Paulina Peavy

Born 1901, Colorado City, CO; Died 1999, Bethesda, MD.

Paulina Peavy (1901 – 1999) was born in Colorado Springs. She graduated from Oregon State College (OSC) in 1923 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Vocational Education; she completed studies equivalent to an MA at the Chouinard School of Fine Art in Los Angeles before it became a degree-granting institution and eventually was absorbed into the present-day CalArts.

Peavy's roots in California, where she lived and painted from 1923 to 1943, were deeply embedded in the emerging abstract art scene of the 1920s, which embraced enthusiastic explorations of the occult. She was a student of Hans Hofmann at Chouinard and joined the circle of California's first Surrealists led by Lorser Feitelson. Her professional and social circles included members of the occult-inclined Group of Eight as well as the Synchromists, who formed the first abstract art movement in America. Beginning in the late 1920s, Peavy played a vital role in the emerging West Coast art scene: she established a gallery, school, and salon under her name, where she conducted her own classes. She also hosted classes of the foundational Los Angeles Art Students League and showed these artists' works alongside her own. Her legacy was almost forgotten, in part because she moved to New York City when the California art community was gaining its most influential chroniclers; in addition, her cosmology was considered too radical for mainstream culture to accept.

Perhaps the most profound moment of her life and career occurred in 1932, while attending a séance at the home of Ida L. Ewing in Santa Ana. Peavy claims to have encountered a spirit/UFO from another world named Lacamo. From that moment forward, Peavy painted with a brush that "moved on its own," and her artistic path centered around her convening with beings and forces beyond the visible plane.

While in California, Peavy showed at some of the most significant galleries of her time, including the Stendahl Gallery in Los Angeles. She was included in the opening of the San Francisco Art Association Annual group show, which opened in January 1935 at the San Francisco Museum of Art (now SFMOMA), and thirty of her paintings were exhibited during the Golden Gate International Exposition of 1939-40 at the Temple of Religion.

Peavy was encouraged to move to Manhattan after the positive response to her 1935 exhibit at Delphic Studios in New York City, a gallery that exhibited work by other important occultist painters including Agnes Pelton. Many of Peavy's painted panels from the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition (some at 72"x42") were also exhibited in New York. And it is in New York where Peavy more fully realized her complex cosmology, including the revelation of the secrets of the universe from Lacamo, secrets that became the subject matter of her art, costume, poetry, films, and manuscripts. Peavy wrote numerous manuscripts describing her cosmology, including "The Story of My Life with a U.F.O." during the 1980s.

Peavy lived and worked in New York from 1943 until close to the end of her life. She died in Bethesda, Maryland, in 1999, at the age of 98, a witness to nearly the entire twentieth century.

EDUCATION

1919-23
BS in Vocational Education, Oregon State College (Oregon State University), OR

1927-1932
Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles, CA

1932-42
Art Educator, Board of Education, Los Angeles and Long Beach, CA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025
Paulina Peavy, Emanuela Campoli, Paris, FR

2023
Paulina Peavy: Astrocultural Messenger, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2022
Paulina Peavy, The ADAA Art Show, Park Avenue Armory, New York, NY

2021
Paulina Peavy: An Etherian Channeler, curated by Laura Whitcomb, Beyond Baroque, Venice, CA

2019
Paulina Peavy/Lacamo: They Call us Unidentified, curated by Bill Arning, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2018
Paulina Peavy: A Message to Paulina, Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE), Reston, VA

2016
Paulina Peavy: The Artist Behind the Mask, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2003
Exhibition of paintings, New Morning Bakery, Corvallis, OR

2002
Exhibition at Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, Corvallis, OR

1961
Exhibition at Crown Gallery, New York, NY

1956
Exhibition of twenty-three paintings, Lacamo Gallery, New York, NY

1946
Genesis, Atomic Forces of Nature, Lawrence Terzian Gallery, New York, NY
Paintings in rotunda of Roxy Theater, New York, NY

1945
Exhibition of paintings at Jurart Gallery, New York, NY

1944
Exhibition of paintings at Staten Island Museum, Staten Island, NY

1943
Paulina Peavy, Argent Gallery, New York, NY

1942
Special exhibition of last supper mural accompanied by public lecture and music, private residence, Long Beach, CA

1941
Debut exhibition of last supper mural, San Diego Fine Arts Gallery (now San Diego Museum of Art)

1939
Exhibition of thirty paintings, Temple of Religion, Golden Gate International Exposition, Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA

1935
Exhibition at Delphic Studios, New York, NY
Exhibition at Gumps Gallery, San Francisco, CA
Exhibition at Stendahl Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

1934
Exhibition at Stanford University Art Gallery, Stanford, CA
Exhibition at Gumps Gallery, San Francisco, CA

1930
Watercolors at Peavy Studio of Art and Architecture, San Pedro, CA

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026
Recursions, Emanuela Campoli, Zurich, CH
Dictation from the Other Side, curated by Laura Whitcomb, Karma Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Conduits of the Unseen: Women Artists Imagine Other Worlds, curated by Susan Aberth, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY

