
ABARCA ENTERTAINMENT LLC
· LIMITED SERIES

The Action Painter

Episode One — "Number One"

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY RAUL ABARCA

C A S T

LEADS

LEE KRASNER - THE
ARCHITECT

**Kristine Kay
Larsen**

LEE KRASNER - THE GUARDIAN

Adrienne Janic

JACKSON POLLOCK

Joel Berg

CO-LEAD

SUPPORTING

THOMAS HART BENTON

Jake Busey

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS

Hernán Canto

GERALD SIMMONS - CIA
CULTURAL AFFAIRS **Craig Shoemaker**

CIA AGENT MILLER - FIELD
OPERATIVE **Mingo**

RUTH - LEE'S CONFIDANT **Courtney Ferris**

BETTY PARSONS - GALLERIST **Carly Durrer**

CASTING OPEN

KRASNER AIDE *Casting Open*

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM - LATE
30S/EARLY 40S *Casting Open*

CLEMENT GREENBERG - CRITIC *Casting Open*

HANS HOFMANN - LEE'S
TEACHER *Casting Open*

CHARLES REMINGTON -
SOTHEBY'S *Casting Open*

Pilot Draft · 2026 · WGA Registration
Pending

Confidential - Do Not Distribute
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PRODUCTION NOTE: All rehearsal and principal photography for this pilot's proof-of-concept coverage take place at **BCII STUDIOS, NORTH HILLS**. The Architect timeline (1936-1948) shoots in color on set and is graded to monochrome in DaVinci Resolve. The Guardian timeline (1974) stays in color. The barn, Sotheby's, and all studio locations are dressed sets within BCII Studios.

UNDER CONSIDERATION: The barn or Siqueiros workshop scenes could alternatively shoot on location at Chuck's Ranch, Moorpark. This would

require an additional production day before July 7 and incremental cost not reflected in the current budget. Not yet confirmed.

COLD OPEN

**INT. SOTHEBY'S ANTEROOM - NEW YORK CITY -
NIGHT (1974)**

CLOSE ON a canvas. Too close to read as art. Just surface, paint built up in layers, varnish gone amber with age.

A HAND enters frame. Unhurried. Two rings. It stops just short of the canvas.

Three inches from the surface. Close, but not touching.

We hold there.

PULL BACK to reveal LEE KRASNER. Alone in the storage room. She arranged it that way. The painting behind her: NUMBER 17A. Oil and enamel on canvas. Springs, Long Island, 1948.

She speaks to it like it can still hear her.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

*(barely
above a
whisper)*

You had no idea
what you were
doing.

A beat.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN) (CONT'D)

Neither did I.

Something crosses her face. Not grief. Not pride. Something else.

A KNOCK at the door.

AIDE (O.S.)

Mrs. Krasner.

Five minutes.

Lee reaches into her coat. Finds a cigarette. Lights it. Studies the painting through the smoke. In no hurry.

SMASH CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: *"THE ACTION PAINTER"*

ACT ONE

**INT. ART STUDENTS LEAGUE - NEW YORK CITY
- NIGHT (1929)**

A different city. A different decade.
Turpentine and chalk dust. Young men
waiting to be told they're right.

THOMAS HART BENTON, early forties, moves
through the rows of easels like a man
checking work he already expects to find
wrong. He has opinions. He delivers them
without apology.

He stops at an easel. Studies the canvas.
Behind it, YOUNG JACKSON POLLOCK, nineteen,
watches him, waiting.

BENTON

*(studying
the
canvas,
not the
boy)*

This is
technically
competent.

A beat. Pollock waits.

BENTON (CONT'D)

Technically
competent is
not a
compliment.

He taps the lower left corner of the canvas.

BENTON (CONT'D)

You painted
what you
thought it
should look
like. I want to
know what it
feels like when
you close your
eyes and think
about a wheat
field in
Missouri in
August at four
in the
afternoon.

Pollock opens his mouth.

BENTON

Do not describe
it. Paint it.

Benton moves to the next easel. Pollock stares at his canvas. Not defeat. The look of someone just handed a problem worth solving.

Benton pauses at the door. Looks back at Pollock without turning all the way around.

BENTON (CONT'D)

*(quieter,
and
meaning
it)*

You have
something,
Pollock. I
don't know what
it is yet.
Neither do you.
That's the
interesting
part.

He leaves. Pollock stands alone with his
technically competent canvas.

