

Guild Hall

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press-approved photos and captions:

Ross Bleckner <https://adobe.ly/4rc0inM>

Eric Freeman <https://adobe.ly/4rKNJzH>

Guild Hall Announces Two Major Summer Exhibitions featuring the Works of Ross Bleckner and Eric Freeman



Ross Bleckner, *Untitled*, 1994. Oil on canvas, 10 x 8 inches. Image courtesy of the artist.

June 17, 2026 — East Hampton, NY: Guild Hall (158 Main Street, East Hampton, NY) proudly announces two solo exhibitions by Ross Bleckner, a major figure in American painting, and the late painter Eric Freeman, who shared a close personal and artistic relationship and a commitment to luminosity and abstraction. The two exhibitions open concurrently in celebration of the Guild Hall Summer Gala on Friday, August 7, uniting the visual arts and Guild Hall's premier social event in a shared moment of creative celebration.

"Few artists explore the intersections of memory, loss, beauty, and hope with the depth and sensitivity of Ross Bleckner, and I cannot express how excited I am to bring this truly special presentation to Guild Hall. Eric Freeman's work invites us to slow down and consider how color, light, and form shape our experience of space," said Melanie Crader, museum director and curator of visual arts. "Together, Bleckner and Freeman reveal the power of two singular artistic voices in dialogue, distinct in approach yet complementary."

ROSS BLECKNER: NEVER THE LESS
AUGUST 9 – OCTOBER 25, 2026

Marks Family North Gallery and Tito Spiga Exhibition Space

Ross Bleckner emerged as a leading artist in New York during the AIDS crisis of the 1980s, creating paintings that explore change, loss, memory, and the human body. A central figure in the decade's revival of painting, he developed a practice that merges psychological, social, and political themes within a strong conceptual framework. In 1995, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York presented a mid-career retrospective of his work, underscoring his importance in contemporary art.

ROSS BLECKNER: NEVER THE LESS will highlight a lesser-known part of Bleckner's process, offering new insight into a prolific and accomplished painter. Bleckner begins by making his own paint and testing it on black paper, where the experimental brushwork often produces striking results. From there, he creates a series of small canvases that gradually increase in scale, leading to the large paintings for which he is best known.

Over decades, this approach has yielded over thousands of works. Guild Hall presents a selection of nearly 200 of these rarely seen studies alongside major large-scale paintings. While rooted in process, the smaller works stand powerfully on their own. Together, they reveal the breadth of Bleckner's artistic vision, offering an expansive view of his practice across time—an illustrated timeline through painting.

ROSS BLECKNER: NEVER THE LESS is curated by Melanie Crader, museum director and curator of visual arts.

Principal Sponsors: Caroline and Robert Taubman - A. Alfred Taubman Foundation

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Running concurrently, Madoo Conservancy presents *Ross Bleckner: Works on Paper*. The exhibition opens August 6 with a reception for the artist on Sunday, August 9 at Madoo Conservancy, 618 Sagg Main Street, Sagaponack, NY.

