Anders Wahlstedt Fine Art is pleased to present an exhibition of gallery selections featuring remarkable abstract works by women artists from the 1960s and 1970s. Working across a diverse array of mediums and movements, Helen Frankenthaler, Sonia Gechtoff, Pat Lipsky, Edda Renouf and Miriam Schapiro created paintings, drawings, and graphic works that shaped the trajectory of modern and contemporary art.

Helen Frankenthaler

Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011), whose career spanned a remarkable six decades, is widely recognized as one of the most important American artists of the twentieth century. She was an enormously influential second generation postwar American abstract painter who played a vital role in the shift from Abstract Expressionism to Color Field painting. In her work, Frankenthaler united a conception of the canvas as both a formalized field and a realm for gestural expression through line. Her remarkable body of work and colorist explorations have wrought a profound impact on contemporary art.

Frankenthaler was born on December 12th, 1928 and raised in New York City by her parents, New York State Supreme Court Justice Alfred Frankenthaler and his wife Martha. She attended the Dalton School, where she studied art under Rufino Tamayo. After graduating high school, Frankenthaler attended Bennington College, where she was a student of Paul Feeley. Her career at a professional artist began in earnest in 1950, when the influential Adolph Gottlieb chose her painting *Beach* (1950) for his exhibition *Fifteen Unknowns: Selected by Artists of the Kootz Gallery.* The following year, Frankenthaler mounted her first solo exhibition at New York’s famed Tibor de Nagy gallery. An encounter and subsequent relationship with renowned art critic Clement Greenberg, who championed her original talent, only amplified her own artistic influence and international recognition. She remained, for the six decades of her artistic career, a tireless advocate for artistic innovation and experimentation, and continued to exert a powerful influence over the development of American painting and printmaking.

Frankenthaler has been the subject of numerous major retrospectives at institutions including the Jewish Museum, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; the Modern Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Naples Museum of Art, Naples, FL; the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT; the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL, and the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh, Scotland. Her work is held in the permanent collections of nearly every significant institution of modern art worldwide.

Sonia Gechtoff

Sonia Geschtoff (1926-) was one of the most successful Abstract Expressionist painters of her generation in the Bay Area. Gechtoff was born in Philadelphia in 1926 to parents who instilled in her a deep appreciation for the arts. Her father was the well-regarded Russian-born genre painter Leonid Gechtoff, who encouraged her from the age of five to sit and paint alongside him. Her mother, Ethel, managed several art galleries. Gechtoff’s talent was discernable from a young age and nurtured by both her parents and her instructors at a series of schools for artistically gifted children. In 1950, she received her BFA from the Philadelphia Museum School of Art. The following year, Gechtoff moved to San Francisco and began her career working within the vibrant creative community of Bay Area Abstract Expressionists. She garnered national recognition in 1954 when her art was included in the Guggenheim’s *Younger American Painters Show* alongside the work of Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, and Robert Motherwell.

Gechtoff’s distinctive style, which began to emerge at the time, is defined by thick, energetic brushstrokes and bold colors on impressively sized canvases. Color—truly luscious and vibrant color—is at the heart of all of Gechtoff’s work. This is not the color of closely observed nature, but rather the heightened hues of memory and association. It is the interplay between color and line, between architectural framework and evocative pigment, that defines Gechtoff’s most powerful and compelling work.

Gechtoff’s work is held in the permanent collection of major American cultural institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Guggenheim Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, and the Menil Collection, Houston, TX.

Pat Lipsky

Miriam Schapiro

Miriam Schapiro (1923-2015) was born in Toronto The 1960s were a pivotal period in Schapiro’s artistic development, when she was turning away from the pure abstraction that had brought her initial acclaim and beginning to explore the feminist motifs and ideas that would shape her life’s work. The egg, for Schapiro, was a symbol of both female fertility and creative fecundity, and appears repeatedly in her art.

Schapiro, who died last year at the age of 91, left behind an impressive legacy. After receiving her MFA at the University of Iowa, Schapiro moved to New York City, where she first won recognition in the aggressively male world of Abstract Expressionism. Her work was included in the 1957 “New Talent” show at the Museum of Modern Art and she had her first solo show the following year at André Emmerich Gallery. The 1960s were a period of profound political and artistic transformation for Schapiro, as she wholeheartedly embraced the ideology of feminism and sought to redefine her artistic practice by its tenants.

Schapiro founded the groundbreaking Feminist Art Program at California Institute of the Arts in 1971 with Judy Chicago. The following year, she and Chicago organized the hugely influential installation Womanhouse in Los Angeles. In the late seventies, Schapiro helped found the Pattern and Decoration movement, which sought to redefine the role of women in the arts and to elevate to fine art the often anonymous labor of women in the domestic sphere. She was a founding member of both *Heresies* journal and the New York Feminist Art Institute.

Her work appears in the permanent collections of prominent collectors and major cultural institutions worldwide including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C., the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; the Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI; the Polk Museum of Art, Lakeland, CA; the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk, Denmark; the Israel Museum, Tel Aviv, Israel; and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.

Edda Renouf

Renouf creates intricate patterns using small markings to draw the viewer into her compositions. She allows her work to slowly unfurl and speak for itself. Whether losing herself in the meditative aspects of nature with delicate washes of color or the sensuous/sinuous geometry of line, Renouf’s drawings, paintings, and prints are preoccupied with the beauty of minutiae/ little details. The subdued colors derive directly from the world around us: the red desert of Arizona; the grey of a stony mountainside; the harmony between a serene, sandy beach and the white clouds in a motionless sky. The simplicity of Renouf’s compositions coupled with the dots, cross-hatchings, fine lines, and scratches focused in different regions on the page demonstrate the artist’s careful, precise approach to making art

Renouf’s work is held in the permanent collections of the Blanton Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and the Walker Art Center