He picks up his brush.

**INT. ART STUDIO - HOFMANN SCHOOL - DAY
(1939)**

A decade later. Rows of student easels.
Chalk dust.

Everyone here wants to be told they're
good.

HANS HOFMANN, sixty, moves through the rows
the way only old Europeans with strong
opinions can move. Without hurry, without
doubt.

He stops at a canvas. The painter before it
is LEE KRASNER, twenty-nine. The canvas is
not doing what she told it to do. She is
studying it with the calm of someone
recalculating.

HOFMANN

*(accented
English)*

This. Here.
What is this?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

That's the
light from the
left window.
I'm trying to.

HOFMANN

No. Stop. Don't
tell me what
you are trying.
Tell me what it
is.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I don't know
yet.

Hofmann looks at her. This is apparently
the right answer.

HOFMANN

Good. The ones
who know, they
always know
wrong.

He studies the canvas.

HOFMANN

You work from
Pollock? The
young one?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I've seen his
work at the
Whyte Gallery.

HOFMANN

And?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

He knocks on
doors and runs.

Hofmann looks at her with genuine surprise.
Then he laughs. Brief. Genuine.

HOFMANN

Yes. Exactly
this.

He moves on. Lee takes out a folded
catalogue page from her pocket. A
reproduction from the Whyte show. She looks
at it for a moment. Folds it back. Picks up
her brush.

INT. WHYTE GALLERY - EVENING (1941)

A gallery opening.

Full of people who have decided that being
seen at openings is itself a form of
artistic practice.

Lee moves through it with the efficiency of
someone who came to see the paintings, not
the people.

She stops at a large canvas at the far end.

Not from the show. Abstract. American. Not quite like anything else in the room, which is why nobody else is in front of it.

She is aware, without turning around, that someone is now standing beside her.

POLLOCK

You're blocking
it.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I'm standing in
front of it.

POLLOCK

Same thing.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Then stand
somewhere else.

He doesn't. She turns and looks at him.
He's looking at the painting.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Do you know
whose it is?

POLLOCK

No.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Motherwell.
Early.

POLLOCK

That's why it's
interesting.

She gives him her full attention. He still hasn't looked at her.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Why?

POLLOCK

Because he
hadn't decided
yet. You can
always see more
when somebody
hasn't decided.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I think it's
the opposite.
The decision is
where the thing
is.

Now he looks at her. This is the first time.

POLLOCK

Pollock.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know who you
are.

POLLOCK

Lee Krasner.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know who I am
too.

A beat. The room continues around them, oblivious.

POLLOCK

You're the one
Hofmann said
paints like a
man.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Hofmann said
that to me, not
about me. He
meant it as a
compliment. I
didn't take it
as one.

POLLOCK

What did you
take it as?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

An error in
observation.

Pollock almost smiles.

POLLOCK

Are you coming
to my show?
February.
McMillen
Gallery.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I might.

POLLOCK

Might.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

That's what I
said.

He nods. About to leave.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Pollock.

He stops.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

You're right
about the
decision. But
wrong about
where it is.
It's not at the
end. It's the
first mark.
Everything
after is just
following it
where it goes.

POLLOCK

That's not how
I work.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know.

She turns back to the painting. He leaves.

Standing at the other end of the room,
watching this exchange without appearing
to: CLEMENT GREENBERG.

Rumpled suit. A glass of wine he keeps forgetting to drink.

A writer for the small political magazines who has decided art criticism is where his real talent lies.

He watches Pollock leave with the look of a man who has just identified something valuable and is already deciding what to do about it.

INT. SOTHEBY'S - CORRIDOR - NIGHT (1974)

Lee at the window overlooking the auction floor. The room filling below her.

A man stops beside her.

GERALD SIMMONS.

Government cultural affairs. The kind of title that explains nothing and means everything.

He doesn't look like he's in a hurry to get anywhere.

SIMMONS

Mrs. Krasner.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

I don't know
you.

SIMMONS

No. But I've
known your work
for some time.
Particularly

the advocacy.
The estate. The
exhibitions
abroad.

She is very still.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

The
exhibitions.

SIMMONS

The European
tours. Fifty-
one, fifty-
three, fifty-
eight. The
Congress for
Cultural
Freedom shows.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

I worked to get
them seen.
That's different
from what
you're
describing.

SIMMONS

Of course.

A beat. He looks at the auction floor.

