

AMERICAN
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ISSUE FEATURING
REINERT FINE ART
GALLERY FOCUS





KENNY HARRIS

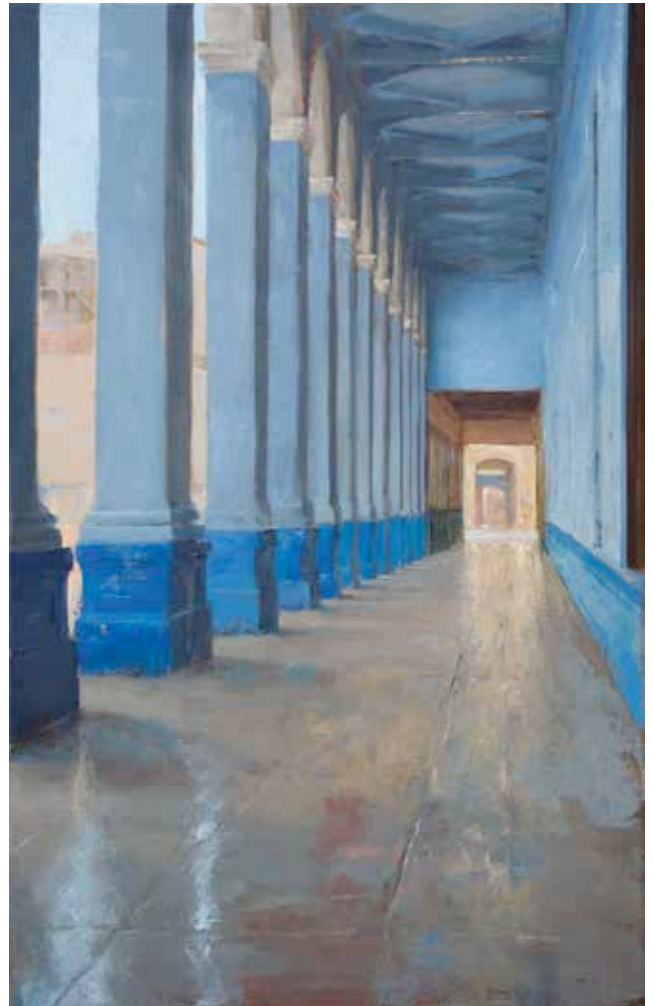
Place and time



Scan for VIDEO



1



2

Kenny Harris' paintings evoke our memories of space whether we have been in the places he paints or not. His spaces are invisibly inhabited by people who are no longer there. The walls and arcades still echo with their conversations. They are universal spaces despite their specificity.

In his book *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard wrote, "Inhabited space transcends geometrical space." The title of the book, alone, is an apt description of the built environment of Harris' paintings but it is the fact that people have come and gone and will come again that gives them presence.

In his paintings, the spaces have the patina of use.

The surfaces of the paintings recall the surfaces of the old walls he paints, rich in color and texture. There is little detail in his paintings, but his spaces are complete in our mind's eye.

