

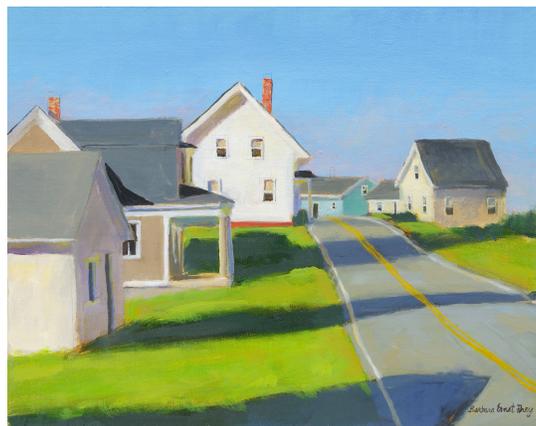
For Immediate Release
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BARBARA ERNST PREY *Oil on Water: Paintings of Land and Sea*

August 15 - September 31, 2015 Opening Reception: Saturday, August 15, 6 - 8 pm

Blue Water Fine Arts is pleased to present an exhibition of new oil paintings by internationally acclaimed artist Barbara Ernst Prey. *Oil on Water* will feature the new "Village View" series of small-scale plein air oil paintings, along with others completed this year. The series marks a shift in Prey's technique, and a return, after a forty-year hiatus, from works on paper into the oil paint medium.

For the past four decades, Prey has been known for her incisive, hyper-saturated watercolors that operate as a record of the artist's constant engagement with the multifaceted, ever-changing American landscape. In the past year, Prey has returned to the medium in which she first began her instruction, and created a new series of small-scale works on panel.



Keenly aware of her environment, the *Oil on Water* is a synthesis of Prey's dialogue with her surroundings in Port Clyde, ME and her observations on the same location's evolution over the course of 35 years. The exhibition presents a meditation on place. The creation of the "Village View" series presented Prey the opportunity to revisit - in an entirely new technical way - the pathways, architectural structures, and vistas she had seen for decades and her family had known before her.

The size of the panels and nature of the oil medium enabled Prey to experiment with levels of freedom and informality not afforded by watercolor. Prey carefully selected the outlooks for these works which when seen together, move along the progression along the main road through the town, but dislocate the viewer from a clean narrative as they feature the same structures and sections from differing viewpoints, times of day and environmental conditions.

The new works sustain Prey's connection with the familiar landscapes that have shaped her way of seeing, and reiterate the tension between the warmth and boldness of color, and the starkness of the scenes, dramatically devoid of any human presence besides the artist's or viewer's that recurs throughout her oeuvre.

Prey's technical acumen in the medium in which she began painting is at once apparent and is also informed by over 40 years of expertly creating pieces in one of the least forgiving media, watercolors. Most notably, the sense of immediacy characteristic of Prey's line, which makes her works on paper reverberate with motion carries over to express the environmental elements, sharp, dramatic light to pull viewers into moments inexplicably both static and in motion.

The experience of recreating whole familiar spaces with immediacy, while retaining the ability to edit in a more flexible way opened up the modes of production for painting, but of viewing as well.

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

As one of the leading artists of her generation, Prey's paintings are included in some of the most important public and private collections around the world including The White House, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Brooklyn Museum, The Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Farnsworth Art Museum, Williams College Museum of Art, Hood Museum of Art Dartmouth College, The Taiwan Museum of Art, New York Historical Society, the Henry Luce Foundation, Bush Presidential Library and Center and The Reader's Digest Collection. Her work is owned by private collectors and celebrities including President and Mrs. George W. Bush, Nobel Laureate Dr. and Mrs. James Watson, Ambassador and Mrs. Craig Stapleton, Prince and Princess Johannes Lobkowitz, Orlando Bloom and Tom Hanks. As a spokesperson for American Art, she was invited to lecture at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. for the Winslow Homer exhibit, at the Corcoran Gallery of Art for the John Singer Sargent exhibit, at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid on American Art and at Dartmouth College. She is an art blogger for The Huffington Post. She is Adjunct Faculty at Williams College.

Prey was recently honored when NASA commissioned her to paint four paintings for their collection. The *x-43*, the fastest aircraft in the world, was included in the Smithsonian Institution's Traveling Museum Exhibit *NASA/ART: 50 Years* at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C. NASA invited her to be the artist spokesperson for the exhibit and she was featured on *The CBS Evening News*. Her other NASA commissions include: *Columbia Tribute*, to commemorate the anniversary of the Columbia tragedy; the *International Space Station*, which is on exhibit with her painting *Columbia Tribute* at the Kennedy Space Center; and *Shuttle Discovery: Return to Flight*. Prey joins an elite group of American artists who have been invited by NASA to document the history of space exploration including Norman Rockwell and Robert Rauschenberg.

Prey is an artistic ambassador for the United States, chosen to participate since 2004 in the United States Arts in Embassies Program. At the U.S. Embassy in Paris she was the only living American painter exhibited with prominent American masters Homer, Ryder and Sargent. The U.S. Ambassador to Spain requested a special exhibit of her paintings for the U.S. Embassy in Madrid. Her artwork is on exhibit in many U.S. Embassies and Consulates worldwide including: Hong Kong, Prague, Seoul, Baghdad, Abu Dhabi, Bogotá, Mexico City, Athens, Cairo and Rangoon. Prey was honored with the Senate's "Women of Distinction Award", a tribute to outstanding New York women. She joins previous honorees Susan B. Anthony, Harriet Tubman and Eleanor Roosevelt.

Prey graduated from Williams College where she studied with Lane Faison and has a masters degree from Harvard University where she was able to continue her art history studies. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and a Henry Luce Foundation grant for her work which enabled her to travel, study and exhibit extensively in Europe and Asia which continues to influence her work.

Prey's artwork has been featured and discussed in numerous books, publications, radio and television programs including *The CBS Evening News*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *BBC Worldwide*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Sun*, *Newsday*, *The Boston Globe*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, *Larry King Live*, *PBS*, *NPR*, *Paula Zahn Now*, *CNN News Sunday*, *AP and Reuters Newswire*, *The New York Post*, *The Daily News*, *The International Art Newspaper*, *Harvard Magazine*, *Artforum*, *ArtNews*, *Forbes* and *NBC's Extra*.

Above: Barbara Ernst Prey *9 a.m. (Early Morning)*, 2015, Watercolor and Drybrush on Paper, 28 x 40 inches