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For Release: Immediately

GEORGE BILLIS GALLERY

KURT SOLMSSSEN

FEBRUARY 9 - MARCH 6, 2010

Artist **Kurt Solmssen** will exhibit a series of his landscape paintings titled *Changing Seasons*, at the **George Billis Gallery**, on the 2nd Floor of **555 West 25th Street**, between 10th and 11th Avenue, from **February 9th-March 6th, 2010**. The reception will be held at the gallery on **Thursday, February 11, from 6-8 PM**. Gallery hours are **Tuesday through Saturday, 10-6 PM**.



The Davis House in Snow, oil on linen, 46"x 120" diptych, 2009

subject matter, but the sophistication in the pictorial language in which he presents it, creating rich, fluid, celebratory paintings; masterful odes to the seasons.

Reaching beyond the conventions of realism, Kurt Solmssen's landscape paintings, with their saturated and almost abstracted forms, record much more than "just trees and skies and buildings." Solmssen uses the scenery of the Pacific Northwest, more specifically, the remote hamlet of Vaughn on the Puget Sound, as a departure point for his intimate memories to take poetic license in his work. What distinguishes his paintings is not so much their nostalgic

Solmssen advocates that "the surface of the painting, the physical presence, the mood and feeling of it, is really a big part of what it's about - not a political message, not a comment about other art movements, not an expression of irony." He is devoted to using a plein air technique, incorporating the elements into his processes, and ultimately his compositions. Solmssen constructs his own easels by attaching a hinged board to the back of the canvases, squatting down and painting the landscape in two separate pieces, stating, "It seemed too much to fit into the kind of rectangular canvas that I often paint...I actually painted the Winter Landscapes as it was snowing. An overhanging tree provided some cover but there was a lot of snow mixing with the paint."

Kurt Solmssen received his BFA from the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, attributing his technique largely to the Northeast location in which he was trained. His work is displayed in numerous private collections, including the Bakersfield Museum of Art and the Tacoma Art Museum, and has been reviewed in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and American Art Collector, among other publications. This is his third solo exhibition at the George Billis Gallery.

The George Billis Gallery marks its fourteenth year in the Chelsea art district and recently opened a second gallery in the burgeoning art district of Culver City in Los Angeles. For more information, please contact the gallery via e-mail at gallery@georgebillis.com or visit our website at www.georgebillis.com.

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