

Since 1973, a gallery promoting the work
of women artists and serving the community
through public events

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For Immediate Release:

DARLA BJORK

Fire Series: Recent Paintings

November 1 – November 26, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday Nov.3rd, 6-8pm

SOHO20 Chelsea Gallery
547 West 27th Street, Suite 301
New York, NY 10001



"Fire on the Mountain" 2010, encaustic & oil stick, 16" x 16"

SOHO20 Chelsea Gallery is pleased to present "Fire Series" new paintings by Darla Bjork. The exhibition is on view November 1 through November 26 with an opening reception on Thursday November 3rd.

Darla Bjork's new body of work, *Fire Series* reflects on the transformative nature of fire. Utilizing its symbols of death and destruction, purification and transformation, Bjork explores the element as a malleable substance.

Bjork's thick layering of paint and wax, as well as digging and scrapping of materials, add to the visceral qualities of these encaustic works. The vermilion and crimson raked across the surface seethe with a tender and unknown violence. Forming a solitary figure against the dirty white ground, the red marks gather in shapes of windowed-rectangles that ebb and flow in and out of focus.

As in her previous series *Water*, Bjork continues her fascination with the ephemeral qualities of weather. Influenced by the harsh conditions of her hometown in northern Minnesota, the severity of her work is akin to that of the elements.

Darla Bjork is a painter who has exhibited in the United States and Europe. She is also a psychiatrist who has had a private practice in New York City for many years. Her work has evolved from abstract portraits that reflected people she worked with in mental institutions to abstract landscapes influenced by her childhood in rural Minnesota and now by the view of the Catskill Mountains from her studio in Woodstock, NY. For years she painted oils on canvas but for the past six years has incorporated encaustic wax and then oil stick on wood panels

Her latest suite of paintings, *Fire Series*, turns from the element of Water, the theme of her last major exhibit, to fire with all its associations. The sense of an internal landscape is still present but the radiant blue hues are gone and replaced with what at times is a harsh deep cadmium red.

For more information on the exhibition or events please contact the gallery at 212.367.8994 or via email at soho20@verizon.net