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Exhibition of works depicting flora and fauna by Nancy Graves on view at Mitchell-Innes & Nash



NEW YORK, NY.- Mitchell-Innes & Nash announced its representation of the work of Nancy Graves through The Nancy Graves Foundation. The gallery's first Graves exhibition focuses on works depicting flora and fauna in media ranging from gouache and watercolor on paper, to painting, to bronze polychromed sculpture. The show presents work from the 1970s to the 1990s, and is on view from May 20 through June 13, 2014.

Titled Nancy Graves, the exhibition is inspired by both the visual representation of natural phenomena and the formal values of abstract art that are widely present in Graves' work. In the early 1970s, Graves began making detailed gouache works on paper of animals such as fish, snakes, and frogs, taking a scientific approach to representation. Among the works included in the exhibition at Mitchell-Innes & Nash are *The Metamorphosis of the Frog* (1971) and *Four Snakes* (1971). Also on view is *Photographs of a Jumping Frog at 1/40 Second* (1971), a drawing influenced by Eadweard Muybridge's motion photography, showing the successive movement of a frog leaping. In the 1980s, Graves' portrayal of

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nature and animals took on more abstract form, with watercolor works on paper such as *Motion of Caterpillars* (1988) and *Tragedy Among Butterflies* (1988). Also included in the exhibition are *Swen* (1983) and *Uplift* (1986), sculptures that are painted with colorful patinas that reflect the brilliant tones of her paintings, watercolors and prints, and were directly connected to the real world by the found objects and casts of natural and man-made forms.

Nancy Graves (1939 – 1995) was an American artist working across a variety of mediums, including sculpture, painting, print-making, and film. Her personal aesthetic emerged in the later 1960s in the form of realistic life-size sculptures of camels. These works were associated with her childhood memories of taxidermy animals in the Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and in the idioms of Abstract Expressionism taught at the Yale University School of Art where she was a student in the early 1960s.

Transposing concepts from one medium to another, she continuously infused her work with new and innovative ideas. The examination of the interrelationships of line and form produced by the movements of a caravan of closely grouped camels in Graves's film *Izy Boukir*, made in Morocco in 1970, informed her sculpture of the period. Representations of natural phenomena like weather maps, and the moon maps made by NASA, inspired her paintings, drawings and prints of the early 70s. The outlines of her maps, reduced to linear abstractions in flat works of the later 70s, were translated into three-dimensional drawings in space in Graves's sculpture of the 1980s. The artist's later work also included brightly colored gouache and watercolor works on paper, bronze and polychrome sculptures.

Nancy Graves's work is included in many public collections, notably those of The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Art Institute of Chicago; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; and the Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, among others.

The Nancy Graves Foundation was established in 1996 through a provision of the artist's Last Will and Testament to give grants to individual artists and to maintain an archive of her life and work and organize exhibitions of her art.