

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
980 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK NY 10075

HOURS:

SUMMER HOURS (Through August 29):

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Tue–Sat 10:00am–6:00pm

Mon–Fri 10:00am–6:00pm



HELEN FRANKENTHALER: *Composing with Color: Paintings 1962–1963*

Thursday, September 11–Saturday, October 18, 2014

Opening reception: Thursday, September 11th, from 6:00 to 8:00pm

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce its first exhibition of Helen Frankenthaler's work organized in collaboration with the newly established Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. This follows the gallery's critically acclaimed 2013 exhibition, "Painted on 21st Street: Helen Frankenthaler from 1950 to 1959," which was organized with the artist's estate.

The exhibition focuses on a brief but critical period in Frankenthaler's career during 1962–63, when she "composed with color" rather than with line, resulting in the freer compositions that came to exemplify her long and prolific career. Transitioning from the sparer, more graphic works of 1960–61, Frankenthaler made paintings that more readily filled the space of the canvas, moving toward what critic B. H. Friedman described as the "total color image" that would become a hallmark of her later work. Included in the exhibition are *Cloud Bank*, *Hommage à M.L.*, and *Cool Summer* (all 1962), in which she employed a limited number of linear elements, linking them to her innovative stain paintings of the 1950s while marking a new direction with the use of spreading areas of color and a reassessment of the properties of painting materials.

Three paintings in the exhibition, *Filter*, *Gulf Stream*, and *Moat* (all 1963), belong to a series of works that include imprints of the floorboards of Frankenthaler's studio. As she recalled of this technique, "I did a whole series of pictures... that I reversed; in other words they stained through and then I worked on them again from the other side." During this period, Frankenthaler also began experimenting with acrylic paint, sometimes employing both acrylic and oil in a single canvas. *Gulf Stream*, one example of this method, features delicately layered passages of oil paint surrounded by denser expanses of vivid acrylic paint, a framing device that she would continue to explore the following year.

The culmination of Frankenthaler's experimentation with acrylic paint is represented by two large-scale paintings, *Pink Lady* and *Sun Shapes* (both 1963). With their large expanses of intense hues that nearly fill the canvas, both paintings anticipate the development of her abstract vocabulary throughout the remaining years of the 1960s.

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The exhibition, curated by John Elderfield, is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an introductory essay by Elizabeth Smith, Executive Director of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. The essay provides an in-depth examination of Frankenthaler's development during this critical two-year period and places these works in the context of American art in the early 1960s.

Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011) was born in New York City. Her work is represented in institutional collections worldwide, including Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; Art Institute of Chicago; Israel Museum, Jerusalem; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate, London; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Solo exhibitions include "Helen Frankenthaler: Paintings," The Jewish Museum, New York (1960); "Helen Frankenthaler," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1969, traveled to Whitechapel Gallery, London; Orangerie Herrenhausen, Hanover; and Kongresshalle, Berlin); and "Helen Frankenthaler: A Paintings Retrospective," Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth (1989–90, traveled to Museum of Modern Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and Detroit Institute of Arts). Frankenthaler was the subject of three major monographs, *Frankenthaler*, by Barbara Rose (1972); *Frankenthaler*, by John Elderfield (1989); and *Frankenthaler: A Catalogue Raisonné of Prints 1961–1994*, by Suzanne Boorsch and Pegram Harrison (1996).

A forthcoming exhibition, "Giving Up One's Mark: Helen Frankenthaler in the 1960s and 1970s," will open at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, in November 2014.

For further information please contact the gallery at newyork@gagosian.com or at +1.212.744.2313. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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Image: *Pink Lady*, 1963, acrylic on canvas, 84 1/2 x 58 inches (214.6 x 147.3 cm) © 2014 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc./Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo by Rob McKeever

Gagosian Gallery was established in 1980 by Larry Gagosian.