



SUSAN WILLIAMS

Earth Tones: The Art of Interference

August 18 - September 15, 2021

Opening Reception: First Friday, September 3, 5-8pm

Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11 - 4, Sunday 1-4

CALDBECK GALLERY

12 Elm Street Rockland Maine 04841

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BRIMSTONE 4 2019

oil on acetate 25 x 40 inches



BRIMSTONE I 2019
oil on acetate 25 x 40 inches



WHERE THE BIRDS ARE 2020
oil on yupo 26 x 40 inches



TEN THOUSAND FLAMES 2020
oil on panel 36 x 48 inches



BRIMSTONE 3 2019
oil on acetate 25 x 40 inches



BROAD SHOULDER 2021
oil on yupo 26 x 48 inches



TOWARDS THE MARSH 2020
oil on yupo 26 x 40 inches



BLUE LAKE 2020
oil on panel 12 x 12 inches



YOU WERE HERE 2020
oil on panel 12 x 12 inches



EARTHTONES 2020
oil on panel 24 x 24 inches



GATHERING 2020
oil on panel 24 x 24 inches



TRICKLE 2021
oil on panel 12 x 12 inches

EARTH TONES: THE ART OF INTERFERENCE

I call this body of work, *Earth Tones: The Art of Interference*,” because it deliberately interferes with traditional representations of natural beauty. When I began painting landscapes, I often worked from my observations of the natural world. I was also influenced by art from the past. As my work evolved, I pushed farther and farther beyond literal realities. I wanted to paint Nature from my memories and from my imagination.

These new paintings have an element of realism in that the rocks and trees and lakes in them are recognizable as such, but they are not actual places. They are traces of my mind wandering. By minimizing the literal and enlarging the imaginary, I am trying to take viewers into a liminal space, to place them in a borderland between Nature as they know it and the many variations of Nature that appear in my mind’s eye. In a few of these works, natural elements are glimpsed through a veil of some sort. In others, an entire landscape is rendered in a single hue—a provocatively bold pink, a raw umber that is moody and slightly menacing. As I worked on this series of paintings, I felt my brushwork growing more energetic, more confident. It seemed to well up from psychic and aesthetic depths I had not previously explored.

The paintings simultaneously undercut and pay homage to earlier traditions of landscape painting. They also quietly hint at the anxieties of our times—the existential dread caused by climate change, the peril to democracy around the world, and the outsized irrationality and myriad absurdities of our everyday lives.

What next? I feel a strong desire to see more than I have seen. I want to create beauty. But I also want to be able to wreck the beauty and sift through the ruins. I want to push my brushwork and the paint itself to the point where they destabilize familiar boundaries between the real and the imagined. Above all, I want to set aside the expectations that have guided my paints and see what emerges when I follow my imagination wherever it leads.

Susan Williams
August 2021

Williams has had significant exhibitions in New York and Maine; juried and group shows; success with numerous collections, including an acquisition of a group of paintings by McKinsey & Co and Goldman Sachs & Co; and solo exhibitions at the Gerald Peters Gallery in New York City. She is represented by the Caldbeck Gallery in Rockland, Maine and Downing-Yudain in Stamford, Connecticut. A New York City native, Williams has a B.A. in Art History and Visual Art from Bowdoin College (cum laude).