

Joan Snyder



Hirschl & Adler Modern

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Cover:

4.

Beanfield with Music, 1984
oil and acrylic on canvas
72 x 144 inches

Joan Snyder

October 5 – 30, 1985

Hirschl & Adler Modern
851 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10021
212 744-6700

Donald McKinney, *Director*

INTRODUCTION

The first painting I saw was from 1963. It was a thick, rough landscape, dark clouds and sky. I could have passed without notice—except for that house. How it grew; with animistic presence. It seemed to be looking back at us.

Then later came the paintings that brought her recognition. They were called stroke paintings, names like *Big Green*, *Love Your Bones*, *Symphony*, *Womanchild*. They possessed the raw, disjunctive quality and feeling of beauty. They were soft walls, tonal dance, vibrating sigh. There was bare suggestion of one's own private music. Where life was uncertain, they seemed to declare and survive.

After that came her rage as she spoke from inside the pain. As a woman—*Vanishing Theatre*, *The Storm*, *Heart On*—she spoke as a victim. There was also the love and affiliation of *Maiden Voyage*, *Sweet Cathy's Song*, *Norfolk Landscape*. And there was the *Welcome To This Land Molly Fink* celebration in music for her new born child. But another anger was to be met and with it terror. Her marriage shattered into *Savage Dreams*, *Requim*, *Mourning/Oh Morning*. And then there was *Apple Tree Mass*, *Love's Pale Grapes*, and renewal; new strength to grow seemed to be returning to her life. Now there is *Beanfield with Music*, *Can We Turn Our Rage To Poetry*, *Bedeckt Mich Mit Blumen*, and *Beanfield with Snow*.

As an expressionist, Snyder's work speaks as her life. Her first sense of something true and alive came in that early painting. There was the entrance into self and place where the music came alive. Now there is the voice become journey in events that are daily life. She does not seek to occupy each painting. But the painting is the place for her to speak. And it is a place we come to share with our own life. The voice I hear speaks of one passage. What she speaks is from the meaning in our everyday life.

"When I started to paint it was like speaking for the first time."

A painter must work the gift in order to realize. Personal meaning must be dragged out of each color; life must be given to each image. Patience and diligence are needed where illusion and the paint matter collide. The gift develops slowly—the painting remains bound by four edges. Something must be brought into place where meaning comes alive.

“I mean, I felt like my whole life, I had never spoken, I had never heard, I had never said anything that had meaning.”

To bring place into meaning, Snyder is tenacious and restless. Tradition has been questioned. Though a gifted painter, she may deliberately underplay her talents to use other gestures to make the painting speak. She uses words, has cut and packed the canvas with matter, and may generally poke, scratch, sew, fringe, dust, sparkle and bejewel the painting with any sort of found material, sticks, and other totem-like matter. These strange collectives lend themselves like a primitive collaboration for communal joy, rage, love, and sorrow. The thing remains a painting because she incorporates all into an illusionistic integrity by her gifted painting. The freedom to use these odd materials seems to establish additional presence to the painting-object. It has a functioning purpose. There is communal presence. Like a shrine in a Mexican chapel, we meet something to participate with not just to observe.

