

MALIN GALLERY



Foad Satterfield, *Woodfox #3*, 2016

Foad Satterfield: *Spaces Before Us - Unrestrained*

30 June - 08 September, 2022

515 West 29th Street, New York, NY

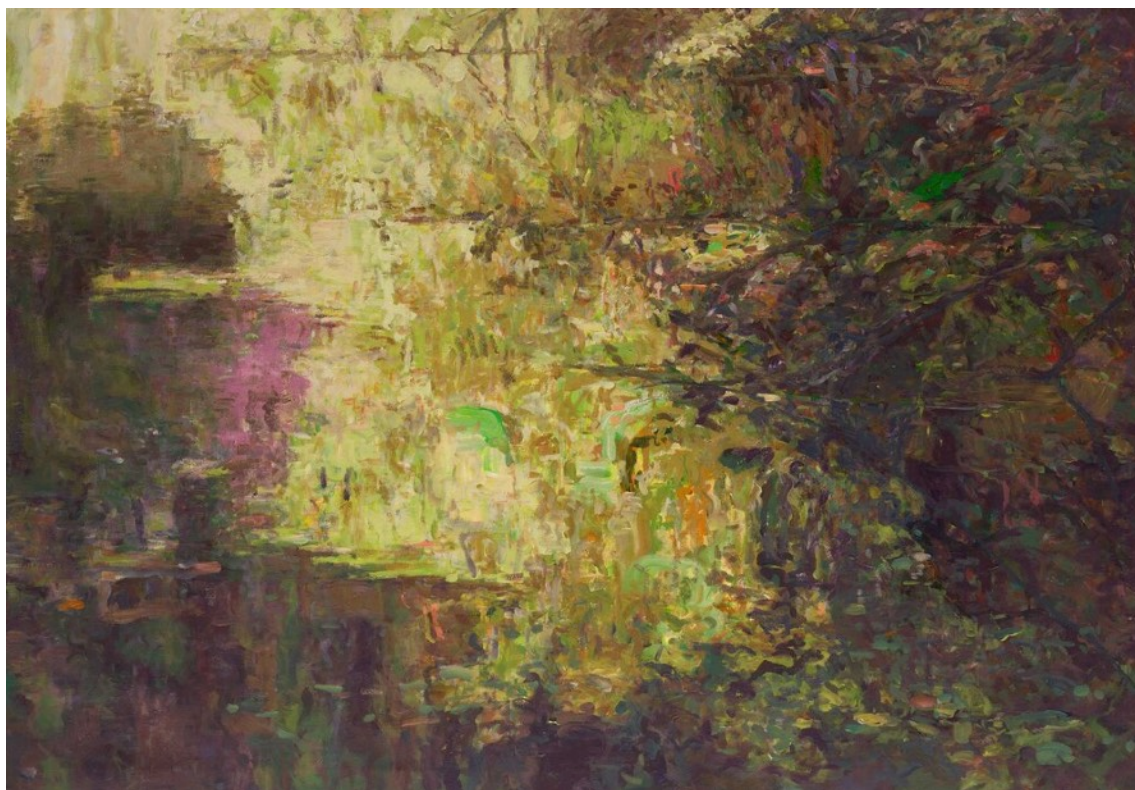
Malin Gallery | New York is pleased to present *Foad Satterfield: Spaces Before Us - Unrestrained*. On view through September 10, the exhibition features 12 large scale paintings on canvas, including two monumentally-sized diptychs. The paintings featured in *Spaces Before Us* manifest Satterfield's preternatural subject: dynamic yet contemplative landscapes pushed to the edge of frank abstraction. Although many of the works retain discernible references to the natural environment, these elements serve primarily as starting points for Satterfield's painterly investigations. He views his paintings as both meditative and aesthetic endeavors. Based in Oakland for over four decades, he sees his artistic engagement with nature as spiritually and intellectually nourishing:

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My morning meditations are rich in their clarity and urgency, I feel it is important to record these intuitive flashes so as not to lose them. In them, I see painting as a ritual - the making of an object, sacred and profound; the material's raw substances; and the substrate of the object as an idea of painting...

Drawing upon deep influences from the *en plein air* tradition, Impressionism, Abstract Expressionism and Northern California landscape painting, Satterfield has devoted decades to developing his own singular approach to near-abstract landscapes. In an intuitive reversal, Satterfield defines his style of painting as “abstractions with landscapes superimposed.”

Born in Orange, Texas in 1945, Satterfield spent his formative years in Lake Charles, Louisiana and rural Texas. As a child, Satterfield was taken with these distinctive natural environments, fueling a lifelong interest in experimentation with landscape. Satterfield began his formal



Foad Satterfield, *Jewel Lake #2*, 2018

training intending to study textiles and pursue fashion design. Although his interests ultimately evolved towards painting, he continues to view the materiality of textiles as a key reference point, noting that:

When a garment is fashioned from cloth, the woof and warp provide structure for support. Similarly, brushstrokes, seen and unseen, build a foundation, providing an intuitive atmosphere that confounds the limited imagination as it opens to greater moments of discovery and revelation.

