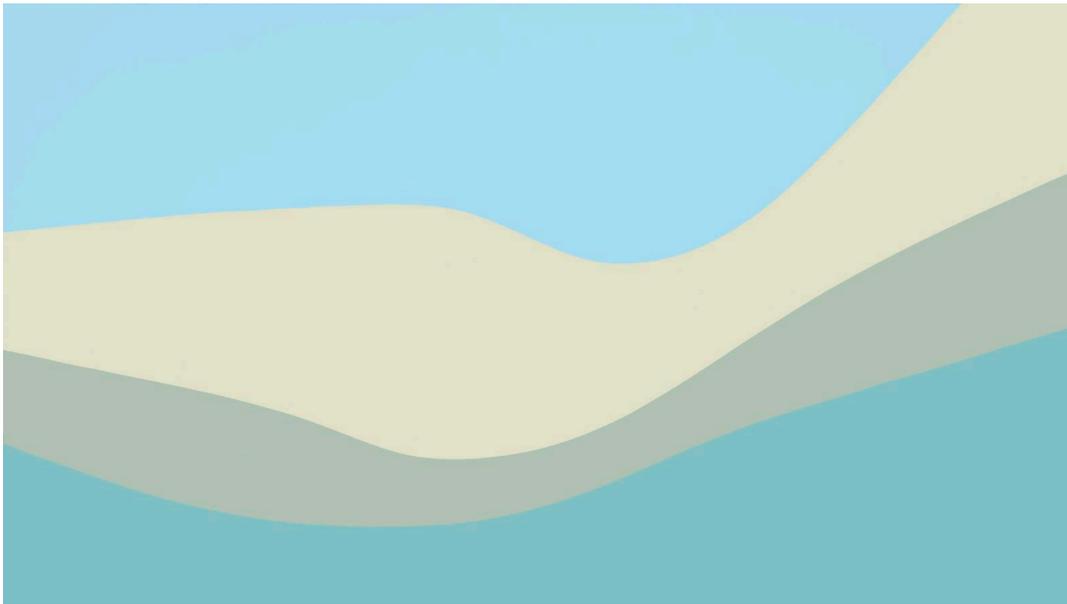


CRISTIN TIERNEY



AMERICAN ARTIST HELEN LUNDEBERG MASTERS THE “CLASSIC ATTITUDE”

Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York, presents “Helen Lundeberg: Classic Attitude,”
an incredible collection of abstract works by one of America’s premier painters.
by **Miss Rosen** Dec 10th, 2016



Artwork: Helen Lundeberg, *Naiad*, 1968. acrylic on canvas. 30 x 54 inches (76.2 x 137.2 cm). ©The Feitelson / Lundeberg Art Foundation

American artist Helen Lundeberg (1908-1999) moved from Chicago to Pasadena, at just four years old. Lundeberg became involved in the Southern California arts scene in the early 1930s, when she and her husband, painter Lorser Feitelson, co-founded Subjective Classicism, which later became known as Post Surrealism, the first focused American response to the famed European movement.

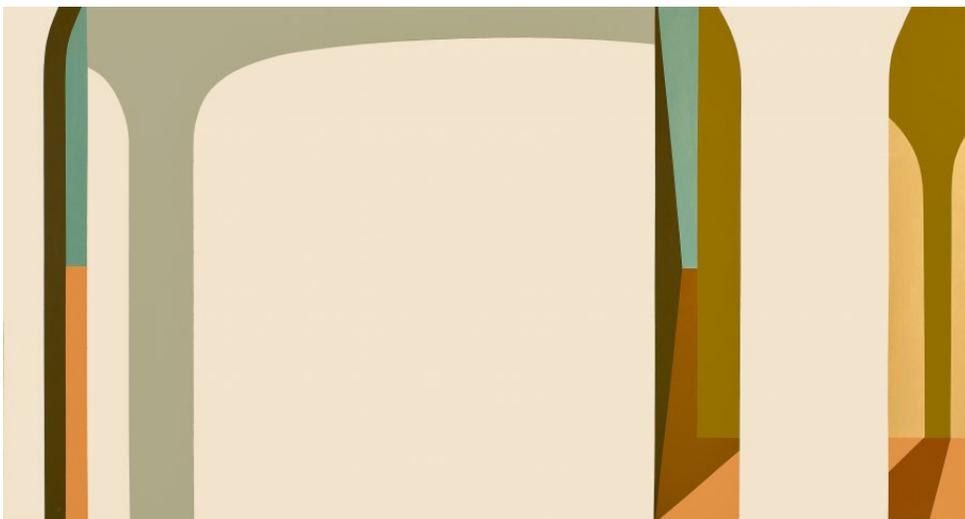
In 1936, Lundeberg became just one of three women artists from the region to make public art for the WPA. She began her painting career as a social realist, creating large-scale murals including a 8 x 241 foot painting titled History of Transportation in Inglewood, before finding herself drawn to geometric abstraction and Hard Edge painting during the 1950s.

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It was here that she began to discover a deeper sensibility that brilliantly balances the material and spiritual realms, using color, form, line, and shape to evoke an ethereal mood and tranquil state of mind, making each painting a poem to the inherent beauty and joys of modern life. The works are not so abstract as to be unrecognizable, but rather become vision of heaven on earth, manifesting the very essence of the world in its purest form.

In celebration, Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York, presents **Helen Lundeberg: Classic Attitude** on view now through December 17, 2016. The works selected for the exhibition are what is needed now: a moment of private reprieve from the ugliness of the world. They offer a tranquil space for meditation, invoking the healing properties of nature, so that we can breathe free once again.



Helen Lundeberg, *Arches 5*, 1962. oil on canvas. 48 x 91 inches (121.9 x 231.1 cm). ©The Feitelson / Lundeberg Art Foundation

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The title of the show a statement Lundeberg wrote for a 1942 exhibition at MoMA: “By classicism I mean, not traditionalism of any sort, but a highly conscious concern with esthetic structure which is the antithesis of intuitive, romantic, or realistic approaches to painting. My aim, realized or not, is to calculate, and reconsider, every element in a painting with regard to its function in the whole organization. That, I believe, is the classic attitude.”

Indeed, her ability to translate three dimensions into two allows us to experience the world as fresh and new as a breeze coming over the sea, rustling gently through palm fronds, as it blows across our cheek. With *Classic Attitude*, Lundeberg absorbs the formal lessons of Henri Matisse and Josef Albers, then adds a South California twist that invokes the great expanse of the Pacific Coast, the majestic landscapes, and elegant architectural vistas were composed of forms remembered—things “imagined rather than ‘seen,’” as she stated later in life.



Helen Lundeberg, *Untitled*, 1962. oil on canvas. 30 x 24 inches (76.2 x 61 cm). ©The Feitelson / Lundeberg Art Foundation

But above all they are premier examples of one of the finest, most noble purposes of art. To quote Vincent van Gogh, “Art is to console those who are broken by life.” The paintings of Helen Lundeberg are delicate, eloquent compositions that stir the soul, soft as a mother’s lullaby, soothing our frayed nerves and reminding us that life is a balancing act between purpose and health. Lundeberg provides a sanctuary into which we may withdraw to take infinite care of ourselves. That, I believe, is the classic attitude.