

Frankenthaler

HELEN FRANKENTHALER FOUNDATION AWARDS \$2.5 MILLION TO ENDOW ART HISTORY DOCTORAL PROGRAMS AT FIVE UNIVERSITIES

**New Frankenthaler Scholarships to be Awarded at The Graduate Center, CUNY;
Harvard University; Institute of Fine Arts at New York University; Stanford University;
And University of Chicago**

New York, NY—January 28, 2020—Helen Frankenthaler Foundation announced today the selection of five new institutional partners for **Frankenthaler Scholarships**, a multi-year initiative that has dedicated more than \$4 million to art and art history graduate programs around the country. For the program’s next phase, the Foundation is awarding \$500,000 to five different universities—The Graduate Center, CUNY; Harvard University; Institute of Fine Arts at New York University; Stanford University; and University of Chicago—to support the creation of named endowments that will offer one or more annual fellowships for doctoral students studying art history. These endowment gifts build on the inaugural round of Frankenthaler Scholarships, which support MFA programs in painting.

In addition to expanding its Frankenthaler Scholarships, the Foundation has continued to advance the contemporary practice of painting and the academic study of modern art history through philanthropic initiatives that stimulate new research on the art of Frankenthaler’s lifetime and inspire the next generation of painters. Recent initiatives include the creation of a new eponymous award with the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, the donation of a major painting by Frankenthaler to Tate Modern, and a \$1-million gift to the capital campaign of the Studio Museum in Harlem to name the research library and support scholarship in the Museum’s new building.

“Helen was passionate about art education. Having benefited from her years at Bennington College, she maintained an active lecture schedule at universities and art schools across the U.S. We are very excited to be supporting these five outstanding doctoral programs in art history by endowing Frankenthaler Scholarships, as our gifts reflect Helen’s deep passion for the history of art,” stated Clifford Ross, Chair of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation’s Board of Trustees.

Elizabeth Smith, Executive Director of the Foundation, added, “The array of recent gifts, including not only the continuation of the Frankenthaler Scholarships program but also the new Foundation for Contemporary Arts award, the work gifted to Tate’s collection, and the support for the Studio Museum in Harlem’s research facilities speak to Helen’s core ideals for supporting the visual arts, in both research and practice.”

The first Ph.D. fellowships in the Frankenthaler Scholarships program will be awarded for the 2020–2021 academic year. Faculty at the associated institutions will select one or more student recipient(s), with preference given to those concentrating in the history of modern art.

These new endowment gifts build on the initial set of Frankenthaler Scholarships, which in 2018 donated \$500,000 to four universities—Columbia University School of the Arts, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture, and Yale School of Art—to establish endowment funds for annual support for MFA students concentrating in painting. The inaugural MFA fellowships for the 2019–2020 academic year were awarded to Nicole Doran (SAIC), Alexandra Heilbron (UCLA), Carly Sheehan (Yale), and Kiyomi Taylor (Columbia).

Additional recent major philanthropic efforts by the Foundation have included:

- The multi-year gift to support the creation of [The Helen Frankenthaler Award for Painting](#), a new \$40,000 annual award administered through the **Foundation for Contemporary Arts** as part of its distinguished Grants to Artists program. The award is presented annually to an individual artist who demonstrates Frankenthaler’s passion for innovation and experimentation in the medium. The inaugural award recipient is New York-based artist **Kerstin Brätsch**, who experiments with artisanal practices (stained glass, paper marbling, Stucco Marmo) to challenge the definitions of painting.
- The Foundation’s **donation of *Vessel* (1961) to Tate Modern**, marking the Foundation’s first gift of a painting to an institution and the first canvas by the artist to enter a public collection in London. The major work is currently on view as part of a [dedicated monographic display](#) at Tate Modern, featuring an additional four masterpieces on loan from the Foundation. The year-long display is on view through November 15, 2020.
- The endowment of the **Helen Frankenthaler Research Library** at the Studio Museum in Harlem through a \$1-million gift to the museum’s capital campaign.
- The **Frankenthaler Prints Initiative**, which donated 10 prints and associated trial proofs to 10 university art museums in 2018 and supports ongoing research and programs centered on these works. Recent and upcoming exhibitions related to these gifts include *At One Stroke: Prints by Helen Frankenthaler* opening February 1, 2020 at [Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts](#), and *Helen Frankenthaler Prints: Seven Types of Ambiguity* at [Princeton University Art Museum](#) (June 29–October 20, 2019).

About the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

Established and endowed by Helen Frankenthaler during her lifetime, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation advances the artist’s legacy and inspires a new generation of practitioners through a range of philanthropic, educational, and research initiatives. Since becoming active in 2013, the Foundation has continued to strategically expand its program, which includes organizing and supporting significant exhibitions of the artist’s work, fostering new research and publications, and advancing educational initiatives in partnership with arts organizations around the world. As a primary resource on the artist, and a steward of her collection and archive, the Foundation holds an extensive selection of Frankenthaler’s work in a variety of mediums, her collection of works by other artists, and original papers and materials pertaining to her life and work.

About Helen Frankenthaler

Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011) is recognized among the most important American abstract painters of the 20th century, widely credited for her pivotal role in the transition from Abstract Expressionism to Color Field painting. Best known for her invention of the soak stain technique, Frankenthaler experimented tirelessly throughout her six-decade-long career, producing a large body of work in painting, prints, works on paper, and other mediums, whose impact on contemporary art has been profound and continues to grow.

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