

Abstract Artist Fact Sheet

Jackson Pollock
1912 - 1956



Jackson Pollock was born in 1912, the youngest of five sons. He didn't have a very happy childhood. His father travelled a lot due to work and the family moved house often. He got into a lot of trouble at school and was expelled from high school twice.

When he was 18 he moved to New York to live and study with his brother Charles, who was an artist. His brother and their teacher inspired him to be a painter. He spent the next years experimenting with his art. In 1939 he saw an exhibition of the work of Pablo Picasso. This encouraged him to try new ideas.

Pollock was often very unhappy and he used his art to express his feelings. This is why many of his paintings use dark, gloomy colours. As his style became more abstract, Pollock invented a technique called 'drip painting', where he would use many different tools to drip, pour and splatter paint onto the canvas. These paintings were very different to other works of the time and they became very famous and popular.



Pollock didn't paint on an easel like most painters, he put his canvases on the floor. He said it made him feel closer to the painting, and it let him work from all four sides. Pollock painted on huge canvases that would dominate the space they were displayed in. Like Mark Rothko, Pollock wanted people to feel like they were part of his paintings.

Pollock's work is still very famous and he is considered to be one of the greatest modern artists. In 2006 his work No. 5 (1948) sold for 140 million dollars, making it the second most expensive piece of art ever sold.

Work: No. 5, 1948