

**Sarah Williams**

*Close to Home*

March 15 – April 26, 2025

Reception for the Artist Saturday, March 15, 3-5 pm, Artist Talk 4 pm

Moody Gallery is pleased to present *Close to Home*, an exhibition of twenty-four new oil paintings by Sarah Williams. This marks her fourth solo exhibition with the gallery which will be on view March 15 – April 26, 2025.

Williams states- "In this new body of work, I continue to use my paintings as a way to honor my own regional history which I will always tie to my upbringing in North Missouri. I now realize that while these paintings started as a way to deal with the homesickness I felt after leaving my childhood hometown to pursue an MFA degree in an urban setting, it has become a way of creating some strange kind of souvenir of the places I left and the structures and things I knew most intimately. Even though I eventually took a job back in my home region, I've come to understand that in many ways, I'll never be home again.

This distance does, however, allow me to really see my home and be aware of my new role as a visitor in a way I wouldn't be able to otherwise. My pride and passion for the rural Midwest remains as strong as it ever was, but now that comes through in my paintings like a witness' perspective. Each time I return home to visit family; I notice that important landmarks are gone or have drastically changed. As a Midwesterner, I've always oriented myself on unique structures or distinctive features of the land. When an entire city block of hundred-plus-year-old buildings falls or significant homes or trees are demolished, I feel my internal compass shift. When so much else feels uncertain, using my home place as a way to center myself has felt steadying and necessary.

I'm aware of how, over time, ways of life shape and define people and the places in which they live. Making these paintings helps me consider whether disappearance can be meaningful. And if so, in what way it's meaningful for my home community and for myself. I'm considering where I'll find "home" again and where I can "go back" to when trying to center myself.

All places acquire layers of history. I'm hopeful that the shift I'm observing in my hometown is a cycle that has occurred before in one way or another. Maybe it looks different to a current resident than a visitor."

Sarah Williams (b. Kansas City, MO, 1984) was raised in Brookfield, MO and currently lives and works in Springfield, MO. She received an MFA degree in Painting and Drawing from the University of North Texas, Denton, TX (2009) and a BFA degree in Studio Art from William Woods University, Fulton, MO (2006). Williams' work has been included in solo exhibitions at the Art Museum of Southeast Texas; Galveston Arts Center; Nicolaysen Art Museum, Casper, WY; and the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art, St. Joseph, MO. Her work is included in numerous collections including the Art Museum of Southeast Texas; Art Museum of South Texas; Tyler Museum of Art; Grace Museum; Old Jail Art Center, Nicolaysen Art Museum, WY; University of North Texas, Denton, TX; William Woods University, Fulton, MO; and the Evansville Museum of Arts, History and Science, IN. She has 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 Professor of Painting at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO.

Sarah Williams | *Close to Home* can be viewed online at [www.moodygallery.com](http://www.moodygallery.com). For more information, please call or email the gallery at 713-526-9911 or [info@moodygallery.com](mailto:info@moodygallery.com). Moody Gallery is open Tuesday - Friday 10:30 am – 5:00 pm and Saturday 11:00 am – 5:00 pm.