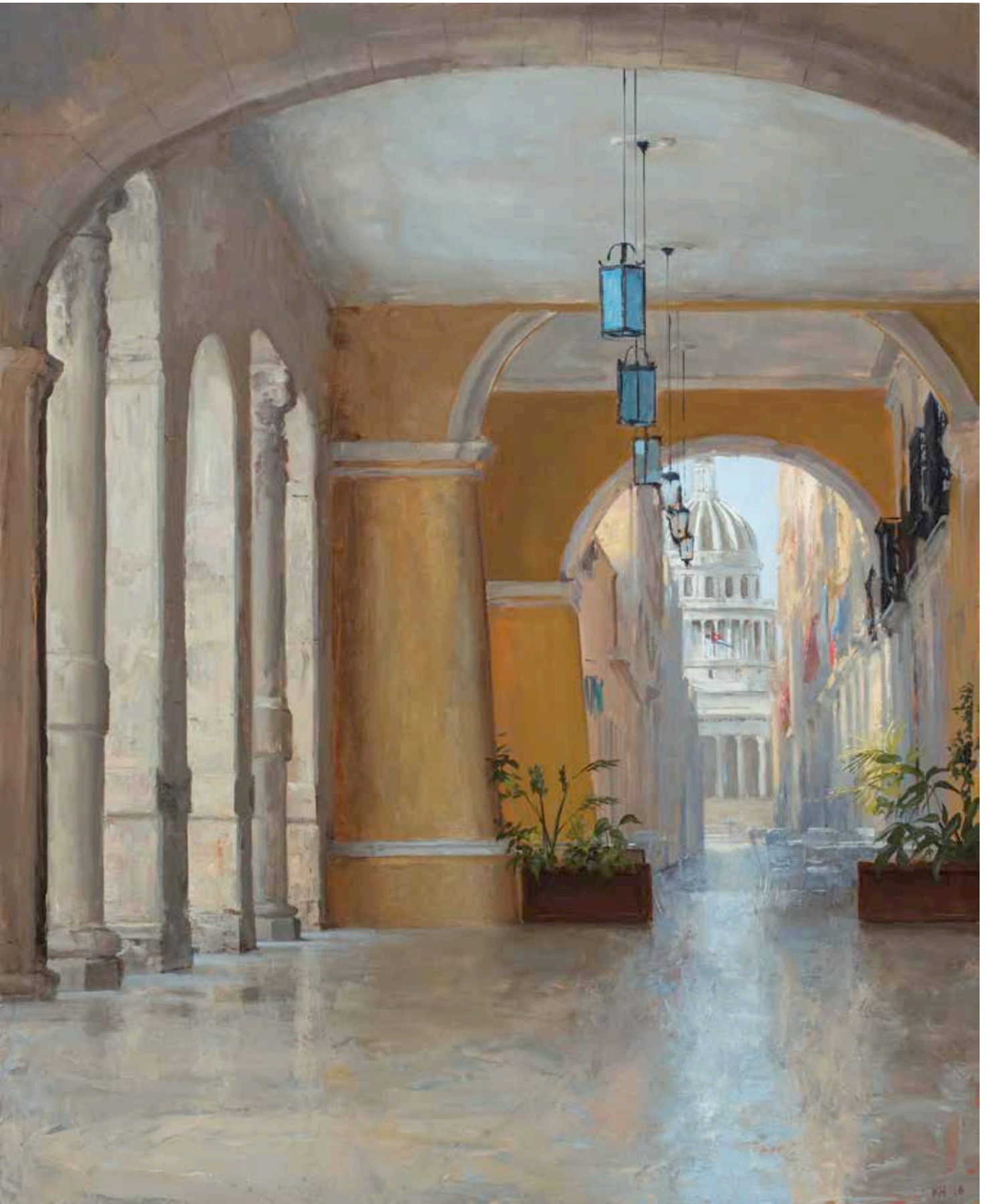
He says, "There's just something about painting a 3-foot-thick stone or plaster wall that has been there for centuries. It's typically irregular lighting conditions that speak to me. Also, irregularities in construction or details that you'd never see in houses in the U.S. are things that catch my eye."

His paintings of light and space are often of subjects in other countries. "I travel to reinvent the subjects I paint," he says, "seeking a fresh eye abroad

