

## Anna Berlin

### *Sisters*

**October 14 - December 2, 2023**

Olympia is pleased to present *Sisters*, an exhibition of new paintings by Anna Berlin. It is the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery.

In 2021, Anna Berlin was awarded a Fulbright Research and Study Scholarship to Berlin, Germany, and has since painted between her new home and her family's house in New Jersey. The paintings in the exhibition weave Berlin's present life with the stories she grew up with about her family, alongside new understanding gained from independent research on her German-Jewish history. The paintings are of a grayscale world, where documentation becomes a form of storytelling, and storytelling documentation.

The works in *Sisters* use the monotone language of the bureaucratic documents she relied on in the first year abroad, such as tax forms, proofs of identity, and lists. The visual-verbal governmental speech was sometimes fraught with confusion as she shares her last name with the city, creating reverberations in the artist's imagination of past and present, person and place, self and family, family history and cultural history. In exploring her new home, the artist accessed a deeper connection to her family's past in Germany and especially on the role of documents and documentation— how they affected their status, imperiling and saving their lives, as they fled their homes in the 1930s and 1940s to escape the Second World War.

Alongside the personal and legal papers her grandparents brought with them to the US, some that were recently donated to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., there is also the oral; intergenerational memories that were passed along in car rides or at the kitchen table in New Jersey. Short, diaristic narratives accompany each painting on the Image List. Names of people and places blur together – Wasser, Berlin, New York, New Jersey – as the generations travel back and forth over water and over land.

Earlier this year, Anna Berlin and Olympia released an artist's book called *Notes from Berlin*, that is part memoir, part travelog, and part family history. It was printed in an edition of 100 copies and is available at the gallery.

**OLYMPIA**

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**Anna Berlin** is a painter currently living and working in Berlin, Germany. She received her BA from Mount Holyoke College in 2015 and her MFA from Boston University in 2020. In 2021, Anna received a Fulbright Scholarship for painting to The Universität der Künste Berlin. She has been a resident at The Vermont Studio Center and the Visual Arts at Chautauqua. Recent exhibitions have been at the SPRING/BREAK Art Fair, Olympia, Vacation Gallery, and The Painting Center. Anna is represented by Olympia in New York.