

Frankenthaler

About the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation stewards Helen Frankenthaler's legacy and inspires a new generation of practitioners through a range of philanthropic, educational, and research initiatives. Established and endowed by the artist during her lifetime, the Foundation became active in 2013 and has continued to expand its program strategically, including organizing and supporting significant exhibitions of the artist's work, fostering new research and publications, and presenting educational initiatives in partnership with arts organizations around the world. To continue to convey the relevancy and dynamism of her work in the 21st century, the Foundation fosters initiatives that address Frankenthaler's art and key themes in her life and work directly, as well as the broader context of modern and contemporary art.

Exhibitions and Educational Initiatives

The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation supports exhibitions of Frankenthaler's work at significant institutions across the globe, including providing major loans and financial support. Select recent museum exhibitions of note have included *Pittura/Panorama: Paintings by Helen Frankenthaler, 1952–1992* (Museo di Palazzo Grimani, Venice, 2019), the first presentation of the artist's work in Venice since its 1966 appearance at the 33rd Venice Biennale; *Abstract Climates: Helen Frankenthaler in Provincetown* (Provincetown Art Association and Museum, MA, 2018, traveled to Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, NY, 2019); *As in Nature: Helen Frankenthaler, Paintings and No Rules: Helen Frankenthaler Woodcuts* (The Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA, 2017); *Pretty Raw: After and Around Helen Frankenthaler* (Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, 2015); *Giving Up One's Mark: Helen Frankenthaler in the 1960s and 1970s* (Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY, 2014–15); and *Making Painting: Helen Frankenthaler and JMW Turner* (Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK, 2014).

The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation also presents a series of lectures, talks, panels and other public programs on Frankenthaler's art and life and related topics at the Foundation's headquarters in New York City and in conjunction with its network of partners. The presentations often build off major exhibitions and publications, as well as ongoing research for the catalogue raisonné. Recent topics have addressed the New York City arts scene in the 1950s; the continuing influence, interest, and impact of mid-twentieth century abstraction; and Frankenthaler's accomplishments in printmaking.

Archives and Research

As a primary source 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. The artist's archive is a critical resource for scholars and curators in the development of academic research, institutional exhibitions, and major publications. As the archives are being processed, individual requests for information or select materials may be sent to archives@frankenthalerfoundation.org for consideration.

In 2017, the Foundation established the Helen Frankenthaler Catalogue Raisonné, LLC, to undertake a long-term, comprehensive initiative to codify and advance Frankenthaler's legacy through in-depth documentation of known works, in addition to her studio settings and creative process.

Philanthropy

The Helen Frankenthaler Foundation supports causes that reflect the artist's passions and vision as well as organizations with which she was connected during her lifetime.

Frankenthaler's liberal arts studies at Bennington College (VT) sparked a commitment to lifelong learning, courageous exploration, and constant evolution. The Foundation has expanded this commitment through continued support of Bennington College and the launch of two university-focused initiatives. The **Frankenthaler Prints Initiative** donated a selection of prints and associated trial proofs to university art museums and supports ongoing research, exhibitions, and programs centered on these works. **Frankenthaler Scholarships** is a multi-year initiative that has dedicated more than \$4 million to art and art history graduate programs around the country by establishing endowments for annual student scholarships at select universities.

Additional recent major contributions include the gift of *Vessel* (1961) to Tate Modern, marking the first major painting by the artist to enter a public collection in London; the establishment of eponymous artist studios at Yaddo artist retreat and Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture; a multi-year gift to underwrite the creation of The Helen Frankenthaler Award for Painting administered through the Foundation for Contemporary Arts; and the endowment of the Helen Frankenthaler Research Library at the Studio Museum in Harlem.

The Foundation also launched the **Helen Frankenthaler Foundation COVID-19 Relief Effort** in response to the global pandemic's catastrophic effect on artists and art organizations. Marking the Foundation's largest commitment of funding to date in support of a single cause, the COVID-19 Relief Effort will distribute \$5 million over three years to initiatives serving critical needs in the field.

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.

Frankenthaler was the subject of her first solo exhibition at New York's Tibor de Nagy Gallery in 1951, which was the same year she was included in the landmark exhibition *9th St. Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture*. Her distinguished, prolific career included numerous monographic museum exhibitions of her paintings, from her first at the Jewish Museum in New York in 1960 to those organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art (1969) which toured in Europe, and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth (1989) which was followed by an extensive tour in the United States. Additional notable exhibitions took place at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (1993) on her printmaking and at the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL (2003) on her works on paper. She also had a regular presence in major international exhibitions, including representing the United States in the 33rd Venice Biennale in 1966.

Frankenthaler also received numerous awards and accolades during her lifetime, including the National Medal of Arts in 2001. Important works by Frankenthaler may be found in major museums worldwide and her work continues to be exhibited widely, including at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Whitney Museum of American Art; National Gallery of Art, DC; and Tate Modern.