SIMMONS

Number 17A is a
remarkable

piece to have
in circulation.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

It's a
remarkable
piece
regardless.

SIMMONS

There will be
considerable
interest from
European
buyers. We've
taken note.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

We.

SIMMONS

The cultural
affairs office.
We track
significant
works as they
move through
the market.

She looks at him now. Really looks.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

What do you
want to know?

SIMMONS

Nothing you
haven't already
answered.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Then we're
done.

SIMMONS

Mrs. Krasner.
The Amsterdam
venue. Nineteen
fifty-three. Do
you remember
who coordinated
the shipment on
the American
side?

She looks at him.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

No.

She goes. Simmons watches her. He doesn't
move. Doesn't write anything down. He just
watches.

ACT TWO

**INT. UNION SQUARE WORKSHOP - NEW YORK
CITY - NIGHT (1936)**

Five years later. A different energy entirely. Spray guns. Industrial enamel. A dozen young artists crammed into a loft that reeks of lacquer.

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS, forty, moves through the chaos like he started it on purpose. Because he did.

POLLOCK, now twenty-four, stands at the back wall. Still carrying Benton's problem. Still looking for the answer.

Siqueiros stops. Looks at him across the room.

SIQUEIROS

*(Spanish-
accented,
to the
room
broadly)*

The accident is
not the enemy.
The accident is
the
collaborator.
You are not
controlling the
paint. You are

in negotiation
with it.

He picks up a can of enamel. No ceremony.
He throws it at the wall. The splatter
stops two or three people cold.

SIQUEIROS (CONT'D)

*(directly
to
Pollock)*

You. Come here.

Pollock doesn't move.

SIQUEIROS (CONT'D)

I said come
here.

Pollock crosses the room. Siqueiros puts a
can in his hand.

SIQUEIROS

Do not aim. Do
not think.
Negotiate.

Pollock looks at the wall one more time.
Something behind his eyes is unlocking.
Benton's problem. The answer arriving from
a completely unexpected direction.

He throws the paint.

The splatter is extraordinary. Different
from Siqueiros. More violent. More
personal. The room goes quiet.

Siqueiros watches him. Something between
fear and thrill crosses his face.

SIQUEIROS

*(in
Spanish,
to
himself)*
Ahi esta. There
it is.

**INT. ART OF THIS CENTURY GALLERY -
EVENING (1943)**

PEGGY GUGGENHEIM moves through her own room with the ease of someone who designed the room, the party, and the guest list.

American by birth, European by choice, entirely her own invention.

Pollock is here.

He is in the wrong clothes and he knows it and he has decided this is everyone else's problem.

Lee is here too. She is in the right clothes. Nobody notices.

Peggy finds Pollock standing in front of one of his own canvases, hung on loan for the evening.

PEGGY

You don't look
like someone
enjoying a
party.

POLLOCK

I'm not
enjoying a
party.

PEGGY

Good. Parties
are for people
with nothing to
look at.

She stands beside him, looking at the
canvas.

PEGGY

The Europeans
think it's
derivative.

POLLOCK

The Europeans
are wrong.

PEGGY

I know they
are. I told
them so. They
were very
offended. That's
how I know
you're right.

PEGGY

I want to give
you a show.
January. And I
want to give
you a contract.

POLLOCK

What kind of
contract?

PEGGY

One hundred and
fifty dollars a
month. Against
sales.

POLLOCK

And the mural.

PEGGY

Yes. And the
mural. Mondrian
says it's the
most
extraordinary
thing he's seen
from an
American
painter. I
agree with
Mondrian about
almost nothing,
so that should
tell you
something.

From across the room: Lee, in conversation
with someone she doesn't care about. Her
eyes find Pollock and Peggy. She reads the
situation in one look.

She excuses herself and crosses the room.
Not quickly.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Peggy. The
Kandinsky in
the back.
Someone is
asking about
provenance.

PEGGY

Let them ask.
I'll be there
in a moment.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

It's the
German. The one
from the
museum.

A beat. Peggy knows exactly which German.
She glances at Pollock.

PEGGY

(to
Pollock)
We'll finish
this. Don't go
anywhere.

She moves away. Pollock looks at Lee.

POLLOCK

What German?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

There is no
German.

POLLOCK

She wants to
give me a show.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know.

POLLOCK

The contract is
a hundred and
fifty a month.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Take that too.

POLLOCK

Lee.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Jackson. Take
the show. Take
the contract.
Take the mural.
We need the
money and the
work deserves
the wall.

POLLOCK

You're very
calm about
this.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

One of us has
to be.

From across the room, Clement Greenberg has
found his way to them.

GREENBERG

Pollock.
Greenberg. I've
been writing
about your work
for the
Partisan
Review.

POLLOCK

I know who you
are.

GREENBERG

What you're
doing is the
logical
continuation of
Cubism. The
pure optical.
Flatness as a
formal
statement
rather than a
limitation.

POLLOCK

That's not what
I'm doing.

GREENBERG

You may not
know what
you're doing.
That's often
the case.

Lee says nothing. She is watching Greenberg with an expression that most people would read as neutral attention. It is not neutral attention.

GREENBERG

*(to Lee,
noticing
her for
the first
time)*

And you are?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Lee Krasner.

GREENBERG

Ah. Yes. I've
seen your work.

A pause that contains the specific shape of a sentence left unfinished.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

And?

GREENBERG

Promising. Very
influenced by
Hofmann, of
course.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Hofmann was
influenced by
Matisse. Are we
going back that
far or shall we

stop somewhere
convenient?

Greenberg laughs. Genuine. It surprises
him.

GREENBERG

Fair.

He drifts away. Lee watches him go.

POLLOCK

He'll write
about you too.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know.

POLLOCK

That's a good
thing.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

It's a useful
thing. That's
not the same.

**INT. ART STUDIO - BENTON'S SPACE - NIGHT
(1942)**

Benton and Pollock. The dynamic has changed
since the League. Not teacher and student
anymore. Two men who have stopped being the
same thing.

The canvas on the easel is Pollock's.
Benton stands in front of it with his arms
crossed.

POLLOCK

Say it.

BENTON

I'm looking.

POLLOCK

You've been
looking for ten
minutes.

BENTON

You want my
opinion or you
want me to
hurry?

A beat.

BENTON

This isn't
painting.

POLLOCK

What is it?

BENTON

I don't know.
That's the
problem.

POLLOCK

Maybe that's
the point.

BENTON

The point of
painting is not

the absence of
a point.

He turns away from the canvas.

BENTON

I taught you
everything I
know. I gave
you everything
I had.

POLLOCK

I know you did.

BENTON

And this is
what you did
with it.

POLLOCK

Yes.

BENTON

You threw it
away.

POLLOCK

I started from
it.

BENTON

Same thing.

POLLOCK

It's not the
same thing.

Benton picks up his jacket.

BENTON

You're going to
be very famous.
I want you to
know I said
that. I think
you're going to
be the most
talked-about
painter in
America. And I
think it's
going to cost
you something
you won't see
coming until
it's already
gone.

He's at the door.

POLLOCK

What did it
cost you?

Benton stops. Doesn't turn around.

BENTON

Everything I
did wrong.
Which is the
only thing
anyone ever
pays for.

He leaves. Pollock puts his hands flat
against the window glass.

**INT. LEE AND POLLOCK'S APARTMENT - EAST
8TH STREET - NIGHT (1944)**

Small. Dense with work.

The life of two people organized around the fact that they are both trying to make serious work in two hundred square feet.

Lee is reading. Pollock is drinking.

Both ordinary facts of the evening.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Peggy called.

POLLOCK

What did she
want?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

What she always
wants. A show.
Spring. Six new
pieces.

POLLOCK

I have four.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

That's why she
wants six.

He pours another drink. She doesn't look
up.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Jackson.

POLLOCK

I heard you.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know you
heard me.

POLLOCK

I'll have six.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

When?

He doesn't answer. She closes the book, one
finger inside to hold the place.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Dr. Henderson
wants to see
you Thursday.

POLLOCK

I don't need to
see Henderson.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

He thinks.

POLLOCK

I know what he
thinks.

A silence. Not comfortable. Familiar.

POLLOCK

The four I have
are good.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know they're
good. I live
with them.

POLLOCK

Better than
anything I've
done.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Better than
most things
anyone has
done.

He looks at her. She says this without
sentimentality, as a statement of fact.
That is why he can hear it.

POLLOCK

You're not just
saying that.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I'm never just
saying
anything.

He finishes his drink. Sets the glass down
very carefully, which is how she knows he's
trying.

POLLOCK

I'll call
Henderson.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Thursday.

POLLOCK

Thursday.

