

MEDIA RELEASE

Nick Miller: Tree House 360°



CONCORD ART ASSOCIATION

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Concord Art Association
16th Jun- 18th August 2011

Open House: Thursday, June 16, 6-8:00pm

[Discussion with Barbara Novak, July 10, 5:00pm](#)

The Concord Art Association in collaboration with OH Projects and Rubicon Gallery Dublin are pleased to present **Nick Miller: Tree House 360°**. A work of material liberation, and a deliberate retreat from worldly concerns into the microcosm of a New England woodland Tree House experience.

Irish painter Nick Miller found himself uprooted to Connecticut, New England undertaking an artist's residency at the renowned Josef and Anni Albers Foundation during the fall of 2009. Initially unsure of what he would do so far from his usual concerns, he had no fixed plans. Furthermore, according to the Foundation's executive director Nicholas Fox Weber, "Anyone who comes has to be the sort of person who can not only survive a degree of aloneness, but who can thrive with it". On his first evening he explored the woods surrounding the remote residential studio. In the fading light, Miller came to a large Tree House or rather a platform constructed between two White Pine Trees 23 feet in the air. Tired from the long flight, he climbed up and briefly fell asleep. He woke, surrounded by trees on all sides, to the sounds and sights of the evening. In that place, Miller felt a sense of homecoming to nature that he describes as "a rare epiphany".

Miller spent the next two months working with sustained urgency, aware of the limited time available and the complexities of trying to record the fullness of such experience. He immersed himself in the woods, adopting the Tree House as a temporary outdoor studio in the daylight hours, slowly coming to terms with the wondrous 360-degree view from a height.

His landscape work has long been rooted in the particular and in experience of direct encounter. The "Truckscape", made from back of his mobile studio (a converted truck), have been shown to acclaim both in Ireland and the USA and were marked by the inclusion of the narrow frame of the doorway that defined the artist's view and the borders of the paintings. The Tree House, like the truck, was an adapted entry point for a meeting with nature and painting, but it was 23 feet in the air and free from the constraints of the narrow view that had defined the earlier practice. In a further break with past habits, he began using an unfamiliar paint medium – Casein on heavy watercolour paper (the pigment is bound in milk proteins - an organic, lightfast and archival medium around even in Ancient Greece). The paint has 'organic' qualities of both watercolour and oil, but dries to an intense flat velvety finish.

Over the weeks a number of intensely observed works evolved, but primary focus was on one major piece (91"x 202"), made from 27 individually worked panels. In the 'normal' residential studio he slowly assembled the 360-degree view from the Tree House platform, growing the image, panel by panel. It was a spontaneous evolution, starting at the centre and expanding clockwise in rotation. The unusual double A-Frame format for the final work emerged as an attempt to solve the unfolding, near spherical view into two dimensions. The works are archival mounted, on rigid aluminium composite panels, but keeping the fragility of the paper edges and allowing the viewer unmediated entry to the experience. Tree House 360° is a work of sustained attention and engagement with nature. It follows a clear line in Miller's work in both landscape and portraiture addressing the meeting points of "seeing, being and doing"

SPECIAL EVENT: Sunday 10th July, 5:00 pm: "INTO THE WOODS: LANDSCAPE, ART AND THOREAU"

As part of the 70th Anniversary of the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering 2011, distinguished critical theorist of American painting, Barbara Novak, holds a public conversation with the artist, Nick Miller in the gallery chaired by the New York based Irish artist, critic and author Brian O'Doherty. Miller read Walden while in the tree house and Novak's celebrated trilogy on American Art and culture, features a chapter on Thoreau. **Limited seating, booking required.**

"I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, And see if I could learn what it had to teach, And not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived" **Walden**, Henry David Thoreau 1854.

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Hours: Tues - Sat 10:00 am - 4:30 pm
Sunday Noon - 4 pm

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