

THE DRAWING ROOM 66H Newtown Lane East Hampton NY 11937 T 631 324.5016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2015

ROBERT HARMS

new paintings



Noyac, 2014, oil on canvas, 62 x 54 in

From May 1 through June 1, The Drawing Room in East Hampton will present an exhibition of recent paintings by longtime South Fork resident **ROBERT HARMS**. On view concurrently is **RAJA RAM SHARMA new miniatures**, for which a separate press release is available.

For the past decade, Robert Harms has been painting lyrical abstractions in the quiet environment of his light filled Southampton studio, influenced by the atmospheric changes that surround the pond front setting on which his workspace is perched. Whereas earlier paintings created there were characterized by heavy impasto and bold brushwork associated with the tradition of Abstract Expressionism, over the last several years his technique has been guided by principles of restraint. Acclimatized to his luminous refuge and removed from the bustle of human activity, Harms has remarked that his immersion in unusually serene working conditions fosters intense contemplation. Approaching each large primed canvas with patience and discipline, he has embraced a slower painting technique that depends on the accumulation of washes of oil paint, accented by delicate gestural marks of brush and pencil.

(over)

Garden Visits (2012), is the first large canvas in which transparent veils of oil set the stage for an orchestration of calligraphic marks in an array of clear color. Inspired by flowers collected from a friend's garden, the flickering painting action suggests impressions of a summer perennial bed in full bloom. The light is bright and the palette is crisp and translucent. Harms' successful experimentation with transparency in this painting paved the way for the four other large-scale canvases assembled for this exhibition.

As the pace of his painting slowed down, Harms enjoyed allowing his compositions to develop over longer expanses of time. In a 62 x 62 inch canvas titled *Snow* (2014), he worked for several months to articulate his experience of the expanse of snow and ice that lingered outside his studio windows. Diffuse areas of sheer grey and pale blue layered with white suggest the haze of a winter blanketed in snow, punctuated with spare linear accents. A year later, a second winter of astounding snowfalls allowed the artist to delve deeper into the effects of winter light on the pond's bleached surface. *A Different Landscape* (2015) is so subtle it requires the viewer to pause in order to perceive the abstract mirage that hovers on the gessoed white canvas. Immersed even briefly in this poetic reference to clouds and sky reflected on the frozen pond, one's sense of time is inevitably suspended.

In the intervening seasons, Harms painted *Noyac* (2014) in homage to the lively dialogue he and a fellow painter and close friend shared about one another's work, reveling in a daring palette of chartreuse and turquoise that invited splashes of broad brushwork. Later last year, he completed *Beech Trees*, an elegant vertical canvas informed by frequent visits to study the majestic brushwork in Chinese and Japanese landscape traditions he admired at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Harms' work has been widely recognized for its ability to capture fleeting atmospheric effects with a remarkable economy of means. Balancing spontaneity with restraint, Harms filters his daily observations of nature and his study of how painters throughout history have created light with paint, imbuing each painting with a palpable sense of his experience.

Robert Harms attended The School of Visual Arts in New York City and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine. He is the recipient of awards from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and the National Arts Club, and his work is in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guild Hall and the Parrish Art Museum.

www.drawingroom-gallery.com

Gallery hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 10-5; Sunday 11-5

For further information and reproduction quality images, please contact Janet Goleas at 631.324.5016