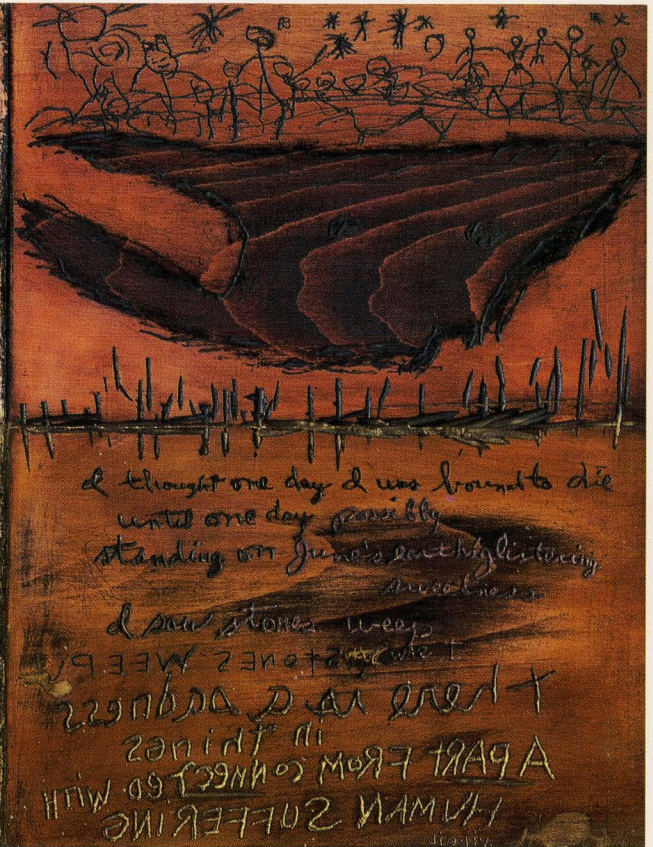
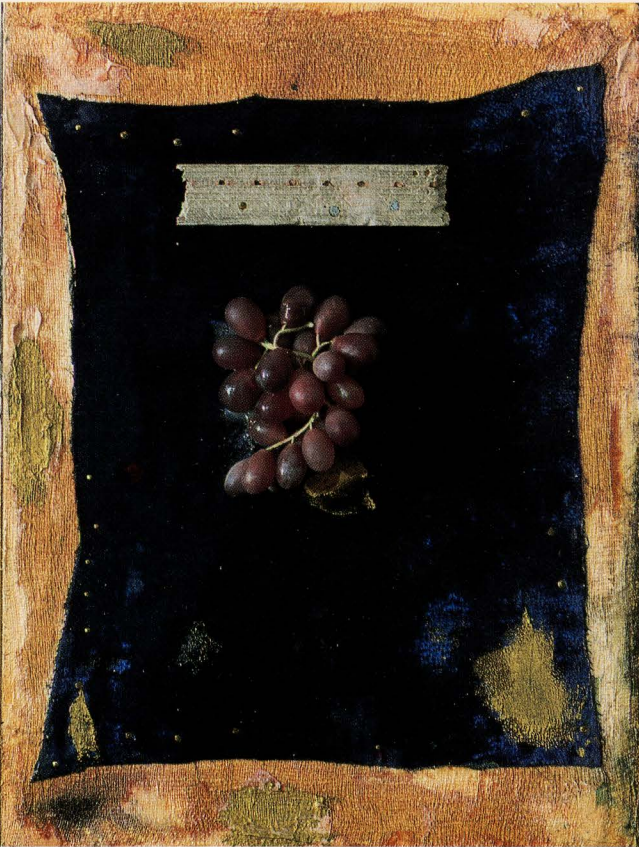
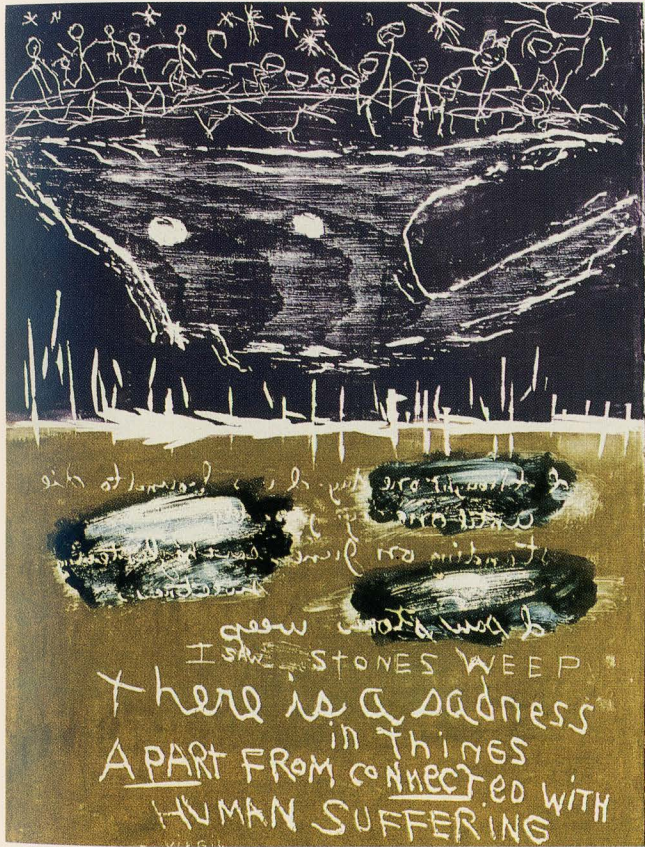
“When I started painting it was like I was speaking for the first time. And that is how important painting is to me.”

