

DOROTHY KNOWLES



A SENSE OF PLACE

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APRIL 25TH TO
MAY 23RD, 2009

MIRIAM SHIELL FINE ART

FRONT COVER: TOFINO SERIES #3 2008, Acrylic on canvas 60 x 72" / 152.5 x 183cm



MOUNTAINS AND WATER
2008, Acrylic on canvas
48 x 72" / 122 x 183cm

"A sense of place, which has always been important to me, is also important to my audience. People connect with and are curious about the location of the images in the paintings." - Dorothy Knowles

This quote of Dorothy's appeared in the Magenta Foundations' *Carte Blanche: Painting* catalogue (2008) and the appropriateness of it struck me. In the 30 years that I have worked with Dorothy's paintings, Canadians have always been fascinated with her vision of the country.



Although it has primarily been the extraordinary landscape of the Prairie, Dorothy has infrequently wandered further a field and this exhibition brings you her vision and insights

into yet another corner of the country, *Tofino, British Columbia*. A decade ago Dorothy visited Ontario and a small suite of paintings came out of that visit including those originating from her boat ride on the lake on a cloudy day. Likewise, the *Tofino* series has the same attraction of being up close and almost touching the sand and the water. Like the "big sky", the mountains and the foothills, water has been a major theme of her work.



'A Sense of Place' sums up a lifetime of painting. At 82 years old she has given us a greater understanding of the sheer beauty and vastness of the country. That is an achievement indeed and one increasingly worth recognizing for its historical and personal contribution.



Olivia

April, 2009

A STORM COMING UP
AT MURRY POINT
2003, Watercolour on paper
22 x 29.75" / 56 x 75.5cm

Forward by Dr. Roald Nasgaard

The 20th-century repeatedly sounded the death knell of painting. And in a technologically negotiated urbanized culture how could landscape painting be but quaint and nostalgic?

Yet, always, when we wake up each morning it is with our physical bodies and our five senses that we reach out to reclaim the world and to restore it to palpable reality. Knowing this, painting reconfirms the corporeality of the body and the artist's ability to bring matter to imaginative life. Painting therefore has continued to flourish. So too has the painting of people and houses and trees because the act of shaping matter into their depiction is to discover bodies and things more fully, to learn to inhabit their spaces, to embody a sense of their place. It is to achieve some sureness, as Robert Frost has said, "a clarification of life....in a momentary stay against confusion."

Dorothy Knowles' life-long subject is the landscape of the Canadian west. She has traveled the prairies and into the Rockies and continued onwards to the Pacific Ocean. But above all it is the parklands of northern Saskatchewan, their rolling plains and the rivers and valleys cutting into them that she has studied with loving attentiveness. This is her Algonquin Park and her north of Lake Superior. It is a farmed and man-shaped land, and yet too vast to walk, its horizons lying only at the distance encompassed by the imagination.



MURRAY POINT WITH A STRONG WEST WIND
2003, Watercolour on paper
22 x 29.75" / 56 x 75.5cm

It is a landscape sometimes measured by lines of fence posts, maybe the glimpse of a road, but otherwise it is as unpeopled as a Group of Seven wilderness. Only when Knowles lowers her eyes onto nearby reeds and grasses may we find a foothold, but the foreground is tangled and muddy.

Knowles has been celebrated both for her visual acuity and for her formal precision: her way with planar structures, her use of the brushstroke, and her respect for the fact of her paper or canvas support. With such techniques she builds her pictures in the tradition of Monet and Cézanne, or indeed in the spirit of colourfield abstraction as it has thrived on the prairies in the wake of Emma Lake. But her ways in and out of the landscape and pictorial space are many and varied and she can be as monumental as a dunescape by Mondrian or as intimate as Art Nouveau filigree.