2025
Big other, Chateau Shatto, Los Angeles, CA
Voice of Space: UFOs and Paranormal Phenomena, The Drawing Center, New York, NY
In a dark time, the eye begins to see, curated by Robert Cozzolino, Andrew Edlin Gallery, NY
Fata Morgana: Memories of the Invisible, curated by Massimiliano Gioni, Daniel Birnbaum, and Marta Papini, conceived and produced by the Fondazione Nicola Trussardi, Palazzo Morando, Milan, IT.
The Medium is the Message, The College of Psychic Studies, London, UK

2024
Modern Art presentation on BCAM, Level 3, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Open Ended: SFMOMA's Collection, 1900 to Now, SFMOMA, CA
Lavinia, Hannah Hoffman Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2021
Greater New York 2021, MoMA PS1, New York, NY
Supernatural America: The Paranormal in American Art, curated by Robert Cozzolino, Toledo Museum of Art, OH, Speed Museum, KY and Minneapolis Institute of Art, MN

2018
April 14, 1561, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY
Duende: Artists Translating Spirits, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, NY

2017
Celestial Mechanics, Artworks Advisory, New York, NY

1967
Display of art and poetry at convention of the Congress of Scientific Ufologists, Hotel Commodore, New York, NY

1948
American Cancer Society display, Fifth Avenue department store windows, New York, NY

1945
Summer group show, Jurart Gallery, New York, NY

1936
Independent Artists Group, Laguna Beach Art Association, Laguna Beach, CA
Independent Artists Group, Stendahl Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Annual Exhibition, Foundation of Western Art, Los Angeles, CA
July group show, Stendahl Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
Painters & Sculptors of Los Angeles (Annual Exhibition), Los Angeles County Museum, CA

1935
Painters & Sculptors of Los Angeles (Annual Exhibition), Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, CA
May group show, Palos Verdes Library, Palos Verdes Estates, CA
Annual sculpture exhibition, Palos Verdes Library, Palos Verdes Estates, CA
San Francisco Art Association Annual Exhibition, San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, CA

1934
Group watercolor show, Laguna Beach Art Association, Laguna Beach, CA

1933
Professional Juried Division, Los Angeles County Fair, Pomona, CA
Annual Exhibition, Laguna Beach Art Association, Laguna Beach, CA

1927
Eisteddfod art exhibition, San Pedro, CA

AWARDS

1985
Bronze medal at the 28th Annual International Film & TV Festival of New York,
The Artist Behind the Mask

1984
Silver Award at the International Film & TV Festival of New York for *Male Sex*

1983
Bronze Award at the International Film & TV Festival of New York, *Is the Moon a Burned-out Sun*

1982
Bronze Award at the International Film & TV Festival of New York, *Mountain of Myrrh*

1981
Bronze Award at the International Film & TV Festival of New York, Paulina, Artist-Philosopher, *An Artist of Vision*

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

2023
Whitcomb, Laura. *Paulina Peavy: Etherian Channeler*, Andrew Edlin Gallery.

2022
Saltz, Jerry. "The Best New York Art Shows of 2022," *Vulture*.

2021
White, Katie. "The Late Artist and Psychic Paulina Peavy Communed With a UFO to Create Her Work. A New Show Revives Her Otherworldly Legacy," *Artnet News*
Smith, Roberta. "A Harmonic Convergence of Signature Art Surveys," *The New York Times*
Schwendener, Martha. "'Greater New York,' a Show of the Moment, Dwells in the Radical Past," *The New York Times*
Greenberger, Alex. "8 Standouts at MoMA PS1's Greater New York: Passionate Protests, Otherworldly Beings, and More," *ARTnews*
Angeleti, Gabriella. "Three exhibitions to see in New York this weekend," *The Art Newspaper*

2019
Kaplowitz, Jane. "Best of 2019: Artists' Artists," *Artforum*
O'Neill-Butler, Lauren. "Paulina Peavy and Lacamo," *Artforum*
Rudick, Nicole. "Art on a Higher Frequency: Paulina Peavy Attended a Séance and Tuned into the Future," *Art in America*
Deters, Alexandria. "Spirituality in Insanity, Revelation from Beyond; Paulina Peavy and Lacamo's Cosmic Interpretations at Andrew Edlin Gallery," *eazel*.

2018
Jenkins, Mark. "Paulina Peavy's postcards from the cosmos," The *Washington Post*

1958
Nebel, Long John, WOR Radio interview, New York, NY

1946
Madra, Margaret. "In Awe of Creative Powers, Impressionistic Painter of Biblical Parable Has Theories on Atom," *Brooklyn Eagle*

1943
Riley, Maud. “Electronics in Paint,” *Art Digest*
“Mystic Symbolism,” The *New York Times*.

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Los Angeles County Museum of Art, CA
Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis, MN
National Gallery, Washington DC
Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR
Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA