



The Morris Grave Museum • 636 F Street, Eureka, CA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**RAPHAELLE GOETHALS: Tales of the Land**

**EXHIBITION DATES: March 11<sup>th</sup>- April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017**

**OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday, April 01<sup>st</sup>, 5 to 7 pm**

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**The Morris Graves Museum is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by New Mexico based artist Raphaëlle Goethals.**

*"With its immobile, bordered presence, painting asks us for time, humility, patience and reflection. In the vast space in front of us, in the field of consciousness drawing us in yet staring back at us, we succumb to a powerful gravitational pull where we can recognize ourselves." RG.*



Untitled (lagoon), 2016, encaustic on panel, 54 x 84 inches

This exhibition presents a selection of paintings created between 2005 and 2015.

Goethal's signature large encaustic on wood panels continue her 20 years dialogue with Light, Space, and Time. Inspired by the meditative aspects of studio practice, connection with Nature, and obsessive observation of light, the coherent and consistent development of Goethals' work offers viewers an incisive means in which to reflect on their own knowledge, perception, and experience.

Discreet references to art historical antecedents such as the romantic sublime of J. M.W Turner or the moody formalism of Motherwell whisper from behind her complex translucent painted veils. Luring the viewer into a space of contemplation, her work evokes childhood experiences of gazing through frozen layers of ice into spaces that are both imaginative and hauntingly memorable.

Known for her signature layered encaustic and pigment abstractions, she developed her signature, process driven style creating a unique luminosity grounded in translucency. Continually investigating modes of perception and memory in her work, her focus is on an increasingly distilled process. Opaque yet translucent, unbounded and restrained, fluid and frozen, her work has been described by essayist and critic Arden Reed as being constructed out of dichotomies: "Surface/depth/, randomness/design, flesh/word, motion/stillness. Her paintings both enliven and compose us."

Goethals artfully weaves these seemingly contradictory qualities into her paintings with multiple layers of encaustic (a mix of Damar resin and beeswax), pigments, and idiosyncratic script-like marks that are reworked and partially erased, leaving trace hints and remains under luscious layers.

Recently, Goethals has introduced additional color into her predominantly monochromatic and earth toned palette. As this body of work evolved and developed, it became apparent that on some deep level, it was referencing Water- estuaries, ocean masses, droughts, currents, melt. Before that, the White paintings were like...painting Air. In other words, the artist is distilling the Landscape to its essentials: Earth (the Lumens series started in the late nineties), Air (Mnemosyne and Dust Stories series), and now, Water.

Of this new body of work, the artist comments; "These paintings, with their distilled, vulnerable, and subtle surfaces, remind us to stop and pay attention. Luring the viewer into a space of contemplation, this work attempts to bridge the personal and universal, the expressive and the minimal. We are exposed to the vulnerability of present time. Ultimately, the paintings are massively silent..."

**Raphaëlle Goethals** was born in 1958 in Brussels, Belgium. She grew up under glazed skies and amidst the devotional works of Van Eyck and Van Der Weyden. She was exposed early to influential exhibitions in Brussels, Paris or Basel, most notably Per Kirkeby and Francis Bacon. She started painting at an early age.

Goethals received a Bachelor of Fine Art from the Atelier 75 in Brussels in 1980; and moved to Los Angeles in 1981 to further her education at the Otis Art Institute.

Attracted to the vastness of the landscape and the quality of light, she relocated to New Mexico in 1994 where she developed her mature painting style.

Morphing the expressive and the minimal, her highly emotive paintings have been widely exhibited in the United States, and featured in Art Forum, Art in America, THE, Architectural Digest, and many regional publications.

Her work was acquired by distinguished collections including the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, the New Mexico Museum of Fine Arts, the Boise Art Museum and numerous selective private and corporate collections.

The artist will be in attendance for the opening reception April 01st, 2017

**For more information and /or images contact: Jamima Harr, Executive Director-curator, (707) 442-0278**