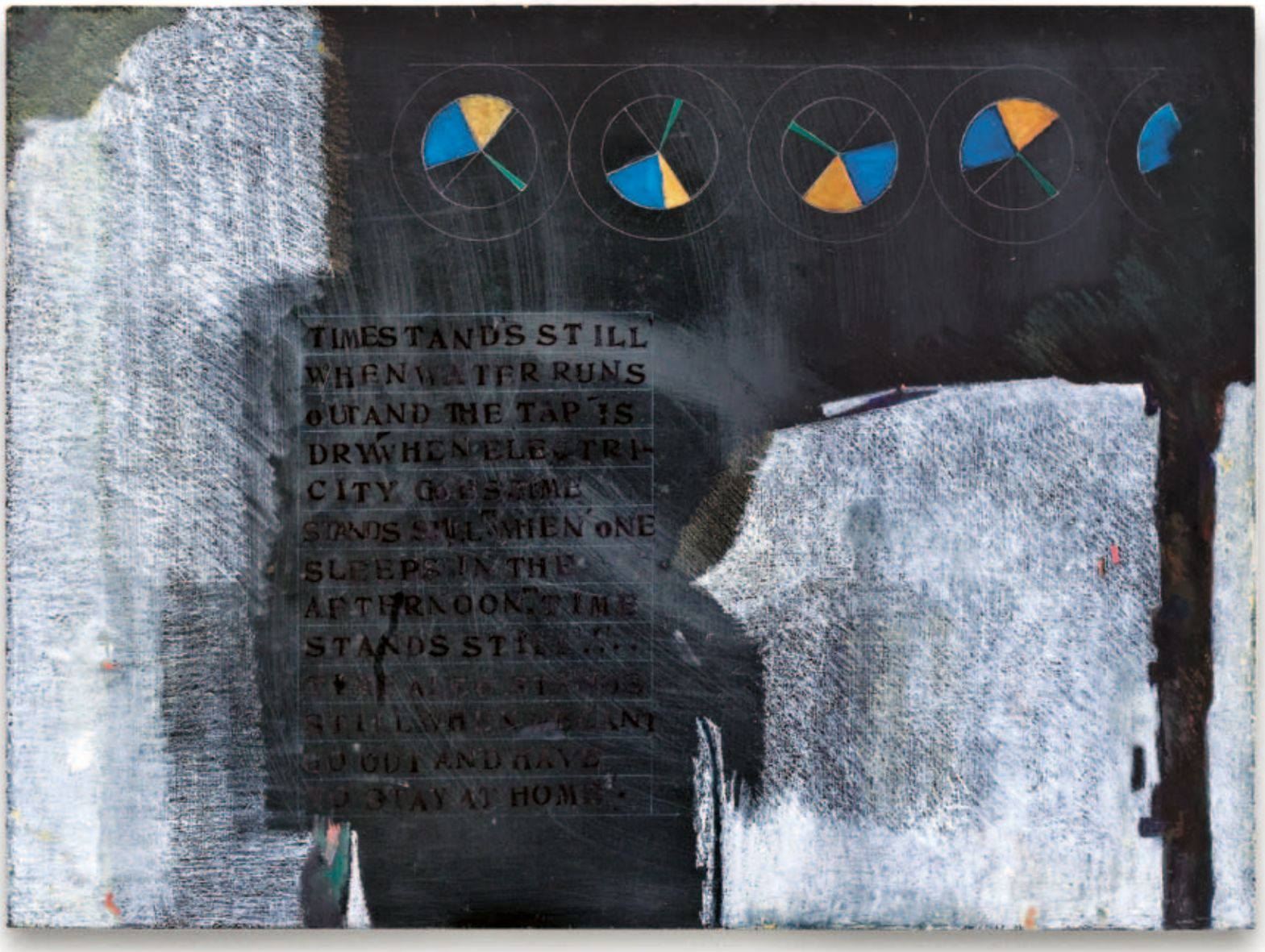


TRUTH IN THE VERY PARTICULAR

Though she stridently abjured the public "wife of the dean" role, Ruth Eleanor Levine's (1936–2010) presence in Pittsburgh was felt widely, particularly in the arts and academic communities. Hers was a life filled with gusto, intelligence, humor, caring, and beauty; that spirit infused those around her.

Ruth E. Levine (née Rubin) met Arthur S. Levine, Pitt's senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and dean of the medical school, when they were both undergraduates. She was studying mathematics at the time (he, Russian literature), yet she ended up pursuing her passion for the arts as a career, becoming an arts administrator and educator. In 1993, Ruth Levine began painting full-time and prolifically. Her paintings hung in museums and galleries in Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Prague, Venice, and Florence. Her last solo show was proclaimed "miraculous" by Tom Sokolowski, former director of the Andy Warhol Museum.

"We had common ground: I was driven to interrogate biology at its molecular level, and Ruth was driven to interrogate art at its molecular level," her husband notes. "I saw science in her art, and she saw art in my science. I am quite sure that in teaching me how to truly look at a painting, whether a Raphael or a Picasso, Ruth taught me how to look at biology, as well—the truth in the very particular."

In his eulogy, Arthur Levine shared a passage from a scene at the funeral of young Illusha in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*: "And whatever happens to us later in life, even if we don't meet for 50 years, let us remember this time. My dear children, you must know that there is nothing higher or stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory. People talk to you a great deal about your education, but some good sacred memory is perhaps the best education. If people carry many such memories with them into life, they are safe to the end of their days." —*Erica Lloyd*

R.E. LEVINE, *TIME STANDS STILL*, OIL CRAYONS, MINERAL PAINTS, AND INKS ON SLATED BOARD, 29" X 32", 2009. PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOM UNDERINER, PIXEL RIVER.