



JENKINS JOHNSON GALLERY

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Sonya Sklaroff

Urban Reflections

October 28 –
December 23, 2010

Jenkins Johnson Gallery

Tuesday – Saturday, 10 am – 6 pm



Corner Cafe, 2010, oil on panel, 40 x 50 inches

Jenkins Johnson Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of painter Sonya Sklaroff's recent oil-on-panel urban landscapes. An opening reception for the artist will be held on Thursday, October 28 from 6 to 8pm.

Sklaroff's hauntingly beautiful cityscapes featured at Jenkins Johnson Gallery continue her exploration of the bold juxtaposition between light and shadow within her home city of New York. She takes seemingly mundane elements of the city's infrastructure, like water towers, fire escapes, street lamps, and breathes new life into them through her vivid color combinations and her perfect depiction of the magic sunset light that makes the city glow. As the Winter 2010 edition of *American Arts Quarterly* pointed out, "What gives her work its unique interest and power is her clever sense of color contrasts, along with reflections of light, depictions of shadows and smoky atmospheres," and this sense of reality within Sklaroff's work is further highlighted within *Urban Reflections*.

Always returning to the fundamentals of composition, color, and light, Sklaroff imbues New York's most commonplace features with an eerie yet dignified drama. In her new works, Sklaroff has given the denizens of New York a more prominent role than in much of her previous paintings, but the people remain anonymous elements of color and shape; the city is the central focus of her work, a personal perspective either at street level or eye-level with the rooftops. Her works capture the breadth and expanse, both physical and emotional, of the vast urban landscape that is New York City, perfectly shown in "Corner Café;" figures occupy the center of the scene, lit strongly from the left, and yet it is clear to the viewer that they are only secondary features within the scene – the city resplendent in its midafternoon light is clearly Sklaroff's star. The complex and contrasting patterns across the cityscape, shown here in the shadows playing over the sidewalk, are portrayed through a panoramic dimensionality reflecting a great inter-connected community.

Depicting the rooftops from eye-level, Sklaroff's paintings contextualize her personal interpretation of the romantic cityscape within the scope of an all-encompassing sky. The profound and the gritty, the pre-war and post-modern, the natural and the man-made all co-exist in a swarming ecosystem of complementarities, contradictions, and creativity. As in 2010's "Red Sky Panorama," Sklaroff captures the essence of New York City through its inimitable sunset lighting coupled with the ubiquitous water towers; she creates an almost supernatural aura above the city, with long shadows providing dramatic opposition between light and dark. In these new paintings, she explores variations on her recurring theme of light versus dark through shifts of time, geography, and weather. Sklaroff's paintings convey the shifts of mood and character a neighborhood can experience from seemingly small changes in the environment, similar to the way in which a painter can alter the atmosphere of a painting with a few simple brushstrokes.

Sonya Sklaroff lives and works in New York City. Her paintings have been exhibited at major museums and galleries around the world, including: Arnot Art Museum; Albright Knox Art Gallery; Flint Institute of Arts. Sklaroff's work is also included in national and international permanent collections of corporations and governments. She has been reviewed in major publications, including *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from Parsons School of Design.



Fee Water Towers, 2010, oil on panel, 28 x 84 inches