

TIBOR DE NAGY GALLERY

ESTABLISHED 1950

March 8, 2013

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **Jane Freilicher**

## **Painter Among Poets**

**April 13 – June 14, 2013**

**As a follow-up to the Tibor de Nagy Gallery's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition, "Painters and Poets," the gallery is pleased to present *Jane Freilicher Painter Among Poets*. The exhibition coincides with National Poetry Month.**

The exhibition will take the same format and approach as "Painters and Poets." The exhibition will closely examine painter Jane Freilicher's pivotal role among the poets of the New York School, particularly **John Ashbery** and **Frank O'Hara**, along with Kenneth Koch and James Schuyler. Freilicher was in many ways a catalytic and consequential presence. Unlike Larry Rivers or Grace Hartigan, who engaged in direct collaborations with the poets, Freilicher played a subtler, more nuanced role, one that is difficult to pin down precisely.

It will be the first exhibition to explore in depth Freilicher's relationship to the poets and their work. It will comprise the artist's paintings and works on paper, including portraits of the poets, many on loan and exhibited for the first time. It will also include a selection of original letters between Freilicher and the poets, as well as films, book covers, and photographs.

Freilicher, now 88, was not only the poets' closest friend and confidante, she was also their muse. As has become clear in early correspondence, a selection of which will be exhibited for the first time, Ashbery and O'Hara regularly sought her advice for poems in process. Urbane, affectionate, and gossipy, the letters put the artist's legendary wit on display.

O'Hara wrote his celebrated series of "Jane poems," weaving her name into the titles. James Schuyler came up with the scenario for "Presenting Jane," a short film starring Freilicher. A scene depicting Jane walking on water – a moment which became legendary among the group of poets – speaks to the esteem for which she was held. The film was never completed and what footage existed is now lost.

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The gallery has been granted rare and historic access by the poets' literary estates to letters, postcards, and original manuscript pages of poems that have never before been exhibited publicly. Many of the poems have lines crossed out and handwritten additions in the margins.

There will be a selection of paintings and works on paper of her best known images including her light-swept, vaporous paintings of Long Island and her diaphanous cityscapes. There will be particular emphasis of works from the 1960s into the 1970s, and an important group of gritty cityscapes from the 1950s. John Ashbery concludes in the exhibition catalogue introduction:

Her pictures always have an air of just coming into being, of tentativeness that is the lifeblood of art. There are always new and surprising full passages where you couldn't imagine another artist coming to the same decisions, which are invariably the right ones....Her work is rich in meanings that continue to resonate with us even after we have moved on and are thinking of something else. It is one reason why we value art and part of what makes her a great artist.

The artist's work has been exhibited and collected widely throughout the United States. Her paintings are included in major museum collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Cleveland Museum of Art. Her work has been the subject of numerous gallery and museum exhibitions, and was included in the Whitney Biennial in 1955 (then the Annual), 1972, and most recently in 1995, attesting to the timelessness and continued relevancy of her art and vision. In 2004 a monograph on the artist's work was published by Abrams with texts by Klaus Kertess and Thomas Nozkowski. In 2005 she won the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Gold Medal in Painting, its highest honor. She continues to paint in her studio on lower Fifth Avenue. A suite of her prints was recently published.

A hardbound exhibition catalogue will be available with an introduction by John Ashbery; text by scholar Jenni Quilter; selected poems and letters by Ashbery, Koch, O'Hara, Schuyler. The publication will include over sixty color images.

**For further information and visuals please contact the gallery at  
212.262.5050 or [info@tibordenagy.com](mailto:info@tibordenagy.com)**

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