She opens the book. He looks at the canvases on the walls.

POLLOCK

Lee.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Mm.

POLLOCK

Thank you.

She doesn't look up.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Don't thank me.

Paint.

INT. A COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON (1944)

Lee and RUTH, thirty, sit across from each other at a small table. Ruth is a painter. The person Lee talks to when she cannot talk to Pollock. Not famous and doesn't expect to be. This has made her perceptive about people who are.

RUTH

How is he?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

He's working.

RUTH

That's not what
I asked.

Lee looks at her coffee.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

He's drinking.
He's working.
The same as
always except
the work is
getting better
and the
drinking is
getting worse
and I don't
know which one
is driving the
other.

RUTH

Does he know
how good it is?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

He knows.
That's part of
the problem.

RUTH

What's the rest
of it?

A beat.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Peggy. The
contract. The
mural. He's
becoming
something and

the becoming is
very loud and
I'm not sure he
knows how to be
inside it.

RUTH

What about you?

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

What about me.

RUTH

Lee. Your work.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

My work is fine.

RUTH

Is it being
shown?

Pause.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Not this
season.

RUTH

Not last season
either.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know that,
Ruth.

RUTH

I'm asking if
you do.

Lee looks out the window at the street.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

What I know is
that there are
two of us and
one show and
I'm not going
to compete with
him for the
same inch of
wall. That's
not strategy.
That's just how
things are.

RUTH

He wouldn't see
it as
competition.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I know he
wouldn't.
That's not the
point.

Ruth says nothing. Lee turns back from the window.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

The work is
good, Ruth. I
know the work
is good. That's
enough for now.

RUTH

Is it?

Lee picks up her coffee. Drinks it. Sets it down.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

It has to be.

**INT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - A GOVERNMENT
OFFICE - DAY (1949)**

Beige walls. A single window, blinds half-drawn. No nameplate on the door.

CIA AGENT MILLER sits across a desk from a SUPERVISOR we never see clearly.

Miller does not look like a government agent. This is the point.

He looks like a man who sells insurance in a city nobody is talking about.

SUPERVISOR (O.S.)

The painter in
Springs.
Pollock.
Status.

MILLER

Working.
Erratic. Drinks
heavily. Wife
manages
everything,
including him.

SUPERVISOR (O.S.)

The wife.

MILLER

Krasner. Also a
painter.
Sharper than he
is, in my
judgment. She's
the one keeping
the operation
viable, whether
she knows
there's an
operation or
not.

SUPERVISOR (O.S.)

She doesn't
know.

MILLER

No.

SUPERVISOR (O.S.)

Keep it that
way. Photograph
the work as
it's produced.
Nothing else.

Miller closes a thin folder. Inside it, a
single photograph: the barn, seen from the
road.

MILLER

Understood.

He stands. Takes his hat from the chair. An unremarkable man, about to drive an unremarkable car to a barn in Springs.

**INT. SOTHEBY'S - PRIVATE OFFICE - NIGHT
(1974)**

Lee sits across from CHARLES REMINGTON, Sotheby's senior specialist. A careful, by-the-book professional who consistently underestimates Lee Krasner.

REMINGTON

The estimate is conservative. We think it could go considerably higher.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Higher than conservative still isn't high enough.

REMINGTON

Mrs. Krasner.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

The reserve stands.

REMINGTON

The reserve is aggressive.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

I know what the
reserve is. I
set it.

REMINGTON

If the room
doesn't get
there.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Then the
painting goes
home with me.

REMINGTON

You've turned
down
substantial
private offers.
The Geffen
inquiry alone.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Was premature.

REMINGTON

If I may ask.
What is the
right time?

She picks up her folder. She stands.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

You may not.

She leaves. Remington watches her go. After
a moment he reaches for the phone.

REMINGTON

*(into
phone)*

She won't budge
on the reserve.

ACT THREE

**INT. THE BARN - SPRINGS, LONG ISLAND -
LATE AFTERNOON (1948)**

JACKSON POLLOCK, thirty-one, is on the floor of a barn.

Moving around a canvas laid flat on the boards.

He tilts a can of Duco enamel at his hip.

The paint falls in long arcs. He isn't watching where it lands. He already knows.

This isn't chaos. It's a language he had to invent because the others weren't enough.

LEE KRASNER stands in the doorway.

Her coffee has gone cold. She isn't going anywhere.

