

NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL TO PRESENT FRANCES BARTH: PAINTINGS,
OPENING MAY 18 AT 6.30PM

The New York Studio School will present “Frances Barth: Paintings” May 18 to July 1, 2006. There will be a reception for the artist on Thursday, May 18 at 6.30-8.30pm.

A selection of works from 2001-2006 includes several paintings that were part of Barth’s exhibition last summer at Dartmouth College where she had been Artist-in-Residence. The exhibition catalogue from that show, with an essay by Barbara O’Brien, will be available.

Frances Barth’s paintings inhabit an idiosyncratic space between landscape, abstraction, and mapping. They often take geology as their starting point, or organizing principle: her work is inhabited by a sense of time and space being bigger than the perceiver can grasp. This explains the highly accentuated horizontality of her formats: “fl-std” (2001) is the most extreme example of this in the present show, at 10 inches high by 10 feet wide.

Radically contrastive modes of perspective are often deployed within the same composition: In “Putnam” (2003), for example, a painting that is 17 inches by 7 feet, there is a flat, schematic, groundplan-like arrangement of lines sharing a plane with an isometric, illustrational rendering of what looks like a seismic plate, with a receding vista beyond with a distant horizon line. Lines and areas of color alike are delivered with clean, unexpressive, precise modulation.

Barth understands her project in terms of representation of phenomena beyond the individual’s grasp. “The idea for the painting is based on the premise that something that was there is no longer there. I make a fault or make signs for sedimentation. I use a stencil so that a line feels more like an artificial line than a hard, drawn line.”

Since 2004, Frances Barth has been Director at the Mount Royal School of Art, Maryland Institute, Baltimore. Previously she was Professor of Painting at Yale from 1986-2004, and has also taught at Syracuse, Sarah Lawrence, Bennington, and Princeton. Born in New York City, she attended Hunter College as well as studying dance with Yvonne Rainer, performing with Rainer and Joan Jonas. She was selected for the 1972 Whitney Annual, and subsequently was the subject of over two dozen solo exhibitions at galleries and cultural institutions, including several shows each at Susan Caldwell Gallery, Tomoko Liguori Gallery, and Donahue/Sosinski Fine Art, all in New

York City. Numerous awards and grants include National Endowment for the Arts grants in 1974 and 1982; the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship in 1977; the Joan Mitchell Award in 1995; and purchase awards of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1999 and 2004. Her work is represented in the collections of the Whitney Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts, and the Tucson Museum of Art.