

A VISUAL EPILOGUE: LINDA RIDGWAY & HARRY GEFFERT

Saturday, September 15, 2018 - Saturday, February 23, 2019

The Grace Museum - Main Gallery 102

Cypress Street, Abilene, Texas 79601



Linda Ridgway by Teresa Rafidi

VISUAL EPILOGUE: LINDA RIDGWAY and HARRY GEFFERT will be the first and last, two person exhibition of works on paper and sculpture by two of the most prolific and widely- recognized contemporary artists who worked together in life and in the studio for decades. The original concept for the exhibition was transformed by the November 2017, tragic, sudden death of Harry Geffert. In time, Linda Ridgway, known personal and poetic visual dialogues, graciously suggested a new concept and title for the exhibition, A Visual Epilogue, referencing the literary term for a short final chapter at the end of a literary work detailing the fate of the main characters. The result is a selection of Geffert's sculpture paired with Ridgway's recent monoprint- drawings and sculpture curated to celebrate Geffert's and Ridgway's individual and personal journeys as artists and life partners.



Linda Ridgway, *Jeune Danseur*, 2015, monotype with graphite on paper, collection of The Grace Museum, gift of Collector's Circle 2016.

When Ridgway decided to work in bronze, she turned to Harry Geffert and his famous Green Mountain foundry and studio in Crowley, Texas to learn the art of bronze casting. Harry Geffert's mastery of both lost-wax and direct casting is evident throughout his over fifty-year career as a sculptor; a career that included numerous solo museum exhibitions, an NEA grant, and a Legend Award from the Dallas Visual Art Center. Geffert also established the sculpture department at Texas Christian University and fostered many aspiring artists there through 27 years of teaching. In the 1980's Geffert left academia and started his own foundry where he produced impeccable

bronze castings for artists Joseph Havel, James Surls, Vernon Fisher, Frances Bagley, Ken Little, Clyde Connell, Ridgway and many other well-known sculptors. For years, Geffert ran his foundry at the service of other artist clients but he never stopped making his own work. Geffert taught Linda Ridgway how to make bronze castings from delicate things like lace and tiny tree branches and their collaborative efforts have become legendary.

Both artists have exhibited widely and have inspired generations of artists as mentors and teachers. Ridgway was in Abilene in May to support former student Shawn Smith's success at his exhibition opening at The Grace. Her work has been exhibited throughout the U.S. and in France and Switzerland, and is held in museum and public collections throughout the US including The Grace Museum. Ridgway received a B.F.A. from the Louisville School of Art and an M.F.A. from Tulane University. Although educated as a printmaker, Ridgway continues to experiment with the limits of various media in combination to create an impressive body of work that is autobiographical, poignant, poetic and profound in simplicity. Memory and poetry are interlaced by direct casting of fragile vines and roses and drawing-enhanced monoprints of graphite dusted aprons and crocheted keepsakes.

Although personal in content, the exhibition can also be experienced as a meditation on the universal significance of close personal relationships, cherished memories, valued mentors, artistic expression, love and loss.