



For Immediate Release:
BOBBIE OLIVER | BY THE RIVER

May 20 - June 27, 2021

High Noon is pleased to present **Bobbie Oliver's** second exhibition with the gallery, **By the River**. Oliver's newest paintings cite her environment as a signifier, owing much of the imagery to the time spent outside the city in 2020. The body of work began at the artist's studio in Rock Valley, NY, which borders the Delaware River and was completed in her loft in TriBeCa, appropriately emulating the journey through the paintings' shifts in edge quality and heightened amorphous formal sensibility of existing between solid and liquid. The river became emblematic of the year's creative process—flowing despite all disturbances, staying whole, natural, and it's own, despite human arbitration—both generating a feeling of how to observe a painting, and anecdotal for the slowly considered and constrained compositions.

Despite the element of chance she invites into her process, she knows when it's right. She worked with Noguchi, who would contemplate a rock for years before intervening. Similarly for Oliver, a series of ordinary activities—blotting, washing, wiping—eventually culminate to something greater than the sum of its parts. The paintings always aim for a freshness and immediacy but the spaces are mentally and physically labored over to obtain the density and luminosity. They are layered and sculpted, additive and retractive, a push and pull that implies the act of coming into being or going out of being. "That one's going away," she will say about a painting during a studio visit, meaning that it's "too worked" or that its illusionistic qualities were betrayed by a disproportionate blend of her deceptively simple material alchemy.

While the appearance is different than the execution, nothing is held over the viewer. The paintings ask nothing but unconscious participation in an abstract narrative akin to Alan Watts's notion that, "Just as you don't know how you manage to be conscious, how you manage to grow and shape this body of yours, doesn't mean to say that you're not doing it." Certainly the task of considering the space between forms and how one relates them to each other takes on a somatic quality, particularly in the larger scale.

Passage, 2020, most closely indicates the show's title both in form and palette. The most washy of the paintings, a strong vertical draw of light down the center cut by a border of horizontal gestures implies the oscillating reflection of a riverbank at golden hour. A gravity-defying sense of atmospheric perspective overtakes any spatial logic, keeping the painting rooted in the non-objective.

Moondust, 2017, the only painting completed several years prior shows wisps, trails, and blots of turquoise emerging like interstellar clouds from a hazy violet nebula. The spectrum of neutrals created by the soft layering of the two colors demonstrate the powerful restraint of a limited palette. **Imprints, 2021**, may be the most daring painting, not only for Oliver's willingness to engage with washes and splotches of Cadmium Orange made electric against an expanse of cool yellow, but because it also manages to integrate the largest range of form. Remnants of the geological decalomania of Max Ernst and the explosive gunpowder calligraphy of Cai Guo-Qiang activates a composition that begs to expand outward.

For Oliver, nothing is too precious to be reworked or discarded entirely if it doesn't contribute to the comprehensive balance of the painting; a discipline that allows for continuously working towards artistic goals, and one that has afforded her the scope and flexibility to edit with remarkable acuity, even when circumstances dictate working in increased isolation. "The thing about changing things around," she says, "is that once you have tried it in 10 different places, its final resting place is absolutely irrefutable."

Bobbie Oliver lives and works in New York and Rock Valley, NY. She has exhibited in New York at High Noon Gallery, Hionas Gallery, Feature Gallery, Showroom, Valentine Gallery as well as solo shows in Toronto at the Olga Korper Gallery, in Los Angeles at the Jancar Gallery and The George Gallery in Laguna Beach. She has received awards from The Canada Council, The Ontario Arts Council, The New York State Council for the Arts and the Pollock Krasner Foundation. Born in Canada, Oliver spent 10 years in England working and studying in her formative years. After moving to New York, she worked for Isamu Noguchi and La Monte Young and then taught painting at Princeton University, School of Visual Arts, NY, Banff School of Arts, Canada and The Rhode Island School of Design where she taught painting and drawing and served as Head of the Painting Department. She also taught at the National College of Art in Lahore, Pakistan and the Rhode Island School of Design in Rome, Italy.