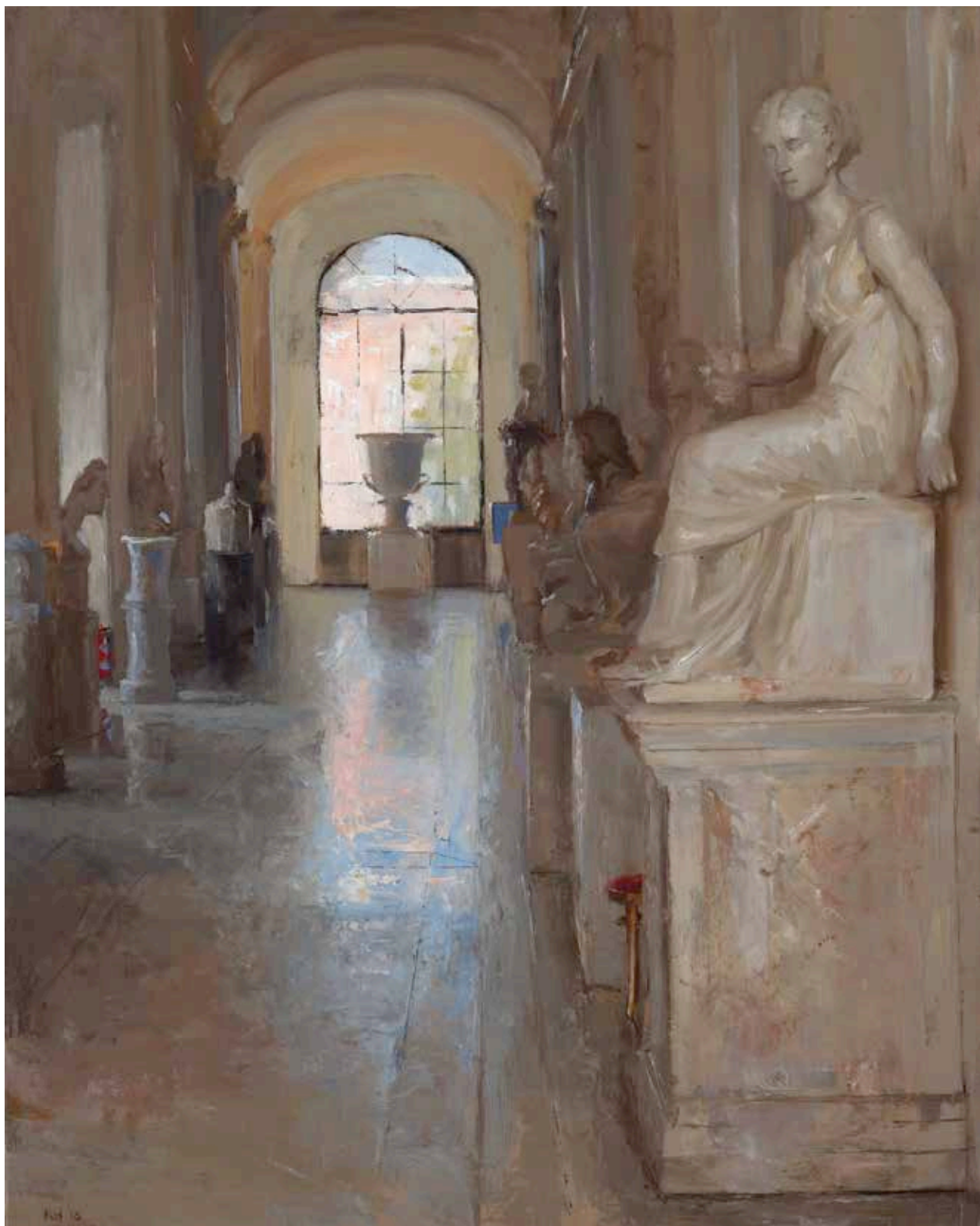
1
Washroom Lisbon,
oil on panel, 36 x 24"

2
Intransigent Will
(*Blue Arcade, Havana*),
oil, 48 x 30"

3
Capitolio, oil on panel,
50 x 40"







5

4
Hall of Mirrors, Havana,
oil on panel, 20 x 16"

5
Capitoline Hallway,
oil on panel, 20 x 16"

or upon return."

Hall of Mirrors, Havana is an intimate painting of a vast space made more so by being painted from a low angle. The softness of the indirect light masks the softness of the once crisp details of the elaborate decoration. Harris' lushly applied paint creates a space of its own, representing the three-dimensional space

and the reflected light in a vast two-dimensional poetic abstraction.

Washroom Lisbon is a mundane space among his grand spaces, but as graced by soft light as any of them.

Kenny Harris: New Paintings opens at George Billis Gallery in New York on February 7 and continues through March 4. ●