



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Deborah Martin – American Painter (b. Boston 1961)

The Kobalt Gallery is pleased to present: “Narrow Lands”

Paintings by Deborah Martin. July 19 – 30, 2013

Opening Reception July 19th 2013

At the intersection of memory and disintegration lie the homes and built structures of the “Narrow Lands” – an architectural geography of history and time along the Outer Cape.

Along this thin spiral of land and water, the shifting of sand and silt and spray create inexorable change in natural terrain – a relentless force of transformation that likewise erodes, reclaims, and reconstitutes the people and structures of Provincetown.

In the series titled “Narrow Lands” Martin explores the decomposition and erosion of built structures on the Outer Cape – homes that have been historically maintained, as well as those abandoned for reclamation by nature or by sale of the land. These poignant and often haunting images are the premise for Martin’s oil paintings.

Martin’s work dwells within a compositional formality – a visitor’s sidewalk stance that captures the essentially public vista of driveway, yard, front porch – yet her portraitist’s eye conjures an emotional complexity nearly operatic in scope: within the silent, vacant architecture, human drama seems to exist more powerfully in allusion.

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Deborah Martin

ARTIST STATEMENT

As a child the fondest memories I have are those spent on Cape Cod with my younger brother Ken. My Grandpa Zett (Zven Zetterlund) would rent a cottage in Dennis Port each year alongside his best friend Gordon Grey and his girlfriend Edna.

It seemed to me that Grandpa Zett new how to have a good time. He loved to drink, fish and take the boat out. Life seemed like a party compared to my home life outside of Philadelphia.

My Uncle Eric Zetturlund and his wife Stell built a home in Sandwich, MA. Eric was a builder and built his own fishing boat out of wood. My memories of spending time with him on the Cape were jovial. He loved to sing silly songs and make wooden board games.

Although our visits to Cape Cod were few- they remain to this day the fondest memories of my childhood.

As a young adult I was to return to the Cape regularly while attending the Museum School in Boston. The painting titled "Ships Way" along with the interiors of this house (Captain John Simmons Interiors) are specific to a house in Provincetown I rented with a gang of girls way "back in the day". This house now lies abandoned. Oddly enough the memories of staying in this house did not surface until after I completed the paintings.

Later in life after spending several years in Manhattan I found myself back on the Cape again. At first I spent the summer only as a "Townie" then back to the city.

Eventually I came to believe that I could live and work in Provincetown year round. For 6 seasons during the 90's I became a local fixture. During this time I owned a painting company painting houses in Provincetown, Truro and Welfleet.

I left Provincetown for Los Angeles in 2000.

My connection to the Cape will always be with me, I find myself returning again and again. It is a place of renewal for me.

ABOUT DEBORAH MARTIN

Deborah Martin (b. Boston 1961) has established a compelling dominion as portraitist of an archaic America. A site-specific artist, her work eulogizes the abandoned habitats and domestic landscapes of small town America. As a painter her work has been compared to that of the prominent American realist painters, Edward Hopper (1882-1967) and Andrew Wyeth (1917-2009).

Much of her practice emerges in collaborative conversation with writers and video artists, and takes form through exhibitions, installations and publications. She is recognized for several pivotal bodies of work: *Narrow Lands* (Provincetown, MA), *Home on the Strange: In Search of the Salton Sea* (Salton Sea, CA), and *America (U.S.)*. Her book *Home on the Strange: In Search of the Salton Sea* was published by Catalysis Projects and written by Amy Sather Smith (2010.)

Currently, Martin is living and working in California's Southern Mojave Desert documenting the unincorporated town of Wonder Valley. In this new body of work titled "Back of Beyond" Martin immortalizes a 21st century desert struggle against destruction. The publication based on this series of paintings is a collaborative effort between Martin and the Los Angeles Poet Nicky Sa-eun Schildkraut.

Deborah Martin has exhibited in galleries and Museums in New York, Provincetown, Boston and Los Angeles. Her work has been featured in prominent magazines including *art ltd.*, *New American Paintings Magazine*, *Palm Springs Life Magazine*, *Fabrik*, *Angeleno* and *Blue Canvas*. She is a recipient of the 2011 Orlowsky Freed Foundation Grant sponsored in part by the Lilian Orlowsky and William Freed Foundation Grant and the Provincetown Art Association and Museum.

Martin received her BFA and BS Masters of Arts in Teaching, Art Education from The Museum School of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University.

REVIEW

“Deborah Martin is blessed with a technique that allows her to portray space and the things in it with a quavering, almost feverish luminosity as she trains her eye on all forms of the American outback.

Martin is probably best known for her paintings of the blasted communities that surround the Salton Sea. But she paints other parts of the California desert as well, and has also painted the rural American south, the nether parts of Cape Cod, and other places in this country where society dissolves and individuals find solitude whether or not they seek it.

What interests Martin – whose pictures are full of human presence but devoid of humans – is not the mundane or the abject, but how habitation seems only to amplify the emptiness of the land itself. In this respect she extends Edward Hopper’s lonely realms into the context of “new topographic” photography.”

-Peter Frank, Los Angeles

More information about Deborah Martin please contact:

Francine D’Olimpio, Founder/Director

KOBALT Gallery
366 Commercial Street
Provincetown MA 02657
c. 617.893.0110

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