

LewAllenGalleries

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In Memoriam: Daniel Morper The Life of a Landscape Painter

Exhibition Dates: October 7 – November 6, 2016

Opening: Friday, October 7th, 2016, 5 – 7 PM

Gallery Hours: Mon - Fri, 10 - 6; Sat, 10 - 5

LewAllen Galleries

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Summer in the City, 2006, oil on canvas, 38 x 53 in

Santa Fe, NM – Daniel Morper, who passed away in April of this year, was a long-time resident and much beloved figure within the Santa Fe art world, as well as a nationally respected painter of the American landscape. LewAllen Galleries presents a memorial exhibition surveying the nearly thirty-five years of Morper's highly successful career that included numerous gallery and museum shows around the country. The exhibit opens October 7 and remains on view through November 6.



Queen's Gambit II, 1989, oil on canvas, 44 x 72 in

The exhibition features a selection of works from Morper's lifelong love affair with every variant of American land form and space, both natural and manmade. As writers have noted, Morper delighted in painting everything from New York rooftops and street scenes, to Southwestern mountains and canyons, even volleyball courts on California beaches. In later years he became intrigued with railroad imagery – engines, boxcars, train tracks, and signal sheds framed in stoic relief against sylvan expanses of distant mountains. The contrast between the railroad as icon of the mechanical age and the sprawling ranges of unspoiled pastoral grasslands it traverses never ceased to fascinate Morper. He is especially well known for his meticulously rendered reverential paintings of the Santa Fe Railyard before its recent re-development. Morper especially prized these luminous and richly evocative portraits of a time in Santa Fe's history now gone by.

Credited by many as helping lead a sea-change in American landscape painting, Morper's vision of the land is one that acknowledges his forebears, the early artists of the 18th and 19th centuries and their wide-eyed, romantic dialogue with the American landscape. He worked, however, within the

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framework of the modern world: his sunlight is just as likely to illuminate a mountainous vista as train tracks and telephone poles, or to streak through the aisles of a sprawling metropolis.

Morper enlivened his tradition with an eye for both photorealism and expression, beholding an America that included both its still-pristine canyons, gorges and peaks, as well as artifacts and edifices made as byproducts of a civilization no longer an unspoiled Eden. In his work Morper could lend visual honor to both the mundane and the spectacular: the majesty of mountains and Manhattan skyscrapers, as well as the ordinariness of trucks along a highway and train cars in the railyard. His best work reads like gentle meditations:

as he told *Southwest Art Magazine* in 2009, “My paintings come from someone reflecting on a quiet space,” he says. “You sense it’s a space fraught with some emotion.”



At Day's End, 2004, oil on canvas, 48 x 64 in



Peering Through Time, 1994, oil on canvas, 34 x 40 in

As one critic who labeled Morper “one of America’s leading landscape painters” described it, Morper’s was “a naturalistic approach that trusts the eye’s reportorial abilities – but also teases its sensual responsiveness. Morper rewards looking. His style borders the edge of photorealism but is filled with metaphor: stunning Southwest light and enough painterly touches to remind viewers that they are looking at hand-painted expressive illusions and not imitations of photography.” (Peter Frank writing in the 2008 catalog that accompanied the exhibition at LewAllen Galleries entitled *Daniel Morper: A Sense of Light, A Sense of Place.*)

Morper was born in 1944 in Fort Benning, Georgia. He was raised in Chicago and Seattle, earned his BA at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, and in 1969 earned a law degree from Columbia University. He practiced law for several years in California and then Washington, DC, where he enrolled at the Corcoran Museum School of Art and rented his first painting studio. In the mid-1970s he moved to New York to devote himself full-time to painting. His first solo show in New York, at the G.W. Einstein gallery in 1978, was a sell-out and was named a “Best Bet” by New York Magazine in addition to being reviewed favorably in *ARTnews* and *Arts* magazine.

Morper relocated from New York to Santa Fe in the mid-1980s, and is survived by his wife, well-known Santa Fe artist Carol Mothner, and daughter Elizabeth.

Morper’s paintings are widely sought after for leading private and corporate collections and are included in leading museum collections such as the Denver Art Museum, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Philbrook Museum of Art, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art, among others.

Exhibition catalog can be sent upon request, and online version will be available at www.lewallengalleries.com. Contact ajill@lewallengalleries.com or 505.988.3250.

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Winter Fog, 2006, oil on canvas, 28 x 36 in



Blue Moon, 2006, oil on canvas, 34 x 46 in



Crossing the Prairie, 2007, oil on canvas, 46 x 38 in