

Art On Paper.

RICHARD POUSETTE-DART

with pencil and ballpoint, carefully and patiently obliterating all but a few of the catalogue's illustrations. When Sollins chooses to retain six tiny, identical rafts from within a large grid of 42 pages, for instance, his blacked-out field becomes a swelling ocean, rendered pocked and irregular through his graphic persistence. Now floating on this pencil-mark expanse, Sollins' rafts attain a level of clarity and necessity, even a kind of pathos, impossible in their previous catalogue world of descriptive texts and juxtaposed sale items. Similarly, when Sollins leaves eight pup tents in two sections at the bottom of a 30-square grid, the graphic ocean of blocked-out catalogue now becomes a thick night, the very condition of foreignness, uncertainty, and failed vision from which tents are designed to protect us. By turning catalogue pages into tragically indifferent or even hostile environments, Sollins' activity of obliterating reinforces the very function of the items he selects to leave. Lights projecting out from the tents reveal the wordy catalogue soil in which they've set down their stakes. This technique, coupled with the small newsprint edge around each sheet, ties this piece to its catalogue origin in a slightly more direct and effective way than the raft piece, whose markings run flush to each sheet edge.

Because this body of work depends upon the camping catalogue as an anonymous advertisement received in the mail (on which Sollins lavishes inordinate attention), it makes less sense for him to order uncut proofs from the same camping-supply company in order to increase his page size, as he does in several other pieces. Though the larger page sizes of these works are visually compelling, part of the metaphoric meaning is lost in the customizing. At its best, Sollins' new work converts a readymade world of floating, equivalent catalogue objects that are saturated in advertising copy into large-scale landscapes whose powerful bleakness emerges in part from the time and concentration required to transform the busy, loud pages into eerily quiet seas, nights, or graphic abysses.

—Lytle Shaw

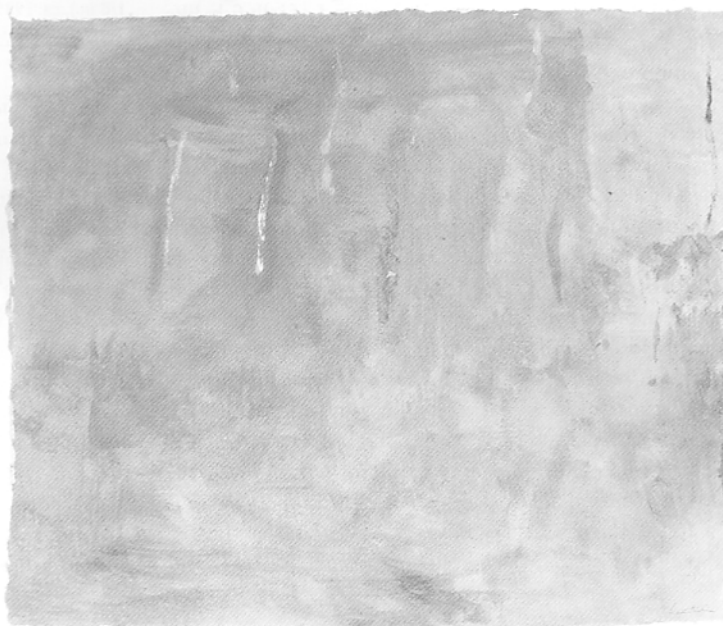
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Helen Frankenthaler. Knoedler and Company, New York.

Looking at Helen Frankenthaler's *Lighthouse Series*, 14 recent acrylic paintings on paper (on view at Knoedler this winter), is like seeing light through fog or rain. These are luminous, wet-looking, tactile paintings that span the extremes of color and shading from smoldering grays to vibrant reds and greens. Underneath their saturated surfaces one finds partial structures, rough geometric forms, calligraphic gestures, and fragments of landscapes, all of which coalesce only to quickly recede back into the overall compositions.

The best pieces in the series are the dense monochromatic acrylics. These paintings somehow manage to evoke a sense of light, place, and mood through texture, color, and shape without reference to anything specific. However, the fluid lines and natural shapes created by the artist as she pours the paint onto the paper suggest the sky and sea, with the horizon line as their dominant organizational element.

In *Lighthouse Series I* (1999), Frankenthaler creates a dynamic space with serious depth and dimension. A small sliver of black in the upper left-hand corner hints at the



Helen Frankenthaler, *Untitled (Lighthouse Series VIII)*, acrylic on paper (32-3/8x37-3/4 in.), 2000. Courtesy Knoedler and Company, New York.

form of a boat or a small island in a bay. The grayish pallor of the violet field imbues the scene with a melancholy air. In *Lighthouse X* (2000), Frankenthaler uses a light gray color with undercurrents of yellow, purple, and black to capture the sensation of a foggy early morning sunrise. One of the outstanding features of this image is the solid textured shape in the center of the painting that resembles a sand dune or some other landform. This visual clue provides just enough information to allow the viewer to reference his or her own subjective memory of the smell, temperature, and feel of a misty beach in the early morning.

Lighthouse Series VIII (2000) is a vibrant red painting with streaky lines in the upper quadrant. Below the red is the grayish outline of a vague form that seems to be moving across the painting. This shadow (or bow of a boat?) leads the eye from one side of the paper to the other following the diagonal horizon line created by juxtaposing lighter and darker shades of red. The completely green *Lighthouse Series IX* (1999) again uses contrasting shades of color to distinguish the pictorial plane. The darker green (mixed with black) that dominates the painting could be interpreted as a tree line at the edge of a forest. There is quiet motion and energy here, created by the swirling black under the green—like trees gently swaying in the wind.

—Brett Littman