

Exhibition Statement

New Haven Lawn Club, 193 Whitney Ave, New Haven, CT Public Viewing: June 30 - August 29, Mon - Sun 9-5

SURFACE PRESSURE - Paintings by Sarah Stewart

New Haven artist Sarah Stewart is exhibiting studio paintings and works on paper completed over a span of 10 years. Also included are several small landscape paintings, completed during the recent stay-at-home orders.

The studio paintings in this show utilize and explore diverging voices. Over the years, the artist has shifted from being more open with contrast and movement, to a more focused investigation of delicate movements of light and atmosphere. A constant through this work is an underlying drawing structure made up of layered natural arm movements curving out from the top and bottom of the paintings.

The show's title, *Surface Pressure*, refers to the way the artist uses a palette knife to apply many layers of paint scraped and drawn into the surface of the painting. This buildup of layers has the effect of everything molding and merging together on the surface. In Sarah's words, "oil paint can be translucent, especially when you are scraping it on thinly. Visible surface textures and under layers are a result of my process. These layers start to form a 'painting space' or a complete narrative structure of light, pattern, and drawing..." This process is slow, yet after months of painting an abstract narrative of light, atmosphere, and movement starts to emerge.

During the recent stay-at-home orders Sarah took breaks from her studio work to focus on small landscape paintings made by looking out her window, or outdoors in remote locations: "I wanted to change modes and look at the world around me. The intense observation in plein-air painting took my mind off the pandemic and the work gave me a needed sense of accomplishment."

Sarah Stewart grew up in Austin, Texas, and graduated with honors from Hendrix College. She was awarded a residency at the Chautauqua School of Art and went on to receive an MFA from Western CT State University. Sarah has exhibited at First Street Gallery, NYC; Blue Mountain Gallery, NYC; Silvermine Arts Center, New Canaan, CT; Dallas Public Library, Dallas TX; The McKinney Avenue Contemporary, Dallas, TX. Her work is included in several private collections.

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