

# ALEXANDRE GALLERY

For Immediate Release – Updated November 6, 2015

## **JOHN WALKER: *Looking Out to Sea***

On view through December 22, 2015

Opening reception for the artist, Thursday, November 5, 5:30 to 7:30 pm

This exhibition will be accompanied by a 202 page fully-illustrated book published by the gallery surveying fifteen years of John Walker's paintings with primary text by William Corbett.

Contact the gallery to pre-order the book prior to its late November 2015 release.



John Walker, *Passage*, 2015, oil on canvas, 84 x 66 inches

Alexandre Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of recent paintings by John Walker (b. 1939). The show includes eight large-scale paintings (84 x 66 and 72 x 60 inches) and related smaller works completed over the past two years. Three earlier paintings (2002, 2004 and 2007) are on view in an adjacent second gallery along with a selection of small-scaled “Bingo” card paintings on board. This exhibit marks the gallery’s second for the British-born American, and its first one-person show in its newly expanded gallery space at 724 Fifth Avenue.

For over fifteen years Walker’s abstract paintings have referenced the landscape and seacoast around his studio in mid-coast Maine. Water, trees, shore, rocks, mud, sky, sun and moon – with an emphasis on the physicality of the natural world – are among his subjects. Through Walker’s extended emersion in this landscape, a personal iconography has emerged – symbols representing the cycles, patterns and elements of nature. Zigzags, stripes, dots, circles, organic and geometric shapes, and flat areas of color are painted with a bold deliberateness in combination with naturalistic flourishes and areas of deep space. All is unified by a rich painterly surface that has characterized Walker’s work for decades. Recent titles include *Black Flow*, *Cascade*, *Passage*, *The Point in Bloom* and *Sea Smoke*.

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In 2014 the critic John Goodrich wrote of Walker's work:

*Few painters have expanded the original impulses of Abstract Expressionism in more directions than John Walker. During the course of his half-century of painting, he has incorporated into his canvases written poetry, concise renderings of skulls and allusions to both aboriginal art and the old masters. . . . Although moodily abstracted, his images from the last decade have been consistently inspired by observations of the real. His urgent stokes and brooding color, moreover, reveal a certain discipline of form; their forces build in ways that create discrete, tangible presences in his paintings. . . . One senses land against shimmering expanses, the remoteness of the sun and sky, and the isolation of a tree-covered island.*

And Julian Kreimer has written:

*He (Walker) moves easily between representational and abstract imagery, and he mixes seemingly contradictory inclinations. For example, his process is messy and engaged, but his compositions are deliberate and playful; his work shifts suddenly from somber to slapstick; he has a sincere belief in painting's transcendent power but embraces absurdist anti-painting gestures.*

John Walker (American) was born in Birmingham, England in 1939. In 1969 he first moved to New York on a Harkness Fellowship. Most recently (1993 to 2015) Walker taught at Boston University, where he was director of the Graduate Painting Program until his retirement earlier this year. His work has been the subject of more than fifty one-person exhibitions in the States and internationally and is in the permanent collections of major museums including the Guggenheim, Metropolitan Museum of Art, MoMA, the Phillips Collection, which presented exhibitions of his work in 1982 and 2002, and the Tate in London.

Alexandre Fine Art Inc. was founded in 1996 and has operated Alexandre Gallery since 2001. Originally located in the Fuller Building, the gallery relocated this summer to 724 Fifth Avenue. Directed by Phil Alexandre and Marie Evans, both of whom worked for the legendary Terry Dintenfass, the gallery specializes in early 20<sup>th</sup> century American Art with an emphasis on the Stieglitz Group. It also represents a select group of mid and late career contemporary artists and maintains an active exhibition and publication program.



John Walker, *Out to Sea Study I*, 2013-2015,  
charcoal, ink, and chalk on paper, 40 x 32 inches