

PRESS RELEASE

STPI  
CREATIVE WORKSHOP & GALLERY

STPI PRESENTS

## ***Helen Frankenthaler: Prints 1977–2004***

Introducing works from the National Collection of Singapore and the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

29 June 2024

— 25 August 2024



Helen Frankenthaler, ***Gateway (Screen)***, 1988, 28 colour etching, relief, aquatint and stencil on TGL handmade paper mounted in a hand-patinated cast bronze screen (three panels), 205.7 x 251.5 x 172.1 cm.  
© 2024 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / Tyler Graphics Ltd., Mount Kisco, New York.  
Collection of Singapore Art Museum, comprising part of the National Collection of Singapore.

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STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery is proud to present their 2024 Annual Special Exhibition, ***Helen Frankenthaler: Prints 1977-2004***, a showcase of the prolific printmaking practice of the late, esteemed artist Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011), one of the most prominent modern American Abstract Expressionist artists of her time. Running from 29 June to 25 August 2024, the exhibition introduces close to 40 of her print works from the National Collection of Singapore and the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, New York – one of the largest to be shown in Singapore and with a spotlight on her woodcuts. In a rare opportunity to encounter these outstanding works up close, this special exhibition will explore Frankenthaler’s influential and collaborative partnership with American master printer Kenneth Tyler, who would later become a significant figure in the establishment of STPI.

Internationally celebrated as a pioneer of Colour Field painting within the Abstract Expressionism movement, Frankenthaler was also a notable printmaker who made significant contributions to the American Print Renaissance. Her 26-year-long collaboration with Tyler at his workshop, Tyler Graphics, began in 1976. It was a legendary print shop in New York that embodied many of the philosophies reflected in the STPI Creative Workshop today: a space for innovation and collaboration with artists to spark new creative possibilities in printmaking.

*“This exhibition celebrates Helen Frankenthaler as an artist and trailblazer, one who constantly sought to materialise new creative possibilities. With a collaborative spirit that is deeply rooted in STPI’s residency programme today, Frankenthaler’s 26-year artistic partnership with Ken Tyler redefined her own printmaking practice to capture her signature symphony of colours and fluid abstractions, producing the many ground-breaking works featured in this exhibition.”*

– Elizabeth Smith, Executive Director of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

Highlights on show include *Madame Butterfly*, an elegant woodcut masterpiece influenced by East and West printmaking styles to create a triptych featuring 102 different tones. Her mastery of colour produced a cloud-like effect imbued with strength and serenity, a demonstration of how she challenged the woodcut medium to create a work that feels “born at once”. Though it shares a title with Puccini’s iconic opera, this piece deftly invites the viewer to peel back the layers of meaning to discover their own personal interpretations.

One of her most ambitious multimedia projects to date, Frankenthaler worked with Tyler to create *Gateway* over a seven-year period from 1982–1988, pushing the boundaries of printmaking and scale. Starting with intaglio prints that later evolved into bronze screens, she utilised print techniques such as etching, relief, aquatint, and spitbite aquatint with hand-stencilled margins on three panels. The *Gateway* series created a nuanced dialogue between her artistic practice and the material, resulting in a multi-disciplinary tour de force that captures the sublime nature of her work.

In *Helen Frankenthaler: Prints 1977–2004*, Frankenthaler’s daring experimentation and expressionistic visual vocabulary shines in tandem with the technical mastery afforded by her collaboration with Tyler Graphics. The same philosophy of building creative partnerships that challenge boundaries continues at STPI to this day, empowering artists in residencies to reinvent the conventions of print and paper.

## About the STPI Annual Special Exhibition

The STPI Annual Special Exhibition features a highly anticipated exhibition that offers audiences a rare opportunity to encounter remarkable printmaking and papermaking explorations of some of the most significant modern and contemporary artists in history. Specially curated to highlight and foster an appreciation for the artists’ exceptional artistry and innovations in these mediums, each edition echoes STPI’s spirit of collaboration and the bold experimentations that take place in STPI’s Creative Workshop.

STPI is proud to have presented the works of many influential artists over the last two decades, including *The Mystery of Picasso’s Creative Process: The Art of Printmaking* (2013), *Zao Wou-Ki: No Boundaries* (2016), *David Hockney: A Matter of Perspective* (2017), and *Takashi Murakami: From Superflat to Bubblewrap* (2019).

## About STPI

STPI is a dynamic creative workshop and contemporary art gallery based in Singapore. Established in 2002, STPI is a not-for-profit organisation committed to promoting artistic experimentation in the mediums of print and paper and has become one of the most cutting-edge destinations for contemporary art in Asia. STPI sits alongside National Gallery Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum as part of the national Visual Arts Cluster of leading institutions in the region.

## About the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation

Established and endowed by Helen Frankenthaler during her lifetime, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation advances the artist's legacy and inspires a new generation of practitioners through a range of philanthropic, educational, and research initiatives. Since becoming active in 2013, the Foundation has continued to strategically expand its program, which includes organizing and supporting significant exhibitions of the artist's work, fostering new research and publications, advancing educational programs in partnership with arts organizations around the world, and launching groundbreaking initiatives that foster systemic change in the field. As a primary resource on the artist, and a steward of her collection and archive, the Foundation holds an extensive selection of Frankenthaler's work in a variety of mediums, her collection of works by other artists, and original papers and materials pertaining to her life and work.