

**Vered**

**GALLERY**

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**PERLE FINE (1908 - 1988)**



**Untitled**  
**Oil and sand, 1950**  
**31 x 48 inches**  
**Signed lower left**

**PROVENANCE:**

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Acquired from Maurice Berezov (Perle Fine's husband)

EXHIBITED: Betty Parson Gallery



**ILLUSTRATED:**

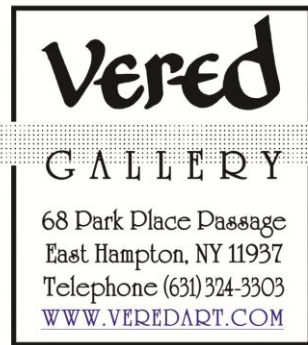
Hausley, Kathlene Tranquil Power Pub.: Hoffman Trust, 2004. Plate #7

**NOTES:**

Boston born Perle Fine, moved to New York City in the late 1920's. Formally, she first studied at the Grand Central School of Art, entering in 1928. During the 1930's she studied at the Art Students League under Kimon Nicolaidis, and intermittently between 1938 and 1951, she enrolled in Hans Hofmann's classes whose courses were held winters in New York and summers in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Though in her words, reflecting on these classes, she said, "I studied academic painters and to that degree I was self taught". Of Hofmann, she said, he was an

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“inspirational” teacher, who made something happen to her work, faster than it would have....”

Perle Fine was a creator of abstract paintings and collages, Perle did work that inspired peace and serenity by using balanced lines and solid shapes on flat surfaces. She was a highly committed art teacher and spent twelve years as a professor of art at Hofstra University in New York.

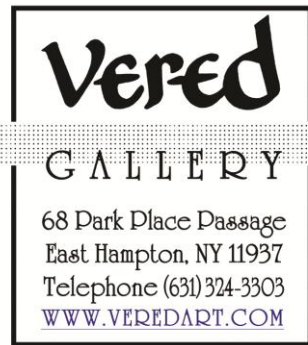
*“I don't paint to sell, I don't paint not to sell. If I feel something will not stand up forty years from now, I'm not much interested in doing that sort of thing.”*

In 1968, The Archives of American Art, oral history department's Dorothy Seckler [interviewed](#) the artist. The following history is derived from that interview.

By 1943, her work was shown in Peggy Guggenheim's Art of this Century Gallery and the Museum of Non-Objective Painting, under director Hilla Rebay. Here she received enough money for paint and brushes. Pollock was at the museum at the same time. He was a Janitor. In her oral history interview she related, *“I didn't (know him there). I got to know him through Lee Krasner who I knew very well. And when they came up to Provincetown I saw quite a lot of them there. Also at East Hampton.”* These were precursors to the Solomon R Guggenheim Museum.

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Following these, Perle Fine was successively represented by The Marian Willard Gallery, then the Nierendorf Gallery who subsidized her, allowing her to paint all the time, and Betty Parsons Gallery, all before moving to 10th street and showing downtown. Finally, she was represented by Graham Gallery. Each of these galleries were in New York City.

In 1947, Fine was given an unusual assignment. She was asked by the collector Emily Hall Tremaine, who had acquired works by Fine, to make an exact copy of Piet Mondrian's diamond-shaped Victory Boogie-Woogie, then in Tremaine's collection (now in the collection of the Gemeentemuseum, The Hague) as well as to prepare a complete analysis of the painting, on which the artist had been working when he died three years earlier. Perle Fine, who had come to know Mondrian after he emigrated to America in 1940, felt a deep reverence for his achievement. She executed her copy under the same conditions in which Mondrian had painted his original, working in a pure white room and using brushes and paints identical to his.

*"My first one-man show at the Willard was I think strongly influenced by Miro. At least some of the critics said they were forms floating in space. And so, for that matter, were Kandinsky's forms floating in space. And a number of others. But it was a way of - and of course it was the first time I had ever put down on canvas anything like that."*

*"Yes, space, movement, form" were the issue.*

Perle Fine

*"I think in a very general way there are two very great directions in art today and probably ever since the discovery, you might say, of non-*

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*objective art. And one is in the direction of the figurative, which is taking on many interesting aspects today, you know, making huge paintings of small objects and so on. And the other is definitely in the realm of the abstract and the non-objective. And I feel that my destiny actually lies in that direction. I can't for the life of me understand why that should be so because, as you know, I teach the figure and I love to work from the figure and to draw from the figure. I don't know that I like to paint so much from the figure, but to draw from it. But I've felt all along that there's something that's drawing me away from the figure and toward the other. I hope it isn't because of a didactic thing about the other. But I think it has to do with the unexplored. There's so much that's still unexplored in the realm of the non-objective and the abstract. And I feel that I sort of owe it to myself because I know quite a bit about it and I think because I do I want to know a little bit more. I want to know what I don't know. And so I feel drawn to that exploration more and more. I don't know whether I'll ever find anything or not, but it's so much fun to look for it. It's strange."*

