

Sikkema Jenkins & Co. is pleased to present *On The Ground*, an exhibition of recent paintings by Josephine Halvorson. On view January 23 through February 29, 2020, this is Halvorson's fifth solo show at the gallery. *On The Ground*, also the title of her essay in *Art In America* (June/July 2018), continues Halvorson's exploration of the ground—as a motif, material, and metaphor. Each painting registers an area of ground through Halvorson's close observation and pictorial description, while its accompanying surround incorporates crushed rocks and debris from the site of the painting's making. Together, they realize a faithful translation of place and time. The work in this exhibition was made in the Berkshire mountains, the Mojave Desert, and Matanzas, Cuba.

These hybrid paintings are made with gouache, site material, dry pigment, and printmaking. They expand Halvorson's on-site practice of transcribing direct experience by hand. While her previous work in oil allowed her encounter with an object to congeal over the course of a day, Halvorson has turned to gouache, a fast drying and graphic medium, which, like handwriting, records her observations in real time. Her paint application is indelible and fresco-like, transferring color from the brush into the absorbent ground of the panel.

Touching down at various points of interest—a piece of plastic, a blade of grass—Halvorson's notational marks establish a correspondence between environment, painting, and viewer. Like a map, they depict the literal scape of the ground while offering an escape from mimesis. The reality of proximity breaks down as one gets lost in the archeology of a single stride. Gravel becomes galactic. The surround acts as a legend or key, a space for evidence and tools of calibration. A ruler, coins, or color chart orient the onlooker in terms of scale and perception, and the site material indexes the painting to its original locale. These are paintings of verification and memorialization. They ask how we make sense of what we see, how we express that witnessing, and how an account of experience is made concrete.

Halvorson holds a BFA from The Cooper Union (2003) and an MFA from Columbia University (2007). She is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship to Vienna (2003-4), a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant (2009), and was a fellow at the French Academy in Rome (2014-15). During Fall 2019, her work was on view at The Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston as part of The James and Audrey Foster Prize Exhibition, curated by Ruth Erickson. Halvorson was selected to be the first artist-in-residence at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, NM. Her residency will culminate in a solo exhibition in 2020 as part of the Museum's Contemporary Voices series.

Halvorson's work has appeared in many solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. In the spring of 2019, Halvorson made a body of work in Matanzas, Cuba which was exhibited a part of the Havana Biennial in a project organized by Maria Magdalena Campos-Pons. In 2016, she exhibited large scale sculptures at Storm King Art Center and in 2015 had her first museum survey exhibition, *Slow Burn*, at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, NC. Her work and has been written about widely in a variety of art publications.

Halvorson is currently Professor of Art and Chair of Graduate Studies in Painting at Boston University, MA. She has also taught at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture (2018), Yale University School of Art (2010-2016), Paint School (2018), among many other institutions.

**UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS:**

KARA WALKER MAR. 5 – APR. 4

**UPCOMING ART FAIRS:**

ADAA ART SHOW FEB. 27 – MAR. 1

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