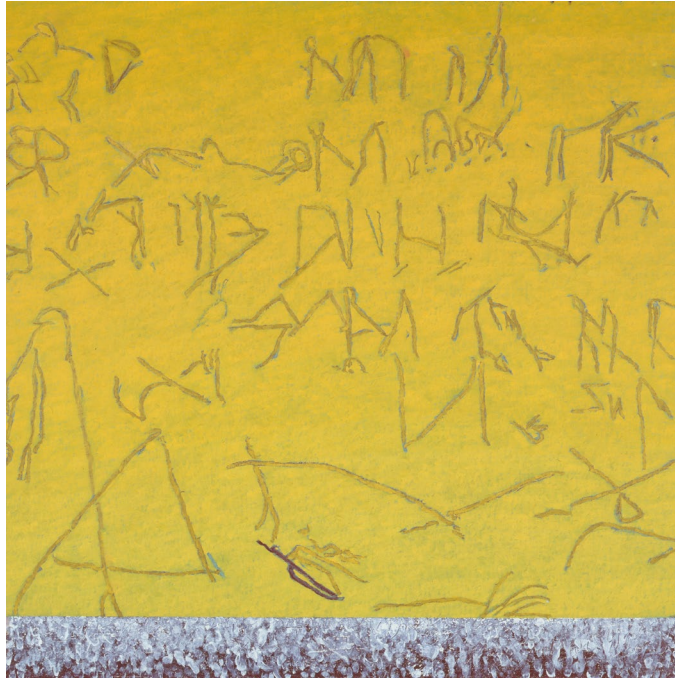


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Locks Gallery
T 215-629-1000/F 215-629-3868
info@locksgallery.com

L
O
C
K
S
G
A
L
L
E
R
Y



Warren Rohrer, *Field: Language 7*, 1990, oil on linen, 54 ¼ x 54 ¼ inches

Warren Rohrer

April 1 - May 14, 2022

Opening Reception: Friday, April 1, 5 - 7 PM



Locks Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of Warren Rohrer's paintings and drawings from the 1990s. Warren Rohrer (1927–1995) was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and became one of Philadelphia's leading abstract painters in the late 20th century. He worked out of a converted barn in Christiana, Pennsylvania, for most of his early career and dedicated 25 years to teaching at the Philadelphia College of Art (now the University of the Arts). He had his first major museum exhibition posthumously at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 2003.

Although committed to abstraction as a spiritual mode of painting, Rohrer's work is rooted in a deep sense of place and revolves around a connection to the land. Raised in a Mennonite community and descended from many generations of Mennonite farmers, his vivid childhood memories and close ties to nature and agriculture informed his work. The artist drew inspiration from a 12-acre farm near Christiana in Lancaster County, where he and his wife, Jane Rohrer, lived with their family in the 60s and 70s. After a trip to Europe in 1972 where he visited seminal exhibitions of Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman, Rohrer ambitiously dedicated himself to working abstractly using a square format for his canvases. This important shift in his work led to the many luminous and meditative paintings from the 1970s and 80s for which he achieved great acclaim.

[continued on reverse]

In 1984, Rohrer moved into the former studio of acclaimed artist and muralist Violet Oakley in Chestnut Hill. While teaching in Philadelphia and exhibiting extensively, the artist maintained weekly trips to Lancaster to photograph and make studies. Of particular interest was a field at the source of the Conestoga River, a place where nine generations of his Mennonite ancestors had originally settled. His later work explored a language of forms found in this landscape, evolving a deeply personal mode of mark making and gestural script embedded within his abstractions. The Field Language series of the early 1990s, on view in this exhibition, is one of the artist's most notable and idiosyncratic periods from his forty-year career, where the painter's marks have the look of a primal language, script, or kind of hidden calligraphy.

.....

On Friday, April 29, at 1 PM, The Brooklyn Rail will host a conversation about Rohrer's life and work as part of their The New Social Environment series on Zoom.

A concurrent exhibition at the Woodmere Art Museum titled *Hearing the Brush: The Painting and Poetry of Warren and Jane Rohrer* explores the artist's work in relation to the poetry of his wife of over 50 years, Jane Rohrer. The exhibition will be on view from April 9 - July 10, 2022, and follows the 2021 exhibition at Penn State's Palmer Museum of Art, *Field Language: The Painting and Poetry of Warren and Jane Rohrer*. The publication, *Field Language: The Painting and Poetry of Warren and Jane Rohrer*, was produced in conjunction with these exhibitions.

Warren Rohrer (American, 1927-1995) was a renowned figure in the painting and teaching community in Philadelphia beginning in the late 1960s. Rohrer's paintings are in the permanent collections of the Denver Art Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Phillips Collection, among others. Locks Gallery has represented the artist and his estate since 1974.

Locks Gallery is located at 600 Washington Square South in Philadelphia, PA. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10am to 6pm. For additional information, please contact Locks Gallery at 215.629.1000 or info@locksgallery.com.

