIOGRAPHY



A painter of colorful abstractions, Michiel Gloeckner was born in Germany in 1915. The son of a prominent art collector, he was educated at the University of Dresden, where he studied mathematics and art history. Following this, he attended classes at the Royal Academy of Dresden, receiving instruction from the painter and printmaker, Otto Dix (1891-1969). During these years, Gloeckner was deeply **influenced by Paul Klee**(1879-1940), the noted Swiss-German painter whose work drew on aspects of Expressionism, Cubism and Surrealism. Taking his cue from Klee's example, Gloeckner went on to paint geometric landscapes, moonscapes and cityscapes that were much admired for their use of light and atmospheric gradations of tone. In many of these paintings, the artist would cover the surface of his canvas with patchwork areas of low-keyed colors, infusing the image with rhythm and movement (what one critic called a "nervous energy") by varying the repeated shapes and contours of his squares.¹ Notable for their lively color patterns and their aura of suggestiveness, Gloeckner's paintings reflect his ability to synthesize his knowledge of mathematics with his own intuitive response to the visible world.

In the wake of World War II, Gloeckner moved to New York City. In the ensuing years, he exhibited his paintings at a number of commercial galleries in Manhattan, including Gallery Seventy-Five (1955-56, 1958), the Jacques Seligman Galleries (1960-62), World House Galleries (1962-63, 1965, 1966) and the Gallery of Contemporary Masters (1978, 1980). His work was also shown at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut (1960), the Munich Kunstverein (1966), the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich, Germany (1968), Galerie 5 in Paris (1972-76), Galerie Oxy in Geneva, Switzerland (1973), and at other venues in the United States and Europe.

Gloeckner spent his later years in North Cornwall, Connecticut, although he continued to maintain a studio at 115 East Seventieth Street in New York. During the 1970s, many of his abstract landscapes were influenced by his recent trips to Haiti.²

Examples of Gloeckner's work can be found in many private collections, as well as in the collections of the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; the Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, Pennsylvania; and the Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

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[1] K. G. E., "Michiel Gloeckner," *Art News* 65 (September 1966): 15.

[2] Anne Anable, "Shop Talk," *New York Times*, 14 August 1977.