She isn't watching Pollock. She's watching what he's making. That's the difference that matters.

She steps inside. Sets the cold coffee on the worktable.

POLLOCK

*(without
looking
up)*

Go inside, Lee.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

I am inside.

POLLOCK

I can't work
when you watch.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Then you can't
work.

He stops. Sets the can down. Turns and looks at her over his shoulder. The paint keeps dripping from the tilted can. He lets it.

POLLOCK

What do you
see.

Not really a question. He needs her to confirm he hasn't imagined it.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

*(a long
beat)*

I see it.

POLLOCK

That's not an
answer.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

It's the only
one I have
right now.

He turns back to the canvas. Lee crouches beside it, looking at it like she already knows what it's worth.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

(CONT'D)

(quietly)

Jackson. This
is the one.

Pollock looks at her. She is not given to
this kind of statement.

POLLOCK

How many times
have you said
that.

Lee makes a small sound. Not a word. She
looks back at the canvas.

That is the answer.

A silence. Something in him settles.

Lee stands. Crosses to the worktable. Finds
a notepad. Writes a name. Tears the page.
Holds it out to Pollock.

He takes it. Reads it. Looks up at her.

POLLOCK

Who is this.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)

Betty Parsons.
The person
who's going to
show the world
what's on that
floor.

He nods. Parsons runs the most serious
gallery in New York for new American work.

If Lee is sending Pollock to her, Pollock is already further along than he knows.

LEE (THE ARCHITECT)
(CONT'D)

You just paint.

She crosses to the door. Stops. Looks back at the canvas once more.

Then she is gone. Pollock looks at the name on the paper. Picks up the paint can.

POLLOCK

*(to the
empty
room)*

Lee. There's a man called about a European tour. The Congress for Cultural Freedom. Some kind of touring show.

No answer. He says it anyway. To the canvas.

POLLOCK (CONT'D)

Probably nothing.

**EXT. THE ROAD OUTSIDE THE BARN -
CONTINUOUS**

Barely visible in the tree line, a CAR with its engine off.

A MAN behind the wheel.

Dark suit. Hat brim low. Writing in a notebook.

Nobody sees him.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT (1958)

The same East 8th Street apartment, fourteen years later. Different art on the walls. More of it.

Lee sits at a desk going through papers. She works through things the way she paints: without theater, without announcement.

She finds a letter.

She holds it.

The letterhead reads: INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION. Washington, D.C.

She reads it. We see her read it. We do not see what it says.

She puts it back. Picks up a pen. Writes a name on the folder tab. Files it in the bottom drawer.

She goes to the kitchen. Gets a glass of water. Stands at the window.

She stands there for a long time.

Then she goes back to work.

INT. SOTHEBY'S ANTEROOM - NIGHT (1974)

Lee finishes her cigarette. Drops it. Steps on it once.

She looks at the painting.

AIDE (O.S.)

Mrs. Krasner.
They're ready
for you.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

*(to the
canvas,
quietly)*

Good.

She opens the door and walks into the light.

**INT. SOTHEBY'S - AUCTION FLOOR -
CONTINUOUS**

The room is full. Lee takes a position at the back. She has not taken a seat.

The AUCTIONEER takes the podium.

AUCTIONEER

Ladies and
gentlemen. Lot
forty-seven.
Number 17A.
Jackson
Pollock. Oil
and Duco enamel
on canvas.
Springs, Long
Island, 1948.
We'll open the

bidding at
forty million
dollars.

The room moves. Lee watches it.

The bidding climbs. Forty-two million.
Forty-four. Forty-six.

AUCTIONEER

Forty-six
million. Do I
have forty-
eight?

Lee reaches into her folder. Takes out a
photograph. The barn floor. The man on his
knees. The paint in the air.

AUCTIONEER

Going once at
forty-six
million.

A hand goes up in the middle of the room.

AUCTIONEER

Forty-eight
million
dollars. Do I
have fifty?

Lee puts the photograph back. She leaves.

**EXT. SOTHEBY'S - YORK AVENUE - NIGHT
(1974)**

Cold. November. She stands outside.

Simmons comes out behind her. She knew he would.

SIMMONS

You didn't stay
for the hammer.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

I know what the
hammer sounds
like.

SIMMONS

Fifty-one
million. It
went for fifty-
one million.

She doesn't react.

