

MATTEAWAN GALLERY

Susan English

Porous Light

July 9 – August 21, 2016

Opening reception Saturday, July 9, 6-9 pm

Matteawan Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition of paintings and works on paper by Susan English. The exhibition runs through August 21. English's work has been previously included in Matteawan Gallery exhibitions *Elemental* in 2014 and *The UV Portfolio* in 2013.

Susan English's work is inspired by light, and she is a keen observer of the effects of light in relation to nature and architecture. Her observations are transformed into colors and surfaces in her abstract paintings. English's recent paintings are influenced by the environment around her, whether it be the Hudson Highlands, New York City, or the Maine coast. She writes that "landscapes condense into shapes of color for me: when I look at a mountain across the river I see its blue shadow as a separate solid, a discrete entity. I will try to precisely determine what that color is, its density, its timbre and how I would make and evoke this expression of light and mass."

The exhibition's title *Porous Light* refers to both the process of creating English's paintings and also to the idea of putting oneself in the path of light, feeling oneself in the present, and for a moment dissolving ego and self and becoming the thing that one is observing. In our over-stimulated digital age this type of experience is very important to English, who regularly walks in the woods or by the river, immersing herself in the natural world.

English's paintings have an unusually rich surface texture and color, which is created by pouring layers of tinted polymer on panels. The poured polymer mimics nature: a layer of paint hardens like ice or mud, its thickness and viscosity impacting how the surface dries. Within the surface are small inconsistencies that are like drawings; paint collects and coagulates and cracks are formed. These marks are the result of the process of pouring and letting layers of paint dry, and English embraces the delicate relationship between control and accident. She assembles the poured panels into horizontal or vertical sequences to create a narrative of color, space, and light. The surfaces range from dull to glossy, either absorbing or reflecting the light, existing always in relationship to the light in the room or the position of the viewer. In this way her work relates to Light and Space artists such as James Turrell and Robert Irwin, artists whose work inspires her.

Susan English's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Littlejohn Contemporary, NYC; Theo Ganz Studio, Van Brunt Gallery, Beacon, NY; and Concrete Gallery, Cold Spring, NY. Group exhibitions include *Abstraction: New Modernism* at Ann Street Gallery in Newburgh, NY in 2013; *Currents: Contemporary Abstract Art in the Hudson Valley* at the Edward Hopper House Gallery in Nyack, NY in 2012; and *Far and Wide* at the Woodstock Artists Association and Museum in Woodstock, NY in 2012. In September 2016 English will be participating in an artist residency at Saltonstall Foundation for the Arts in Ithaca, NY. She received an MFA from Hunter College in New York City and a BA from Hamilton College, Clinton, NY. She lives and works in Cold Spring, NY.

For additional information please contact Karlyn Benson at info@matteawan.com.

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