

## CATALOG ESSAY

### ***The Mountain Series: Quiet Magnitude***

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Pia De Girolamo's colorful, subtle, and abstracted *Mountain Series* paintings are forged from the interaction of being in a singular landscape and the memory of that experience. Her shapes, colors, and compositions mirror the tectonic shifts and geologic marvels of the stunning landscapes she has explored. Using a bold visual language, she recalls the intensity and elation of her adventures. Influenced by American Modernists of the 20th century including Milton Avery, Arthur Dove, and Georgia O'Keefe, her work harnesses paint and shape to express space and time in the landscape. De Girolamo's paintings are a celebration of the breathtaking and relentless landscapes of the Canadian Rockies, Patagonia, Iceland, and the American Southwest.

The physical acts of hiking in the mountains and painting in the studio lyrically commingle in her *Mountain Series*. During challenging explorations in the field, she makes color sketches and visual notes. Then, while painting in the studio, she retraces her steps reaching the summits again in mental and physical memory. She creates abstracted and composite landscapes that are bold, nuanced, and enliven the senses. De Girolamo's brushstrokes reveal the physicality of her painting style, which is quietly attuned to a visceral natural world.

Underlying this sensuality, her color palette and elemental shapes speak to the metaphysical. Addressing the landscape from the perspective of how one feels in its presence is central to the emotive quality of De Girolamo's work. Rather than depicting the mountain range before her, she paints the essence of being in the landscape faced with the impossible magnitude of its peaks and valleys. A strength of voice and unique point of view are created through composition, color, and gesture.

It is a pleasure to take in De Girolamo's paintings as one does an impressive vista - with curiosity, appreciation, and gratitude. Her *Mountain Series* is an unsentimental yet loving recognition of the geological formation of the earth as well as our ability to experience its majesty in our own lives and minds.