

## Margaret Hoening French

### Artist Biography

Born in Hoboken, New Jersey, Margaret Hoening (1906–1998) was a painter and an etcher perhaps best known for her photographs as part of the PaJaMa photography collective. After attending Smith College, she settled in New York, where she pursued formal artistic training at the Art Students League. There, she met the artist couple Paul Cadmus and Jared French. In 1937, she married French, fifteen years her junior, who had spent the previous decade with Cadmus. The trio formed a tight bond, with Cadmus and French continuing their relationship. Together, the three formed PaJaMa (a mash-up of their first names, Paul, Jared, and Margaret). Using Hoening's Leica, they captured themselves, their artist friends, and members of the gay community posing in artful tableaux on the beaches of Fire Island, Provincetown, and Nantucket over the following eight years. Those captured by their camera include the photographer George Platt Lynes; Cadmus's sister and artist Fidelma; artist Bernard Perlin; and Monroe Wheeler, director of exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, among others. Though she produced few canvases, Hoening's paintings demonstrate the influences of French and Cadmus, particularly with her adoption of the time-intensive, traditional medium of egg tempera that they championed.

In the 1940s, the Frenches' social circle continued to expand. They befriended the British author E.M. Forster, who stayed with them on his first trip to New York in 1947, spending a few days with them in Provincetown, and visiting them again in 1949. When Cadmus began a relationship with the young artist George Tooker in 1944, the trio became a foursome, with Tooker regularly vacationing with the group and appearing in PaJaMa's photographs. But it was during a vacation through Italy and France in 1949 that Tooker broke away from Cadmus because of the latter's relationship with the Frenches. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the pair traveled extensively throughout Europe with Cadmus nearly always accompanying them. Jared eventually moved to Italy to pursue a relationship with Roberto Giannotta, and Hoening followed.