

For Immediate Release
January 10, 2018

Inman Gallery is pleased to present

DANA FRANKFORT
there was a stone

January 19 – February 24, 2018

Artist's reception: Friday, January 19, 6–8pm

Inman Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of new paintings by Dana Frankfort, entitled ***there was a stone***. Opening with an artist's reception on Friday, January 19, from 6–8pm, the exhibition will continue through Saturday, February 24, 2018.



Dana Frankfort, *Magical Marker*, 2017
oil on linen over panel, 48 x 48 in

For over two decades, Dana Frankfort has explored the vexing periphery between language and sight by painting words. Rather than laying claim to the paintings, controlling their semiotic pulse, her words serve as the formal armature; they prop up, ventilate, and allow the many layers of paint to breathe. Imperatives, allusions, evocations—the words dissolve into a palimpsest of obscured serifs and stems, into color and form.

The works in ***there was a stone***, Frankfort's first exhibition of new paintings in seven years, are her least legible. As such, they mark a refinement, and a departure. They function as signs and reminders. They point backward, to their inception, and forward, to their being seen by the viewer. Thin layers of oil paint combine to create a dense scrim, a case file of the work's anxious history.

As she paints, Frankfort sands down, creating a fraught tension between the done and the undone. This history is often only visible when viewed aslant; only then do you see the whispered conversation of colors on the surface of the work, the palindrome of layers on the side. It is the thrill of adjacency that charges these works—that excitement of meaning about to enter the room, or having just left.

Magical Marker is boisterous, its billowing forms slashed through with white, as if the carnival has been cancelled, the posters torn down. Above these obfuscating white clouds we see the purple, cursive peaks of the letters. So much painting of words (Lawrence Weiner, Christopher Wool, etc.) falls tangled in the semiotic briar. Here, it's refreshing to see these words as nothing more than remnants of wrist flicks, condensation from the act of writing, of speaking.

Edna Mayer provides a similar trace. The name, which belongs to the painter of a thrift-store painting Frankfort has kept on her wall for twenty years, is near impossible to read. The interstitial has won out; we map the space within and around the letters—a Turneresque cloudburst of scrubbed purples and oranges. The painting recalls a tombstone rubbing.

Some of these paintings, as well as the name of the exhibition, spring from Carlos Drummond de Andrade's "In the Middle of Road." Here it is, translated from the Portuguese by Elizabeth Bishop:

In the middle of the road there was a stone
there was a stone in the middle of the road
there was a stone
in the middle of the road there was a stone.

Never should I forget this event
in the life of my fatigued retinas.
Never should I forget that in the middle of the road
there was a stone
there was a stone in the middle of the road
in the middle of the road there was a stone.



Dana Frankfort, *Edna Mayer*, 2017
oil on canvas over panel, 26 x 30 in

Throughout, Frankfort's paintings tilt on the edge of being; they are both tentative and fixed. And though long in the making, the product of layering and anxious erasure, each appears anew with every viewing. In her work, she achieves an arbitrary predestination. The words themselves are both definitive and happenstance, mainly offering a conceptual substrate Frankfort can then bury with fields of color. The language does not define the palette, nor the other way around, but of course there is going to be some bleed-through. That's just how language works. A word itself is unimportant. What matters is that it allowed Frankfort to begin the painting, to complete it.

Dana Frankfort (b. 1971, Houston, TX) received a BA in Art History from Brandeis University in 1995 and an MFA from Yale University in 1997. She attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, also in 1997. From 1999-2000 Frankfort was an MFAH Core Studio Art Resident. One-person exhibitions include: Southwest School of Art, San Antonio (2018); James Harris Gallery, Seattle, WA (2011); Inman Gallery (2012, 2010, 2007); Sorry We're Closed, Brussels (2008); Bellwether Gallery, New York, NY (2007); and Kantor/Feuer Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2006). Her paintings have been included in the group exhibition *Abstract America: New Painting from the U.S.*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2009-10); and locally in *Learning by Doing: 25 Years of the Core Program*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (2008-09). Frankfort received a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2006. Her paintings are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, Rice University, Houston, TX, St. Edward's University, Austin and The Jewish Museum, New York, NY. Frankfort lives and works in Houston, TX.

SPECIAL GALLERY EVENT: Saturday, February 3, 1pm

Dana Frankfort will lead an informal walkthrough of her exhibition ***there was a stone***.

For more information please contact the gallery at kerry@inmangallery.com