The intersections of the realms of sky, land and water have engaged Satterfield since his youth, when he was immersed in natural environments characterized by the streams, ponds and open skies of Texas and Louisiana. Attention to visual and material borders has persisted in his work and grown into a prevailing interest in conceptual interfaces and cultural / geographic boundaries. While Satterfield maintains juxtapositions of earth, water and sky as visual points of reference, his paintings feature an immersive perspective. Rather than examining them at a critical remove, the viewer inhabits Satterfield's landscapes within a sensorium of natural forms and no fixed position. Elements of sky or water are seen as glimpses or as reflections, and grounding remains elusive. Satterfield uses binary distinctions in a Gordian fashion, alternately emphasizing and disrupting his dichotomies. Addressing this dynamic, East Bay Area Artist and Curator Jan Wurm asks the following:

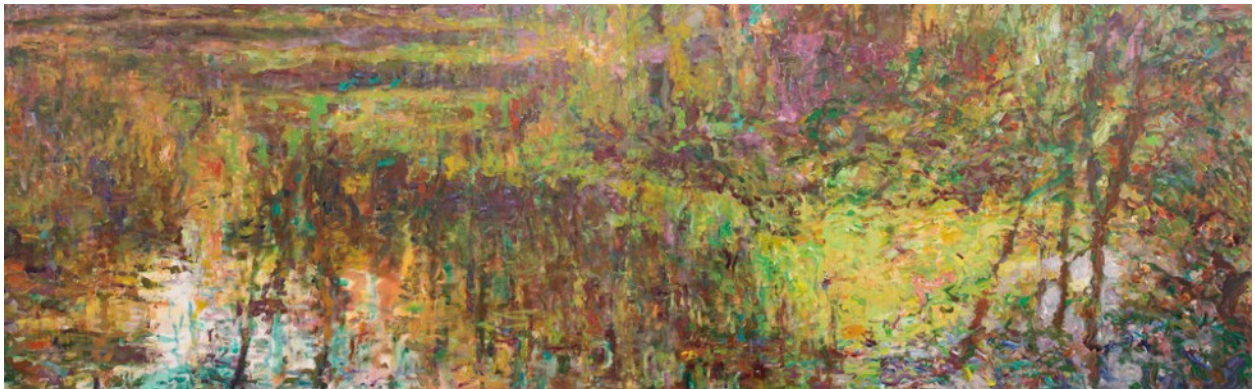
What if [Satterfield's] dualities are viewed like a call and response? Krik? Krak! Back and forth, the lead in of the Haitian Creole storyteller and the engaged listener, the riddle - the answer, in and out and in again - from left, from right, in light, in shadow - stroke from the left, stroke from the right. A call and response like an African gathering, like a song, like a dance, like a religious ritual leading into sacred territory.

Despite the absence of narration, Satterfield considers his work to be thematically rich. As meditations on the vitality and continuity of the natural world, his works point toward notions

of elegy, resilience and remembrance. Moreover, Satterfield values the salutary potential of his work with regards to personal, historical and collective trauma:

I am deeply moved by the suffering experienced by individuals, regions, and nations, and I am profoundly concerned about the destruction of our shared planet. As a black man subjected to harsh Jim Crow denials and hatred, forced to participate in the Vietnam War, with limited opportunity to engage and be part of a larger conversation...I am deeply committed to contributing to the mitigation, amelioration of the pain and ravaging of our planet and its people.

These dimensions of Satterfield's work are perhaps most overt in his *Woodfox* paintings, which were inspired by the life of Albert Woodfox. Born in the Tremé neighborhood of New Orleans, Woodfox joined the Black Panther party while imprisoned at the Angola State Penitentiary, the "bloodiest prison in the South." Unjustly convicted of murder in 1974, Woodfox served over 41 years in solitary confinement - longer than any other prisoner in U.S. history. Woodfox was released in 2019 at the age of 69. His memoir, *Solitary*, was a finalist for both the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. Of his *Heartwood* series, Satterfield has said, "I dedicate this body of work to all of my Ancestors and to Albert Woodfox. Consider these paintings conversations with these people who, in the face of injustice and hardship, found great inner strength and triumphed." The title of the current exhibition was similarly inspired by Woodfox's release.



Foad Satterfield, *Epic Jewel Lake* (diptych), 2017

Biography

Foad Satterfield (b. 1945, Orange, TX)

is an Oakland-based painter. Born in rural Texas in 1945, Satterfield spent his formative areas in Lake Charles, Louisiana. He received his BFA from Southern University in Baton Rouge. After a compulsory period serving with the U.S. Army during the Vietnam war, he received his MFA in Painting from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge in 1971.

Satterfield has held the position of Professor of Art at the Dominican

University of California in San Rafael, CA from 1980 to 2018, and he remains Professor Emeritus. He also served as Head Curator of the San Marcos Gallery at the Dominican University of California from 1980 to 2013.

Previous exhibitions including the following venues: Maybaum Gallery (San Francisco); Saint Mary's College Museum (CA); The Studio Shop (Burlingame, CA); 555 12th St. (Oakland, CA); San Marco Gallery (San Rafael, CA); Triton Museum (Santa Clara, CA); Joyce Gordon Gallery (Oakland, CA); Richmond Art Center (Richmond, CA); Studio 57 (Emeryville, CA); Porter Troupe Gallery (San Diego, CA); and Hatley Martin Gallery (San Francisco).





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