

FRANKLIN WILLIAMS: 1963-73

September 17 – November 4, 2017

Parker Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of early works by Franklin Williams, made between 1963 and 1973. *Franklin Williams: 1963-73* will be on view September 17th through November 4th, 2017. Please join us for an opening reception on Sunday, September 17th from 3–5pm.

The value of handicraft was paramount in the Williams household, where Franklin's grandmother and mother made everything from quilts to hand-painted wallpaper, while his Uncle George carved figures out of vegetables, among other creative pursuits. Franklin learned to sew and crochet at an early age; skills that he would continue to use throughout his artistic practice. When dyslexia prevented him from learning to read and write until adulthood, his mother encouraged his artistic pursuits by transforming their basement apartment into an art studio. Williams attended California College of Arts and Crafts in Oakland, where he received a BFA in 1964 and an MFA in 1966. Williams was implored by Fred Martin to begin teaching at the San Francisco Art Institute, assuring the reluctant young artist wary of his competence, "Your gift is what counts." At the Art Institute, Williams taught alongside Joan Brown, Bruce Conner, Jay DeFeo and Bruce Nauman. Williams was included in the landmark 1967 *Funk* exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum, and Whitney Museum Sculpture and Painting Annuals in 1967 & 1968.

Franklin Williams: 1963-73 will focus on the early part of Williams' career, from his formative student years through the development of his mature style. Most of the works in the exhibition have never been seen outside of the studio. They include sewn canvas sculptures stuffed with cotton batting and surfaces covered in painted dots and knotted yarn; small, contorted canvases on the brink of bursting; bulging box-like constructions sprouting appendages; and a suite of elegant organic abstractions composed of cut, folded and collaged paper. The exhibition will be accompanied by a limited edition fully-illustrated catalogue, including reproductions of early exhibition announcements and an essay by writer and curator Eli Diner.

Franklin Williams (b. 1940 in Ogden, UT, lives and works in Petaluma, CA). Select solo exhibitions include *Eye Fruit: The Art of Franklin Williams*, Sonoma County Art Museum, Santa Rosa, CA (2017), Nora Eccles Harrison Museum of Art, Logan, UT (1997), Braunstein Gallery, San Francisco, CA (1971-89), Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City, UT (1984), *Franklin Williams Paintings & Constructions*, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA (1983), Galerie B, Paris, France (1975), Gallery Marc, Washington, D.C. (1972), Phyllis B. Kind Gallery, Chicago, IL (1969), Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA (1968), Dilexi Gallery, San Francisco, CA (1967), Richmond Art Center, Richmond, CA (1966), and New Mission Gallery, San Francisco, CA (1964).