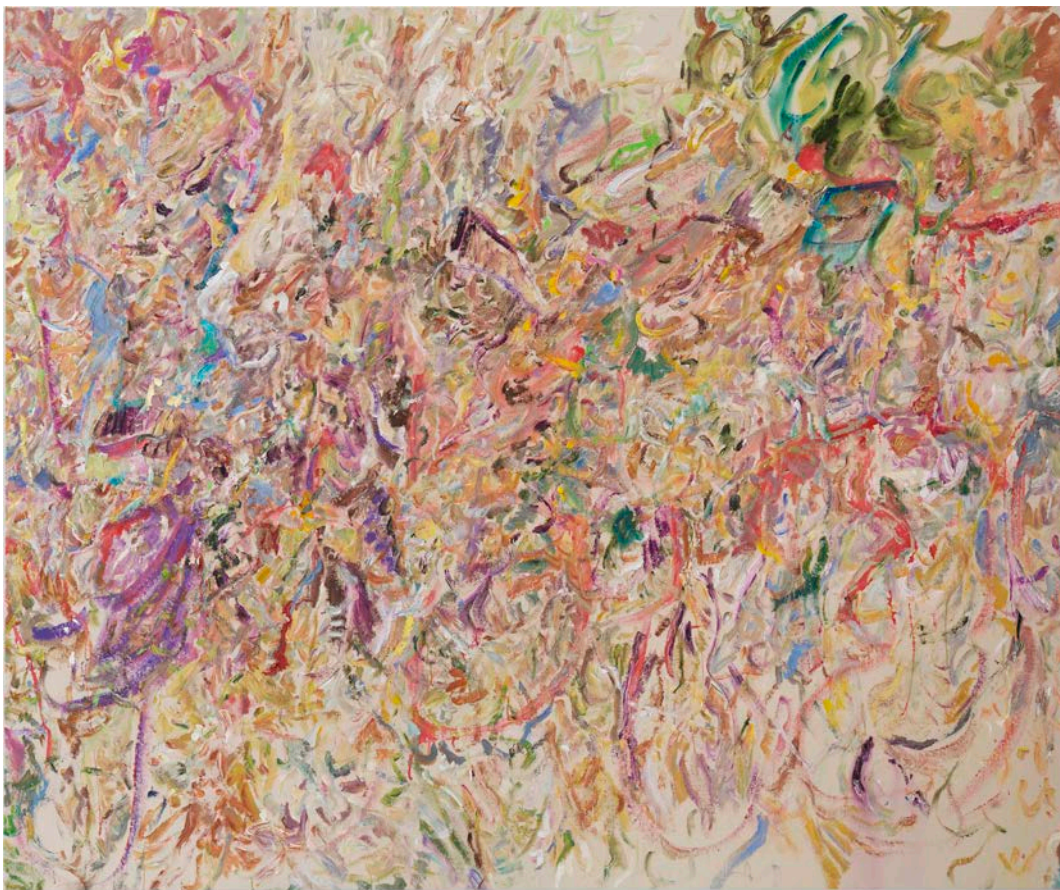


It's About the Paint, Not the Subject, for Veteran New York Artist Larry Poons

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by Bridget Gleeson

Take a guess who's behind *Outta-Here* (2015), a boldly abstract, nearly seven-foot-wide acrylic painting, dense with frenetic brushstrokes in saturated pastel hues. It's not a boundary-pushing street artist or an edgy emerging painter: it's Larry Poons, a veteran New York artist who's nearly eighty years old.



Larry Poons
Outta-Here, 2015
DANESE/COREY

Youth, as it turns out, is less important than inspiration—and Poons, who's been working in the field for nearly six decades, seems to possess an endless supply of the latter. He dropped out of the New England Conservatory of Music in 1955 to pursue a career as an artist; 10 years later, his work was selected for inclusion in the seminal MoMA exhibition "The Responsive Eye," considered the first introduction of op art to the public. Since then, he's moved into an abstract-

expressionist style, and now, in his late 70s—at a stage of life when many artists retreat into the background, appearing in galleries only for retrospectives of their work—Poons is producing some of his most energetic and interesting work to date.



Larry Poons
Oh Charlie!, 2014
DANESE/COREY



Larry Poons
Paving the Water with Glory, 2014
DANESE/COREY

Outta-here, like the other pieces currently on exhibit at Danese/Corey, is striking and lively, both in scale and spirit; many of the paintings are as tall, or much taller, than the viewers looking at them. But the particular brand of wild energy that they emit isn't instantly obvious from across the room.



