

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Anne Truitt: Waterleaf

February 13 to April 18, 2026

Opening: Thursday, February 12, 6:00 to 8:00 PM

Matthew Marks is pleased to announce **Anne Truitt: Waterleaf**, the next exhibition in his gallery at 523 West 24th Street. The exhibition includes a series of twelve paintings on handmade paper entitled *Waterleaf* that will be exhibited for the first time, along with four sculptures made between 1963 and 2003.

Truitt's *Waterleaf* works, made in 2003, are among the final works on paper the artist made before her death at the age of eighty-two. Truitt described waking one morning with the sudden impression that her sense of shape, structure, and proportion had departed her: "I was left with sound and reception and out of them alone made... *Waterleaf*." In each *Waterleaf* work, subtle variations in color create vertical or horizontal lines, dividing each sheet into halves or quadrants. The compositions recall Truitt's lifelong preoccupation with delineating space. As she wrote in 1974, "This dependence on placement is ingrained in me. I pay attention to latitude and longitude. It's as if the outside world has to match some personal horizontal and vertical axis. I have to line up with it in order to be comfortable."

The exhibition also includes *Gloucester*, an important early sculpture from 1963. Made in the same year as Truitt's first one-person exhibition in New York, *Gloucester* refers to the Earl of Gloucester in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. The sculpture's stepped form references the blinded Gloucester's mistaken belief that he has fallen off a cliff, when he has only stepped off a small ledge. Speaking about this sculpture, Truitt said that *Gloucester* refers to the "inevitable, inalienable, irreconcilable separation between land and sea, and the sadness that it refracts into human lives."

Three of Truitt's well-known totemic sculptures are on view, each over six feet tall and made with a labor-intensive process she first developed in the late 1960s in which she would apply up to forty layers of paint by hand, every layer sanded to a fine finish. At the bottom, each sculpture has a thin band of contrasting color. "What I'm trying to do is lift the color up and set it free in three dimensions, and I have spent my whole life trying to do it," Truitt described. "I'm trying to move it out into space so the color, magnetized to the line of gravity from the sky down to the ground—just as we are—becomes flesh, it becomes human, it becomes emotion, it becomes alive, and it vibrates. I don't let it be quiet, except for the line underneath that I'm anchoring it on."

Anne Truitt (1921–2004) lived and worked in Washington, DC, for most of her life. The first museum retrospective of her work was at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1973. A posthumous survey was organized by the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington in 2009. In March, the first European retrospective of Truitt's work will open at the K20 Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen in Düsseldorf. The exhibition will travel to the Musée de Grenoble in France and then to the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid. Truitt published three volumes of her journals: *Daybook* (1982), *Turn* (1986), and *Prospect* (1996). A previously unpublished fourth volume, titled *Yield*, and an anthology of other selected writings, titled *Always Reaching*, were published by Yale University Press in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Anne Truitt: Waterleaf will be on view at 523 West 24th Street from February 13 to April 18, 2026, Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

For additional information please call 212-243-0200 or email inquiries@matthewmarks.com.