

THE DRAWING ROOM 66H Newtown Lane, East Hampton, NY 11937 T 631 324.5016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 2013

ROBERT DASH

From Blue Hill
pastels



From Blue Hill XV, 2012-13, pastel on antique rag paper, 25 ½ x 19 ¾ in



From Blue Hill XIV, 2010-13, pastel on antique rag paper, 25 ½ x 19 ¾ in

The Drawing Room is pleased to present the gallery's first exhibition of drawings by the late artist, poet and gardener, Robert Dash (1931 – 2013), titled *Robert Dash, From Blue Hill, pastels*, opening on October 4, 2013.

Robert Dash, a longtime resident of Sagaponack, was renowned as an extraordinary gardener, a gifted and erudite writer and a sensitive artist whose paintings and works on paper revealed the ineffable majesty of the natural world. Rather than working directly from or within nature, Dash intuited the landscape through memory, invention and an elastic mind. As the creator of the Madoo Conservancy, Dash presided over one of the most unique and acclaimed garden environments in the United States. In 1967, when he purchased the property, it was little more than two acres of barren farmland. In the intervening decades Robert Dash's painterly eye and unerring sense of experimentation yielded a whimsical, luscious and bountiful sanctuary.

Born in 1931, Robert Dash grew up in lower Manhattan. During several protracted recoveries from childhood illnesses, the young Dash turned to poetry, music and painting. He studied at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque before returning to New York to embark on a successful career in journalism. He wrote art criticism and poetry, becoming an editor for Noonday Press. He forged friendships with poets of the New York School – James Schuyler, Frank O'Hara, John Ashbery and Barbara Guest. At night, he painted.

Robert Dash never formally studied painting, but he found a kindred spirit in the work of Willem de Kooning, whose muscular abstractions helped guide the young artist toward his mature work. In *The Blue Hill* series that

occupied Dash for many years, he explored not his beloved Sagaponack, but the cliffs and overlooks, rolling green hills, and rocky shoreline of Blue Hill, Maine. "You know, the hills become blue when the altitude is 200 feet or more," he said just weeks ago.

As Dash grew familiar with the terrain and the long vistas across Blue Hill Bay, he committed the site to memory, returning there in his pastel drawings time and time again. His energetic hand, quick strokes and exquisite color sense lend to the works a dynamism that links the eye and the mind as if the earth and its details are surging through the paper. In *From Blue Hill XV*, imagery rushes across the page as if the hurried sky were racing toward sunset. For Dash, the poetry of nature's bounty was at once literal and metaphorical -- explosive in its grandeur, intimate in its sensuousness.

Robert Dash had more than twenty one-person exhibitions in his lifetime, with works exhibited across the U.S. and abroad. His art is represented in public and private collections, among them The Modern Art Museum, Munich; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art, New York; the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Carnegie Institute Museum of Art, Pittsburgh; Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven and the Parrish Art Museum. The author of numerous books, *Dash's Notes from Madoo*, was highly praised by The New York Times, who called the Madoo Conservancy, "Robert Dash's ever-changing masterpiece."

Gallery hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 10-5; Sunday 11-5

For further information and reproduction quality images, please contact Janet Goleas at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.