

Sarah Williams

Off-ramp Communities

October 3 – November 14, 2020

Moody Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new oil paintings by Sarah Williams, *Off-ramp Communities*. This is Williams' second solo exhibition at Moody Gallery. The exhibition is on view in the gallery October 3 - November 14, 2020 as well as online, featured on the gallery website at moodygallery.com.

The artist states- "It is my belief that art should originate through a painter's personal experiences in her home environment. I see my whole life as preparation for the way I paint and the work I am currently making. Even though my connection to the small town farm culture that shaped me as I grew up played a major role in how I approach these works, I believe they can speak to people from a variety of places and experiences.

My perception of a specific sense of place guides me while these local settings offer abundant material. Strong emotions can be prompted by a place. Over time, ways of life shape and define the people and the spaces in which they live. I am drawn to areas and structures that show character acquired from the history and memory of the people that formed that environment.

Aesthetically I am interested in light sources and the play of light on surfaces. This led me to paint nightscapes of familiar yet isolated and unremarkable buildings and scenes located in rural areas close to my home. I use darkness to edit out extraneous information and provide the viewer with the essence of the place. This approach applied to slightly familiar yet hauntingly isolated areas permits me to transform the common place and make the insignificant significant.

More and more I am realizing how this work unknowingly started as a way to deal with my homesickness when I moved away from my childhood home in North Missouri to pursue my MFA degree in a southern urban setting. Even though I eventually took a job back in my home region, I am understanding that I'll never be home again in many ways. But it's this distance that allows me to really see and be aware of my hometown in a way I wouldn't be able to otherwise. My pride and passion for the rural Midwest is still strong but it's interesting to see it come through in my paintings now more from something like a visitor's perspective.

While my current paintings are beginning to act as this strange kind of souvenir of the places I left and the structures and things I know most intimately, I also love seeing how people from other regions and backgrounds relate to my work. I'm finding the more specific I can be, the more universal the work somehow becomes. I hope my work allows people to think about where they come from and take pride in the collective identity of their home region". --Sarah Williams

Sarah Williams (b. Kansas City, MO, 1984) currently lives and works in Springfield, MO. She earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting and drawing from the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas (2009) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Studio Art from William Woods University, Fulton, MO (2006). Her paintings have been included in exhibitions in Texas at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas; Art Museum of South Texas; Tyler Museum of Art; The Grace Museum; and the Galveston Arts Center, as well as at the Nicolaysen Art Museum, WY; Albrecht-

Kemper Museum of Art, MO; and Elmhurst Art Museum, IL. She had held artist residencies at The Studios of Key West, FL (2020); Millay Colony of the Arts, NY (2019); Willapa Bay, WA (2016); Ucross Foundation, WY (2013); and Vermont Studio Center, VT (2010). Williams is an Associate Professor at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO.

The gallery is open by appointment only. To arrange a viewing of the exhibition please call or email the gallery at 713-526-9911 or info@moodygallery.com.