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Gagosian Presents *Helen Frankenthaler: The Moment and the Distance*

Exhibition Surveys Four Decades of Paintings Featuring Many of the Artist's Largest and Most Ambitious Works

Opening April 30, 2026, in New York



Helen Frankenthaler, *Moontide*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, 75 1/4 × 124 1/2 inches (191.1 × 316.2 cm) © 2026 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc /Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo: Maris Hutchinson

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NEW YORK, March 10, 2026—Gagosian is pleased to announce *Helen Frankenthaler: The Moment and the Distance*, an exhibition organized in collaboration with the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. Surveying four decades of paintings from 1960 to 1992, the exhibition features more than twenty of Frankenthaler's largest, most ambitious works. Arranged by decade, these canvases—with their monumental scale, sensuous color, and innovative compositions—offer new perspectives on the artist's continual reinvention of her practice.

The exhibition's title is derived from an incisive 1975 essay by Barbara Guest, a poet and friend of the artist, who wrote: "She has rewarded us with the astonishing combination of freedom with restraint, extravagance with discipline, suggestion and definition. The moment becomes the distance."

Embodying Frankenthaler's exploratory, lyrical approach to abstraction, the canvases on view benefit from an expansive scale that enhances the exceptional visual impact of their brilliant colors and varied gestures.

Created with diluted oil paint applied directly to untreated canvas, *Provincetown I* (1961) features compelling contrasts between line and color, bound and unbound form. In the late 1960s and 1970s,

following her move from oil to acrylic paint, Frankenthaler shifted to composing with large, flat slabs of color. *Mornings* (1971) is distinguished by flowing descents of yellow, buff, and white tones interrupted by linear filaments drawn with black marker, which is also used in *Thanksgiving* (1972) to arrange biomorphic shapes in precarious balance.

Throughout her career, Frankenthaler engaged in a conversation with the history of art. *Auguste* (1977) was inspired by Auguste Renoir, reconfiguring the Impressionist's fleshy palette and varied application into a field of loosely rectilinear brushstrokes. Allusions to landscape are also a constant in Frankenthaler's oeuvre. *Ocean Drive West #1* (1974), titled after the address of her seaside studio at Shippan Point in Stamford, Connecticut, stretches striated bands across a vibrant blue canvas to suggest currents, while the expansive horizontal composition of *Shippan October* (1981) evokes the seascape of the Long Island Sound in autumnal light.

Frankenthaler once described her painting as "inner amorphous worlds or depths exploding on the surface and in perspective," channeling the fluidity of pigment that washes over works like *A Green Thought in a Green Shade* (1981), punctuated by opaque elements in contrasting colors. In *Janus* (1990), mirrored accumulations of layered gray tones face one another in the center of the work, framed by passages of fiery color and splattered, vaporous textures. Together, these paintings epitomize Frankenthaler's continuous introduction of new painting techniques and imagery as well as her stalwart commitment to abstraction.

Gagosian is publishing a catalogue to accompany the exhibition. It features the essay "Unborrowed Dreams: Helen Frankenthaler's Post-Surrealist Spaces" by Ara H. Merjian, which discusses the artist's uniquely sustained engagement with abstraction and Surrealist methods. The gallery's tenth solo presentation of Frankenthaler's work, *The Moment and the Distance* follows *Helen Frankenthaler: A Grand Sweep* at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (on view through February 8, 2026) and coincides with *Helen Frankenthaler* at Kunstmuseum Basel (April 18–August 23, 2026), which will be the largest exhibition of her art to date in Europe.

For Helen Frankenthaler's biographical information and exhibition history, [please visit gagosian.com](https://www.gagosian.com).

#HelenFrankenthaler

HELEN FRANKENTHALER

The Moment and the Distance

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April 30–July 2, 2026

522 West 21st Street, New York

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