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Media contact: Gaybe Johnson

Jerald Melberg Gallery

704.365.3000

gaybe@jeraldmelberg.com

## JERALD MELBERG GALLERY OPENS NEW SOLO EXHIBITION

LEE HALL

*The Quarry Paintings*

January 15 – February 19, 2022

Jerald Melberg Gallery is pleased to present our sixth solo exhibition for Lee Hall, focusing on paintings Hall made over fifty years ago of a quarry in Maine, several of which were exhibited at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1975.

*Whether it is the play of light and shadow on the craggy blocks of an abandoned quarry or the drifting sea fog covering and uncovering the shore of an island in Maine...Lee Hall may spend weeks and months telling in images the different aspects and moods of her object. What she is speaking of are adventures of her eyes.*

Excerpt from Essay by Wolfgang Zucker

Lee Hall (1934-2017) was a North Carolina native and renowned Abstract Expressionist, whose muses were the American and Mediterranean landscape. Loosely titled by the locale they represent, her poetic landscapes are iterations of the tradition of abstraction derived from meditations on nature, whose forbearers include a myriad of great minds from painters of the Sung Dynasty to modernist John Marin.

Hall's legacy is one of an exceptional painter as well as a respected educator and writer. Hall stood with the great artists of the New York School, earning herself representation at Betty Parsons' famed New York gallery. She also served as President of the esteemed Rhode Island School of Design, and she has written a number of books, including biographies of Willem and Elaine DeKooning and Betty Parsons.

Lee Hall generously left her estate to the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art. The proceeds from acquisitions of her work through the gallery directly fund the museum's educational programs.

### [More About Lee Hall](#)

Lee was born in Lexington, NC in 1934 and pursued her academic career at the University

of North Carolina, Greensboro, where she studied with the painters John Opper and George Ivy. She received her MA in 1958 and her PhD in 1965, both from New York University, and continued her post-doctoral work at the prestigious Warburg Institute at the University of London with research fellowships from the American Philosophical Society.

In New York, she forged close relationships with leaders in American modern painting, including Elaine and Willem de Kooning, and exhibited alongside Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell. Lee was represented by Betty Parsons, one of the most important gallerists of the period, and eventually became her close friend and biographer.

Lee's work was reviewed frequently and favorably in the central periodicals of the day, including *ArtNews*, *Art in America*, *The New Yorker*, *Artforum*, *Arts Magazine* and *The New York Times* by the widely respected critics Clement Greenberg, John Russell and Hilton Kramer, among others.

Lee's works are held in the permanent collections of several museums, including the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Montclair Art Museum, the Seattle Art Museum, the Newark Museum, the Hudson River Museum, the Weatherspoon Art Museum, the Mint Museum (Charlotte, NC) and the Johnson Collection (Spartanburg, SC) as well as in many corporate collections such as Chase Manhattan Bank, Citibank and Prudential.

She was the recipient of many awards, including an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the University of North Carolina, the Childe Hassam Purchase Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Athena Medal from the Rhode Island School of Design. In 2016 she was awarded an Alumna of Distinction Award by the College of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Alongside her lifelong devotion to making art, Lee also pursued a career in academia beginning in 1958. She taught at the University of New York, Potsdam and then Winthrop College in Rock Hill, SC. She spent almost a decade at Drew University where she left as full professor and Chair of the Art Department. She then served as the Dean of Visual Arts at the State University of New York at Purchase where, in 1975, she left to begin her tenure as President of the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design. There, she served for eight years before becoming the Director of Arts and Communication and Senior Vice President at the Academy for Educational Development in New York City.

Notwithstanding her many accomplishments as an academic, historian, university leader and teacher, throughout all of her life Lee was first and foremost a painter. She drew great inspiration from her engagements with the landscapes and history of Greece, Rome and her love of the New England countryside. She continuously experimented in drawing, collage, oil and acrylics. Her interests were expansive, deep and informed by her pragmatism, empathy and seductive sense of humor.

Her growth as an intellectual and artist was persistent and enduring. As she wrote once, "A painter should live a long time. It takes decades of work, of arduous search and fretting, to know that labels don't matter, and to find what will suffice."

Jerald Melberg Gallery is located at 625 South Sharon Amity Road near the intersection with Providence Road. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 10am to 6pm and Saturday 10am to 4pm. For more information about the exhibition please contact the gallery at 704.365.3000. To view selected works online, visit the gallery website at [www.jeraldmelberg.com](http://www.jeraldmelberg.com).

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Images attached:



**JUNE GRANITE** 1981  
Acrylic on Linen  
46 x 56 inches  
JMG20019 / LH.0179



**QUARRY DUSK** 1982  
Acrylic on Linen  
65 x 60 inches  
JMG20001 / LH.0064



**QUARRY FACADE** 1972  
Acrylic on Linen  
57 1/4 x 55 inches  
JMG20002 / LH.0194