

Joan Nelson New Release



Untitled, (#1), aquatint with hard ground and soft ground etching and drypoint. Paper size: 21 x 20"; Image size 11¼ x 11¾".
Edition 60. Price \$1800, subject to change.

Joan Nelson is a young artist. She was born in 1958 in Southern California, spent her youth in St. Louis, and now lives in Brooklyn. She paints small paintings on thick pieces of wood using a variety of materials, often combined with wax. Her pictures are of trees or of landscapes, and usually are based on fragments of paintings by artists of the past. Recently, as in this etching, she has combined images from old art with those of living things recorded in snapshots. She says she learned in art school that "you could paint anything. What mattered was the attitude." Her attitude is one of pleasure in stillness, delight in detail, and a dream-like recognition of the capacity in nature for renewal. This is her first etching, and she worked on six copper plates in a way comparable to how she paints on wood, making changes and additions until a dense, layered image magically takes on life. Nelson has shown regularly since 1989 at New York's Robert

Miller Gallery. Her work is included in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Minneapolis Museum of Art; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington D.C.; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

"Often I walked in the neighboring forest of fir and pine whose beauties seemed to protect me from the onset of despair. Ineffably kind voices spoke down to me from the trees: "You must not come to the dark conclusion that everything in the world is hard, false, and wicked. But come often to us; the forest likes you. In its company you will find health and good spirits again, and entertain more lofty and beautiful thoughts."

—from a story by Swiss poet Robert Walser (1878-1956) printed in the exhibition catalog for Joan Nelson, 1991, Robert Miller Gallery.

Valerie Wade, *Gallery Director*

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