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Danielle Frankenthal's *Chaos Contained* opens at Wade Wilson Art

(HOUSTON, September 2011; source: Juice Consulting LLC) – Wade Wilson Art is pleased to announce an exhibit of works by **Danielle Frankenthal** which she titles, ***Chaos Contained***. The exhibit opens with a **preview for the artist 6-8 p.m., Friday, September 30** and will remain on view through **October 29, 2011**. A **general opening** will be held along with the other galleries of the 4411 building from **6-8 p.m. on Friday, October 14, 2011**. Wade Wilson Art is located at 4411 Montrose Blvd. Suite 200, Houston, Texas, 77006.

Ten years have transpired since American artist Danielle Frankenthal watched with horror the demise of the World Trade Center towers from her studio window. She channeled her dismay into creative energies which resulted in a haunting and mysterious body of work that launched her on a journey which has taken her literally and spiritually from ashes to light.

An underlying tension parallels the paintings' exquisite luminosity where Frankenthal balances the use of light and color. Philosophically, mark-making in Frankenthal's works embraces tenets of the Concrete Painting movement yet she carefully articulates those tenets in her own particular vocabulary.

In her 2009 exhibit at Wade Wilson Art, titled "Five Tone Poems," the artist drew her inspiration from Franz Litz's use of the term "tone Poem" where he describes "a musical form which, while referring to something outside of itself (a narrative theme or an experience), used no language..." Frankenthal states, "If, by definition, unsung music is abstract, then we might say that such music evokes rather than tells. When I began doing these serial works, I thought of both poetry and music...their linear structure in which marks and colors unfold harmoniously, refer, continue, and echo without being continuous. To some, the great time for abstract painting ended in the 1960s. For me, this quasi-narrative form takes it further. In a world where languages compete, perhaps the Tone Poem's luminous language can sing to all."

From the time Frankenthal began her exploration of multi-panel resin paintings, a dynamic transformation has occurred in the paintings continues as daylight moves from dawn to dusk and then occurs again as night falls and artificial light illuminates the space that houses her work and they remain in motions as light changes during the time continuum. Even after dark, the shadows play though perhaps with a bit less motion.

The artist makes marks and strokes, which then live on a transparent surface of acrylic resin panel. She began the journey painting on one side of an acrylic resin panel (acrylite), which she affixed to a plexi-glass mirror so that light reflected back on itself through the paint. Since then, the work has evolved to include two or multiple resin panels, which Frankenthal separates with space between in order to create the "painting." The artist devised an unobtrusive structure that virtually disappears allowing the piece to "float," coming off the wall an inch or so. The result is iconic - an object near a wall that invites us to look and observe.

Light shines on to the surface of the painting. It shines through the painting and shines behind the painting creating shadows of the painterly marks and strokes against the wall. As daylight passes, one's perception of the painting changes as well. This aspect, while unique to Frankenthal's work, finds its roots in the tenets of early Modernism when Bauhaus architect Walter Gropius defined the first glass-surfaced buildings during the 1920s. Examining those buildings, you could see surface of the glass, you could see through it, and you could see the structure behind and supporting the glass surface. This, said Gropius, gave the building a sense of "simultaneity." In theory and in practice, Gropius' statement of simultaneity mimics the ideas that served as the basis for Cubism where both the front and side of a face, for example, were simultaneously visible. Both Picasso and Braque dialogued about this very idea thoroughly during their involvement with Cubism.

The philosophical and aesthetic basis for Cubism and for much of the Bauhaus theories also influence Frankenthal's paintings. The great scholar and critic, Donald Kuspit, writes in his essay on Frankenthal's works titled, "Isolated in the Medium: Danielle Frankenthal Paintings":

"There is a profound sense of spiritual conviction in Frankenthal's abstract paintings: they track a process of self-transformation that has been regarded as spiritual since human beings first discovered they had selves as bodies. It involves a revolutionary reorganization of consciousness of self-climaxing in an experience of pure consciousness - a different kind of 'selflessness.'"

The philosopher William James once said that religion is what we do with our solitude and Frankenthal has turned her solitude into the religion of pure art. Moving from opaqueness to transparency, and from painterly density to linear spontaneity, Frankenthal transforms a finite surface into an infinite horizon. More particularly, she begins with a tightly woven matrix of gestures, each a sort of concentrated burst of energy impinging on the other through a less claustrophobic field of broadly brushed gestures to an open field of expansive

gestures clearly differentiated from each other however magnetically associated. The surface has changed, but the power remains - only now it seems joyous rather than morbid. (Kuspit, Wade Wilson Art, 2008, 6)

With the advent of her most recent body of work in which the artist revisits some of the ideas that marked her earliest 9/11 paintings of color/density where line and gesture merge, Frankenthal, states, "I call the reconsideration of my 9/11 oeuvre 'Chaos Contained.'" She continues, "The pieces are now three layers of painted acrylite and have a visual interior in which color and light move through gestural marks. The last decade has made it clear that destruction does not create peace...What shall we make of that? Let us contain the embers and light a new creative fire to illuminate the darkness and despair."

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For additional information, please visit our website at www.wadewilsonart.com or contact Wade Wilson Art Associate Director Ken General at 713 521 2977.

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