



Louise Fishman, *Coda di Rospo*, 2017, oil on linen, 70 x 88 inches

## LOUISE FISHMAN

### *Soliloquy*

October 28 - December 23, 2022

Opening Reception Friday, October 28, 5:00 - 7:00 PM



Locks Gallery is pleased to announce **Louise Fishman: Soliloquy**, which marks the late artist's second solo exhibition with the gallery. The show features paintings from the past twenty years, which highlight several important canvases and drawings made surrounding her third, and final, residency in Venice, Italy from 2016 to 2017.

Louise Fishman's (1939–2021) paintings are layered upon an improvised structural grid assembled out of strokes, skeins, and slashes of oil paint, applied with large serrated trowels and scrapers, along with more traditional paint brushes—and sometimes, her hands. Her dynamic surfaces are often intensified by their scale, she excelled at working big and many of her canvases measure over seven feet. While her work is rooted in the AbEx tradition celebrating process and materiality, Fishman always drew upon personal experience informed by her identity as a Jewish, lesbian feminist.

Fishman embarked on several residencies at the Emily Harvey Foundation in Venice: during the Fall of 2011 and 2013, and at the end of 2016, and many of her works from the past decade were inspired by these periods. Fishman had a deep understanding and appreciation of art history, from her family background (her mother and aunt were both artists and studied at the Barnes Foundation), and her education at Tyler School of Art

in Philadelphia, and University of Illinois in Champaign. Being in Venice was a powerful experience. She highly anticipated it (for years, due to it being postponed several times). While in Venice, Fishman limited her studio practice to drawing and watercolor, reveling in small scale work including Japanese style fold out books and note card sized watercolors. When she returned to her studio in New York, the effects of the residency became pronounced in her work. The theatricality that comes from the grandness of opera, the drama of the old masters paintings (Titian was a favorite) imbued her paintings. As put in the 2014 Whitney Biennale: "The melding of order and chaos that she encountered while touring the city's famous blue-green canals and labyrinthine alleyways aligned with the direction her painting has taken since the early 1990s. Artworks that Fishman made during this period reveal her efforts to resolve the two apparently opposing tendencies she has worked through as an abstract painter since the mid-1960s - the hard-edge objectivity of the grid and the gestural subjectivity of expressionism."



Louise Fishman, artist's studio, c. 2015



*Born in 1939 in Philadelphia, Louise Fishman, lived and worked in New York. Fishman's work is in the collections many public institutions, including the National Academy of Art and Design, NY; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburg, PA; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; the Jewish Museum, NY; the Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, NY; the Krannert Art Museum, Champaign, IL; the Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, NH; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA. She was the recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts grants, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, among others.*

*Widely shown for the past five decades, Fishman's first group show was at the National Drawing and Print Exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1961. Her first solo exhibit was at the Philadelphia Art Alliance in 1963. Fishman was included in three Whitney Biennials: 1973, 1987, and 2014 (the last biennial at the Breuer building). In 2016, the Neuberger Museum of Art organized the artist's first retrospective, curated by Helaine Posner and accompanied by a monograph; the retrospective traveled to the Weatherspoon Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2017. In Fishman's hometown of Philadelphia, the Institute of Contemporary Art held a concurrent exhibition of her small-scale work, Paper Louise Tiny Fishman Rock, curated by Ingrid Schaffner. The Krannert Art Museum at the University of Illinois presented an exhibition of Fishman's drawings in 2021.*