

SANDRA MENDELSON RUBIN

Above and Beyond

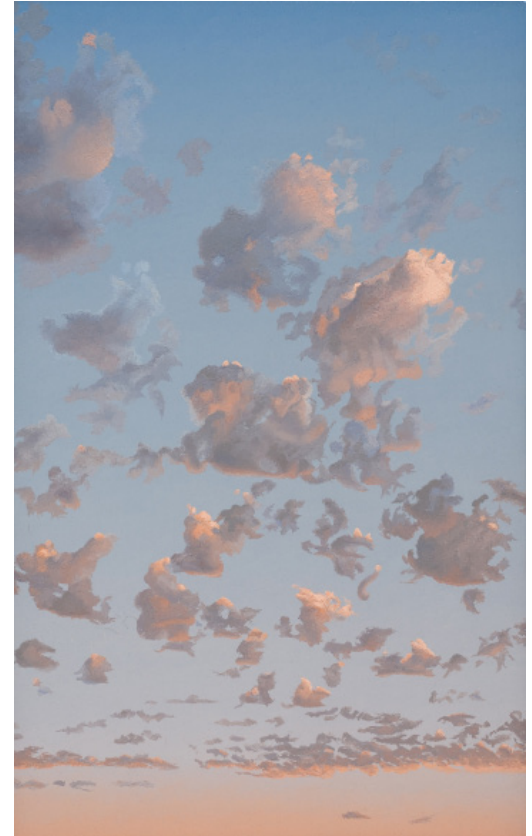
28 April - 28 May 2011

Reception for the artist:
 Thursday, 28 April, 6-8 P.M.
 Valet parking available

Venice, CA---L.A. Louver is pleased to present new paintings by **Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin** in the exhibition ***Above and Beyond***.

In this new body of work, Rubin draws her inspiration from the light and space that envelops the landscape of the Anderson Valley in Northern California, where she has made her home for the past two decades.

Rubin's journey to this new series began in the early 1980s, when she depicted the urban landscape of Los Angeles, where she then lived. These paintings gained widespread attention at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1985. Rubin exhibited her last series of paintings inspired by the city at L.A. Louver in 1992. Rubin's subsequent move away from Los Angeles led to her focusing on interior still-life subjects. When the first rural landscapes emerged (at L.A. Louver in 2007), they were predominately small works. In the current exhibition, there is a blossoming of scale and subject, with a particular focus on depicting space.



Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin, *Light in Transition*, 2008-2009
 oil on polyester, 9 x 5 1/2 in. (22.9 x 14 cm)

The earliest paintings in this new series-*Valley in Early Summer* and *Lifting Fog and Clouds*, from 2008-offer panoramic views in an expanded rectangle format (each measures 9 x 54 inches). The paintings embrace the nuance and beauty of light: bright and low cast in *Valley*, diffused in *Lifting Fog*, and radiant in the blue sky and sun kissed clouds of *Clouds*. Limitless space is explored in the no-horizon "skyscapes": *Light in Transition*, 2008-2009; *Thunder Clouds*, 2009, and *Passing Storm*, 2009. These paintings are all small in scale (no larger than 9 x 5 1/2 inches), yet convey a feeling of grandeur and sublime awe within an intimate experience. Rubin states, "I think the scale amplifies this intimacy by directly addressing the mind's eye. The scale choice is intuitive. Some images need to be small, to convey the intensity of detail, to feel the texture of the surfaces. Some images need to be big, quite big in fact, in order to convey a physical presence, a sense of place and placement for viewing."

Two of the largest paintings are nocturnes, a subject that Rubin has returned to repeatedly. *Studio Window*, 2008 and *The Bungalow*, 2009-2010, depict lighted structures, shrouded by the dark veil of night. Formally, each composition has a building at its core, but the powerful interpretation of the night sky and its overall effect are what dominates.

Rubin creates her paintings using undiluted oil paint, which she applies in several layers to find resolution. She does not use glazes. While inspired by form, composition, light and atmosphere, the main relationship is between paint and color. Previously, Rubin worked purely from direct observation, and while this is still her primary mode,

she has recently incorporated photography in her process. Photographic referencing was key in the development of the triptych painting *Above and Beyond*, 2010-2011, which was inspired by the aerial view from a plane while descending into the Santa Rosa dusk; Rubin recalls seeing “country homes as little islands of life, all lit up at night.” Rubin’s own property is the source material for the paintings in the triptych, each of which deals with a different level of space. The three paintings hang in a cluster to make up a larger composition; in effect, the viewer is directed to “fill in” the spaces between the paintings, while traveling back and forth among the different picture planes. The largest painting depicts Rubin’s studio and garden; the smallest, the steep driveway to her studio; and the third, which hangs highest in the cluster, the valley view beyond.



Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin, *Above & Beyond*, 2010-2011, oil on polyester, triptych, 19 x 36 in. (48.3 x 91.4 cm), 6 x 46 1/2 in. (15.2 x 118.1 cm), 11 x 5 1/2 in. (27.9 x 14 cm)

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Sandra Mendelsohn Rubin studied art at the University of California, Los Angeles, and counts William Brice, James Doolin and James Valerio as primary influences. Graduating with an MFA in 1979, Rubin had already developed a distinctive landscape style that attracted early public attention and critical acclaim. In 1980, she received the Young Talent Purchase Award from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1981, and again in 1991. Rubin went on to expand her range of subjects to include still-lives and urban landscape scenes. The artist’s first solo show was held at L.A. Louver in 1982, and was followed by solo exhibitions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Fischer Fine Art, London in 1985; Claude Bernard Gallery, New York in 1987; and L.A. Louver in 1992, 2003 and 2007. The current exhibition is Rubin’s eighth solo exhibition in a career of over three decades, attesting to the time-consuming and time-honored nature of her art.

Concurrently on view at L.A. Louver

South Gallery **Richard Deacon** *Waiting for the Rain* (sculpture)

Skyroom **Richard Deacon** *Nothing is Allowed* (sculpture)

For more information and visuals, please contact Elizabeth East, L.A. Louver, 45 North Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, USA; Open Tuesday - Saturday 10am -6pm, www.lalouer.com; tel: 310-822-4955; fax: 310-821-7529; e-mail: Elizabeth@lalouer.com

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