

FIN 220 Painting

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Unit #3 Final Painting Assignment

Helen Frankenthaler

Helen Frankenthaler, (1928-2011) was an American abstract painter of the mid-1900s. She studied at Dalton School, Bennington College Vermont. In the 1950's at a time when the conversation of abstract expressionism was dominated by male influencers

Helen Frankenthaler's colour-field paintings shone across the art scene in innovative ways that was pioneering for women. Being one of the few female abstract expressionist painters during the years after WWII, she was considered firstly for her gender not for her talent as an artist. She refuted the term "Woman Artists", and she often stated that gender should have no place in determining whether a person has talent.

For Helen Frankenthaler her creative process was a journey of discovery. Much like her male contemporaries her study of design, form and colour with her colour-field paintings was revolutionary at the time. However, her style was remarkably different to her male counterparts with her bold gestural lines described as whimsical lyricism and intense contrasting hues of sharp primary colours setting her apart.

Her method of creating her colour-field paintings and abstract landscapes was a novel creative process. She would apply thinned paint to raw canvas then with automatism creativity she would draw line over the paint. To thin the paints, she would thin oil paints with paint thinner and water to thin acrylics. Then on an untreated canvas, laid flat, she would pour the thinned paint letting it sit and soak into the canvas, creating a stain of saturated hue, "Soak-Stain" technique an artistic

invention attributed to her. With pastel- oil or chalk, or charcoal she would draw with whimsy, quickness. Her abstract expressions connected directly to her primal sense of artistic purpose, painting to create something beautiful. She poured her expressive force into her paintings working drawing into the flow of the conversation with the paint resulting in colourful abstractions that alluded reality. Though her work was consistently overshadowed by the male the discourse her methods, style, and insistence of being an artist in her won right has inspired many female artists to stay the course and continues to influence artist to this day, myself being one.

“As early as the 1950s, combining the immediacy of the drawn line with pure gestural, abstract painting liberated her works on paper from small works, usually studies for larger works, to works in their own right.”



Artist Helen Frankenthaler photographed in her NYC studio by Austrian photographer and artist Ernst Haas, 1969. Image from the Ernst Haas estate.

<https://news.masterworksfineart.com/2017/10/19/helen-frankenthaler-the-woman-of-postwar-american-painting#continue-reading>



Helen Frankenthaler, Mountains, and Sea, 1952. Oil and charcoal on unsized, unprimed canvas

86 3/8 × 117 1/4 in | 219.4 × 297.8 cm

<https://www.artsy.net/artwork/helen-frankenthaler-mountains-and-sea>

Gloria Tamerre Petyarre

Gloria Tamerre patyarre, (1942-2021) was also known as Gloria Pitjara. She was an Aboriginal Australian artist from the Anmatyerre community in Northern Australia. She started as an artist in the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Associations Woman's Batik Group in 1977 and worked closely with her six sisters predominantly Kathleen Patyarre throughout her career. She won awards for her unique style of brush stroke painting and is still renowned for her diversity and mastery as a colourist. She is known as one of the most collectable indigenous artists in Australia.

Her work is anchored in traditional aboriginal cultural and women ceremonial spiritual awareness, "awely". She re-invents her cultural histories and family stories into her work and creates a dialogue for and with contemporary art.

In 1989 she moved from batik painting on cloth to painting on canvas. Her brush stroke style is like pointillism took on elongated drop-forms in feathery well-defined layers. These marks weave in and out of one another travelling across the surface of the canvas in waves or like grass or feathers caught in the wind, creating an animated effect that gives an organic feel to her work. Though her paintings are mostly mono chromatic colour-fields she has painted in multicolour as well. I am mesmerized by her style and find her work to be as wonderful as Mark Rothko's colourfield paintings. They draw the viewers in to engage them in a personal conversation of personal and spiritual discoveries.



Bush medicine Leaves, 2012 Acrylic on Linen, 19' X 49'

“This work represents the leaves of the Kurrajong tree used in the Utopia region to treat a variety of ailments. The women collect the leaves, dry and mix them with Kangaroo fat, in order to extract the plant's medicinal qualities. The significance of the Kurrajong tree and the part it plays in healing is celebrated in the Women's Awelye ceremonies.”



Mountain Devil Lizard Dreaming, 2014, Synthetic polymer paint on Belgian linen 99cmX117cm
<https://aboriginalartgalleries.com.au/artwork/7017-bush-medicine-leaves?artistsid=426>