Painting cannot promise entrance into new world. It can honor the renewal of that voice which is old inside us. A rare painting gives us that voice. Snyder leaves us to consider what it takes to remain alive in our darkest moments. Our growth may seem fragile but it rests upon our need to survive. Her painting voices growth through her own need, the journey of her painting. It is this ambition that speaks to meaning in everyday life. We are each left to give expression to our own possibility. Her paintings give us place where such possibility has survived.

13.

Love's Deep Grapes

1983-4
mixed media on panel
20 x 45 inches





2.

Apple Tree Mass

1983
mixed media on canvas
24 x 72 inches

17.

Tell Me in Any Way You Can

1984
mixed media on canvas
48 x 144 inches





I.

Ancient/Night/Sounds

1984
mixed media on canvas
48 x 60 inches

5.

Beanfield with Snow

1984

oil and acrylic on canvas

72 x 96 inches





3.

— *Beanfield with Mud*

1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
34 x 52 inches

6.

Bedeckt Mich Mit Blumen

1985
mixed media on canvas
72 x 72 inches





10.

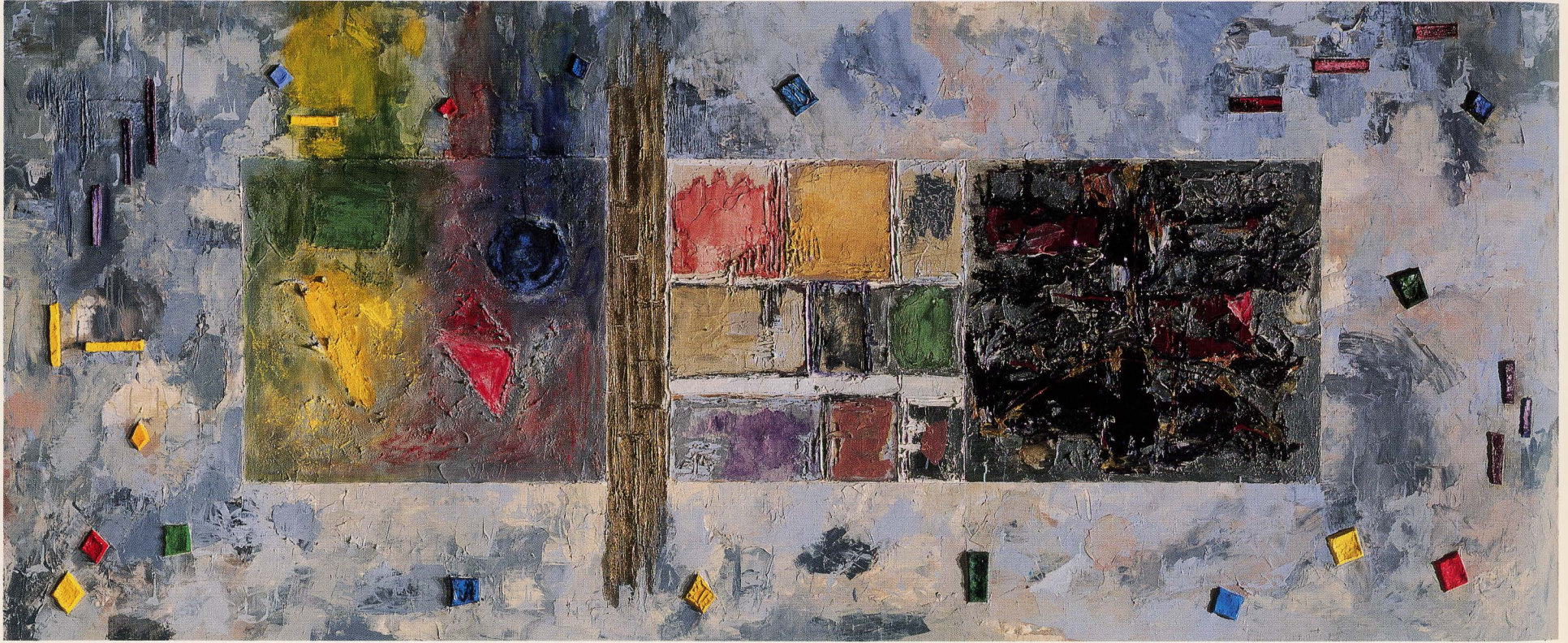
The Field/May

1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
72 x 96 inches

7.

