John Warren Ekstrom (American, 1929 - 2020)
Untitled, ca. 1960s
Oil on canvas
63 1/2 x 63 1/2 inches (framed 64 x 64 inches)
#20958

John Warren Ekstrom

John Warren Ekstrom was born in Chicago, IL in 1929. In 1947, he began his studies at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in 1952. Ekstrom served in the U.S. Air Force from 1952-1954. After returning from the Air Force, Ekstrom enrolled at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, on the G.I. Bill, receiving his Master's degree in 1957. In 1962, Ekstrom moved to Paris and Munich with his family, sharing a studio with his mentor, artist Lee Chesney. He returned to the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana from 1972-1973 and became a long-time instructor in art department of Parkland College in Champain-Urbana, teaching there from 1979 to 2001.

Ekstrom exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago in 1955, The Brooklyn Museum in 1960 and at the Arts Club of Chicago, among others.

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His work is largely Abstract Expressionist in nature, with bold strokes and colors. Ekstrom said about his work, "One of the most important constants in my work is "I am a finder." I find and react to interesting things that happen along the way, that is to say, in the process of making art. Practically that means I try to extend those beginning stages so I can find any exciting accidental effect that might occur. I feel this is the major source of my creativity. It probably happens less so when working realistically, but even then you have several degrees of freedom."

In 2020, Ekstrom died in Urbana, IL at the age of 90.