

JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Claire Cowie

“Land Escapes”

February 19 – March 27, 2004

Reception: Wed., Feb. 18th 6:00-8:00PM

James Harris Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of works on paper by Claire Cowie. The imagery is inspired from the area and views around the artist's studio, a part of the Duwamish River that is both industrial and natural, with cement factories, a military complex, large shipping containers, small boats with men fishing, and a bird sanctuary with eagles and heron. Combining these seemingly disparate activities and structures, these landscapes are a response to Cowie's experiences of community versus isolation.

All the works in the exhibition are collages that have been pieced together from elements of "rejected" prints and drawings that Cowie has been saving for several years. The individual works merge elements of landscape and architecture to create spaces that are meant to be both familiar and strange. Often, Cowie uses a double or triple horizon line which offers stacked views into her personal world. This compositional device is inspired by Japanese woodblock and Chinese landscape painting and is used to evoke an atmosphere of fantasy or dreaming. The combination of assembling images by cutting and pasting along with her delicate use of watercolor imbues her works with a sense of limitless improvisation and informality.

Though Cowie's work draws upon stories, events and people in her life, meaning is not exclusive to her alone. They describe both the physical and psychological spaces in which we reside, and in that way they are meant to be both comforting and disconcerting.

Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday 11:00 to 5:00 and by appointment. Photography is available upon request.