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## GEMINI G.E.L. AT JONI MOISANT WEYL

### Sam Francis

Born:

San Mateo, California, 1923

Sam Francis received his B.A. (1949) and M.A. (1950) from the University of California. He then moved to Paris where he launched his artistic career. Francis' earliest works were figurative (at times influenced by surrealism) but his attention to an inner life led him to set aside figuration for the fluid, abstract style that he continued to pursue until his death in 1994.

Francis was a voracious reader of both Eastern and Western literature and philosophy, and the evocative power of poetry is a constant resource and inspiration. He has visited and resided in Japan several times since 1957. Francis, profoundly influenced by the quality of light in his environs, settled in Santa Monica (1962) largely due to the sharp, bright California light. His early Paris paintings reveal his response to that city's gray daylight.

The spirit that Francis brought to collaborations is evident in his graphic work, primarily lithography, although he has worked in screenprinting, aquatint, etching and monotype. His commitment to printmaking was revealed in 1970 when he set up his own printmaking studio, The Litho Shop, Inc. There he worked closely with lithographer George Page. In 1982 Francis expanded the shop's capabilities and hired Jacob Samuel to print etchings. Francis made his first lithographs in 1959. He was artist-in-residence at the Tamarind Lithography Workshop (1963 and 1969) and worked on several occasions with Garner Tullis at San Francisco's Experimental Printmaking Workshop. His association with Gemini dates from 1971.

Francis' first one man exhibition was in Paris in 1952. Retrospectives of his work have been organized by Houston's Museum of Fine Arts (1967), the Kunsthalle in Basel (1968), and the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo (1972). Francis has also had major shows at Tokyo's Idemitsu Art Gallery (1974), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1980), and the Hong Kong Art Centre (1980-81). Francis passed away in 1994 at the age of 71.