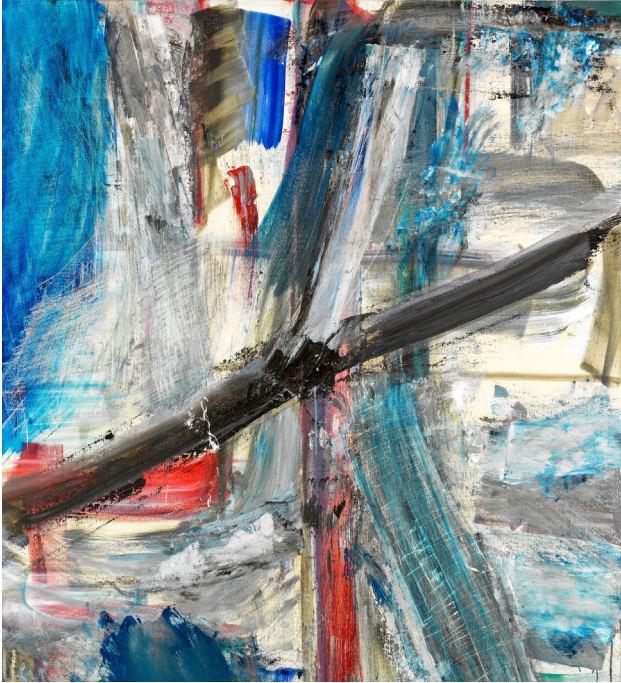


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The Evolution of Louise Fishman, Brash and Fierce

by Holland Cotter



Louise Fishman's "Crossing the Rubicon" (2012).

The New York artist Louise Fishman was on the front lines of the early feminist movement of the 1960s, and out in the streets for gay liberation. She was also hard at work in the studio, as she has been for 50 years. Now, at 77, she's having her first full-dress retrospective, at the Neuberger Museum of Art in Purchase, N.Y., through July.

Ms. Fishman started small, with fabric pieces and gridded drawings. In the 1970s, these exploded into the slashing "Angry Paintings" based on the names of female artists, including her own. She then translated that energy into pure abstraction, which has become richer and more expansive, turning somber after a visit to Auschwitz in the 1980s, and oceanic, after her immersion in the work of J.M.W. Turner. The Neuberger show includes an exhibition of sketchbooks and miniature sculptures at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia (through Aug. 14). (The retrospective is at Purchase College, neuberger.org; "Paper Louise Tiny Fishman Rock," at icaphila.org.)