

THE DRAWING ROOM 16R Newtown Lane, East Hampton, New York 11937 T 631.324.5016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 2011

JENNIFER BARTLETT *Day into Night: pastels*

July 28 – August 29, 2011



Amagansett, June #1, 2011, pastel on paper, 30 x 30 in



March, Bermuda #8, 1998, pastel on paper, 22 x 22 in

From July 28 through August 29, The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present *Jennifer Bartlett: Day into Night*, an exhibition of vibrant pastels drawn on site in her gardens in Amagansett and Brooklyn, and while traveling to the islands of Nevis, St. Barthélemy and Bermuda. These lush drawings of dramatic landscape spaces where land meets sea and sky reflect Bartlett's longstanding engagement with the subject of place, a central theme in her work since the completion in 1976 of *Rhapsody*, her epic painting that integrates the motifs of house, tree, mountain and ocean with passages of pure geometric abstraction. Ever fascinated with the rigor of a square composition, Bartlett gives structure to the colorful tensions she discovers in natural surroundings of far reaching tropical and cultivated oases.

Selected from pastels that span over fifteen years, this exhibition brings together landscapes created at all hours of day and night. In one room, Bartlett's island subjects reflect close observation paired with her exploration of the mysterious possibilities of her powdery medium. Whether inspired by a sun-drenched Bermuda seascape, a moonlit harbor view of St. Barth's or a salmon sunset over Nevis, each daylight, dusk and nocturnal view evokes the distinct mood of a palpable atmospheric and spatial experience. Through drawing techniques that range from broad, languid gestures, to frenzied swirls of color, to more intricate staccato marks that define sailing skiffs, spiny evergreens and broad palm fronds, Bartlett affirms a place in the history of the pastel medium alongside the midnight mindscapes of Odilon Redon and Van Gogh's intense drawings of the French landscape.

Participation in shaping her primary working environment has been a consistent thread in Bartlett's practice and the design of her new Brooklyn studio and garden echoes her keen appreciation for gardens as both physical and psychological refuge and fuels her appetite for perpetual access to

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interesting subjects. Within the relatively small space of her urban specimen garden, two recent pastels express the range of pictorial potential. In one, tapering dark conifers frame a central boulder that punctuates the center of a composition with tree trunks silhouetted against a brick garden wall beyond. This dense exploration of solid forms is contrasted by a drawing in which cross hatches of green and earthy tones coalesce with sky blue marks and the white of the page in an airy latticed landscape. Both drawings extend the dialogue of a recent series of large oil paintings to powerful new heights in pastel.

With remarkable freedom and unyielding energy, Bartlett delves into each composition with an extensive palette, eschewing verisimilitude and harnessing the tools at her disposal to transmit the intense charge of her personal experience. Speaking about her work Bartlett has remarked, "I'm not concerned with whether something's real or abstract, but whether a space is functioning, whether it's working within the painting." It is a privilege to witness the evolution of Bartlett's commitment to the process of observation and rendering as she extracts from her subjects and delivers to the viewer a full spectrum of experiences. Throughout her career, Bartlett has moved deftly in and out of representational imagery, bringing the best of her conceptual roots to bear in works that are not limited by a single ideology. Perhaps this is what makes her drawings so unexpected and compelling. As if through osmosis, each perfectly square composition becomes a window that transports the viewer to a newly discovered moment in which time is suspended and we are invited to linger.

Jennifer Bartlett (b. Long Beach, CA, 1941) divides her time between New York and Amagansett. After graduating from Mills College (1963), she received BFA (1964) and MFA (1965) degrees from the School of Art and Architecture at Yale University. Her works are in numerous public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Brooklyn Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Parrish Art Museum and Whitney Museum of American Art.

Please note gallery hours for this exhibition
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 11 to 6; Sunday 11 to 5

For further information and reproduction quality images contact Lindsay Reichart at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.