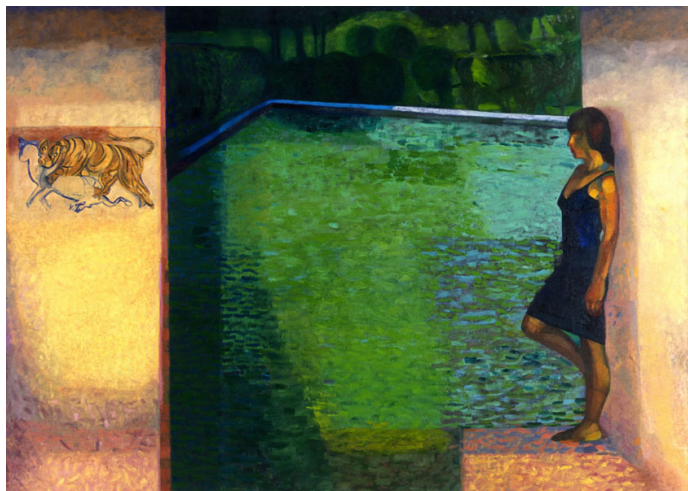


ROBERT STEELE GALLERY

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Carole Robb

Women and Water



Lake at the Villa d'Este, 2003-06, Oil on linen, 60x84 in.

I was in Tivoli at the Villa d'Este, a 16th century summer palace built by a Cardinal. Water trickles from the mouths of beasts and the breasts of goddesses. It begins as a trickle and ends in cascades on the lower terrace. The site was closing as I made my way out and saw a woman lying on a bench, one knee raised and an arm shielding her eyes from the sun. I saw her again as I left. This time she stood with one leg pressed against a wall like a stork. She was wearing a black cocktail dress, an odd choice for a tourist site. The next morning I hired a model, bought a similar dress and reconstructed the pose, working on-site at the Villa. The paintings in the "Women and Water" series were begun at that time and painted in Rome, Venice, London and New York. By placing the women close to water, the two elements result in more than the sum of these elements. Women in a pictorial plot. Things half-seen and half-understood.

- Carole Robb, 2006.

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Great art, great experiences, so often begin with such small gestures, such inconsequential details: the quiet murmur of water in motion, the color of light at a time of day, the angle of a limb, the depth of a shadow. For years now, Carole Robb's paintings have plumbed the emotional range of those shadows, the quiet *frisson* of contrasting images. *Helen of Troy* surveying the action through a pair of binoculars, for instance; *Ulysses* in a business suit; a smoking, looming *Vesuvius*, not unlike the *Duomo* in Florence, heavy and ever-present mass always on the edge, and at the edge of one's periphery.

The paintings in *Women and Water* are flush with such contrasts, paintings whose deceptive stillness conceal the rush of emotional and intellectual content. Women and water; women *are* water. We dive into the past, the past rushes to the present. Past and present commingle toward a decaying future. All, after all, is now.

- René Grayre, NYC 2007



Sunbather, 2003-06, Oil on linen, 14x14 in.

Each person finds their own Rome and you have to leave it to discover it. My Rome was an airship flashing the message over the British School, "Roma è bella per la notte." My Rome was Bernini's Apollo & Daphne and the neglected Canova fountain with a dead cat floating in its pools. When I left for America, Apollo & Daphne became the central theme of my work for eight years. Now I'm back in Rome painting that fountain.

- Carole Robb, 2001



Empty Fountain, 2003-06, Oil on linen, 74x74 in.

Dreadful deeds are done, here and there, in these very intelligent pictures. But they command our attention both by the ordered calm with which the imagery is laid out and by the sense of historical fatality that Robb knows how to conjure...

- John Russell

In the more peaceful precincts of the city, you can hear the whispered conversations of gods and goddesses, mingling with the splash of fountains and carried aloft on the wind through the pines. Carole Robb's paintings of women in Rome remind me...that Rome is alive and voluptuous, serene and overwrought, melancholy and threatening...

- John Berendt.



Roof top Fountain 2003-6, Oil on linen 62x62 in.



Entrance to the Villa d'Este, 2003-6, Oil on linen, 62x62 in.



Altarpiece for Hadrian 2003-6, Oil on linen, 72x186in, Triptych

Carole Robb was born in Port-Glasgow, Scotland and studied art at the Glasgow school of Art and the University of Reading, England (MFA 1979). Major awards include the Prix de Rome to Italy, Greater London Arts Association, British Arts Council Award in Painting, a Fulbright Fellowship to the USA and the GL Fondazione Fellowship to Venice, Italy. Solo exhibitions include the South London Art Gallery and Museum, AIR Gallery London, J.T. Fassbinder, Berlin, Forum Gallery New York and C'a d'oro Gallery, Rome. Group exhibitions include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; Alternative Tate Gallery; and The Institute of Contemporary Arts, England.

Works in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The Tate Gallery, England; the Museum of Modern Art, Rome, Italy; the Imperial War Museum, London, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Teaching experience includes the Royal College of Art, Goldsmith's College, and the Slade School of Fine Art, London; Boston University, MA; Cleveland Institute of Art, OH; Brandeis University, MA; City College, NY; and American University, Rome, Italy. Robb has worked in London, Venice, New York and Rome and lives in New York City.



The Diver, Paestum, 2003-6, Oil on linen, 60x84in.

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