

# Mary Frank

## *The Near Far—Portraits and Paintings*

JANUARY 9 - FEBRUARY 9, 2008

RECEPTION FOR THE ARTIST: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9 FROM 6 - 7:30 PM



Mary Frank, installation of drawings at DC Moore Gallery

Mary Frank is drawn to the concept, most often expressed in Asian thought, of events, time, and understanding that is simultaneously both near and far. This concept explains the trajectory of much of the current work in this new exhibition. This recent body of work encompasses both large oil and small encaustic paintings as well as a group of more than fifty portrait drawings - some started years earlier and many drawn within the last five years. Mary describes these as “portraits of people I have known, of people I have imagined, and portraits of portraits from the past.”

Mary treats the landscape of the face in similar ways to the landscapes of the caves, crevices, and vistas that she finds in the natural world—adding elements of other objects, shapes and individuals—taking her work out of literal description and expressing a viewpoint that is both close and intimate and expressive of larger realities. She has described the color that emerges in her paintings as “...dredged from within. It is the color of memory.” Running throughout Mary’s work is a deep emotional resonance.

As Linda Nochlin has observed:

Mary Frank reveals herself...to be the visual poet of the inner life, evoking the pain and the mystery of our human embeddedness in the natural world. She is not afraid of the large subjects, nor is she reluctant to deploy her extraordinary skills as a creator of memorable imagery in the service of our darkest memories: death, chaos, loss, fragmentation. Nor does she trivialize tragedy and terror by suggesting some easy redemptive value to be obtained from their contemplation. Rather, the artist confronts this darkness of the spirit and wrestles it into vivid pictorial expression.

Many of the works in this exhibition, whether paintings or drawings, include mixed media elements and collage. Over the course of her career, Mary Frank has worked with sculpture, paintings, drawing, printmaking and encaustic, suggesting that her primary loyalty is not to a particular way of working or to any medium, but rather to the power of direct expression and to the act of creation itself. As has previously been the case with her sculpture, this new body of work shows her eagerness to use the intuitions and improvisations that arise naturally during the creative process.

Mary Frank was born in London, England in 1933. She has been the subject of numerous solo museum and gallery exhibitions, including shows at the Brooklyn Museum, the DeCordova Museum, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, the Everson Museum of Art, Marsh Art Gallery at the University of Richmond, and the Neuberger Museum. Her work is in the permanent collections of the above institutions and other museums including: the Art Institute of Chicago, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Museum of Modern Art, the National Museum of American Art, the Newark Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and Yale University Art Gallery.

A major monograph on Mary Frank by Hayden Herrera was published in 1990. Two years later Mary collaborated with author Peter Matthiessen on the book *Shadows of Africa*. She later collaborated with poet Terry Tempest Williams on the book *Desert Quartet, An Erotic Landscape*, and with Jonathan Cott on *Skies in Blossom: The Nature Poetry of Emily Dickinson*. In 2000 Linda Nochlin wrote the book *Encounters*, a survey of Mary's paintings.

This exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue with an essay by David Rosand, Meyer Shapiro Professor of Art History at Columbia University and author of numerous publications including *Robert Motherwell on Paper, Myths of Venice: the Figuration of a State* and *Drawing Acts, Studies in Graphic Expression, Representation and The Invention of Painting in America*.

Mary Frank will discuss her work in a gallery talk on Saturday, January 26 at 4pm. The talk is open to the public and is free of charge.

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DC Moore Gallery specializes in twentieth-century and contemporary art. The gallery is located on the eighth floor of 724 Fifth Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets and is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 to 5:30. Press viewings can be arranged prior to the exhibition.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, FOR PHOTOGRAPHS, OR TO ARRANGE A VIEWING,  
PLEASE CALL SANDRA PACI AT 212-247-2111**