Dr. Roald Nasgaard
April, 2009



EARLY FALL
2007, Acrylic on canvas
40 x 60" / 101.5 x 152.5cm



TANGLED FOREGROUND
2001, Acrylic on canvas
30 x 40" / 76 x 101.5cm



REEDS AT EMMA LAKE
2003, Watercolour on paper
22 x 29.75" / 56 x 75.5cm



LILIES AND REEDS
2008, Acrylic on canvas
48 x 72" / 122 x 183cm



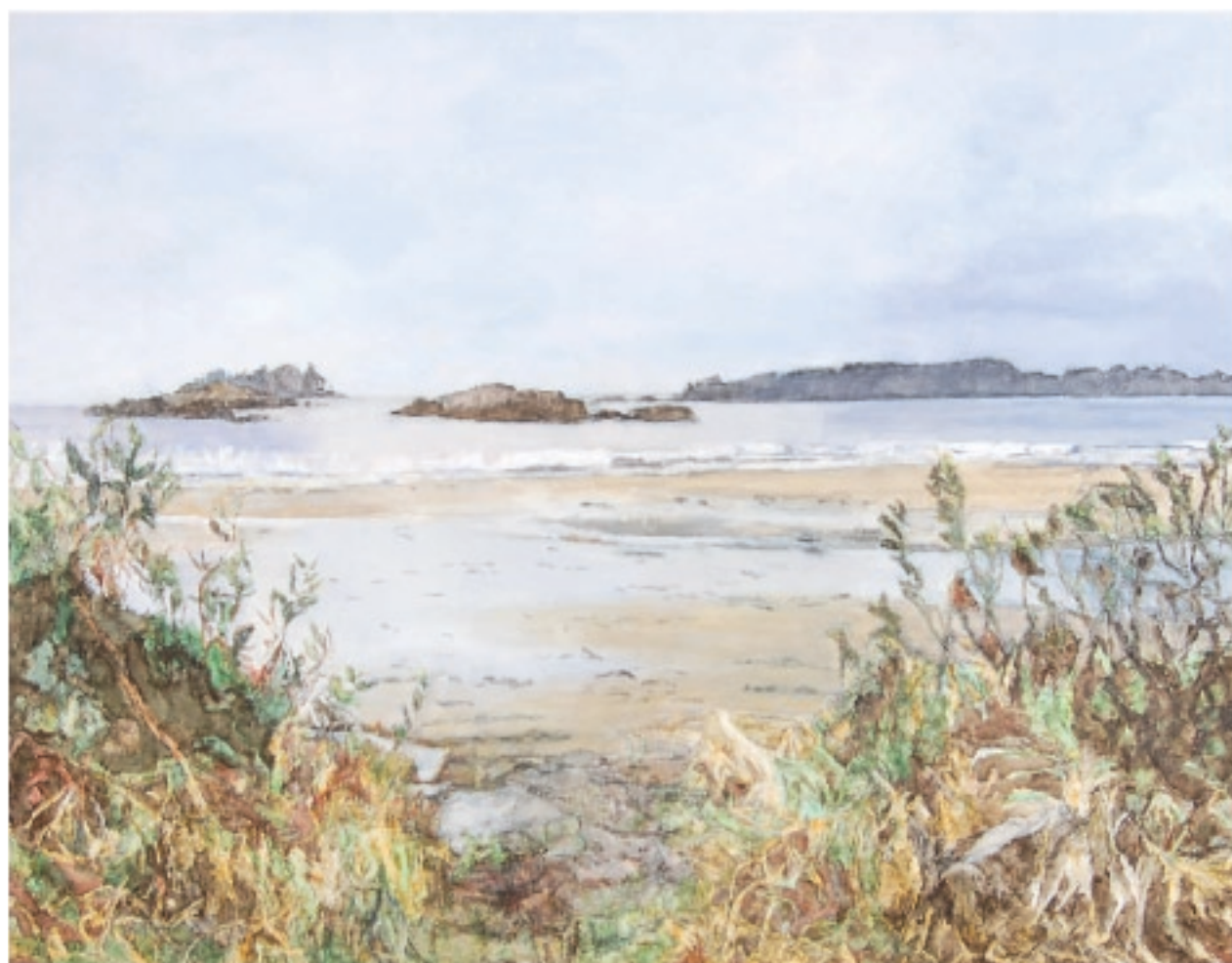
TOFINO SERIES #3
2008, Acrylic on canvas
60 x 72" / 152.5 x 183cm



CLOUDS TOUCHING THE MOUNTAINS

2008, Acrylic on canvas

48 x 72" / 122 x 183cm



TOFINO SERIES #4
2008, Acrylic on canvas
48 x 60" / 122 x 152.5cm



CLOUDS OVER THE PRARIE
2003, Acrylic on canvas
40 x 60" / 101.5 x 152.5cm



CLOUDS AND PRARIE
2008, Acrylic on canvas
48 x 60" / 122 x 152.5cm



A SHELTERED BAY ON A WINDY DAY
2003, Watercolour on paper
22 x 29.75" / 56 x 75.5cm



