

# PHILLIPS

PRESS RELEASE

## Phillips to Showcase Works by Helen Frankenthaler in Southampton

Exhibition to Include Paintings Available for Private Sale and Auction  
Open to the Public from 17 September to 4 October



Helen Frankenthaler  
*Off White Square*, 1973  
Estimate: \$3-4 million  
To be Offered in the November Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art

NEW YORK – 16 SEPTEMBER 2020 – Phillips is pleased to announce *Helen Frankenthaler: Paintings, 1973-1981*, an exhibition dedicated to the work of Helen Frankenthaler in the auction house’s recently-opened Southampton outpost. On view from 17 September to 4 October, the exhibition will showcase a selection of works that are available for private sale alongside a major highlight from the November Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art.

Robert Manley, Phillips’ Co-Head of 20th Century & Contemporary Art, said, “Our Southampton location, which opened just last month has already seen an outpouring of enthusiasm from the community and we are very much looking forward to hosting our first thematic exhibition in the space, *Helen Frankenthaler: Paintings, 1973-1981*. Helen Frankenthaler is among the most significant masters of post-war abstraction, whose influence over the 20th century art historical canon cannot be overstated.”

During her lifetime, Frankenthaler created brilliantly evocative paintings that reinterpreted her personal experiences and memories in a unique visual language. In 1952 at only 23 years old, she pioneered her revolutionary “soak-stain” technique of pouring thinned-down paint onto unprimed canvas, which opened the door to the Color Field paintings of Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, and Jules Olitski—expanding the possibilities of abstraction for generations of artists.

*Helen Frankenthaler: Paintings, 1973-1981* includes four important paintings from one of the most pivotal decades of Frankenthaler’s career. One of the largest paintings the artist ever made, *Off White Square* is a 1973 masterpiece of her mature style, featuring the expressive expanses of pure color, which characterize the highly-acclaimed body of work she created during the period. While showcasing Frankenthaler’s signature use of diluted

paint, *Off White Square* betrays a renewed assurance and shift in focus to all-over composition. “*Off White Square*... shows her at the top of her game, pouring, painting, and drawing with complete confidence,” according to renowned curator Douglas Dreishpoon. “She surely had a hot hand, trusted her instincts, and went for broke.” Estimated at \$3-4 million, *Off White Square* is the only work in the exhibition that will be offered at auction when it is included in the Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art on 12 November.



Helen Frankenthaler  
*Fireball*, 1981



Helen Frankenthaler  
*Untitled*, 1978



Helen Frankenthaler  
*Tethys*, 1981

This visual dynamism is echoed in three other monumental works she executed in the following years: *Untitled*, 1978, as well as two works from 1981, *Tethys* and *Fireball*. Though they reveal a variety of sources and approaches, they all provide a look into Frankenthaler’s transition from gestural abstraction to paintings filled with large areas of refined color and tonal nuance.

On view in Southampton alongside *Helen Frankenthaler: Paintings, 1973-1981* is the [recently announced](#) star lot from Phillips’ October Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art – Georg Baselitz’s monumental *Das letzte Selbstbildnis I (The last self-portrait I)*. This large-scale canvas comes directly from the renowned Collection of Marcel Brient, Paris, where it has been for 20 years. Painted in 1982, *Das letzte Selbstbildnis I* is a seminal work that is emblematic of an iconic period of Baselitz’s *oeuvre* as well as paying tribute to the late self-portraits of Edvard Munch. It will be on view in Southampton from 17 to 21 September, before travelling to Paris from 29 September to 5 October, and finally to London for the Frieze Week viewing before the auction.



Georg Baselitz  
*Das letzte Selbstbildnis I (The last self-portrait I)*, 1982  
Estimate: £4.5-5.5 million

To be Offered in the October Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art

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*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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