*"Well, of course the biggest change came about when I moved down to Tenth Street, down here, I left 57th Street completely. I don't know whether I was frustrated, but I knew that I was completely disgusted with the commercialism of it. And I didn't care whether I ever showed again or not. I just wanted to be among artists. I wanted to see artists and I wanted artists to see me. So I moved straight to 90 East Tenth Street. With Bill de Kooning next door, and Esteban Vicente above him, and Lewitan and Milton Resnick. And you probably know that the Tanager Gallery came down there shortly after I did. And it really was a very exciting time for me. Because they would drop in. And I would love to have them. And everybody was very frank about my work. Lewitan, I remember, told me to*

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*do the smallest paintings I could possibly do if I wanted to be a success. And at the same time Milton Resnick had the largest studio in the neighborhood. I think it was one inch larger than Elaine de Kooning's; or it might have been the other way around - I don't know. There was all that kind of discussion. But it was a lot of fun. People were painting for the fun of it. And there was a certain release there that I didn't get anywhere else. And I think it had to do with these people dropping in that I found were real people.*

Perle Fine was the first woman to join the Eighth Street Club, introduced by Bill de Kooning. Because of the vigorous, gestural approach of her paintings of the 1940's and 1950's, she was associated with the New York School and included in the famed *Ninth Street Show* held in New York City in 1951.

It was Bill De Kooning who brought Perle Fine into *The Club*. Perle Fine was the first woman entrant in the group of trendsetting *Abstract Expressionist* artists, including Bill de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Franz Kline.

In 1954, Jackson and Lee urged her to come out to the Hamptons where she could more freely explore the singleness of her vision. The power of the site affected Perle as surely as it had Jackson and Bill. One day in her studio, Bill said, "This is what you are doing, the trees and the landscape?" Perle knew she had painted the paintings from within, the inescapable reference to the Hamptons light and scene, infused her work as it did his.

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Midway in the oral history, Dorothy Seckler, interviewer said: "Who was it said that the history of art is the history of problems that are misunderstood. " To which Perl Fine replied, "Yes, *exactly.*"

In her many reviews in Art News it was noted that, Perle Fine's works penetrate the physical, that her works were sometimes tranquil abstractions, that she painted shapes as though she was working with collage.

Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts; Arkansas Art Center, Little Rock; Ball State Museum of Art, Muncie, Indiana; Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts; Brooklyn Museum, New York; Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, Nashville, Tennessee; Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Guild Hall, East Hampton, New York; Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Hofstra University, Long Island, New York; Indianapolis Museum of Art; Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; New York University Art Collection; Parrish Art Museum, Southampton, New York; Principia College, Saint Louis, Missouri; Provincetown Art Association and Museum, Massachusetts; Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey; Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; University of California Art Museum, Berkeley; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina, Greensboro; and Worcester Art Museum, Massachusetts.

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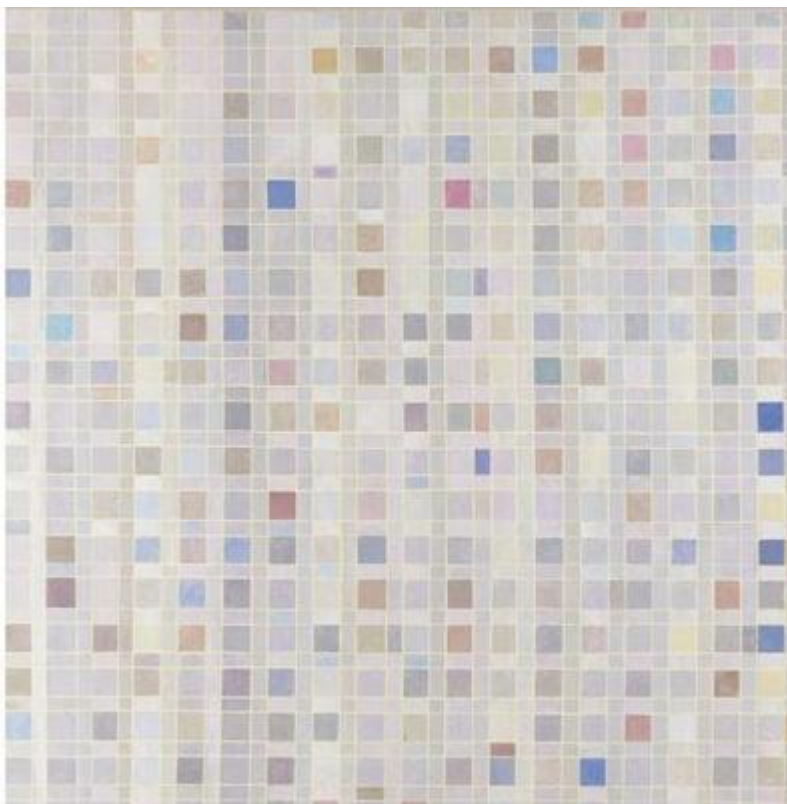
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Few works of Perle Fine have appeared at auction. Such works as appear privately receive higher prices. But auction prices are always worth reviewing.

