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LewAllen Galleries Presents 'Banners Of The Coast' Exhibition By Brian Rutenberg June 23-July 22

Submitted by Carol A. Clark on June 10, 2023 - 9:18 am



Phlox 3, 2016 oil on linen, 82 x 60 in. by Brian Rutenberg. Courtesy/LewAllen Galleries



Clambank 2, 2023 oil on linen, 36 1/8 x 55 in. by Brian Rutenberg. Courtesy/LewAllen Galleries

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SANTA FE — For more than four decades, Brian Rutenberg has made art that enthusiastically embraces the beauty of nature. His works meld the seen and the imagined in masterful combinations of visual grandeur that engage the eye with pleasure and touch the soul with joy.

LewAllen Galleries is presenting an exhibition of 20 recent oil paintings on linen and six paintings on paper by Rutenberg, whose beautiful and complex intuitions about the natural world are dazzling responses to his being a part of nature.

"Banners of the Coast" opens Friday, June 23 and extends through Saturday, July 22.

Rutenberg's paintings unabashedly assert the sheer lusciousness of paint and color. He proudly declares his "deep love for excess; moderation simply isn't in my vocabulary". He paints the landscape with utter physical immediacy and immersion in a manner that integrates the visceral and the intellectual.

This is part of his aesthetic philosophy learned early in his development as an artist, one that he describes as follows:

"If you are going to impinge on someone's consciousness, even for a second, you have to grab them by the earlobes with a composition that looks good from 25 feet away. Many of these new paintings feature large, bold forms at the edges quickly shifting to atmospheric space near the center, which is punctuated by percussive flecks of intense color."

In creating his art, Rutenberg extracts the structures and colors of landscape and reassembles them into a painterly universe all his own. While his work is populated with references to natural forms—trees, horizon, bodies of water, Rutenberg has moved further and further away from depicting the literal in order to explore what the artist refers to as "sustained meditations on the sheer transformative power of looking". Indeed, for him, the landscape remains a powerful impulse more than a particular subject matter.

His high-keyed oil paintings treat the landscape as a jumping off point into abstraction. These vibrant and energetically choreographed combinations of color and light exude an idiosyncratic muscularity that bursts forward from the surfaces of his canvases and excite the gaze and refresh the mind.

Indeed, with their exhilarating vibrancy and luminous clarity, these paintings have the remarkable capacity to feel as though the visual equivalence of the joy of being in nature has been achieved.



River Diver 7, 2023 oil on paper, 23 x 30 in. by Brian Rutenberg. Courtesy/LewAllen Galleries



Tempest Tells Me, 2023 oil on linen, 53 x 68 in. by Brian Rutenberg. Courtesy/LewAllen Galleries

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