



Contact: Beth Kaminstein
Tel. (305) 393-4013
Email: bethkaminstein@gmail.com
Date: 2/25/2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Painting in Paradise: Olitski and Poons in Islamorada

Moorings Photography and Art Gallery March 16 – April 1, 2017

The work of two preeminent American abstract painters, Jules Olitski and Larry Poons, who lived and worked in Islamorada during the late 80s through the late 90s, will be viewed side by side for the first time in an exhibition entitled *Painting in Paradise: Olitski and Poons in Islamorada* at The Moorings Photography and Art Gallery opening on March 16th at 6:00 pm and continuing through April 1, 2017. This exhibition is curated by Beth Kaminstein and produced by IFAME, with the cooperation of Lauren Olitski Poster, Kristina Olitski, Larry Poons and Paula De Luccia.

These two important abstract painters were friends as well as colleagues, and this exhibition of their work shows an aesthetic conversation rooted in place and the materiality of paint. They both hold a passionate belief in the immediacy of color and the expressive, evocative power it conveys. "It's all about light," Poons has frequently said. "Color is light." And Olitski concurred, saying, "What I would like in my painting is simply a spray of color that hangs like a cloud, but does not lose its shape."

The allure of fishing drew Olitski and Poons to Islamorada. Poons was teaching at Broward Community College in 1976 when he and Paula De Luccia drove down to the Keys, where they found Abel's Tackle Box, rented a boat, got lost, and decided that Islamorada had a "sense of the wild" that appealed to them. Olitski heard about the fishing from Poons and decided to venture south to the "Sport Fishing Capital of the World." It was a unique moment in time for Islamorada when they were both painting there, Poons in his outdoor studio and Olitski in his home studio. With *Painting in Paradise* we have an opportunity to view their work together and appreciate both the significance and influence of this place and time on their work.

Moorings Photography and Art Gallery is located on the grounds of the Moorings Village & Spa, a top travel destination as well as a coveted fashion and editorial location. The gallery, when not used for photo shoots, features work by renowned artists. It is open for a limited time to the public to proudly showcase the work of Jules Olitski and Larry Poons.

About Jules Olitski: Jules Olitski was born Jevl Demikovsky in Snovsk (now Ukraine) in 1922. Several months before his birth, Olitski's father was executed by the Soviet government prompting his mother and grandmother to emigrate to the United States. They settled in Brooklyn and in 1926 his mother married Hyman Olitsky. Olitski first studied art in New York at Pratt Institute, the National Academy of Design, and the Beaux Arts Institute. After being discharged from the army in 1945, he married and in the late '40s went to Paris on the G.I Bill. After returning to New York in 1951, he received his B.A. (1952) and M.A. (1954) from New

PO BOX 305
Islamorada, FL 33036
(305) 393-4013

York University in Art Education. In his lifetime, Olitski had over 150 one-person shows and is currently represented in museums all over the world. His career began with his first one-person show in Paris in 1951, followed by his first NY solo show in 1958. At the NY show, Olitski met Clement Greenberg, an influential art critic, who called him “the greatest painter alive.” He represented the United States at the 33rd Venice Biennale in 1966 and was the first living American artist to have a solo exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York in 1969. He taught at Bennington College from 1963-1967. Olitski died in 2007 in New York City.

About Larry Poons: Larry Poons was born 1937 in Tokyo, Japan, and grew up in New York. Poons studied at the New England Conservatory of Music from 1955-57 and wanted to become a composer, but in 1959, through an interest in Mondrian and the encouragement of Barnett Newman, enrolled in the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and then at the Art Students League of New York to study painting. His paintings of small elliptical brightly colored dots arranged on a ground of intense colors done in the ‘60s established his reputation and led to his first solo show at the Green Gallery run by Richard Bellamy in 1962. In 1965, New York's Museum of Modern Art included this work in the seminal exhibition of Op Art called “The Responsive Eye.” In 1969 he was the youngest artist featured in Henry Geldzahler’s landmark show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, “New York Painting and Sculpture, 1940-1970.” In 1981, the Museum of Fine Art in Boston organized a major exhibit of his paintings. He has had more than 60 solo shows in galleries worldwide and is represented in numerous museums and private collections. Poons taught at the Art Students League from 1966-1970 and Bennington College in 1968. He has been a visiting faculty member at the New York Studio School and Cooper Union and currently teaches at the Art Students League in NYC. Poons has been the recipient of multiple honors and awards and races vintage motorcycles. He lives in New York City and upstate New York.

About Beth Kaminstein: Beth Kaminstein is an alumna of Bennington College. She’s a ceramicist and since 1989, has lived in Islamorada, where she met Poons and Olitski.

###

PO BOX 305
Islamorada, FL 33036
(305) 393-4013