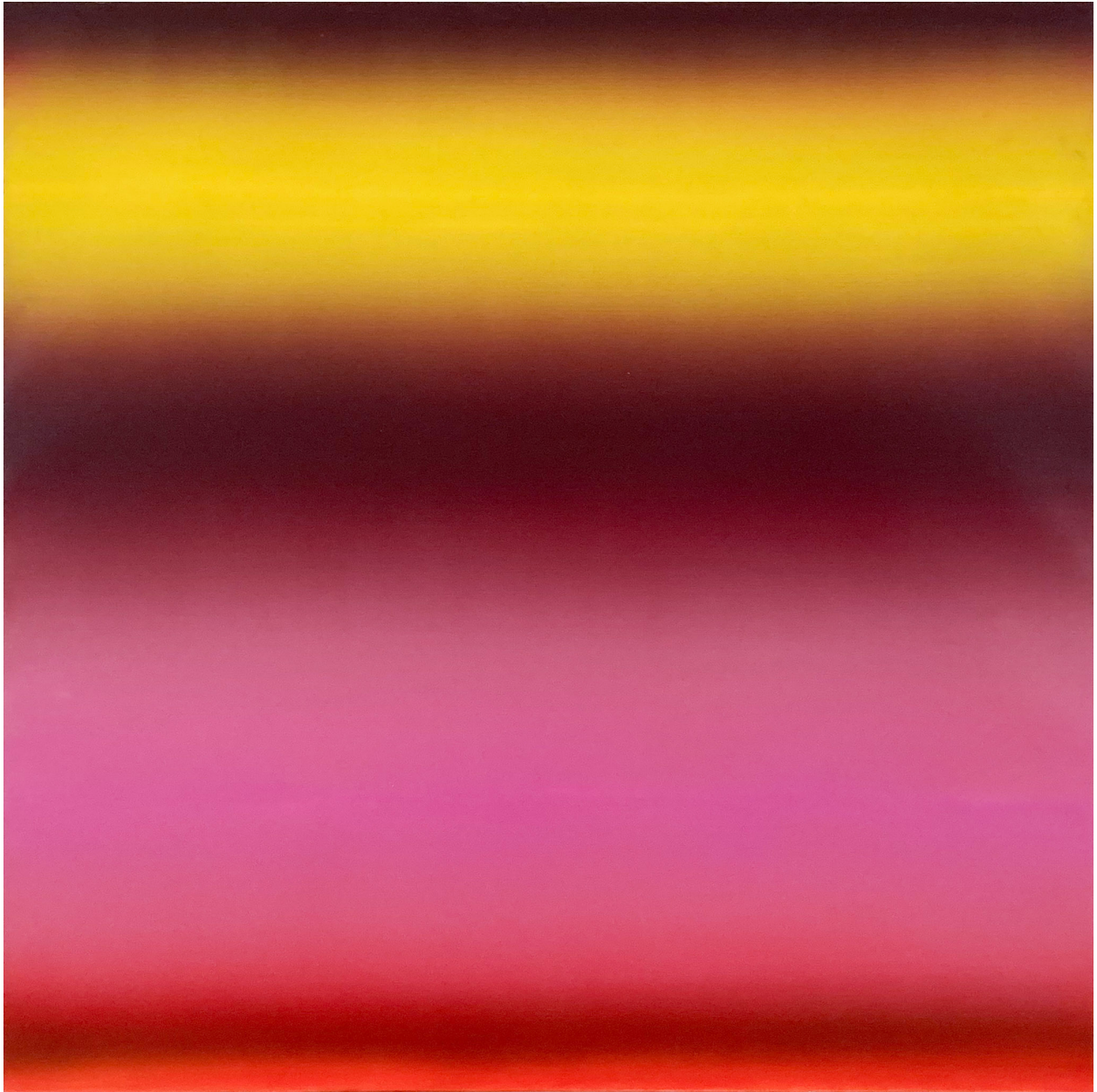
RELATED PROGRAM

IN CONVERSATION: ROSS BLECKNER & DAVID SALLE

The program is supported in part by the Robert Lehman Foundation

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 7:30 PM

Join artists Ross Bleckner and David Salle for a conversation at Guild Hall between two artists who first met at CalArts in the early 1970s.



Eric Freeman, *Beach Lane*, 2004. Oil on linen, 72 x 72 inches. Private Collection.

ERIC FREEMAN: THE VOLUME OF COLOR

AUGUST 9 – OCTOBER 25, 2026

Marks Family Gallery South

This exhibition marks the first major institutional solo presentation of the work of the late artist Eric Freeman (1970–2021) on the East End, where the artist lived and worked for many years. Freeman's radiant abstractions transform color into planes of light and pigment that construct space rather than merely depict it. Layers of luminous varnish and saturated tone generate a visual depth that feels structural—at times almost architectural—drawing viewers into fields of color defined by both intensity and calm.

Eric Freeman: The Volume of Color brings together a selection of paintings alongside a small group of furniture pieces designed by Freeman, revealing a practice shaped by the productive tension between control and emotion, precision and presence. His work enters into quiet dialogue with the legacies of Josef Albers, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Mark Rothko, and James Turrell. Freeman's subtly modulated surfaces, sleek yet unmistakably hand-painted, balance intellectual rigor with sensory immediacy, collapsing distinctions between painting, object, and environment.

Presented following the artist's death in 2021, the exhibition honors Freeman's sustained contribution to contemporary abstraction and affirms his lasting connection to the East End's artistic landscape, where his work quietly expanded the possibilities of color, light, and spatial experience.

Eric Freeman: The Volume of Color is co-curated by artist Nathan Dilworth and Guild Hall Museum Director and Curator of Visual Arts, Melanie Crader.

Lead Sponsors: Christina and Alan MacDonald

Additional Support: Steve and Susan Pesner and Peace, in memory of Michèle Pesner, whose entire life was devoted to all aspects of culture, and David Schwarz and Brian Meola

A Guild Hall members-only preview will be held Saturday, August 8th from 12-5 PM. To join Guild Hall please visit [HERE](#) for further details. The exhibition will open to the public on Sunday, August 9.

Galleries are open Thursday to Sunday, 12-5 PM (Wednesday to Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day), and museum admission is \$12/\$10 for Seniors 65+, and Free for Guild Hall members, children, and students.

Visit GuildHall.org for more details on the exhibitions as well as related programs.

Visual Arts programs are supported by Principal Sponsors Lucio and Joan Noto, with additional support provided by The Giuppy Nantista Fund, The Hoie Fund, The Melville Straus Family Endowment, The Michael Lynne Museum Endowment, and Vital Projects Fund.

Additional support provided by Friends of the Museum: Danielle Mandelbaum Anderman, Shari and Jeff Aronson, The Artist Profile Archive, William L. Bernhard, Elizabeth Gordon and Woody Heller, The Hayden Family Foundation, Robert Longo and Sophie Chahinian, Elin and Michael Nierenberg, Onna House, Lori and John Reinsberg, Jeff and Audrey Spiegel, Hillary and Jeff Suchman, Jane Wesman and Don Savelson, and Yurman Family Foundation.

ABOUT GUILD HALL

Guild Hall is the cultural heart of the East End: a museum, performing arts, and education center, founded in 1931. We invite everyone to experience the endless possibilities of the arts: to open minds to what art can be; inspire creativity and conversation; and have fun.

Guild Hall has served four generations and introduced audiences to the most storied artists and performers of our time. As we approach our centennial, we have completed a state-of-the-art renovation to match the caliber of our artistry for twenty-first-century audiences. The facility-wide Capital Improvements Project & Campaign includes top-of-the-line physical and technological enhancements to better deliver on our mission as an artist-driven, interdisciplinary institution.

For more information, visit www.guildhall.org or follow Guild Hall on Instagram at [@GUILD_HALL](#) and [Facebook](#).