

LORSER FEITELSON: A RETROSPECTIVE

November 1 through December 31, 1988

Los Angeles's current cultural vibrancy is rooted in the life of **Lorser Feitelson** (1898-1978). From the time he arrived in Southern California in 1927 until his death in 1978, Feitelson served as a galvanizing leader of the Los Angeles arts community. He inspired a generation of young artists, laying the groundwork with artist wife Helen Lundeberg for L.A.'s emergence onto the national art scene in the 1930's and the international art scene in the 1960's. He introduced Angelenos to modern art by showcasing the works of Klee and Braque in his Hollywood art gallery in the 1930's and through his NBC television show, "Feitelson on Art" (1957-1963). Feitelson was a significant artist, contributing to art history by pioneering two distinct art movements: Post-Surrealism and California Hard Edge.

In 1934, Feitelson founded the Post-Surrealist movement with Helen Lundeberg. They challenged the excessive, uncontrolled imagery of the Surrealists, preferring to create art according to an intellectual and aesthetic plan. Feitelson's paintings from this period contain rich psychoanalytic imagery and provide visual paths to navigate.

In the mid-40s, the artist's work evolved from Post-Surrealism toward anthropomorphic abstractions. Though perspective is still present, Feitelson simplifies the otherworldly figuration in *Dancers – Magical Forms* (1945). The figures are ghostly and thin, vague illusions of the familiar – a bridge between post-surrealism and further abstraction. In *Figure Evolving into Magical Forms* (1946),



Lorser Feitelson 1898-1978
Figure Evolving into Magical Forms Ink 1946
8 1/2 x 11 inches (21.6 x 27.9cm)

Feitelson carries that abstraction through progressively simplified forms. As the forms move from left to right., the images evolve from abstracted anthropomorphic forms to total hardedge abstraction and "Magical Space Forms".

Thirty years later, the forms assume a radically different appearance in *Magical Form* (1976). They are reduced to line and color; references to perspective, human or animal shapes are gone. The flat colorforms relate to Feitelson's contribution to the California Hard Edge/ Abstract Classicism movement

Feitelson died the year our gallery opened. Two years later, wife Helen Lundeberg sought our help in furthering her husband's legacy. Featured in ten solo exhibitions at our gallery, Feitelson continues to teach and inspire us.



Lorser Feitelson 1898-1978
Magical Form Acrylic on canvas 1976
24 x 20 inches (61.0 x 50.8cm)



Lorser Feitelson 1898-1978
Dancers - Magical Forms Oil on canvas 1945
36 x 40 inches (91.5 x 101.6cm)