



Moon in Transit, 1990. Oil on canvas, 55 x 60 inches.

Jane Wilson: *Atmospheres*

September 7 –
October 7, 2023

Opening Reception
September 7,
6 - 7:30 pm

My landscapes are not painted on-site or from photographs. They come out of my mind... out of my bones, really. I seek to capture what it feels like to be there, on a strip of land or sand. I move into a kind of recall about season, climate, time of day. It's what I call 'muscular recall'... the sense of temperature and humidity... the wavering weight of the sky. All this motivates me, defines selections, as I begin to paint. – Jane Wilson, c. 1999

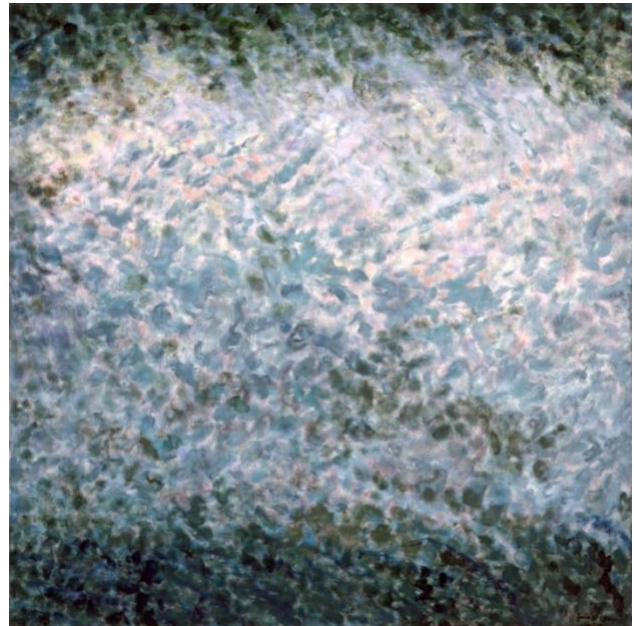
DC Moore Gallery is pleased to present *Jane Wilson: Atmospheres*, an exhibition of large landscape paintings and intimate watercolors from 1988 – 2011, many on view for the first time. Jane Wilson (1924-2015) was a New York School painter most known for her emotive, abstract landscapes depicting the meetings of sky, land, and sea. In the early 1980s, Wilson made the decisive move toward this more personal and expressive painting of landscapes, which she continued to explore for the remainder of her career. Up until that time, landscape painting was part of a larger group of subject matter for Wilson, which included still lifes and figures, with elements of landscape always informing her approach. The works on view envelop the viewer in the effects of heavy air, oncoming storms, light reaching beyond clouds, and total stillness.

Born in Seymour, Iowa, the Midwestern landscape of low horizons, flat farmlands, and expansive skies made a deep impression upon her, as did the sense of mystery and solitude contained within these vistas. Upon arriving in New York City in 1949, Wilson settled in Greenwich Village and immersed herself in the downtown art scene, producing Abstract Expressionist work that resonated with the energy of the moment. By the 1960s, Wilson was living on East 10th Street,

across from Tompkins Square Park, which led her to create atmospheric cityscapes of the park and surrounding neighborhood. At that time, and until the end of her life, she also worked in Water Mill, New York, on the East End of Long Island, painting the fields, houses, farms, and coastline.

She found landscape to be the most intuitive subject, fascinated by the challenge of portraying, as the artist commented, the “substance of a thing without substance,” that is the daily experience of weather. As Edward Gómez writes, she “settled into making signature works that have defied easy classification. Instead, they have seamlessly blended the techniques of gestural abstract painting with unabashed, unmistakable references to the real, perceived world—to some of the most elemental aspects of nature.” Her paintings make the ephemeral phenomena of the weather and sky tangible, not only as visual experiences, but as full-body sensations. The painting *Moon in Transit* (1990) exemplifies Wilson’s distinctive approach to landscape. A luminous moon appears from behind an earthy green sky nearly indistinguishable from the land. The sensation of light and color suggests the reflection of the sea or earth in the sky, a remembered rather than observed reality.

In the 1970s, instead of the direct painting technique common at the time, which involves applying wet paint to wet paint, Wilson discovered that a richness and complexity of color application could best be attained through indirect painting, with a wet layer of paint placed upon a dry one. This approach allowed each layer of color to stand on its own instead of being muted by the layer on top of it. Working downward from the top of the canvas, Wilson added thin gradations of paint, allowing translucence while simultaneously creating an intensity of color. Her dry-brushing technique creates swirls and eddies of paint, horizontal planes and centripetal movement echoing weather patterns.



Whirlwind, 2002. Oil on linen, 70 x 70 inches.

Underlying her work is a paradox between the largeness of the landscape and the interiority of experience. Her watercolors, although much smaller in size, address the same boundless skies as the paintings on canvas. In these low-horized landscapes, the sky rests on the earth as an infinite field.

Jane Wilson’s painting are in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, IL; Brooklyn Museum, NY; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Museum of Modern Art, NY; Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City, MO; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, PA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, as well as other museums throughout the country.

DC Moore Gallery specializes in contemporary and twentieth-century art. The gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10am-6pm. For more information, photographs, or to arrange a viewing please call 212-247-2111 or email Caroline Magavern at cmagavern@dcmooregallery.com.