

Ruth Ann Fredenthal

Untitled, 1966

Oil stick on paper

11" x 8.5"

Opening bid: \$3500

Artist's Statement:

Having graduated from Bennington College in 1960, I had studied closely with Paul Feeley who was my painting teacher throughout my college career except for my first term

and from then on Paul Feeley was my only painting teacher. My other major art teachers were Tony Smith in Architecture and Vincent Longo in Print Making.

Feeley and I became close friends very rapidly. He was very cheerful and had a charming and unique personality.

I did not know his work yet and when I first saw it, I was disappointed and found it sort of soft, but later when I returned to the USA in late 1961 to set up my life in New York City after my Fulbright to Florence, Italy in Painting, I saw Feeley's exhibition at the Betty Parsons Gallery in 1962 and was utterly smitten with the strength and strong centered beauty of these two color paintings. These influenced me greatly and I started to do my own strong mostly two color large oil paintings that showed his influence but were still very much my own work.

Since Feeley and I continued to be friendly after I had graduated, he would do an occasional studio visit when he was in New York and he was quite struck by my work as well. He also sent Tony Smith, with whom I had remained friendly as well, to take a look at it.

In early September of 1965, when Feeley was preparing for an exhibition of painted sculpture at Betty Parsons in December 1965, he asked me to come up and work for him and help him paint his sculptures.

I had seen him during the summer when we were both very sad about the death of David Smith who was a mutual friend. I decided that though there was little pay, my admiration was so great for him that I accepted.

When he saw how good I was at the painting, especially of the edges, he left it more or less entirely up to me so that I ended up painting all of his sculptures. His hand is only on the last coat of the model for Errai that MoMA had just purchased and which we were rushing to finish and deliver and a baby sculpture he made as a gift for me, since he had paid me so little, where I chose my colors and I made him paint the 3rd layer of paint! After the Betty Parsons exhibition of Feeley's sculpture in December 1965, he and his wife, Helen, left for a sabbatical in southern Spain, but Feeley fell ill in April and came home where he died on June 10, 1966.

When I was back in my studio at 12 West 29th St. in New York in late 1965, after working with Feeley, I made a group of wall and table sculptures painted with acrylic on wooden structures I made, that were somewhat like the Feeley sculptures I had painted for him. There were 11 of these and I made numerous works on watercolor paper using inks and some using oil stick on paper. These were executed mostly in 1966. My contribution to this Gala is one of these oil stick on paper works from 1966 showing strong Feeley influence but still very much mine.

Ruth Ann Fredenthal is a leading painter in the third collection of Count Panza di Biumo of Italy. Her paintings are in The Museum of Contemporary Art of Lugano, Switzerland; The Museum Palazzo Ducale of Gubbio, Italy; The Museum Villa Panza of Varese, Italy (three rooms, two of which were Rothko's in the first Panza collection); the Museum of Contemporary Art of Trento and Roveretto now the largest contemporary museum in Italy, and The Albright-Knox Art Gallery of Buffalo, NY.

Biography:

Fredenthan, daughter of the late David Fredenthal (DavidFredenthal.com), a watercolor painter, draftsman, was born in Detroit and grew up mostly in Vermont. She is a graduate of Bennington College where she studied with Paul Feeley and Tony Smith. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Painting to Florence, Italy and a recipient of the Pollack-Krasner Foundation Grant (2008).

Ruth Ann lives and works in New York City and is represented by Larry Becker Contemporary Art of Philadelphia and Osart Gallery of Milan, Italy.