

Alfred Skondovitch biographical information

1927

Alfred Skondovitch is born in London, England, on February 10, to Russian Jewish immigrants. His father, Harris Skondovitch, a tailor, and his mother, Molly, a homemaker, have four sons and one daughter. Alfred is the youngest.

1937

Wins London's county council prize for painting at age ten.

1939

Evacuated to Banbury, Oxfordshire at age twelve to escape the bombings in London; many children were evacuated to the countryside at the beginning of WWII.
Encounters great paintings in the collection of Lord Saye and Sele at Broughton Castle near Banbury.

1941

Returns to London. Is employed as an apprentice stage and costume designer at the Unity Theater.

1945-1946

In the spring of 1945 makes a trip to the liberated Bergen-Belsen camp in Germany with a Zionist youth group. Images from this experience would remain with him and later influence his Holocaust series.

On his return, begins at East Ham Technical College of Engineering, on scholarship, in London. Spends much time at the British Museum studying the masters.

1947

Works on sets for plays by Sean O' Casey and his Excellency Lord Willis.

Begins to study art at Toynbee Hall Settlement House with instructors from the Heatherley School, the Slade School, and London University.

Enters paintings in group show, "Artists of the Free World," Knightsbridge, London, and is introduced to Oskar Kokoschka.

Assists Kokoschka with sets and costumes for Mozart's "The Magic Flute."

Exhibits paintings with artists from Toynbee Hall at the Whitechapel Art Gallery.

1947-1956

Arrives in New York, with a letter of introduction to Franz Kline, from his teacher, Ms. Turner (sister-in-law of Franz Kline). Turner and Kline were students together at the Heatherley School.

Earns some money as a boxer and tailor; skills he learned as a boy in London.

Joins The Artist Club on New York's historical Eighth Street.

Meets William Hayter and Marcel Duchamp.

Exhibits at Roko, Ashbey, and Rienzi galleries, among others, with Jan Muller, Allan Kaprow, Charles Cajori, Herman Somberg and Wolf Kahn.

Attends Hofmann School in Provincetown and New York, continues painting, and shows at the Art Association with Edwin Dickenson, Robert Motherwell, Myron Stout, Steven Pace, Herman Somberg, Karl Knaths and Chaim Gross.

Joins New York cooperative, The Hansa, and exhibits with Felix Pasilis, Jan Muller and Wolf Kahn.

Shows at The Tanager with artists from the "Tenth Street Movement," including Jane Wilson, Leland Bell, Louisa Matthiasdottir, Jack Tworckov, Milton Resnick, Philip Guston and Charles Cajori.

Shows at the Nonagon Gallery with Allan Kaprow, Robert Rauschenberg, Cy Twombly, Joseph Cornell and Alfred Jensen.

Exhibits with Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Balcomb Greene and Alfred Jensen at the Civic Center in Sag Harbor, Long Island.

Shows at the Paganos Gallery, which was a sandal store on MacDougal St., with Willem de Kooning, Joseph Cornell, Franz Kline, Nanno De Groot, Milton Resnick and Earl Kerkam. The show includes paintings by Picasso and Marc Chagall on loan from composer Gian Carlo Menotti. Designs stage sets for the National Theater of France, a cultural mission of France to the U.S. led by Madame Eve Daniel, at the Comedy Club, New York. Plays included "Isle de Chevre."

