Andrew Kreps Gallery
22 Cortlandt Alley, New York, NY 10013
Tue–Sat, 10 am–6 pm andrewkreps.com
Tel. (212)741-8849 Fax. (212)741-8163

Hollis Sigler
Mysterious Delights of My Heart

22 Cortlandt Alley
June 6 - August 9, 2025

Andrew Kreps Gallery is pleased to announce *Mysterious Delights of My Heart*, an exhibition of works by Hollis Sigler (b. 1948, Gary, Indiana, d. 2001, Lincolnshire, Illinois).

In the late 1970s, Sigler abandoned photorealism in favor of a new style of representation, seeking to develop a visual language that centered the experiences of women. Influenced by the drawings of her youth, and the paintings of Florine Stettheimer, Sigler created compositions set within skewed, nearly theatrical spaces, marked by the figure's absence. Scenes ranging from familiar, suburban homes, to almost surreal landscapes are littered with personal effects suggesting the immediate aftermath of an event. Vanities are strewn with personal items, clothing is littered across the ground and floor, along with flung shoes, open windows, and empty chairs. Sigler viewed the removal of the figure as a way to generate visual tension, while also inviting the viewer to insert their own experience, and resonance. Titling her works within their frame, she further narrativized the emotional cycles of life, and fugitive emotional states - passion, romance, desire, as well as fear. In *Under Her Dark Pain is Rage*, 1982, the shadowed silhouette of a woman is crowded amongst household anxieties, as veiled painting easels float above, suggesting her own anxieties around the traditional gendered roles of "woman's work." And in *Mysterious Delights of My Heart*, 1983, a fantastical, imagined beachfront reflects the ecstasy of new-found love.

Sigler's work shifted again in 1985 after being diagnosed with breast cancer, a disease that had also afflicted her mother and grandmother. While initially Sigler kept this private, her works became charged with frenetic brushstrokes and agitated colors. Tidal waves, earth-quakes, and fires created scenes of disequilibrium and imbalance, connecting her own fears of impermanence with that of the natural world, and impending ecological crisis. Sigler later wrote, "Although I wanted emotions in my art, I was determined to be silent about their cause… I wanted the viewers to have a dialogue with the art, to be able to put them-selves in the picture… The works should touch us in our shared emotional space."

After her cancer recurred in 1992, the subject of illness adopted a newfound urgency, as she started her series *Breast Cancer Journal: Walking with the Ghosts of My Grandmothers*

that same year. The intricate, handmade frames that had become typical of her drawings and paintings, were now used as a vehicle for her voice and the voices of others, adorning them with medical research, quotes from figures including Audre Lorde, and excerpts from her own diaries. Increasingly intertwined with her own advocacy for women's health, Sigler hoped that "the work would gain the power to destroy the silence surrounding the disease." The resulting works formed an intensely vulnerable chronicle of her experience with the illness. A room-sized, painted installation, titled *I Can't Even Get the Pictures to Hang Straight*, 1994, details statistics of rising rates of Breast Cancer in the United States, and houses drawings from the series, hung off-kilter. These include *It's The Hardest Part of Life… Leaving*, 1999, in which Sigler details the small, fleeting pleasures of life as she writes, "I love the changing of the seasons when I can shed the isolation of winter to the expansiveness of summer…" Despite her waning health, Sigler remained resolute, positioning her work not only as a personal catharsis but also as a way to demystify the disease.

The gallery would like to thank Patricia Locke and Deborah Rethemeyer for their collaboration on this exhibition.

Hollis Sigler was an educator, activist, and pioneering feminist artist, who lived and worked in Chicago.

