

ROOMS 1 AND 2

SPOTS ON THE LOOSE

Helen's art is called "abstract" because it doesn't represent something recognizable but is made up of shapes, lines, and color splashes that open endless possibilities. She said discovering Jackson Pollock was key for her because he painted by dripping color onto canvases placed on the ground (one of his works is in room 2). Even Helen invented a new technique called "soak-stain": she poured liquid color onto the canvas until the fabric absorbed it.

Helen used various tools to spread the paint, which left different marks on the surface of the painting. Flip the kit over to see some of them. Can you guess which tools she used in these first two rooms?



ROOM 3

LIQUID COLORS

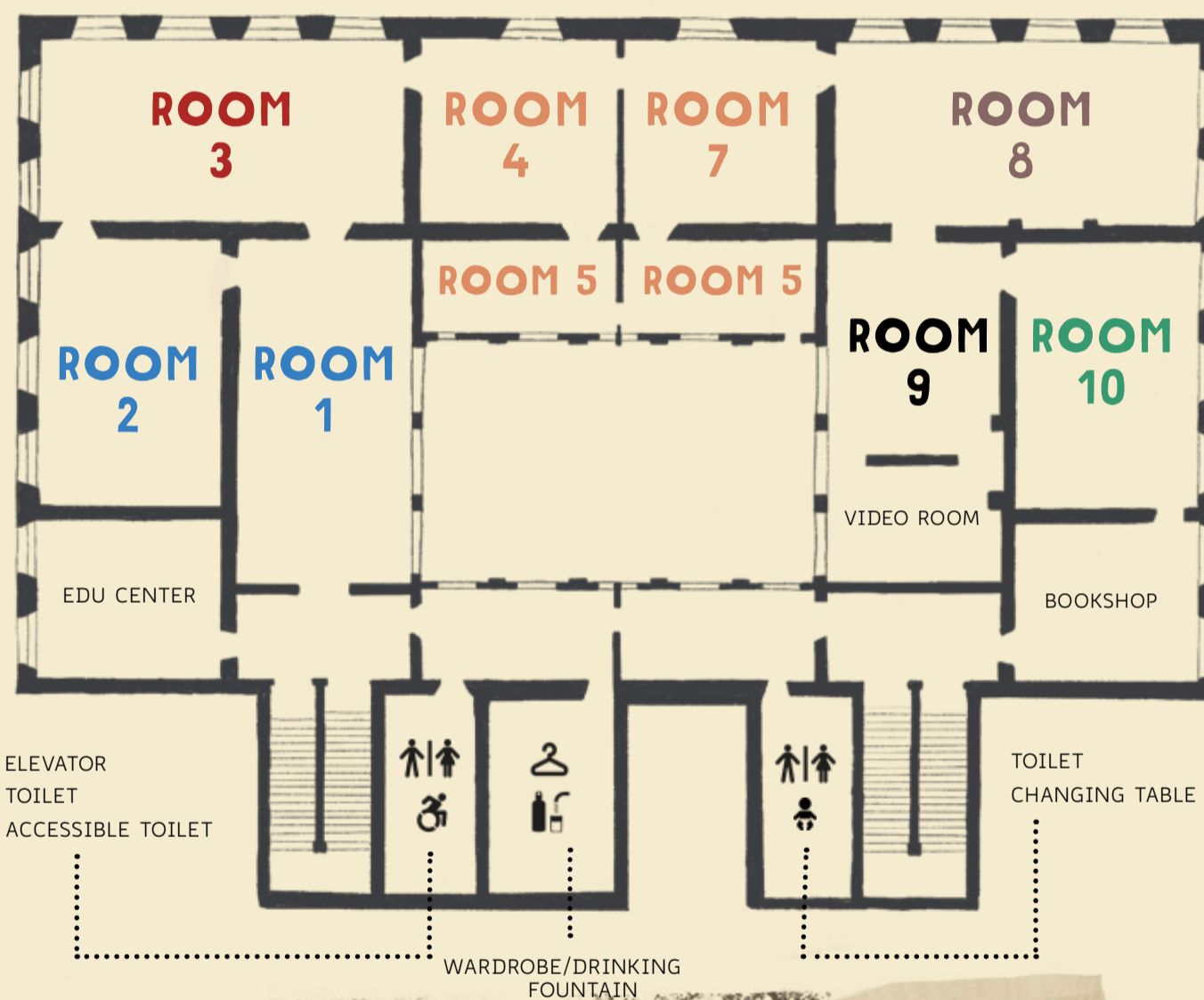
As a child, Helen would pour her mother's nail polish into the sink just to watch it dissolve into strange shapes in the water. Even as an adult, she was fascinated by colors and how they changed when mixed with liquids. In her works, she used very diluted colors that blended to create halos and soft shades. Sometimes, these colorful shapes reminded her of special places, like *Allassio*, a town in Liguria where she stayed in the summer of 1960, or *Cape (Provincetown)*, on the east coast of the United States, where she spent many periods painting and enjoying the sea.

