

john ros

*HEDDA STERNE SERIES*

2010

## UNTITLED (H.S.) SERIES INFORMATION

this series of collages is a biographical look at the influential and pertinent artist hedda sterne. i had the honor of meeting her during the summer of 2008 when i worked for her foundation in her studio on the upper east side of new york city. that brief relationship meant so much to me and sparked the inspiration for this series.

hedda sterne was born, hedwig lindenberg, in 1910 in romania. she escaped nazi encroachment during wwii, fleeing to new york in 1941. in 1944 she married saul steinberg and became a us citizen. hedda was the only woman in a group of abstract expressionists known as the irascibles which consisted of jackson pollock, barnett newman, mark rothko, and many more. hedda died on 08 april 2011 at the age of 100.

the original biographical portfolio included 25 collages all 30 x 22 inches. *untitled (h.s. 01)*, 2010, initiated the series. the pieces developed with minimal surfaces and delicate contrasts. the human touch and aged surface can be attributed to material collected from hedda's studio floor. i saved scraps from old artwork housings and coverings including cardboard, muslin, linen, tape and more — material that would have otherwise been discarded. during my intimate time in her studio and through the recycling and reuse of material from her space, i offered this subtle gesture of love as a way to thank her for her contributions to us all throughout her life.





PREVIOUS PAGE / Hedda Sterne in her studio, c. 1960

TOP / Hedda Sterne in the backyard of 179 East 71st St., c. 1954

BOTTOM / *The Irascibles* or *Irascible 18*: a group of American abstract artists who put name to an open letter, written in 1950, to the president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, rejecting the museum's exhibition *American Painting Today - 1950* and boycotting the accompanying competition. The subsequent media coverage of the protest and a now iconic photograph, with Hedda Sterne as the only woman, appeared in *Life* magazine and helped popularise the term Abstract Expressionist.