Earlier this year, Sigler's work was included in *For Dear Life: Art, Medicine, and Disability*, presented at MCA San Diego as part of *Pacific Standard Time*. Sigler rose to prominence in the 1970s as part of Chicago's vibrant art scene, co-founding Artemesia Gallery, a female cooperative gallery in the city. She exhibited extensively during her lifetime, including the traveling exhibition *Breast Cancer Journal*, which originated at the Rockford University Art Gallery, Illinois, 1993, and traveled to National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1993, and MCA Chicago, 1994. In addition, her work was included in the 1981 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, and the 1985 Corcoran Biennial, as well as the 1982 exhibition *Eight Artists: The Anxious Edge*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Additionally, Sigler exhibited with Gladstone Gallery, New York (1986 and 1981), Carl Hammer Gallery, Chicago (1998 and 1995), and Steven Scott Gallery, Baltimore (1998, 1996, 1995, 1993, and 1990). In 2009, the Rockford Art Museum, Illinois mounted a posthumous retrospective of Sigler's work, titled *Expect the Unexpected*, which traveled to the Chicago Cultural Center in 2010. In 2022, Andrew Kreps Gallery presented the first solo exhibition of Sigler's work in New York in over three decades.

Hollis Sigler's works are held in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Glenstone, Potomac, MD, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Honolulu Museum of Art, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, and the Seattle Art Museum, among others.

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HOLLIS SIGLER
Her Life Was Shattered But She Couldn't Forget, 1981

Oil on canvas with painted frame
45 x 63 inches (114.3 x 160 cm.)
(HOS25-010)



HOLLIS SIGLER
The Lady Desires The Divine For Herself, 1990

Oil on board with painted frame
16 1/2 x 19 1/2 inches (41.9 x 49.5 cm.)
(HOS21-006)



HOLLIS SIGLER
A Lost Self in a Forest of Guilt, 1984

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 1/4 x 34 3/8 inches (74.3 x 87.3 cm.)
(HOS25-001)



HOLLIS SIGLER
Mysterious Delights of My Heart, 1983

Oil on canvas with painted frame
61 1/8 x 61 1/8 inches (155.3 x 155.3 cm.)
(HOS25-034)



HOLLIS SIGLER
I Can Not Go On Without A Place To Go To, 1982

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 1/4 x 34 1/4 inches (74.3 x 87 cm.)
(HOS25-016)



HOLLIS SIGLER
If It Wasn't For Medicine, I Would Not Have This Extension on Love, 1999

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 1/4 x 34 3/8 inches (74.3 x 87.3 cm.)
(HOS25-020)



HOLLIS SIGLER
She Knows There's A Different Person Inside, 1982

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 3/8 x 34 3/8 inches (74.6 x 87.3 cm.)
(HOS25-040)



HOLLIS SIGLER
When She Was Young, She Couldn't Wait To Grow Up, 1982

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 3/8 x 34 3/8 inches (74.6 x 87.3 cm.)
(HOS25-061)

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HOLLIS SIGLER
I Can't Even Get the Pictures to Hang Straight, 1994

Acrylic on canvas, framed drawings and prints
118 x 130 x 130 inches (299.7 x 330.2 x 330.2 cm.) overall installation
(HOS25-068)



HOLLIS SIGLER
It's The Hardest Part of Life... Leaving, 1999

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
29 1/4 x 34 inches (74.3 x 86.4 cm.)
(HOS25-029)



HOLLIS SIGLER
It Is The Victory of Life, It Is The Victory of Death, 1999

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
26 1/4 x 31 1/4 inches (66.7 x 79.4 cm.)
(HOS25-027)



HOLLIS SIGLER
She's Got An Itch She Can't Scratch, 1983

Oil on canvas with painted frame
52 1/8 x 64 1/8 inches (132.4 x 162.9 cm.)
(HOS21-021)

Front Office



HOLLIS SIGLER
For Weeks I Waited to Begin, 1998

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
26 1/8 x 31 1/4 inches (66.4 x 79.4 cm.)
(HOS25-006)



HOLLIS SIGLER
Under Her Dark Pain is Rage, 1982

Oil on canvas with painted frame
48 1/4 x 60 3/4 inches (122.6 x 154.3 cm.)
(HOS24-003)



HOLLIS SIGLER
When I Get to the Promised Land, 1984

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
25 1/4 x 31 1/8 inches (64.1 x 79.1 cm.)
(HOS25-059)



HOLLIS SIGLER
This is a Large Love Drawing for Patty, To Be Dated

Oil pastel on paper with painted frame
42 1/8 x 54 inches (107 x 137.2 cm.)
(HOS25-054)