

## BORTOLAMI

### ***Deborah Remington: Five Decades***

**1 May – 12 June 2021**

**Opening Saturday, 1 May from 11am-6pm**

Bortolami Gallery is pleased to announce a solo show by Deborah Remington (b.1930, d. 2010) featuring paintings and drawings from each of five decades of her practice. It is the most comprehensive exhibition to date by Remington, a reevaluation of an artist whose biomorphic abstractions defied categorization during her lifetime and remain stridently unique today, over a decade since her passing.

Remington began her career in San Francisco, where she studied with artists like Clyfford Still and co-founded the influential 6 Gallery. She was known for thick, gestural oil paintings informed by both her Abstract Expressionist mentors and calligraphy she learned during a stint living and teaching in Japan.

Remington moved to New York City in 1965, where she pioneered a hard-edge abstraction which removed all vestiges of brushstroke, opting instead for lush color gradients and a mechanized uniformity of surface. She painted large, centrifugal shapes outlined in thin bands of brilliant, luminescent color. They recall disparate associations of UFOs, television screens, shields, or coats of arms. Truly, though, they resemble nothing of this world.

In New York Remington became a force to be reckoned with, both critically and commercially, with gallery exhibitions selling out in Paris, New York and San Francisco and several paintings entering museum collections throughout the U.S. and Europe.

Following a mid-career survey in 1983, Remington made a paradigm shift. She returned to expressionistic painting, foregoing hard edges for more organic, botanical abstractions which expand and recede into an indeterminate space. Disillusioned with the vagaries of the art market and a systemic subordination of female artists, she also began to sell work directly from her studio, rejecting gallery representation and exhibiting sparingly with dealers in one-off exhibitions.

From the late 1990s until her death, Remington struggled with cancer, a secret to even her closest of friends. Though illness slowed the quantity of her output, she continued to innovate in the studio. In both paintings and drawings such as her *Beinen* series (1997-2006), Remington re-contextualized the hard-edge motifs from earlier paintings as bodily structures in dissolution; forms break apart and splinter away, a reflection of her own mortality.

*Deborah Remington: Five Decades* features the first public exhibition of *Encounters* (2007), the artist's final painting. In it there are aspects from each era of her career – the gesture of her AbEx beginnings, the palette of her hard-edge period and the calligraphic brushwork of her late works. It is the summation of a life's work rendered in unflinching eloquence.

***Deborah Remington: Five Decades* coincides with *Deborah Remington, Drawings 1963-1983*, a solo show on view from 4 May – 30 July at Craig F. Starr Gallery at 5 East 73<sup>rd</sup> Street in Manhattan.**

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The work of **Deborah Remington** has been widely collected by institutions including the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Centre Pompidou; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Smithsonian Museum of American Art.; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Carnegie Museum of Art; and the Cleveland Museum of Art, among dozens of other museums. During her lifetime Remington exhibited at such prestigious galleries as the Dilexi Gallery in San Francisco, the Bykert Gallery in New York and Galerie Darthea Speyer in Paris. In 1983 a twenty-year retrospective curated by Paul Schimmel opened at the Newport Harbor Art Museum (now the Orange County Museum of Art) in Southern California, traveling to the Oakland Museum of California. Remington was a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship and a Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant.

A new catalog on Deborah Remington is scheduled for release in 2022, spearheaded by The Deborah Remington Trust and Nancy Lim, Assistant Curator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.