

PEYTON WRIGHT

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Elaine Kurtz

(American Painter, 1928-2003)



Elaine Kurtz' work of the seventies were cool, intellectual geometric abstractions. By the 1990's with her Alluvial Paintings, she was creating an abstracted, minimalist planet Earth. Formulating her own geology in a time of rapid deforestation she devised her own natural phenomenon: a union of the artist's eye and the minerals that compose the earth's crust: ergo a

pure composition that balanced the Earth with the artist's touch. Through unique patterns defined by sand, pebbles, mica and other materials, the Alluvial Paintings series distilled natural phenomena and redefined abstraction.

As Susan Rothenberg wrote in her essay for the catalogue which accompanies an exhibition, "The expanding scale of texture in Kurtz' paint medium in the 1970's and 1980's -- from paint to pigment and mineral -- adds dimension and grain to the visual. Pursuing paint back to its material origins redefines the modernist search for the essence of medium, redirecting it toward nature and away from the canvas confines."

After her death, Elaine Kurtz came to William R. Valerio's attention when he saw one of her paintings in the home of Nancy Posel, a longtime friend of the artist's and a supporter of Woodmere Art Museum. The recently appointed Woodmere director was so intrigued by the work that he decided that Kurtz, who died in 2003 at 75, was an artist deserving of a major exhibition. The exhibition Valerio organized to remedy that situation proves that his instinct was true. The retrospective of 76 paintings and mixed-media works on canvas and paper reveals an

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artist of exquisite sensitivity to natural phenomena and a career that evolved as a journey of discovery.

Selected One Person Exhibitions

2005 Kouros Gallery, New York, NY
2003 Kouros Gallery, New York, NY
2001 Kouros Gallery, New York, NY
2001 Troyer Gallery, Washington DC
1999 Corcoran Museum of Art, Washington, DC
1995 Troyer Gallery, Washington DC
1998 Gross McLeaf Gallery, Philadelphia, PA
1990 Anita Shapolsky Gallery, New York

Selected Public Collections

Academy Art Museum, Easton, MD
Berman Museum of Art, Ursinus College, PA
Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, Washington, DC
Corcoran Museum of Art, Washington, DC
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC
Israel Museum, Jerusalem
Library of Congress, Washington DC.
Museum of the University of the District of Columbia
Museum of Art, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC
Philadelphia Museum of Art, PA
Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME
Power Gallery of Contemporary Art, University of Sidney, Australia
University of Pennsylvania, PA
Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA