

ALAN BRAY

April 30 – May 31, 2014

reception: Thursday, May 1, 6-8 p.m.

I have always found it exciting and mysterious to just sit in some ordinary place and give myself to it for hours. I try to be there completely and let that place swallow me up in its rhythm, which goes on every hour of every day, with or without me. — Alan Bray

Garvey | Simon is pleased to present ALAN BRAY, an exhibition highlighting the artist's newest casein tempera landscape paintings. This will be Bray's seventh solo show in New York and his first with Garvey | Simon Art Access. **The opening reception will be held on Thursday, May 1, from 6-8pm; the artist will be present.**

From small-town, central Maine, Alan Bray has earned a national reputation as one of the most poetic and visionary contemporary painters of New England. His mystical paintings quietly celebrate the phenomena and intricacy of nature in the ordinary. Particularities of place, such as the branching of trees, the drifting and melting of snow and the meandering flow of water reveal their structures to him. He incorporates elements of memory and dream to achieve interconnectedness between what is seen and what is deeply known.

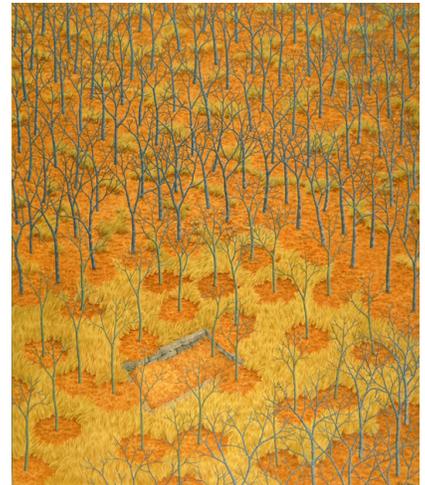
The spirit of discovery from Bray's childhood adventures in the Maine woods and the meditative maturity he learned from Italian Renaissance masters meld together as fuel and fodder for his quietly peculiar compositions. After studying at the Art Institute of Boston, and the University of Southern Maine, Bray traveled to Italy in the early 1970s to study painting at the Villa Schifanoia Graduate School of Fine Arts in Florence. That experience continues to significantly inform his work to this day. It was in Italy that he adopted a

new medium: casein tempera, a milk-based tempera paint that has virtually no drying time. Necessarily, his paintings consist of thousands of tiny brush strokes, built up in layers, out of which his



Windbreak, 2013, 18 x 24 inches.

vision advances from the foundation of a mirror-smooth void of white ground. *The New Yorker* described his work as "meditations on landscape that are cool, elegant, and blessedly devoid of prettiness... [They] evoke nature's majesty but drain away its wildness, suggesting something of the poise and repose of Giotto or Mantegna."



Ghosts, 2013, 24 x 20 inches.

As a naturalist and painter alike, Bray is interested in what ordinarily goes unobserved. "I paint what is right around me," he says. "Occasionally it's a big subject, but more often it's a bird's nest or a farm pond." Bray's choice of humble vistas (a cluster of pines rather than coastal Maine seascapes) belies the rich and engaging soul found in his paintings, making them anything but ordinary.

What seems like a nice little landscape painting becomes increasingly odd the longer you look at it. [Bray] captures the enigmatic quality of the ordinary and the commonplace. And he's so sure of himself and what he's doing, he doesn't have to show it off. — Theodore Wolff, Christian Science Monitor critic

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