MOUNTAIN LAKE
1988, Acrylic on canvas
72 x 108" / 183 x 274.5cm

DOROTHY KNOWLES

EDUCATION

- 1948 Bachelor of Arts, Type C, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon
- 1956 - 69 Emma Lake Artist's Workshop led by Joseph Plaskett, Will Barnett, Clement Greenberg, Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Lawrence Alloway and Michael Steiner



SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, A Sense of Place, April 25 – May 23
- 2008 Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, AB, April 26- May 9
- 2007 Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, AB, Feb. 1-17
- 2006 Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, ON
- 2003 Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon
- 2003 Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, ON
- 1999 Institute for Modern and Contemporary Art, Calgary, AB, The Sky Paintings, Curator: Jeffrey Spalding
- 1996 Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, ON, Dorothy Knowles, 'Visits the Muskokas'
- 1994 Touring Exhibition: Mendel Art Gallery, Edmonton Art Gallery, Glenbow Museum, Whyte Museum, Dorothy Knowles, Catalog essay by Bruce Grenville
- 1982 Touring Exhibition: organized by Edmonton Art Gallery to: Centre Saidye Bronfman, Montreal; Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina; Art Gallery of Windsor, Windsor; London Regional Art Galleries, London; Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Dorothy Knowles, 1964-1982 Curated and Catalog by Terry Fenton
- 1982 Waddington Galleries & Co. Inc., New York, New York, Dorothy Knowles, Paintings and Watercolours

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2004 Palm Springs Desert Museum, Clement Greenberg A Critic's Collection, Palm Springs, California, Oct.2
- 2003 Kenderdine Art Gallery, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Lodestar, RCA Show July 14 to August 24 2002, 2003 McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, ON, March 3 to 5, 2002, Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, SK, June 14 to September 2, 2002; Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, SK., Sept.27 to Jan. 12, 2003 Qu'Appelle, Tale of Two Valleys, June 14 - September 2, co-curated by Dan Ring and Robert Stacy
- 2001 Portland Art Museum, Portland Oregon, Clement Greenberg—A Critic's Collection
- 1997-98 Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, MB, May 30 to September 28, 1997 Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, SK, June 19 to August 16, 1998 Prairie Region Exhibition, Organized by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in cooperation with the Winnipeg Art Gallery
- 1996 Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Rediscovering the Landscape of the Americas, Curated by Alan Gussow and Gayle Maxon-Edgerton
- 1994 Windsor Art Gallery, Windsor, ON, Achieving the Modern: Canadian Abstract Painting and Design in the 50's
- 1995 Traveling show organized by Mendel Art Gallery, The Urban Prairie
- 1992 Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, Art Gallery Achieving the Modern: Canadian Abstract Painting and Design in the 1950s
- 1992 Concordia Art Gallery, Montreal, PQ, Robert Ayre: The Critic and the Collection
- 1978 Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton, AB, Modern Painting in Canada
- 1975 Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, ON, The Ontario Community Collects: A Survey of Canadian Paintings from 1976 to 1975
- 1968 National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, ON, 7th Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting, Catalogue introduction by William C. Seitz

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia
Art Gallery of Ontario
Art Gallery of Windsor
Boston Museum
Edmonton Art Gallery
Glenbow Museum, Calgary
Kamloops Art Gallery
Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery
Mackenzie Art Gallery
Mendel Art Gallery
Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal.
National Gallery of Canada
Portland Art Museum
Rideau Hall
Vancouver Art Gallery
Winnipeg Art Gallery
Various Corporate and Private collections

AWARDS

- 1982 Painting selected for Canada Postage Stamp
- 1982 Cited by Century Saskatoon for Award of Appreciation in the Arts
- 1987 Saskatchewan Award of Merit
- 1994 Honorary Degree Recipient, University of Regina
- 2004 Order of Canada
- 2005 Centennial Medal of Saskatchewan
- 2007 Canada Post Corporation honoring Dorothy Knowles with the inclusion of 2 paintings in their Art Series

BACK COVER: MOUNTAIN COLOURS
2001, Acrylic on canvas
30 x 40" / 76 x 101.5cm



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