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***Karen Gunderson: Nature and the Nature of Royalty*
Opens Saturday, May 14th at Erin Cluley Gallery**

[Dallas, Texas – January 15, 2022] **ERIN CLULEY GALLERY** is pleased to announce *Nature and the Nature of Royalty* – a solo exhibition by New York based painter Karen Gunderson. The exhibition will be on view May 14th through July 2nd, 2022 at the gallery’s main location, 150 Manufacturing Street, Suite 210. The gallery is open weekly Wednesday through Saturday, 12 – 5 PM and by appointment. An opening reception will be held Saturday, May 14th from 5 – 8 PM with the artist in attendance.

Based in Upstate New York, Karen Gunderson has been using nature as the subject of her paintings for over 50 years. She began with clouds images in the 1960s and since 1988 she has been painting images of nature – in addition to images of historical figures – using shades of black paint.

When asked, “Why black?”, Gunderson states, “Because it is the biggest contrast to the light reflecting on the paintings. When the light shines on the brush marks it describes the process of painting the images as if feeling them in space. Imagine lightly touching and feeling the objects and following their forms with the brush. The energy of the strokes can engage the viewer with a haptic experience – a sense of touch.” She feels her making an experience of light on the black paint feels hopeful.

Gunderson chooses her subjects with an intention of drawing attention to them. Mountains from Tibet have been included because of the devastation to the Tibetan monasteries – creating a reminder of their beauty and the hope of their continuing culture. She chose to paint water for its beauty, danger, and importance to our human existence. The moon makes an appearance because it is a universal symbol – seen by all humanity from anywhere on earth. And lastly, the brambles for their intricacy – a delicate and yet lasting part of our landscapes.

Featured alongside paintings of nature, Gunderson will include portraits; of royalty to raise archetypes of good leaders to their people; and of President Barack Obama to celebrate the importance of his presidency and his legacy.

A catalogue with an essay by New York City based writer Noah Becker will be published on the occasion of the exhibition. The catalogue will be released at the end of May and will be available for purchase.

About the Artist

Karen Gunderson was born in Racine, Wisconsin in 1943. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Wisconsin State University, Whitewater and both a Master of Arts and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Iowa, Iowa City in painting and intermedia respectively. Gunderson has been the subject of numerous one-person shows throughout the United States and in Madrid, Spain and Sophia, Bulgaria. She also had a solo exhibition in the Bahrain National Museum in the capitol of Manama, Bahrain. Gunderson has received many honors and awards, most notably a Lorenzo Magnifico Prize in Painting at the 2001 Florence Biennale, Italy. She has been named by noted critic Donald Kuspit as one of the New Old Masters and was included in the New Old Masters show at the Abbots Palace in Gdansk, Poland.

Karen Gunderson, in her all black paintings, conjures vast landscapes through what critic Gerard McCarthy described in *Art in America* as “a deft working in surface texture alone.” Over the past three decades she has perfected a technique whereby pictorial illusions result from white light reflected off the raised edges of varied brushstrokes.

About Erin Cluley Gallery

Erin Cluley Gallery is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging, mid-career, and established artists from Dallas and the United States. The gallery presents a provocative program of artists working in both traditional and alternative forms including painting, sculpture, new media, photography, sculptural installation, and public intervention.

In 2014, Erin Cluley Gallery ignited a creative movement in West Dallas acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery has moved its operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas’ Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

In April 2021, Cluley opened Cluley Projects – a satellite location in West Dallas acting as an incubator space focusing on regional artists and providing a platform for discovery and mentorship.

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