

# JAMES HARRIS GALLERY

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## PRESS RELEASE



### Mirage

March 22 to April 28, 2012

Opening Reception

Thursday, March 22, 6 – 8pm

Claire Cowie  
Eric Elliott  
Marcelino Gonçalves  
Will Henry  
Mary Ann Peters

Gallery hours are:  
Thurs. - Sat. 11:00am - 5:00pm  
Tuesday & Wednesday by appointment  
Additional images are available upon request

Left: Will Henry  
*In the Dust*, 2011  
Gouache on paper, 15" x 15"

James Harris Gallery is pleased to present a group exhibition titled *Mirage*. Centered on the theme of the landscape, this exhibition explores the practice of five artists, Claire Cowie, Eric Elliott, Marcelino Gonçalves, Will Henry and Mary Ann Peters. It is through their individual works that we see how the landscape is observed, imagined and abstracted.

A mirage is an optical phenomenon in which objects appear or hover over a landscape. In Claire Cowie's complex watercolors titled "Treehouse," a large barren tree grows out of the landscape. The simple earthen colored horizon is in sharp contrast to the frenetic activity found in the branches where houses and people populate the boughs. Eric Elliott's paintings are defined by a thick impasto. In a sense, a mirage is the result of spatial variations of the index of refraction of air creating illusion without substance or reality. Elliot's brushwork compresses light and air into a density of paint in which a landscape slowly unfolds. Mary Ann Peters' sepia colored gouache is a response to a place that is both real and imagined. Inspired by a recent trip to Lebanon, Peters' landscape unveils an archeological history, where organic fragments float, tumble and overlap creating an impression of an atmospheric landscape that is in a state of flux. Will Henry creates paintings on paper that depict stylized West Texas landscapes. His arid landscapes with bright blue skies depict the vast emptiness of the American West, but they also become backdrops or stages for critique of art history and film. For example, in the work "In the Dust" a flurry of sand carries a painting up into the air injecting the work with humor while subtly questioning the act of painting itself.