



Best in Show
Take Your Pic
Recommendations by R.C. Baker
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James Brooks

Brooks was one of "The Irascibles," that group of American avant-garde artists who, in 1950, protested the Metropolitan Museum as unwelcoming to advanced art. He stares out of the famous Life magazine group photo of the abstract expressionists, seated to Pollock's right, and while he was less daring than "Jack the Dripper" (and who wasn't?), he did possess a strong abstract vision and a virtuoso touch with acrylic, a medium shunned by many of his peers. Check out the silky brambles under his broad areas of silver and black in 1980's Hoon, and the beautifully built-up layers of white in 1969's Minos, which sets off a vibration in two areas of blue, as if a shadow has passed over the sky. Naran (1982) is as immediate as a cave painting, with stalactites of velvety charcoal scrubbed into the canvas, contrasting orange swatches that flicker like flames. Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave, 212-445-0444. Through March 29.