



BARBARA ROTHENBERG: *FRAGMENTS - NEW WORK ON PAPER*

May 6 - June 12, 2012

Opening reception: Sunday, May 6, 5 – 7PM

Artist Talk: Wednesday, May 23, 7PM, Reception at 6:30

David Rothenberg will speak on his latest book, *Survival of the Beautiful* Tuesday, May 15th, 7PM,
Reception at 6:30 PM

ARC Fine Art is pleased to announce the upcoming solo exhibition, *Fragments: New Work on Paper*, of the work of Barbara Rothenberg. A Westport resident for several decades and a veteran artist and teacher at the Silvermine Guild of Artists, Rothenberg will be represented by nearly thirty works on paper, all fresh to the public's eye. Opening with an artist's reception on Sunday, May 6th from 5-7pm, the exhibition will be on view until June 12th. On May 23rd at 7pm, Rothenberg will present a talk on the show, and on May 15th, David Rothenberg, the artist's son, a writer and musician, will talk about his latest book, *Survival of the Beautiful*.

The exhibition includes three distinct bodies of work, all of which are on and of paper. Neatly coinciding with the centennial celebration of collage in America, the first grouping includes a series of gem-like collages on paper, some of which utilize sandpaper as their main vehicle of expression. Intimate in scale and modernist in tone, these works sing with a subtlety of color and a harmony of shape and line, evoking the early twentieth century collages of Rothenberg's muse, Kurt Schwitters.

The recipient of an Indo-American Fulbright Fellowship, Rothenberg traveled to India to study the melding of music and art through the ragamala, a traditional form of Indian miniature painting dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries. What impressed the artist most about Indian art was its exuberant use of color and miniature scale. In addition to using sandpaper for its wonderfully textured surface, Rothenberg also employs Japanese mulberry paper as well as handmade Indian and Nepalese papers for their subtle surface variations.

The second group of work includes a series of larger collages, most measuring 22 x 30 inches, as well as a group of four slightly smaller vertical pieces titled Portals I-IV. This collection, which incorporates her experiments with photography and photo transfers, reflects a greater inspiration from the natural world rather than her more formalist concerns for form, line, color and composition. With these works the flora and fauna from outside Rothenberg's studio, which has always provided a source of encouragement for the artist, presents itself to the viewer. Ferns, fiddleheads, and seedpods apparent in the larger collages also figure prominently in *Milkweed*, a triptych belonging to the third group of works in the show.

The final body of work included in *Fragments* represents a significant departure from Rothenberg's collages. These multi-paneled pieces are oils on paper and reveal a bolder and more spontaneous approach. *Milkweed* continues the fluid, calligraphic motion of such collages as *Scatter* and *Winter into Spring*; however, its overall scale and looser brushwork set it apart. Rothenberg goes one step further towards bold, abstract expression in *Mutation*, a suite of six 40 x 26 inch sheets conceived in a dramatic palette of black, grey, red, and pink with accents of white. The strong hues of black

and red offer a glimpse into Rothenberg's grave reality, the recent death of her husband of 40 years and her battle with ovarian cancer.

ARC Fine Art is located at 3113 Bronson Road in Fairfield, CT and is open by appointment. Further inquiries, please contact Adrienne Ruger Conzelman at 203 895 9595.