

Lois Dodd | Landscapes and Structures

A Painting Survey

April 10 through May 30, 2008

Reception for the artist Thursday, April 10, from 5 to 7 pm

For over fifty years Lois Dodd has painted her immediate everyday surrounds at the places she has chosen to live: New York's Lower East Side, rural mid-coast Maine, and the Delaware Water Gap. Focusing on the latter two locations, this exhibition will present the motifs of structures in the landscape and structures within the landscape that she has returned to again and again over her career. The exhibition will be comprised of over forty-five mostly small-scaled oil paintings on wood or masonite panels. These portable panels are part of a spontaneous working method that enables Dodd to capture the atmosphere of a day or the mood of an evening—working beside a road, in a quarry, or on a neighbor's property.

With titles such as *House and Barn* (1967), *Barn Door and Chicken House* (1970), *Roses and New Shingles* (1984), *Snow and Spruce* (1989), and *Apple Blossoms Behind Out Buildings* (2007), Dodd presents her subjects with an unsentimental, no-nonsense directness grounded in observation, yet boldly simplified with the active, painterly marks and surfaces of early American and European modernism. Grace Glueck, writing in a 2003 review of the gallery's first Dodd show, says:

Translating the commonplace into art has long been the province of Lois Dodd . . . who celebrates the richness of everyday life. . . Simple as the work seems, it touches the transcendental.

The painter and critic Robert Berling similarly noted in 2004:

One feels that she downplays detailed, literal description not out of some modernist imperative but, as the Shaker hymn puts it, because she has "a gift to be simple" and with that temperamental dispensation, "a gift to be free." . . . (and) she knows just when to stop—a sure sign of grace.

Lois Dodd studied at The Cooper Union in the late 1940s. In 1952 she was one of the five founding members of the legendary Tanager Gallery, the first artist run gallery in New York. It was also in the early 1950s that Dodd began to spend every summer in Maine, with a loose community of representational artists in and around Lincolnville that included Rackstraw Downes, Yvonne Jacquette, Alex Katz, and Neil Welliver, among others.

Dodd is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Academy of Design. Since 1954 her work has been the subject of over 50 one-person exhibitions, and her work is included in many major museum collections. In 1992 she retired from teaching at Brooklyn College.

Also on view at the Center for Maine Contemporary Art (April 26 through July 19) is *Lois Dodd: Directly Considered*, a survey exhibition of paintings spanning Dodd's career.