Claremont, CA — The Pomona College Museum of Art presents the exhibition “Marcia Hafif: A Place Apart” on view from Sep. 4 to Dec. 22, 2018. A public reception will take place from 4-6 p.m. on Saturday, September 15 and will be preceded by a roundtable conversation in honor of Hafif and her legacy with artist Nancy Buchanan, Hammer Museum chief curator Connie Butler,
Marcia Hafif (1929-2018) was renowned as a painter of experimental canvases that suggest both minimalism and process art. Her six-decade-long career included painting, drawing, film, photography and writing, for which she has been widely recognized in Europe and the United States since the 1970s.

The exhibition “Marcia Hafif: A Place Apart” includes over 100 artworks, many never exhibited before, and is the first to highlight the more personal and intimate side of Hafif’s drawing practice. It places her paintings within a context of sketches, architectural models, photographs, and text, bringing together works that investigate lived spaces, drawing forms and site-specificity.

Hafif created a vast amount of art within which she questioned subjects from the history of painting practices to museum architecture, from constellations to tables and boxes. In her words:

“I find a subject that interests me, inspiring a desire to know more, then find a way to do that using drawing, photography, painting or sculpture. The subject can be anything from designing a museum to the writing of foreign calligraphy, from naming weeds to making ice in the desert using cold night winds. Or grinding dry pigments into oil making paint and preparing a traditional canvas support. For me they are all experiments for the purpose of seeing more closely. What does that color of red look like alone?”

Site-specificity and a focus on intimate examination of one’s surroundings frame the breadth of Hafif’s explorations. Works in the exhibition focus on how naming can lead to concrete acts of drawing and building. The exhibition presents sketches, photographs, plans, models and artifacts from realized projects such as the Lusthus Wanas in Sweden and Hafif’s mill house in upstate New York; a wide variety of drawing portfolios and sculptures focused on imaginary projects such as The Hut Has No Walls and A Place Apart; and several paintings titled after specific sites: Roman Colors and Pacific Ocean Paintings. Another section of the exhibition includes drawing groups of common forms such as grids, maps and constellations inspired by the artist’s interest in her surroundings and her final site-specific wall writing piece, Cooking Fish (written in April 2018). The exhibition frames how Hafif’s works, while shifting temporally and physically, retain a focus on the world around her—a signature of her practice.

“Marcia Hafif: A Place Apart” represents a close partnership with the artist. Each element was collaboratively conceived before her untimely passing in April 2018. The exhibition and accompanying publication honor her voice and vision and are dedicated to her memory.

The exhibition is curated by Rebecca McGrew and Nidhi Gandhi and is accompanied by a publication designed by Kimberly Varella of Content Object. Contents include an introduction by McGrew, a new scholarly essay by Gandhi, writing by Hafif and new photographs of the works by Fredrik Nilsen. The book is distributed by D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, Inc., and is supported in part by Fergus McCaffrey Gallery, New York.

About Marcia Hafif
An internationally renowned artist, Marcia Hafif is most well known for her paintings, which have been exhibited and collected across Europe and the United States since the early 1960s. Hafif is represented by Fergus McCaffrey Gallery, New York.

In 1947 Hafif enrolled at Pomona College as a creative writing major while taking painting and art history classes. Then, as a junior, she shifted her major to studio art. After graduating from Pomona College in 1951, Hafif settled first in Claremont, then in Rome in 1961, where she remained for almost eight years creating abstract paintings. She returned to California in 1969 to start graduate school and completed an MFA degree at the University of California at Irvine, where she experimented with film, photography and sound installation and studied with fellow Pomona College alum Chris Burden (Pomona College Class of 1969) and Barbara T. Smith (Pomona College Class of 1953). In 1971, Hafif moved to New York to attempt to return to painting, and made her breakthrough Pencil on Paper drawings in early 1972. Her expanded practice grew to encompass painting, drawing, photography and writing.


About the Pomona College Museum of Art

The Museum collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets works of art; and houses a substantial permanent collection as well as serving as a gallery of temporary exhibitions. Important holdings include the Kress Collection of 15th- and 16th-century Italian panel paintings; more than 5,000 examples of Pre-Columbian to 20th-century American Indian art and artifacts, including basketry, ceramics and beadwork; and a large collection of American and European prints, drawings and photographs, including works by Francisco de Goya, José Clemente Orozco and Rico Lebrun.
Admission
All exhibitions and programs are free of charge and open to the public.

General Information
330 North College Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711
Tuesday through Sunday, 12-5 p.m., Closed Monday and Nov. 22—23, 2018
Art After Hours: Thursday, 5-11 p.m., Sep. 6 – Dec. 6, 2018

For more information, please call 909.621.8283 or visit www.pomona.edu/museum.