Can We Turn Our Rage to Poetry

1985
mixed media on canvas
60 x 144 inches



Chronology

- 1940 Born, Highland Park, New Jersey
1962 B.A. Douglas College, New Brunswick, New Jersey
1966 M.F.A. Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

One-Woman Exhibitions

- 1966 Rutgers University, Thesis Exhibition
1967 Little Gallery, New Brunswick, New Jersey
1970 *Three Paintings*, Paley and Lowe Gallery, New York
1971 Paley and Lowe Gallery, New York
Michael Walls Gallery, New York
1972 Parker 470 Gallery, Boston
Douglas College, New Brunswick
1973 Paley and Lowe Gallery, New York
1976 Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art,
Los Angeles, California
Douglas College, New Brunswick, New Jersey
Recent Paintings, Portland Center for the Visual Arts,
Portland, Oregon
Works on Paper, Reed College, Portland, Oregon
Carl Solway Gallery, New York
Broxton Gallery, Los Angeles
1977 Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina
1978 *Seven Years of Work*, Neuberger Museum, Purchase,
New York
Women's Art Registry of Minneapolis, Minneapolis,
Minnesota
New Work, Hamilton Gallery, New York
1979 Traveling Exhibition, San Francisco Art Institute
Hamilton Gallery, New York
1981 Nielsen Gallery, Boston
Resurrection and Studies, Matrix Gallery, Wadsworth
Atheneum, Hartford, Connecticut
1982 Hamilton Gallery, New York
1983 Nielsen Gallery, Boston

Group Exhibitions

- 1970 The New Gallery, Cleveland, Ohio
A Clean Well Lighted Place, Austin, Texas
Dayton's Gallery 12, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Bykert Gallery, New York
- 1971 Glauber-Poons Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
Into the 70's, Mansfield Fine Arts Museum, Ohio
Paley and Lowe Gallery, New York
- 1972 *Paintings on Paper*, The Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut
Seven New York Painters, Berkeley Art Museum, California
Grids, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia
Whitney Annual, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Ten Artists Who Happen to be Women, The Kenan Center, Lockport, New York; Rockefeller Arts Center, Fredonia, New York
12 Statements—Beyond the Sixties, Detroit Institute of Art
Three Artists, Fine Arts Center, University of Rhode Island, Providence
Gedok American Women Artists Show, Kunsthaus, Hamburg
- 1973 *New York Avant-Garde*, Saidye Bronfman Center, Montreal
Options 73/73, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio
Image of Movements, Stamford Museum, Stamford, Connecticut
American Drawings 1963-73, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Women Choose Women, New York Cultural Center, New York
- 1974 *Joan Snyder / Pat Steir*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston
Michael Walls Gallery, New York
An Exhibition of Current Paintings, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn
Women's Work—American Art '74, Philadelphia Civic Center
- 1975 *34th Biennial of Contemporary American Painting*, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
14 Abstract Painters, Whight Art Gallery, U.C.L.A., Los Angeles
- 1976 *23 American Women Artists*, Koogler Art Institute, San Antonio, Texas
- 1977 *Twelve from Rutgers*, University Art Gallery, Rutgers
Drawing on a Grid, Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York
Contemporary Women-Consciousness and Content, Brooklyn Museum
- 1978 *Perspective '78: Work by Women*, Freeman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, Pennsylvania
- 1979 *The Implicit Image: Abstract Painting in the Seventies*, Nielsen Gallery, Boston
The 70's New American Painting, The New Museum, New York (travelling)
Generation, Susan Caldwell Gallery, New York
Color and Structure, Hamilton Gallery, New York
Exchanges I, Louis Abrams Art for Living Center, Henry Street Settlement, New York
- 1980 *New York*, Hamilton Gallery, New York
- 1981 *Painters' Painters*, Seigel Contemporary Art, New York
Whitney Biennial, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
New Works on Paper I, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- 1982 *Art of the 80's*, WWAC Gallery, Westport, Connecticut
Hamilton Gallery, New York
Fast, Alexander Milliken Gallery, New York
Rutgers Master of Fine Arts 20th Century Anniversary Exhibition, New Jersey State Museum, Trenton
The Abstract Image, Hamilton Gallery
American Abstraction Now, Institute of Contemporary Art, Virginia Museum, Richmond, Virginia
- 1983 *Stroke, Line and Figure*, Gimpel Fils Ltd., London
Brave New Work, Boston Museum of Fine Art, Boston
- 1984 *Nature as Image*, Organization of Independent Artists, New York
American Women Artists: Part II: The Recent Generation, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York
Aliens, Art City, New York
Heroic Poetic, School of Visual Arts, New York
Location, Nielsen Gallery, Boston

