

# Reginald Pollack

By Margaret Morton

Reginald "Reggie" Murray Pollack, who died December 6, 2001, at age 77 at his home in Palm Springs, CA, is being remembered for the deep impact he had on Loudoun's arts scene and his influence on young local artists.

Born in New York, Pollack attributed his early love of art, in part, to his father's appreciation of the city's museums.

Following instruction at New York City's High School of Music and Art, Pollack studied under the painter Moses Soyer, and was also influenced by Bowery painter Reginald Marsh.

After serving with the Army Air Force in World War II, Pollack studied and painted in Paris intermittently for 14 years, during which time he shared studio space with Constantin Brancusi and was friends with Giacometti.

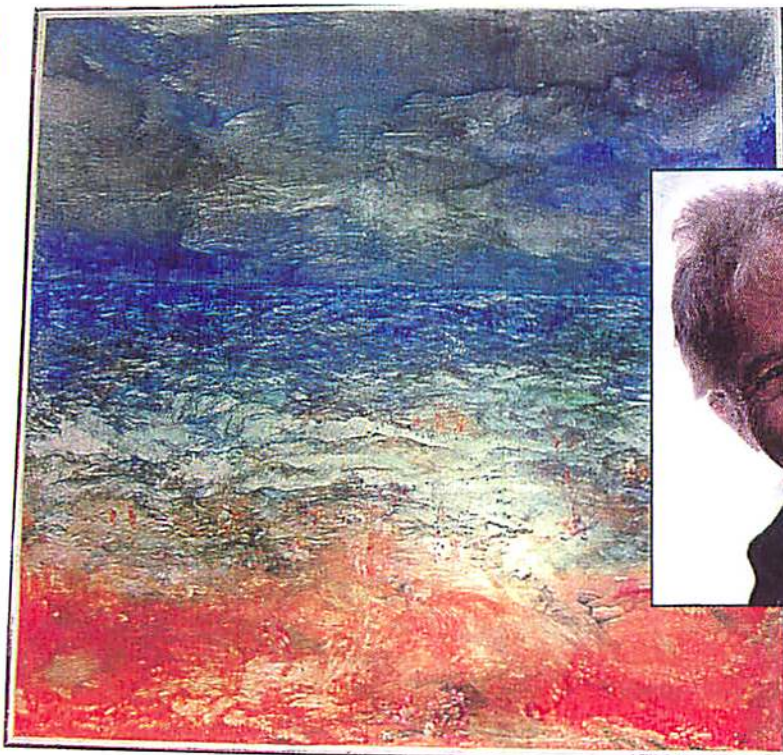
In 1988, he and his wife, Kerstin, moved to Loudoun under the encouragement of an old friend, stained glass artist Rowan Le Compte. Living near Waterford for almost a decade, the Pollacks were at the center of an artistic revival in Loudoun.

In August 1991, they founded The Gallery in Leesburg. It featured not just visual art, but also dance, music, poetry readings and light shows. Pollack said its purpose was to create a living cultural center that would play an active role in the aesthetic education of the community and the cultivation of young artists. He deeply believed in art being seen as a functional part of life, and he encouraged the growth of the arts across a broad spectrum.

In 1997, it was with mixed emotions that he and Kerstin decided to move to Palm Springs, California to be closer to his family.

Pollack's work is featured in many private and leading public collections, including the Hirshorn Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the National Museum of American Art, the Whitney Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the University of California at Santa Cruz and Stanford University's Museum of Art.

Locally, District West Fine Art Gallery in



Heavy Seas in Ocracoke

Reginald M. Pollack



Photograph by Mouncey Ferguson

Leesburg represents him.

In the weeks following his death, Pollack was remembered by many in Loudoun for his energy, creativity and generosity.

Local physician Jack Cook recalled that he was both intellectual and artistic. "Art came alive when he talked about the theory, practice and personalities from cubism to surrealism," Cook said. "He was also a superb artist, and I expect him to be remembered more as we look more carefully at the end of the 20th century."

His artist wife, Di Cook, remembered Pollack as one of "the dearest, sweetest people I knew." The Cooks' son, Harrison studied under Pollack while in high school, later becoming Pollack's studio assistant and helping run The Gallery. "He was a tremendous mentor," she said of Pollack.

Marketing consultant Mouncey Ferguson, an accomplished photographer and sculptor, remembered Pollack as "a wonderful human being. He had a great gift for creativity, which he applied to painting, sculpture, writing, and his whole life." Ferguson credits Pollack with rekindling his own artistic career. "I had gone to art school 40 years ago, but it was Reggie who encouraged me to start again," he said.

Loudoun Academy of the Arts director Carmen Howell spoke of Pollack's talent for bringing "all the arts together" and his abilities as a teacher of young people.

Leesburg sculptor Michael Clay met Pollack when he moved from Charlottesville to Loudoun 10 years ago. The Pollacks exhibited Clay's work

at The Gallery, giving him valuable exposure. "He had a profound impact," said Clay. "He brought a sensibility that made people more aware of the art scene and a broader diversity. Art for him was a way of life; he was always pushing himself to discover more."

Delores and Lee Tucker, owners of Loudoun Valley Vineyards at Wheatland, have a gallery of Pollack's paintings hanging on their winery's tasting room walls. Delores recalled one occasion when the Pollacks came to dinner. "He brought us a small picture called *Color of Wine*," she says. "And Lee said, 'Oh, Reggie, could we use it as a wine label?' To which Pollack quickly replied, 'Yes, you'd capture my spirits.'" Following that dinner, Pollack designed two of the firm's wine labels.