### RECENT AUCTION PRICES :



**Title:** *Homage a Mondrian*

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$51,000

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$12,000

**High Estimate:** \$18,000

---

**Signature:** Signed

**Size:** 49.00" x 49.00"  
(124.46cm x

124.46cm)

**Created:** 1967

**Medium:** Mixed Media / Canvas

**Auction Lot:** 327

**Auction House:** [Sotheby's New York](#)

**Auction Date:** 10/11/2006

[See all lots for this auction](#)

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**Title:** *The Storm Departs*

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$33,000

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$20,000

**High Estimate:** \$30,000

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**Signature:** Signed Lower Right

**Size:** 50.00" x 44.00"  
(127.00cm x

111.76cm)

**Created:** 1950

**Medium:** Mixed Media / Canvas

**Auction Lot:** 236

**Auction House:** [Sotheby's New York](#)

**Auction Date:** 10/11/2006

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**Title:** *Impact*

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$20,400

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$2,000

**High Estimate:** \$3,000



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**Signature:** Signed  
**Size:** 34.00" x 67.70"  
(86.36cm x

171.96cm)

**Created:** 1961

**Medium:** Oil / Canvas

**Auction Lot:** 527

**Auction House:** [Sotheby's New York, Arcade](#)

**Auction Date:** 06/30/2004

[See all lots for this auction](#)

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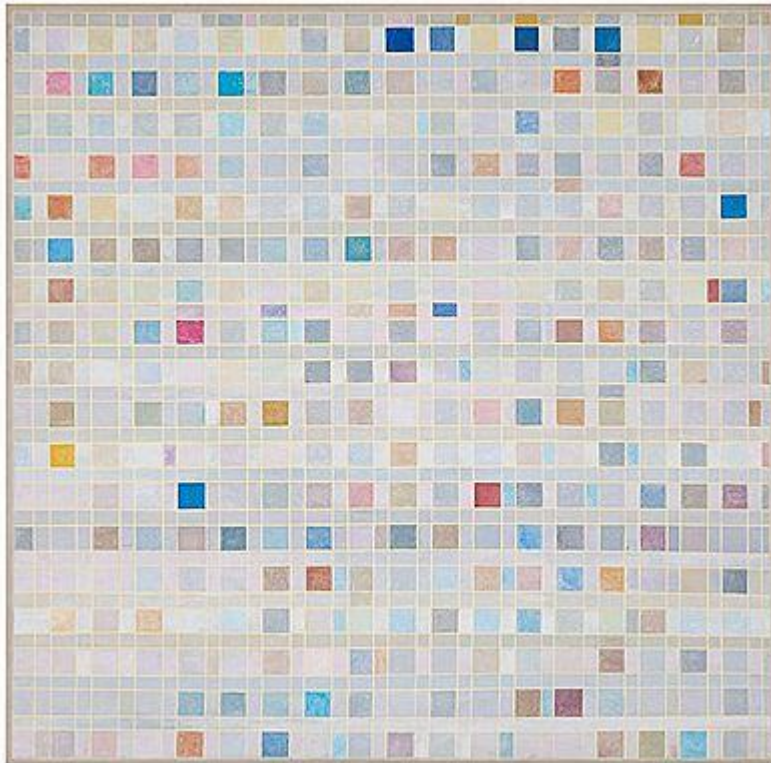
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**Title:** *Homage à Mondrian*

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$14,950 (€11,476)

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$13,028 (€10,000)

**High Estimate:** \$19,542 (€15,000)

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**Signature:** Signed and Dated

**Size:** 48.82" x 48.82"

(124.00cm x

124.00cm)

**Created:** 1967-1969

**Medium:** Mixed Media Acrylic  
and watercolor / Canvas

**Auction Lot:** 18

**Auction House:** [Tajan, Paris](#)

**Auction Date:** 03/08/2013

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**Title:** # 8 Gridiron

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$13,750

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$7,000

**High Estimate:** \$9,000

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**Signature:** Unsigned

**Size:** 40.00" x 40.00"  
(101.60cm x

101.60cm)

**Created:** not given

**Medium:** Oil / Canvas

**Auction Lot:** 119

**Auction House:**

[Christie's New York, Rockefeller Center](#)

**Auction Date:** 07/16/2012

[See all lots for this auction](#)

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**Title:** *INFINITY BLUE*

**Sales Price\*\*:** \$12,500

\*\* (Includes auction fee to buyer)

**Low Estimate:** \$12,000

**High Estimate:** \$18,000

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**Signature:** Unsigned  
**Size:** 48.70" x 47.70"  
(123.70cm x

121.16cm)

**Created:** 1965

**Medium:** ACRYLIC AND  
WOOD COLLAGE / Masonite

**Auction Lot:** 208

**Auction House:** [Sotheby's New York](#)

**Auction Date:** 04/02/2008

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