



KENISE BARNES FINE ART

Press Release – Kent, CT

New exhibition: April 1 – May 14, 2023

Reception: Saturday April 1, 4 – 6 PM, public invited

Gallery hours: Thursday – Saturday 11:00 – 5:30, Sunday 12:00 – 4:00 and by appointment

The Presence of Absence – Brett Eberhardt and Gregory Hennen

Kenise Barnes Fine Art is pleased to present a two-person exhibition featuring oil paintings by Brett Eberhardt and Gregory Hennen. Eberhardt paints interiors and objects while Hennen paints from nature. This is the gallery's second show pairing Eberhardt and Hennen whose work, while very different in subject, finds a kinship in their closely observed attention and reverential treatment of subjects whether commonplace or grand.

In Eberhardt's paintings, interiors are vacant or sparsely inhabited by a single object or utilitarian furniture. In his paintings, human presence is established by the artifacts of over-painted studio walls, chipped woodwork, worn floorboards or a worktable softened by use. Eberhardt's humble interiors, lushly described in oil paint, depict the well-loved surfaces of his studio and home in a tender, devout manner.

Brett Eberhardt has spent most of the past three years making two grand scale paintings. The painting titled *Studio Corner and Floor* (60 x 85 inches) won the 12th Annual Manifest Prize awarded by the Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center, Cincinnati, OH. Two of Eberhardt's other paintings, *Two Tables* (98 x 75 inches) and *Elly's Drawing*, were in the ten finalists list and are included in this exhibition.

Bret Eberhardt has been the recipient of many grants and fellowships including a Pollock-Krasner Grant, Elizabeth Greenshields grant and a Rhode Island State Council Foundation grant. Eberhardt earned his MFA, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, and BFA, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI. His work has been widely shown in the United States and in Japan and Bulgaria. The artist who teaches in CT lives and works in Rhode Island. Eberhardt has been represented by the gallery since 2015.

Gregory Hennen paints the mountains and valleys of his Virginia home. A naturalist as well as a life-long painter, Hennen has a close relationship with his environment. Hennen says he paints to express "my love and respect for nature and to cultivate those feelings in others". On his daily walks he fills sketchbooks chronicling the land, the effect of passing light and seasonal changes. Each piece is *about* a landscape, not *of* a landscape as it does not necessarily depict an exact site or location. Finished paintings are often composites of several images that have evolved from a realistic portrayal to an abstract interpretation. By building up tens of thousands of small brushstrokes, Hennen's paintings are a complex collection of small marks gathered and made solid. By using a palette of close tonalities, the

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objects and surrounding space along with a carefully planned composition result in an all over patterning of color and shape that at times verges on abstraction. The landscape paintings are at once astoundingly complex and perfectly calm.

Gregory Hennen's work has been exhibited at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art, Virginia Beach, Huntsville Museum of Fine Art, Huntsville, AL, Museum of the Hudson Highlands, Cornwall, NY, New Britain Museum of American Art, New Britain, CT to name a few. Hennen attended School of Visual Arts, NY and earned an BFA, Eastern Connecticut State University. He lives and works in in Charlottesville, VA. Hennen has been represented by the galley since 2002.

Please contact Kenise Barnes, director: Kenise@kbfa.com with inquires or to arrange a preview of the exhibition.