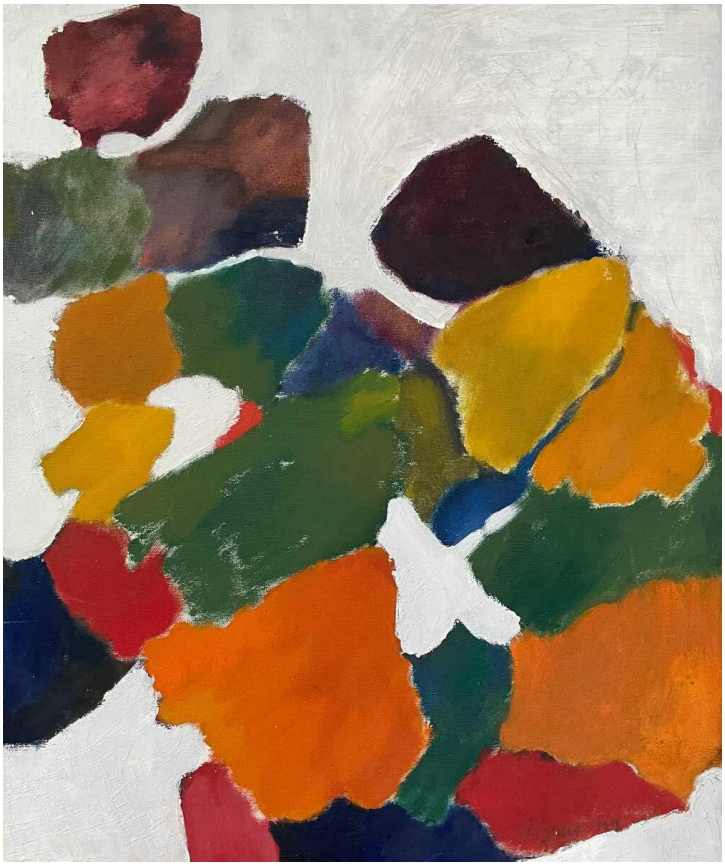

John Purpura (American, Born 1933)
Gather, 1958
Oil on canvas
22 x 18 inches
Signed and dated Purpura 1958, lower right
#21252

John Purpura

John Purpura was born in New York City in 1933 and lived and worked in Hewlett, New York. He received a B.A. in Art Education from SUNY Buffalo, and an M.A. in Creative Art from Hunter College, where he studied with Robert Motherwell and Richard Lippold. He moved to Baltimore, Maryland in 2012. His work has been shown at galleries on Long Island and in New York City, including Ward Nasse Gallery, Phoenix Gallery, The Islip Museum of Art ("Exploring the Corners: Box Work," curated by Nancy Driscoll); The Nassau Country Museum; Huntington Township Art League (29th Annual Long Island Artists' Exhibition, curated by John Elderfield and Audrey Flack); Pleiades Gallery ("Past/Post/Future" curated by Robert Atkins); SUNY Brockport, and galleries around the country, including The Fern Gallery, Hardwick Vermont, and in traveling exhibitions at universities in Nebraska, Oklahoma, Iowa, and Montana.

Artist's Statement:
As a student during the 1950's and early 1960's, my concerns about art were influenced by Peter Busa, at SUNY Buffalo, and Robert Motherwell, at Hunter College. My paintings are primarily about color: how it appears and then dissolves into form. Using paint, to me, is like being a composer who understands the technical structure of sound, then forgoes these ideas in pursuit of the elusive, ever changing essence of creating.

In the course of painting, I became interested in three-dimensional forms of expression, and the ways they create and expose unrealized meanings and relationships. I saw inspiration in the works of Joseph Cornell, Marcel Duchamp, Kurt Schwitters, Louise Nevelson, Paul, Klee, and the so-called "naïve" artists, creating a body of work related to these concepts but connected to my own experiences. I am mainly interested in visual listening, rather than in presenting ideas. "All things speak in their own voice" as poet/essayist (also my daughter) Lia Purpura has written. Attention and intention then, are forms of listening and perceiving.

Source: John Purpura