

## A Survey Exhibition: Louis Stern Fine Arts Through the Decades January 27 – March 9, 2024

Los Angeles, CA. Louis Stern Fine Arts is pleased to present a survey exhibition celebrating its 30th year in West Hollywood's Design District. Founded in 1982 as Louis Stern Galleries in Beverly Hills, the gallery is helmed by veteran art dealer Louis Stern. A specialist in Impressionist and Modern artwork and a pillar of the Los Angeles arts community, Stern marks 2024 as his 63rd year in the art business. The works on view illustrate the breadth and significance of the gallery's storied exhibition program, spanning historical and contemporary Hard Edge painting, sculpture, photography, Hungarian Avant-Garde, and Latin American art.

Since moving to its current location on Melrose Avenue in 1994, Louis Stern Fine Arts has become renowned for its focus on Mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century West Coast artists, with a special emphasis on those who have been historically underrecognized. Through a robust exhibition program, esteemed publications, and rigorous scholarly research, the gallery has returned to rightful prominence the careers of three of the artists who defined and epitomized the California Hard Edge movement: Lorser Feitelson, Helen Lundeberg, and Karl Benjamin. The gallery published the digital catalogue raisonné of paintings by Benjamin in 2023. The reputation of the influential but long-overlooked painter and muralist Alfredo Ramos Martínez has also been revived through the gallery's efforts, which include the compilation of an in-progress catalogue raisonné for this prolific artist.

In addition to paintings by Benjamin, Feitelson, and Lundeberg, the exhibition showcases works by their fellow Hard Edge artists June Harwood and John McLaughlin, as well as selections by influential California artists James Jarvaise, Matsumi Kanemitsu, Samella Lewis, Mimi Chen Ting, and Frederick Wight. In dialogue with these historical works are selections by contemporary artists who work in related geometric abstract modes, including Laurie Fendrich, Mokha Laget, Mark Leonard, James Little, and Richard Wilson. Works by Hunter Color School artists Doug Ohlson and Gabriele Evertz engage the East and West Coasts in a conversation on color and form, and paintings by Michele Toohey and Kymber Holt offer meditations on pattern and scale. The serenity of Harrison McIntosh's ceramics finds kinetic parallels in the elegant metal sculptures of Knopp Ferro and Jerome Kirk.

The mixed media constructions of Ron Cooper and Heather Hutchison, though produced more than 40 years apart, share a preoccupation with capturing the transient effects of light. Sculptor Cecilia Miguez and assemblage artist George Herms both create found object sculptures with presence and impact greater than the sum of their parts. Works by Jean Charlot, Ana Mercedes Hoyos, Anita Payró, and Ramos Martínez highlight Stern's promotion of and expertise in Latin American art. Hungarian Avant-Garde paintings by Béla Kádár, Hugó Scheiber, and János Mattis Teutsch harken back to the gallery's landmark 2002 exhibition investigating this artistic movement. They are accompanied by a group of thoughtfully composed photographs by Lucien Clergue, Mark Feldstein, Magali Nougarede, Leonard Nimoy, and Jean-François Spricigo.

Among the works on view in Stern's office, which has been incorporated as an additional exhibition space, are selections from his personal collection. A 1950 monochrome painting by Leon Polk Smith hangs above a handsome wood cabinet, custom-built in the 1960s by Sam Maloof for architect Edward H. Fickett. Nestled amongst Stern's extensive collection of art publications are a whimsical *Head Cup* by Magdalena Suarez Frimkess and group of sculptures from the series *Variations on the Theme of Queen Nefertete*. Reimagining the iconic *Bust of Nefertiti* in the styles of various Modern artists, these works were a collaboration between sculptor Bruce Houston and film director Billy Wilder, who was a close friend of Stern's for many years before his passing. Accumulated over decades in the art business with a knowledgeable and discerning eye, these personal treasures exemplify the connoisseurship, longevity, and dedication to the advancement of artists and their work for which Stern and his gallery are acclaimed.