



JESSICA LEE IVES

COURTHOUSE GALLERY
FINE ART

JESSICA LEE IVES

Watermark

SEPTEMBER 15 – OCTOBER 28, 2017

Essay by Karin Wilkes



Head First, 2017, oil on panel, 5 x 7 inches

COVER *Watermark*, detail, 2017, oil on panel, 24 x 48 inches

COURTHOUSE GALLERY
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6 court street ellsworth, maine 04605 courthousegallery.com 207 667 6611



Bring Life To IT
oil on panel
20 x 48 inches
2017

“We are, in fact, mostly water. As terrestrial organisms we may live on solid ground and breath air, but as a collection of individual cells we still live within the same liquid medium from which we emerged. Every organ and system in the body supports in some way the containment, the renewal, and the circulation of this internal sea.”

— Deane Juhan

Job's Body: A Handbook for Bodyworkers



Joyful Participation, 2017, oil on panel, 30 x 40 inches

JESSICA LEE IVES *Watermark*

It's not just a visual experience that I am trying to capture and communicate. It is a body experience. It is a lived experience.” — Jessica Lee Ives



Humanity of the Body, 2017, oil on panel, 6 x 6 inches

When Jessica Lee Ives began her career as an artist, she had absolutely no interest in making figurative work. In fact, her perspective was passive—from inside a room looking at the landscape through paned windows.

I met Ives in the summer of 2009, when her work was selected for *Betwixt and Between*, an invitational show hosted by Courthouse Gallery with guest curator Bruce Brown. She painted on mylar and canvas, and her work stood out, in particular her palette and brushwork. We began representing two artists from that invitational show—Colin Page and Jessica Stammen (her maiden name).

In the eight years since, her work has changed dramatically. Kinesthetic intelligence became important to her life and work, and she got married. “At some point looking out at landscapes and painting them wasn’t enough. I wanted to live in them—to hike, to swim, to climb—and paint from being, not just seeing.”

Ives and her husband, Jonathan, share a passion for living an active outdoor life. They soon began crisscrossing Maine in search of lakes, rivers, quarries, and fishing holes. *Art imitates life.*



Water Form, 2017, oil on panel, 18 x 18 inches



Eden is the Moment, 2017, oil on panel, 36 x 48 inches



Leaving the Familiar, 2017, oil on panel, 4 x 12 inches

Once Ives began painting the figure, she burst through those windows both figuratively and literally. Her figures move freely outdoors, year round. They go hiking, swimming, surfing, kayaking, fly fishing, skiing, snowboarding, and skating. Viewers do too.

With her recent paintings in *Watermark*, Ives explores the figure as it moves through water—at the surface, below, and looking down from above—creating colorful ripples as in *Unconscious Energy*, or exploding above a swimmer's head like a jeweled headdress as in *Humanity of the Body*. Swimmers are suspended under water in *The Body Mind* and *Light Headed*, or shivering in *Leaving the Familiar*. While Ives' early work may have been quietly passive, her new work is dynamic and active.

In the hands of a less accomplished artist, contemporary figures, clothed in modern fabrics and styles, are seldom harmonious in the natural landscape. The visual experience can be jarring. In *Watermark*, Ives translates a modern reality and experience, yet her paintings remain harmonious and beautiful.

Ives likes painting bodies in water because that is where bodies are most free, “and I think water displays the human body beautifully.” Ives makes these paintings about more than pictures of people swimming. They are visually stunning. Some surprising. Her contemporary figures, combined with her exquisite portrayal of water, make Ives' paintings fresh, exciting, and relevant.

