

EMILY MASON was born in New York City in 1932. She graduated from New York City's High School of Music and Art and studied at Bennington College for two years before attending and graduating from the Cooper Union. She spent 1956-58 in Italy on a Fulbright grant for painting, where she studied at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Venice.

During Mason's two-year stay in Italy she married the painter Wolf Kahn, whom she had met earlier in New York. Mason and Kahn's daughter, Cecily Kahn, is also an abstract painter, as was Emily Mason's mother, Alice Trumbull Mason, a founding member of the American Abstract Artists group in New York.

Mason spent more than six decades exploring her distinctive vein of lyrical, luminous abstraction. Her paintings executed in oil are distinguished by a sense of intriguing intimacy combined with uncompromising, though gentle, intensity. They evince a sense of structure within open, luminous space and juxtapose robust color harmonies with vivid contrasts that create an engaging optical vibration. Robert Berling said of her in *Art in America*, "Mason works within the improvisational model of Abstract Expressionism, though notably without angst or bravado."

Mason exhibited steadily throughout her career since she emerged on the Tenth Street gallery scene with multiple exhibitions at the Area Gallery in New York City in the 1960s. In 1979, she was awarded the Ranger Fund Purchase Prize by the National Academy. She taught painting at Hunter College for more than thirty years. Her work has been included in numerous public and private collections.

Emily Mason: *The Fifth Element*, a comprehensive treatment of her work by *Art in America* associate managing editor David Ebony, was published in 2006 by George Braziller publishers. A second monograph, *Emily Mason: The Light in Spring*, was published in 2015 by University Press of New England.

Emily Mason died in December of 2019 in Vermont.