

kk kozik



ICEHOUSE Project Space

Eric Aho's "Vanishing Point" opens May 13. 4-6



ice harvesting on Keewaydin Lake, Stoneham, Maine, February 21, 2023

## Dear friends,

Please join ICEHOUSE Project Space in celebrating Project #14, Eric Aho's "Vanishing Point" on May 13 with a reception from 4-6 to be followed by a potluck dinner!

This fascinating project brings together the three strands of Aho's investigation into the harvesting of ice as both a chapter in history and a personal journey. In Aho's own words:

"I'm always surprised by the places both real and imaginary that painting takes me," says Eric Aho. "When I began my Ice Cuts project in 2008, I couldn't have guessed that fifteen years later, I'd recreate the scene of a Marsden Hartley painting. Or that I'd launch a personal inquiry into the historical ice trade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Last winter I painted along the shores of the open Kennebec River at the site of a former ice-harvesting town: Iceboro, now almost forgotten. This was the first winter in memory the Kennebec remained free of ice cover."



Ice Ledger, Iceboro, Maine, modified by Eric Aho, 2023, Courtesy the artist and DC Moore

Gallery

The paintings in Aho's ongoing Ice Cuts series comprise his most ambitious works and yet remain among his sparest. The works on paper exhibited here represent an extension of that evolving project. Although painted in the studio, the dark hues of the focal shape and the qualities of light and reflection at its edges are artifacts of direct observation. These icy incisions reverberate for Aho as elements from childhood memories shared by his father of New England ice harvests during the Great Depression.



Eric Aho, Ice Cut 1930, 2008, oil on linen, 50 x 70 inches, Courtesy the artist and DC Moore Gallery

This past February, a block of ice was excised from Keewaydin Lake in Oxford County, Maine, with antique ice tools and transported to ICEHOUSE Project Space. It has been insulated with a sawdust barrier one foot thick (a backup was placed in a modern freezer just in case!) This plug of ice pulled from a frozen lake in Maine now rests on an icehouse floor in Connecticut before images of the very hole from which it came. As the ice melts over the course of this installation, the paper set underneath will record the progress of its vanishing in watercolor and other mineralic stains from the lake water.



February 2023, reenactment of Marsden Hartley's The Ice Hole, Keewaydin Lake, Maine



Ice from Keewaydin Lake starting its journey to ICEHOUSE Project Space, Sharon, Connecticut

In 1936, Alfred Barr asserted that “Each generation must paint its own black square.” As Aho wrestles with the exchange of abstraction and realism in these paintings that he calls his “own personal sort of Modernism,” he is wrapped into a painterly lineage that extends from Courbet and Malevich to Agnes Martin and Ellsworth Kelly. “I’m not sure if my apertures in the ice are, as some have suggested, entrances to oblivion, but I like how they mediate — within a painted experience — the tension and sensation present in our relationship to the physical world.”

*Aho's project is dedicated to Danny Barker of Stoneham, Maine, whose participation and guidance were integral to the success of the ice harvesting endeavor in February. We're sad to say that Barker left this world in November of 2022 before he could see the vision realized. Barker was president of the Stoneham Maine Historical Society and cared deeply for the area and its past. Ten percent of the proceeds of this*

show will be donated to the Historical Society. In conversation with his widow Geneva as she and I stood on the ice during the harvesting project, I learned that Barker was also passionate about the Shakers -- the Sabbath Day Lake community site is nearby. As another tribute to Barker, we are inviting those who hope to attend and contribute dishes to the potluck dinner following the opening (all are welcome) to consider making dishes from Shaker recipes. As we stood there on the frozen lake, Geneva mentioned these and I was fascinated. Follow this [link](#) to recipes if they interest you, too.

And please join us for this celebration of Eric's journey!

Warmest regards,

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Eric Aho, Ice Cut, 2023, watercolor on gessoed paper, Courtesy of the artist and DC Moore Gallery



Eric Aho, Ice Cut, 2023, watercolor on gessoed paper, Courtesy of the artist and DC Moore Gallery