Taylorstown artist and friend Sandra Ehrenkranz spoke of Pollack as "the most dedicated artist I have ever known," saying he "had to paint all the time...no surface could be left unfinished." She recalled Pollack telephoning her during a snowstorm to say he had made designs with gold and silver spray paint on all the snow banks outside his house. "He was a vortex of creative energy," she said. "His was inspiration by example."

Exploring new ways of understanding and possibilities was crucial to Pollack. In a 1995 interview with Ferguson, Pollack said, "I paint because I have to find out where I am... The adventure is only getting started now."

# Who's Who in America®

1999

POLLACK, REGINALD MURRAY, painter, sculptor; b. Middle Village, L.I., N.Y., July 29, 1924; m. Kerstin Birgitta Soederlund; children by previous marriage: Jane Olivia, Maia Jaquine. Grad. H.S., High Sch. Music and Art, N.Y.C., 1941; student with, Wallace Harrison, Moses Soyer, Boardman Robinson; student, Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, 1948-52. Occasional asst. to Constantin Brancusi; vis. critic Yale U., 1962-63, Cooper Union, 1963-64; mem. staff Human Rels. Tng. Ctr., UCLA, 1966; artistic dir. The Gallery, Greater Washington Collection Fine Art, Leesburg, Va., 1991-94; chmn. artists adv. com. Loudon Arts Coun., Va., 1990-93. One-man shows include Charles Fourth Gallery, N.Y.C., 1948, Peridot Gallery, 1949, 52, 55-57, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67, 69, Galerie Saint-Placide, Paris, 1952, Dwan Gallery, 1960, Jefferson Gallery, LaJolla, Calif., 1963, 68, 69, Goldwach Gallery, Chgo., 1964, 65, 66, Feliz Landau Gallery, Hollywood, 1963, 65, 67, David Alexander Gallery, 1974, Washington Gallery Arts, 1974, Cosmos Club, Washington, 1976, Washington Project for Arts, 1976, Everhart Mus., Scranton, Pa., 1977, Pa. State U., 1977, Jack Rasmussen gallery, 1978, 79, 80, 81, 82, Art Washington, 1979, 81, Corcoran Mus., 1980, Zenith Gallery, Washington, 1982, Summit Gallery, N.Y., 1982, Tartt Gallery, Washington, 1986, Arctic Images Gallery, Aspen, Colo., 1987, Loudoun County Adminstrn. Bldg., 1988, 95—, Susan Conway Carroll Gallery, Washington, 1990, The Gallery, Leesburg, 1992, Loudoun Valley Vineyard, Waterford, Va., 1992—, Sordoni Art Gallery, Wilkes U., Pa., 1994, The Natural Light Art School Gallery, Leesburg, Va., 1995, George Washington U., Va. Campus, Leesburg; exhibited group shows including Whitney Mus. Am. Art. 1953, 55, 56, 58, 62, U. Nebr., 1951, 56, 57, 60, 63,

Chgo. Art Inst., Carnegie, Pitts., Salon du Mai, Paris, U. Ill., Salon des Artistes Independants, Paris, 1955-58, NAS, 1990, NIH, 1990, Elaine Benson Gallery, Bridgehampton, L.I., 1991, Met. Mus. Art, 1997—, numerous others; multi-media theatrical prodns. The War of The Angels, 1974; The Twelve Gifts of Christmas, 1974; commns. include Jacob's Ladder painting, Washington Cathedral, 1974; bronze sculpture, The World Bank, awarded to King of Thailand, (TV episode Star Trek) Methusalem Returns, 1968, (laser show) The Crucible, 1996, others; represented in permanent collections, Bezael Mus., Bklyn. Mus., Collection de L'Etat, France, U. Glasgow, Haifa, Mus. Modern Art, U. Nebr., Stanford Mus. Art, U. Calif., Santa Cruz, Newark Mus., Rockefeller Inst., Whitney Mus. Art, U. Calif., Worcester Art Mus., Nat. Mus., N.Y., Ft. Lauderdale (Fla.) Mus., Loew Mus. U. Miami, Fla., Met. Mus., N.Y., Hirshhorn Mus., Washington, New Orleans Mus. Art, numerous other pub. and pvt. collections.; author and illustrator: The Magician and the Child, 1971; illustrator: Get a Horse (Steven Price), 1974, Visions from the Child, 1971; O is for Overkill, A Horse Quest of the Gole (John Hollander), 1966, O is for Overkill, A Horse Alphabet (Merrill Pollack), 1968, The Blessed Ones (Ulla Isaksson), 1970, Oedipus (Seneca, transl. Ted Hughes), 1973, The Enjoyment of Music (Joseph Machlis), 1968, Instr. Quaker Half-way House, Los Angeles, 1968; cons. staff Lighthouse Child Guidance Center Presbyn, Hosp., 1966-69; pvt. instr., 1966-69; vis. artist Materials Research Lab., Pa. State U., 1941-45, trustee Washington Project for Arts, 1976-80, Served with AUS, 1941-45, Recipient Prix Neumann Paris, 1952, Prix Othon Friesz Paris, mention, 1954, 57, Prix de Peintres Etrangeres, 2d prize Paris Moderne, 1958; Ingram-Merrill Found. grantee, 1964, 70-71; Maurice Fromkis fellow, La Residence, Segovia, Spain, 1953. Address: 2283 East Smokewood Ave Palm Springs CA 92264