



Charles Loring Elliott, Portrait of Matthew Vassar, 1861

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[Madame Butterfly, 2000](#)
woodcut

Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer
2003.201

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[Sanguine Mood, 1971](#)

pochoir and screenprint

Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer
2016.237

Exhibition of prints by acclaimed abstract artist Helen Frankenthaler makes its only northeast stop at the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, October 6-December 10, 2017

Widely known for her iconic “soak-stain” canvases, acclaimed artist [Helen Frankenthaler](#) (1928–2011) was an equally inventive printmaker who took risks in a medium not frequently explored by abstract expressionists. *Fluid Expressions: The Prints of Helen Frankenthaler, from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation* highlights Frankenthaler’s often-overlooked, yet highly original print production. The exhibition will be making its only northeast stop at Vassar College’s Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center October 6–December 10, 2017. This exhibition is free and open to the public.

Frankenthaler became well known through her large, almost 10-foot-wide oil painting, *Mountains and Sea*, made in 1952. In a breakthrough development, she poured thinned oil paints onto raw, unprimed canvas to suggest the Nova Scotia landscape. With an element of chance, the paints bled into the bare cloth in a dramatic play of watercolor-like washes, instinctual shapes, and receding space. Her pioneering, immediate approach widened the practices of abstract expressionists and went on to inspire Color Field abstract painters such as Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland and generations of future artists.

Frankenthaler made over 200 prints, and the earliest one in the exhibition is from 1968, executed during a printmaking revival in the US that is still going strong. The exhibition includes almost 30 prints made from a diverse range of techniques, including lithography, etching, aquatint, screenprinting, pochoir, Mixografia, and woodcut. The artist’s adaptation of her “soak-stain” aesthetic for the graphic medium offers a stunning look at how printmaking—notorious for being a slow process—can exude a sense of spontaneity and immediacy.

From splattered pigments to translucent layers of colorful ink, the radiant prints brought together in *Fluid Expressions* pulse with creative energy. “The Loeb is pleased to have the opportunity to show these beautiful and impressive prints by Helen Frankenthaler,” says Patricia Phagan, the Philip and Lynn Straus Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Art

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[Snow Pines, 2004](#)
[woodcut](#)
[Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer](#)
[2004.330](#)

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Center. “She is such an important artist for the twentieth century and has inspired generations of contemporary artists through her open, experimental outlook and soak-stain process.”

An innovator, Frankenthaler was interested in colors and the independent paths they took in both her paintings and prints. A collaborator with chance, she was intrigued with prints, and borrowed aspects of her painting technique to achieve her fluid style in the print medium. Just as she placed canvas on the floor in her studio, Frankenthaler sometimes poured pools of greasy ink onto the heavy Bavarian stone in making her lithographs, going with the flow of the ink itself. Unlike many print artists, Frankenthaler remained intimately involved throughout the print process: she chose the paper, mixed ink, approved registration, and even cut rigid woodblocks herself. Often made with dozens of colors, her woodcuts revived the medium in the 1970s.

The artist’s unconventional methods and close collaborations with printers allowed her to create prints with the same dynamism and sophistication as her gestural paintings. Prints in the exhibition were made with several print workshops, including Universal Limited Art Editions, Tyler Graphics, and Pace Editions.

The exhibition is organized by the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation. The presentation at the Art Center is funded by the Friends of the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center Exhibition Fund. A 16–page full–color pamphlet, with an essay by Michaela R. Haffner of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art and a collector’s statement by Jordan D. Schnitzer, accompanies the exhibition. The publication is made possible through the generosity of Jordan D. Schnitzer and his Family Foundation.