Public Collections

Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio
American Can Company, Greenwich, Connecticut
Chase Manhattan Bank, New York
Dallas Museum of Contemporary Art, Dallas, Texas
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia
Sydney and Frances Lewis Foundation, Richmond, Virginia
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
J. B. Speed Museum, Louisville, Kentucky
United Bank of California, Los Angeles
The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Bibliography

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"Powerful, Rough-Hewn Painting," *San Francisco Chronicle*,
August 8, 1971
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May 1971
Hickey, Dave. *Art in America*, January/February 1972, p. 35
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February 7, 1972, p. 79
Elderfield, John. "Grids," *Artforum*, May 1972, p. 53
Hughes, Robert. "Myths of Sensibility," *Time*, May 20,
1972, p. 72-3
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Alloway, Lawrence. *The Nation*, June 1973, p. 733
Elderfield, John. *Art in America*, May/June 1972, p. 27
Ratcliff, Carter. *Art International*, January 1972, p. 68
Davis, Douglas. "Art Without Limits," *Newsweek*, December
1972, p. 68-74.
Kingsley, April. "Women Choose Women," *Artforum*, March
1973, p. 73
Webster, Sally. "Fury and Fugue, Politics of the Inside,"
Feminist Art Journal, Summer, 1976, p. 5
Welish, Marjorie. *Art in America*, July/August 1978, p. 114

Herrera, Hayden. *Art in America*, May 1976
Kramer, Hilton. *New York Times*, March 3, 1978
Shirey, David. *New York Times*, February 12, 1978
Rubinfien, Leo. *Artforum*, Summer 1978, p. 75-6
Lippard, Lucy. Catalogue for Henry Street Settlement Exhibition,
Exchanges I, 1978
Bell, Jane. *ARTnews*, April 1979
Proctor, Roy. *Richmond News Leader*, May 10, 1980
Merritt, Robert. *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 8, 1980
Henry, Gerrit. *Art in America*, Summer 1982, p. 142
Cohen, Ronny. *Artforum*, September 1982, p. 81
Phillips, Deborah C. *ARTnews*, September 1982, p. 63
Merritt, Robert. *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, September 2, 1982
"Expressionism Today: An Artists' Symposium," *Art in America*,
December 1982, p. 58

Checklist

1.
Ancient/Night/Sounds, 1984
mixed media on canvas
48 x 60 inches
2.
Apple Tree Mass, 1983
mixed media on canvas
24 x 72 inches
3.
Beanfield with Mud, 1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
34 x 52 inches
4.
Beanfield with Music, 1984
oil and acrylic on canvas
72 x 144 inches
5.
Beanfield with Snow, 1984
oil and acrylic on canvas
72 x 96 inches
6.
Bedeckt Mich Mit Blumen, 1985
mixed media on canvas
72 x 72 inches
7.
Can We Turn Our Rage to Poetry, 1985
mixed media on canvas
60 x 144 inches
8.
Eastport, 1984
mixed media on canvas
24 x 48 inches
9.
The Field in June, 1985
oil on canvas
60 x 84 inches
10.
The Field/May, 1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
72 x 96 inches
11.
The Grape Tryptich, 1984
mixed media on canvas
72 x 24 inches
12.
Study for "The Field/May," 1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
24 x 24 inches
13.
Love's Deep Grapes, 1983-4
mixed media on panel
20 x 45 inches
14.
Midnight Sun, 1984
oil and acrylic on canvas
24 x 24 inches
15.
My Pain Is No More Than Being's Pain, 1983
mixed media on canvas
72 x 120 inches
16.
My Temple/My Totems, 1983
mixed media on canvas
60 x 120 inches
17.
Tell Me in Any Way You Can, 1984
mixed media on canvas
48 x 144 inches
18.
To Transcend/The Moon, 1985
oil and acrylic on canvas
60 x 96 inches

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