—Karin Wilkes, *Director*
Courthouse Gallery



The Body Mind, 2017, oil on panel, 8 x 10 inches



Water Wings, 2017, oil on panel, 8 x 10 inches



Illumination, 2017, oil on panel, 36 x 36 inches



Embody, 2017, oil on panel, 18 x 18 inches



Source, 2017, oil on panel, 24 x 24 inches



Watermark
oil on panel
24 x 48 inches
2017



Unconscious Energy, 2017, oil on panel, 4 x 12 inches



Light Headed, 2017, oil on panel, 20 x 30 inches



Art of the Pickup, 2017, oil on panel, 8 x 10 inches



58°, 2017, oil on panel, 6 x 6 inches



Lightly Held, 2017, oil on panel, 24 x 24 inches



Surface Level, 2017, oil on panel, 20 x 30 inches



Fresh Water Free Style, 2017, oil on panel, 4 x 12 inches



Sparkling Surface, 2017, oil on panel, 10 x 10 inches



Wonder, 2017, oil on panel, 10 x 10 inches



The Blue Pool, 2017, oil on panel, 20 x 30 inches



What You Are, What You Might Be, 2017, oil on panel, 5 x 7 inches



Shadow of the Abyss, 2017, oil on panel, 5 x 7 inches



McKenzie River, 2017, oil on panel, 10 x 22 inches

JESSICA LEE IVES



BORN 1980 Portsmouth, NH

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

Courthouse Gallery Fine Art, Ellsworth, ME 2017
Blue Gallery, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, ME 2014
Ten High Street, Camden, ME 2012
Élan Fine Arts, Rockland, ME 2005
The Cooper Union, New York City, NY 2002, 2003

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Courthouse Gallery Fine Art, Ellsworth, ME 2008–2017
Gleason Fine Art, Boothbay Harbor, ME 2001, '02, '14
The Good Supply, Pemaquid, ME 2013, 2014
Sam Shaw Gallery, Northeast Harbor, ME 2014
Pascal Hall, Rockport, ME 2013
Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockport, ME 2006, '09, '11
Aarhus Gallery, Belfast, ME 2010
Episcopal Church and the Visual Arts, New York City, NY 2002
Élan Fine Arts, Rockport, ME 2005, 2006

Union of Maine Visual Artists, Invitational, Rockport, ME 2006
The New York Historical Society, New York City, NY 2003
St. Paul's Chapel, Acquisition, New York City, NY 2002
The Cooper Union, New York City, NY 2001

SELECTED AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

9/11 Debris Project, Commissioned fifty artists and writers to create a large-scale artwork from Ground Zero for a travelling exhibition, 2007–Current
Farnsworth Art Museum, Studio Crawl, 2013
The United States Embassy, Banjul, The Gambia 2011
Maine Community Foundation, Marilyn & James Rockefeller Grant, 2009
St. Paul's Chapel, Coordinated Memorial Communion Chalice Commission from World Trade Center steel, New York City, NY 2001–2002
The New York Historical Society, Acquisition, New York City, NY 2003
The Clark Foundation, Fellowship, New York City, NY 2003
Eileen Fisher, Ad Campaign: "Women Change The World Every Day" 2003
Glamour Magazine, "Top 10 College Women of 2002," 2003
St. Paul's Chapel, Acquisition, New York City, NY 2002
The Cooper Union, Molly Levenstein Scholar, New York City, NY 2002
St. Paul's Chapel, Artist in Residence for Ground Zero, New York City, NY 2001–2002
The Cooper Union, Durbin Scholar, New York City, NY 2001
The Cooper Union, Herb Lubalin Award, New York City, NY 1999

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Keyes, Bob. "Bodies in Water." *Maine Sunday Telegram*. 2017.
Little, Carl. Interview. *Maine Boats, Homes, & Harbors*. June/July 2015.
Keyes, Bob. "The Artist at Work and Play." *Maine Sunday Telegram*. 2013.
McAvoy, Suzette. "The Canvas," *Maine Home+Design*. March 2010.

EDUCATION

MA, Interdisciplinary Studies (Art/Religion/Public Service), New York University, New York City, NY
BFA, Fine Arts, The Cooper Union School of Art, New York City, NY
Drawing Studies, with Peter Cox at The Art Students League of New York, New York City, NY



Boathouse Bright, 2017, oil on panel, 8 x 10 inches

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