**Stella, Frank (1936—)**

Antonia Pocock

American artist Frank Stella cultivated a deadpan aesthetic that presaged Minimalism and Color Field painting. In contrast to the turbulent brushwork and improvisatory methods of Abstract Expressionism, Stella’s groundbreaking *Black Paintings* (1959) feature uniform surfaces and serial arrangements of forms. Born in 1936 in Malden, Massachusetts, Stella’s artistic education was grounded in non-objective painting. At the Phillips Academy, he studied with abstractionist Patrick Morgan, a pupil of Hans Hofmann. At Princeton University, he took studio courses with William Seitz, a scholar and practitioner of Abstract Expressionism, and Stephen Greene, an abstract painter and former student of Philip Guston. After graduating from college in 1958, Stella moved to New York City and produced gestural paintings of squares and stripes inspired by Mark Rothko and Jasper Johns*.* He soon abandoned painterly textures but retained the stripe as his signature motif. Stella’s work of the 1960s continued in the vein of his *Black Paintings*, but evolved to include metallic and Day-Glo pigments and shaped canvases. After 1970, his paintings assumed sculptural dimensions and incorp0rated expressionist brushwork and exuberant arabesques.

**References and further reading**

Cooper, H. and M. R. Luke. (2006) *Frank Stella 1958*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Fried, M. (1998) “Shape as Form: Frank Stella’s New Paintings.” In *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews,* 77–99. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.