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| **Lassaw, Ibram (1913-2003)** |
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| Sculptor of the New York School, Ibram Lassaw was born to Russian parents in Alexandria, Egypt. The family immigrated to Brooklyn, NY, in 1921, where Lassaw learnt modelling, casting and carving. He discovered avant-garde art at the Brooklyn Museum in 1926, and continued to study sculpture at the Clay Club from 1927 to 1932.  An active participant in New York modernist circles, Lassaw was a founding member of the American Abstract Artists group (1935), and The Club (1949). Lassaw's interest in cosmic and religious themes culminated in abstract sculptures for Jewish synagogues like *Pillar of Fire* (1953) at Temple Beth El, Springfield, MA. Known for web-like structures, Lassaw dripped, fused and spattered metal, embracing the accidental contours accrued to his gridded designs as in *Galactic Cluster #1* (1958, Newark Museum). He wielded the oxyacetylene torch like a paint-brush and the intricately structured wires twist, turn and redouble like skeins of paint by Jackson Pollock. His work was included in the 1959 Kassel Documenta which showcased American Abstract Expressionism. |
| Further reading:  Goossen, E.C., R. Goldwater, and I. Sandler. (1959) *Three American Sculptors: Ferber, Hare, and Lassaw*, New York: Grove Press.  Philips, L. (1984) *The Third Dimension: Sculpture of the New York School*, New York: Whitney Museum of American Art. |