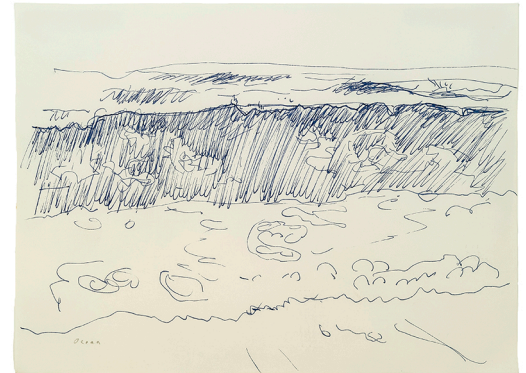


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 30 – December 7, 2015

ROBERT DASH
JANE FREILICHER
FAIRFIELD PORTER
JANE WILSON

perspectives on land, sea and sky



Fairfield Porter, *Ocean*, c. 1972-73, ink on paper, 8 x 11 in

The Drawing Room is pleased to present paintings and works on paper by **Robert Dash, Jane Freilicher, Fairfield Porter** and **Jane Wilson** in an exhibition that highlights four venerated American artists unified by their attraction to the rural panoramas they discovered on Long Island's East End. Works on view range from Fairfield Porter's sketchbook pages of the 1960s and 1970s to intimate and large-scale landscape paintings by Jane Wilson, Jane Freilicher and Robert Dash. Since the late 19th century artists have migrated to the eastern tip of the island, establishing a cultural legacy central to the region's identity. In the mid-20th century, when Abstract Expressionism dominated the New York art world, the painters in this show established an alternative course for artists interested in expanding the realist tradition in work rooted in observation. Strong alliances developed among these painters as they repaired from New York City to the bucolic farmlands and beaches of the Atlantic coast. Here the light, long horizons and distinctly American culture provided a pictorial frankness that was both in sync with and separate from the ethos of the New York School.

Acclaimed for the astute critical voice he shared in art writings for *The Nation* and *Art News*, Fairfield Porter (1907-1975) offered the world not only keen literary discourse but an influential body of paintings and drawings. His preferred subjects included portraits of friends and family, rural landscapes of coastal Maine and Long Island, and understated interior and backyard views of his 1840s colonial home on Southampton's Main Street. Inspired by the French Intimist painters Édouard Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard, Porter's work shared with theirs a muted palette and rigorous pictorial structure. Over time, Porter's mode of representing observed reality became increasingly reductive while reveling in sumptuous brushwork. This characteristic fluidity is also reflected in the ink drawings on view, which capture both the grand and the ordinary. From studies of the sea to a bustling village parking lot, Porter's command of line integrated visual candor, immediacy and compositional finesse.



Jane Freilicher, *Some Trees*, 2007, oil and paper on board, 14 x 17 in

Like her friend and mentor Fairfield Porter, Jane Freilicher's mature work was grounded in realism. Although she had studied with noted art teacher and theorist Hans Hofmann, Freilicher abandoned abstraction early on, directing her attention to still lifes, cityscapes and, after she began spending summers in Water Mill, the area's pastoral marshes and farmland.

In *Some Trees*, 2007, fluid brushstrokes and delicate lines scratched into the surface articulate an inlet where saplings and coastal thickets glisten under a radiant sky. Her fidelity to the subject is characterized by the sparkling lime, celadon and moss greens that suggest the color and light of early spring. For Freilicher, authenticity was paramount, and her evocations of the landscape capture both a dramatic sense of transformation and the intangible poetry of nature.

(over)

After his move to Sagaponack in 1966, the painter, writer and gardener, Robert Dash (1931-2013) embarked on a body of works that reflected his love of the hamlet as it appeared to him from his window, on the broad horizon or along the village streets. In a confluence of memory and immediacy, Dash worked less from direct observation than from his emotional response to the environment. His paintings embraced the conventions of rural life – automobiles, telephone lines and traffic signs – as well as the local vistas that surrounded him. A visionary horticulturalist, Dash also created and presided over Madoo Conservancy, a garden appreciated for lush plantings, romantic vignettes and cultivated overgrowth.

In *Monday Morning (laundry)*, a simple farmhouse anchors the image field mid-ground. Flanked by pines and maple trees, a line of white sheets dips across the yard as it echoes the striated clouds above.



Robert Dash, *Monday Morning (laundry)*, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 60 x 70 in

Singular in her approach to the landscape, Jane Wilson (1924-2015) was distinguished from her contemporaries by the edge between abstraction and realism that she often straddled in luminous, experiential paintings of sea, land and sky. An early abstractionist, it was the influence of Fairfield Porter that urged her, like Freilicher, to return to realism. One of two early paintings on exhibit, *View from Seven Ponds Bridge*, reveals her debt to Porter. Over the course of an oeuvre that spanned six decades, Wilson's graceful brushwork and layered, prismatic color captured the iconic light, wind and weather that animate the East End's big skies and long stretches of countryside.

In *Green Twilight*, mottled clouds bear down on a narrow belt of land. Brooding, ethereal and incandescent, Wilson's painting invokes both the foreboding and the voluptuousness of natural phenomena.



Jane Wilson, *Green Twilight*, 2001, oil on linen, 18 x 18 in

The sky, textured as if woven into deep space, yields to diffuse fields of light and dark as deep space emerges through dappled clouds. Wilson's paintings elicit an experience that is immersive, inviting the viewer to fall inside the picture space as if witnessing the unfolding of a celestial event. Likewise, in her 1963 painting, *Branches*, we are dispatched as much to the wind and fog as to the trees themselves. Defined by the action of Wilson's hand and brush, at the core of her painting is a synthesis of reality and reflection.

www.drawingroom-gallery.com

Gallery Hours: Monday, Friday and Saturday 10-5; Sunday 11-5

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