Now, close your eyes and imagine you're in your favorite place. Think about the objects, sounds, and smells around you. What colors would you choose to represent it?

ROOM 10

HORIZON LINES

In this room, you'll find the paintings Helen created between the ages of sixty and seventy. Even as she grew older, she continued working in her studio, exploring abstraction and the search for beauty. Nature always inspired her: the shapes in her work came from nature, her travels, or what she saw outside her window.



ROOMS 4, 5, 6, 7

EXPERIMENTING TOGETHER

Helen had many artist friends, such as the sculptor David Smith, and her first husband, Robert Motherwell, was also a painter. They all shared a passion for art, supported each other, and explored new techniques together. For example, Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland adopted Helen's soak-stain technique in some paintings.

Helen once said, "I often go out on the terrace and observe the ever-changing sky and tides, and what happens to the colors, shapes, and spaces."

Every horizontal line can suggest hills, waves, houses, forests, buildings, or streets, as if a landscape is taking shape. Choose a painting in this room and look at it for a few minutes. What place appears before your eyes?

ROOM 8

UPSIDE-DOWN CANVASES

Helen's paintings are often very large. To create them, she used her whole body: she walked on the canvas, kneeled, stretched, and sometimes even seemed to lie on top of the flowing paint.

While observing her paintings even the body of the observer is fully engaged. Choose your favorite piece in this room and move around to see how it changes depending on where you stand: start far away and then get as close as possible (watch out for the platform!);

observe it from the right, then from the left; and finally, try looking at it upside down. What did you notice?

YOU CAN SEE THE ARTIST IN ACTION IN HER STUDIO IN THE VIDEO ROOM!



In turn, Helen collected works by her artist friends to keep them close to her. Some were gifts, signs of affection, while others she purchased herself to have in her home, and they became a source of inspiration for her.

Look at the artworks around you in this room and in the next ones: which one would you choose for your family collection?

The activities Palazzo Strozzi dedicates to families are designed to make art an experience to be shared together. Adults and children can visit the exhibitions on their own using the Family Kit, which offers activities and insights into the artworks on display, or they can participate in visits and workshops tailored to different age group from 3 years old and up.

Watching the Clouds

Families with children ages 3 to 6.
Every Wednesday at 10:30 am

Fantastic Stains

Families with children ages 7 to 12.
Every Saturday at 10:30 am

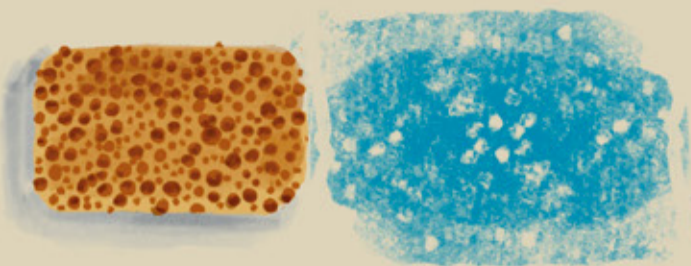
Reservation required. Activities are in Italian only, free with the exhibition entrance ticket.

Reservations Office

CSC Sigma
Monday through Friday
9am-6pm
Tel. +39 055 26 45 155
prenotazioni@palazzostrozzi.org



Brush



Sponge



Pipette



Hands



Marker



A path for adults and children ages 5 and up to explore together the exhibition

Helen Frankenthaler Painting Without Rules

FAMILY KIT

YOU CAN USE ANYTHING

"I use everything. I use big hardware brushes. I use spatulas. I often go to a good hardware store or a five-and-dime and pick up stuff. I once made a terrific picture with a spaghetti scooper. I use a lot of sponges, a lot of sponges on sticks, such as floor sponges, squeegees, window wipers. And then sometimes, a nice little brush. So, it also varies. Yes. Sometimes a chamois mitten and my hand, depending on what invention I feel like and what the picture seems to need, because you learn a lot looking at your own picture and letting it speak to you."

Helen Frankenthaler

Every tool leaves different marks on the canvas: large or small streaks, filled areas, halos, or prints. At home, experiment with whatever you have: have you ever dipped a leaf in paint and dragged it across a page? Or spread color with a kitchen spatula? As Helen says, there are no limits in art—anything is possible!

What is the Family Kit?

The Family Kit is a tool for exploring the exhibition, providing observation tips, curiosities, and activities to be shared among adults and children aged 5 and up.

How to use the Kit?

The Kit suggests a path through the exhibition rooms; to find your way, follow the map inside: it shows the room numbers of the Noble Floor (the first floor of Palazzo Strozzi).

- You have the freedom to choose how long you want to spend at each stop during your visit.
- Keep a safe distance from the artwork (marked by platforms) and be mindful of other visitors.
- You can rest on the steps beneath the windows.