EVENTS

Lecture and Reception

Friday, October 6

5:30 Lecture by Douglas Dreishpoon: *Helen Frankenthaler: Poetic Ambiguity*
Taylor Hall 102, Vassar College

6:30 Reception

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center Atrium

Douglas Dreishpoon is Director of the Catalogue Raisonné project at the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation in New York City, and Chief Curator Emeritus at the Albright–Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York. His essays, interviews, and reviews have been published in numerous catalogues, magazines, and journals, including *Art in America*, *Art Journal*, *ARTnews*, and *Sculpture*, and he has written numerous books and catalogues on contemporary and twentieth–century art. Originally from Poughkeepsie, Dreishpoon holds a Bachelor of Arts from Skidmore College, a master’s degree from Tufts University, and a PhD from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Family Day

Sunday, October 22

1:30–4:00

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center

Family Day, designed for children ages 5–10, will feature fun, hands–on art activities related to the art on view in the galleries, along with kid–friendly mini–tours. This fall the focus is on different printmaking techniques, with a variety of materials and mediums to be explored. Children can see the fascinating prints of artist Helen Frankenthaler in the temporary exhibition galleries. Vassar student docents lead the activities and tours. Activities are on–going so families can drop in at any time during the program. The programs are free, and no registration is required.

Gallery Talk

Thursday, November 16

4:00pm

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center

Patricia Phagan will discuss the *Fluid Expressions* exhibition from her perspective as curator of prints and drawings for the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center. She will explore the exhibition as a whole and highlight Frankenthaler's mastery of multiple printmaking techniques by looking at selected works in detail.

About the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation

The Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation in Portland, Oregon (<http://www.jordanschnitzer.org>), was established in 1997 as a non-profit organization to manage the collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation, provide supplemental funding for education and outreach in conjunction with related exhibitions, and publish scholarly texts. Since the program's inception, the Foundation has organized over 100 exhibitions that have been held at over 100 museums. Jordan Schnitzer purchased his first work of art when he was fourteen years old from the Fountain Gallery, the first contemporary art gallery in Portland, Oregon, owned and operated by his mother Arlene Schnitzer. It was through her and her gallery that his initial acquisition turned into a lifelong pursuit to collect, share, and promote the visual arts. While he furthers the family legacy of supporting local and regional artists in all mediums, Mr. Schnitzer began buying contemporary prints and multiples in earnest in 1988. Prints and multiples seized his interest for their technical versatility and collaborative process. The combined holdings of the collection of Jordan Schnitzer and the collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation exceed 10,000 prints and multiples.

About the Artist

For additional information about the artist, please visit the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation's website, at www.frankenthalerfoundation.org.

About the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center

The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center was founded in 1864 as the Vassar College Art Gallery. The current 36,400-square-foot facility, designed by Cesar Pelli and named in honor of the new building's primary donor, opened in 1993. Vassar was the first U.S. college founded with an art museum as a part of its original plans, and at any given time, the Permanent Collection Galleries of the Art Center feature approximately 350 works from Vassar's extensive collections. The Art Center's collections chart the history of art from antiquity to the present and comprise over 21,000 works, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, and glass and ceramic wares. Notable holdings include the Warburg Collection of Old Master prints, an important group of Hudson River School paintings given by Matthew Vassar at the college's inception, and a wide range of works by major European and American 20th-century painters.

Admission to the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center is free and all galleries are wheelchair accessible. The Art Center is open to the public Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 10:00am–5:00pm; Thursday, 10:00am–9:00pm; and Sunday, 1:00–5:00pm. Located at the entrance to the historic Vassar College campus, the Art Center can be reached within minutes from other Mid-Hudson cultural attractions, such as Dia:Beacon, the Franklin Roosevelt and Eleanor Roosevelt national historic sites and homes, and the Vanderbilt mansion. For additional information, the public may call (845) 437-5632 or visit fllac.vassar.edu.

Vassar College strives to make its events, performances, and facilities accessible to all. Individuals with disabilities requiring special accommodations must contact the Office of Campus Activities at least 48 hours in advance of an event, Mondays–Fridays, at (845) 437-5370. Without sufficient notice, appropriate space/and or assistance may not be available. For detailed information about accessibility to specific campus facilities, search for “campus accessibility information” on the Vassar homepage (<http://www.vassar.edu>).

Directions to the Vassar campus, located at 124 Raymond Avenue in Poughkeepsie, NY, are available at www.vassar.edu/directions.