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# The Paintings Of Joan Mitchell



## Synopsis

Joan Mitchell (1926-1992) was one of the few women among the first-rank Abstract Expressionist painters. She outpaced all but a handful of her male mentors and counterparts, while only Lee Krasner stands as a possible rival among her female counterparts. Although well regarded by critics, fellow artists, and the general public, Mitchell's achievement has never received full recognition; her work has not been shown in New York for more than twenty-five years. This exquisitely illustrated volume and the exhibition that it accompanies restore the artist to her rightful place in the history of American painting. Spanning Mitchell's entire career, from early works of 1951 until the year of her death, *The Paintings of Joan Mitchell* includes a wealth of breathtaking paintings, both intimate and grand in scale, that reveal Mitchell's fierce dedication to her art and reflect both the struggles and the artistic triumphs she achieved with her distinctive vision of Abstract Expressionism. Jane Livingston draws on the artist's personal papers, including her journals and extensive correspondence, to provide an illuminating interpretation of the artist and her work. Linda Nochlin, who was a friend of Mitchell, discusses the artist's experience working in a field dominated by men. A third text by Whitney Curator Yvette Lee explores a distinctive and little-known suite of paintings entitled *La Grande Vallée*, created in 1983-84. Mounted with the full cooperation of the estate of Joan Mitchell, the exhibition contains many paintings rarely seen before--and in some cases never publicly exhibited. This book includes an exhibition history; an extensive artist bibliography of related monographs, reviews, and filmed interviews; and color plates and listing of all the works appearing in the exhibition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book, *The Paintings Of Joan Mitchell*, from a Whitney retrospective exhibition in 2002, has a beautiful representation of Mitchell's work, and gives a good sense of what a marvelous painter she was, with various plates of full paintings done throughout her life, and full size details of her vibrant brush strokes of many. The book is fleshed out with three essays by three different authors. Jane Livingstone's gives a fairly good sense of Joan's life from growing up in Chicago, to time in New York, to time in France to the relationships of importance and influence. All three essays, between the lines, give a good sense of the uneasy relationship between an artist and 'the art world,' often a love-hate relationship between the world of creativity, and the world of public acclaim, acquisition, money, survival. (For direct discussion of how pernicious art acquisition and money have become on art itself, especially from the time of this book publication, read some Jed Perl). Yvette Lee's essay on Joan's late life series *La Grande Vallee* is informative and interesting and mercifully minimizes exploring the critic-historian's comparative analyses, while giving you enough insight to do that on your own. In Linda Nochlin's essay, *A Rage To Paint*, you know you are in trouble when the word "heuristic" shows up in the very first sentence. You'd think a writer, and editors, would know better. Yet, I suppose the Whitney people felt they needed some filler that directly addressed a feminist perspective, just because, but what a dry, tendentious, academic, and ultimately ironic essay. There is enough information in even this essay, as well as other work, to know that Joan would have rolled her eyes at such an approach to her work.

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