



House Store

Date

1977

Primary Maker

Betty Parsons

Medium

Acrylic on wood

Description

Although better known as the owner of a premier Manhattan art gallery—the dealer of Jackson Pollock and many other Abstract Expressionists—Betty Parsons was also an artist in her own right. She was initially inspired to become a sculptor by a teenaged visit to the famous 1913 Armory Show in New York, and she trained in Paris under Antoine Bourdelle, Aleksandr Archipenko, and Ossip Zadkine. Her first exhibition took place in Paris in 1933. Later in life, in addition to paintings on paper, Parsons produced abstract assemblages from wood that washed up on the Long Island shore below her studio. She explained, “All of my wooden pieces were shaped by the hand of man. They were pieces of houses or docks or boats or signs. And something happened and they were lost. . . . And then they washed ashore, broken and changed, and I find

them.” Parsons found her inspiration in the world around her, unlike the generation of artists she championed, whose work foregrounded emotional and expressive content that often originated in the subconscious mind. To her wood constructions—abstract, but often referred to by the artist as “personages”—Parsons applied stripes and patches of acrylic paint. The title of this example, *House Store*, may allude to its shape or to the origin of the wood of which it is composed. It was created in the year the Jill Kornblee Gallery mounted an exhibition of Parsons’s work in New York and was donated to the Emerson Gallery in 1986. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, *INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS*, 2017)

Dimensions

Overall: 18 9/16 × 15 3/16 × 1 1/2 in. (47.1 × 38.6 × 3.8 cm)