

SIKKEMA
JENKINS&CO.
JOSEPHINE HALVORSON

AS I WENT WALKING

October 19 – November 22, 2017

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 19, 6-8 PM

Sikkema Jenkins & Co. is pleased to present *As I Went Walking*, an exhibition of recent paintings and works on paper by Josephine Halvorson. On view from October 19 through November 22, the exhibition is Halvorson's fourth solo show with the gallery. A catalog accompanies the exhibition with an essay by Erin Yerby.

As I Went Walking includes a series of life-sized oil paintings made in the western Massachusetts town where Halvorson lives and votes. The exhibition's title is borrowed from the first line of a missing stanza from Woody Guthrie's anthem, *This Land Is Your Land*, rediscovered in the 1990s.

As I went walking I saw a sign there / And on the sign it said "No Trespassing." / But on the other side it didn't say nothing, / That side was made for you and me.

The lyrics echo Halvorson's artistic practice and subject matter. Wandering the woods near her home, she encounters signs of neighbors, dead and alive. Naturalized marks of ownership animate and declare themselves. Wherever one's eyes land, there are human claims and natural reclamations.

Halvorson makes paintings from direct observation, *en plein air*. She finds herself working at the limits of private and public property. The feet of the easel, the table and the artist trespass and straddle invisible boundaries. A day's work leaves its physical imprint in the tamped-down ground. But the painting itself, in its portability and self-contained rectangle, leaves the site of its making without a trace. Once removed from its original context, the painting metaphorically extends the boundary line.

Working within arm's length of her subject over the course of daylight hours, Halvorson's position foregrounds attention, experience and locale. For the last decade she has employed the mediumistic quality of paint to connect with the world, rendering visible that which is felt but not necessarily seen: time, emotion, history. Touching the surfaces of her subjects through the thick, short strokes of her brush, she gets up-close and personal. This intimacy is conveyed in a face-to-face encounter with the paintings themselves.

For this exhibition, Halvorson is also presenting works on paper made with gouache and silkscreened elements. Alluding to other visual and informational formats, such as maps, calendars, and newspapers, these works include a measure and printer's marks as keys for calibrating the unquantifiable. Standardized units are drawn by hand, reminding us of the abstraction in every act of description. Through perceiving a patch of ground and translating it to scale, Halvorson registers what lies before us.

Josephine Halvorson grew up on Cape Cod, where she first studied art on the beaches of Provincetown and with Barnett Rubenstein at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. She attended The Cooper Union School of Art (BFA, 2003), Yale Norfolk (2002), and continued her interdisciplinary education at Columbia University's School of the Arts (MFA, 2007). Halvorson has been awarded a number of prestigious residencies including a Fulbright Fellowship to Austria (2003-4); a Harriet Hale Woolley Scholarship at the Fondation des États-Unis, Paris (2007-8); Moly-Sabata in Sablons, France (2014, 2017); and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation in Captiva, Florida (2016). She was also the first American to receive the Rome Prize at the French Academy at the Villa Medici, Rome, Italy (2014-2015). In 2017, Halvorson was an artist in residence at Flying Horse Editions in Orlando, Florida, where she printed the silkscreened elements of the works on paper in this exhibition.

Halvorson's work has been exhibited widely. In 2015 she presented her first museum survey exhibition, *Slow Burn*, at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, curated by Cora Fisher. In 2016 she exhibited large-scale painted sculptures at Storm King Art Center, as part of the "Outlooks" series curated by Nora Lawrence. Her work has been written about extensively in various publications and she is one of the subjects of Art21's documentary series, *New York Close Up*.

Josephine Halvorson has taught at The Cooper Union, Princeton University, the University of Tennessee Knoxville, Columbia University, and Yale University. In 2016 Halvorson joined Boston University as Professor of Art and Chair of Graduate Studies in Painting. She lives and works in Western Massachusetts.

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UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS: ARTURO HERRERA NOV. 29 – JAN. 20

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OPEN TUESDAY – SATURDAY 10 TO 6