1956

- Is included in Ten Americans with de Kooning, Richard Diebenkorn, Nell Blaine, Milton Resnick and other notable abstract expressionist artists at New York's Egan/Poindexter Gallery. This show heralded the New York School—a collective of artists whose radical new ideas formed a movement that effectively shifted the art world's attention from Paris to New York City. Exhibits in show Four Young Painters, Poindexter Gallery, New York City. ARTnews annual critic poll votes Poindexter among the top ten galleries in the U.S. Travels to Europe and shows in Paris and Copenhagen. Exhibits at the Zero Conduite Gallery in Paris. Studies at Academie de la Grande Chaumiere in Paris. Works with Samuel Beckett on setting for his first ill-fated comedy, "Comedy Gris," across from Montparnasse. Reenters the United States and receives his permanent residency card under the sponsorship of George Dillon Poindexter, owner of Poindexter Gallery, and art historian Meyer Schapiro.
- 1956-1957
Takes a bus to southern California in 1956, where he meets with students in Claremont. Continues painting and working odd jobs, including designing sets for the USC theater department. He routinely travels between New York and California, at one point diverting to Houston to help friend Percy David Bell open an art gallery.
- 1958
Artist friends in Claremont persuade him to join them in going to Alaska in the summer to fight forest fires. He arrives in Fairbanks, Alaska, in the summer of 1958. For the next three summers he fights fires in the summer, spending the winters in California.
- 1960
Solo show at Alaska Art Gallery, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1962
Goes to the Caribbean Island St. Lucia under the auspices of George Poindexter to manage Poindexter's banana plantation. This was to afford him opportunity to earn money while also working on his art, but within a few months he wants to return to Alaska. His girlfriend, Patti, an airline employee, arranges a ticket for him.
- 1963
Marries Patricia "Patti" Howard.
- 1964-1966
Works as manager of an engineering and architectural supply company.
- 1965
Son, Sidney, is born in Fairbanks, AK.
- 1966
Alfred and family move to New York City to get back into his art career. They live there for three months before realizing they miss Alaska terribly and do not want to raise a family in the rat race of New York. They return to Alaska.
- 1968
One man show at the First Federal Savings and Loan, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1969
Daughter, Lara, is born in Fairbanks, AK.
- 1969-1978
Works jobs to support his family, including surveying on the Alaska pipeline, selling radio advertising, and doing a weekly radio book review.
- 1978
Solo show, Re-Entry, at The Artworks, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1979-1989
Owns and operates an engineering-reprographics company in Fairbanks, AK.
- 1980
Solo exhibition, Monoprint Exhibit, Bear Gallery, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1981
One man show in the Alaska State Museum, Juneau, AK.
- 1982
Solo show at Eye Appreciation Gallery, Fairbanks, AK.

- 1983
On and of Paper, University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1984
Solo show sponsored by Fairbanks Arts Association at Bear Gallery, Civic Center, Fairbanks, AK. Receives Roughhouse Boxing award, "In Appreciation of Five Years of Dedication." This recognition acknowledged his service as teacher, referee and judge, to the kids of The Fairbanks Youth Boxing Association.
- 1985
Is part of a group show at the Stonington Gallery, Anchorage, AK.
- 1986
Exhibits in Of the Bitter and Sweet, The State Museum, Fairbanks, AK.
Article with paintings published in The Alaska Journal.
- 1989-1992
Holds a campus sketch group through the institutes and conferences arm of the University of Alaska—Fairbanks.
- 1990
The Easel and the Palette, at Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka, AK. Delivers a public lecture on art in conjunction with the show's opening.
- 1991
Instructs a painting class at Fairbanks Summer Fine Arts Camp.
- 1992-1999
Board member of Friends of the University of Alaska Museum, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1993-1997
Shows at Site 250, Fairbanks, AK.
- 1997
Paintings displayed at River Gold Offices, Seattle, WA.
- 1998
Exhibition at Lisa Belden and Matt O'Meara Home, Mercer Island, WA.
Site 250 solo show, Fairbanks, AK.
- 2000, 2003, 2007 and 2008
Solo shows at the Well Street Art Company, Fairbanks, AK.
- 2001
One man show at the University of Alaska—Fairbanks, Fine Arts Gallery.
Teaches introduction to painting as part of Adventures of Lifelong Learning Program, University of Alaska—Fairbanks.
Elected and serves a one-year term as president of the Pioneers of Alaska, Local Igloo #4.
- 2002
Exhibition at Klatt Home, Anchorage, AK.
- 2003
Part of a group show at the Well Street Art Company, Fairbanks, AK.
- 2003 and 2006
Solo shows at A Light in the Attic Gallery, Fairbanks, AK.
- 2008
Patti, in cleaning out their cache, discovers fifteen large oil and acrylic paintings on canvas from his work in New York in the 1950s. These had been stored and forgotten for four decades.
- 2011
Solo show at the office of architect Steve Keller, Fairbanks, AK.
- 2011
Dies July 15, 2011, in Anchorage, AK.