



May 28, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In June, Rehs Contemporary will present *A Noble Pursuit: The Majestic Landscapes of Ken Salaz* while celebrating the successful release of his book, *Landscapes in Oil*, a comprehensive guide to classical landscape painting. Salaz, author and painter, assembled a who's who of today's finest artists to accompany him on his mission to elevate the genre of contemporary landscape painting, while bringing awareness to a cause which has always been deeply engrained within him – the preservation of our environment.

As a partial descendant of the Yaqui tribe, Salaz spent much of his childhood in the Southwestern United States and Mexico. His father's Native American roots were wholly responsible for instilling a reverence for nature; exposing him to the mystical aspects of their culture while allowing him to realize, through direct experience, that everything is alive and pulsating with meanings and lessons.

This upbringing only inspired Salaz to develop the skills needed to convey his vision of the natural world. His mastery of technique shows a diverse flexibility of expression, allowing him to capture a wide range of light effects and portray a unique sense of atmosphere. Employing methods used by the Old Masters coupled with tonalist qualities, Salaz is breaking into new ground with his own modern voice of Poetic Realism. While classical painting has always been a passion, Salaz believes it is the function of artwork to be a vehicle that elevates the viewer and all of humanity. As he puts it, "landscape painting is a *noble pursuit*, and the goal of the landscape artist is not to paint 'pretty pictures' but to create compelling images that express our profound connection to nature in all its diversity and grandeur."

It is the potent connection Salaz has to tradition which has shaped his understanding of the utility of art. The first artistic movement that the United States contributed to the world was the Hudson River School Painting movement, which began in 1825. It was in this era where artists, in conjunction with philosophers, poets and naturalists in the likes of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman, established the foundation of our nation's identity regarding its love for and protection of our greatest cultural resource – the land itself. In their language, the Land was both physically beautiful and imbued with divinity and spirituality.

This cultural shift was fully embraced by the nation. In 1832, the first efforts were seen by the United States Government to begin protecting the land, but it was not until many years later where we saw official designation of authority. The work of John Muir, who is regarded as the "Father of the National Parks," published two influential articles which formed the basis of subsequent legislation - Abraham Lincoln signed an Act of Congress which restricted private ownership of land in the Yosemite Valley in 1864. By 1872, Yellowstone National Park was established; not only the first national park in the United States, but the first in the world. Today, the National Park Service of the United States manages 60

national parks and another 361 protected lands; a testament to our long-standing commitment to these natural treasures.

With the instilled values of his heritage, coupled with the enduring traditions of the artistic movement he so greatly admires, it is no surprise to see how Salaz's work has become a modern voice for the founding principle of our nation. In these trying times, our environment is constantly under attack from careless corporations and individuals, and our politicians have failed to take on the same responsibilities as their predecessors. The works put forth in this exhibition were created as a mirror reflection of our joys, sorrows and triumphs as human beings. They seek to evoke questions of 'who are we?', 'why are we here?', and 'how can we live for the betterment of humanity?', with the aim of revivifying our responsibility to protect the land we call home.

A Noble Pursuit opens to the public on June 8th, 2019 with an opening reception from 1-6PM. The exhibit will remain on view through June 28th, 2019. Featured artists will include: Ken Salaz, Erik, Koeppel, Joseph McGurl, Brett Scheifflee, Eleinne Basa, TJ Cunningham, Tim Lawson, Charlie Hunter, William Davis, Kathleen Dunphy, Patrick Mcphee, John MacDonald and several other premiant contemporary landscape painters

If you would like to request high-resolution images of featured work, please contact Lance Rehs at Lance@Rehs.com.

About Rehs Contemporary

Rehs Contemporary is regarded as one of the top galleries in New York City and is a platform for new, emerging and established contemporary artists; many of whom have received extensive academic training. The gallery offers high quality works to art lovers of all kinds, from first-time buyers to major collectors.

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Ken Salaz's *Annunciation - Spring Sunrise*, 32 x 48 inches oil on canvas



Ken Salaz's *Clear Morning Passage, Near Ninepipes, Montana* 2016, 30 x 40 inches, oil on canvas



Ken Salaz's *Sunset - Dobbs Ferry Looking South to NYC* 10.23.18, 12 x 20 inches, oil on canvas-panel



Ken Salaz's *Sunrise over Lake Placid*, 16 x 20 inches, oil on panel



Ken Salaz's *The Eternal Now, Saint Mary's Lake*, 30 x 40 inches, oil on canvas

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