

**Sale Name:** Hodgins - September 2025 Fine Art

**LOT 126 - Illingworth Holey (Buck) Kerr**



**Estimate \$** 3000-4000

### Description

#### **Illingworth Holey (Buck) Kerr**

Canadian ASA, BCSA, FCA, RCA [1905-1989]

PROMETHEUS; 1962

oil on canvas

24 x 32.25 in. (61 x 81.9 cm)

monogrammed lower left; signed and titled on the stretcher verso

Note: A full-page colour illustration of this painting is included in "Illingworth Kerr: Fifty Years a Painter"; Edmonton Art Gallery; 1963 (No. 84). A copy of the book will accompany the painting. Kerr additionally references this painting in "Paint and Circumstance: Illingworth Kerr"; Private publication, Calgary AB; 1987 (page 134)

In 1954, at the age of 50, Illingworth Kerr and his colleague Stan Perrot travelled to Provincetown, Massachusetts, to take a course with the famed abstract expressionist Hans Hofmann. Kerr, a more traditional painter, was fully aware of the burgeoning modernist movement taking hold in the broader art world and how it was influencing his students. He sought to understand it directly from one of its most notable proponents. The lessons Kerr learned from Hofmann, particularly the principle to "construct with planes", would influence him for the remainder of his career. From 1954 to 1964, Kerr described his practice as "adventurous" and actively sought to incorporate elements of modernism into his work. Hofmann's teachings on pictorial structure, the importance of tensions between form and colour, and the role of intuition lead Kerr's explorations.

Kerr's particular brand of abstraction often remained somewhat rooted in form. In his use of automatic painting techniques, Kerr frequently found himself surprised by the symbolic imagery that emerged when he stepped back from a completed canvas, titling his works accordingly. Here, in his 1962 canvas, Kerr references Prometheus: the Titan who created mortals from clay and delivered fire to them from Mount Olympus, in a colourful and textural abstraction that reflects an artist constantly engaged in the exploration of his practice.

[Additional Information About the Artist](#)

**Quantity:** 1

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