SIMMONS

In nineteen
fifty-eight. The
International
Organizations
Division
letter. The one
authorizing the
use of American
abstract works
in the cultural
outreach
program. We'd
like to know if
you have
documentation

from that
period.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Documentation.

SIMMONS

Correspondence.
Anything from
the organizing
committee.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

You're asking
me if I kept
their letters.

SIMMONS

We're asking
what you may
have retained
from that
period, yes.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

And if I had?

SIMMONS

We'd appreciate
the opportunity
to review
anything
sensitive.

She looks at him for a long time. He holds
very still.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

He didn't know.

SIMMONS

I'm sorry?

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

My husband. He
didn't know who
was funding the
shows. I want
that on record.

SIMMONS

Of course.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Not of course.
I want it said
explicitly. He
was a painter.
He painted.
What anyone did
with the
paintings
afterward was
not his
business and he
did not make it
his business.
Is that
understood?

SIMMONS

Completely.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

Then we're
done.

SIMMONS

And the
documentation?

She looks at the door of Sotheby's.

LEE (THE GUARDIAN)

I don't know
what you're
talking about.

She hails a cab. Gets in. The cab pulls
away.

Simmons watches it go. He takes out a small
notebook and writes something down.

He does not put the notebook away for a
long time.

CODA

**INT./EXT. NEW YORK CITY - VARIOUS - NIGHT
(1929/1948/1974)**

A sequence. No dialogue.

1929: Young Pollock alone with his canvas after Benton leaves.

1974: Lee in the back of a cab, hands in her lap, the folder.

1943: Peggy Guggenheim looking at a Pollock canvas with the expression of someone who has just understood something expensive.

1974: Lee's face in the cab window. City lights going past behind her.

1948: The canvas on the barn floor. Paint still wet.

1944: Ruth watching Lee across a coffee shop table, saying nothing because there is nothing to say.

1948: The unnamed man on the road outside the barn. Writing in his notebook. Not looking up.

1974: Lee looking at the photograph of the man on his knees above the canvas. The paint frozen in the air above him like a question.

She closes the folder.

CUT TO BLACK.

*The CIA secretly funded Abstract Expressionism
exhibitions
across Europe for seventeen years.*

*Lee Krasner managed Pollock's estate until her
death in 1984.*

*Number 17A sold in 2015 for \$200 million -
the most expensive American painting ever sold.
She knew it would.*

FADE OUT.

THE ACTION PAINTER

Episode One: "Number One"

Written & Directed by Raul Abarca

Abarca Entertainment LLC · 2026

WGA Registration Pending · Confidential · Not for
Distribution

CAST REQUIRED – FULL PILOT

CHARACTER	BILLING	ACTOR
Lee Krasner – The Architect	Lead, The Early Years	Kristine Kay Larsen CONFIRMED
Lee Krasner – The Guardian	Lead, The Estate Years	Adrienne Janic CONFIRMED
Jackson Pollock	Co-Lead	Joel Berg CONFIRMED
Thomas Hart Benton	Supporting	Jake Busey CONFIRMED
David Alfaro Siqueiros	Supporting	Hernán Canto CONFIRMED
Gerald Simmons – CIA Cultural Affairs	Supporting	Craig Shoemaker CONFIRMED
CIA Agent Miller –	Supporting	Mingo CONFIRMED

CHARACTER	BILLING	ACTOR
Field Operative		
Ruth - Lee's Confidant	Supporting	Courtney Ferris CONFIRMED
Betty Parsons - Gallerist	Supporting (named, not on screen this episode)	Carly Durrer CONFIRMED
Krasner Aide	Supporting (Cold Open & Sotheby's scenes)	<i>Casting</i> <i>Open</i> <small>OPEN</small>
Peggy Guggenheim	Featured Guest, Episodes 1-4	<i>Casting</i> <i>Open - Late</i> <i>30s/Early</i> <i>40s</i> <small>OPEN</small>
Clement Greenberg - Critic	Recurring, Episodes 1-6	<i>Casting</i> <i>Open</i> <small>OPEN</small>
Hans Hofmann - Lee's Teacher	Guest, Episodes 1-2	<i>Casting</i> <i>Open</i> <small>OPEN</small>
		<i>Casting</i> <i>Open</i> <small>OPEN</small>

CHARACTER	BILLING	ACTOR
Charles Remington - Sotheby's	Recurring, Guardian Timeline	
Auctioneer	Day Player - voice/cameo only	<i>No casting required - crew</i>