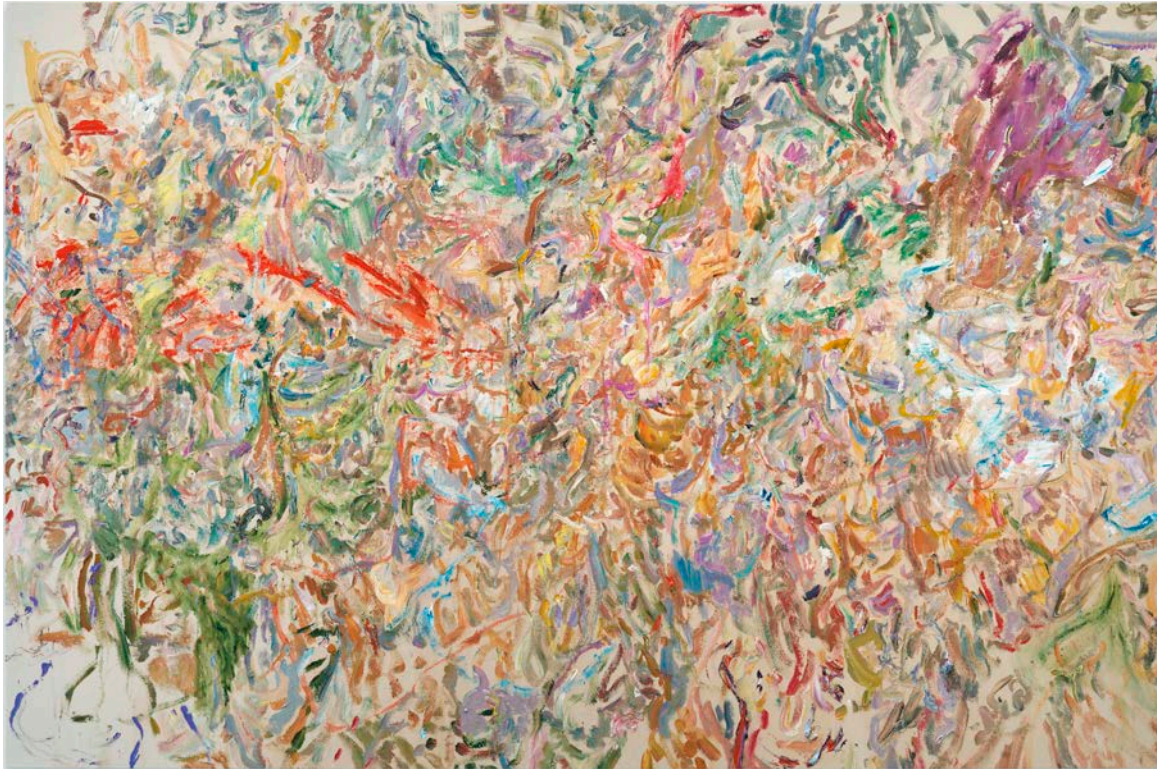
Larry Poons
Corso-for Yeats, 2014
DANESE/COREY



Larry Poons
St. Genesee, 2014
DANESE/COREY

That's due, in part, to Poons's relatively muted color palette. His rosy pinks and pale blues call to mind the dreamy gardens, ponds, and fields of the French Impressionists. But approaching Poons's paintings for a closer look, it's clear that his works are hardly romantic landscapes.

His works are, in fact, the opposite of sedate studies. His densely applied brushstrokes create an effect that's busy, bordering on frantic. And that's what Poons is all about: the paint itself, not the subject. "There is a piece of everything in everything," he's said, when asked about the forms and shapes some viewers detect in his paintings. "A rock looks just like a tree and tree just like a rock. It all depends on how you see it. They are, we are, all made up of the same stuff. And in the end, it's just paint."



Larry Poons
Angle of Landscape, 2014
DANESE/COREY

It's a refreshing, uncompromising approach to abstract painting, especially coming from an artist of a certain age. Then again, Poons has never followed a conventional path, or put much stock in the notion that an artist hits his prime at a certain point, then settles into oblivion via a graceful fade to the sidelines. For Poons, the prime time was then, and the prime time is also now, and presumably, the prime time still lies ahead.