

## Press release

# Museum Folkwang 100

## **From Abstract Expressionism to Colour Field Painting: Museum Folkwang pays tribute to the American artist Helen Frankenthaler in a comprehensive solo exhibition**

**Essen, 5 October 2022 – With the exhibition *Malerische Konstellationen (Painterly Constellations)*, Museum Folkwang will be showcasing the work of the American artist Helen Frankenthaler in Germany for the first time in over 20 years from 2 December 2022 to 5 March 2023. The focus of the show, comprising 84 works from the period between 1949 and 2002, is her work on paper. As a pioneer of Colour Field Painting, Frankenthaler achieved international fame and became a model for a new generation of painters.**

At the age of 23, Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011) had already established herself in the male-dominated art scene of New York in the circle of Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. After experimenting with paint on paper, Helen Frankenthaler revolutionised Abstract Art in 1952 with her invention of the soak-stain technique – the soaking of canvas in thinned paint. The exhibition *Helen Frankenthaler Painterly Constellations* retrospectively traces Helen Frankenthaler's artistic development from Abstract Expressionism to Colour Field Painting and landscape-like works. The choice of paper as a medium had a decisive influence on her work and at times completely replaced the use of canvas. Altogether 75 of her paintings on paper are shown in the exhibition. They range from the Cubist-like still lifes of the late 1940s and works inspired by life in the epicentre of New York to the deliberately placed, striking puddles of colour of the 1960s and the landscape touches typical of Frankenthaler as well as contemplative compositions of the early 2000s. Her works on paper are juxtaposed with selected paintings by the artist, which illustrate that the painter Frankenthaler knew how to use the medium of paper in a way that was just as colourful and expansive as canvas. The formats of the paintings on paper reach impressive sizes of up to 100 × 500 cm or 200 × 200 cm. The main lender of works is the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. Other important loans come from the Museum of Modern Art New York, Museum Reinhard Ernst in Wiesbaden as well as Museum Ludwig in Cologne and Sprengel Museum Hannover.

In cooperation with Kunsthalle Krems and the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation.

Supported by Bankhaus Metzler.

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## Information

**Helen Frankenthaler**

***Painterly Constellations***

2 December 2022 to 5 March 2023

**Press conference: 1 December 2022, 11 a.m.**

Tickets: EUR 8.00; concessions: EUR 5.00

A catalogue in German and English has been published by Buchhandlung Walther and Franz König, Cologne (price: EUR 29.80).



**Helen Frankenthaler**

*Grotto Azura*, 1963

Oil on paper, 58.4 × 73.7 cm

Collection Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, New York

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