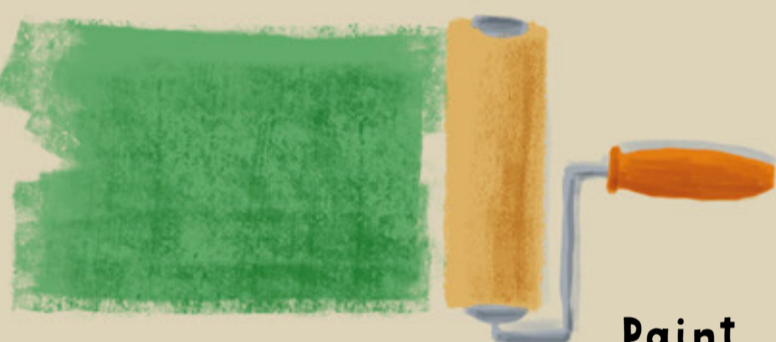
Where do we start?

Palazzo Strozzi is the building Filippo Strozzi decided to build in 1489 as a home for his family. Today, it's an art center where you can find exhibitions from ancient to modern and contemporary art.

Who is Helen Frankenthaler?

Helen Frankenthaler was an artist born in New York in 1928. As a child, she enjoyed walking in Central Park with her two older sisters, and sometimes she drew a path home with chalk on the ground. She loved swimming in the ocean waves, looking out the window, and imagining the shapes hidden in the clouds. Her greatest passion has always been art: her parents have encouraged her to experiment freely with materials and colors since she was little. As she grew older, she studied painting and became a famous artist.

At Palazzo Strozzi, you can see Helen's works alongside those of other artists her friends, she shared with them ideas and experiences.



Paint roller

Illustrations inspired by the works:
Helen Frankenthaler, *Moveable Blue*, 1973
Helen Frankenthaler, *Alassio*, 1960
Morris Louis, *Aleph Series V*, 1960
Kenneth Noland, *Helen's Choice*, 1977
Helen Frankenthaler, *Madrid*, 1984
Helen Frankenthaler, *Cassis*, 1995

The Family Kit is a project of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi
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Illustration and Graphic Design by Simone Spellucci
High Legibility Font biancoenero®

The Kit is made possible with the support of



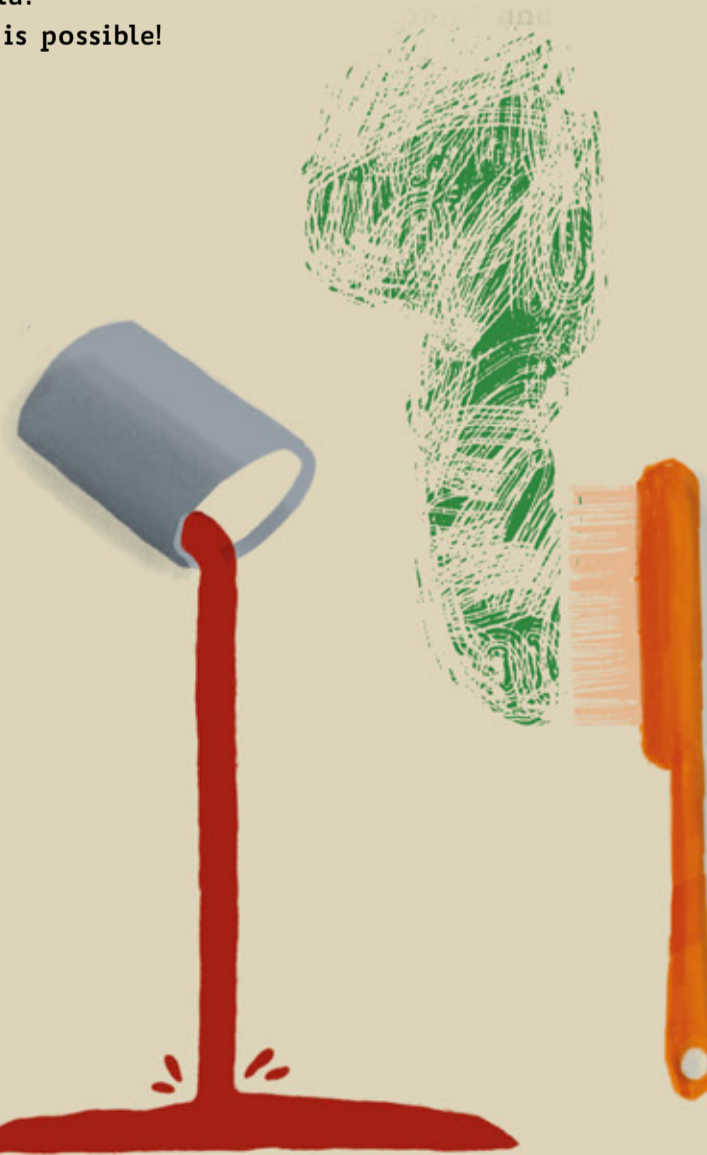
Pencil



Spatula



Rake



Can

Brush